

**ABUSE OF POWER, OPPRESSION AND THE
STRUGGLE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
IN MODERN INDONESIAN SHORT FICTION**

By

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**Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
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ABBREVIATIONS

ABRI	<i>Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia</i> (the Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia)
APRI	<i>Angkatan Perang Republik Indonesia</i> (War Forces of the Republic of Indonesia)
APRIS	<i>Angkatan Perang Republik Indonesia Serikat</i> (United War Forces of the Republic of Indonesia)
DKJ	<i>Dewan Kesenian Jakarta</i> (Jakarta Arts Council)
Gestapu	<i>Gerakan September Tiga puluh</i> (Movement of September 30)
GORO	<i>Gotong Royong</i> (People's Mutual Aid)
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
Lekra	<i>Lembaga Kesenian Rakyat</i> (Institute of People's Culture)
MPR	<i>Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat</i> (People's Consultative Assembly)
MPRGR	<i>Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Gotong Royong</i> (People's Mutual Aid Consultative Assembly)
MPRS	<i>Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara</i> (Provisional People's Consultative Assembly)
NICA	<i>Nederlandsch Indië Civil Administratie</i> (Netherlands–Indies Civil Administration)
PKI	<i>Partai Komunis Indonesia</i> (Communist Party of Indonesia)
PKK	<i>Pendidikan Kesejahteraan Keluarga</i> (Family Welfare Education)
PRRI	<i>Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia</i> (Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia)
PWI	<i>Persatuan Wartawan Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Journalists' Association)
RSP	<i>Jurnal Revitalisasi Sastra Pedalaman</i> (RSP, <i>Journal for Revitalization of Literature from the Hinterland</i>)
RT	<i>Rukun Tetangga</i> (Neighborhood Organization)
RW	<i>Rukun Warga</i> (People's Local Organization)
Satpam	<i>Satuan Pengaman</i> (Private Security Unit)
TIM	<i>Taman Ismail Marzuki</i> (Jakarta Arts Centre)
TNI	<i>Tentara Nasional Indonesia</i> (Indonesian National Army)
TKR	<i>Tentara Keamanan Rakyat</i> (People's Security Army)
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Note on the translations

All English translations in this thesis are mine except where indicated otherwise.

Note on the source of texts used

The year of each work provided refers to the date of first publication. The texts used in the analysis might refer to the first publication, a collection or an anthology.

Note on Referencing

In this thesis, I have used APA system. However, I have preferred to give the full form of naming the scholars and authors for the first mention. In the next use of the names, I use the last name for scholars and the first given name or the common names for Indonesian writers because that is the usual cultural practice.

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates fictional representations of human rights issues in Indonesia as found in selected short stories published in the Indonesian newspaper *Kompas* and the literary magazine *Horison* especially during the New Order. The examination deals with key issues related to certain forms of human rights, including gender relation, freedom of expression, right to life and right to assembly, which were regularly violated by individuals, groups, and/or state related bodies. A huge number of short stories were published in the media; in those that took human rights violations in these four areas as their main theme, the writers resisted gender oppression and the authoritarian and unjust regime of the state, despite the fact that the New Order regime heavily punished anyone attempting to resist it. In particular, the regime applied tight censorship so as not to allow the publication of any text which could cause trouble to national stability.

The thesis treats a wide range of short stories and other materials, but especially focuses on four writers – Ali Akbar Navis, Putu Wijaya, Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim and Seno Gumira Ajidarma, all of whom took advantage of the power of fiction to resist censorship. The analysis is focused on understanding how human rights issues are constructed in these individual works and how rights violations are represented by each of the writers. The works examined offer new insights into human rights issues as well as to Indonesian sociopolitical history.

DEDICATION

To my late father Bustami Iskandar Dt. Kupiah, who taught me discipline, honesty and right faith, and my late mother Zubaidah Karim, who instilled in me love and patience

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PART I – HUMAN RIGHTS IN INDONESIAN SOCIETY AND LITERATURE

This background to the analysis of the thesis provides the contextual and literary critical bases for interpreting Modern Indonesian short stories, especially those written and located during the New Order Indonesia (1966–1998). It consists of four chapters. Chapter 1 provides the theoretical discussion which provides the foundation for the analysis. Chapter 2 analyses the concepts of human rights historically, legally and politically, and how these concepts are derived and adopted in the Indonesian context. Chapter 3 analyses the role of the short story in presenting human rights issues in Indonesia. Chapter 4 evaluates critical approaches to the study of the Indonesian short story and human rights.

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

Human rights have been studied in various disciplinary fields, including Literary Studies. In literature, issues such as governmental and ideological oppression, abuse of power, violence and domination have been associated with human rights, which can be seen from literary perspectives, where the affective impact of terrorism can be powerfully evoked. To contribute to the field of such studies, this thesis examines the issues of human rights as they are represented in Indonesian short fiction.

The introduction consists of five elements. Firstly, it presents the research questions which are the basis for this project. Secondly, it provides the background of the research, locating the research in the domain of literary criticism, particularly that relating to the short story in Indonesian literature. Thirdly, it describes the significance of the research. Fourthly, it focuses on the research methods to be employed. Fifthly, the structure of the thesis is outlined.

Part 1 of the thesis provides a comparative study of “Western Human Rights” and their Indonesian interpretation; an overview of the short story tradition in Indonesia, including a critique of its representation or misrepresentation by various critics as “marginal literature”; an assessment of the usefulness of Western colonial and postcolonial theories in the context of the Indonesian short story framed as a cultural artifact within a particular historical moment.

1.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The objective of this thesis is to examine the treatment of human rights issues in modern Indonesian short stories, especially published after 1960 and during the Suharto regime. The word “treatment” refers to both the aesthetic and the ideological practices involved in the representation of how Indonesians claim their rights.

Specifically, this research aims to answer the following questions:

1) How have human rights issues developed in Indonesian short stories? It is to investigate the development of Indonesian short fiction which represents the struggle

over human rights. Attention will be given to aspects of plot, characterisation, setting and theme, as well as to the ideological implications of these short stories;

2) What forms of human rights violations have been central in these stories? It examines the forms of human rights represented in the stories, such as freedom of speech, right to life and right to assembly;

3) Who are the perpetrators and the victims in the stories? It is to study the characters created in these stories that are involved in human rights issues, including the actors or agents, the victims and the government related bodies;

and

4) What are the sociopolitical motives behind the violations? It is to see the sociopolitical relationship between actors and victims, including gender conditions, socioeconomic problems and politics.

The first part of the thesis will discuss the background and theories in regard to these aims. The second part is the analysis of the four aims. It will be concentrated on the works of the four dominant authors: Ali Akbar Navis, Putu Wijaya, Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim and Seno Gumira Ajidarma.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

The study of Indonesian literature in general has a long and healthy tradition. Over the last two decades scholarly analysis of Indonesian culture has been undertaken by: Susan Brenner (1999), who deals with women's images in media; Razif Bahari (2003, 2007a, 2007b), on Indonesian cultural traditions; Julie Shackford-Bradley (2001), Tineke Hellwig (2001), C. W. Watson (2003), Henk Maier (2004a), Laurie J. Sears (2007), Barbara Hatley (2007), Soe Tjen Marching (2007), Intan Paramaditha (2007) and Monica Arnez (2009), on women's writing; Michael Bodden (1999, 2002a, 2002b), Harry Aveling (2001) and Marshall Clark (2001, 2004), on the political dimensions of Indonesian literature; and Helen Creese and Laura Bellows (2002), William van der Molen (2003) and Kenneth Hall (2005), on the richness of Indonesia's literary past.

In term of the theoretical frameworks used by such scholars, feminist and postcolonial perspectives have dominated the approaches of literary critics of Indonesian literature. These approaches can especially be seen in the writing of scholars such as Doris Jedamski (2002), Paul Tickell (2002), Maier (2002), Keith Foulcher (2002), Marshall Clark (2002), Thomas Hunter (2002), Hatley (2002), Goenawan Mohammad (2002), and Melani Budianta (2002).

While few Indonesian voices seem to have featured in these interpretations of modern Indonesian literature, they become much more dominant when it comes to the investigation of marginal literature. Scholars writing about Indonesian regional and popular literature include: Edward Djamaris (2002) and Sudarmoko (2008), who respectively talk about Minangkabau literature and romance in Bukittinggi, Indonesia; Anna-Greta N. Hoadley (2005), who analyses political violence in Indonesian literature, including short stories; Harris E. Thahar (2008), who considers the problem of violence in the short stories of *Kompas*; Ivan Adilla (2007), who analyses the structure of short stories in Indonesian newspapers; Edmons-Louis Dussault (1995), who writes about Islam and identity in Motinggo Busye's fiction; Nanang Tahqiq (1995), who analyses freedom of speech and literary expression in fiction; and Th. Sri R. Prihatmi (1985), who looks at fantasy in the genre of the short story.

However, analysis of the short story as popular literature is still scarce. Among the scholars who have analysed such literature are Joost Coté (1998), I. Nyoman D. Putra (2000), Stefan Danerek (2005), Maman S. Mahayana (2006a), Aveling (2010) and Ferdinal (2011, 2012, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c). Budiarto Danujaya (1994, p. 129) has argued that the contribution of "newspaper literature" (the short story) has never been adequately addressed; it has attracted only one or two studies but has never become the focus of serious literary criticism. Considering this literary genre unimportant, scholars have written little about short stories, let alone the contribution of this genre to the debate about issues of human rights and democratisation. Do the short stories fail to address important issues such as history, nationalism, human rights or culture? Or is it because Suharto's regime was considered militaristic and censoring, so that the above issues were hardly seen or

studies on such issues were deemed unnecessary? There must be reasons for this lack of critical attention. “Popular” or “pop” literature in Indonesian appeals to the tastes and interests of ordinary Indonesians so this type of literature is not considered to be serious literature. Many scholars believe that “literature” is a term that belongs only to works which meet the expectation and criteria of readers of literary journals, or of those involved in educational and literary institutions. Such a category has often emphasised aesthetics over ideology, technique over content.

1.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

There are three central reasons for the importance of this study. First, despite its critical neglect, the short story genre in Indonesian literature is used by a great number of writers, both new and well known. Second, it is a genre which has a wide readership. Third and most importantly, the short story has been used by many writers as a tool to resist oppression.

The issue of human rights is obviously an important one. Scholars across disciplines and from outside Indonesia have investigated the issue of human rights from different perspectives such as the legal, scientific, political and literary. These scholars, both international and national, include: Gayatri Spivak (1988), who mostly concentrates on colonised women’s rights; Richard Wright (1945) and Franz Fanon (1961), on violence and colonialism; Homi K. Bhabha (1994), on the effect of colonisation on the life of the colonised; Barbara Harlow (1987), on the colonised people’s resistance toward dominant power; Sheila C. Kelly (2003), on women’s resistance in American novels; and Elizabeth S. Anker (2007), on human rights in world literature. In individual nations, it is self-evident that some scholars have examined the rights of citizens through literature. The scholars include: Ogaga Okuyade (2010) on the civil war in Nigeria; Rekha and Anup Beniwal (2008), on Indian women’s resistance against patriarchy; Tirop Simatei (2005), on colonial injustice in Kenya; Seong-kon Kim (1999), on women’s invisibility in Korean literature; and John Shuler (2007), on black American people’s life in America.

In the context of Indonesian literature, scholars whose works deal with particular issues of human rights include Foulcher (1981, 2002), who examines oppression in the work of Pramoedya Ananta Toer; Tahqiq (1995), who focuses on freedom of expression in Indonesian literature; Clark (1999), who analyzes the rights of the East Timorese; Bahari (2003), on nationalism in the works of Pramoedya Ananta Toer; Hoadley (2005), on political violence in Indonesian literature after 1966; Wijaya Herlambang (2005), on state terror in Indonesian literature; Diah A. Arimbi (2006), on women writers' struggles against male domination; and Thahar (2008), on violence as presented in Indonesia's media fiction. These scholars present the context upon which this thesis extends.

Literary scholars have paid less attention to the problem of the development of short fiction in Indonesia than to other literary genres. There has been much more attention given to the development of novels and poems. This gap in the scholarship makes it necessary to provide some analysis of the development and the significance of the short story in the evolution of modern Indonesian literature.

Why is it that short fiction has failed to attract much scholarly attention? Some possible reasons might include a consideration such as the perception of the genre as belonging to popular literature and therefore being of less literary value, because it is regularly published in the mass media. Many see it as having only a slight social function in terms of its contribution to the development of Indonesian literature. Nevertheless, because of its so-called marginal status, this genre actually provides wide opportunities for investigation beyond the limits of traditional canonical approaches to literature. In the context of Indonesian mass media, this kind of literature attracts a large readership that enjoys its entertainment value, particularly when placed alongside the mainly factual reportage of current events and in particular when it addresses various themes about everyday life. For this reason alone the short story in the media may have a greater social impact and significance than the more esoteric qualities of "great literature". This ultimately provides a key justification for deciding to focus on this unjustly ignored genre.

In response to the unfavourable perception of the short story, Sapardi Djoko Damono (1983, pp. 58–9) has noted that Indonesians cannot get away from the

existence of the short story because the mass media such as newspapers and magazines provide a regular space for stories. Damono's argument proves to be true for the condition of the Indonesian media industry of the 1990s, where almost every mass media publication provided the space for fiction. More and more space for arts including literature was allocated by newspapers, as well as by some magazines. Short stories accompanied reportage, articles and features. The short story was not separated from the daily informational needs of Indonesians, who consume both fact and fiction. Hard life and limited time caused readers to consume quick information as well as entertainment that can be enjoyed in a short time. To answer this demand, for example, the newspaper *Kompas* provided space for the arts (including the short story) in its Sunday edition. In 1995 the newspaper sold more than half a million copies daily (Sen & Hill, 2007, p. 57). Jalal and Sardjunani (2005) claim that in 1990, readers included 135,032,694 people aged 10 years and above, of whom 22,914,703 (16.26%) people had never/not yet attended school. They further say that the literacy rate at the national level for the population aged 15–24 aged above increased from 96.2 percent in 1990 to 98.7 in 2002. If each of 600,000 subscribers of the paper's Sunday edition shares the daily with, say, three others (one spouse and two other family members)¹, it is possible for at least two million readers to have the opportunity to read *Kompas* fiction weekly. In addition, some subscribers are institutions where one copy of the paper is shared among many readers. Offices and schools and faculties, for instance, which subscribe to the paper, share it between more than tens of readers. As a percentage of the Indonesian population, this is still small. Yet for Indonesians, whose national attention to literature is small, the figure of literary readership is significant.

Indonesian short story writers, according to Damono, can sometimes make a living by writing short stories, due to the fact that magazines and newspapers need lots of short stories every week while there are not many writers who devote themselves to meeting this need. Demand as well as incentive, as elaborated by Damono, have caused writers to be divided into three groups: first, those who think

¹ Different from Western culture where a house contains its core members (parents and children), an Indonesian house can be occupied by more extended family members (two parents, children and relatives).

that writing for the mass media is not respected by literary circles; second, those who think that writing for the mass media is a way of getting their stories published for a large audience and so they are not interested in having their short stories published in mass media outlets with lower circulations; and third, those who actually enjoy writing for mass media and for literary magazines or journals. Readers may find short stories in the literary magazine *Horison* written by serious writers such as Sori Siregar, Muhammad Fudoli, Umar Khayam, Budi Darma, Danarto and F. Rahardi. At the same time they may read short stories in other publications written by popular writers such as Yudhistira Ardi Nugroho, whose works are published both in literary magazines and in the entertainment media.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODS

To respond to the inadequacy of knowledge about representations of human rights as found in the short story in Indonesia, this thesis will deal with the topic through an examination of a number of short stories, especially published in Indonesia's foremost national newspaper *Kompas* and literary magazine *Horison*. These two journals have nurtured the talent of many Indonesian writers, both established and new. Most importantly, they have published works which are, nevertheless, often considered marginal by some literary critics, because they are not "serious" works. It is crucial to examine how "marginal" literature published in "elite" publications responds to the era which produces it and how far its assumed lack of social function carries.

Short stories from the two publications will be selected that deal with the theme of human rights. As there are hundreds of writers in the two publications, the selection will first be made in general terms and then focused on the works of four dominant writers: Ali Akbar Navis (Navis), Putu Wijaya (Putu), Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim (Ratna) and Seno Gumira Ajidarma (Seno). In this dissertation, I will examine in detail a small number of stories by each of these writers. Their stories engage with human rights in relation to Indonesian women, history, sociopolitical events and how they relate both to the practice and violation of human rights

respectively. The four writers, I argue, are not only dominant in the two media but also have national and/or international reputations. Also, they satisfy the criteria of origin, gender, residence and other professions. Navis was a writer and a politician, who looked at Indonesian sociopolitical problems from a “Sumatran context”. Putu is a multi-profession Balinese writer who spends most of his time in the capital of Indonesia. Ratna was a woman writer and a social activist who was born in a Sumatran family and spent all her life in Malang, East Java. Finally, Seno is a writer and a journalist who grew up in Yogyakarta and has lived most of his life in Jakarta. The reflection of the themes in the works of the four writers respectively will be examined through issues of gender, socioeconomic problems and politics. The research will also examine data drawn from interviews with the editors of each publication and some literary scholars.

When examining the particular works of the four writers, this thesis will demonstrate how their narratives resist human rights violations and thus contribute to the field of human rights. Specifically, the thesis will show how:

- 1) Navis provides an Islamic perspective on the suffering caused by the Indonesian military during the PRRI rebellions and on the values of New Order government officials.
- 2) Putu applies a critical lens to the New Order regime describing ways in which government officials abused their power.
- 3) Ratna depicts suffering due to the patriarchal values of the New Order; and
- 4) Seno most directly addresses the struggle for human rights in the aftermath of the Indonesian invasion of East Timor.

This project has been most informed by the post-colonial theories of Bill Ashcroft in his book *Post-colonial Transformation*. Ashcroft (2001, p. 2) argues that “colonized cultures have often been so resilient and transformative that they have changed the character of imperial culture itself.” He suggests that colonised people have continued and will continue to find the solution to dealing with the imperial and oppressive culture by transforming it, culturally and politically, into one that can satisfy their needs. In the Indonesian context, external colonisation has ended but

internal oppression continues. This implies that Indonesians will find their own way of transforming the dominant culture in order to meet their basic human needs.

1.5 THE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This thesis is divided into two parts and ten chapters. Part I consists of four chapters, presenting the theoretical and the historical background to the study. This first chapter, the introduction, concentrates on research questions, the background of the research, the short story in Indonesia, research methods and the thesis structure.

The second chapter includes a theoretical overview of the current state of discussion of human rights especially in Indonesia. The chapter will examine concepts and definitions of human rights, Indonesian nationalism, human rights in Indonesian life and human rights and the New Order in light of both the restriction of rights in the regime.

Chapter 3 discusses the nature of the short story in Indonesia. The first section introduces the chapter. The second section examines the status of the short story, contrasting American and Indonesian literature and the analysis of popular and serious literature. The third section examines the importance of the short story in the development of Indonesian literature in light of important themes discussed in the regime and literary circles which contribute to the development of human rights. The last section is the conclusion.

Chapter 4 discusses the relevance of postcolonial studies to Indonesia. The first section introduces the chapter. The second section defines the importance of cross-cultural methods in the study of Indonesian literature. The third section attempts to rethink postcolonial studies in literature. The fourth section discusses postcolonial studies and Indonesia. This section looks at Indonesian postcolonial studies and the recontextualisation of postcolonial studies in Indonesian literature after independence has been achieved. The fifth section deals with some common literary approaches to oppression. These include social criticism narrative, terror narrative and trauma narrative. The sixth section describes resistance literature as an appropriate theory of response to oppression. The last section concludes the chapter.

Part II is dedicated to the analysis of the representation of human rights issues in Indonesian literature from the colonial period to 1990, and the detailed analysis of the works of specific authors. This part consists of six chapters.

Chapter 5 deals with the development of Indonesian short fiction from the 1920s to 1990. This chapter will divide the discussion and analysis of the short story in Indonesian literature into two main periods: from the colonial era (1920) to the end of the Old Order era (1965), and during the New Order, from 1966 to 1989. The first section discusses the representation of human rights in the short stories published in collections of short stories and anthologies before 1966. The second section deals with the short stories published in *Kompas* and *Horison*. The overall discussion examines the content of the Indonesian short story in general, the current state of Indonesian short fiction and representations of human rights in Indonesian literature before 1990. This will include discussion of plot, theme, setting and characters. These stylistic elements help explain how writers benefit from their artistic skills to represent the issues of human rights violations that they resist.

Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9 analyse the issues of human rights respectively in the works of Ali Akbar Navis, Putu Wijaya, Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim and Seno Gumira Ajidarma. The chapters will focus on the dominant themes and modes of representation in the works of these writers. The final chapter, chapter 10, will provide a general conclusion to the thesis.

CHAPTER 2 – HUMAN RIGHTS IN INDONESIA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the relevant literature on human rights in Indonesia as applicable to my study of the Indonesian short story. Because the analysis of the short story in this thesis applies Western concepts of human rights, it needs to contextualise which concepts of human rights have been adopted in Indonesia and which are nationally developed. We need to do this because the concept of human rights which has developed in the West is not the same as what has been applied in Indonesia. Drawing from the various discourses on the subject, this chapter consists of four sections. The first section discusses the development of concepts of human rights in the West. The second section evaluates the development of Indonesian nationalism from colonialism to the 1990s. The third section situates human rights in Indonesian life. The fourth section evaluates human rights in the New Order and elaborates the rights which were restricted by the regime and significant social aspects of human rights. The restricted rights are mainly focused on freedom of expression, right to life and right to assembly.

2.2 HUMAN RIGHTS THEORIES

What are human rights? Despite different interpretations of the concept of human rights, I embrace the one that emphasises just and fair relations with other people. The United Nations refers to human rights as the basic rights and freedoms to which all human beings are entitled to and has enshrined these in a number of its documents.

Jack Donnelly (1999) says:

Human rights are, literally, the rights one has simply as a human being. As such they are equal rights, because we are human beings. They are also inalienable rights, because no matter how inhumanly we act or are treated we cannot become other than human beings. (p. 608)

Donnelly's definitions deal with the very basic rights human beings need to have. These rights are inherited because of our status as human beings.

Despite various debates on the types of rights, Anker (2007), for example, concludes that rights belong not only to individuals but also to groups. She claims:

Some political theorists have explained human rights as falling into three generations: the first speaking to political and civil rights and freedoms; the second to basic economic and social rights and equalities; and the third generation to rights of self-determination and cultural identities. (p. 5)

From a political perspective, Anker incorporates collective rights as a major focus of concern.

In the context of world politics, practitioners and theorists have expanded this definition of basic human rights. For example, Zehra F. Arat (2003, p. 3) argues that the individual rights defined in the UDHR include:

1. Civil rights: freedom from slavery and servitude, torture and inhuman punishment, and arbitrary arrest and imprisonment; freedom of speech, faith, opinion and expression; right to life, security, justice, ownership and assembly.
2. Political rights: right to vote and nominate for public office; right to form and join political parties.
3. Social and economic rights: right to education, work, food, clothing, housing and medical care.

Where do these concepts of human rights derive from? Michael Freeman (2002) argues that there are a number of different views regarding the conceptualisation of human rights. One view says that the concept of human rights has a very short history as its appearance is associated with the history of the UN concept. Others argue that the concept of human rights has a universal history coming from the religions and philosophies of the world. Still others consider that the concept comes from the West and became universal only recently. We can go back to the history of Western ideas where we can find thinkers who talk about the concept of human rights.

The first concept of human rights was proposed in Western culture and possibly appeared in 1215. The Magna Carta was concluded between King John and his fellow English aristocrats, who asked for their rights, which included both political and civil rights. A philosophical concept of natural rights appeared in the works of Hobbes (1588 –1679), Montesquieu (1689 –1775), Rousseau (1712 –1778) and John Locke (1632 –1704). Locke himself stresses the right to life, liberty and property. Their formulations of natural rights then reappear in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the UN.

Historically, human rights are not new to any nation in the world. Ideally, all nations, even the newest societies, try to protect their members from ill treatment and abuse. Western countries have long been familiar with written legal documents which guarantee the rights of their people. The Third World countries have accessed knowledge of rights through different forms, such as stories and legends which are often unwritten and open to individual interpretation.

Thought on human rights has not been static. It changes over time. In the 20th century, a shift happened in the concept at the time the world suffered from the Great Depression (1929 –1934), which began in the USA and then spread to all other parts of the world. Many people lost their jobs and starved. Each nation tried to solve the problem by ratifying laws regarding human rights. The American President, Roosevelt, proposed the four freedoms: freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from fear and freedom from want. The action taken by Roosevelt was then followed by other nations.

Internationally, the basic core of the law on human rights derives from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948, which has generally become the source of human rights law in almost every nation in the world. Among these rights are freedom of expression, the right to life and the right to assembly. The three rights respectively read: Everyone has the right to life, liberty and the security of person (Art 3, UDHR);² Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression (Art 19,

² Article 19, the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UDHR),³ and The right of peaceful assembly shall be recognized (Art 21, ICCPR).⁴ What the United Nation adopts are the rights which are supposed to be applied by all nations in the world in order that they can make peace with the world.

In the context of the nation, those rights may not be able to be fully applied. Each has its own practices. The concept of human rights has to be translated into the nation's own situation when different views collide. In relation to this, Freeman gives an example of the fact that the protection of someone's right may violate the rights of another. For instance, if a religious group forbids their members to change their religion, the right of those who want to change comes in conflict with the rights of other group members. This is an example of how human rights cannot be applied to everyone, everywhere and at all times.

Dealing with this situation, the UN has also tried to ratify the declaration of human rights into covenants such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which are together named the International Bill of Human Rights. Civil and political rights consist of the right to liberty and security of person, the right to equality before the court and tribunals, the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, the right to hold opinions without interference, the right to peaceful assembly and the right to freedom of association.

Do civil and political rights in Indonesia follow the concepts introduced by the UN? To answer this, the idea of Indonesian nationalism needs to be put forward first. To politically appreciate the issue of human rights in Indonesia, I argue that it must be understood that it was the concept of human rights in the West, and especially that defined by the United Nations, that was adopted into the Indonesian constitution. However, I argue that this has also needed to be nationally contextualised. The amendments adopted in the constitution of Indonesia are the clues to explaining this.

³ Article 3, the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights

⁴ Article 21, the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

2.3 INDONESIAN NATIONALISM FROM COLONIALISM TO THE 1990s

Indonesian political history suggests that one key to understanding Indonesian nationalism in terms of the relationship between ruler and people may be the traditional interpretation of power derived from Javanese culture, into which many leaders of this nation were born. Benedict Anderson (1990) has made a detailed analysis of this conception of power in Javanese society. This relationship is based on the concept of unity and the centre as signifying the bond between rulers and ruled. Anderson argues that the ruler represents the centre and works to unite all elements under his/her territory and realise the oneness of all. The ruler – the ruled relationship is interpreted as top-down management through which the ruler manages all power around him. It is a matter of focus and concentration to execute the power. Anderson notes:

In Java power is accorded to a ruler, rather than earned per se. Power descends on one who rules. It is a static, fixed and all-encompassing commodity. The Javanese ruler does not have some of the power, he has all of it. Power is a zero-sum game: to get it, you have to take it from someone else. There is no sense of broadening your scope of power by seeking a mandate from your subjects. Power is neither legitimate nor illegitimate. (Schwarz, 1999, p. 45)

Anderson's analysis echoes a very different story about Hang Tuah in Malay literature where Hang Tuah, an exiled knight, is forgiven by his king and allowed to come back to kill Hang Kasturi, who has endangered the king's power.⁵

Both Anderson's study and the story about Hang Tuah suggest that the power belongs to the rulers. The rulers exercise their authority so as to stay in power and make use of people around them to make profits. The ruled have no rights but to serve their masters. They only have obligations and responsibilities, and cannot demand for their rights to be provided. The two texts exemplify how traditional nationalism works in the nation which is now called Indonesia.

⁵ See W. G. Shellabear's *Sejarah Melayu* (pp. 98–106).

To understand what Indonesian nationalism is like, it is firstly important to know what a nation is. Anderson (2006, p. 6) argues that: “it is an imagined political community ... and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign”. Anderson attests that the nation is formed by the essential three words: “*limited*,” which means a nation has finite boundaries among other nations; “*sovereign*,” which means being free from any single realm such as religion; and “*community*,” which means fraternity.

David Brown (2004, pp. 49–51) asserts that Indonesian national identity is unique in the sense that it does not fit any of the three conventional types of nationalism Anderson describes: cultural (ethno cultural), civic or multicultural nationalism. Brown argues that in the case of Indonesia, which comprises diverse religious communities and hundreds of different language communities, Indonesian nationalist leaders under the influence of Dutch and Japanese colonialism promoted a *Pancasila* vision of national identity. This is a national identity which is not based on the majority identity (Islam) but which stresses religious diversity. Brown contests that this nationalism:

superimposed an ideological unity on the social and political diversity and that marginalized Islam. This policy of stressing the centrifugal fragmentation of the country, rather than pointing to its centripetal core, was undoubtedly successful in legitimating an increasingly authoritarian Sukarno regime and, subsequently, the Suharto regime too, both of them lacking close ties to their mass constituencies. (p. 51)

For Brown, nationalism in Indonesia also stressed unity more than the majority cultural identity. Brown continues that both the Sukarno and the Suharto regimes employed this concept of national identity to reformulate a fragmented Indonesia so that it could be elucidated in a single understanding (p. 51).

However, Brown asserts that Indonesian nationalism can nevertheless be located somewhere in between the three types of nationalism. Referring to the regimes of Sukarno and Suharto, he states:

Indonesia’s authoritarian regimes portrayed this collectivism in three overlapping ways: firstly, as a unitary civic nation whose common good

demanded limitations on individual citizenship rights; secondly, as an ethno-cultural nation built historically around its status core, the secular, *priyayi* (aristocratic) Javanese elites; and thirdly, as a multicultural nation whose very diversity demanded corporatist management. “Unity in diversity” (*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*) thereby became the ideological slogan, which justified administrative centralization. (p. 51)

In Brown’s argument, civic nationalism provides an equality for everyone in which every member of the nation enjoys the same status, liberties, rights and responsibilities; ethno-cultural nationalism guarantees full status and membership to those having the same culture while others are second class citizens; and multicultural nationalism offers the state an opportunity to establish institutions to legalise each group’s identity. The three types of nationalism enabled Indonesia to enter into the democratisation process.

As with other developing countries, Indonesia has also experienced a series of problems in its process of democratisation. Once considered to be “the cure for all the world’s political ills” (Bell, 2004, p. 25), today, however, democracy “cannot resolve crippling poverty, environmental degradation, and pervasive corruption afflicting the developing world” (p. 25). As with other ideologies, democracy has also failed to cure the world’s economic, social and political illnesses. However, democracy still has some possibility to take the world to a better life. What is democracy? Democracy is “a procedure of the filling of political offices through periodic free and fair elections. Such elections are only possible if there is some measure of freedom of speech, assembly and press, and parties can criticise incumbents without fear of retaliation” (p. 26). Bell believes these three rights should be fulfilled in order for democracy to take effect.

Unlike Brown who argues that Indonesian identity consists of a mixture that draws on three types of nationalism, Jacques Bertrand (2004) says that “the Indonesian nation reflected a modified civic nationalism” (p. 179). A new nationalism in Indonesia is based not only on what the Dutch left behind but on new values and principles of a new nationalism as spelled out in *UUD 1945, Undang*

Undang Dasar 1945 (Indonesian Constitution of 1945) and *Pancasila* ideology. I will discuss this in more detail in section 2.4.

How have Indonesians perceived nationalism in the context of human rights? In Indonesia, the issue of human rights is not a new thing. It has a relatively long history. Although Indonesia did not recognize human rights terms before the birth of the Indonesian constitution in 1945, the idea of human rights has gradually developed in this nation since the 19th century in an implicit way. Todung Mulya Lubis (1993), for example, has noted that there have been at least four steps in its development.

This development started with the view of Raden Ajeng Kartini⁶ (1879–1904). In a letter, composed to her friend in the Netherlands at the beginning of the 20th century, she protested for such rights as the freedom to think and women's emancipation. Kartini writes:

Could one in earnest expect that India (Indonesia), uncivilized, unenlightened, slumbering India, should take it well that her daughters, women who through centuries had been looked upon as being a lower order—yes, why should I not say it—as soulless creatures, should suddenly be regarded as human beings, who have a right to independent ideas, to freedom of thought, of feeling and conduct? (Lubis, 1993, p. 52)

The letter indicates Kartini's view on women's rights and her protest against the lower status of women in Indonesia. She was concerned about women's subordination. Questioning what her country could offer women, she criticised the limitations imposed upon women, which included their having no freedom of expression or freedom to act in public. In another letter, she indirectly resisted patriarchal domination in social and personal life:

For girls to study at school, to leave the home daily, is said to destroy the traditional values of our social life ... I want to be independent, so that I can never be forced to marry ... But I have to marry, have to, have to, for to remain single is the greatest possible sin for Muslim woman, the greatest

⁶ Raden Ajeng Kartini was a leading Indonesian feminist who attempted to emancipate women from patriarchal power. She was born on 21 April 1879 in Jepara, Central Java. She struggled for women's rights, including the right to education. By establishing a school for women, she encouraged them to fight against injustice and to achieve more than what society wanted them to do at that time. Women's domains should not be only the home and kitchen, but much more.

disgrace for the family. ... How can it be otherwise, when the man has all the rights and the woman all the duties? (Johns, 1979, p. 20)

Kartini wrote passionately about the personal and social life women did not have. She was not completely against the marginalization of women that her society practised. Yet she resisted the othering of women. She accepted that marriage was a woman's obligation but she questioned why society emphasised the importance of men over women.

A few years after the death of Kartini, the recognition of the collective spirit of rights began. The era was defined by Sutan Takdir Alisyahbana as having "the desire to unite among the various Indonesian peoples, to co-operate for their mutual benefit, and thus enable them to meet the other peoples of the world on equal terms" (Johns, 1979, p. 23). The second phase came with the birth of Boedi Oetomo, an organisation which aroused Indonesians to fight for independence. It indirectly inspired several Indonesian representatives in the *Volksraad* (Parliament). Raden Achmad (as cited in Lubis, 1993, p. 55), a member of the *Volksraad* from *Syarikat Islam*, stated in 1914:

The people have joined *Syarikat Islam* en masse because they seek their rights ... It is the people that sees its rights continually threatened; that is why there is the great cry for them to unite themselves in order to defend and resist with more power those who rob them of their rights.

When Raden Achmad spoke in Parliament, he spoke on behalf of those who insisted that their rights had been stolen by the Dutch.

Lubis argues that the third phase occurred when Sukarno, as leader of the *Partai Nasional Indonesia* (Indonesian National Party), made efforts to expand the concept of rights to include political and economic democracy. Sukarno (as cited in Lubis, 1993) asked:

May I once more frankly and honestly pose the question: is there freedom of press, organization and assembly for my people here, when the exercise of those freedoms and rights is restricted by every kind of obstacle, and obstructed by hindrances such as these? No! These rights do not exist. In the presence of endless impediments, or booby traps, "freedom" remains only a

word; “rights” are nil. In this farce “freedom of the press” and “the right to organize and assemble” are simply a charade. (pp. 56–57)

Unlike Kartini and Raden Ahmad, who respectively voice individual and organisational concern for rights in a more subtle way, Sukarno’s concern for rights such as freedom of the press, to organisation and assembly was stated in a direct manner. Sukarno clearly believed that no rights existed during Dutch colonisation. In the next phase, Indonesia entered into a national documentation of rights.

2.4 WHERE ARE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATED IN THE INDONESIAN NATION-STATE?

Throughout its history, Indonesia has had three constitutions, namely: the *UUD 1945* (1945 Constitution), the *Konstitusi RIS 1949* (the Constitution of the United Indonesia 1949) and the *UUDS 1950* (the Provisional Constitution of 1950). As this thesis is particularly focused on the New Order regime (1966–1998), the constitutional analysis of human rights is focused on *UUD 1945*, which was used at that time by the government. The constitution mentions a number of rights, including the right to life, right to assembly, freedom of expression, freedom of religion, right to defend the state, right to get education and right of the needy and the displaced to be taken care of by the state in its certain chapters and articles.

Legally, the explicit concept of human rights in Indonesia became explicit when the draft of *UUD 1945* was being made. While there was little argument about the place of human rights in the constitution, the constitution was finally made to include basic human rights of Indonesians but primarily stressed the need to unite above individual needs. The Indonesian constitution never explicitly mentions the term “human rights”; instead it asserts the rights and responsibilities of Indonesian citizens and the rights of the people’s representatives.

The legal recognition of rights in Indonesia is enshrined as Indonesia’s state ideology *Pancasila*. In the preamble to *UUD 1945*, the *Pancasila* has five principles:

1) *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa* (belief in one God)

2) *Kemanusiaan yang adil dan beradab* (a just and civilised humanity)

3) *Persatuan Indonesia* (a united Indonesia)

4) *Kerakyatan yang dipimpin oleh hikmat kebijaksanaan dalam Permusyawaratan/Perwakilan* (democracy guided by wisdom through consultation and representation) and

5) *Keadilan sosial bagi seluruh rakyat Indonesia* (social justice for all Indonesian people).

Irene Istiningasih Hadiprayitno (2010) argues that “the second principle (*sila kemanusiaan yang adil dan beradab*) is the key reference to the country’s commitment to human dignity and human rights” (p. 377). It offers a clear vision of humanity based on justice and civilisation for all Indonesians. The principle, as Hadiprayitno and other scholars believe, is the source of all laws regarding human rights.

Initially, the constitution explicitly acknowledged at least six rights. First, Chapter X, Article 27(2) states: “*Tiap tiap warga negara berhak atas pekerjaan dan penghidupan yang layak bagi kemanusiaan*” (Every citizen has the right to work and a decent living for humanity). This article not only guarantees the right to live but also provides the right to work in order for all Indonesians to live decently.

Second, Article 28 in the same chapter says “*Kemerdekaan berserikat dan berkumpul, mengeluarkan pikiran dengan lisan dan tulisan dan sebagainya ditetapkan dengan undang undang*” (Freedom to assemble and gather together, express their opinion orally and in written forms and any other ways are determined by laws). Despite the limitations determined by the laws, this article sets a political path for Indonesians to speak.

Third, Chapter XI, Article 29(2) states “*Negara menjamin kemerdekaan tiap tiap penduduk untuk memeluk agamanya masing masing dan untuk beribadat menurut agamanya dan kepercayaannya itu*” (The state assures each citizen freedom to embrace his/her religion and worship in accordance with the religion and faith).

This article gives freedom to religious life, where every person can worship through any religion.

Fourth, Chapter XII, Article 30(1) says “*Tiap tiap warga Negara berhak dan wajib ikut serta dalam usaha pembelaan Negara*” (Every citizen has a right and an obligation to defend the state). It asserts that it is a right as well as the obligation for all Indonesians to participate in the state’s defense.

Fifth, Chapter XII, Article 31(1) says “*Tiap tiap warganegara berhak mendapatkan pengajaran*” (Every citizen has the right to have education). It offers opportunities for Indonesians to become educated. Yet the state does not oblige its citizens to go to school.

Sixth, Chapter XIV, Article 34 states “*Fakir miskin dan anak-anak terlantar dipelihara oleh Negara*” (The needy and the displaced children are taken care of by the state). It appears as a warranty for unfortunate Indonesians to stay alive and exercise their rights.

These basic concepts of human rights were not influenced by the UN which emphasised freedom of expression, the right to life and the right to assembly. However, alongside Indonesian nation-state history, the concepts of human rights also developed in relation to international politics. The development of the concepts, which previously grew in line with Indonesian ways of life and situations, then dealt with international politics and demand. It now lies between two different contexts: dealing with the Western ideas and preserving national character. As a part of the world, Indonesia has to agree fully or partially with the world legally through the UN and at the same time Indonesia also has to deal with the particulars of the Indonesian situation and condition. As a member of the UN, it is the responsibility of Indonesia to adopt the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and then adjust it with the needs of Indonesia. This discrepancy occurs between Indonesia and the West because of their different histories. Scholars argue that the American constitution was drafted by immigrants who came to the country to seek liberty, while the Indonesian constitution was drafted by Indonesians who came from different ethnic groups and races from Sabang to Merauke. They wanted to keep peace and maintain the harmony of Indonesian life. Bambang Sutiyoso (2004) writes that the development of

the concept of human rights in England and France dealt with the struggle of two groups, the people and the aristocrats, and the people wanted to get away from the control and force of the king and his men. On the other hand, Indonesia had to deal with the national struggle against the Dutch, the coloniser. There was no primary group or personal interest. It was only after the collapse of the New Order in 1998 that the concepts underwent significant changes.

2.4.1 UUD 1945 and its Amendments on Human Rights

The concepts of human rights in the constitution have been ratified and extended by Parliament a few times: the first amendment was made in 1999; the second in 2000; the third in 2001; and the fourth in 2002. Although clearer concepts of human rights were enshrined in the post Suharto era, I discuss them in this chapter because they cast an important light on some rights which had been previously neglected. These rights are found in the second amendment of 2000, where Parliament paid wide attention to the problem of human rights by incorporating Chapter XA entitled *Hak Asasi Manusia* (Human Rights). This chapter consists of 10 articles and 26 subarticles.⁷ The amendment “took the form of a Bill of Rights closely modeled on the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) – albeit with important caveats in some areas” (Herbert, 2008, p. 457). Taken together, the chapter incorporates a number of rights, duties and responsibilities. Chapter XA indicates the Indonesian state’s commitment to deal with human rights. As a whole, the chapter includes more than fifteen individual rights, one children’s right, one group right, two state obligations and two individual duties.

First, chapter XA puts most emphasis on individual rights. In the middle of the chapter, Article 28 I(1) states seven basic rights of individuals:

⁷ The English translation of the 10 articles and 26 subarticles is taken from the books *The Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia* (Indonesia, 2002) and *The Constitution of Indonesia: A Contextual Analysis* (Simon, 2012).

Hak untuk hidup, hak untuk tidak disiksa, hak kemerdekaan pikiran dan hati nurani, hak beragama, hak untuk tidak diperbudak, hak untuk diakui sebagai pribadi dihadapan hukum, dan hak untuk tidak dituntut atas dasar hukum yang berlaku surut adalah hak asasi manusia yang tidak dapat dikurangi dalam keadaan apa pun.

The rights to life, freedom from torture, freedom of thought and conscience, freedom of religion, freedom from enslavement, the right to the recognition as a person before the law, and the right not to be tried under a law with retrospective effect are all human rights that cannot be limited under any circumstances.

The rights guarantee every person to live their life, be free of oppression, practise the religion of their choice, be set free from colonisation, have justice before the law and be free from trial of past events.

Although Article 28I(1) lists the seven basic rights, they are defined in the following articles. Individual rights include: the right to life (Article 28A); family rights and the right to procreate (Article 28B(1)); the right to basic needs and education (Article 28C(1)); the right to protection (Article 28G(1) and (2)); the right to have a good life (Article 28H(1)); the right to social security (Article 28H(3)); and the right to be free from discrimination (Article 28 I(2)). These seven types of rights provide the thorough protection an individual needs in executing his/her rights as a human being. They advocate the rights of each person to a peaceful and prosperous life.

The right to assembly is partially stated in Article 28C(2) and Article 28E(3). The two articles guarantee every citizen to execute the rights in relation to assembly such as collective right to forming a nation and right to the freedom to associate, to assemble and to express opinions. The phrases “collective struggle”, “freedom to associate” and “to assemble”, taken together, assert individuals’ right to have contact with others for their own benefits as well as those of the larger communities.

Freedom of expression is written in Article 28E(2) and (3), and Article 28F. They are expressed through the key words: “opinion”, “view”, “thought” and

“information”. These articles demonstrate what rights and freedom-related ideas exist and how far they can be executed by each person. They range from general ideas to the transfer of certain information.

Other articles address different rights such as the right to legal security (Article 28D(1)), the right to work (Article 28D(2)), the right to participate in the government (Article 28D(3)), the right to citizenship (Article 28D(4)), religious rights (Article 28E(1)), the right to affirmative action (Article 28H(2)) and the right to own property (Article 28H(4)). These six subarticles address different types of rights and freedoms in relation to equality, religion, a place to live, equal opportunity and property.

Second, children’s rights are stated in Article 28B(2) which says “*Setiap anak berhak atas kelangsungan hidup, tumbuh, dan berkembang, serta berhak atas perlindungan dari kekerasan dan diskriminasi*” (Every child shall have the right to live, to grow and to develop, and shall have the right to protection from violence and discrimination). This subarticle specifically addresses the basic rights every child should have in order that children can grow optimally and be safe from harm done by other persons.

Third, the group right includes Article 28I(3) which says “*Identitas budaya dan hak masyarakat tradisional dihormati selaras dengan perkembangan zaman dan peradaban*” (The cultural identities and rights of traditional communities shall be respected in accordance with the development of times and civilizations). The right to cultural identity and minority rights guarantee the existence of the culture of any community, including those of the traditional groups.

Fourth, state obligations assert the responsibilities of the state to ensure that all of the rights mentioned can be executed. These include:

Article 28I(4): *Perlindungan, pemajuan, penegakan, dan pemenuhan hak asasi manusia adalah tanggung jawab negara, terutama pemerintah.*

The protection, advancement, upholding and fulfillment of human rights are the responsibility of the state, especially the government.

The state also has a responsibility to establish laws in that regard:

Article 28I(5): Untuk menegakkan dan melindungi hak asasi manusia dengan prinsip Negara hukum yang demokratis, maka pelaksanaan hak asasi manusia dijamin, diatur, dan dituangkan dalam peraturan perundang-undangan.

For the purpose of upholding and protecting human rights in accordance with the principle of a democratic and law-based state, the implementation of human rights shall be guaranteed, regulated and set forth in laws and regulations.

The two articles oblige the state to execute its citizens' rights legally through laws.

Fifth, individual responsibilities include the obligation to respect the rights of others (Article 28J(1)) and to abide by the law (Article 28J(2)): These subarticles as a whole encourage each individual to respect others' rights and to exercise his/her rights according to the law.

2.4.2 Double Protection and Ratification

Despite the addition of some articles on human rights, the amended versions of *UUD 1945* raise some concerns about the seriousness of this legislation. These concerns relate to the overlapping of ideas, the ratification of articles, and the addition of articles about human rights outside the chapter on human rights.

Firstly, there are articles which duplicate ideas similar to those found in other articles. For instance, Article 28C(1) partially states the right to education, which is also stated in Article 31(1) and (2); Article 28D(1) repeats the equality before the law already found in Article 27(1); Article 28E(1) and (2) on religion is similar to the statement in Article 29(2); Article 28I(3) on the rights of indigenous people is repeated in Article 32; Article 28E(3) on freedom of expression is also found in Article 28; Article 28B(2) on children's right is repeated in Article 34. These double inclusions can be read more as an emphasis than as a devaluation of the articles on

human rights. The repetition of statements of one right may indicate double protection of the right.

Secondly, ratification and addition are found in the fourth amendment of 2002. In Chapter XIII, Article 31(1) the word “*pengajaran*” is ratified as “*pendidikan*” indicating the change from passive subjects to active ones. Article 31(2) states that “*Setiap warga negara wajib mengikuti pendidikan dan pemerintah wajib membiayainya*” (Every citizen should have basic education and the government must finance it). It guarantees that all Indonesians, no matter who they are, must have the basic education needed to enable them to live their life.

Thirdly, in Chapter XIV, Article 34, two new subarticles (2 and 3) are added of rights not defined in article 28: “*Negara mengembangkan sistim jaminan sosial bagi seluruh rakyat dan memberdayakan masyarakat yang lemah dan tidak mampu sesuai dengan martabat kemanusiaan*” (The state develops a social security system for the people and empowers the poor in accordance with human dignity) and “*Negara bertanggung jawab atas penyediaan fasilitas pelayanan kesehatan dan fasilitas pelayanan umum yang layak*” (The state is responsible for providing decent health facilities and public facilities). These two subarticles indirectly put emphasis on people’s right to have access to social security and health services.

To summarise the above discussion, the development of human rights in Indonesia from the colonial era to the era of reform has undergone a significant expansion in terms of scope and quantity. It began with individual and political group efforts to voice rights such as women’s rights, the right to be independent and rights of self-determination and later came to include constitutional recognition of human rights as defended by the UN. Indonesia has legally acknowledged three groups of rights: first, civil and political rights; second, socioeconomic rights; and third, cultural rights. Up to 1949, Indonesians struggled to voice their civil and political rights against their colonisers. During the first two national governments: the Old Order (1945–1965) and the New Order (1966–1998), when the *UUD 1945* could be nationally applied, many Indonesians enjoyed rights ranging from civil and political rights, and socioeconomic rights to cultural rights. In the era of reform (after 1998), although the coverage of rights was similar to those in the previous governments,

constitutional concerns about rights were much greater and more extensive, where the basic human rights enshrined in *UUD 1945*, which were previously frequently abused, were widely expanded, ratified and elaborated by incorporating a special chapter on human rights.

2.5 HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE NEW ORDER

After independence was proclaimed in 1945, human rights laws were initially adopted by all Indonesian governments, including the New Order. Because the concept of rights was general, the regimes in charge needed to interpret them further before implementing them. Nevertheless, like the Old Order regime, the New Order government did not pay much attention to the development of human rights issues. It concentrated more on national politics than on individual concerns. The dynamics of human rights issues at that time was only really evident after the fall of the New Order. The practice and treatment of the issues of human rights in the previous era might be the worst in Indonesian history. As shown in many studies, the regime provided little space for human rights to grow. This could not be separated from the policies made by Suharto, the president of the era. The practice of human rights in the regime could be seen in a number of aspects of Indonesian life such as ideology, politics, economics and the socio-culture.

Ideology became a very important key to the success of the New Order government. The government used it widely to legitimate its power. Scholars argue that, like the previous regime, the New Order also appropriated the *Pancasila* in order to achieve this goal. For instance, Adam Schwarz (1994) has written, “And by obliging all social groups to swear allegiance to the *Pancasila*, Suharto has tried to make all Indonesians endorse the same view” (p. 41). Schwarz suggests that the *Pancasila* has been a key tool used by Suharto to exercise his political strategy to rule.

Literature on Indonesian politics clearly suggests how *Pancasila* was manipulated by the New Order government to justify its policy. The so called “*Pancasila* democracy”, was interpreted to mean that individual needs should not be

above the affairs of the state. In other words, human rights never became the main concern of the government due to the fact that Suharto and his men seemed to believe that human rights would come only when Indonesian people lived a prosperous life. His concern for the economy caused him to ignore other aspects of Indonesian life, including human rights. Lubis (1993) writes:

Economic development has been regarded as the core policy of the New Order, and human rights must be deferred until economic development has been completed. This policy has evidently caused Indonesians, particularly the weak, to experience violations of human rights such as land expropriations, labor dismissals, banning of books and the press, and expulsion of student activists. (p. 12)

Lubis argues that the New Order policy did not allow Indonesians to express their rights whenever they endangered the regime.

Furthermore, Lubis claims that the regime tended to be willing to violate its people's rights until the regime met its economic goals. For example, Suharto, while speaking before *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Gotong Royong* (Parliament, 1966–1971) in an early year of his term said:

On behalf of the government we hope to be able to obtain a precise and positive guideline in implementing *Pancasila* (the state ideology), the 1945 Constitution, human rights and other matters for the state and the nation where the said guideline is being prepared by the ad hoc committees of the *Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara* (MPRS or the Provisional People's Consultative Assembly). (Lubis, 1993, p. 6)

Suharto suggested that the state through its people's assembly needed to provide him with proper guidelines in order for him to be able to practise state matters, including human rights. In practice, he also needed the power to interpret the guidelines to be able to function.

His understanding of the *Pancasila* as the Indonesian national guideline benefited him so much that he could ideologically justify his authoritarian government to the people. In this way, the *Pancasila* enabled him to counter all

possible political changes and criticism which might come from many possible groups such as communists, liberalists, radical Muslims or political rivals.

Suharto and his architects of the New Order government determined that their mission was to re-establish order in Indonesia after the terrible situation of the Old Order. After the September 1965 coup, they were given full power to take a new approach to governance. To respond to the situation, they chose political order and economic development as the key solutions to finding Indonesian stability and prosperity. Suharto, with his political vehicle, the functional group *Golkar*, tried to obtain this objective by applying any possible means, especially by selling persuasive discourse to Indonesians and using this discourse against his opponents. In each term of office, he seemed to succeed in employing his strategy of using the national ideology and ignoring differences. Thus, John Bresnan (1993), commenting on Suharto's statement of 1983, writes:

However, the country is not going to journey backwards. The multi-party system of politics was a failure. It was time, he said, for Indonesia to consolidate politically and accept the national ideology. We must remove the remnants of conflicts, disunity and suspicion. (p. 273)

Suharto implicitly argued that it was the multi-party system which had caused Indonesia to experience disunity. One of the most challenging groups for Suharto was the Muslims, who were the most populous and powerful when they were united. So he needed to act politically to minimize their power. Changing the multi-party system was one of his strategies: the many previous political parties were reduced to three: the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) to accommodate all parties which promoted nationalism, the United Development Party (PPP) to unite all Islamic parties; and the *Golkar*.

After politics, Suharto also applied strong economic policies. He carefully planned Indonesian economic development through *Repelita*, *Rencana Pembangunan Lima Tahun* (Five Year Development Plans). Based on the series of the *Repelita*, Hal Hill (1996, pp. 14–7) divides the New Order economic development into several phases. The first phase, that of rehabilitation and recovery, took place between 1966 and 1970. Controlling inflation, strengthening relations with donor communities and

rehabilitating infrastructure became the top priorities of the government. This phase was useful and successful. By the end of his first term, Suharto seemed to have reached economic stabilisation. The period of 1971 to 1981 was a phase of rapid growth. In this phase, Indonesia was successful in preserving the growth of the economy in spite of some problems such as rice prices which were not stable, and oil prices, which kept increasing because of external factors such as Iran–Iraq war. Third, Hill continues, Indonesia needed to deal with the adjustment to lower oil prices from 1982 to 1986. This was the stage when Indonesia could not enjoy much income from oil or foreign loans. Oil prices declined and loans needed to be repaid. Liberalisation and recovery started in 1987. After passing through hard times, Indonesia again came to change from a reliance on oil revenue to one in which development was supported by the industrial and commercial sectors.

Economic development directly or indirectly influenced sectors of the mass media and communication. The mass media helped to develop writers and readers. More writers found their chance to work or write for new media, both electronic and printed, where their communication abilities could be used widely. Most media, especially the printed ones, provide special spaces for literature where columns of literature review, poetry and fiction were welcome. The appearance of new media and the availability of literary columns created a new trend in Indonesian literary development.

Unity was also an important goal for the New Order. Because Indonesia comprises various races, ethnicities, and religions, the New Order government tried to unite them in order that national objectives could be reached. There are hundreds of ethnicities, three main races: Malay, Chinese and Austronesian, and five major religions: Islam, Catholic, Protestant, Buddhism and Hinduism. It is difficult to bring them to uniformity. Perfection was the dream of the New Order government. In all of its policies it intended to apply a perfectionist approach. Producing “real humanity” was the objective of the government cultural politic. Nirwan Dewanto (as cited in Zaidan & Sugono, 2003, p. 52) argues that citizens are multidimensional beings who cannot be separated from the state and who should conform to the state ideology. To

achieve perfection and unity together, the government applied the concept of “oneness”.

The oneness policy, which stressed national unity, was used to guard Indonesian socio-cultural life. This “*politik adalah panglima*” (politics is the commander) approach of the Old Order was played out in a new and different way. While in the Old Order, the government used every possible means to advance its goals in a positive way, in the New Order the government negatively controlled or banned anything which could prevent it from realising its policies. This even included control over many literary figures and their products became part of their targets, particularly those which had a strong impact on people. Figures such as Pramudya Ananta Toer, W. S. Rendra, Wiji Tukul and Mochtar Lubis and their works were banished, jailed and banned because the government was afraid of the effect they could produce on the people. These are some repressive examples of acts which occurred during Suharto’s presidency and were part of his strategy to maintain the oneness policy.

Finally, knowing that women were among the major groups in the state, the New Order established a gendered policy which limited women’s rights. Marshall Clark (2010) argues that “the norms of feminine subordination and submission are legitimized and sanctified by the ideologies of the state and the stricture of religion” (p. 26). What was the New Order policy on women? Kathryn Robinson (1998) argues:

A cornerstone of the authoritarian New Order regime was a gendered model of political authority which offered women citizenship on the basis of their subordinate status as wives and mothers. Hence, repressive and restrictive representations of women and circumscribed roles for them in social life have been part of the underpinnings of the dominant forms of the Indonesian political system. (pp. 205–206)

The government widely exercised policies which undermined women’s roles and stressed male domination. Robinson (2009) says that “Suharto’s New Order exercised gendered power through policies such as family planning and state control of women’s organizations in a familial model that registered male authority” (p. 68).

The New Order regime strongly applied hegemonic ideologies in dealing with women. First, the New Order regime exercised the ideology of “*kodrat wanita*” (woman’s biological specific nature), which “identifies women as gentle beings, naturally endowed with softer, more refined feelings than those of men” (Hatley, 2002, p. 152). The ideology, which helped legitimise the government in implementing its programs, made women legally and culturally subordinate to men, because women’s citizenship was not equal to that of men. Robinson (2009) argues that “Women’s citizenship was maternal citizenship, and their difference from men was deemed to be located in their *kodrat*, assumed to be God given and sanctioned by Islam” (p. 68). So in practice, such ideology created a path for the regime to direct women’s lives which, according to their *kodrat*, needed to be limited to the supposed women’s spheres.

Second, another central pillar of the ideology of the New Order was the family principle of the state, the *azas kekeluargaan*. Robinson (2009) argues that “New Order gender ideology rendered the family as a cornerstone of the nation and valorized the wife as the *pendamping suami*—the companion at the husband’s side” (p. 71). The principle again located women as inferior to men. Mikaela Nyman (2006) draws on the idea of Suryakusuma, who says that “This principle described the state as a family, with President Suharto as the father figure (*bapak*) for a state and society heavily influenced by Javanese paternalism, marked by deference to power and authority, (which) coincides with military norms of hierarchy and obedience to the command” (p. 133).

Third, Nyman (2006) argues that the New Order’s model of womanhood, *Dharma Wanita*⁸, was legally taught and spread among Indonesian women through the state-sponsored organisation of civil servants’ wives, who were active in propagandising among Indonesian women. Women were prescribed to be supporters of their men, procreators and educators of their offsprings. The document legalised the regime’s ideology of “*state ibuism*” (state “mother-ism”) and “*housewifisation*”.

⁸ *Dharma Wanita* was an ideology practised by the New Order. The ideology prioritised the teaching of *Panca Dharma Wanita* (Five Responsibilities of Women) reads that “A wife is to (1) support her husband’s career and duties; (2) provide offspring; (3) care for and rear the children; (4) be a good housekeeper; and (5) be a guardian of the community” (Sunindyo, 1996, p. 124).

I argue that the gendered policy, which was initially intended to magnify men's position as breadwinners of the family and women as the figures who were supposed to function as subordinates, shifted the way Indonesian women looked at themselves, especially after more than two decades of following such gendered ideology. Suharto, in his last years of office, launched a new agenda known as "*kemitrasejajaran*" (harmonious partnership) (Robinson, 1998, p. 206). Women writers began to resist the ideology of the *kodrat wanita* and the *state ibuism* which were sustained in the New Order regime. The political agenda of harmonious partnership which tried to raise women to an equal level with men encouraged women writers to express themselves.

It can be concluded that overall Suharto had a limited belief in human rights. For instance, in 1990 in his state speech, Suharto said that the reference for human rights in Indonesia was the second pillar of *Pancasila*, *kemanusiaan yang adil dan beradab* (just and civilized humanity). However, to minimize the effects the concepts of human rights could have on his government, he sometimes needed to "play the game" in a very careful way. The establishment of a human rights commission on 7 June 1993 was an example of this. What rights were dominant in the New Order?

2.5.1 Restriction of Rights in the New Order

Elizabeth Fuller Collins (2002, p. 583) argues that "The New Order portrayed itself as the defender of order and security against the forces of immorality and anarchy." In the name of security, the regime made attempts to put the nation in order and restricted people's rights, ignoring the effects this had on their personal freedom. The regime believed that individuals and groups should conform to the policies it exercised. As a result, the state executed various types of violence to reach its goals and, at the same time, individuals and groups also took advantage of the situation by committing violence for their own benefit. The recurrence of violence, including state-sponsored violence, as the effect of state policy and practice was predicated on the idea of restraining terrorism, as opposed to the discourse of injustice which partially dominates Indonesian public consciousness. The act of terror was elevated

to the status of a common happening and such incidents were considered to be a way to protest against real or imagined fear. State apparatuses sought to turn their people into passive sufferers who had no ability to speak back. Collins furthermore contests that “The Suharto regime institutionalized state terror by labeling political opposition ‘communist’, using military and paramilitary forces against protesters and separatists when necessary” (p. 583).

Among many forms of rights which were restricted during the New Order were the freedom of speech, right to life and right to assembly. From 1966 to 1990, most Indonesians experienced some restriction of freedom of speech. Based on the ideal that stability should be maintained, the New Order government tried hard not to permit any effort to challenge its authority and any criticism was often interpreted as subversion. People from many different levels of status and occupation were regularly accused of wrong doing against a legitimate government. This policy was briefly changed late in the New Order. Schwarz (1999) writes:

After a long winter of whispers and harsh tones, 1990 offered a promising new start for freedom of expression in Indonesia. The architects of the New Order’s uncompromising “security approach” to dissent, it seemed, were beginning to have second thoughts. The strict curbs they had put on the press and on all manner of cultural expression had succeeded in silencing most of their critics but their success had produced as well a number of unfortunate side-effects, one being a largely vacuous, stifled and stagnant public discourse. (p. 230)

In response to criticism by many organizations and groups, the Suharto regime began to shift in the late 1980s by introducing openness, “*keterbukaan*”. Suharto said:

It is . . . wrong if our vigilance towards security is so excessive that it restricts our own movement . . . We must view differences and opinion as dynamic . . . Our common task in the years to come is . . . to develop further the people’s initiative, creativity and participation in development. (Schwarz, 1999, p. 231)

The policy of openness proved to be just a camouflage and was soon withdrawn. Many Indonesians were disappointed by what followed but only a little surprised.

The withdrawal was contrary to the government claim that the people are sovereign and able to change their government at will. The practice was really contrary to the fact. The people suffered a lot from the price paid for political stability and economic development.

In a letter to a visiting delegation of Australian legislators from the Indonesian Front for the Defense of Human Rights, 20 October 1992, it was said:

Honorable Parliamentarians: Welcome to Indonesia, and the government which boasts the chair of the Non-Aligned Movement and a long list of human rights violations. Welcome to Indonesia, where workers are forbidden to organize, where political and civil rights are repressed, where detainees are tortured, sometimes to their death. Welcome to a country where to speak out and to organize means jail. (Schwarz, 1999, p. 230)

Goenawan Muhammad said:

For the most part, (the) carnival of expression seems absent from the Indonesian language today. Our language has been ripped off from the world, stripped of shape, smell, color and form, cleansed of the grit and graffiti, the rumpus and commotion, that make up real life . . . The language that we see forms a landscape almost barren of vegetation, dotted by sparse clumps of bamboo and threatened by blight, a landscape in which only the poorest of “transmigrants”⁹ might find a home. (Schwarz, 1999, p. 230)

The Indonesian mass media also indicated a tendency to deviate from the spirit of struggle and education to industrial mindedness. Mass media such as newspapers, tended to partner with industry or industry owners. Nowadays media bloom like mushrooms in summer. The situation demands more journalists including authors to work for them and the varieties of topics are also needed to publish regularly. Factually mass media not only deliver news but also create it. Certain issues are carefully selected and engineered to gain audience attention. They keep digging at issues such as politic, women, religion, art, and affairs. Issues such as

⁹ “Transmigrant” (*Transmigran*) is a term used to explain those who move permanently from one area to a newly established place in Indonesia. They usually move from a densely populated area to an area which is not dense.

women, sexuality, and gender which dominate Indonesian literature lately should have been part of the earlier mass media scenario.

The New Order was not fond of intellectuals, who like giving ideas, commenting on policy, and criticising wrong doings. This behavior was clearly seen in college life where university deans all over Indonesia were strongly expected to clear politics from campuses. Civil servant intellectuals who were critical of Indonesia's government were denied promotion. Some student activists were arrested or expelled from campuses. Goenawan Mohammad (as cited in Schwarz, 1994) once said, "Universities are dead" (p. 237) and "The government's obsession with security is like a black hole swallowing all independent thought" (p. 237). Mochtar Lubis, a novelist and journalist, was imprisoned after his newspaper was closed in 1974. He said then:

There is no time to waste. Indonesians must be allowed to develop their critical faculties so they can understand what's happening to themselves, to their society and in the world. Not just understand, but be able to analyze and make choices. Members of society are not allowed to be critical, so how can they be creative? How can you expect people to create, think, if there is no climate of freedom? Without fostering our intellectual strengths, which means letting people say what they think without fear, Indonesians will remain coolies in their own country. It is terrifying to think that just to say common things you have to be so careful. When you reach that stage, and that's where we are, you have to realize we've arrived at a critical situation. (Schwarz, 1994, p. 238)

Schwarz (1999, p. 235) records that Indonesian artists, poets, playwrights, essayists, intellectuals and journalists were not much welcome but relatively tolerated. Some works which were banned during the early 1990s included Nano Riantiarno's *Sukses*. The play talks about the succession of a king who has four children. Backed by the army, the king's favourite daughter gains success, jailing her siblings and taking over the throne. After playing for a few days, the play was closed down. It was proclaimed to be non-educative and anti-*Pancasila*, something which threatens security. Banning continued with Riantiarno's *Opera Keco*.

2.6 CONCLUSION

The application of the concept of human rights in Indonesia has attempted to balance historical Indonesian conditions and the nation's effort to deal with the wider world as pioneered by the UN. Human rights values such as women's rights, the right for independence, and the right to life and assembly were all values claimed by Indonesia before its independence. After independence, Indonesia started to adopt the world's agreement on human rights.

That every country is unique echoes in Indonesia as well. Although Indonesia does not adopt any specific concepts and definitions of human rights as practised in any other part of the world, especially the West, Indonesia has dealt with such rights sociopolitically. Politically, Indonesia is concerned about the rights of its citizens. Human rights values as enshrined in the Indonesian ideology *Pancasila* and the Indonesian constitution *UUD 1945* are a sign of Indonesian political will. Basic issues of rights such as humanity, justice and democracy clearly indicate such attempts. Violations of human rights which happened during the New Order and beyond should not be seen as stemming from Indonesia's having no human rights concerns but as the particular interpretation of each regime.

As one sector of society, Indonesian literary activity indicates that human rights are not just the domain of politics and law but also of literature. History has shown that human rights issues have helped enrich Indonesian literature as an institution. Indonesian literary history has recorded that writers had been both witnesses to, and victims of, human rights violations and their works have represented a number of human rights cases in Indonesian history.

CHAPTER 3 – THE ROLE OF THE SHORT STORY IN REPRESENTING HUMAN RIGHTS IN INDONESIAN LITERATURE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Having analysed the understanding of human rights in Indonesia during the 20th century, I will now describe the role of literature in addressing human rights during this period. I will do this in this chapter in two stages. Firstly, I will deal with the nature of the short story in general. In Indonesia, the short story genre is often considered to be “second class” or “popular”, putatively a literature which lacks seriousness and depth. I want to argue against these assumptions. Rather than engaging in depth with theories of genre and form, this thesis concentrates more on the roles and power of the short story in the examination of the issue of human rights. This is the area where theoretical disagreement and contestation of human rights and their application in Indonesian literature have been most prominent. Secondly, I will evaluate the importance of the short story in representing the issue of human rights in Indonesian literature. This section will look at the dominant themes writers concentrated on during the New Order and the role of the literary circles in promoting these issues.

3.2 THE SHORT STORY

Although the short story is a form that is not often examined in Indonesian literature, it is the most widely read literary form and has the potential to represent and expose the abuse of human rights. So discussion of how the short story contributes to the development of Indonesian literature, particularly the issue of human rights, should be put forward in order that its roles can be evaluated. There are a number of things which need to be considered in this regard, including the status of the short story in the West, the debate on serious versus popular literature, critical reassessment of the status of popular literature and the importance of the short story in Indonesian literature.

3.2.1 The Short Story in the West

I would like to begin by describing the position of the short story in the West, which is very different from that in Indonesia. Western popular fiction has attracted the attention of many scholars since the 1960s because of its number of readers; these scholars notably include Margaret Dalziel (1957), R. C. Terry (1983), Bob Ashley (1989), Tony Bennet (1990) and Martin Scofield (2006). Scofield (2006) argues that “The short story in America has for almost two centuries held a prominent, even pre-eminent place in the American literary tradition” (p. 1). Scofield explains further that the short story attracts a large audience of readers and of scholars and writers. Frank O’Connor (as cited in Scofield, 2006) says that for Americans the short story has become “a national art form” (p. 1). Americans are proud of their great fiction writers. A number of the 19th and 20th century writers have proven their greatness in this literary form. Edgar Alan Poe thought that the short story was his most successful and influential literary form. Nathaniel Hawthorn’s stories are as famous as his novel *The Scarlet Letter*. Herman Melville’s stories, such as “Bartleby”, are arguably as great as his novel *Moby Dick*. Stephen Crane’s short stories, such as “The Open Boat” and “The Bride Comes to the Yellow Sky”, are regarded as great works. Many other writers have also proved themselves to be great American short story writers: Flannery O’Connor, Eudora Welty, Donald Barthelme and Raymond Carver, to mention some, have made their way especially through the short story.

How do Americans define the short story so that they can appreciate it as much as the novel? Some critics have suggested that short story criticism has aimed to align the genres. Scofield (2006) argues that:

The short story can be defined in terms of length. Any fiction of between five hundred to fifteen thousand words can be categorized as a short story as compared to a novella (long story), which runs between fifty and hundred and fifty pages (or 20,000 and 40,000 words), and a novel, which takes the form of more than a hundred and fifty pages long. (p. 4)

So if it is just a matter of length, how could the short story be less valuable than other genres in certain cultures? Is it because of its aesthetic quality or its social context? Some short stories could be as bad as some novels. Many novels fail to gain favourable attention from readers. The quality and significance of literary works (short stories) should not be judged only by their complexity or their “literariness”, but also need to be evaluated in terms of their social contexts. Great works by great authors are not born from the length of work or the form of publication. Great authors can produce great works in whatever form or genre they write. Medium is just a matter of social context. Washington Irving, (as cited in Scofield, 2006) wrote in a letter in 1824:

I have preferred adopting a mode of sketches & short tales rather than long works, because I chose to take a line of writing peculiar to myself, rather than fall into the manner or school of any other writer; and there is a constant activity of thought and a nicety of execution required in writing of the kind.
(p. 6)

Beside the writer’s preference, 19th century American writers were also encouraged to write short stories due to the fact that the conditions of writing and publication had changed. For example, Edgar Alan Poe, at that time, was ambitious to establish an independent tradition from Britain. He turned to short pieces of writing requested by magazines. His intention was to create a literature and a reading public. For him, it was the magazine, not the book (novel) that could best express American culture. Poe wrote, “I perceived that the whole energetic, busy spirit of the age tended wholly to the Magazine literature – to the curt, the terse, the well-timed, and the readily diffused, in preference to the old forms of the verbose, the ponderous and the inaccessible” (Scofield, 2006, p. 7).

Scofield (2006) further elaborates his discussion on the status of the short story in American literature as follows. Drawing on Frank O’Connor’s *The Lonely Voice*, which suggests the short story’s aim is to treat the life of the isolated individuals, Scofield claims that the genre is a medium to talk about the common man and marginal groups. In American literary history, the short story has also been able to perform social functions. In later years following the American Civil War, the

short story was associated with “local colour” literature, caused by American expansion to different parts of the American continent, including the far east, south west and deep south. Today, the short story plays its role in the treatment of Native American, African, Jewish, Hispanic, Asian and other ethnic groups within American society. Scofield argues that the short story is a very useful way to treat as many races, groups, and ethnicities as possible in ways that can interest the authors. They are able to change their focus from one angle to another through presenting a variety of topics, places, figures, times, conflict, and themes. In so doing, they used different modes of expression: romantic tales, realist stories, tall tales, anecdotes, sketches and parables.

3.2.2 Serious and Popular Literature

Broadly speaking, scholars recognise two kinds of literary genre: “serious” and “popular”. Canonical literature, which is also called “good” or serious literature, is supposed to be about serious human daily matters. What is the “canon”? Chris Baldick (2008) writes:

Canon is a body of writings recognized by authority. Those books of Holy Scripture which religious leaders accept as genuine are *canonical*, as are those works of a literary author which scholars regard as authentic. The canon of a national literature is a body of writings especially approved by critics or anthologists and deemed suitable for academic study. (p. 12)

In the practice of literary criticism, good literature is regarded as serious art. Its existence is sanctified and praised as prestigious. Yet its readers are relatively fewer in number than those of popular literature. For example, in the teaching of Indonesian literature in Indonesian departments across Indonesia, lecturers and students are very familiar with Marah Rusli’s *Siti Nurbaya* (1922). The students are supposed to be able to understand and criticise the work. The evaluation of the work is widely conducted in an intellectual environment where reading, discussion and writing are involved. Hence, a small group will be relatively well informed about such a work. Yet, outside these academic environments people have less access to

“serious” literature unless via its film version. Readers of serious literature are largely limited to some elites within literary, educational and art institutions.

On the other hand, literary works which most literary critics regard as popular literature are read by a large number of readers. Some Indonesian literary critics rate popular literature as a second-class literature, “left over” literature or unimportant literature compared to the value of high or canonical literature. They mostly define this literature from the perspective of its commercialism due to its wide readership. Popular literature consists of works which are purchased, read and enjoyed by readers who are thought to lack the capacity for appreciating fiction of serious literary merit, usually having little ability or time to interpret and criticise such works. As a consequence, in relation to the short story, Maman S. Mahayana (2006) laments that in Indonesia “*banyak cerpen yang mati bersama pengarangnya*” (many short stories died away with their writers) (p. xi). He continues that the short story scarcely exists, because no one is willing to record it as part of Indonesian literary history and its writers are deemed novelists in training.

Consequently, because it is rated as secondary in relation to serious literature, popular literature cannot make its way into the chamber of canonised literature where national literature locates itself. Ignatia M. Hendrarti (1998) has argued that popular literature is not purely the result of the ability of its creator but is also dependent on the taste of the public. This view draws on the arguments of DiMaggio (1977) and Bourdieu (1985) on popular literature. DiMaggio, she observes, argues that the market for popular literature seems to control the writers of popular literature; while Bourdieu thinks that the power of the public in determining what the creator needs to write results in a negative relationship between symbolic profit and economic profit. Similarly, Damono (1983) claims that mass media which relies on readers must submit to the taste of its readers and the writers who write for should also refer to the readers’ taste. However, for some critics, the relationship indicates that the popularity of a work among its audience is likely to reduce its symbolic profit. In the end, the low symbolic reputation of popular literature makes many scholars reluctant to study it and hence they ignore it. Although Hendrarti’s and Damono’s ideas should be respected, I argue that the publication of popular literature like the short story in

Indonesia has functioned not only as entertainment which satisfies its readers' feelings but also as a thoughtful tool to resist what is not correct in society.

Umar Yunus (as cited in Sudarmoko, 2008) calls this kind of literature "*dilupakan*" (forgotten) or "*diremehkan*" (underestimated) work, because it has been overlooked in the classification (canonisation) that has evolved in the history of Indonesian literature. Further, he argues that the impact of the classification of literature as either "serious" or "popular" by some scholars has made certain readers unwilling to read such work. As a result, many readers also underestimate works like folklore, legend, romance and fables, or short stories in newspapers or magazines. So far scholars' energy has been spent on literature from the centre (works accepted or appreciated by other literary critics), which basically constitutes a body of canonical works. Less effort has been given to study what they call "marginal literature" as opposed to literature of the centre.

Why is the short story form often considered not a suitable area for research? As the notion of "serious" literature is political, the question also calls for a political answer. However, there will be no fixed and satisfactory response, as so called "good" or "serious" literature is traditionally defined so that the answer will be dependent on who answers, where it is answered and when it is answered. In my view there are several reasons why this interpretation appears.

Firstly, this rejection is often based on the place of publication or birth of the literary work. This can be misleading. The fact that literature appears in newspapers or literature developed in a local area or region should not be the basis for overlooking it, because locality and mode of publication are not always identical to questions of quality and impact. Works published in the mass media, for example, may be equally as qualified as the works published in books: It is often just a matter of opportunity. As the number of media increases, the demand for the works also increases. So the publication of short stories which used to be dependent on the most recognised publishers is now provided with a much broader range of publication spaces and incentives.

Secondly, the short story is often considered too brief to be taken seriously. The length of a literary work is surely no criterion by which a literary work ought to be defined. Brander Matthews (1968), for example, writes:

The difference between a novel and a novelette is one of length only: a novelette is a brief novel. The difference between a novel and a short-story is a difference of kind.¹⁰ A Short story deals with a single character, a single event, a single emotion, or a series of emotions called forth by a single situation. (pp. 10–11)

On this basis, the issue here is not at all a question of marginality or centrality of the work in relation to the literary canon. The short story is a distinct genre of writing and thus needs to be judged on its own terms.

Thirdly, it is often said that short story writers are not major writers. In fact, some of the authors of short stories are very well known Indonesian writers. Mahayana (2006a), for example, in his book *Bermain dengan Cerpen (Playing with Short Stories)*, has noted some important canonical writers such as Budi Darma, Kuntowijoyo, Danarto, Sori Siregar, Korrie Layun Rampan, Putu Wijaya, Pamusuk Eneste, Seno Gumira Ajidarma and Darman Munir, who have used the short story genre to deliver their ideas. They are commonly categorised as serious writers whose works have enriched Indonesian literature with their artistic and aesthetic values. Women writers such as Leila S. Chudori, Lea Pamungkas, Dorothea Rosa Herliany, Djenar Maesa Ayu and Sirikit Syah are among important women writers whose stories have also contributed to enlivening the world of fiction in Indonesian literary circles as well in the mass media.

Fourthly, it is sometimes suggested that the issues in the popular short story are trivial. John Foster (2003) writes that the contents of popular literature deal with subjects such as humour, violence, drugs, sex and bad language. In fact, the issues which short story writing encompasses are also found in canonical works. One of the differences is likely to be the independence of the writers. The writers of the

¹⁰ Matthews differentiates between “Short-story” with a capital S and a hyphen to emphasise the distinction between the Short-story and the story which is short. Mathews argues that the Short-story is a high and difficult department of fiction. The story which is short can be written by anybody who can write at all, and it may be good, bad or indifferent but at its best it is wholly unlike the Short-story.

canonised works are presumably free from any burden, whether financial or social, while the writers of popular works are possibly more dependent upon, and conditioned by, the taste of their readers or the ideology of the newspapers.

Fifthly, it is objected that the short story is marginal to mainstream Indonesian literature. In fact, much Indonesian literature, either popular or serious, is considered marginal. This is partially because foreign scholars have contributed to underestimating the existence of the “marginal literature”. Due to their interests and limitation, they tend to come to this conclusion, which is usually not well based. Critics could be mistaken when their arguments are not based on more comprehensive data. This is one of the points understood by Derks (2002) in his article, “*Sastra Pedalaman: Local and Regional Literary Centers in Indonesia*”.¹¹ Derks specifically tries to challenge Keith Foulcher and H. B. Jassin in the way they map the tradition of Indonesian literature in general. When reading Foulcher’s essay “In search of the postcolonial in Indonesian literature,” Derks finds that Foulcher’s conclusion does not fit the reality. Foulcher, when working on the picture of Indonesian postcolonial literature, discusses three main novels: Abdul Moeis’s *Salah Asuhan* (*Wrong Upbringing*, 1928), Armijn Pane’s *Belenggu* (*Shackles*, 1940) and Achdiat K. Miharja’s *Atheis* (*Atheist*, 1949). He does not look at other genres such as poems, plays and short stories. He seemingly believes that the mapping of Indonesian literature is only dependent on “real” literature (great novels). There are not many canonical works in Indonesian literature. Besides these three works, most of the works of Pramoedya Ananta Toer can be categorised as “real” literature. So, to understand Indonesian literature is to read Pramoedya’s works. Derks says Foulcher’s way of mapping Indonesian literature is a mistake, as Indonesian literature is not the same as the Western literary tradition, which mostly focuses on novels. Derks (2002) argues that:

The Indonesian literary system is strongly oriented towards orality. From this point of view it is a matter of course that the novel with its dependence on the

¹¹ Derks questions the issue of “*sastra pedalaman*” (literature from the inner land), which became a crucial debate in Indonesian literature in the 1980s.

printing press and the solitary individual ... is but a marginal phenomenon, whereas the poem and the short story are omnipresent because they can be, are meant to be, and frequently are, performed. In this connection it could be said that the greater the novelist in Indonesia, the more marginal is his position, since literature in Indonesia is something that you do together with, and in the presence of, others. (p. 330)

Derks further says that the novel, which is in a Western print-literate type of literary system and which constitutes the genre with the highest prestige, is not applicable to the Indonesian context, except for what he calls “art novels”: the substantially long, composite, narrative, explanatory evocation, printed in book form with a 19th-century-like aura. His definition fits with the expectation of the literary elite in Jakarta, the centre where the significance of Indonesian literature is determined. This way is not suitable at all for the wider Indonesian context. Indonesian literary life exists not only in Jakarta but also in many other literary centers all over Indonesia. In other words, three categories of centres: national, regional and local, should all be considered. In so doing, all literary genres play different roles. Regional and local centres are rich with poems and short stories which basically are consumed by lay readers, rather than novels. So to evaluate the works of literature from the centres also requires one to look at the marginal ones. In relation to this idea, Nasjah Djamin (as cited in Derks, 2006), an author whose reputation has been made far from Jakarta, argues that Indonesia has many writers whose literary activities are not centred in Jakarta and whose works are either unknown to the Jakarta elite or not recognized as being of any value. Are they not Indonesian writers? Are their works of less value due to the fact that they do not belong to the elite circle? The answers to those questions remain unanswered.

Sixth, Indonesian critics themselves have not valued marginal literature. We can see this in the case of H. B. Jassin. The late H. B. Jassin, Indonesia’s most famous literary critic, was the one who had the strongest influence on deciding whether a work of art was valuable and whether a genre was of value in determining the development of Indonesian literature. As an editor of some important publications, he had the power to evaluate a work of art for public forums. For a long

time, he had nobody to argue seriously with him in the context of Indonesian literary criticism because of his various roles. Rachmat Djoko Pradopo (1994) writes that Jassin “wrote poems, short stories, and especially essays and literary criticism” and “He was a literary anthologizer, translator, editor of some literary magazines.” (p. 124). His key role in Indonesian literary circles placed him high in the formation of what “Indonesian literature should be like.” His special positions as an anthologist, an editor and a literary critic brought him status so that he could say something on the basis of his own judgement.

Jassin tended to subscribe to Western culture, which prefers novels to other genres of literature. In 1952 in his letter to M. Balfas, Jassin (1983) wrote:

In our literature of the last ten years we have for the greater part produced poetry and short stories. What was valuable and less valuable in those fields has already been collected in the two anthologies *Kesusastraan Indonesia di Masa Jepang (Indonesian Literature during Japanese Occupation)* and *Gema Tanah Air (Echo of the Home Land)*. Apart from that there are ten to fifteen dramatic works that do not pass the test as well as three novels that we hesitate to put forward. So, all in all, it is not that much. (p. 102)

His letter indicates that literary works other than novels receive less attention and literary works produced in regional or local centres are not of interest. Jassin complained about the fact that Indonesian literature fails to produce great literature because it keeps producing poetry and short stories instead of novels. In the same letter, in his response to Achdiat Karta Miharja, Jassin (1983) writes about what Achdiat thinks of Jassin himself:

He (Jassin) is in favor of complimenting. Based on the theories he learned. He categorised Indonesian works of literature into schools and genres as they are in the Western world. His measurements do not completely support what is being measured and they seem like his dream of what Indonesian literature should be. (p. 112)

According to Derks (2002), Jassin ignored literature from outside Jakarta. Derks questions whether Jassin was aware that there existed a large number of writers who

were active in other part of Indonesia such as Yogyakarta, Medan, Banjarmasin and Ujung Pandang.

This ignoring of popular literature was also practised by a Dutch Indonesianist Andries Teeuw. Teeuw contributed a lot to defining what Indonesian literature. In one of his articles, Teeuw (1972) said, “before 1908 there was no literature in Indonesia, or ... the whole population of the country was illiterate” (p. 111). He followed the role of *Balai Pustaka*, the government Bureau for Popular Literature set up in 1908, whose task had been to gather the abundant, unpublished, traditional, popular literature in Indonesia. He became a strong supporter of the Bureau. The Bureau considered that Indonesian authors’ works should be judged by their quality in relation to Western literature. Although Teeuw was an outsider with possibly limited views, he continued to analyse many Indonesian stories with the perspective of a Westerner, bringing with him the politics of the Bureau which provided “translations of all kinds of Western literature which were considered good and useful reading according to the standards of the officers in charge of the Bureau” (Teeuw, 1986, p. 14). For him, Indonesians were to be modernised by providing them with Western texts or Indonesian texts which equalled or came close to texts selected by the Bureau.

Regarding the presence of popular literature, which he calls the “dime novel”, Teeuw thinks that during the *Balai Pustaka*¹² era, there had been some writers who did not belong to the category of novelists but to that of storytellers. As Teeuw writes, in Indonesia, especially in Sumatra, there have been many storytellers, who wrote stories for the sake of entertainment. He further writes:

Their work was often published in response to the orders of small private publishers, especially in Medan and Padang, and these “dime novels” (*roman pitjisan*) were often published in series with attractive titles such as *Lukisan Pudjangga (Pictures by Poets)*, *Dunia Pengalaman (A World of Experience)*, *Roman Indonesia (Indonesian Novels)*. These booklets, mostly between 50

¹² *Balai Pustaka* (Bureau of for Popular Literature) was founded in 1917 and used by the Dutch colonial government to control Indonesians’ access to information and then was the state-owned publisher of Indonesia after independence.

and 100 pages in length, were cheaply published paper backs *avant la letter*.
(p. 74)

His statement indicates he does not classify all writers as novelists but sees some as storytellers (a term which usually refers to oral literature: traditional literature). Yet he acknowledges that some storytellers like Suman Hs had written short stories which had to be published in newspapers and magazines. Suman's works such as *Kasih Ta' Terlarai (Inseparable Love, 1929)*, *Petjobaan Setia (A Test of Faithfulness, 1931)*, *Mentjari Pentjuri Anak Perawan (Seeking a Girl's Kidnapper, 1932)*, *Kawan Bergelut (Argumentative Companions, 1938)* and *Tebusan Darah (Blood Revenge, 1939)* belong to such a category. Other storytellers include Muhammad Kasim who wrote a collection of short stories in *Muda Teruna (Youth, 1922)* and *Teman Duduk (A Friend to Sit with, 1936)*, A. Dt. Majoindo, Achmad Chartani, Saadah Alim, Muhammad Sjah and Hamka.

In summary, the place of publication, length, the writers and the themes should not be the criteria in determining the importance of the short story as a popular literary form because these criteria can also apply to both popular and serious literature. Scholars and critics of Indonesian literature should not base their arguments on these criteria. So they should not underestimate the short story until they have properly investigated it.

3.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SHORT STORY IN INDONESIAN LITERATURE

In any investigation of Indonesian literature, particularly when one is trying to understand the development of the literature during the New Order, the American tradition suggests that the short story should be one of the genres which needs to be considered as much as "chick lit" or "regional literature," which have been prominent in recent Indonesian literary analyses. This is not only because the short story has until now been given less attention from foreign and local scholars, but also because it was a genre which seemed to have gained wide public following during the New Order period due to its implicit and explicit commentary on issues of human rights

and the reality of life during the New Order. The popular acceptance of such works continues to grow. This genre has attracted many readers and has significantly developed the direction of modern Indonesian literature. It has given readers a variety of readings about different problems in Indonesian social life.

Responding to such a need, some Indonesian literary figures have made efforts not only to meet the needs of the readers but also to upgrade the status of the short story to canonical status. Ignatia M. Hendrarti (1998) claims that efforts to include popular literature in the literary canon in Indonesia have recently been made by a number of critics and writers. *Dua Kelamin Bagi Midin: Cerpen Kompas Pilihan 1970–1980 (Midin in Two Sexes: Selected Short Stories from Kompas 1970–1980)*, edited by Seno Gumira Ajidarma in 2000, is an interesting example of a major short story anthology. This book consists of 53 selected short stories published in *Kompas* between 1970 and 1980. There are a variety of nuances that Seno has given to this collection. He has selected some works by well known Indonesian writers such as Marga T., Putu Wijaya, Arswendo Atmowiloto, Ali Akbar Navis and Emha Ainun Najib, as well as works by many new writers who are not established. The short stories have many different topics, themes, settings and types of characterisation.

Through this anthology Seno has tried to answer the question of how those stories depict the cultural debates of the era by paying less attention in his selection to their literary qualities and more to their value as social commentary. Specifically he has intended to demonstrate how the stories deal with the ideological war of the decade 1970–1980. In particular there are three main emphases that we get from the book.

First, Seno has brought the works of women to the attention of the reading public. The emergence of women writers at that time, providing a feminist perspective on social and cultural developments in a period of rapid change was an important development. More women writers exist beside Marga T. and Nh. Dini; we now know Lani Charis, Ratmana, Toti Tjitrawasita, and Rahini Ridwan. Their selection will surely encourage the writing of more women writers in Indonesia.

Second, Seno has tried to open our minds to the fact that there are more potential writers out there than the ones that many Indonesian readers are familiar with. Indonesia is rich with authors. Great writers gain prominence because they have gone through some experiences throughout their careers. Things such as competitions, publication and criticism contribute to the escalation of their career. Pramoedya Ananta Toer, for instance, has become a leading Indonesian writer because of such criteria. Writers, including Pramoedya, are not known today without their past, and this is also true for the new ones. They will not become important if they do not get published. Realising this, Seno through his eyes has tried to tell the public that there are more talented writers out there who readers need to know and read.

Third, all stories in this collection remind us of the various problems that the writers saw and experienced in the 1970s and 1980s. Thematically they talk about various problems in Indonesia: violence, youth issues, poverty, love, family, human rights, ignorance and so on. This wide range of themes can enrich our views about how writers see the cultural changes and social dynamics of the era. In other words we might say that these short stories are not only pieces of writing with textuality and complexity, but they have things to offer directly and indirectly to the public to make them think about what is going on around them. More specifically, short stories can help historicise what is not historicised and straighten biased histories. The questions remain: how far can this expose the cultural issues and how reliable can they be?

On this basis we can see that as in America and elsewhere in the West, the Indonesian short story, as a genre of work of literature, has the potential to provide important insights into the cultural and political significance of activities in the world, in a region, and in a state. It could be of great help for the reader in understanding culture. Literature is not only an independent institution which is separate from society, but it can play a dual role: as a pure work of literature and as a source for the meaning of other institutions. Due to the development of the contemporary short story, a researcher needs to be selective in using short stories to understand meanings in societies. Not all short stories can be considered good, but there are some which cannot and should not be ignored in creating meaning,

including ones published in the mass media. This is particularly because a variety of authors have used the genre with their particular strengths and viewpoints, writing on issues such as gender, social status, ethnic culture, and marginality, on international experience, decentralisation, regionalism, violence, corruption and politics.

This endeavour was particularly important during the New Order, because Indonesian publishing experienced very hard times under strict surveillance by the state. Under this regime, although the arts were still playing a role in the cultural development of this nation, literature in general stagnated. Its development was restricted because many aspects of Indonesian life were monitored in the name of national security, so that the regime could maintain its power. Not least, the press and the publication of literary works were the focus of strict government censorship. David T. Hill (1994), for instance, notes that the year 1965 was the worst in the history of the press in Indonesia when 29 papers were closed down for their support of communism; later in the year, a further 163 newspapers were banned because of their presumed association with the Indonesian Communist Party (*PKI*) and its allies. In such acts, Hill continues, hundreds of staff members were arrested. Leftists were fired from the Indonesian Journalist Association and the national *Antara* news agency. The arrests and killings of communist and sympathizing journalists in 1965–1966 produced a nightmare situation for the press in subsequent decades.

The practice of this kind of control, intimidation and force continued during the reign of Suharto (Hill, 1994). Clark (2008) points out that many Indonesian artists speaking out in the later years of the regime were silenced. Some artists were even kidnapped and killed because of their outspoken works. For example, Wiji Tukul, a tricycle driver's son who did not have good formal education, was known internationally for his poems, which talk about themes such as “famine, plague, natural calamities, sick souls, the absence of choice, and the futility of effort” (Wohangara, 2003, p. 45) during the regime. Other artists connected (or thought to be connected) to the Indonesian Communist Party were examined and imprisoned on Buru Island for almost two decades. Pramoedya was one of those whose works could not get the approval of the government to get published, even though in reality his novels could still be read by Indonesians through international publishers or through

photocopies made by certain people and distributed underground. In the 1980s too, W. S. Rendra, to mention another example, experienced several cancellations of his theatre shows and poetry readings due to his direct criticism of the New Order. Many artists experienced imprisonment or being banned from their activity. Some of them needed to choose between being outspoken by writing realist works or being implicit by writing anti-realist works.

In short, the facts that the abundance of the short story, its wide readership and its potential to criticise socio-political problems in Indonesia, including the problems which existed during the New Order, all suggest that its existence should not be ignored. This can be seen at least in two aspects: the representation of human rights themes, and the roles played by the New Order literary circles in promoting these themes in the wider society.

3.3.1 What Themes Were Discussed in the New Order Literature?

What issues are mostly addressed in the stories written during the New Order? What forms do the stories take? It is not easy to say at once what issues and forms are most commonly found in these short stories because serious research on this topic has been rare. My preliminary observation indicates that various topics have been written about. These themes include personal liberty, including freedom of expression, the right to life and the right to assembly. Writers during this period also wrote on various themes related to Indonesia's past and the present era of globalisation ranging from social to political matters. Central among them are politics, marginalisation and religion.

3.3.1.1 Literary themes about politics

Not only does media literature evoke in readers a sense of what has happened and is happening in the country, it is also a powerful way for the writers to respond to and resist these situations. The representation of rights in this literature marks the border between communities and the status of rights as practised by the state. In such a

practice, literature can convey messages about resistance to oppression, violence and terror to its readers. The representation of such themes might cause readers to experience a terrorised state of mind and to understand the background to these state acts. The readers are made to realise that literature does not stand alone but appears as the effect of emotions created by the state. Wijaya Herlambang (2005) argues that the emergence of Indonesian literature cannot be separated from the sociopolitical conditions of the era which produces it. The conditions inspired a number of writers to use state terror as the main theme in their works. The writers have viewed the regime's violence as an important subject to write about as well as to resist. Their fiction represents a number of rights-related issues such as violence, oppression, intimidation, torture, and political arrest; this fiction definitely enriches the debate about human rights, especially in the field of literary studies.

Political terror became one of the most important focuses in contemporary Indonesian writing. Edi A. H. Iyubenu (2000) asserts that Indonesian postcolonial literature representing terror is characterised by a number of traits, including clash, conquest and repression. These themes represent direct implications of social realities in the society. He continues to say that short story writers who are sensitive to such cases attempt to record and reconstruct them in the form of fiction. Many authors represent this issue in their works. Throughout New Order history, a number of events which were related to politics became a central theme in works of literature. A number of groups of people have been represented. The people who have been politicised include the following groups. First, Indonesian Communist Party members and associates suffered a lot during the New Order regime. Considered enemies of the nation, those who were immediately involved in the *G/30 S/PKI* (Indonesian Communist Party Coup)¹³ were captured and jailed, and those related to them were marginalised. Their immediate family members also shouldered some of the burden. Acep Iwan Saidi (2006, pp. 118–20) notes that Kayam's *Jalan Menikung* (*Cornering Road*, 2000) exemplifies a novel which talks about how the government treats the members of a family whose parents are members of the *PKI*. This story talks about

¹³ *PKI, Partai Komunis Indonesia* (Indonesian Communist Party). The *PKI* reached its prime popularity with its failed coup known as *Gestapu, Gerakan Tiga Puluh September* or *G/30 S/PKI* (the *PKI* coup of September 30) in 1965 and was banned right after the tragedy.

Harimurti, who has to quit his job because he was involved in the *G/30 S/PKI*. The story draws on other incidents. His dismissal for political reasons causes a threat to his son, who is studying in the U.S. So he forbids his son to come back home to Indonesia.

Nurhadi (2009) asserts that violence (terror) after Indonesian independence energised a number of writers to document it artistically. He lists a number of themes, including the issue of the *PKI* in Ahmad Tohari's *Kubah (Dome, 1980)*, *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk (The Dancer of Dukuh Paruk Village, 1982)* and *Lintang Kemukus Dini Hari (1985)* and Umar Kayam's *Sri Sumarah (1986)* and *Para Priayi (1992)*. Iyubenu's and Nurhadi's lists can surely be enlarged to include a number of further writings which represent terror: works on state terror Pramoedya Ananta Toer in *Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu (A Mute's Soliloquy, 1995-1997)* and on *PKI*-related cases by Umar Kayam in *Bawuk (1975)*; and by Ajip Rosidi in *Anak Tanah Air (The Son of the Home Land, 1985)*. These writers tried to resist the dominant powers by writing works which depict the terrible oppression imposed upon the people through the use of the literary perspective. Despite wide controversy about the accuracy of the literary field in picturing reality, it has provided readers with literary ways to understand the history of the nation. The representation of terror or violence can also be found in fiction published in media.

3.3.1.2 Social marginalisation of the poor

The poor (the majority of the people) are surely the most marginalised group in the society; they live in every place in this country: in villages and in cities. Some live a basic life; some live under the poverty line and others still live a miserable life. Sri Majangwoelan (1997) argues that "various groups in Indonesian society were marginalized from the New Order political system and international political economic order" (p. 122). She continues that of these groups, the poor were the most marginalised group. In her analysis, she contests that marginalisation in the New Order was closely related to politics. Since 1970s, despite macro-level achievements such as economic growth, a decrease in the poverty level, and increase in literacy of

the regime, “millions of people were still poor. Moreover, many Indonesians had income only slightly above the estimated ‘poverty line’” (Majangwoelan, 1997, p. 6). She asserts that such structural marginalisation was basically economic and political. Marginalisation in Indonesian culture has gone hand in hand with the loss of the right to life, freedom of speech and freedom of assembly.

The effects of marginalisation on the lives of the poor have become sources of inspiration for many fiction writers. Iwan Simatupang, for example, in his *Merahnya Merah* (*The Redness of Red*, 1968) and *Kering* (*Dried*, 1972) respectively, represents the life of homeless people and miserable migrants. Gerson Poyk’s *Sang Guru* (*The Teacher*, 1973) depicts the hard life faced by an elementary teacher in an isolated village. Ahmad Tohari’s *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk* (*The Dancer of Paruk Hamlet*, 1982) reflects the unrespected life of a village dancer. The literary form of the short story was used by many writers to represent the issues of marginalization. Examples of such representation published in anthologies, magazines and newspapers are abundant. In *Kompas*, Jujur Prananto’s “Nurjanah” (1992), for instance, also represents the issue of poverty; Joni Ariadinata’s “Lampor” (1994) and “Mang Santa” (1996) respectively represent the issues of poverty and family values; Rayni N. Massardi’s “Yang Tersisa” (“The Remaining”, 1995) depicts a mother whose children have to leave her one by one because of poverty; and Rainy M.P. Hutabarat’s “Aaa! Iii! Eee! Ooo!” (1999) reflects the life of a poor unmarried mother whose disabled daughter causes her to suffer. In *Horison*, Putu Wijaya’s “Pelacur” (“A Prostitute”, 1980) presents the life of prostitutes; Emha Ainun Najib’s “Seorang Gelandangan” (“A Bum”, 1980) depicts the issue of homelessness; Aant Kawisar’s “Malam Itu 23 Tahun yang Lalu” (“That Night, 23 Years Ago”, 1990) represents the issue of poverty; and Muhammad Ali’s “Tandus” (“Barren”, 1990) depicts the sufferings of people whose land is flooded.

3.3.1.3 Social marginalisation and women

Like the poor, women of all classes in Indonesia are marginalised by their society and the patriarchal system. Women writers such as Nh. Dini, Leila Chudori, Lea

Pamungkas, Agnes Yani Sarjono, Titis Basino and Rainy MP Hutabarat are the products of such situation. Their appearance has challenged the subordinate status put upon them. They have not complied with the gendered ideology promoted by the government. Through media such as newspapers and magazines, which have enabled them to express their feelings, ideas and criticism on any subject directly or indirectly, they have exposed what they think and feel. The media has opened wide doors for them to feel and enjoy their rights in a popular forum.

Literature has proven that women writers are still unable to achieve equal status to men in their capacity as literary figures. Their presence is still questioned as inferior, as unqualified, as improper and as unable to equal the ability of male authors. Foulcher (1995) argues that in the New Order, women writers and poets are marked as *penulis wanita* (women writers) and *penyair wanita* (women poets) so that their works are labeled as “women’s fiction” (p. 41). For a very recent example, the work of some women writers whose reputation has soared due to their ability to produce works which attract large audiences is called “fragrant literature.” Writers like Selasih and Saadah Alim in the colonial period and Ayu Utami, Dewi Lestari and Fira Basuki in the contemporary situation are among those who have found difficult to enter the real world of Indonesian literature because they are women.

Drawing on the argument of Judith Fetterley, Diah A. Arimbi (2006) argues that literature is political, which means that literature is meaningful in the hands of those who read it. So far, the world of literature belongs to men, where they write themselves, read the works of men and women, and determine what is good or bad by providing standards or criteria for literature. Despite their being able to create, as opposed to what happened centuries ago when women were not supposed to write, women writers are still considered separate figures who write. They are not just writers, but women writers. In the sense that women are still discriminated against because they are women, they are denied their individual rights due to the fact that they are women.

This kind of discrimination is conspicuous in the Indonesian literary world. Women’s images are made by men, the creators of the literary parameters. Being good or bad is not women’s choice. Women have no freedom in describing or

creating their own world. When they do, they are seen as wrong, as it is considered inappropriate for them to describe themselves. They are often depicted as being passive instead of active, submissive rather than assertive, weak rather than strong. So when they express themselves as different from what they should be, they are severely criticised. During the New Order, women writers tended to keep back their protest against male domination while men's criticism appeared to be unchallenged. This situation is completely different if the discussion refers to the situation post-New Order. For example, when Ayu Utami with her *Larung* (2001) and Fira Basuki with her *Jendela Jendela* (2001) tried to tell the world who women really are, they were immediately criticised for not being proper, being pornographic, showing inappropriate behaviour. So to speak, they are then named "fragrant literary writers." In short, they have no right to enjoy their own freedom.

3.3.1.4 Religious matters

Due to its great diversity of religions, Indonesian literature cannot get away from either internal factors or international influences. Being bred from more than five religions, Indonesian literature is also coloured by them. So we can read works with Islamic, Hindu or Christian influences. Indonesian literature, particularly those works written by authors of Javanese descent, is sometimes adapted from or influenced by stories such as the Indian epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. Islamic influence can be seen from the adaptation or retelling of the stories of the Prophet Muhammad, other prophets in Islam or other Islamic tales. Yus Rusyana (as cited in Zaidan & Sugono, 2003, p. 59) believes that the stories derived from Hindu or Islam are not purely replicas but they have been adapted to the needs of Indonesian audiences, in which some part or the whole stories have been modified into new forms, new expressions or new genres. In these new works, there exist life philosophies, ideas, thoughts, imagination, feelings and knowledge which partially derive from other cultures and partially from local Indonesians.

Slamet Sukirnantono (as cited in Zaidan & Sugono, 2003) argues that Indonesian literature is enlivened by religious elements, especially those of Islam.

The Islamic awareness has grown in line with the recent strengthening of Muslims' attitudes to their religion, particularly materials used for preaching and teaching Islamic dogmas. Marwan Saridjo (2006) widely analyses Indonesian literature of that kind from Hamzah Fansuri in Aceh in the 16th–17th centuries to *Puisi Gelap (Dark Poetry)* by Goenawan Muhammad and Sapardi Djoko Damono. He has also examined short stories such as “Man Rabbuka” by Ali Akbar Navis, “Si Kampeng” and “Si Sapar” by Utuy T. Sontani and “Persetujuan dengan Iblis” by Muhammad Ali; novels such as *Siti Nurbaya* by Marah Roesli, *Salah Asuhan* by Abdul Muis, *Di Bawah Lindungan Ka'bah (The Auspices of the Ka'bah)* by Hamka and *Atheis* by Achdiat Kartamiharja; and poems such as “Dengan Puisi Aku Berzikir” (“With Poems I Remember God”) by Taufik Ismail, and some poems by Goenawan Mohammad and Sapardi Djoko Damono.

After the 1970s, the focus moved from teaching to the recognition as Islamic authors of those who are more mainstream writers. Writers such as Wildan Yatim, Ahmadun Yosi Herfanda, Abidah El Khalieky and Ulfatin Ch. represent religious issues in their works. Wildan Yatim's *Pergolakan (Revolt, 1972)*, for instance, depicts a religious life during the *PRRI*¹⁴ during the late 1950s and the *PKI* movement in the 1960s (Rani & Sugriati, 1999).

3.3.2 The New Order Literary Circles and Human Rights

The practice and handling of human rights have been important issues in Indonesian literary history. They have grown with the development of Indonesian literature, including in the New Order era. In that era, freedom of speech, the right to life, and the right to assembly were significantly debated.

¹⁴ *Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia* (the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia), commonly called the *PRRI*, was a Sumatran rebel movement (1956–1958) led by Indonesian army officers who did not agree with the central government who refused to pass a law on local autonomy in Indonesia. The rebellion was first by *Dewan Banteng* in central Sumatra (20 December 1956) led by Lieutenant Colonel Ahmad Husein; second by *Dewan Gajah* in east Sumatra (22 December 1956) led by Colonel Mauluddin Simbolon; and by *Dewan Garuda* in south Sumatra (15 January 1957) led by Lieutenant Colonel Barlian. Lieutenant Colonel Ahmad Husein declared the existence of the *PRRI* in 15 February 1958. The central government under its army officer Nasution took immediate action to destroy it. The rebellion ended in August 1958.

How were the issues of human rights practised and handled in the New Order? Was the regime significant in the development of Indonesian literature? Although the regime was oppressive in many ways, it also indirectly contributed to creating opportunities for Indonesian literature to develop by nurturing various elements, which helped to develop the consideration of human rights. Regarding this, Yudiono K. S. (2007) argues that the New Order era played a very important role in the process of helping Indonesian literature to reach a greater maturity. Furthermore, he implies that the regime itself significantly contributed to this process. In so doing, he gives the regime credit by introducing a new period, *masa pemapanan* (the establishing period).¹⁵ This stage started after the eradication of the Indonesian Communist Party in 1965. Yudiono argues that, in this period, literature was strengthened by a number of pillars. Among many pillars that he mentions in this period, at least three of them helped to deal with the issues of rights.

The first, Yudiono argues, was the literary magazine *Sastra* and its chief editor H. B. Jassin. The magazine was first published in 1961 and edited by H. B. Jassin, M. Balfas, D. S. Mulyanto, Ekana Siswojo, Toha Mochtar, Tatang M., Zaini A., Wakidjan and Ipe Ma'ruf. It stopped printing in 1964 due to H. B. Jassin's involvement in *Manifes Kebudayaan*.¹⁶ It started again in 1967 with Darshaf Rahman, H. B. Jassin, Muhlil Lubis and Hamsad Rangkuti as editors. Again in 1969 *Sastra* had to close because its editor H. B. Jassin was jailed for allowing the story "Langit Makin Mendung"¹⁷ ("The Sky is Getting Cloudier") by Kipandji Kusmin to be published. *Sastra* also gave awards to some authors whose works were not widely accepted. These included A. Bestari Asnin's "Di Tengah Padang" ("In a Field"), Bur Rasuanto's ("Discharge"), B. Soelarto's "Rapat Perdamaian" ("A Peaceful

¹⁵ Yudiono divides Indonesian literature into four periods: *masa pertumbuhan* (the development period) (1900–1945), *masa pergolakan* (the era of revolt) (1945-1965), *masa pemapanan* (the establishing period) (196–1998) and *masa pembebasan* (the era of liberation) (1998–now).

¹⁶ *Manifes Kebudayaan* (Cultural Manifesto), also known as *Manikebu*, was the concept of national culture as proposed by non-government artists on August 19, 1963 in Jakarta. The artists made an effort to counteract pressure from *Lekra, Lembaga Kesenian Rakyat* (Institute of People's Culture) which supported the government at that time (Foulcher, 1986). *Lekra, Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat* (Institute of People's Culture) is "a left-wing cultural organization which functioned in Indonesia between 1950 and 1965" (Foulcher, 1986, p. i).

¹⁷ "Langit Makin Mendung" was published in *Sastra* No. 8, August 1968. The story was then prohibited by the Attorney-General because it was considered an insult to God, to Islam and to Moslems.

Meeting”), Satyagraha Hoerip’s “Seorang Buruan” (“A Fugitive”), Gerson Poyk’s “Mutiara di Tengah Sawah” (“Jewel in the Field”) and Soepriadi Tomodiharjo’s “Persahabatan” (“Friendship”) in 1961. In 1962, Bur Rasuanto with “Pertunjukan” (“Performance”) and “Ethyl Plant,” Motinggo Busye with “Nasehat Untuk Anakku” (“Advice for My Kid”) and Virga Belan with “Pangeran Jakarta” (“The Jakarta Prince”) received the same award for their short stories.

The second pillar of support for literary social criticism, according to Yudiono, was the establishment of the literary magazine *Horison* founded in July 1966. *Horison* was established to resolve the Indonesian cultural crisis through literature in order that a new spirit would grow to struggle for democracy and the dignity of the Indonesian people. The magazine published short stories, poems, literary criticism and essays. Some important figures related to the early publication of *Horison* are Arief Budiman (Sioe Hok Djin), Budi Darma, Chairul Harun, D.S. Muljanto, Dick Hartoko, Gerson Poyk, Goenawan Muhammad, Hartojo Andangdjaja, Julius R., Salim Said, Satyagraha Hoerip, Subagio Sastrawardoyo, Sutardji Calzoum Bachri, Taufik Ismail, Umar Khayam, and Wiratmo Soekito.

Horison has contributed greatly to the development of Indonesian literature. One of the essays published by this magazine, Jassin’s “Angkatan 66: Bangkitnya Satu Generasi,” created one of the terms used in Indonesian literary history, “the Generation of 1966”. The publication of the magazine was always eagerly awaited by its readers. By the time it reached its 31st birthday in 1997, it had “published 1,471 short stories and 110 essays” (Yudiono, 2007, p. 172). It had featured hundreds of writers. Those writers talked about various topics such as revolt, suffering and individual conflicts.

The third pillar supporting the debate about human rights in literature, Yudiono continues, was the establishment of the faculties of letters in Indonesian universities. Two faculties of letters which took part much earlier in this arena were the Faculty of Letters of the University of Indonesia Jakarta (FSUI, 1940), Jakarta, and the Faculty of Letters and Culture of Gajah Mada University (FSUGM, 1946), Yogyakarta. These faculties have produced a number of scholars who have played significant roles in Indonesian literary history. FSUI has had graduates such as M. S.

Hutagalung, B. Rangkuti, Boen S. Umaryati and J. U. Nasution. FSUGM has had Rachmat Djoko Pradopo, Budi Darma, Subagio Sastrawardoyo, Kuntowijoyo and Sapardi Djoko Damono. Other faculties of letters which were established in the 1970s began to contribute later than the first two, such as the Faculty of Letters of North Sumatra University, Medan (1965), the Faculty of Letters and Culture of Diponegoro University, Semarang (1965), the Faculty of Letters of Udayana University, Bali (1962) and the Faculty of Letters of Sam Ratulangi University, Manado (1965).

In summary, the debate on what forms of literature contribute to the development of Indonesian literature cannot be separated from the nature of the short story and the institutions which support it. Although it is often considered “marginal”, it has enriched Indonesian literature. Its prejudged status as a popular form of literature has caused scholars to pay less attention to it. Scholars and critics who have gradually made an effort, including the increase of research to upgrade its status to a canonical position should be respected.

3.4 CONCLUSION

Human rights are being represented and examined through many different fields of study, including literature. Writers have used different literary genres, including the short story, to depict human rights violations for a wide readership, but the short story has been particularly effective in reaching wide daily audiences.

Analysis of this subgenre shows that it has contributed significantly to the development of Indonesian literature, especially in its representations of human rights. A large number of short stories published in anthologies, magazines and newspapers in different eras, including the New Order, need to be scrutinised so as to understand the importance of this subgenre.

The short story has been used not only as a medium of entertainment but also as a medium of protest. Both male and female writers have employed the short story to criticise their society, as well as their government who did harm to its citizens directly or indirectly. Through different forms of narratives, they have resisted the

power of the nation, which at times sought to oppress individuals and groups of citizens. Among the types of narrative they have chosen, social, traumatic and terror narratives need to be analysed, because writers find these three modes of narrative effective in delivering their messages.

CHAPTER 4 – CRITICAL APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF THE INDONESIAN SHORT STORY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Human rights are issues which have been investigated from different perspectives. Literature has also played a rich and often subversive role in increasing an awareness of human rights. Scholars such as Lyn McCredden (1996), Inga Clendinnen (1998), Aveling (2001), Foulcher (2002) and Hoadley (2005) find cultural products such as poetry and fiction richly evocative for representing history and politics. Clendinnen, for instance, partially relies on poetry and fiction to study the Holocaust. Aveling studies Indonesian poetry to expose state violence in Indonesia. Hoadley uses fiction to study Indonesian history around the New Order.

This chapter presents a range of literary critical, ideological approaches to the study of human rights in Indonesian literature, with the discussion divided into five main sections. Section 4.1 introduces the chapter. Section 4.2 broadly discusses the usefulness of cross-cultural methods in the study of Indonesian literature. Section 4.3 examines the usefulness of postcolonial studies in Indonesia, in general, and the need to rethink postcolonial studies in literature in particular. Section 4.4 discusses the importance of postcolonial studies in Indonesian literature. It includes the application of postcolonial studies in Indonesian literary contexts and the recontextualisation of such studies. Section 4.5 elaborates possible literary approaches to the study of oppression as represented in Indonesian literature. This section covers social criticism narrative, terror narrative and trauma narrative. Section 4.6 examines resistance literature theory as a way of studying the response to oppression. The last section concludes the chapter.

4.2 CROSS-CULTURAL METHODS

How should the study of human rights in Indonesian literature be conducted? It is undeniable that the development of Indonesian literature cannot be separated from its wider social context.

In his book, *We Are Playing Relatives* (2004b), Henk Maier provides a broad approach to Malay literature through the use of a cross-cultural analysis. For him, comprehensiveness is an important criterion in studying literature. That is, in order to trace the development of Malay literature, he studies works of literature across different regions. He argues that there is a relationship between works of literature produced in present day Indonesia and those produced in Malaysia. For him, these two cultures used to be one. Indonesians and Malaysians have shared the same literature and they continue to do so. This kind of broadly based regionalism draws together Malay literature in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. Further, Maier does not differentiate between any genres of literature. Poetry, prose and plays are all important in enriching the Malay world of literature. No genre is more special than any other. To discuss Malay literature is to read the variety of works produced in Malaysia and Indonesia, such as *Hikayat Hang Tuah* (*The Tale of Hang Tuah*), Muhammad Bakir's *Hikayat Sempurna Jaya* (*The Tale of Sempurna Jaya*, 1886), *Nyai Dasima* (1896), Mas Marco Kartodikromo's *Student Hidjo* (*Student Green*, 1918), the works of Ahmad bin Muhammad Rasyid Talu, Hamka's *Tenggelamnya kapal van der Wijck* (*The Wreck of the Ship of van der Wijck*, 1939), Armijn Pane's *Belenggu*, the works of Pramoedya Ananta Toer and writing in literary journals and cyberspace. Maier seems to suggest that the study of Malay literature should partially be characterised by the presence of storytelling as the origin of modern Malay literature, just as it is with Indonesian literature.

With regard to this point I would like to argue that, to understand the culture of a nation through literature, a more comprehensive analysis should be conducted in order that more appropriate appreciation of the short story can be gained. This is, I think, the very gist of Maier's thesis. In the context of Indonesia, which consists of

many races, ethnic groups and a large area of land, Maier's method is crucial. We should not just study works written in Jakarta or novels and poetry.

Maier, of course, is not the only critic to express this idea. Ten years before Maier, Elleke Boehmer (1995) argued that the identity of a people cannot be uprooted from their culture, including those things that have been suppressed. She further argues:

So it was that culture—in the form of reinterpreted history, religious revivals, elegiac and nostalgic poetry—developed into an important front for nationalist mobilization. To this end literary conventions and discourses inherited from the colonizer were appropriated, translated, decentered, and hybridized in ways which we now name postcolonial but were in fact at the time anti-colonial, often opportunistic, tactical, and *ad hoc*, and which formed an important means of self-expression. (p. 100)

She suggests that the colonisers implant their culture during their occupation but then the colonised, after gaining their independence, reassert their own ideology or a hybridised one, through new cultural forms. Going back to Indonesian literature and borrowing Boehmer's statement, the study of Indonesian literature has not used fully appropriate culturally based methods. New approaches to the study of Indonesian literature need to be made. Following Western standards is not contextually correct. Now is the time for Indonesians to declare what is "popular" or "serious" in Indonesian literature and what genres are appropriate to be analysed so as to historicise it for their own sake with an Indonesian perspective. This echoes the phenomenon in which nationalists protested through the *Surat Kepercayaan Gelanggang* of October 1950, against the ideology of socialist realism introduced by the Indonesian Communist Party through its *Lekra*, the Indonesian Institute of People's Culture. The key statement of the *Surat Kepercayaan Gelanggang* is: "We are the true heirs of world culture and we must perpetuate this culture in our own way" (Foulcher, 1983, p. 460). This clearly indicates that Indonesians want to choose their own way without others' determination.

Echoing both Maier and Boehmer, I argue that the historical study of literature should be based on the criteria of comprehensiveness, cultural determination and chronological significance. Thus

1. The definition of the canon needs to be comprehensive. It should include all significant genres, including poetry, drama and prose, which are published in different media and places.
2. It should be culturally determinative. The significance of the genres, media, and places is a national criterion. It is the nation which determines its own canon.
3. The choice of works should be chronological. Significant works of each era need to be proportionately represented because every age has its own significance and difference.

4.3 RETHINKING POSTCOLONIAL STUDIES IN LITERATURE

Culturally, most Asian and African countries have undergone significant changes because of the impact of imperialism. Two waves of Western hegemony – colonisation (imperialism) and neo-colonisation (neo-imperialism) – have contributed to the changes. Geoffrey Barraclough (2004) argues:

The history of the twentieth century has been marked at one and the same time by the impact of the West on Asia and Africa and by the revolt of Asia and Africa against the West. The impact of Western science and industry, which, having transformed Western society, began in an increasing tempo to have the same disruptive and creative effects on societies in other continents; the revolt was a reaction against the imperialism which reached its peak in the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century. (p. 118)

Barraclough suggests that Asian countries including Indonesia have been influenced by the West directly or indirectly. The cultures of these countries lie between accepting, hybridising and resisting the West.

Before analysing the relevance of postcolonial study in the Indonesian context, it is important to understand how postcolonial study in literature should be defined. According to Michael Ryan (2007) postcolonial study takes two forms: the

study of the works of the indigenous peoples of the formerly colonised nations, and the study of the imperial works about those countries. K. M. Newton (1997, p. 283) similarly argues, “Postcolonial criticism tends to have a double focus: it concentrates either on the representation of the non-European in Western canonical literature or on writing from non-European culture traditions, particularly writing from countries that have been colonized by Western nations” (p. 283).

Literary scholars have different opinions about defining the starting point of the “postcolonial”. Stephen Slemon, for instance, argues:

Definitions of the “post-colonial” of course vary widely, but for me the concept proves most useful not when it is used synonymously with a post-independence historical period in once-colonized nations, but rather when it locates a specifically anti- or post-colonial discursive purchase in culture, one which begins in the moment that colonial power inscribes itself onto the body and space of its Others and which continues as an often occulted tradition into the modern theatre of neo-colonialist international relations. (Childs & Williams, 1997, p. 3)

Slemon stresses the importance of the cultural influence of the coloniser on the colonised starting from physical contact between the two but continuing through to the ideological effects after the physical colonialism ends.

Chris Tiffin and Alan Lawson (as cited in Strongman, 1996) argue that the act of describing the coloniser should be concentrated on the effect and inflection imposed on the colonised. Independence does not end the hegemony of Europe but it continues as the power that resides in discourse or textuality. Drawing on Tiffin and Lawson’s idea, Luke Strongman (1996) argues:

We need to be reminded that for an area of discourse that concerns itself with the “other”, the “subaltern”, the “abject”, the “liminal”, and the “marginalised”, post-colonial theory is not to be found in the process of re-articulating the “centre” or “periphery” of discursive strategies inscribed by the Imperial project. Rather, post-colonialism is perhaps better conceived of as an articulation of a plurality of “centres”, as a re-inscription of a

multiplicity of emergent identities. Thus we are not so much engaged on a project of de-scribing empire, as re-inscribing its hybridized offspring. (p. 21)

Unlike Slemon who defines postcolonialism only on the basis of culture and time, Strongman claims that the identities of the former colonised are more important than those of the coloniser and always will be.

Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin (1989) also argue that postcolonial literature covers cultures colonised and influenced by imperial power, starting from the beginning of the influence to its remaining influence after the imperialism ends. By emphasising a range of time, they imply that imperialism affects the colonised not only during the colonisation but also after it. They suggest that the imperial power starts from the modern colonisation by Europeans in the eighteenth century over other nations all over the world. This literature refers to the effect of the colonisation by Europeans such as the English, French, Portuguese, Dutch and Spanish on the use of the colonisers' language and criticism of the postcolonial nation. Such an effect can be seen after colonisation as well, including ideological impacts which have spread worldwide.

Western thoughts and philosophies still play their roles as a universal standard. A number of scholars have written about this kind of standardisation. Exemplifying Britain as one of the Western powers, Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin (1989) argue that:

Through the literary canon, the body of British texts which all too frequently still acts as a touchstone of taste and value, and through RS-English (Received Standard English), which asserts the English of south-east England as a universal norm, the weight of antiquity continuous to dominate cultural production in much of the post-colonial world. (p. 7)

They proceed by arguing that the practice of cultural hegemony continues to affect the cultural production of the countries previously colonised by Britain. Literature produced in those former colonies is still considered marginal. Although he refers to English postcolonialism, his concepts apply to all European imperialism and its effects both global and local.

4.4 POSTCOLONIAL STUDIES AND INDONESIA

Dutch colonisation in Indonesia has ended but it has had an ongoing impact on Indonesian culture, particularly literary productions, in which colonial hegemony played its hidden tricks to dominate the colonised Indonesia. Hegemony influences the nation and thus shapes its national identity. Hegemony is now manifested through the widespread Western ideology, capitalism, and modernisation (globalisation) (Barraclough, 2004, p. 73).

This thesis argues that Indonesians have widely submitted to this prevailing ideology. Tineke Hellwig agrees that “writers and readers are subject to ideologies which prevail in their societies” (1994, p. 13). What is ideology? Diane Macdonnell (1986) writes:

Ideologies can be understood as “the beliefs, meanings and practices in which we think and act.” Individuals’ “consciousness” is constructed through ideologies. “Ideologies” have a material existence ... in apparatuses of religion, education, family the law, the system of the party politics, the trade unions, communications and culture. An ideology does not exist without some opposing ideology and opposing ideologies are shaped by each other. (pp. 14–5)

Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin (1989) note that Fredric Jameson, Louis Althusser and Michel Pecheux are among many important Marxist critics who have influenced postcolonial critics in investigating the ideological shaping of the identity of the colonised. Their theories have been applied to the area of language and literary practice, and to the problem of constituting the identity of the Other imposed by imperialism.

Althusser claims that the subject exists within ideologies. Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin interpret this as meaning “we become conscious under the power of construction resident in imaginary subjection” (p. 170). Drawing on Foucault’s argument that human beings are made subjects culturally, Michel Pecheux (1982) classifies subjects into three modes: “good”, “bad” and “disidentification”. The “good subject” is “freely consented to”, and results from “identification” and

“consent to the discursive formation which determines them” (p. 157). The “bad” subject is a “trouble maker” (p. 158) who moves away from the discourse. The third mode is “disidentification”, in which the subject experiences “a subjective process of appropriation of scientific concepts and identification with political organizations of a new type” (p. 159).

The experience of disidentification during the process of colonisation causes subjects to unite and fight for their rights. Sharing a common feeling of being tyrannised by colonisation encourages subjects to understand who they really are and to find out who they should be. In other words, they build up their feeling of nationalism, which reminds them of their own identity. This has been expanded by Barraclough (2004), who argues:

The development of the nationalist movements in Asia and Africa occurred in three stages. The first can be identified with the “protonationalism”. It was still preoccupied with saving what could be saved of the old, and one of its main characteristics was the attempt to re-examine and reformulate the indigenous culture under the impact of Western innovation. The second stage was the rise of a new leadership of liberal tendencies, usually with middle-class participation – a change of leadership and objective not inappropriately described by Marxist historiography as “bourgeois nationalism”. Finally there was the broadening of the basis of resistance to the foreign colonial power by the organization of a mass following among peasants and workers and the forging of links between the leaders and the people. (p. 118)

He asserts that a society’s choice to abide by an ideology is a process of totality in which the ideology embraces the whole life of the society’s members and “manifests itself in their class structure, history, literature, art, religion” (p. 66).

Western imperialism has ended physically, but is now taking a different form: cultural imperialism, which is still concentrated on changing the viewpoint of the previously colonised. The colonised with their own legacies and traditions had to submit to the needs of the colonisers who instill their ideology through the process of physical colonisation and globalisation. New Western hegemony, at present failing to colonise physically, turns to “mind” colonisation, where the colonisers want to

shape and reshape the colonised as they wish. This Western hegemony is seen as a well-planned effort to keep capitalism on top of the world. Western nations will make every attempt to realise what they want through the imposition of their ideology through the use of indigenous models.

Some argue that there is no need to apply postcolonial criticism to Indonesian literary discourse after independence as it is now a national literature which is free from its colonisers. Here I would like to argue that it is absolutely important as, even though colonial power has already ended, its influences are therefore still evident in many aspects of Indonesian life. Justus M. van der Kroef (1952) has noted the main areas of Western (Dutch) influence in the country. He is concerned with some selected patterns such as aspects of government, economic life, religion and contemporary literature. Kroef (1952) argues that “government in Indonesia is of two kinds: Western and indigenous” (p. 442). He continues that:

the “Western” type of government is of great Western influence where the idea of an national state, the concepts underlying its constitution, the party and cabinet system, and certain national political ideologies, such as President Sukarno’s “Five principles of the Indonesian state” (belief in God, humanitarianism, nationalism, democracy and social justice); these are illustrative of the broad influence of the West. (p. 422)

Kroef also divides the Indonesian economy into two: Western and indigenous. For Kroef, the Western economy:

involves primarily the production on a highly scientific and organized basis of agricultural exports and their processing, industrial production of commodity goods for both local and international exchange markets and the utilization of financial resources and investment opportunities in connection with them. (p. 425)

He argues that the Western economic system is widely applied in urban areas but not in villages, where the indigenous one is still dominant. The introduction of the Western system, he argues, can be seen in some forms, such the introduction of the Western money economy, Western estate agriculture for export and the retail trade.

Since the 19th century, Western influence on religion through its Christian missionaries has acted in Indonesian life. Kroef (1952) argues that “In attempting to Christianize a given section of Indonesian people, the missionary also attacked the social and political traditions of the group” (p. 427). Kroef furthermore says that: “In close contact with Western missionaries, to some Indonesians such as Toradjas, ‘Christianization’ and ‘Westernization’ have occurred” (p. 428).

Lastly, Kroef (1952) argues that the impact of Westernisation can be seen in the development of Indonesian literature itself. He argues that since the appearance of the literary journal *Poedjangga Baroe* (the New Poet) in the 1930s, Indonesian writers have been “subject to Western influences both in the content and in the construction of their novels, plays, and poetry” (p. 429). These influences have worked throughout Indonesian history, including the contemporary period. An example can be mentioned here: the *roman pitjisan* (dime novel). The *roman pitjisan* “gives a picture of the new Indonesia with the hopes, problems and aspirations of the new elite, the fairly literate, semi-Westernized town dwellers” (p. 429).

Physically, Indonesia has been formally free from Western (Dutch) colonisation since Indonesian independence in 1945 (effectively in 1949) after being occupied for 350 years. During those years, Dutch hegemony had a great impact on Indonesian life as we have just seen. Colonisation resulted in more mental degradation than material destruction (Ratna, 2007). It also produced anti-colonial struggles, which were aimed at creating new identities that could energise the colonised to counteract the coloniser. Ashcroft (2001) argues that resistance has been the primary reaction that the colonised subjects have used to protest against the coloniser. This takes two main forms: forceful and ideological resistance. The forceful struggle took place during the colonial time and the ideological one continues to the present time. The two types of struggle have both played their role in Indonesian decolonisation.

4.4.1 Indonesian Postcolonial Studies

Postcolonial experiences are clearly portrayed in many aspects of Indonesian life, including literature. The study of Indonesian postcolonial literature can provide the answer to understanding such effects. Indonesian postcolonial studies deal with the national culture (literature) during and after the domination of the Dutch and the effects that continue to remain in Indonesian contemporary literature.

What is postcolonialism in the context of Indonesian literature? The definition of the postcolonial perspective (criticism or approaches) here refers to the one given by Tony Day and Keith Foulcher (2002). They argue:

postcolonial approaches to the study of literature are concerned with the way in which literary texts, in many different ways, reveal the traces of the colonial encounter, the confrontation of races, nations and cultures under conditions of unequal power relations that has shaped a significant part of human experience since the beginning of the age of European imperialism ... The term postcolonialism defines a critical discourse that can be used to investigate the specific literary properties of 'postcoloniality' in Indonesian literature ... Postcoloniality designates the literary traces and effects of colonialism, but it also refers to the subject position of the postcolonial writer and his/her narrative voice. (pp. 2–3)

In this thesis, my analysis will deal with the narrative voice of the postcolonial writers while the effects of colonialism and the subject position of the writers will also be considered.

Alongside the important concepts in postcolonial study such as diasporas, hybridity and mimicry (Ryan, 2007), which might also be found in Indonesian literature, there are some other important postcolonial themes that are also relevant: language, identity, place and displacement (Ashcroft, 1989; Day & Foulcher, 2002); and resistance, history, allegory and globalisation (Ashcroft, 2001).

I argue that identity is an important area for researchers to investigate, not only because it is relatively new to Indonesian literature but it also allows scholars to go deeper into the effects of colonialism on writers and the Indonesian people.

Identity, which is also generally identified with the notion of hybridity, is believed to have coloured the works of most Indonesian authors. Hybridity, according to Day and Foulcher (2002), is “a way of referring to the interaction of disparate cultural forms that over time results in the formation of new cultures and identities with their own histories and textual enactments” (p. 9). They further argue that hybridity deals with cultural imbrications and syncreticism, by which “the products of culture blend themselves, but more importantly to the way in which the nature of these cultural products and enactment in social and historical space under colonialism is part of the imposition and contestation of colonial relationship and power” (p. 9). Hybridity can be organic or intentional in the process of identity formation or might appear as a result of the impact of gender, ethnicity and domestic spheres (Day & Foulcher, 2002).

4.4.2 Recontextualising Postcolonial Studies in Indonesian literature

It is important to evaluate where the concept of postcolonialism and its application are situated in contemporary Indonesian literature. This evaluation is crucial because scholars and critics argue that Indonesian literature during the New Order was a national literature. It developed through the spirit of nationalism and is now free from the influence of colonialism. The argument might be true when it is situated in the context of conventional colonisation. Yet Western hegemony and ideology remain. That is why it is still important to locate postcolonial studies in Indonesian literature. We have also seen that the new nation state of Indonesia acts in a way that was previously characteristic of the colonial power. Therefore, I will evaluate how writers responded to the Indonesian situation after colonisation. Just as writers resisted the coloniser, who extensively violated the rights of the Indonesian people during colonisation, the New Order literature indicates similar resistance to this imposition of indigenous authoritarianism. Both male and female writers in the era produced different forms of literary resistance. So it is important to evaluate the concept of resistance literature in the study of human rights issues in the Indonesian New Order era.

Although the acts of violence committed by the Dutch had ended, the influence of such acts is still evident in Indonesian life post independence as practised by powerful figures or institutions, including the government. Similar violent actions recur in a different relationship. Oppression takes place not between the coloniser and the colonised, but between the government and its people. Starting from Indonesia's first regime, the Old Order onwards, Indonesia has slowly moved from the traumatic experiences of colonisation into domestic traumas. Indonesia no longer dealt with foreign powers which imposed a variety of violent actions, but faced similar acts imposed by the domestic powers of the government, military, and non-governmental institutions. Violence was not enacted against a people by another people, but by the government against its own people. The situation changed from conventional colonialism to domestic colonialism. The government traumatised its people when the policies enacted by the government oppressed them directly or indirectly. Less powerful groups such as the poor, women and children have also become victims. This oppression was extended when the people of the former East Timor, Papua, Sumatera, Sulawesi and Aceh suffered internal domination (colonialism) within the Republic of Indonesia. In this case, political, economic and ideological movements were further transmitted from the central government in Jakarta to the people in the former East Timor and Papua. Internal colonisation also occurred when political and economical movements were supported by the state against the people of Sumatra and Sulawesi during the *PRRI-Permesta* rebellion (1956–1961) and by the people of Aceh during the military operation (1976–2005).

Both neo-colonialism and internal colonisation have shaped Indonesian society after independence, including literature. Many writers have depicted issues of government oppression and exploitation in Indonesia. Chief among these works are various novels and collections of short stories – Ismail Muharimin's *Dan Perangpun Usai* (*And the War Was Finally Over*, 1977), Idrus's *Corat-Coret di Bawah Tanah* (*Scratches from the Underworld*), Ahmad Tohari's *Kubah* (*Dome*, 1980), Ajip Rosidi's *Anak Tanah Air* (*Son of the Mother Land*, 1985) and Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *The Buru Tetralogy*; and short stories – Mochtar Lubis's "Kuli Kontrak" ("Contracted Coolies", 1979), Damin Mahmud's "Jaman Pakuasi" ("The Era of

Evacuation”, 1991) and Satyagraha Hoerip’s “Sesudah Usai Perang” (“After the War”, 1995). The issue of internal colonialism has been another theme which few Indonesian writers have represented in their works. The writers of this group include Ali Akbar Navis who represents *PRRI* issues in his works, Seno on East Timor stories and Motinggo Busye on the Free Aceh Movement.

4.5 LITERARY RESPONSES TO OPPRESSION

This section discusses how the short story has often dealt with serious issues relating to human rights, particularly in the West. It provides some basic approaches to the study of human rights through the perspective of literature. This will later, directly or indirectly, also locate how Indonesian fiction also responds to human rights issues. This section consists of an analysis of various literary forms of resistance to social injustice and inequality, including the use of social criticism, trauma and terror narratives, and the connection between resistance literature and human rights.

4.5.1 Social Criticism Narratives

This is the most general response to social injustices. Aaron C. Ahuvia (1998) argues that “ ‘Social criticism’ is a broad term for works which deal with how individuals should act in society, asking what is wrong with our current social system, or how should society be organized” (p. 143). Social criticism, Ahuvia continues, is not a single discipline of study but a multidisciplinary study which might belong to psychology (social psychology), philosophy (social philosophy), sociology, economy (political economy), and cultural studies such as literature. Literary scholars have used broad social and cultural contexts to study literature. This is evident in the study of novels such as George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* which portrays sociopolitical conditions in Russia in the 1920s, Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852) which depicts the dark side of human slavery in America, Pramoedya Ananta Toer’s *The Fugitive* (1950) which deals with cultural impacts of Dutch colonization

in Indonesia and Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) which represents colonial impacts on Nigerians.

Such works of fiction vary in their themes and in the social and political settings they criticise. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, for example, among its many political messages, voices the importance of education for the black slave sufferers (Farrell, 2010). Toer's *The Fugitive* depicts "conflict between patriotism and personal loyalties, sexual love and familial/filial responsibility" (Anderson, 1991). Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* represents resistance against Western colonisation in Africa (Mirmotahari, 2011). All of them deal with sociopolitical problems of the country they represent. Stowe speaks for the black Americans of the U.S.A. Pramoedya for the colonised Indonesians, Achebe for Africans and Rizal for the Filipinos. These are some of the most important political novels globally because they fulfill the requirements of: "(a) literary quality, (b) narrative power, and, most importantly (c) historical/political/meta-political insight" (Satin, 2005, p. 2).

It is undeniable that great novels contain the three important elements Satin mentions. However, such elements not only appear in novels but can also be found in other genres of literature, including the short story. In the Indonesian context, short stories such as Lubis's "Kuli Kontrak", Pramoedya's "Yang Hitam" and Seno's "Saksi Mata" fulfill such criteria.

4.5.2 Representing Terror

Social injustice can be inflicted upon the bodies and minds of individuals. Thus, literary writers' social criticism of violations of human rights can further be interpreted from the various aspects which are represented in their stories. Representing physical and mental terror is a method which is widely applied.

What is terror? Charles L. Ruby (2002), drawing on the theory of Kaplan, argues that there are two main criteria in defining terror: a fearful state of mind and an intended audience. Based on these factors, Ruby describes terror as: "politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience" (p. 10). It is also

possible, of course, for government sponsored groups (the army, police, armed groups, etc) to terrorise unarmed civilians. The representation of terror is often described in literature. Anthony Kubiak (2004) proposes three types of narratives which represent terror: first, writings which set out to explicate the ideological ground of terrorist acts; second, narratives about terrorism; and third, narratives which destabilise narrativity. He argues that the ideological reasons range “from spiritual faith, to political action, to nihilism” (p. 295). These discourses are “the admonishing, the calls to action, the steeling of will” (p. 296). The second group of narratives deals with “any form of literary discourse that sets out to explore the motives and ideas behind the socio-political and psychic act of terrorism” (p. 296); and the third involves “disrupting linearity, temporality, plot, character or whatever conventions may be regarded as essential to the production of stories, memories, dramas, or histories” (p. 297).

In her book *Plotting Terror*, Margaret Scanlan (2001) deals with the study of fiction in relation to terrorist themes. She argues that a number of writers have made use of literature to reconstruct history and the existence of terror. Analysing works such as Dostoevsky’s *Demons*, James’s *The Princess Casamassima* and Conrad’s *Under Western Eyes*, she considers “writers and terrorists in these novels as remnants of a romantic belief in the power of marginalized persons to transform history” (p. 2). She further argues that writers of this group take advantage of fiction to criticise the dominant state power of discourses. Writers represent narrative-based terror in order to protest against unjust acts, including violence and the abuse of rights as performed by social and political groups wielding power.

Subjective violence is among many types of violence which befall common people. Slavoj Žižek (2008) argues that subjective violence is “a violence performed by a clearly identifiable agent” (p. 1). According to Žižek, subjective violence takes two forms: systemic violence, “the often catastrophic consequences of the smooth functioning of our economic and political system” (p. 1) and “symbolic violence embodied in language and its forms” (p.1). Bourdieu and Wacquant define symbolic violence as “the violence which is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity” (Parkin & Coomber, 2009, p. 391). Systemic violence may be committed

by a state against its people (state violence), a class against another class (class violence), individuals against other individuals (personal violence), and any of these against women (gender violence). Systemic violence can be physical or non-physical. Symbolic violence relates to the non-physical imposition of power and control upon less powerful members within a given structure. This results in unequal relationships, in which the dominated may be treated as inferior, denied access to resources and limited in their social mobility and personal aspirations.

4.5.3 Trauma Narratives

Terror acts can have a lasting impact on its victims. They leave traumas on their victims. Because of the traumas, writers have produced what is called “trauma narrative” to channel their anger and dissatisfaction, as well as their desire to expose what the perpetrators are doing. What is a trauma narrative? Laurie Vickroy (2002) defines trauma narratives as “fictional narratives that help readers to access traumatic experiences” (p. 1). Vickroy argues that trauma narratives provide readers with opportunities to recognise social and psychological problems in a number of ways:

First, these works attest to the frequency of trauma and its importance as a multi-contextual social issue, as it is a consequence of political ideologies, colonization, war, domestic violence, poverty, and so forth. Second, trauma narratives raise questions about how we define subjectivity as they explore the limits of the Western myth of the highly individuated subject and our ability to deal with loss and fragmentation in our lives. Third, the dilemmas experienced by characters in such narratives confront us with many of our own fears—of death, of dissolution, of loss, of loss of control—and provide a potential space within which to consider these fears. Lastly, trauma writers elucidate the dilemma of the public’s relationship to the traumatized, made problematic by victims’ painful experiences and psychic defenses that can alienate others, and by the public’s resistance. (p. 2)

Vickroy suggests that a writer who experiences a traumatic event, personally or through the experiences of others, might write about this in his/her works. Although

Vickroy is not aware of any necessary political aims behind the writer's work, her description is beneficial in understanding the psychological effects of such works for readers.

Vickroy's argument relates to Susan D. Solomon's argument that "Most people will experience a traumatic event at some time in their lives" (2003, p. 3). Solomon (2003) further claims that stressful experiences can cause further trauma to those who experience them:

traumatic events ... can result in the violations of human rights. Events like war, political repression, terrorism, genocide, poverty, and disaster deprive individuals of their homes, their families, their work, their schools, their places of worship, and their access to education and health care. The traumatic events, like disaster, war, crime, torture, rape, and abuse, are those on the continuum of stressors that may be particularly severe, and/or those that disrupt whole communities. (p. 4)

Although for Solomon the form of such experiences are definitely different from one nation to another, she argues that they produce similar results: a specific threat to a person's life or that of a community, such as experiencing severe physical harm or injury, or being a victim of harm that is intentionally perpetrated, like rape, torture or assault. Additional experiences that may be particularly traumatic are exposure to the unnatural or grotesque death of others, including multiple or violent deaths, witnessing or hearing about death or violence done to a loved one or a member of one's social group, or inadvertently causing the death of others.

In presenting the idea of trauma narratives, Vickroy and Solomon suggest that all traumatic events are potential sources of fictional representations of human rights-related issues which writers might represent and seek to understand and contextualise in their works. Their description of trauma narrative helps to reveal how Indonesian writers deal with such narratives. This is also clear in the works of some Indonesian writers. For example, Navis's representation of state violence in his stories suggests his attitude towards human rights violations against groups such as the *PRRI*, resulting in war and arrests by the state.

4.6 RESISTANCE LITERATURE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Oppression is not only described in literature, it is also resisted. Various theories propose different ways to investigate the relationship between literature and human rights. The chief among them view literature as a form of social advocacy and resistance to the abuse of human rights and trauma. In this section the relationship will be focused on the literature of resistance. Resistance literature, I argue, is the most applicable theory to examine the issue of human rights as they are represented in literary works. The use of this theory is necessary to see how Indonesian postcolonial literary discourse responds to Western and local oppression in Indonesia. In this thesis, I want to go beyond the old paradigm of resistance literature as proposed by Barbara Harlow (1987) who was concerned with resistance only as a tool of the colonised to resist colonial hegemony. Indonesian literature after independence aimed not to resist colonisation any more but to fight against any power within the country itself which violated the rights of others. What is resisted is not the colonialist presence or ideology but its transformation in Indonesia after independence.

Theorists have tried to define resistance literature in different ways. Harlow (1987, p. 2) writes that Ghassan Kanafani, a writer and critic, in his study of Palestinian literature uses the term “muqawamah,” which means “resistance,” for the first time in 1966. He differentiates between “under occupation” (tahl al-ihtilal) and “exile” (manfa) literature. In the context of national liberation, Harlow contests that resistance literature is “a particular category of literature that emerged significantly as part of the organized national liberation struggles and resistance movements in Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East” (p. xvii). Cudjoe (as cited in Kelly, 2003) defines resistance literature as “any act or complex of acts designed to get rid of its oppressors, be they slave masters or multinational corporations” (p. 15). Cudjoe categorises acts of resistance as:

- 1) cultural resistance which is expressed in religion or the arts; 2) socioeconomic resistance, expressed by suicide, abortion, work sabotage, withholding labor, and poisoning masters; and 3) political resistance, founded

on a people's ideological struggles to determine their own lives as it is expressed in revolts, rebellions, or revolutions. (pp. 15–6).

Drawing on the idea of Richard Terdiman, Ashcroft (2001) introduces counter-discourse theory, a resistance which operates transformatively. Ashcroft argues that “A powerful Eurocentric discourse such as literature represents itself as natural, universal and timeless, and yet it exposes itself, by virtue of such claims, to continual resistance and contradiction” (p. 33). He claims that the colonised try to write back to the coloniser by producing what he calls canonical counter-discourse. In my attempt to go beyond such a discourse, I argue that the object of postcolonial critique is the state ideology itself which is used to justify the application of various forms of domination, and results in oppression and terror of citizens by groups and government elites. So, while finding postcolonial approaches helpful in terms of analysing resistance, my research does not directly focus on external colonisation, but on those who practise the ideologies of terror from within the newly independent state itself.

Postcolonial theorists such as Gayatri Spivak, Chandra Mohanty and Margaret C. Gonzales have investigated the many forms of resistance in colonial, postcolonial and neocolonial contexts. Spivak argues that “It is virtually impossible for the subaltern subject ... to resist in any way that the West will not misinterpret” (Kelly, 2003, pp. 16–7). The application of censorship in post-independence Indonesia shows that this is also a feature of the postcolonial state. In her study of the subaltern, Spivak is concerned with three crucial issues, as Kelly notes:

First, she argues that strategic essentialism – that is, the conscious assumption on the part of the critic that reference is to the subject (in the Western, humanist sense of a sovereign agent). Second, she explains that when resistance on the part of the subaltern can be determined, it is most often in the form of an emerging collective consciousness. Third, that “the subaltern's persistent emergence into hegemony must always remain heterogeneous to the efforts of the disciplinary historian”. (p. 17)

It is the growing subaltern political consciousness which produces resistance against human rights violations in these differing circumstances. With direct reference to

literature, Mohanty (1991), stressing the relationship between literature and human rights, argues that there are a number of elements in the relation of writing, memory, consciousness and political resistance:

(a) the codification of covert images of resistance during non-revolutionary times; (b) the creation of communal (feminist) political consciousness through the practice of storytelling; and (c) the redefinition of the very possibilities of political consciousness and action through the act of writing ... Therefore, one of the most significant challenges here is the question of decoding these subversive narratives. (pp. 35–6)

Here, Mohanty strongly asserts that women's postcolonial writings represent their political stance against the dominant power (patriarchy) and their need for political actions (feminism) towards it. Naomi Wolf (1993) claims that feminism has developed through two approaches: victim feminism and power feminism. Victim feminism "casts women as sexually pure and mystically nurturing, and stresses the evil done to these 'good' women as a way to petition for their rights" (p. xvii), while power feminism "sees women as human beings – sexual, individual, no better or worse than their male counterparts – and lays claim to equality simply because women are entitled to it" (p. xvii). One of the key similarities between these two approaches is the acceptance of women's victimisation. Despite what women have struggled for so far, Wolf suggests that women should realise their power and use it to create a better future. Furthermore, Wolf (1993, pp. 150–1) strongly argues that women should affirm power feminism, which has the following core tenets: 1) women matter as much as men do; 2) women have the right to determine their own lives; 3) women's experiences matter; 4) women have the right to tell the truth about their experiences; and 5) women deserve more of whatever it is they are not getting enough of because they are women: respect, self-respect, education, safety, health, representation and money. Wolf believes that those are the basic rights that women need to be aware of and claim.

Gonzales (1998), analysing the literature of Spain under Generalissimo Franco, who ruled Spain with an iron fist for almost four decades, takes us further in this discussion. She contests that the literature of protest, a parallel term for the

literature of resistance, is an alternative way for the oppressed to resist their treatment by the state. The oppressed writers, whom she calls “dissidents”, have had to find their own method of criticising the regime as they had no power. She argues that “lacking competitive political parties and legitimate channels of dissent, dissidents protested against the regime within the context of novels and drama” (p. 1). She continues that such writers commonly deliver their messages through political codes: “This political code in which they often wrote consisted of metaphors and subtle techniques used to criticise the regime in a manner that appeared sufficiently oblique to pass the approval of the censors, yet was clearly identifiable to its audience” (p. 2). For Gonzales, dissident writers often criticise the oppressive regime indirectly and subtly within an acceptable channel for the audience to understand. Gonzales’ arguments definitely support the arguments of Albert Memmi’s *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (1957) and Franz Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), both of which have written the domination of governments over their own people. The non-dominant groups within such society can, nevertheless, take advantage of the literary discourse to critique the oppressive institution as they attempt to “demystify, delegitimise, and deconstruct the established norms, institutions, and discourses that play a role in constructing their subordination” (Gonzales, 2003, p. 4).

What Gonzales presents is the same phenomenon as some Indonesian writers have experienced in dealing with their sociopolitical situation, particularly in the era of Suharto, where they resisted inappropriate acts in the process of democratisation such as injustice and violations of rights. At the beginning of the New Order, Jassin (1970) argued that:

Pengarang dan seniman sejak dahulu kala selalu menegakkan keadilan dan kebenaran. Musuh mereka adalah kebohongan, kepalsuan, kekerasan, kebatilan. Karena itu mereka disamping menjadi sahabat sahabat yang baik dari masyarakat, juga kadang kadang menjadi musuh penguasa-penguasa yang angkara murka. (p. 21)

Authors and artists since ancient times always uphold justice and truth. Their enemies are lies, falsehood, violence, and evil. They therefore not only

become good friends of the society, but also sometimes become the enemies of the insolent rulers.

Although there are not many works of direct and outspoken resistance in Indonesian literature in the terms addressed by Jassin, indirect and implicit resistance is widespread. This is because, as Kelly (2003) argues:

acts of resistance are not so easily recognized, so neatly represented as they are in national struggles for independence. Most ideological struggles today, especially within a postcolonial context, are played out in societies that are far from revolutionary, or that have already achieved a certain level of independence. (p. 16)

In a broader understanding, where the issue of human rights violation arises not only in the scope of a national struggle but also within domestic social criticism, the works of writers who address human rights violations are an important form of resistance. Elizabeth S. Anker (2007) contests the limited proposal that “The idea of a literature of resistance articulates an antagonism between the writer and the repressive government or neo-imperialist presence, and, moreover, it assumes a concretely materialist and instrumentalist understanding of literature’s impact” (p. 16). Nevertheless, Anker’s dichotomy between dissident (writer) and rights oppressor (dominant power) suggests the materiality of resistance literature and its ability to produce effects on the oppressor.

4.7 CONCLUSION

The question of whether a postcolonial study approach is applicable to Indonesian national literature is important. Although colonisation has ended, state institutions still continue to follow the coloniser’s former practices. Violence and oppression, for example, which were commonplace during the colonial era, are again practised by the state in the independence era. Yet, from the Old Order era onwards, although violence and oppression still exist, they have shifted from conventional colonial to domestic and internal colonialism. This shift requires an act of recontextualising postcolonial studies in Indonesian literature.

To investigate the issue of human rights and their representation in Indonesian literature, scholars and critics need to look at the issue through a range of different lenses. The short story is one such lens. In Indonesia, writers, both important and emergent, write their human rights works in different genres: poems, plays, novels and short stories. Among these writers, some have used the short story to represent human rights violations. Their stories can involve social criticism, representations of terror and of trauma. Such stories have affected a wide and diverse audience.

The stories which represent human rights violations directly or indirectly should be read not only as literary products but also as resistance to these unexpected acts performed by the state, its apparatuses or individuals. The theory of resistance literature is appropriate for explaining the case through detailed analysis and the refinement of theories. By applying different approaches, political, social and psychological, these theories can show who resists whom, where the resistance takes place, what is resisted and how the writers resist.

PART II – HUMAN RIGHTS AND THEIR REPRESENTATION IN THE INDONESIAN MEDIA SHORT STORIES

Having discussed critical approaches to the study of the Indonesian short story and human rights, I am now in a position to analyse the development of the Indonesian short story in two ways in part 2. First is the general representation of human rights in Indonesian short stories from the colonial era to 1990. This chapter is divided into two sections: first, the development of the Indonesian short story up to 1965 gathered from various sources, and second, its development from 1966 to 1990 is based on the publication of short stories in *Kompas* and *Horison*. Second, a more specific analysis will be conducted on works published by four writers: Ali Akbar Navis, Putu Wijaya, Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim and Seno Gumira Ajidarma. The analysis of the works of the four writers is undertaken chronologically, beginning with Navis (1924–2003) (Chapter 6), then Putu (born 1944) (Chapter 7), Ratna (1949–2011) (Chapter 8) and Seno (born 1958) (Chapter 9). Navis' works focus on violations of human rights by government apparatuses and individuals especially both during the late Sukarno era and during the end of the Suharto era. Putu's stories focus on various types of violence performed by powerful persons such as the rich and the government apparatuses during the early New Order period. Ratna's works represent all classes and groups, and are always a marginalised group whose rights are violated by both men and other women. Seno's narratives focus on state violence and mass traumas as a consequence of inappropriate government policy.

CHAPTER 5 – THE INDONESIAN SHORT STORY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a general introduction to the role played by the short story in general in shaping human rights issues in Indonesian literature. The chapter is divided into two main sections: the first deals with the history of the Indonesian short story prior to 1966 (from the beginning of modern Indonesian literature to the end of the Old Order era); the second section deals with the Indonesian short story from 1966 to 1990 (the major decades of the New Order government). The first section will be based on a broad range of sources. The latter will examine short stories published in the newspaper *Kompas* and the literary magazine *Horison*. The examination of the short story in Indonesian literature between 1920 and 1990 will help locate the contribution of *Kompas* and *Horison* to the enrichment of crucial debates around human rights. In the constellation of Indonesian fiction from 1920 to 1990, the short story has been used by writers as a political weapon to attack and critique the government as well as to criticise social conditions caused by faulty government policies.

5.2 THE INDONESIAN SHORT STORY FROM PRE-INDEPENDENCE TO 1965

It is difficult to present a complete analysis of the Indonesian short story between 1920 and 1990. Harry Aveling (2009, p. 244) writes that “most major newspapers in Indonesia include a short story in their Sunday edition. If there are twenty major papers, this suggests an output of 80 stories a month and 960 in a single year. Many magazines also carry stories.” Although fewer newspapers were published in the prewar period, Indonesian literature has surely been built by tens of thousands of short stories. If one out of 20 stories published every week dealt with an issue of human rights, this suggests that there have been 16 such stories a month and perhaps 192 each year. This number will be enriched by the short stories published in

magazines, collections of short stories and short story anthologies by individual authors. Due to this huge number of short stories, it is not possible to deal with them all in detail here. Instead, I will analyse a small number of exemplary stories which have significantly contributed to the development of debates around human rights in each period.

The following section further divides the representation of human rights issues in Indonesian short stories between 1920 and 1965 into four periods: the Colonial Era, the Japanese Occupation, the Era of Revolution and the Old Order Era. In order to focus the analysis, I will deal in most detail with a small number of short stories which have major significance. It is these stories which may be considered as representative of human rights stories within the development of Indonesian literature. In this preliminary analysis of short story development, I rely on a small number of readily available short story anthologies and collections.

In general, the authors write about a wide range of themes regarding many different aspects of life, whether real or symbolic. Their stories represent the social critiques on the social issues around them. These stories take the forms of social, terror and trauma narratives. They talk about reality in Indonesia and abroad – in women's lives, poverty, power, education and corruption; the world of imagination.

5.2.1 The Colonial Era

The first period is based on the emergence of a recognisably modern Indonesian literature which is widely considered to have begun in the 1920s. Pamusuk Eneste (2001) writes that five short story collections were published before Indonesian independence: M. Kasim's *Bertengkar Berbisik (Fighting and Whispering, 1929)*, *Buah di Kedai Kopi (Fruit in the Coffee Shop, 1930)* and *Teman Doedoek (A Friend to Sit with, 1936)*; Suman Hs's *Kawan Bergelut (Argumentative Companions, 1938)*; and Saadah Alim's *Taman Penghibur Hati (Garden of Consolation, 1941)*. The shortness of this list suggests that the short story was not a popular genre at that time.

Nevertheless, these early collections of short stories can still be a barometer in looking at the issues of human rights during the colonial era. These collections deal

with various social and political themes. M. Kasim's *Teman Doedoek*,¹⁸ for example, consists of a number of witty stories ranging from religious content, including Islamic experiences to life in cities like Medan. Among these stories, "Pengalaman Hadji Djaka" ("The Experiences of Djaka") represents the issue of rights. It depicts the hardship experienced by Djaka and his friend during their pilgrimage to Mecca. When they were on their way to visit the Prophet Mohammed's grave in Medina, they met some men who robbed them and took what they had, leaving them with only their clothes. The story suggests that right to practice religion and to property can be violated anywhere, including in holy places like Mecca and Medina.

Suman's *Kawan Bergelut*¹⁹ also presented a number of humorous stories which reflect on the ridiculous behaviour of the common people, ranging from a man who tries to attract a widow and a local trader who comes to Singapore to meet a religious leader who asks his followers to donate but forbids his wife to do so. Only a few stories focus on the issue of rights. "Fatwa Membawa Ketjewa" ("The Teaching Which Produces Disappointment"), for example, depicts domestic violence against women. The story deals with Lebai Saleh, a preacher, who slaps and hits his wife because she is generous to visitors who come to their house as her husband always teaches his people to be. In this story, Suman suggests that violence can be done by anybody and anywhere, including a religious husband who violates the rights of his own wife.

Saadah's *Taman Penghibur Hati*²⁰ presents stories which mostly center on the relationship between young men and women. She represents "heaven" and "hell" for women and how women's rights are violated by *adat* (custom). In "Pusaka Mamaknya" ("His Uncle's Inheritance"), women are represented as figures whose lives are predetermined by their parents. In the story, Zahara is forced to marry Chairul, her father's nephew. Upon the death of her father, she prefers to cancel the

¹⁸ This collection of short stories comprises a number of stories which mostly deal with everyday experiences. Yet there are a few stories which depict human life symbolically. Stories such as "Pendikar Bukan Pendekar", "Tjara Chicago" and "Bertengkar Berbisik", which respectively deal with the fear of theft, deception, public attack in public and a feud among friends represent how human rights were perceived at that time.

¹⁹ This collection of short stories consists of 12 witty stories.

²⁰ This collection of short stories was published in 1941a, 1941b and 1953. In its 1953 edition, the name of the author is Sadah instead of Saadah. In this edition, there are 13 short stories.

marriage although she has to let her father's property go to Chairul. Here, Saadah implies that custom can hinder a woman from exercising her rights, such as freedom to choose her own husband and run her own life.

However, it is not enough to understand the development of the Indonesian short story from Eneste's list. Although the short story anthology was not popular at that time, many more short stories were published in media like magazines and newspapers after the establishment of the printing presses. The magazine *Pujangga Baru* (*The New Poet*)²¹, for example, started to publish short stories in 1933. In his book *Pujangga Baru* (1987), Jassin includes a few short stories about human rights such as Armijn Pane's "Lupa" ("Forget") on the right to assembly, and Selasih's "Pertemuan" ("Encounter") on domestic violence. "Pertemuan" is an account of Syafril, who is mistreated by his step mother. When he goes home, he also finds out that his sister has also been badly treated by their step mother and that she has behaved badly and thus violated the rights of their family members.

In her critical book *Cerpen-Cerpen Pujangga Baru*, Maria J. K. Mantik (2006) also studied a number of short stories from the magazine *Pujangga Baru*. Among the 15 short stories she analyses structurally, some contain stories which represent the issues of human rights, including Armijn Pane's "Tujuan Hidup" ("Purpose of Life"), H. B. Jassin's "Antara Si Lemah" ("Between the Weak"), Mundingsari's "Perjuangan" ("Struggle") and Achdiat K. Mihardja's "Pak Sarkam" ("Mr. Sarkam"). Quite similar to the novels of early modern Indonesian literature, which are characterised by an atmosphere of despair, the short story in this period also often deals with traumatic experiences such as historical, social and psychological violence. Socio-historical events such as gender cases, poverty and colonisation are important. Violence, in fact, is the most favoured plot solution.

Armijn Pane's "Tujuan Hidup", for instance, represents the subtle violence against women. He depicts the psychological trauma experienced by women who are traumatised by their family and society. Unlike *Siti Nurbaya*, where a woman submits to the patriarchal tradition by accepting a forced marriage, in "Tujuan Hidup", women protest against these conditions. The women's protest is articulated

²¹ *Pujangga Baru* is the standard spelling for *Poejanga Baroe* in the modern Indonesian language.

through their dissatisfaction at their parents' treatment of them and thus of the social values which do not allow women to live freely in their adulthood.

In "Tujuan Hidup", Kartini is a 25 years old woman teacher who struggles with her life as an unmarried woman.²² She lives her life alone away from her family. From day to day, she deals with her students. She suffers from the thought of being a lonely but independent woman. One day her brother Martono, along with his son, comes to see her and leave his son with her. She raises him as if he were her own son. The story is Pane's protest against women's subordinate position in Javanese society. The story echoes what has happened to women throughout Indonesian history. It continues Raden Ajeng Kartini's struggle for women's rights such as education and freedom of expression. The main character Kartini says "*Jadi perempuan, artinya ikatan, batasan*" ("Being a woman, it is a bond, limitation") (p. 63).

Writers' concern about the issue of poverty is also evident in some stories. Short stories, including H. B. Jassin's "Antara Si Lemah", depict this theme. The story is a protest against poverty at that time. Using the setting of a market, Jassin takes readers to an episode in a market where the market rules do not acknowledge humanity. Rules are rules although they hurt the people around them. Borrowing money from money-lenders causes Maman to lose his job, although he wants to save his own child. Through the story, Jassin depicts how poverty deprives a poor man of this right.

Colonial violence can be seen in D. E. Manu Turoe's "Rustam Digulist" (2001). The story deals with Rustam, who is caught, brought to court and found guilty of promoting the *PKI*, which was forbidden at that time. It is a biographical depiction of Rustam, who spends some time in Digul Prison Camp in Papua. Through the use of a love plot, Turoe represents an episode of Indonesian history, particularly the effect of political acts such as *PKI* involvement and the subsequent inhuman life in Digul prison where a number of political prisoners were imprisoned, forced to work and denied their rights. Turoe critiques both Dutch inhumane treatment of Indonesian political prisoners and the marginalisation of *PKI* members in society.

²² In the Indonesian context, especially in rural areas, young women often get married between 15 to 20 years of age. Being single at the age of 25 or more is considered late for a woman.

5.2.2 The Japanese Occupation (1942–1945)

Works of Indonesian literature about the Japanese occupation can be categorised into two types: propaganda and non-propaganda. Propagandic literature was used by the Japanese military government to instill a spirit of brotherhood among Indonesians, so that they would help the Japanese troops during the war against the Allies. M. Yoesoef (2010) writes that many plays in the Japanese occupation period (1942–1945) were full of the propaganda of the Japanese military government that tried to influence people to assist the Japanese troops in fighting against the American army in World War II. Literature was used as a propaganda tool where people could get the message directly about what they should do in a war situation. Yoesoef implies that this type of literature did not originally come from the writers themselves. Instead it was “manufactured”. To fulfill its need, the Japanese government used its arts machine *Sendenbu*, the Propaganda Service Office, to recruit a number of artists to work for it.

Non-propaganda literature was not published during this era. However, such works by non-Japanese government writers were published in later eras. Unlike propaganda literature which was designed to encourage Indonesians to support the Japanese troops in fighting against the Allies and was set around war related problems, non-propaganda literature varies in themes and settings. H. B. Jassin has documented them in his book *Kesusasteraan Indonesia di Masa Jepang (Indonesian Literature during the Japanese Occupation, 1954)*. Writers depicted not only the issues of war but also a variety of lives at that time. Some writers, including Idrus, criticised both the government and the people.

Idrus’s “Kota – Harmoni”, for example, criticises the behaviour of Indonesian subjects and the Japanese colonialists in Indonesia during the Japanese occupation. The story itself looks like a sketch. Although it has no plot, it is interesting to see how Idrus used the social setting in Jakarta to represent Indonesians and Japanese people. Set on a tram which ran from Kota to Harmoni in Jakarta, Idrus’ story cynically describes acts of “hypocrisy, arrogance, and greed” (Aveling, 1991, p. 1).

Idrus sketches both the arrogant Japanese and Indonesians who undermined their own people.

Unlike “Kota – Harmoni”, which describes the unwanted behaviour of the colonisers and the colonised, Idrus’s “Heiho” satirises a number of Indonesians who joined *Heiho*, an institution consisting of Indonesians who assisted Japanese soldiers during World War II. Idrus shows how, through the slogan “*membela tanah air*” (fight for the motherland), the Japanese government was successful in recruiting Indonesians to join *Heiho*. For him, those who joined Heiho are naïve people, imitating “monkeys”: “*Kalian semuanya monjet, pandai meniru sadja*” (You were all monkeys, who could only imitate) (p. 71). These people are gullible cannon-fodder.

Idrus’s “Okh ... Okh ... Okh!” is as interesting as the previous two stories. It satirises the acts of the Indonesian railway company’s corrupt employees and of police agents. These people behave violently against the passengers. Idrus depicts the passengers from different angles such as Indonesians in poverty, the Chinese power of money and Arab religiosity. They are described as victims of corruption and violence. Idrus sarcastically represents how corruption works among the company’s employees and how police agents confiscate passengers’ possessions. Social injustice is very obvious here too.

5.2.3 The Revolution (1945–1949)

Indonesian life under the Dutch and the Japanese colonial powers had left traumatic memories for many Indonesians. In the era of the Revolution, traumatic experiences took a different form. Such bad “treasures” of the revolutionary period have been documented in a number of stories, including Utuy Tatang Sontani’s *Orang Orang Sial (Unlucky People, 1951)* and his *Menuju Kamar Durhaka (Headed for the Lawless Room, 2002)*.²³ The stories in these collections reflect Indonesians who “*mengalami berbagai kesengsaraan dan kesialan tanpa memahami persoalannya*

²³ *Menuju Kamar Durhaka* (1951, 2002) is a collection of short stories by Utuy Tatang Sontani. The 2002 collection was edited by Ajip Rosidi and consists of 17 stories. Chief among them are “Menuju Kamar Durhaka”, “Paku dan Palu”, “Usaha Samad” and “Si Sapar”. These stories are set during the Revolution.

secara proporsional” (went through a difficult life and misfortune without knowing the causes properly) (Rosidi, 2002, pp. 5–6).

Orang Orang Sial enshrines the representation of the terrible lives of the poor in the Revolution era. The story of “Paku dan Palu” (“Nail and Hammer”), for example, represents the hardships Indonesians faced at that time. The story represents how the Revolution caused the poor to give up their rights as it was impossible to live in poverty. The story is an account of Atma, a shoe repairer, who cannot make a living through his job because of the revolution. Civilians experienced a number of mishaps, including poverty and even death.

Both H. B. Jassin and Satyagraha Hoerip have collected works by various other authors in this era in *Gema Tanah Air 2* (*Echo of the Homeland 2*, 1975) and *Cerita Pendek Indonesia I* (*Indonesian Short Story I*, 1975). The stories which reflect social injustices in this period include Idrus’s “Surabaya” (1947)²⁴, S. Sastrawinata’s “Gigi Emas” (“A Gold Tooth”, 1948)²⁵, M. Balfas’s “Anak Revolusi” (“A Child of the Revolution”, 1948)²⁶ and Gajus Siagian’s “Perpisahan” (“Parting”, 1953).²⁷ These stories centre around responses to the effects of colonisation on ordinary Indonesians. The stories represent Indonesia’s anger against colonisation and its aftereffects, particularly the absence of Indonesian people’s freedom.

“Perpisahan” describes people’s disagreement with the inhumane acts committed by certain groups of Indonesians against their own fellow citizens. The story is an account of a woman who is raped during the Japanese occupation and whose husband and brother are both killed by a militia group; she finally commits suicide. In this story, Gajus criticises two layers of inhuman acts: the bad effects of the revolutionary war, and the previous trauma caused by both colonisers and Indonesians. Gajus implies that the era of Revolution was as bad as the colonial time, when people killed each other and committed inhumane acts not only towards the

²⁴ Idrus’s “Surabaya” was first published in Merdeka Press in 1947 and republished in *Gema Tanah Air 2* in 1975 (Jassin, 1975).

²⁵ S. Sastrawinata’s “Gigi Emas” was first published in the magazine *Gema* No. 11, November 1948 and republished in *Cerita Pendek Indonesia I* in 1979 (Hoerip, Ed., 1979).

²⁶ M. Balfas’s “Anak Revolusi” was first published in *Gema Suasana* No. 5, May 1948 and republished in *Cerita Pendek Indonesia I* in 1979 (Hoerip, Ed., 1979).

²⁷ Gajus Siagian’s “Perpisahan” was first published in *Kisah* No. 6, December 1953 and republished in *Cerita Pendek Indonesia I* in 1979 (Hoerip, Ed., 1979).

colonisers but also to their fellow Indonesians, including abuses against the rights of the common people.

5.2.4 The Old Order Era (1950–1965)

After full independence was achieved in 1949, writers produced works with a diversity of themes ranging from the issues of rights to religious problems. Violence seems to dominate Indonesian literature in this era. Different types of violence, including colonial and state violence and violence towards women, are all documented in an emotional and affecting way by writers in their works.

Some writers were still interested in exposing colonial issues. Works such as Pramoedya Ananta Toer's "Anak Haram" ("Illegitimate Child", 1952)²⁸, Mochtar Lubis's "Kuli Kontrak" ("Contracted Labourers", 1959)²⁹, Nugroho Notosusanto's "Sungai" ("River", 1959)³⁰, Trisnojuwono's "Di Medan Perang" ("In the Battle Field", 1959)³¹ and Titie Said's "Kelimutu" ("The Mount of Kelimutu", 1962)³² represent colonial problems. These stories depict Indonesian traumas experienced during the colonial and revolutionary wars. The stories depict the hard life Indonesians, especially soldiers, endured during the two eras.

Pramoedya's "Anak Haram" depicts the issue of betrayal. Pramoedya delivers his protest against the government and condemns those who betrayed the nation, together with their descendants. He regretted the fact that the government went too far in applying the policy where they punished not only those who were directly involved with the Dutch but also those who were related to these persons. Through the main character Achyat, Pramoedya depicts how miserable life can be for a child like him. His father is a Dutch spy. When he goes to school, he is not wanted. He is

²⁸ Pramoedya Ananta Toer's "Anak Haram" was published in 1952a, 1952b, 1989 and 1994 (Toer, 1994).

²⁹ Mochtar Lubis's "Kuli Kontrak" was first published in *Siasat Baru*, No. 650, 25 November 1959 and republished in *Cerita Pendek Indonesia 1* in 1979 (Hoerip, Ed., 1979).

³⁰ Nugroho Notosusanto's "Sungai" was first published in *Budaya*, No. 8, August 1959 and republished in *Cerita Pendek Indonesia 2* in 1979 (Hoerip, Ed., 1979).

³¹ Trisnojuwono's "Di Medan Perang" was first published in *Siasat Baru*, No. 646, 28 October 1959 and republished in *Cerita Pendek Indonesia 1* in 1979 (Hoerip, Ed., 1979).

³² Titie Said's "Kelimutu" was first published in 1962 and translated into English in *Women's Voices* by Pamela Allen in 1995.

made to repeat his classes. At home, he is not allowed to follow his hobby. The story, according to Saridjo (2006, p. 78), is “*gambaran dari korban kekuasaan Negara yang tidak mengenal kompromi*” (representation of the victims of the state which cannot compromise). In Saridjo’s analysis, what Achyat experiences is identical with what the state did to many other people who were associated with those who were perceived as having worked against the nation.

Nugroho’s “Sungai” illustrates the effects of war on children. This story depicts the inhuman journey a baby endures. He represents family love through the contrast between safety and danger. The story is an account of a soldier, Segeant Kasim, together with his troops, who are making their way to the republican zone and who may have intentionally killed his crying baby because the crying baby can make enemies know where they are and come to kill them. Here, Nugroho silently represents a voluntary violent act against one’s loved one so as to protect more people from being slaughtered in a war.

Titie’s “Kelimutu” shows her interest in colonial domination. The story is an account of Messy, a woman whose husband is proclaimed a traitor by their own people and who, together with her children, has to live away from society. The story represents an episode of violence that Indonesia experienced during Dutch colonisation. Using the setting of Flores³³, Titie depicts the colonial violence related to an uprising against the Dutch by the Flores people. She depicts how Flores men plotted an attack on the Dutch soldiers and killed them, and how the soldiers then captured innocent civilians. All this amounts to a long series of rights violations.

State violence in the later Sukarno period can be seen in Soewardi Idris’s *Antologi Cerpen Pergolakan Daerah: Senarai Kisah Pemberontakan PRRI (Short Story Anthology of Regional Rebellion: Tales of PRRI Rebellion, 2008)* which includes a number of *PRRI* related stories. The stories include “Diluar Dugaan” (“Beyond Expectation”) which deals with violence against ordinary people, “Semuanya Sudah Terjadi” (“Everything has happened”) with the destruction of a family and “Ia Akan Mengerti” (“He will understand”) with the violence which accidentally befalls unintended victims. Through the stories, Soewardi protests

³³ Flores is an island in Nusa Tenggara Province.

against the side effects of the civil war on the two opposing armies, *PRRI* and *APRI*, as well as on the common people. These stories depict sufferings and violent acts committed by both *PRRI* and *APRI* soldiers. In “Diluar Dugaan”, Soewardi describes a woman who is almost raped by a *PRRI* soldier in the jungle when she is travelling on a bus from Padang. When the soldier comes close to her, she begs him not to abuse her sexually. He finally decides not to touch her but tries to find out more about her. When she mentions the name of her husband, the man realises the woman’s husband is his brother.

Violence against women is also significant in a few other stories in this whole era. Pramoedya Ananta Toer such as “Inem” (1952)³⁴, Djamil Suherman’s “Umi Kalsum” (“Mrs Kalsum”, 1956)³⁵ and B. Yass’s “Di Atas Jembatan Rusak” (“On a Broken Bridge”, 1959)³⁶ fall into such a category. These stories depict women as victims of male domination during the revolution and are preoccupied with violence and death. “Umi Kalsum” and “Di Atas Jembatan Rusak” both depict young women who commit suicide because they have been impregnated. “Inem” represents the life of a girl who is married at a very young age and suffers all her life from then on. Her husband repeatedly abuses her mentally and physically. After her divorce a year later, she suffers from her family’s violent acts. Here, Pramoedya criticises the Javanese tradition of arranged marriage and the effects of such marriages on young women’s lives. Pramoedya exposes social and moral collapse, and the essential inhumanity of the traditional sense of propriety.

Besides the issue of violence, religion-related works of literature are also significant. In the Indonesian context, literature and religion (particularly Islam) are closely related, in the sense that Islamic teachings and Islamic content have often been presented in literature by both Muslim writers and non-Muslim writers. Marwan Saridjo in his book, *Sastra dan Agama (Literature and Religion)* has discussed the matter at length from the perspective of Islam. In the case of profane literature, a number of literary works have aroused strong debates. This occurred with

³⁴ Pramoedya Ananta Toer’s “Inem” was published in 1952a, 1952b, 1989 and 1994 (Toer, 1994).

³⁵ Djamil Suherman’s “Umi Kalsum” was first published in *Kisah*, No. 7–8, July–August 1956 and republished in *Cerita Pendek Indonesia 1* in 1979 (Hoerip, Ed., 1979).

³⁶ B. Yass’s “Di Atas Jembatan Rusak” was first published in *Konfrontasi*, No. 31, July–August 1959 and republished in *Cerita Pendek Indonesia 1* in 1979 (Hoerip, Ed., 1979).

the publication of Ali Akbar Navis's "Robohnya Surau Kami" ("The Decline of Our Prayer House", 1956) which offended many Muslims, as did his "Man Rabbuka" (1957). The most controversial case of religious literature came with the publication of "Langit Makin Mendung" ("The Sky Getting Cloudier", 1968) by Kippanji Kusmin, which landed H. B. Jassin in jail as the result of his New Order editorship of the work.

5.3 THE INDONESIAN SHORT STORY BETWEEN 1966 AND 1990:

KOMPAS AND HORISON

This section examines the representation of human rights issues in the short fiction of the newspaper *Kompas* and the literary magazine *Horison* prior to the 1990s. It will examine the contents of the stories, their major themes and the ways in which they treat rights such as freedom of speech, the right to life and the right to assembly. However, before proceeding to the more detailed analysis of the stories, a discussion of human rights as advocated by publications such as *Kompas* and *Horison* needs to be put forward.

5.3.1 The New Order Media: *Kompas*, *Horison* and Human Rights

Popular media such as *Kompas* and *Horison* play an important role in the discussion of human rights in Indonesia. These two publications are leading national media in their own field, and their contribution to Indonesian literature is significant. The two media, through their attention to elements of development such as politics, finance, ideology and related concerns, have made a persistent effort to promote humanist themes such as human rights. These two media outlets help also to promote the treatment of human rights issues through publishing literature. Despite their similar concern with these issues, they have different backgrounds and objectives. As a newspaper *Kompas* mainly relates to the economy, while as a magazine *Horison* concentrates on literary issues. They were born in a time of turmoil at the beginning of the New Order in 1966.

The press in the New Order developed at a time when there was heavy banning of newspapers and frequent arrests of journalists. Hill (2010, p. 93) writes that:

within months of 1 October 1965, 46 of Indonesia's 163 papers were banned indefinitely because of their presumed association with, or sympathy for, the *PKI* and its allies. Many staff members were arrested. Leftists in the Indonesian Journalists' Association (*PWT*) and Antara³⁷ were expelled.

The press was divided into the publications which were anti-*PKI* and those which were pro-*PKI*. After the government actions, some publications continued printing, some stopped and some regained their printing rights after being banned in the Old Order. Newspapers such as *Indonesia Raya*, *Pedoman*, *Abadi*, *Harian KAMI*, *Sinar Harapan*, *Kompas*, *Pos Indonesia*, *Berita Yudha*, *Angkatan Bersenjata* and *Pos Kota* continued to address their New Order readers. Despite the tight censorship, a number of new publications and institutions appeared. Some of them became leading and important pillars in Indonesian cultural development.

Two other institutions also emerged as important cultural pillars: *Horison* and *DKJ*, *Dewan Kesenian Jakarta* (Jakarta Arts Council). Budi Darma (2006), a leading Indonesian literary critic and writer, suggests that 1966 was an important moment for many aspects of Indonesian life, including literature. At that moment, *Kompas*, *DKJ* and the literary magazine *Horison* offered with a new approach to arts and culture. *Horison* was established by Mochtar Lubis, *DKJ* by the Governor of Jakarta as a meeting place for artists and the staging of cultural events, and *Kompas* was founded by P. K. Ojong. Despite their many different aims, the three institutions have been able to produce many Indonesian leading literary figures and literary products.

Kompas became a leading national daily newspaper. It is dominated on most days by reportage, non-literary articles, advertising, and sometimes news about literature. On Sunday, however, *Kompas* provides space for short stories and "cerbung" (serialised stories). *Kompas* has always received widespread public attention (Darma, 2006). It has been successful not only financially but it also attracts readers with its reportage, articles and cultural content. Its contents have made it one

³⁷ *Antara* is the Indonesian National News Agency.

of the most prestigious media outlets in Indonesia. Rizal Mallarangeng says “*Kompas* is a press which has functioned as the most successful and largest press in Indonesia” (2010, p. 62). *Kompas* has played its role as a reformist publication which articulates its function as an independent media outlet. Herb Feith says “*Kompas* and *Tempo* are among important Indonesian media which articulate reform in Indonesia” (*Inside Indonesia*, April 1989).

Horison, on the other hand, is a literary magazine that has also become an important pillar in the development of Indonesian literature. According to Budi Darma (2006), one thing that differentiates *Horison* from the previous major literary magazine *Kisah* is that the authors of this magazine are supported by talent and intellectualism. This publication is dominated by “cerpen” (short stories), poetry and essays.

5.3.2 *Kompas* and Its Short Stories

This section briefly examines the development of the newspaper *Kompas* and its role in the development of Indonesian literature. It consists of two parts: the history of *Kompas*, which is an overview of the growth of the paper, and an introduction to human rights issues in the short stories published in *Kompas*.

The daily *Kompas* was born on 28 June 1965, having as its motto *amanat hati nurani rakyat* (Our mandate is the heart of the people). The newspaper was founded by Petrus Kanisius Ojong (1920-1980) and Jakob Oetama (born 1931). The idea of its establishment began in the 1960s when Ojong, chief editor of *Star Weekly*, and Oetama, chief editor of the magazine *Penabur*, met to found the magazine *Intisari*, which was launched on 7 August 1963. Two years later, they agreed to establish the newspaper now called *Kompas*. The first edition contained 11 pieces of foreign news and seven domestic items. Its editorial board comprised a chief editor, Jakob Oetama, and editors, J. Adisubrata, Lie Hwat Nio, Marcel Beding, Th. Susilastuti, Tan Soei Sing, J. Lambangdjaja, Tan Tik Hong, Th. Ponis Purba, Tinon Prabawa and Eduard Liem (Santoso, 2004).

Born in a political situation where politics had become the government's first priority, the Old Order regime required any social organisation to be affiliated with a political party. *Kompas* was first affiliated with the Catholic Party (Partai Katolik) and when the government cancelled the requirement, *Kompas* became an independent newspaper (Mallarangeng, 2010). Mallarangeng writes that *Kompas*'s vision according to Jakob Oetama was “*Ikut mengembangkan saling pengertian dalam masyarakat yang majemuk dan menghibur yang papa dan mengingatkan yang mapan*” (Develop a mutual understanding in a pluralistic society and comfort the poor and remind the well-established) (p. 51). In the eyes of another *Kompas* founder, Ojong, a newspaper should have a critical presence:

Secara intuitif setiap orang merasakan bahwa tugas utama pers ialah mengontrol dan kalau perlu mengecam pemerintah. Tugas pers bukanlah untuk menjilat yang berkuasa tapi untuk mengkritik yang sedang berkuasa. Mereka (penguasa itu) harus bekerja dengan pikiran bahwa selalu ada pentungan (social control) yang selalu siap sedia untuk memukul mereka, kalau menyeleweng. (Mallarangeng, 2010, p. 52)

Intuitively, everyone feels that the main task of the press is to control and if necessary criticise the government. The task of the press is not to flatter but to criticise those in power. They (the rulers) should work with the thought that there are always sticks (social control) which are ready to beat them if they go astray.

Kompas was not immune to Indonesian political pressures. It has experienced various kinds of “close down”. Firstly, when the *PKI* coup occurred on 30 September 1965, a number of newspapers, including *Kompas*, were closed down due to the government's perception that they might confuse the people or side with the *PKI*. Five days later, it was allowed to publish again. In 1978, for a second time *Kompas*, along with a few other leading media such as *Tempo*, *Merdeka* and *Sinar Harapan*, was closed down for three weeks. They signed an agreement whose contents include:

Kami akan mengindahkan, memenuhi dan menjalankan ketentuan ketentuan sebagaimana telah digariskan dalam peraturan perundangan, Dewan Pers,

kode etik jurnalistik serta ketentuan lainnya yang dikeluarkan pemerintah dalam rangka membina pers yang bebas dan bertanggung jawab.

(Mallarangeng, 2010, p. 55)

We will heed, comply and enforce any provisions as outlined in legislation, the Press Council, the code of journalistic ethics and other provisions issued by the government in order to foster a free and responsible press.

Under the leadership of its founders, *Kompas* developed very quickly. After moving from its publisher Eka Grafika to Masa Merdeka with a total circulation of 4,800 copies per day, *Kompas* quickly reached 8,003 daily copies. In the middle of 1967, it reached 30,650; in 1968, 44,400; in 1969, 63,747; and in 1970, 80,417. About 40 percent of copies were sold in Jakarta and 60 percent outside Jakarta. In 2004, the paper published 500,000 copies on weekdays and 600,000 copies on Saturdays and Sundays (Santoso, 2004).

Kompas is financially well established and it has expanded into several types of businesses: press, publications, a printing business, a department store, a bank and shrimp farms. It controls *Intisari* (a monthly magazine), *Bola* (a weekly sports magazine), *Jakarta-Jakarta* (a weekly news magazine), *Bobo* (a monthly children's magazine), *Hai* (a weekly teenager's magazine), *Senang* (an entertainment magazine), *Nova* (a woman's magazine) and *Monitor* (a weekly tabloid). *Kompas* also owns regional media such as *Sriwijaya Post* in Palembang, *Serambi Indonesia* in Aceh, *Surya* in Surabaya, and *Berita Nasional* in Yogyakarta (Mallarangeng, 2010, p. 59). *Kompas*' reportage is without doubt of high quality. Intellectuals and observers have claimed: "*Kompas telah mengaburkan batas antara idealism dan komersialisme*" (*Kompas* has blurred the demarcation between idealism and commercialism) (Mallarangeng, 2010, pp. 60). *Kompas*' economic interest has caused it to be divided in its attitudes: maintaining good relations with the government, and keeping the distance in order to continue monitoring and criticizing the government. (Mallarangeng, 2010, pp. 60–1) Nevertheless, Mallarangeng argues that the newspaper, which is non-partisan, has contributed greatly to the development of Indonesian media and helped enrich Indonesian literary development, particularly

through its commitment to the short story. The short story not only entertains but also helps to develop a sense of moral awareness in Indonesia. Oetama says:

Cerpen merupakan bagian yang esensial dari existensi surat kabar seperti Kompas, yang falsafahnya adalah kemanusiaan yang beriman, kemanusiaan yang serba dimensi, dan kemanusiaan yang peduli. Kalau surat kabar melaporkan kenyataan yang hidup di masyarakat lewat berita dan komentar, lewat cerpen sukma dari kenyataan itulah yang coba digambarkan. (Kompas, 29 June 2005)

Short stories are an essential part of a newspaper such as *Kompas*, whose philosophy is faithful humanism, multi-dimensional humanism and care for humanity. While newspapers report what is happening in the community through news and commentary, the short story depicts the true spirit of that reality.

Oetama implies that the short story published in *Kompas* is not an additional element which complements the existence of news but exists in line with the paper's humanist dimensions in its own way. Although the short story does not always have to describe reality, it can depict reality or come up with its own reality (Bre Redana, editor of *Kompas*, personal communication, 20 April 2011).

5.3.2.1 The short stories published in *Kompas* prior to 1990 and human rights

As this new stream of literary production began to appear in *Kompas*, it signaled an important institutional effort to create its own cultural tradition in literature. The writers' idealism, enthusiasm, and energy in *Kompas* enlightened the literary world, especially through the genre of the short story. The great number of short stories submitted to this newspaper provided its editors with the opportunities to select the ones which fitted its ideology and objectives. Although *Kompas* did not place a taboo on any themes, its editors with their personal and institutional eyes had ample space to include more entertaining and fresher stories every week.

The issues of human rights were one of the most important themes they selected and centred on issues such as the freedom of speech, the right to life and the rights to assembly. These created alternative ways for the readers of *Kompas* to understand the socio-political situation in Indonesia. Writers of national and international calibre such as Jakob Sumardjo, YB Mangunwijaya, Putu Wijaya, Idrus Ismail, Ali Akbar Navis, Jujur Prananto, Danarto and Emha Ainun Nadjib, as well as those who began to emerge in the field such as Anton Septian and Damhuri Muhammad, participated in enriching readers' outlook on human rights issues. This phenomenon can readily be seen through an examination of the fiction published in the two anthologies: *Dua Kelamin Bagi Midin: Cerpen Kompas Pilihan 1970–1980* (Midin with Two Sexes: Selected Short Stories from *Kompas*, 1970–1980) edited by Seo Gumira Ajidarma and *Riwayat Negeri Yang Haru: Cerpen Kompas Terpilih 1981–1990* (The Stories of a Touching Country: Selected Short Stories from *Kompas* 1981–1990) edited by Radhar Panca Dahana. These two anthologies published 53 and 55 short stories respectively and are labelled according to the year each story was first published. The anthologies thus provided their readers with more than 100 stories. Generally they deal with “actual events” such as love, prostitution, poverty, ethnic eradication, religious problems and politics. The two anthologies provide general information about the development of human rights in the decades 1970–1980 and 1981–1990 and I will make extensive use of them throughout the thesis.

In *Dua Kelamin Bagi Midin: Cerpen Kompas Pilihan 1970–1980*, there are a number of stories which deal with human rights issues such as poverty, the position of women, prostitution and violence. The 53 stories, which were selected from 350 stories previously published in *Kompas*³⁸, indicate writers' different interests in the issues of rights. Generally they are concerned with individual rights which are violated by others or by government related officials or bodies. These stories can be read as protests against violations of human rights by individuals as well as the government. They also deal with women's marginalisation. In the 1970s, writers mostly protested against state violence through representing human rights violations

³⁸ The selected short stories published in the anthology are derived from 350 short stories published in *Kompas* between 1971 and 1980 (Ajidarma, Ed., 2003b).

perpetrated by state apparatuses and as the effects of the state's inappropriate policies on its people. Local representations of state violence dominate writers' concern about issues of mass crime, poverty and the trade of children. For instance, Jakob Sumardjo's "Malam Seorang Maling" ("The Night of a Thief", 1970)³⁹ deal with "street court" of a suspected thief, Dharmadji's "Bong Suwung" (1971)⁴⁰, with poverty-driven prostitution in Yogyakarta, Putu Arya Tirthawirya's "Langit Biru dan Seekor Gagak Menggarisnya dari Arah Kampung" ("The Sky is Blue and A Crow Drew A Line on It from the Village", 1973)⁴¹, with a poor son-in-law's unknowingly robbing his mother-in-law in Surabaya, Toti Tjitrawasita's "Surabaya" (1977)⁴², with food scarcity in Lombok and Dharmadji's "Patek" ("Yaws", 1978)⁴³, with a baby traded for begging in the streets experienced by a mother of eleven children, whose husband was jailed in Nusakambangan.⁴⁴ "Patek", illustrates how poverty drives people to abuse the rights of other people, including their own family members. In this story, poverty has driven a mother, Mijah, to lease her baby to an old woman Supinah, so that Supinah can beg along the streets of Yogyakarta. This story clearly represents the terrible effects of poverty on poor people in cities like Yogyakarta in the 1970s.

Short stories such as Tahi Simbolon's "Tawanan" ("Prisoners", 1972)⁴⁵ deal with the issue of the *Lekra*. "Tawanan" represents Simbolon's disagreement with the state's perception of people's association with Communist Party-related organisations. Furthermore, he depicts state violence against women prisoners. The story itself is an account of a university student, together with four other women, who

³⁹ Jakob Sumardjo's "Malam Seorang Maling" was first published in *Kompas* in 1970 and republished in *Dua Kelamin Bagi Midin: Cerpén Kompas Pilihan 1970–1980* in 2003 (Ajidarma, Ed., 2003b).

⁴⁰ Dharmadji's "Bong Suwung" was first published in *Kompas* in 1971 and republished in *Dua Kelamin Bagi Midin: Cerpén Kompas Pilihan 1970–1980* in 2003 (Ajidarma, Ed., 2003b).

⁴¹ Putu Arya Tirthawirya's "Langit Biru dan Seekor Gagak Menggarisnya Dari Arah Kampung" was first published in *Kompas* in 1973 and republished in *Dua Kelamin Bagi Midin: Cerpén Kompas Pilihan 1970–1980* in 2003 (Ajidarma, Ed., 2003b).

⁴² Toti Tjitrawasita's "Surabaya" was first published in *Kompas* in 1977 and republished in *Dua Kelamin Bagi Midin: Cerpén Kompas Pilihan 1970–1980* in 2003 (Ajidarma, Ed., 2003b).

⁴³ Dharmadji's "Patek" was first published in *Kompas* in 1978 and republished in *Dua Kelamin Bagi Midin: Cerpén Kompas Pilihan 1970–1980* in 2003 (Ajidarma, Ed., 2003b).

⁴⁴ Nusakambangan is an island where Indonesian first class prisoners have been jailed.

⁴⁵ Tahi Simbolon's "Tawanan" was first published in *Kompas* in 1972 and republished in *Dua Kelamin Bagi Midin: Cerpén Kompas Pilihan 1970–1980* in 2003 (Ajidarma, Ed., 2003b).

is suspected as a member of the *Lekra*. The five women are interrogated in different headquarters. During the interrogations, she was sexually abused and mass raped.

The story “Mogok” (“Strike”, 1980)⁴⁶ by F. Rahardi is different from other “human rights” stories. While other stories make use of a realist mode, “Mogok” is written in a satirical mode. It resembles George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* in its satirical mode of expression. The story portrays a chicken farm where the chickens protest against their owner. As the chickens continue to protest, the owner begins to be oppressive and finally decides to slaughter all the chickens which cannot produce eggs. The story is powerful in representing its writer’s disagreement with poor relationship between labourers and owners in Indonesian industry in the era. It shows the bad effects labourers experience if they disobey their managers.

Women’s marginalisation is represented in the story “Gamelanpun Telah Lama Berhenti” (“The Gamelan had long stopped”, 1973)⁴⁷ by Faisal Baras, which depicts the issue of virginity in Bali. The story depicts Nyoman Sukeni, a Balinese dancer who has been left by her boyfriend because she has lost her virginity before marriage and who has to leave her society because of that. This story represents how women are marginalised by customs. It suggests that women are not supposed to make a mistake before their marriage. It is women who have to take care of their virginity. Once they lose it, they can lose their rights to marry and live in their own neighborhood.

In the second anthology *Riwayat Negeri yang Haru: Cerpun Kompas Terpilih 1981–1990*, the writers came up with a slightly different variety of themes, including capitalism, corruption, women’s affairs, debt bondage and freedom of expression. Unlike those in the 1970s, writers in the 1980s were more interested in national problems such as women’s matters in Leila S. Chudori’s “Air Suci Sita” (“The Holy Water of Sita”, 1987)⁴⁸ and “Keats” (1988)⁴⁹, and Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim’s

⁴⁶ F. Rahardi’s “Mogok” was first published in *Kompas* in 1980 and republished in *Dua Kelamin Bagi Midin: Cerpun Kompas Pilihan 1970–1980* in 2003 (Ajidarma, Ed., 2003b).

⁴⁷ Faisal Baras’s “Gamelanpun Telah Lama Berhenti” was first published in *Kompas* in 1973 and republished in *Dua Kelamin Bagi Midin: Cerpun Kompas Pilihan 1970–1980* in 2003 (Ajidarma, Ed., 2003b).

⁴⁸ Leila S. Chudori’s “Air Suci Sita” was first published in *Kompas* in 1987 and republished in *Riwayat Negeri yang Haru: Cerpun Kompas Terpilih 1981–1990* (Dahana, Ed., 2006a).

“Bersolek” (“Dressed Up”, 1984)⁵⁰; corruption in Harris Effendi Thahar’s “Orang Besar” (“An Important Person”, 1984)⁵¹ and Radar Panca Dahana’s “Mat Kurap” (1988)⁵²; capitalism in Hamsad Rangkuti’s “Wanita Muda di Sebuah Hotel Mewah” (“A Young Woman in A High Class Hotel”, 1983)⁵³; and debt-bondage in Beni Setia’s “Puntung Berasap” (“A Cigarette Butt was Burned”, 1984).⁵⁴

Women writers such as Ratna and Leila suggested that women need to speak out for themselves in order for their voices to be heard. Ratna and Leila argue that women should not comply with what men need but assert what they themselves need. While Ratna protests against the patriarchal tradition which limits women’s freedom through her character Nuke in “Besolek”, Leila suggests that women should be assertive in facing their problems. Chudori’s “Keats” and “Air Suci Sita” represent her concerns about women’s freedom. The two stories present mature and intellectual women characters who live their lives between individual freedom and cultural bondage.

Writers such as Harris and Radhar show their anger with national problems such as corruption. They suggest that corruption is not only an individual act but also a social phenomenon which results from people’s permissive attitude towards corruptors and poverty alleviation. While Dahana in his “Mat Kurap” implies that corruption committed by low-rank civil servants is motivated by Indonesia’s inability to provide prosperity to its people, Harris’s “Orang Besar” places his concern on why corruption spreads throughout society. The story is a depiction of a high-ranking state officer who becomes rich by manipulating his position and corruptly taking money from the projects he is in charge of. In this story, Harris implies that

⁴⁹ Leila S. Chudori’s “Keats” was first published in *Kompas* in 1988 and republished in *Riwayat Negeri yang Haru: Cerpen Kompas Terpilih 1981–1990* (Dahana, Ed., 2006a).

⁵⁰ Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim’s “Bersolek” was first published in *Kompas* in 1984 and republished in *Riwayat Negeri yang Haru: Cerpen Kompas Terpilih 1981–1990* (Dahana, Ed., 2006a).

⁵¹ Harris Effendi Thahar’s “Orang Besar” was first published in *Kompas* in 1984 and republished in *Riwayat Negeri yang Haru: Cerpen Kompas Terpilih 1981–1990* (Dahana, Ed., 2006a).

⁵² Radhar Panca Dahana’s “Mat Kurap” was first published in *Kompas* in 1988 and republished in *Riwayat Negeri yang Haru: Cerpen Kompas Terpilih 1981–1990* (Dahana, Ed., 2006a).

⁵³ Hansad Rangkuti’s “Wanita Muda di Sebuah Hotel Mewah” was first published in *Kompas* in 1983 and republished in *Riwayat Negeri yang Haru: Cerpen Kompas Terpilih 1981–1990* (Dahana, Ed., 2006a).

⁵⁴ Beni Setia’s “Puntung Berasap” was first published in *Kompas* in 1984 and republished in *Riwayat Negeri yang Haru: Cerpen Kompas Terpilih 1981–1990* (Dahana, Ed., 2006a).

corruption is an act which is not easy to alleviate. He reminds the state that a corruptor is surrounded by many people who try to make him stay in his position as long as possible. He suggests that there are many more corruptors than the government has caught so far. Similarly, there are more violations of human rights than those which have become known to the public.

The last type of cultural protest which is evident in this second collection relates to the effect of capitalism on people. This theme can be found in Hamsad Rangkuti's "Wanita Muda di Sebuah Hotel Mewah". The story describes a 16-year-old girl who comes to a hotel to sell herself for money. Through the hotel officer, she offers her body to the hotel visitor who wants to pay her the highest fee. Afterwards she rushes home to tell her sickly mother to get prepared to go to the hospital. Hamsad, in this story, criticises the government for the effect of capitalism on people's attitudes towards humanity. He suggests that public services, including hospitals, are only provided to those who can pay. Those who have money can receive any service they want. Those who do not have money do not have public services. As the girl understands that public services are only provided for buyers, she sells her body in order that she can be a buyer.

5.3.3 *Horison* and Its Short Stories

This section attempts to account for the emergence of *Horison* in the constellation of Indonesian media. It will also examine its history and its human rights stories.

Horison is a national literary magazine. It was launched in July 1966 and has been praised by many as an institution for its literary idealism. Its existence has been envied, criticized, respected and praised. *Horison*'s development has been across three important periods: the period of respect (1966–1980), of difficulty (1980–1995), and of new appearances (1996–now).

The magazine was initially "recognized as part of the literary vanguard of the 1966 student movement, and provided a nexus between opponents of *Lekra* from the Cultural Manifesto group and young artists associated with the student movement" (Hill, 2010). The magazine was established to realise one of the recommendations of

a symposium conducted at the University of Indonesia, Jakarta, in May 1966 (Mahayana, 2006b). It was founded by Mochtar Lubis, P. K. Zaini, Soe Hok Djin (Arief Budiman) and Taufiq Ismail. Its board of editors consisted of Mochtar Lubis, H. B. Jassin, P. K. Zaini, Taufiq Ismail, Arief Budiman and D. S. Mulyanto. As it developed, new editors were added such as Goenawan Mohamad, Sapardi Djoko Damono, Ikranagara, Aant S. Kawisar and Hamid Jabbar.

The prestige of this magazine soon rocketed and it came to be known as a trendsetter by which the development of fiction in the era of the New Order was judged. Although the magazine was run by a number of leading major figures and critics of Indonesian literature, who constantly monitored and observed the development of Indonesian literature, its circulation always remained small. This indicates that its readership was also small.

Like most literary media, *Horison* has undergone a fluctuating development, moving through some important stages in its history. Hill (2010) argues that under the editorship of prominent figures such as Mochtar Lubis and H. B. Jassin, the magazine remained prestigious until the 1980s, when its national literary guardianship began to be questioned and its financial problems began to emerge. Its high status as the barometer of “good” literature started to be replaced by the availability of “the cultural and literary section” provided by most newspapers. In Hill’s analysis, the emergence of *Tempo*, under Goenawan Mohamad, with its featured short topical essays and *Prisma*, an intellectual monthly journal, as well as a number of attractive popular magazines which provided higher honorariums with wider circulation, made *Horison* less important.

After the 1980s, *Horison*’s unsatisfactory position began to be obvious and it was gradually replaced by other media such as newspapers as writers of national calibre who had initially written for the magazine moved to other publications. Consequently the short stories and essays published in *Horison* were no longer judged to be superior to those published in the Sunday edition of newspapers such as *Kompas*, *Republika*, *Suara Pembaruan* and *Jawa Post*. There were a number of possible reasons why the development of *Horison* faltered. First, *Horison* was financially unstable and its organisers could not develop it fully. They could not pay

writers appropriately and writers became reluctant to send their writings to the publication. Among the important writers who stopped sending their writing to *Horison* were Umar Kayam, Darmanto Jatman, Gerson Poyk, Budi Darma, Emha Ainun Najib, and Satyagraha Hoerip. Second, the artistic layout of this magazine was arguably less attractive than those of other magazines. This meant that the magazine was artistically less interesting to its readers. Third, the people's need for good works of literature, be it poems, short stories, essays or novels, was being met by newspapers so readers no longer needed *Horison*.

Its financial weakness could be the most important of the reasons why this magazine began to lose its literary supremacy. *Horison's* limited financial condition meant it could not, as Mochtar Lubis said, "*dapat bertahan hidup, meskipun berada dalam kemiskinan*" (survive in financial difficulties) (Mahayana, 2006b, p. 33). From the 1980s to the 1990s, *Horison* went through hard times. Readers began to leave the magazine and it began to experience further financial difficulties. Mahayana writes "*Majalah Horison seperti hidup terseok seok dan selalu mengalami kesulitan keuangan dengan oplah yang tidak lebih dari 4,000 exemplar*" (*Horison* staggered along and always experienced financial difficulties with a circulation of not more than 4,000 copies) (p. 33). At these times, as Mahayana continues, *Horison* had to move its location from one place to another, resulting in a chaotic administration in which some writings went missing and some contributors were not paid.

However, after 1996, the magazine was run by *Yayasan Indonesia* (Indonesia Foundation) and began to make a breakthrough in order to survive and gain a wider readership. *Horison* appeared with a new look, more pages and more certainty in its circulation because a number of institutions, especially government ones, began to order copies.

5.3.3.1 *Horison's* short stories before 1990 and human rights

Like *Kompas*, *Horison* did not have any policy about taboo themes. Ikranagara states that *Horison* accepted works on all themes, including human rights (Ikranagara, former editor of *Horison*, personal communication, 27 April 2011). From 1966 to

1990, a number of writers wrote stories whose themes occupy the territory of human rights. These themes covered a number of rights issues, including the Japanese occupation, the war, *PKI*-related problems, state matters such as state violence, social criticism, corruption and politics and women. Although *Kompas*' two anthologies represented social issues more than state issues, *Horison* appears to have dealt with more tragic themes, including themes related to state violence. All of these themes revolved around three rights: freedom of expression, the right to life and the right to assembly.

Certain stories also represent Indonesian life during the Japanese occupation which may have been less controversial than the contemporary period. These include B. Jass' "Kabut" ("The Fog", 1967), Ras Siregar's "Ia Datang di Malam Hari" ("He Came at Night", 1967), Mohammad Diponegoro's "Potret Seorang Prajurit" ("A Portrait of a Soldier", 1970), Ina Sumarsono Sastrawardoyo's "Ujung Menanti" ("The End of Waiting", 1979) and Zainuddin Tamir Koto's "Menjelang Magrib" ("Before Sunset", 1981). "Ujung Menanti" deals with the life of a woman who is involved in the colonial war against the Dutch and Japanese, "Ia datang di Malam Hari" with a woman who has a close relationship with a *Kempetai*⁵⁵ soldier when her husband is employed out of town, "Kabut" with the effect of rape by Japanese soldiers on the life of a woman's daughter, "Potret Seorang Prajurit" with the recollection of an Indonesian about the murder of a Japanese soldier in Semarang and "Menjelang Magrib" with a story about a woman who smuggles rice during the occupation to feed her family. These stories show that the Japanese occupation caused Indonesians to experience not only bad memories but also with some pleasurable ones.

However, most stories about this era picture the occupation as a tragedy. "Ia Datang di Malam Hari", for instance, depicts the violence perpetrated by Japanese soldiers. Siregar criticises the behaviour of Japanese soldiers, who did not behave as "big brothers" as the Japanese slogan read during the occupation. Instead, they used the slogan only to enable them to reach their goals, to win World War II, and to benefit from the colonisation of Indonesia. The story deals with Aminah, a young

⁵⁵ *Kempetai* (Kempetai) were the military police of the Japanese Army.

woman who is rumoured to have had an affair with a Japanese soldier. When her husband is murdered, she is accused of killing him.

Some stories represent different views of the occupation. “Potret Seorang Pradjurit”, to take one example, is not centred on the trauma caused by the Japanese, but on what the main character does to a Japanese soldier. His violent act during the occupation causes him to be haunted when he sees the photograph of the man he killed. The story is an account of an Indonesian soldier, Mohammad, who killed a Japanese soldier. When he happens to visit the family of the deceased, he is tormented by his guilty feeling.

There are also the stories representing issues of war caused by internal national conflicts, including stories about the regional revolts. The stories of the 1959 regional revolts include Chairul Harun’s “Melantai Batang Anai” (“Take the Floor of Anai River”, 1971), Arif Gossin’s “Rentetan Peluru” (“A Series of Bullets”, 1972), Udin Lubis’s “Ajahku” (“My Dad”, 1973), and Chairul Harun’s “Pulang” (“Back Home”, 1974). “Melantai Batang Anai” deals with a lieutenant who is ordered to kill *PRRI* soldiers in Sumbar; “Ajahku” with a family’s ideas about the *PRRI* war; and “Pulang” with an ex-general of the Indonesian national force who is not accepted by his family and villagers because of his action in trying to destroy the village in the *PRRI* war. These stories depict the dilemmas faced by the Indonesian armed forces personnel and the rebels. They confronted what the Minang proverb describes: “*Kalah jadi abu, menang jadi arang*” (To win is to be ash, to lose is to become charcoal) (Wisran Hadi, 2008, p. xv).

War and conflict stories include Ang Hiap Lee’s “Tamu Dari Penjara” (“A Guest from a Prison”, 1967) and N. Belanto’s “Kalabasu” (1970) and Danarto’s “Labyrinth” (1971). Most stories of this group represent violence and destruction. Belanto’s “Kalabasu”, for instance, depicts conflicts between Indonesians and the government of Portuguese Timor, the border issue between the two nations and the violence which occurred because of the disagreement between two different peoples.

What is interesting here is that the writers responded to these events long after they happened, decades before their critical accounts were published. For example, Chairul’s “Melantai Batang Anai” was published a decade later than the rebellion. In

these cases, this delayed confession was possibly connected to the political situation at that earlier time. Because of government censorship, the writers tried not to provoke problems with the government. They waited until the situation was conducive enough for them to publish. They found the right time a few years later when the Old Order was replaced by the New Order. Jassin (as cited in Idris, 2008) argued that this kind of delay was caused by the writers' belief that "*pemberontakan yang gagal itu kurang menarik atau persoalan yang mereka anggap tabu, atau mereka takut membicarakannya*" (the failed revolt was not interesting or was thought of as a taboo thing, or they were scared of talking about) (p. xix).

In the first decade of *Horison's* development, issues related to the *PKI* were an important theme in a number of short stories, including works such as Satyagraha Hoerip's "Pada Titik Kulminasi" ("The Culmination", 1966), Gerson Poyk's "Perempuan dan Anak Anaknya" ("A Woman with Her Children", 1966), Sosiawan Nugroho's "Sebuah Perjuangan Ketjil" ("A Small-Scale Struggle", 1967), Umar Kayam's "Bawuk" (1970), Suwarna Pragola's "Berakhir Dibalik Terali" ("Ended Up Behind Bars", 1973), Ngurah Parsua's "Paman Wera" ("Uncle Wera", 1975), Zakaria M. Passe's "Liku Liku Dalam Rimba" ("Twists and Turns in the Jungle", 1975), Rayani Sriwidodo's "Satu Hari Dalam Hidup Pa Mulih" ("A Day in Mr. Mulih's Life", 1980) and Sumartono's "Pulang" ("Back Home", 1979). These stories indicate the writers' concerns about such historical moments and their aftereffects. They represent the wide and terrible consequences the *PKI* coup had in the lives of former party members, their family members and anybody accused of having a connection to the *PKI*. The writers question the violence triggered by the tragedy of 1965, which Satyagraha Hoerip (1983, p. 57) calls "*petaka terselubung rapi*" (well designed catastrophe). Satyagraha's story also draws readers' attention to the second principle of the state ideology of *Pancasila*: "just and civilized humanity" for all Indonesians. The stories launch their silent "calling Indonesians to arms" to fight against mass crimes. They provide readers with details of the mass killing and violence: cut throats, bodies floating in the river, imprisonment and gun killings.

This list can be read as an indication of the writers' direct and indirect traumas. The national tragedy put hundreds of thousands of people's lives in danger

and left deep wounds. Satyagraha's "Pada Titik Kulminasi", for instance, deals with the issue of eradicating *PKI* members. The story is an account of Soesetio, a teacher, who faces a dilemma of whether or not to kill his brother-in-law who is linked to the *Lekra*, and this causes him to get into trouble with his job. The story depicts how the issue of the *PKI* destroys the unity of a family and how anti-*PKI* supporters respond and act against those who are involved with it.

Unlike "Pada Titik Kulminasi", which centres on the life of the family of a *PKI* member, Sumartono's "Pulang" deals with an ex-party member. It is an account of the life of Bakir, a man who is imprisoned for a number of years because of his involvement in the *PKI*. During 12 years in prison, he is moved from one prison to another; his family does not know where he is and they are not accepted by their society. It depicts the horrible life that *PKI* members, including their family and relatives, might have experienced. Sumartono protests against the New Order regime which caused the situation to take place. The government deprived the rights of these people to live properly in their own country.

State matters, including arbitrary arrest, social protest, and military domination are themes of some authors' protests. Stories which belong to this group of themes include Mochtar Lubis's "Sebuah Sketsa dari Penjara" ("A Sketch from A Prison", 1966), Bur Rasuanto's "Malam Berkabung" ("A Mourning Night", 1966), F. Rahardi's "Negeri RI" ("The Nation of RI", 1979), Fadli Rasyid's "Sebutir Tjahaja Mengembara Dalam Gelap" ("A Light Shines in the Darkness", 1972), Kuntowidjojo's "Samurai" (1973), Sides Sudyarto DS's "Sholat Lebaran Kawan-an Tahanan Politik dalam Sebuah Kamp Konsentrasi" ("Political Prisoners' Lebaran Prayer in A Concentration Camp", 1977), Pamusuk Eneste's "Jenderal-jenderal" ("Generals", 1980); Hamsat Rangkuti's "Umur Panjang Untuk Tuan Joyokoyoroyo CS" ("Long Live Mr. Joyokoyoroyo and Friends", 1980) and Darman Moenir's "Perburuan" ("The Hunt", 1988). These stories deal with arbitrary arrest, power and politics, military violence, men's superiority over women, political prisoners, military and civil government, corruption, and a social phenomenon in Minangkabau.

Mochtar Lubis's "Sebuah Sketsa dari Penjara", for example, deals with a military person who is jailed because he is a week late back to his battalion after

getting married and he is jailed without trial. In this story, Mochtar illustrates the terrible feelings of the man arrested. Unlike “Sebuah Sketsa dari Penjara” which depicts military violence, Darman’s “Perburuan” is a social critique of recreational hunting in Minangkabau, West Sumatra. The story is an account of a man named Abizar Datuk, who has two wives and likes to go hunting. For him hunting is more important than anything else, including his daughter’s earrings. In this story, Darman criticises the dark side of hunting practice because of its social and financial disadvantages. Consider the following: “*Pekerjaan menumpuk, isteri hamil berat, anak sakit dan badan kurang enak tidak mesti menghalanginya untuk pergi berburu. Jikalau uang tidak ada, maka itu harus diadakan*” (Piles of work, his wife’s pregnancy, his child’s illness, his own sickness, nothing would hinder him from hunting. If there was no money, it must be found) (p. 316). Darman represents how women support their husband in such a hobby. Although they do not like their husband’s hobby, they decide to prepare their husband to go hunting every Sunday. No matter what happens, every two weeks each is ready to prepare the husband for hunting although each has to sell something at home to do so.

Women’s issues also interested a few writers. These themes become the central problems in some stories such as Kuntowidjojo’s “Parni” (1970), Martin Aleida’s “Aku Sebertjik Air” (“I am a Splash of Water”, 1971), Asnelly Luthan’s “Tuntutan” (“Demand”, 1977), Zainuddin Tamir Koto’s “Air Mata Ibu” (“Mother’s Tears”, 1979), Gik Sugiyanto HP’s “Lelaki Tua dan Maut” (“An Old Man and Death”, 1979) and Sides Sudyanto DS’s “Terdakwa” (“The Defendant”, 1989). “Aku Sebertjik Air”, “Air Mata Ibu”, and “Lelaki Tua dan Maut” respectively describe a prostitute, a killer wife, spinsterhood, women’s sufferings, violence against women and women’s marginalisation.

Among all of these, “Terdakwa” may be the hardest social critique. Through “Terdakwa”, Sides indicates that women are marginalised by patriarchal society in multiple ways: as women, as a secondary social class and as a powerless group in general. Sides helped to voice women’s anger against a state’s system which does not recognise their equality. “Terdakwa” is an account of a blind pregnant woman Rukmini, who is raised by a single mother. She wants the man who impregnates her

to marry her. She goes to *Lurah*⁵⁶ to bring the man to court. In this story, Sides protests against the government, which fails to protect the rights of its citizens. Instead of gaining her rights, Rukmini experiences several incidents: arrest, imprisonment and murder.

5.4 CONCLUSION

The connection between the short story and human rights in Indonesia, seen clearly in this literary history, begins with the issue of colonisation – foreign or external, and then moves to domestic or internal colonialism. Although Indonesia has reached the postcolonial era, the short story in this era is not free from traumatic experiences. While writers in the new era address different themes regarding their national problems, they have not diverted their attention from writing about state oppression. They use their stories to protest against the powers that operate and maintain the status quo by colonising people within the nation.

From the pre-independence era to 1990, Indonesian short stories represent a variety of themes related to human rights. The stories examined in this chapter are an indication that writers have always communicated their concerns about rights. From one era to another, they criticize the practice and handling of the issues of human rights in Indonesia. Some react to the issues soon after the events take place and others wait until much later. For example, the issue of the *PKI* has been responded to by writers in different decades. *Horison* published Satyagraha Hoerip's "Pada Titik Kulminasi" in 1966, Ngurah Parsua's "Paman Wera" in 1975 and Rayani Sriwidodo's "Satu Hari Dalam Hidup Pa Mulih" in 1980.

The stories grapple with historical humanitarian incidents in Indonesia. They represent philosophical and practical problems within human rights discourse and Indonesian history. They also depict the ideology of rights under the reign of both foreign and domestic powers. The stories directly or indirectly criticise the inhuman acts the various powers have used in maintaining their domination. Some stories also

⁵⁶ *Lurah* is the person in charge of a *kelurahan* (local authority).

represent the writers' protest against injustice and immorality within the society they depict.

Although *Kompas* and *Horison* have both contributed to the development of the Indonesian short story's representation of human rights, they have shown similarities and differences in their manner of representation. Both have played their role as a medium for writers to protest against the powers which infringe the rights of others. As a daily newspaper, *Kompas*'s representation of violence in the Colonial Era, the Japanese occupation and the Revolution deals with Indonesia's struggle against foreign powers. The stories of this type use the issue of nationalism and state oppression due to state policy on important problems such as rebellions, poverty, crimes and the effects of economic crisis, and corrupt state apparatuses that open doors for the state and the people to violate the rights of weaker citizens.

Through their emphasis on particular constructs of human rights, the stories also evince an interest in the unjust mechanisms the powers apply to tackle these problems. They suggest that the dominant powers, both foreign and domestic powers, can cause human rights violations to occur. These short stories clearly demonstrate that human rights violations have happened not only between two individuals or two groups, but also between the state and its own people. The authoritarian governments and their apparatuses have caused the people to experience harmful acts which might initially have been aimed at maintaining government supremacy. The acts did not solve the security problems but led to humanitarian crises among Indonesians. Both foreign and domestic powers have caused people to deny and abuse the rights of their fellow citizens.

These stories not only depict the sociopolitical realities in Indonesia but they function as a form of cultural resistance against the unjust and inhumane actions which have taken place. In the stories, the writers resist any domination and inhuman treatment which has been experienced by Indonesians, domination which has taken place from the colonial era to the Japanese occupation and the Revolution, from the Old Order era to the New Order era. In short, the writers powerfully mourn and protest violations against freedom of expression, the right to life and the right to assembly, rights held by the colonised, women and the weak.

CHAPTER 6 – REPRESENTING INJUSTICE AND IMPOSED IMMORALITY: ALI AKBAR NAVIS’S SHORT FICTION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines how injustice and forced immorality are represented in the works of Ali Akbar Navis. His short stories, published in the Indonesian newspaper *Kompas* and the literary magazine *Horison*, reveal Indonesian human rights injustices initially committed during the *PRRI* revolts of the late 1950s. But he also deals with traumas experienced during the reigns of the Old Order, the New Order and the Reform Order regimes. This chapter argues that “human rights” media narratives by Navis not only represent issues of injustice and forced immorality but also contribute to the overall exposure of cultural protest against these issues in Indonesia’s New Order and in the regimes before and after it. Critical readings of such narratives attest to a further contestation of sociopolitical events in all the regimes.

To analyse which issues of injustice and immorality are represented in Navis’s works and how these issues became his cultural tools to protest against the Indonesian government, the analysis is structured into three main sections: Navis’s social and political concerns, cultural transformations in his short fiction, and his cultural protest post-New Order. The first section will explain why Navis was concerned about these issues, the second will show how his fiction functions as his vehicle to deliver his cultural dissent against the Old Order and the New Order, and the last will consider his dissent with the issues in the regime after the New Order.

6.2 NAVIS’S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONCERNS

Navis’s works are generally his responses to what was directly going on around him. They mostly represent his concerns about social and political problems which were significant at the time he wrote them. This section briefly discusses Navis’s social and political backgrounds which then became the foundation for his works. The discussion starts with Navis’s political concerns.

6.2.1 Navis and Indonesian Politics

Navis's connection with politics has a long history which spans four periods: the Dutch colonial era, the Japanese Occupation, the Old Order era and the New Order era. In the first two periods, Navis was not active in politics. However, he experienced hard times as the effect of political traumas caused by the wars against the Dutch and the Japanese. During the Old Order era, Navis continued to experience difficult times because of the civil war in his home region of West Sumatra.

Navis became formally involved in politics in the 1950s, when the *PRRI* war broke out. A number of regions in Indonesia started to rebel because they felt discriminated against by the central government in Jakarta. Although Navis preferred to live as a civilian when the war broke out, he could not completely free himself from what was happening around him. In *Otobiografi A.A. Navis: Satiris & Suara Kritis dari Daerah* (Yusra, 1994), Navis described his life. After Navis was fired from his position in *Jawatan Kesenian Sumatera Tengah* (the office of the Middle Sumatera Arts Affairs), he lived with his family and spent his writing career for years in Maninjau.⁵⁷ When he joined his own wife there, who worked as a midwife, without his presence or prior consent, he was elected vice chairman of a youth group and this compelled him to directly experience the war. In this place, he who never wanted to get involved in the war was appointed *Wakil Ketua Koordinator Pimpinan Pemuda Pejuang Daerah Agam* (Vice Head of Coordinators of Youth for the Agam region). He then witnessed what happened to the victims of the war and got involved in it indirectly (Yusra, 1994). Despite his reluctance to join the group, he had no power to negate the membership's vote because, as he said, refusing the invitation would have meant opposing the invitees. So his involvement provided him with information about what happened during the war, who was involved and what terrible effects civilians and warriors experienced. All of these inspired him to write a number of stories, including "Maria" and "Penumpang Kelas Tiga" (analysed below). The two stories depict the effects of the war on civilians and on combatants.

⁵⁷ Maninjau is a district in West Sumatra.

Although Navis did not interfere in his wife's duties as a midwife and sometimes as nurse,⁵⁸ he personally saw the condition of her patients and was always ready to listen to them and give his personal opinion about their condition. His wife's career caused him to realise how horrible the civil war was and what profound traumatic effects it caused. As he stated:

PERANG SAUDARA bukan saja jahat karena saling membunuh. Tapi juga menimbulkan suasana ketakutan bahkan korban-korban dikalangan penduduk. Yang memilukan dan teramat memprihatinkan saya adalah kenyataan bahwa ketakutan penduduk itu bertambah hebat dan mencekam karena gaya dan tingkah laku anggota anggota militer yang berlebih lebihan. (Yusra, 1994, p. 99)

Civil war was evil not only because people killed each other but it also caused fear and made victims of the public. What broke my heart and made me anxious was the fact that people's fear intensified and gripped them harder because of the excessive behaviour of military personnel.

Navis really knew the dark sides of the war: the behaviour of some military personnel, the suffering of the civilians and the political tricks both belligerent groups played. Such experiences later gave him the energy to republish stories depicting such traumatic experiences in his recent anthology *Kabut Negeri Si Dali (Fog Over Dali's Country, 2001a)*.⁵⁹ These stories help confirm what Adilla (2003) and Fanany (2005) claim: that the short story is Navis's most important field of writing.

⁵⁸ Akasari Jasin was a midwife. However, in Maninjau during the civil war, there was only one *mantri* (male nurse) whose job was often taken over by Aksari because he was so scared of the war and often refused to care for those who needed his treatment, especially at night. Instead, the care seekers turned to Aksari, who was more available to care for both *APRI* and *PRRI* personnel as well as civilians (Yusra, 1994).

⁵⁹ The anthology includes stories which were previously published in a number of media. Among the stories are "Si Bangkak" ("The Swollen Man", 1966), "Laporan" ("Report", 1988), "Sang Guru Juki" ("Juki, the Teacher", 1990), "Si Montok" ("The Voluptuous Woman", 1990), "Perempuan Itu Bernama Lara" ("The Woman Named Lara", 1996), "Gundar Sepatu" ("A Shoe Brush", 1997), "Rekayasa Sejarah si Patai" ("The Created History of Patai", 1997) and "Marah yang Marasai" ("Marah Who Suffered", 1998).

6.2.2 Navis and Islam

Navis's strong moral sense may have been caused by the fact that he was born in Padang Panjang, which is well known as *Serambi Mekah* (The Verandah of Mecca). His strong Islamic sensitivity influenced his religious narratives such as "Robohnya Surau Kami" ("The Collapse of Our Prayer House", 1956a) and "Datangnya dan Perginya" ("His Coming and Going", 1956b) as well as his novel *Kemarau* ("Dry Season", 1967). These works also exemplify his mission of resistance, which is "*menemukan perjuangan manusia yang memberontak dan atau hendak merubah mentalitas masyarakatnya*" (to discover the human spirit of rebellion and/or to want to challenge people's ways of thinking) (Rosidi, 1970, p. 129).

Navis's religious protest against those who submit their body and soul to God without any attempt to right social injustices in the world is evident in "Robohnya Surau Kami", "Datangnya dan Perginya" and *Kemarau*. In "Datangnya dan Perginya" and *Kemarau*, Navis argues that the truth should always be revealed even though it is hard to accept. Muslims should not succumb to fate and continue life as it is, but they have to set things right whenever they see something wrong or unjust in practice. Through the characters in "Datangnya dan Perginya", Navis contrasts two beliefs: accepting fate and allowing a particular sin to continue, or telling the truth in order to stop it. Here the contradiction is built around the story of a husband and wife who have a good family with three children. When the husband invites his father to visit, a secret is then found out: the man has married his father's daughter from a different mother. The mother decides not to tell them that they are brother and sister for the sake of family unity and let her and her ex-husband take the burden of the sin. Yet the ex-husband thinks that they have to tell the truth in order that sin might end, as Islamic teachings instruct. In the end, the ex-husband fails to tell his son and daughter, and leaves the readers to think about what will happen to the married couple.

6.3 CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION IN NAVIS'S SHORT FICTION

My reading of the four selected stories by Navis aims to show how his traumatic and social experiences contribute to an understanding of human rights issues in Indonesia. Broadly speaking, they embrace three main themes: state violence, women's marginalisation and moral degradation.

Navis's fiction has penetrated the domain of trauma to depict political violence and its human impact: death, anguish, exile, revenge and separation. Political violence and its effects have energised the mind of this writer, helping to produce an artistic expression of his concern. Three of the four works by Navis under examination in this chapter explore the issue of political violence. "Penumpang Kelas Tiga" ("The Third Class Passengers", 1995)⁶⁰ depicts violence in the Old Order in light of the *PRRI* revolt, "Penangkapan" ("Arrests", 1996)⁶¹ examines violence in the New Order in light of the regime's efforts to silence political subversions and the third story "Maria" (1996)⁶² represents women's marginalisation, the patriarchal oppression of women and of the victims of the *PRRI* revolts. The three stories support the proposition that trauma writing is personally and culturally critical to recognizing the abusive acts to which the stories refer to. The stories elucidate victims' physical and psychological pains and those who witness the pains and their effects. They resonate with what Vickroy (2002, p. 2) calls "the public's relationship to the traumatized". Through the relationship, the trauma writers "help readers discover their own sympathetic imaginings of humanity" (p. 2), especially to the victims where such relationship has been made by "the public's resistance" (p. 2) towards the victims' painful experiences. Navis was concerned with social matters in a particular way. The kind-hearted writer⁶³ was a social observer and was well known

⁶⁰ "Penumpang Kelas Tiga" was first published in *Kompas* in 1995 and republished in the anthology *Pistol Perdamaian: Cerpen Pilihan Kompas 1996* on which the analysis is based.

⁶¹ "Penangkapan" was first published in *Kompas* in 1996 and republished in *Anjing Anjing Menyerbu Kuburan: Cerpen Pilihan Kompas 1997(a)* on which the following analysis is based.

⁶² "Maria" was written in 1956 and was published in *Kompas* in 1995 and in *Anjing Anjing Menyerbu Kuburan: Cerpen Pilihan Kompas 1997(b)* on which the analysis is based, and in *Jodoh* 1999 (Fanany, 2005).

⁶³ Navis's wife Aksari Jasin, in an interview in Padang on 9 April 2011, mentioned that Navis was someone who could not bear to see people suffering. When he served as the people's representative for

as a satirist who criticised incorrect practices performed and suffered by his society. His primary concern was with the lives of the commoners. His concern about moral matters in “Tamun yang Datang di Hari Lebaran” (“A Visitor Who Came on *Lebaran*”⁶⁴, 1998)⁶⁵ is evident.

6.3.1 Political Violence: “Penumpang Kelas Tiga”

In addressing the issue of politics, Navis’s “Penumpang Kelas Tiga” qualifies as creative dissent or literary resistance. In this realist story, which is set against the background of the political events in the Minangkabau region, Navis concentrates on the events surrounding the *PRRI* civil war during the Old Order and the *PKI* in the early New Order, in this story he responds to the political violence as the effect of the war between the state and secessionists, and the rebellion at the very beginning of the Suharto regime.

“Penumpang Kelas Tiga” emerges from the traumatic events Navis experienced as a civilian. The story provides testimonial narratives of the war victims. Navis’s narrative reshapes the course of history by transforming it into artistic forms which entertain the readers without directly condemning certain individuals or groups, as well as culturally resisting state violence. His story suggests that he is against the war as well as the aftereffects of political practices. It helps to confirm his disagreement with the practices and it is in line with his personal skepticism about politics: “*Saya memang agak skeptis dan kurang senang politik praktis*” (I truly was skeptical about and did not really like practical politics) (Yusra, 1994, p. 89). He questioned the intention of politicians to care for their nation-state because he believed that they acted more for the sake of their own groups. When addressing the politicians of the Old Order, he said that “*Saya betul betul muak*

West Sumatra Province, he was one of those who voiced the rights of the marginal groups, including the poor.

⁶⁴ *Lebaran* is a term used to celebrate Muslims’ triumph after the fasting month. It is celebrated nationally and normally runs for two days, which are national holidays. It is a great national celebration and people, especially Indonesian Muslims, enjoy the event.

⁶⁵ “Tamun yang Datang di Hari Lebaran” was first published in *Kompas* in 1997 and then republished in the anthology *Derabat: Cerpen Pilihan Kompas 1999* on which the analysis is based.

dengan kelakuan dan target kaum politisi kita dewasa ini” (I am truly fed up with the behaviour and targets of our politicians in recent times) (Yusra, 1994, p. 89).

“Penumpang Kelas Tiga” tells of two brothers who join different armies with different ideologies after they begin to struggle to win the heart of a woman they both love. After the woman decides to marry one of them, the rejected brother comes to fight his brother’s army. The story is built on binary pairs through which Navis delivers his protest. The main binary polarities are the state and the rebels.

Based on the main binary opposition of state/rebels, Navis has established other polarities, such as center /region, nationalist/marxist, and winners/losers. First, Navis presents the opposition between the state national military force (*TNI*) and the regional separatist force (*PRRI*). The *TNI* was assigned to crush the *PRRI* rebels. Navis deplored the Old Order’s decision to use military force to solve the regional revolt. He represents tens of thousands of Indonesians who could not shed tears any more because they had become victims of the war. The war had deprived them of their rights, morality and brotherhood. This is what Navis shows in the story: as a result of the war, the brothers in each army have different ways of living to achieve their objectives as they attempt to gain the attention of the one woman.

Second, Navis also represents a nationalist force (*TNI*) and a different rebelling group the *PKI*. The *TNI* annihilated the *PKI* revolt in late 1965 and caused the *PKI* personnel to be “*ditangkap lalu dipenjarakan*” (arrested and jailed) (p. 84). Navis presents the change of the course of history. The *PKI*, which used to support the government, committed a coup d’etat against it. This opposition produces the third binary pair between winners and losers. Navis represents these polarities to depict the relationship between those who gain victory and those who fall victim to the national tragedy. This opposition is represented as foundational to the background of the victims. It illustrates the terrible effect of state violence on the victims.

Navis’s state is never directly mentioned in the story. His story suggests that the state is so high that it does not need to be discussed. Historically, his not mentioning the state can be understood as his way of avoiding direct criticism of the government. Instead he provides clues which can explain the role of the state throughout history. The first, for example, is related to the state’s policy in dealing

with military forces during the Revolution: “*pemerintah melakukan kebijakan rasionalisasi*” (the government implemented rationalization policies) (p. 82). In the story, Navis introduces a number of military regiments such as the *TKR*,⁶⁶ (p. 82), *Pasukan Hisbullah*⁶⁷ (p. 82), and *Tentara Merah Indonesia*⁶⁸ (p. 82). These regiments were then united into the *TNI* (p. 82). Navis showed the disadvantageous effects of this arbitrary decision for non-*TNI* military personnel: “*yang pangkatnya diturunkan sejarah*” (who were demoted by history) (p. 84). Historically, he then takes his readers to what Indonesia had done to a great number of military personnel in the 1960s. They were punished for their involvement in the *PRRI*. Thirdly, Navis mentioned the further issues of being “*ditangkap lalu dipenjarakan*” (arrested and jailed) (p. 84) during the rebellion by the *PKI* in 1965 (p. 84).

Navis portrayed the state as an untouchable institution whose “*kebijaksanaan*” (policy) (p. 82) was to “*menumpas*” (annihilate) (p. 83) rebellions and which must always win “*perang*” (the war). It was the state’s political vehicle, the *TNI*, which was assigned to perform this task. Navis did not narrate how the *TNI* oppressed the rebels. Instead he narrated what the effect of the *TNI* actions was on its personnel and civilians. Navis attempted to show the social effects of a military presence in society, the meaning of its existence among the people and the political roles the winning military groups play in Indonesia. On the other hand, the rebels are depicted as groups who have betrayed the state and whose members’ lives are full of revenge against others.

Through his binaries, Navis depicts not only a representation of human rights violations but also an expression of traumatic experience – “*perseteruan*” (feud) (p. 82). Navis poses some important problems in relation to the representations of

⁶⁶*TKR, Tentara Keamanan Rakyat* (People’s Security Army) was the first Indonesian army, established on 5 October 1945. On 7 January 1946, *TKR* changed its name to *Tentara Keselamatan Rakyat* (People’s Safety Army) and to *TRI, Tentara Republik Indonesia* (The Army of the Republic of Indonesia) on 24 January 1946. Due to the existence of other military forces besides the *TRI*, through President Sukarno’s decree of 5 May 1947, all of these forces were united under the *TNI, Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (Indonesian National Armed Forces) on 3 June 1947.

⁶⁷*Pasukan Hisbullah* (Army of Hisbullah) was a militia under *DI, Darul Islam*, who supported Kartosuwiryo to establish *Negara Islam Indonesia* (Indonesian Islamic State) on 7 August 1947. *Pasukan Hisbullah* together with *Pasukan Fisabilillah* allied with *TII, Tentara Islam Indonesia* (Indonesian Islamic Army).

⁶⁸*Tentara Merah Indonesia* (Indonesian Red Army) was a military force associated with the *PKI*.

traumas and memories associated with the wars and their impact on the life of the protagonists. This story can be categorised as a “trauma narrative” in which Navis deals with particular traumatic events – “*kemelut militer*” (military conflict) (p. 83) and “*pemberontakan*” (rebellion) (p. 84) – involving various socio-psychological incidents. In this story, Navis attempts to locate traumatic fiction within a specific cultural and historical context. He is particularly interested in exposing certain traumatic events which played a role in shaping the protagonists’ identities during and after the *PRRI* civil war. At the same time he also defines them in the place where they come from. By so doing he builds the narratives within the context of the cultural history of political violence.

The binary pair of winners/losers is presented through the symbolisation of the three characters. They help to illustrate Indonesian history and take readers to the scene of Indonesian national “wounds” in the 1960s. The pair gives meaning to understanding the political violence on civilians – Wati and Inna – as well as on combatants – Nuan and Nain, giving voice to the experiences of Indonesians during the upheaval eras of the Old Order and redefining the meaning of struggle through the deeds – “*dendam*” (revenge) (p. 83) and “*khianat*” (betrayal) (p. 84) – of the combatants and their efforts to remind people of the belligerent forces in the nation.

Navis blends history with the psychological experiences of his characters. His historical and psychological narrative attests to voices articulating a variety of war-related experience and uncovering what has been oppressed and hidden. Although Navis does not represent the physical destruction caused by the war, he depicts how terrible war can be for the psyche of both soldiers and civilians. He suggests that wars are always destructive. They even destroy holy relationships, including kinship, through their “*permusuhan ideology dengan saudara kembarnya*” (ideological conflict with his own twin brother) (p. 83). Navis shows how vulnerable the kinship between Nuan and Nain is. War has washed away their feelings and understanding that they are from the same parents. Navis represents this by employing Nuan and Nain as military personnel of different forces. Nain appears as a soldier whose force is “*ditugaskan menumpas*” (assigned to annihilate) (p. 83) the separatists and Nuan as a separatist whose force needs to “*mundur ke hutan*” (retreat to the forest) (p. 83).

Navis depicts that it is “*permusuhan ideologi*” (opposing ideology) (p. 83) which causes Nain to take revenge against his twin. Brotherhood means nothing to him except anguish. Nain and Nuan are characters who both become winners and losers. Nuan, who joins the *PRRI*, loses the war and becomes a victim of his brother’s regiment. Nain, who annihilates the *PRRI* rebels, is arrested and jailed because he joins the *PKI*.

Unlike Nuan and Nain, Nuan’s wife, Wati, and Nain’s wife, Inna, are equally victims of the rebellions. Wati and Inna suffer during both the *PRRI* and the *PKI* rebellions. During the revolt, when Nuan goes away to escape the *TNI* personnel, Nain comes to “*mengunjungi*” (visit) (p. 83) Wati and sexually abuses her. She is forced to “*melayani prajurit ... yang mabuk kemenangan*” (satisfy a soldier ... who was drunk on victory) (p. 83). She needs to have her feeling “*diredam*” (submerged) (p. 83) and “*berdamai dengan situasi*” (make peace with the situation) (p. 83). In contrast to Wati who is visited by Nain, Inna has to stay with Nuan when Nain is jailed. She has to stay with her husband’s twin. She is psychologically in pain, not only because her husband Nain is involved in the coup, but also because she has to deal with Nuan, who may “*membalas dendam kepada saudara kembarnya*” (take revenge against his twin brother) (p. 84) by sexually abusing her in his own house.

6.3.2 State Arrests: “Penangkapan”

Navis’s “Penangkapan” is a hybrid narrative of the effects of state oppression on the miserable lives of artists in West Sumatra, Indonesia and is probably set some time in the early New Order. The story elucidates his dissatisfaction with the type of politics that the authoritarian Suharto regime exercised against its own civilians. In this story, Navis depicts the lives of artists in the framework of a state political regime suspicious of the artists’ ability to provoke the public to protest against it. The story, on closer analysis, portrays a potentially historical event: the arrest of some artists after they appeared in a public performance. The story voices Navis’s protest against the state’s act, which prevented artists from exercising their freedom of expression, and socially exposes the state’s inappropriate policy in dealing with the existence of

the arts. It may serve as an object of analysis for a mixture of biography and fiction where the testimony of the writer about his group's lives as artists is narrated around the state political agenda. Navis appears to have witnessed what happened to a number of artists in West Sumatra during the New Order. The story offers some possibilities to the readers to identify with the text or distance themselves from what the story evokes, particularly the event of arrest.

“Penangkapan” deals with a fictional biography which derived from Navis’ personal record of political turmoil that he and his friends went through. It contains the issue of state violence against which he delivers his fictional resistance. It represents his dislike of the incident, where he depicts his own experiences as well as those of his friends. As a personal narrative told in the third person, the text explores the ways in which the artists’ freedom of expression is denied as an effect of the state policy. It shows the systemic inequalities that perpetuate distress for the populations who experience them.

“Penangkapan” is a fictionalised account of the life of Si Dali⁶⁹ and Alfonso, who are arrested arbitrarily by the police. They are among many people arrested, including a number of young artists, because of certain accusations of their involvement in the *PRRI*, the *PKI* and other supposedly subversive acts. The autobiographical account starts with the narrator’s testimony on the issue of violence, especially arrests throughout state history. People were arrested because of their involvement in forbidden events and organisations. These acts had been going on for a number of years. Here Navis attacks the the Old Order regime through the *PRRI* (p. 26) and the New Order through the *PKI* (p. 26) and “*Malari*”⁷⁰ (p. 26) in. Navis’s narrator flatly tells readers that “*Sejak bertahun-tahun silam saya sudah terbiasa mendengar peristiwa penangkapan*” (For many years I have been used to hearing about arrests) (p. 26). He believes that arrest is not a new phenomenon, as he jokingly says that this was a regular occurrence. Through the narrator’s knowledge, Navis takes readers to the scene of rights violations performed both by the Old Order and

⁶⁹ “*Si*” is a term used in the Indonesian language which denotes someone being discussed.

⁷⁰ *Malari* incidents, also known as “Malapetaka January” (Lasut, 2011), were riots staged during the official visit to Jakarta of Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka. Teeuw (1979) argues that there were a number of political events where literary figures in many places in Indonesia, including prominent figures such as Mochtar Lubis and Rendra, were involved.

the New Order. His sentence “*Ke mana-mana kami berkumpul selalu diinteli oleh oknum dari berbagai instansi*” (Anywhere we met, we were monitored by spies from various agencies) (p. 26) implies that people including artists have always been subjected to state violence.

Navis’s testimony begins with the arrest of two artists: “*Si Dali dan Alfonso ditangkap polisi sekeluar dari bioskop*” (Dali and Alfonso were arrested as they came out of a theatre) (p. 27). Here the narrator begins to depict the political acts of the New Order behind the act. The narrator confesses that their arrest is suspected as “*indikasi menentang pemerintah*” (on suspicion of their being against the government) (p. 27). Navis avoids using a direct critique so as to discourage his readers from anger against the state. He takes the readers on a funny journey of two artists who find more enjoyment in their arrest than in daily life. This is Navis’s way of further saying that the regime is both oppressive and ineffective. In the name of security, it arrests anyone suspected of disturbing its power. Despite the fact that some political prisoners were badly treated, as was depicted in Pramoedya’s *The Mute’s Soliloquy*,⁷¹ Dali and Alfonso experience the opposite. They are well treated – “*dikasi makan cukup*” (given enough to eat) (p. 29), “*dibiarkan main catur*” (allowed to play chess) (p. 29), “*makan bersama pengawal, main domino, bergurau bahkan saling meledek*” (eat together with the guards, play dominos, joke and mock at each other) (p. 29) – and they live their life quite normally. The difference, as they narrate, is “*memindahkan tidur penganggur dari rumah istrinya*” (These idlers now left (in jail) away from their wife’s home) (p. 29). The quote elucidates Navis’s frontal challenge to the New Order and suggests that the regime would take immediate attempts to secure its political stability. The good treatment they receive and the comfortable place they are detained imply that they are not harmful to the government, although it is their effects on society that the government most fears.

Dali and Alfonso’s stay in custody serves as an example of state detention which mockingly exposes what happens during the process and how the detainees live their lives. Navis satirised the New Order’s lack of confidence in handling its

⁷¹*The Mute’s Soliloquy* is an account of Pramoedya Ananta Toer’s life when he was imprisoned in Buru Island.

people's freedom of expression in the name of "*stabilitas politik dan ekonomi*" (political and economic stability) (p. 28). Citizens have no opportunity to express themselves freely. Their freedom is circumscribed for the sake of state politics. "*Kami, yang tertua ditahan*" (We, the older (artists) were detained) (p. 30) arbitrarily in order to prevent them from provoking the masses to resist the government. Their rights were doubly violated: first, they could not express their aspirations freely and, second, their right to life was endangered. Instead of using direct protest words against the government which is violating the rights of its citizens, Navis wants his readers to side with him while brushing aside the government's censoring eyes. His phrase "*semacam hidup yang dipermainkan*" (a sort of life which was toyed with) (p. 30) can lead readers to further questions: Whose life was played about with? Who played about with? And how was it played about with? Although such state acts invite national disagreement, Navis implicitly suggests that certain groups of Indonesians, including artists knew that the regime was more afraid of the masses than of the artists. At the very end of the quotation, Navis gives a ridiculous answer to the question of why the artists were arrested through the words "*tidak ada*" (no reason) (p. 30). He suggests that the government has done something illegal and stupid, wronging its own people.

6.3.3 Women's Marginalisation and War Victims: "Maria"

Navis's "Maria" is set in the period of the Old Order. It exposes the life of women in the workplace and the issue of women's emancipation in early Indonesian nationhood. The story deals with a strong and independent village woman who does not want to be under men's control and resists male domination over women. The story represents Navis's attempt to dismantle patriarchal ideas and attitudes which have caused women's oppression. In this section, I look at groups of characters who support the oppression and how Maria challenges social norms with reference to the construction of gender identities which label her as a feminist. The main concern of the four-part story "Maria" is the repression of women in a male-dominated society.

The story begins with an introduction to the many dead bodies, including that of Maria, found floating on the surface of the *Batang Antokan*⁷² and ends with the account of Cok, Maria's husband, being gunned down into the river. The second part presents women's ideas of emancipation and the third consists of the journey of a woman who suffers from male domination after the revolution. Navis's effort to reveal the terrible impact of their experiences on doubly colonised group during the Old Order regime, including the era of civil war, is evident in at least two aspects: as the figures who are marginalised by the patriarchal culture and as the figures who suffer from the side effects of the war. He depicts women's marginalisation through the emancipated woman Maria, the way she demands her rights and how her freedom of expression and her right to life are violated and denied. This depiction seems to be special because the discourse of women's emancipation is often unrecorded in Minangkabau texts.

This story can be read as Navis's voicing his resistance towards women's oppression and marginalisation in an early era of Indonesian independence. There are two points where Navis has touched on the issue. First, he tells the readers that the marginalisation of women also happened in early independence times. He represents women in the work force, a sector of life where women were not highly involved: "*Dia bekerja pada suatu instansi yang semenjak zaman dulu tidak punya pegawai perempuan. Oleh karena mau ikut mode, instansi itu menerima tiga orang gadis*" (She worked at an agency that, since olden times, never had women employees. But because it wanted to keep up with the fashion, it employed girls) (p. 22). Here, despite the change of eras, from colonial to postcolonial, Navis implies that the long history of women's marginalisation, particularly in West Sumatra, which stems from the era of colonisation, has not yet changed. Women's second-class position in Minangkabau life has echoes back in Indonesian history. "Maria" reflects Evelyn Blackwood's statement that: "The colonial and postcolonial era is in part a history of the privileging of men's authority and power in West Sumatra" (2001, p. 143). In the story, Maria represents women who are "shadowy figures in their own homes, while men appear to be the social glue that holds kin groups and communities together"

⁷² Batang Antokan is a river in West Sumatra.

(Blackwood, 2001, p. 131). The story does not speak explicitly of the colonisers but condemns the Old Order that failed to elevate women's status above what it was in the colonial period.

In the third part of the story, Navis focuses very clearly on women's oppression. He represents how male bosses treat their female subordinates by depicting the bad sides of male bosses who show little respect for their secretaries. He shows empathy for women who are sexually, socially and psychologically abused by men. Through the eyes of the characters, Navis narrates two bosses who do not consider their female employees as an asset to the office but as figures with whom they can satisfy their passions. He artistically builds the intersection between gender and class relations to demonstrate various types of oppression over women. Navis, through his protagonist, represents women as figures who need to "*ikut atasan*" (accompany their bosses) (p. 22), and become sexual objects who by being "*patuh*" (obedient) (p. 24) become "*selir*" (mistresses) (p. 24).

Navis thus clearly represents the issue of sexual abuse among women employees who are conditioned to be sexual objects because of their inability to protest. He shows that there was a great tendency for bosses to abuse their female subordinates sexually, as confessed by Maria: "*si bapak bertingkah seperti si om. Pegang sini pegang sana setiap mereka berdua di mobil sedan*" (he gradually became a cad. He pawed when they were alone in the car) (p. 22). As the figures who are doubly oppressed, as women and subordinates, women become vulnerable to domination: "*Sulitkan, menghadapi laki laki yang jadi bos begitu?*" (It's surely hard, facing up to a man who is your boss?) (p. 22), by becoming the object of sexual harassment by their male superiors. Their presence is not regarded as meaningful in the work environment. They are employed partially to satisfy men. In the name of duty, they are forced to do what their superiors ask them to do, including "*harus ikut atasan*" (has to accompany their bosses) (p. 22) to go out of town.

Navis satirically elucidates how male bosses think of female subordinates and how those men expect women to behave towards them. Navis compares the bosses to "*ruting*", fish which eat their own babies (p. 22) to exemplify the men, especially bosses, who like to abuse their young female employees. Navis's anger with such

social phenomenon is then channelled through his character Maria, who introduces the issues of women's emancipation in society, especially in her workplace. Although Maria's response to her boss signals an emancipatory and rare case: "*saya mencakar mukanya dengan kukuku yang panjang. Rasain lu kataku dalam hati ketika dia kesakitan tapi tidak berani mengaduh*" (I clawed his face with my long nails. See how you liked it, I said when he was in pain but did not dare to complain) (p. 22), her emancipative ideas denote that male domination of women seems to have been unquestioned for a long time.

Maria is a powerful character, who, unlike her female office mates, fights against patriarchal domination. Presented differently from other women characters, she does not accept any dominating male attitudes imposed upon women. She challenges the perpetrators, both verbally and physically:

Maria menyesali anggapan umum para laki laki tentang pegawai perempuan yang patuh boleh digoda dan digagahi atasannya. Mengapa setiap atasan mesti memperlihatkan keperkasaannya? Padahal mereka toh sama jadi orang gajian negara? Mengapa laki laki tidak memandang pegawai perempuan sama dengan laki laki secara sosial? "Bila saling jatuh cinta, itu normal. Tapi jika ingin menggagahi atau menyalurkan birahi, sungguh tidak beradab", komentar Maria dengan perasaan getir. (p. 24)

Maria was dismayed by the general perception of men that obedient female employees could be seduced and sexually abused by their superiors. Why did every boss have to show his virility? Weren't they all employed by the state? Why didn't men see female employees as equal to them socially? "If you were in love, it would be normal. But if you want to rape someone or find an outlet for your sexual needs, it's not civilised" commented Maria bitterly. The quote indicates that women are not considered equal to men and male bosses place themselves above women socially. In such a situation, men tend to perceive that obedient women subordinates can be sexually abused because they are less powerful. The case is even more evident in Maria's anger with Delly's boss. She resents other women's being oppressed physically, mentally and socially as well as

her own. Delly is sexually objectified, mentally underestimated and socially unappreciated. One of the antagonists in the story says “*Aku tidak punya alasan untuk menikahi Delly. Tapi karena dia sudah hamil, ya harus bagaimana lagi?*” (I have no reason to marry Delly. But because she is pregnant, what else can I do?) (p. 24). When Maria asks Delly’s boss “*Jika Delly tidak hamil?*” (What if Delly was not pregnant?), he answers “*Ya, tidak perlu menikah, kan?*” (There would be no need to marry her, right?) (p. 24). The answer makes Maria conclude that “*Delly dijadikan selir saja*” (It means Delly was a mistress) (p. 24). Through Delly’s boss, we are given access to how male bosses think oppressively about female employees. Delly, the obedient woman character in the story, becomes the victim of male domination where she is oppressed physically and socially. She is meaningless to her superior. When she becomes pregnant because of her boss’s sexual harassment, her boss marries her not because of his responsibility to her but because of his responsibility in the public arena.

In short, through “Maria”, Navis asks readers to pity women’s position and roles in Indonesia, most especially in the Minangkabau region, and condemns men’s oppressive behaviour. Navis suggests that Indonesian women of the era of Revolution, including those who lived in villages, wanted to be emancipated and that patriarchal power tore apart Indonesian women’s rights. Navis’s critique of women’s status as second-class citizens in the era is still worthy of consideration in this present era.

6.3.4 Culture, Modernisation and Religiosity: “Tamu yang Datang di Hari Lebaran”

The story of “Tamu yang Datang di Hari Lebaran” satirically conveys Navis’s critique of cultural modernisation from a critical Islamic viewpoint. Representing the behaviour and attitudes of state officials in carrying on their roles as the heads of certain institutions and administrations, Navis criticises the corrupt practice of administration performed by high ranking state officials. Picturing an ex-combatant who had become a governor with his memories of the time he was in charge of a

province, and of his son who served his minister, Navis attempts to picture the cultural transformation of the celebration of the end of the fasting month from the one based on Islamic tradition to a new one where fawning on bosses to preserve one's position is applicable.

The story depicts the life of Inyik Datuk Bijo Rajo⁷³ and Encik Jurai Ameh⁷⁴ (husband and wife) who have six children, all of whom now live away from them. At *Idul Fitri*⁷⁵ they feel lonely and sad as none of the children come home to give their *sungkeman*.⁷⁶ Inyik is nostalgic for an old fashioned *Idul Fitri* because he misses the power and attention he enjoyed as a governor. When Inyik was governor, he was never sad as everyone turned up, especially during the *Lebaran*: his children, his subordinates and anybody who wanted to get close to him. Tired of waiting, the two fall asleep. Inyik, in his sleep, thinks that he still wants to be the governor for another term because he believes that nobody can replace him.

In this story Navis resists three main things: first, the transformation of the Islamic teaching of “*saling bertemu dan saling memaafkan*” (meeting and forgiving each other) (p. 97) after the fasting month of *Ramadhan*⁷⁷ to the modern culture of the *Lebaran*, where the intimidating and patronising behaviours of state officials are practised; second, the issues of wealth and age; and third, the arrogance of old officials.

The description of the corruption of traditional religious practices to promote equality is both direct and metaphorical. The story begins with the introduction of the setting and characters, where Navis describes an old couple who live in an old house with its traditional architecture looking different from other modern houses. Navis's way of using the characters of Inyik Datuk Bijo Rajo and Encik Jurai Ameh and the traditional house is a symbol of old tradition. It shows their uniqueness in the

⁷³ *Inyik* is a title usually awarded to someone who is religious. This title can be seen in the titles awarded to Inyik Djambek, Inyik Rasul and Inyik Ahmad. Datuk is a traditional title awarded to a man selected to be a clan leader.

⁷⁴ *Encik* is a title awarded to a noble woman, usually as spouse of an Inyik.

⁷⁵ *Idul Fitri* is an Islamic celebration after the fasting month and it is generally known as *Lebaran* in the Indonesian context.

⁷⁶ *Sungkeman* is a tradition where children bow, kneel and kiss their parents' palms on the *Lebaran* days. This tradition is practised in wider contexts. It now applies to children for their parents, younger family members to the older ones and subordinates to bosses in the work environment.

⁷⁷ *Ramadhan* is the holy fasting month for Muslims.

community. Navis implies that they are of a different generation to most people now. The story then moves on to the couple's desire to be visited by their children on the *Lebaran* or the *Idul Fitri*, a culture which derives from the teaching of Islam (p. 96).

Through *Inyik*, Navis criticises Indonesians' practice of the culture of the *Lebaran*. In line with modernisation, Navis believes that Indonesians do not practise *Idul Fitri* as they should, but embed the issue of politics into the practice, particularly among high-ranking officers. Borrowing the holy concept of the *Idul Fitri*, Navis criticises the distortion public officials have made to their people for their own advantage. Navis cynically denotes that the *Idul Fitri*, which used to be a moment of equality, has turned out to promote subordination. The apology which should be the gist of everyone's concern is only performed by the weaker party not by all people to each other. Today, subordinates apologise to their superiors and people do it to the government officials: "*Tapi kini setelah Idul Fitri jadi kebudayaan baru, bawahan dan orang miskin yang wajib datang ke penguasa untuk minta maaf*" (But now after *Idul Fitri*, a new culture emerges, subordinates and the poor must report to the authorities to apologise) (p. 97). The superiors use the moment to consolidate their position and the subordinates use it to gain their superiors' sympathy. The subordinates practise the Indonesian proverb which says "*Di mana padi masak di sana pipit berbondong-bondong*" (Birds will come where the rice is ripe) (p. 97). They will visit those from whom they can benefit.

Navis shows how different the culture has become. Although the festival still has the same name, it has been transformed into a new cultural form:

Nabi tidak menyuruh orang berpesta untuk merayakan Idul Fitri, melainkan berzakat dan bertakbiran. Tapi kebudayaan baru menjadikannya lain. Acara takbir dijadikan acara tontonan di lapangan. Pakai musik segala. Takbir bukan lagi ibadah pribadi, melainkan di jadikan pesta dunia dengan biaya milyaran rupiah. Sepertinya uang sebanyak itu tidak lagi berfaedah untuk orang miskin. (p. 98)

The prophet did not encourage people to celebrate *Idul Fitri* with a feast but to pay the tithe and call for others to recognise God (*takbir*). But a new culture

has changed that. *Takbir* has been made into a spectacle, a worldly gathering. It even uses music. *Takbir* is no longer a form of private worship, but has become a worldly party that costs billions of rupiahs. It seems that this large amount of money is no longer needed by the poor.

Navis uses Islamic teaching to criticise the religious and social distortion of the *Lebaran* celebration. He suggests that what the government has done, directly or indirectly, violates the rights of the poor. The government tends to spend more money on the feast than on the lives of the poor. It prioritises worldly events more than its duties to its citizens.

The theme of the manipulation of wealth and power occurs because elderly superiors gather riches while they are in power and proclaim their intellectual superiority to their subordinates. Navis criticises corrupt state officials who gather wealth, become “*kaya-raya*” (very rich) (p. 99) and tend to stay in power for a few terms in spite of their old age: “*pimpinan yang pikun*” (senile leaders) (p. 99). Highlighting the role of the Prophet Mohammed, whom he believes is an ideal leader of the world, he criticises the state leaders, whom he calls “*diktator yang berkuasa*” (dictators in power) (p. 99). He believes that certain state officials do not do their jobs properly. They struggle to get certain positions for their own benefit.

Because of their advanced age, Navis also touches on the issue of senility as an element in corruption. He believes that high positions should not be given to senile leaders. Because of their age, they cannot conduct their duties properly: “*Apakah tidak akan terjadi kekacauan pada kehidupan umatnya?*” (Won't there be chaos in the life of his followers?) (p. 99). Although Navis provides an example of the Prophet Mohammed, who died at the age of 63, readers can read this as an indication of senility of a whole generation.

Although many people today would perhaps disagree with the issue of age as Navis described it some decades ago, they would possibly agree with the issue of wealth. Indonesians have witnessed many state officials, especially high-ranking ones, becoming much richer than they should have been. Within a few years, such officials have gathered much more wealth than they could otherwise. Where did it

come from? How did they gain it? Although Navis does not provide the answer, he implies that they seem not to think of their people.

Finally, Navis satirises a group of leaders whose arrogance also allows them to behave in a corrupt way. He argues that these leaders think that they are the only ones who can lead the nation. These aged leaders think that younger generations cannot lead the nation because they have no courage, although they have “*pendidikan tinggi*” (good education) (p. 100). Such belittlement expressed by Inyik is then satirically answered by Navis through the presence of the Angel of Death, who directly addresses him: “*Ternyata kau sama sombongnya dengan golonganmu. Tambah tua tambah sombong*” (It turns out that you’re as arrogant as your group. The older you get, the more arrogant you become) (p. 100). Navis shows his disagreement with old leaders who belittle younger leaders in terms of their lack of ability to lead the nation. He believes that Inyik’s doubt about the leadership crisis is unreasonable. Referring to Islamic history again, he reminds them that natural law will apply. Old leaders should be replaced by younger ones. It is in line with a proverb: *Patah tumbuh, hilang berganti* (What is broken, regrows; what disappears will be replaced). In the end of the story, when Inyik realises that he will die, he hopes that no one will feel hurt by his actions. Here Navis satirically closes the story by saying that Inyik will not harm people any more because “*kau tidak berkuasa lagi*” (You are not in charge any more) (p. 101). Navis implies that Inyik harmed his people when he was the governor and has given reasons that explain this suggestion.

6.4 NAVIS’S WORKS AFTER THE NEW ORDER

Navis’s narrative style remained the same in the stories published after the New Order. His fiction continued in the area of social criticism in such stories as “Inyik Lunak si Tukang Canang” (“Old Lunak, the *Canang*⁷⁸ Drummer”, 2001b) and “Mak Pekok” (“Uncle Bandy”, 2002). In “Inyik Lunak si Tukang Canang”, Navis

⁷⁸ *Canang* is a musical instrument made from metal. In Minangkabau tradition, it is usually used to call people for social works such as creating a footpath, building public facilities or cleaning ditches along the street within a certain community.

continued to depict the effects of the *PRRI* war on people when he goes back to incidents which took place 30 years before. The story is an account of Otang, an intellectual but jobless man, who marries a beautiful woman during the *PRRI* war. During the war he is forced to do Gotong Royong (mass social service work), in a job he has never done before. During this situation he learns that the *APRI* personnel (the victors of the war) treated the people badly, including having forced sexual intercourse with the wives of the losers. Otong is one of those who protests (his wife is also one of the women who was raped). He goes to Jakarta. There he makes money by visiting Minangkabau people regularly. In this narrative, Navis criticises the Old Order government's apparatuses during the *PRRI* war, who abused their positions for their own benefit.

Unlike "Inyik Lunak si Tukang Canang", "Mak Pekok" talks about a social problem. In this story, Navis represents the issue of the right to live in the way one chooses. For him, nobody has the right to jeopardise the life of others, let alone take it from them. He believes that the villagers have wronged Mak Pekok because of his practice of bestiality. "Mak Pekok" represents the issue of mass violence, which befalls a disabled man. As depicted in the story, a good man is isolated by the whole village he lives in, in order to punish him for having sex with a cow which is considered immoral by the people. The story presents the effects of psychological violence on the life of the victim. The story is told by a narrator whose friend is Mak Pekok, whom he loves because he lives his life freely. He breeds cows and goats and sometimes helps to build other people's houses. Mak Pekok loves gathering with children. He does not have a family. He is isolated by the villagers because he is caught having sexual intercourse with his cow. He dies in his shanty and nobody realises this for a long time.

6.5 CONCLUSION

Navis wrote his short stories as a response to incidents that took place in his society. Some were set in earlier historical period, especially 1959 and 1965. Consequently, his indirect attack on the previous regimes saved him from state censorship and its

effects. Through his numerous works, including stories published in the media after the New Order regime collapsed, he remained focused on criticising sociopolitical problems in Indonesia. While he criticised his nation, he also created works which entertain and inform his readers, as well as awakening them to the sociopolitical problems the nation has been struggling through.

In the four stories analysed in detail in this chapter, Navis reveals events related to Indonesia's traumatic history and social problems. His representation of the effects of the *PRRI* war on its combatants and civilians in "Maria" and "Penumpang Kelas Tiga" helps to enrich the available literature on the civil war. The stories contribute not only to the war settings but also to an understanding of the psychological effects the war victims experienced. The other two stories, "Penangkapan" and "Tamun yang Datang di Hari Lebaran", touch on socio-religious problems; they satirise social practices and provide alternatives to the inappropriate behaviour of the state apparatus in carrying out state duties as well as of civilians in practising their rights. Although the traumatic events and social problems he presents are respectively neither a direct account of the *PRRI* civil war nor an immediate criticism of the social practices in the 1990s, they allow later readers to think about the effects of the war, the state's treatment of its own people, the behaviour of state apparatuses and the individual execution of religious rights by the people. The stories represent sociopolitical problems faced by all Indonesians, and not just by the Minangkabau people. They function as Navis's weapon to expose the violation of human rights as practised by the state, groups and individuals.

Navis's long career as a social writer enabled him to produce a large number of works, including short stories which were published in *Kompas* and *Horison*. Living through three different regimes, he created stories to respond to the era that inspired him. In particular, his stories use a satirical style in order to criticize the sociopolitical problems faced by his nation. His delay in recalling the stories and publishing them suggests that this helped him to be free from the direct censorship previously imposed by the Old Oder and the New Order regimes. The stories, at the same time, reflect how *Kompas* and *Horison* published the stories because of their

concern about the sociopolitical issues which address the problems of human rights in Indonesia.

CHAPTER 7 – REPRESENTING “POLITICAL” TERROR AND VOICING RESISTANCE: PUTU WIJAYA’S SHORT FICTION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I argue that the fiction of Indonesian surrealist writer Putu Wijaya represents another type of protest against the cultural power which remained strong throughout the New Order regime. In particular, the chapter attempts to explore Putu’s short narratives which represent psychological and sociopolitical terror, by questioning how Putu represents terror in short fiction and how fiction responds to the time which conditions it.

Putu’s stories protest against Indonesian sociopolitical problems during the whole period of the New Order’s hegemonic policy. This chapter analyses Putu’s short stories which represent human rights problems concerning the individual or group victims and how those stories respond to the regime which allowed them to emerge. In addition, I will also trace the existence of similar representations in Putu’s works after the New Order.

The four stories analysed in detail in this chapter were published during the 1990s but are typical of his work from the 1970s on. They are “Demokrasi” (“Democracy”, 1995a),⁷⁹ “Rakyat” (“The People”, 1995b),⁸⁰ “Sket” (“Sketch”, 1991)⁸¹ and “Mulut” (“Mouth”, 1995c).⁸² The four selected stories criticise various social problems in Indonesia: the silencing of freedom of expression, corrupt social practice, state oppression and intimidation. They represent Putu’s critique of and concern for humanity in a range of different contexts. They offer visions which condemn the undesirable conditions and effects of the state’s physical and symbolic acts against its people.

Despite the fact that some writers and critics have analysed the works of Putu from the perspective of surrealism, comparatively little has been written in relation to

⁷⁹ “Demokrasi” was published in *Horison*, No. 10, October 1995.

⁸⁰ “Rakyat” was published in *Horison*, No. 10, October 1995.

⁸¹ “Sket” was published in *Kompas* (1990) and *Kado Istimewa: Cerpen Pilihan Kompas 1991*.

⁸² “Mulut” was published in *Horison*, No. 10, October 1995.

the importance of terror in his works with regard to this study. Some critics have focused on Putu's fiction as social criticism (Sumardjo, 1976; Eddy, 1978; Foulcher, 1995; Astuti, 2010), cultural criticism (Sunarti, 2008) and its treatment of political violence (Hoadley, 2005), and discuss his style in relation to this (Foulcher, 1998; Rafferty, 1990; Februana, 1994). These areas of Putu's fiction should be seen as ways of enabling his works to confront state terror. Instead of making the stories unreal, the depictions of violence, frightening story-lines and characters' physical and psychological sufferings all contribute to his exploration of the working of state terror.

In this chapter, my analysis will relate to three domains of interpretation. Firstly, I will observe the status of human rights in the four stories, because they are preoccupied with the sociopolitical representation of human rights violations. This stage will provide a further contextual discussion and observation of the research about rights, politics and literature in Indonesia. Secondly, I will argue that Putu resists the Indonesian government's oppression of its own people's freedom of expression and right to lead their lives. His use of social settings of terror suggests that he wants to express his disagreement with what has happened around him. Here I demonstrate why Putu's terrorised characters are artistically presented and sociopolitically intended to criticise the aberrant behaviors of the state apparatus. This will help explain his representation of terror. Finally, I investigate the perpetrators of abuse. At this point I argue that Putu presents terror to his readers in order for them to condemn the perpetrators whether they are civilians or state apparatuses.

7.2 PUTU WIJAYA: BETWEEN TERROR AND JUSTICE

This section examines critically the works of Putu, centring on his response to terror, which mirrors the tension between terror and justice in artistic representation. In implementing his understanding of terror, Putu found his best element in the settings he presented.

There are several reasons why we are interested in Putu as a short story writer. First, Putu takes up some of the most significant social problems in Indonesia. In this respect, he fuses the aesthetic and the political. Second, he is a writer who develops a new style of writing on terror. Third, his works are full of human relationships in the context of violence and oppression.

Putu is not a subversive writer, nor has he ever been an immediate victim of the state system. However, having lived in all regimes after Indonesian independence, his writing has benefited from different influences. Although he does not depict specific national events or incidents, he records social problems that have occurred around him and addresses them in his works. Although Putu was not as outspoken as his theatre teacher W. S. Rendra, who became “the voice of the voiceless” (*The Jakarta Post*, 9 August 2009), his responses are clearly channelled through his works, both fiction and performance.

Critics argue that Putu, through his works, consistently indicates his concern for social values. Putu exploits his literary style to represent violence and this, for Maier (2002), becomes “the central theme of Putu’s literary work ... that keeps on breaking the rules of expectation, the law of genre” (p. 66). Putu’s fiction, according to Rafferty (1990), is “organized in order to deceive and disturb the reader, to encourage the reader to question accepted norms” (p. 104). Putu deals with a simple event which then is made to be more impressive than the reader or viewer expects. In his fiction, as Dewanto (1992) says, Putu reminds the readers that fraud, violence and repression can be conducted by anybody, no matter what their social class is.

Astuti (2010) argues that Putu’s work is more than just a record of reality and his fiction indicates his attempt to awaken his readers to resist anything wrong in their society:

Putu Wijaya dalam karyanya mencoba mengungkap ketimpangan ketimpangan yang terjadi dalam masyarakat. Ketimpangan tersebut dapat berupa kemiskinan, perilaku sewenang wenang penguasa, dan kesenjangan social. (p. 3)

Putu Wijaya in his works tries to expose the inequalities of society. These inequalities include poverty, arbitrary use of power by the authorities, and social inequality.

It is by the representation of terror that he finds his best way to convey his message to his readers. As many critics and scholars believe, his concept of theatre and his fiction are based on “mental terror” which, as defined by Sunarti (2008), is “*pembelotan, pengkhiatan, kriminalitas terhadap logika tapi nyata*” (desertion, betrayal, crimes against logic but is true) (p. 4). For Putu, she continues, “*Teror tidak harus keras, bahkan bisa berbisik, mungkin juga sama sekali tidak berwarna*” (Terror does not have to be overt; it may whisper or be completely colourless) (p. 4).

Although the terror Putu describes in his fiction mostly takes the form of mental anguish, I argue that he detests any acts which deny the rights of the people. He protests against the perpetrators whether they are individuals, groups or state apparatuses. His concern is for the rights of marginalised people: the poor, the weak, the abandoned and the powerless. In his works he does not deal with upper class people but the commoners who fall victim to the state apparatus at the very lowest ranks, such as the village headman, the *Lurah*. His settings are usually the life of people at the levels of *RT*, *Rukun Tetangga*,⁸³ *RW*, *Rukun Warga*,⁸⁴ or the village with their local dynamics.

7.3 PUTU WIJAYA’S MEDIA FICTION: PLOTTING TERROR

The four stories under investigation constitute two forms of “the narrative of terror” (Kubiak 2004). Firstly, they are stories about “terrorism”. They set out to examine the things which have motivated the terrorist to commit the act of terrorism.

Throughout the four stories, state violence is presented as foundational, undergirding law and authority. State sovereignty itself justifies violence, whose power rests in its performative nature and in its ability to inflict physical and psychological pain.

⁸³ *Rukun Tetangga (RT)* is an informal neighbourhood security organisation widely applied in Indonesia, especially in cities and suburbs. Its existence is strongly supported by the state. Despite its leader not being salaried, the position is well respected. The male leader in charge of this is called *Pak RT* and his wife *Buk RT*.

⁸⁴ *Rukun Warga (RW)* is another neighbourhood security organisation whose territory consists of *RTs*.

Through the conflict between the poor and the rich, the weak and the powerful, and leaders and their people, Putu powerfully depicts state sovereignty and its acts of direct and indirect violence. Secondly, in narrating the stories, Putu not only explores the physical consequences of terrorist actions on the victims but their mental effects also. He powerfully represents the “mental terror” through the use of surrealism which in Kubiak’s words “destabilizes narrativity” (Kubiak 2004).

The overriding theme of the stories under investigation is the effect of Indonesian state’s systemic physical and mental violence as practised by its apparatuses. This state “terror” takes many shapes, including “street” violence and oppression, detention and forced operations, silent violence and the firing of unsalaried heads of a community. The plots and characterisation invoke the reality of incidents in order to build public knowledge about human rights violations. The stories depict a number of rights violations and physical and psychological suffering. They represent resistance and expose the practice of human subjection in the New Order regime. In these stories, Putu prefers to depict meaningful occurrences through what he calls anecdotes.⁸⁵ Putu takes advantage of such stories to describe minor incidents of violence and oppression which take place between two groups such as the poor and the rich, the natives and the foreigners, the farmer and the trader, the marginal and the powerful, authorities and the people. These events are more than mere “anecdotes”. They are also allegories.⁸⁶ Putu creates allegories to echo the state’s violence, which directly or indirectly terrorises society. His allegories of physical and psychological deterioration, allegories of suburban land eviction and allegories of logical aberration, all constitute the core of his fictional method and the domain in which the characters in his four stories show their importance.

⁸⁵ In a newspaper article “Sasaran saya terror mental objek saya anekdot” Putu deals with readers’ spiritual terror by exploring anecdotes (*Yogyakarta: Minggu Pagi* 23 December, 1984).

⁸⁶ I use the term “allegory” as suggested by Angus Fletcher (1964, pp. 2–3) who argues, “In the simplest terms, allegory says one thing and means another.” He provides a basic theory of allegory which he calls “the theory of symbolic mode.” He believes that there are a variety of literary kinds which employ an allegorical mode of expression. Among them are: “chivalric or picaresque romances and their modern equivalent, the ‘western,’ utopian political satires, quasi-philosophical anatomies, personal attacks in epigrammatic form, pastorals of all sorts, apocalyptic visions, encyclopedic epics containing *summaries* of true and false learning, naturalistic muckraking novels whose aim is to propagandize social change, imaginary voyages... detective stories ... fairy tales ... and debate poems.”

The stories are multilayered. They depict state violence, the denial of rights and the psychological attacks on people. Every layer of the four stories represents issues that are perilous to Indonesian people's rights. This fractured society shapes and limits the lives of Putu's imagined characters. Out of these settings of a fractured society, Putu explores his characters so as to provide a cultural resistance through them, and this will surely be reflected in readers' attitudes towards the government as they associate themselves with the characters and react to their situations.

7.3.1 Terror in Various Guises

In the four stories, Putu deals with the issue of terrorised agency where its depiction is clearly evident in the portrayal of marginalised agents. The presence of powerless residents in "Demokrasi", victimised neighbourhood leaders in "Rakyat", a poor boy in "Sket", and an abnormal woman in "Mulut" all represent the marginality of weak agency. All his oppressed characters are presented as those persons who are beaten down by hegemonic powers, that are directly or indirectly legalised by the state. They represent those whose rights are violated by individuals, groups or the state. Throughout the four stories, Putu presents four different forms of terror: systemic state violence, bureaucratic practice, intimidation and the death of freedom.

7.3.1.1 Systemic state violence as terror: "Demokrasi"

In "Demokrasi", Putu voices his sympathy with Indonesians whose freedom of speech and right to freedom are violated by the state as practised by its apparatus. His resistance towards state violence is made through his depiction of people's lives in the story. Exploring the power of language, he represents state violence as generating and sustaining "symbolic violence" as well as "systemic violence". The systemic violence is done without any physical harm to the victim.

Putu's "Demokrasi" elucidates the implications of symbolic violence for the reader in its demand for sympathy. "Demokrasi" deals with an *RT* leader who initially supports his people in their fight against the government's effort to take

some of their land, but at last turns out to be the leader who urges his people to submit to the government's will after receiving money from someone wishing the project to happen. The story asks readers to sympathise with the victims of a rights violation and to condemn the perpetrators. Moving from social to political allegory, readers encounter Putu's critique of democracy in the story that finds its parallels in the ubiquity of the experiences of communities and organisations in many parts of the country. He depicts a government whose discourses of development and democracy result in people being deprived of their rights:

Petugas itu menghimbau, agar kami, seperti juga warga yang lain, merelakan kehilangan itu, demi kepentingan bersama. Warga kami tercengang. Kok enak saja ngambil dua meter, demi pembangunan. Pembangunan siapa? (p. 54)

The officer called, for us, as well as other residents, to give up the land, for the common good. Our residents were stunned. How can they just take two meters of our land, in the name of development? Whose development was it? The government treats the evicted people as inferior beings whose rights to live and freedom of expression are denied. Without their consent, the residents lose two metres of land per person. They do not have any power to protest although they gain no benefit from the project. The dominated are treated as inferiors, denied access to resources, and are restricted in their social mobility and personal aspirations.

The perpetrators' acts reflect how democracy can be used as a "political weapon". They execute their power through the manner in which violent acts are generated and sustained by symbolic violence which is legalised by the state. Although the symbolic dimension of state violence in the story is apparently absent from the clearly discernible oppressor figure, readers can still relate the perpetrators to the state apparatuses. That the government has the authority to issue any policy for public projects, including the construction of a new street that passes through a village, is a definite indication that it is a state project. The execution of the site eviction and the ongoing construction project clearly tell who the perpetrators are.

The officer's transgressive campaign functions as systemic symbolic violence; this is made clear in his debate with the people. He claims that “*‘Tapi ini sudah keputusan bersama’, kata petugas tersebut. Kami semakin tercengang saja. Bagaimana mungkin membuat keputusan bersama tentang rumah kami, tanpa rembukan dengan kami*” (“Yet, this is a group decision,” said the officer. We were even more stunned. How is it possible to make a group decision about our houses, without involving us?) (p. 54). Quoting the benefits of development and careful planning, he speaks as if on behalf of the people of both sides as he continues “*Dan pembangunan itu akan dinikmati juga oleh kampung diselahnya, karena sudah diperhitungkan masak-masak*” (And the development would also be enjoyed by the people of the next village, because it was fully considered) (p. 55).

The symbolic violence stops when the officer fails to find the best way to persuade the people to agree with him. The state finds that the most effective way to apply its political aim is physical mass violence. Through the power of one group, the state's plan intimidates another group: “*mereka mewanti-wanti, kalau tidak bisa dikatakan mengancam. Kalau pelebaran jalan itu tak dilaksanakan, sesuatu yang buruk akan terjadi*” (They signaled, if not threatened, that if the road widening did not take place, something bad would happen) (p. 55). Such intimidation ends in a stabbing of a resident who makes an effort to prevent his property from being destroyed by a bulldozer. Putu writes “*Warga kami panik, mereka melawan. Tetapi baru hendak buka mulut, tiba tiba kelewang mendarat dipundaknya. Ia terpaksa dilarikan ke rumah sakit*” (Our residents panicked, one fought back. But when he was about to speak, someone suddenly stuck a sword in his back. He had to be rushed to the hospital) (p. 55).

The systemic and symbolic attempts find their clearest expression in the act of a corrupt RT leader who proposes:

Memang berat kehilangan 2 meter dari milik kita yang sedikit. Tetapi itu jauh lebih baik daripada kita kehilangan nyawa. Lagipula semua itu untuk kepentingan bersama. Suara terbanyak yang harus menang. Sebagai penganut demokrasi, kita tidak boleh dongkol karena kalah. Demi demokrasi,

kita harus merelakan 2 meter untuk pembuatan jalan yang menunjang pembangunan. (pp. 55–6)

Indeed, it's hard to lose 2 metres of our very limited land. But that was far better than if we lost our lives. Anyway, It was all for the common good. The majority voice must win. As adherents of democracy, we can't do not have to be be annoyed by losing. For the sake of democracy, we have to willingly give up 2 metres of land for the road construction which supports the development.

The leader reflects the behaviour of the New Order agents in implementing the regime's policies. Instead of using acts of direct violent, the leader, in the names of democracy and development, tries to soothe the villagers and convince them that what the regime does is correct and appropriate.

7.3.1.2 Bureaucratic practice as symbolic terror: “Rakyat”

“Rakyat” also represents acts of symbolic state violence. The story tells of a few *RW* leaders who are fired by a *Lurah* because they support their people and ignore the *Lurah*'s demands. Putu treats the conception of democracy with irony. Although irony is a commonplace phenomenon, the irony he presents is special in that it involves emotion, suspense and sympathy for the victim. He plays with readers' psyches by presenting a case which is against commonsense and logic. People are confronted with the issues of opposition, confrontation and contradiction. Such confronting feelings terrorise them. The terror arises from a good deed which is materially defeated by an evil act, the majority by individuals, and logic by an illogical policy.

This story mirrors social conditions in Indonesia and is a protest against the bureaucratic policy applied by the New Order. It should be read as an indication of the wide practice of tight political bureaucracy by the Indonesian government. Through the debate between the *RW* people and their *Lurah*, the story takes readers to the New Order bureaucratic practice where subordinates must unthinkingly comply

with the expectations and rules made by those who have “*mengesahkan kepengurusannya*” (legalised their administrative practices) (p. 56). The subordinates cannot violate the guidelines even when they would like to do something good for the people.

Putu’s protest starts with the introduction of a contrast. This ironic representation saves him from direct resistance against the state. The irony begins with the *Lurah*’s attempt to question the *RW* leaders for not following the *Lurah*’s guideline: “*Lalu Pak Lurah memanggil mereka untuk diberi pengarahan, karena mereka dianggap sudah bertindak sendiri bahkan menentang kebijakan kebijakan kelurahan*” (The *Lurah* called them for further instruction, because they were assumed to have acted on their own and deviated from government policy) (p. 56). In their acts the public officials, who are described as good public organisers, do not meet the expectation of the *Lurah*’s government. This can be read as a reminder to the government officers of their illogical application of tight bureaucratic practices. This act explains the authoritarian rule that they apply to silence any aspirations or acts of those outside the governmental circles. Through this first act of the government officer, Putu attempts to remind the government that their officer has actually applied a wrong conception of bureaucracy, one which terrorises the people. The officer prioritises oppressive governmental procedures over good humanitarian acts. His effort to interrogate the organisers causes the people to feel uneasy. Putu writes “*Masyarakat ramai bingung. Kami semua bertanya-tanya, karena perbuatan baik kok malah dipersoalkan. Apa sebenarnya rencana kelurahan? Kami resah*” (People were confused. We all kept wondering, because good deeds kept becoming problems. What was the government up to? We were anxious) (p. 56).

The terror continues when the *Lurah* dismisses the *RW* officials and appoints new ones. The act of the *Lurah* leads the people to experience continuous terror, as they are unhappy with the act:

Ketika permasalahan tersebut menjadi serius, karena dikuntit dengan pemberhentian, kami tak bisa lagi tinggal diam. Kami langsung menghadap ke rumah Pak Lurah. Bertanya-tanya, kemudian meminta dan akhirnya

menghimbau, agar pengurus RW yang kami cintai itu tidak dipecat. Karena kami senang dengan apa yang sudah dikerjakannya. (p. 57).

When the problem became serious, resulting in dismissal, we could not keep quiet any more. We went to see the *Lurah* at his house. We asked questions, begged and ultimately appealed that our beloved *RW* leaders not be dismissed, since we were pleased with what they had done.

The act confirms the violence perpetrated by the *Lurah* who, as a representative of the state, should make every effort to execute the state guidelines within the framework of assisting the people to achieve a better life. In contrast he does the exact opposite. So when the people request him not to dismiss their leaders, he changes the topic. He moves from the topic of a good deed to the issue of bureaucracy. He is supposed to stop violence against the people. Yet in practice, he commits symbolic violence in the name of following the rules. The point underlined here is that Putu invites readers to resist any power in a democratic state which does not work for the benefit of the people.

The second irony appears when the people come to meet the dismissed caretakers to urge them to protest against the *Lurah*. Although all residents are on their side, the caretakers do not want to disobey the rule, as they believe that everyone should abide by this law:

Kita sedang menegakkan aturan. Dan itu sering tak sejalan dengan keinginan. Sekarang tinggal memilih. Mau hidup teratur dengan aturan-aturan yang jelas dimasa depan, atau melanggar segala aturan yang kita buat sendiri, dengan mengatasnamakan kelayakan dan kebahagiaan bersama. (p. 57)

We were following the rules. They were often not what we wanted. This was the time to choose. Did we want to live with clear rules or violate the ones we made ourselves, in the name of propriety and happiness.

Putu represents a situation where orderliness and negotiable business are contrasted with each other. The government is depicted as an organisation which is based on

orderliness but actually acts on the basis of economic negotiation. The government campaigns to promote justice but in practice inflicts injustice on the people. Satirically it presents the leaders as those who do not protest against the *Lurah*'s decision to dismiss them shows the government's practical discrepancy, the way it makes rules. The leaders silently resist such injustice:

“Kenapa Bapak Bapak, tidak berani melawan ketidakadilan dalam keteraturan?” “Kami bukan tidak melawan”, jawab pengurus itu, “Kami justru melawan. Karena kami telah melakukan apa yang baik untuk warga semua, bukan hanya baik untuk Pak lurah. (p. 57)

“Why don't you dare, Sirs to fight against injustice in order?”

“It's not that we don't fight”, said one of the leaders, “we are fighting”.

Because we have done what is good for everybody, not only what is good for the *Lurah*.

The former leaders agree to their dismissal in order to sustain the culture of orderliness. They implicitly exercise the culture to make sure that everyone, including the state apparatus, abides by the law:

Jadi biar saja kami dipecat sekarang, demi keteraturan. Asal dikemudian hari tidak hanya wakil rakyat yang tidak memenuhi aturan – karena tidak menyuarakan kepentingan Pak Lurah – yang dipecat, tetapi juga semua wakil rakyat yang tidak mampu menyuarakan kepentingan rakyat – termasuk Pak Lurah sendiri – harus dipecat. (p. 57)

So, let us be fired now, for the sake of order. As long as in the future, It will not only be public servants men who do not follow the rules – because they do not support the *Lurah*'s interests – who are fired, but also all public officials who cannot represent people's interests – including the *Lurah* himself – have to be fired.

The leaders suggest that everyone should be equal before the law, no matter who they are. Once a rule is executed, it must be inflicted on those who do not stand in line with it. Public leaders should not be loyal to certain figures but to the public. Putu

argues that it is the duty of all leaders to serve the public and exercise rules for the people's benefit.

7.3.1.3 Physical intimidation as terror: "Sket"

Putu's "Sket" is a realistic story of physical violence. It tells of a poor boy who is wronged by a rich family for beating their boy, who is tortured by the *hansip*,⁸⁷ and who is then defended by the poor villagers who destroy the house of the rich family. The story allegorically sets up the gap between the poor and the rich. The overriding theme of the story deals with terror in the form of violence perpetrated by the rich against the poor. This fiction deals with what Healey (2009) describes as financial and physical violence through a caricature of the violence of the rich over the poor and of the powerful over the weak. Putu depicts a fragment of life of a society in which violence is stirred and managed by the power of money; the rich impose their will through their power of money over the poor while the poor experience the effects of power through poverty, intimidation and stereotyping of one class by another.

The story is a bit like Mark Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper*. In it, Putu argues that the New Order should accept responsibility for the gap between the rich and the poor. The gap enables the rich to impose their power over the poor and creates opportunities to react violently. This story takes Indonesian people's memory back to the Indonesian colonial era when the colonisers acted violently against them for doing anything considered wrong by the colonisers. This happened because the law belonged to the colonizer, or the powerful. In modern times, as depicted in the story, poor people, having no financial power, are still vulnerable to violent experiences where they are often wronged for doing things they are not responsible for.

The fact that Putu presents the large gap between the rich and the poor in "Sket", and the violent acts performed by both groups suggests that the story

⁸⁷ *Hansip*, *pertahanan sipil*, (private security officer) is a unit of security in Indonesia, which is trained by military and assigned to protect the public when police or military is unavailable.

functions not only to entertain but also to reach certain political objectives. Literally, the story presents a general case between Tony, “*anak orang kaya*” (a son of a rich family) (p. 70), and Udin, “*putra seorang gembel*” (a boy of a very poor family) (p. 70), who play with each other and sometimes fight. Tony’s parents use the society’s apparatus, a security officer (p. 8), to “make the law” work for them. Although the story’s plot is simple, its goal goes beyond that. It suggests that the New Order has failed to exercise equality before the law. The law fails to protect the rights of every person, because rights only belong to the strong (the rich). Putu shows that it is money which enables the rich to oppress the poor. His money-related phrases include “*membayai ...*” (pay for ...) (p. 73) and “*mensponsori seragam sama hansip kita*” (paid for our *hansip*’s uniform) (p. 73). This financial power enables the rich, such as Tony’s parents, to determine oppressive acts against others. Such actions can generate similar acts in response, including mass destruction.

On the whole, the story describes three violent acts: a child against another child; the rich against the poor; and the poor against the rich. The first violent act represents Putu’s concern about children’s life in a mixed community of the rich and the poor. The mingling of the two classes is like “*langit dan comberan*” (the sky and the ditch) (p. 70) and has the potential to generate injustice, although he suggests that children recognise only “*senang-senang*” (fun) (p. 72). Yet this scene is foundational in introducing Putu’s approach to injustice.

Through the second violent act, Putu suggests that it is hard to find peace between the two social classes if there is no equality among the people who live in such different worlds. Trivial things can cause serious rights violations. For instance, when Tony plays with Udin, he accidentally gets his head banged on an iron fence and bleeds, Tony’s parent uses the *hansip* to violate Udin’s right. This scene reflects structural violence conducted by society’s apparatus against the weak (the poor). The *hansip* has become the right hand of those in power. Through this institution, the rich exercise their violence over vulnerable weak people. The apparatus tends to protect the rich people and ignore the poor. Putu is concerned about the reaction of the society apparatus in handling the case. He shows how different treatments are given to different social classes. The rich are “*didahulukan*” (prioritised) through better

treatment (p. 72) while the poor should be wronged. The rich are always protected and the poor are tormented. Putu's use of the words "*dibekuk, dibentak, diseret, ditarik, dipermak*" (arrested, scolded, dragged, pulled, and tortured) (p. 72) accompany the scene in which Udin is treated like a thief.

The third violent act is the anarchic action by the poor, Udin's sympathisers. In this part, Putu attempts to depict the consequences of inequality before the law where the poor must take justice into their own hands by applying "street law."⁸⁸ The poor people's direct reaction to a problem is described in this way:

"Gila! Ini over acting. Apa ini tidak terlalu keras buat si Udin?" "Mungkin Udin tidak sengaja menggebuk si Tony. Masak anak yang melakukan sesuatu tak sengaja ditimpe seperti maling? Mereka kan anak anak! Siwalan!" "Ini sudah over dosis, tidak proporsional! Tidak bisa lagi ditolerir." "Emangnya zaman kolonial! Mentang mentang si Udin anak kere, hak-hak dasarnya bisa diinjak seenak udel? Nggak! Mereka yang lemah justru harus diberikan perlindungan. Ini bukan hutan-rimba! Si Udin harus dibela! Ini tidak adil!" (pp. 72–3)

"You nut! This is overacting. Isn't this being too hard on Udin?"

"Udin may not have knocked Tony down on purpose. Why is a child who did nothing on purpose being treated as a thief? They are just children! Damn it! This is an overdose, it's disproportional. This can not be tolerated any more."

"This is just like the colonial era! So, because Udin is a neggar's son, his rights can be trampled at will? No way! The weak have to be protected. This is not the jungle! Udin must be defended! This is not fair!"

Putu passionately gives voice to the poor in their fight against the improper treatment that their class receives from the rich. The apparatus's taking side with the rich energises the poor to fight back. They show their solidarity with their own group members, whose rights have been violated by the rich. Putu sarcastically criticises the government by saying "*Ini bukan hutan-rimba*" (This is not the jungle) (p. 73). This

⁸⁸ "Street law" is an act referring to a mob which punishes someone suspected to have committed a crime without any trial. It often deals with theft, robbery or pickpocketing.

refers to “the law of the jungle”,⁸⁹ indicating society’s arbitrary acts and inappropriate acts.

Although Putu does not mention the exact setting, by using the Jakarta dialect for words such as *lhu* (you), *elhu* (you), *gebukin* (beat) and *gelo* (crazy), he represents the poor people’s feeling of being oppressed in the capital city. At the same time, he indicates that in such a city, “street law” is always a potential solution to any clash between the poor and the rich. Unlike the rich, who exercise their power through society’s apparatus, the poor must exercise their intention “*tegakkan kewarasan*” (stand for righteousness) (p. 73) through street law in order to channel their anger. Based on their feelings and intuitions, they can only show their anger in an inhuman manner. Consider the following:

“Heeeee, setan! Mentang mentang kamu yang mensponsori seragam sama hansip kita, jangan seenak perut main hakim sendiri, anarkis lhu!

Nazi! “Siapa yang kasih mandate elhu gebukin anak kecil, emang ini negeri moyang elhu? Gelo!” “Dasar manipulator! Kalau kayanya mendadak memang begini. Kelakuan Bandit! Kamu yang harus digebuk! Ayo hantam lagi!” “Serbu!” Batu dan kotoran makin gencar terlempar. Dalam sekejap rumah orang kaya itu rusak berat. (pp. 73–4)

“Hei, devils! Though you are the one who paid for uniforms for our security men, you can’t do anything you want, you anarchist! Nazi! “Who gave the right to beat a child? Do you think this country belonged to your ancestors? You nut!” “What a manipulator! This is because of your sudden wealth.

You’re acting like a bandit! You are the one who should be beaten! Come on, hit him!” “Attack!” Stones and dirt were thrown. Within a few minutes, the house of the rich man was badly damaged.

Voicing the hate, anger and antipathy of the poor against the rich, Putu claims that social jealousy makes both the poor and the rich act illogically. Both groups tend to act instinctively, so they do not use their minds but their passion. The law lies in the

⁸⁹ “*Hukum rimba*” (the law of the jungle) is a term which means that the stronger will dominate the weaker.

hands of those whose interest is endangered, no matter who they are. Putu even equates the perpetrators with the World War II criminal group the Nazis.

In short, Putu tries to depict that the large financial and social gap between the rich and the poor means that the two are not suited to live side by side in peace. Any mingling of the two classes tends to violate the rights of both. Putu wants to tell his readers that violence is not a good way of solving a problem and it can make a small problem more serious. Systemic violence can occur anywhere, anytime and the actors are not only the powerful ones. As the story shows, they can be the poor, the rich, the society apparatus or even the masses.

7.3.1.4 The death of individual freedom as terror: “Mulut”

The story of satirical allegory “Mulut” tells of a mouthless woman who is caught, forcibly operated on to form a mouth, and finally has her lips sewn together again. This is Putu’s attempt to represent the case freedom for speech and the right to live, which have been denied and obliterated by the government’s physical and symbolic violence. By describing a mouthless woman, Putu exposes suffering and injustice. Using a surrealist technique, he claims that something is wrong in his society. I argue that he is against any action which denies or violates people’s rights to express their concerns and live their own lives. In exposing such violent oppression, he indirectly pleads with the perpetrators to realise the effects of such terror, and at the same time aims to persuade his readers to disagree with it. In this story, the aim of Putu’s terror is not to scare his readers but to make them think more seriously about such rights violations. In other words, it is important to understand his depiction of the suffering and injustice in order to understand his plea.

Putu’s depiction of agency in this story is evident in the characterisation of the unnamed woman, who suffers all her life from injustice; she is beaten down by the story’s trajectory of violence. She is placed between good and bad; between love and hate; and between being voiceless and being dangerously vocal. She appears to be an ambivalent and undetermined figure in Putu’s effort to elucidate resistance. One allegorical constraint which exemplifies this ambivalent resistance is her

physical and social abnormality. The denial of freedom of expression and the right to live as she wishes is shaped and restricted by her physical defect: being “*tuna mulut*” (mouthless) (p. 45), as well as by her social involvement, namely her position between being “*suka atau tidak*” (liked or disliked) (p. 45) by the community.

Injustice begins when the community’s discomfort with the abnormal woman is made known to the government which sends its officer to tackle the issue of her abnormality. Through this officer, Putu depicts the brutality which befalls the woman. He writes:

Tiba tiba saja bagaikan tabrakan mendadak, petugas itu membunyikan peluit dan menyerukan bahaya. Tangkap, serunya memberikan instruksi. “Tangkap, tangkap, tangkap cepat”. Rumah wanita itu dikepung. Lalu wanita itu ditarik keluar dari rumah, untuk diamankan. “Mana mulut kamu!” teriak petugas itu dengan nafas kembang kempis. Dadanya nampak turun-naik sehingga kami seperti mendengar suara gemelutuk. “Mana mulut kamu!” wanita yang tak bermulut itu tercengang. (p. 46)

Suddenly, it was like a sudden collision, the officer blew his whistle and calls “danger!” “Arrest her”, he instructs. “Catch her, catch her, catch her now”.

The woman’s house was surrounded. She was then pulled out of the house to be arrested. “Where’s your mouth?” shouted, the officer panting. The officer’s chest heaved and seemed to hear an unclear voice. “Where’s your mouth?” The mouthless woman looked stunned.

Putu succinctly shows the brutality of the state apparatus in handling the issue of a person who appears different and so endangers social harmony. Through the arrest, which resembles the arrest and interrogation of a major terrorist, Putu suggests a form of resistance. This exemplifies the state arrests which regularly occurred in Indonesia during the New Order. Through the mouthless woman, Putu delivers his resistance of such acts. The officer’s instant reaction, his instructions, taking the woman out of her house and his questions, all amount to a process of detention. The representation of the incident speaks back to the New Order government, because during the Suharto administration a number of cases took place of arbitrary arrests

and detention of innocent people without any charges. The detention of the mouthless woman is a tool for Putu to remind the regime that how it acted was against the rights of the people.

Putu represents not only a sample case of detention but also the motives and the way in which such acts were carried out. He depicts the symbolic issue of security behind the act and how this issue is instilled in the mind and behaviour of its apparatus. Consider the following passage:

“Untuk menjaga keamanan bersama, perempuan ini akan kita amankan dulu, sampai jelas betul asal usul dan peranannya dalam kehidupan kita, “kata petugas itu kemudian pada seluruh warga. “Kenapa dan bagaimana ia tak punya mulut. Apa maksudnya? Dan yang lebih penting dari semua itu, dari mana asalnya dan siapa yang sudah mengatur sampai semua warga terkesima sehingga menerima begitu saja kehadirannya tanpa mampu mempersoalkan, kenapa ia tidak punya mulut. Bukankan itu semacam pengacauan!” Petugas itu kemudian menahan wanita itu. (p. 47)

“To maintain security for all, this woman has to be pacified first, until we learn her origin and role in our community,” the officer then said to all the people. “Why and how does she have no mouth? What does it mean? And above all, where does she come from and who set up all this, such that the residents willingly accepted her presence without asking why she has no mouth? Isn’t this a kind of disruption?” The officer then arrested her.

Here Putu indicates that it is the security problem which most concerns the regime. Anyone who causes a problem will be “*amanken*” (pacified)⁹⁰, the regime’s word for detention. So anyone who appears different will be suspected and restrained, even though the people do not consider them to be dangerous. Putu refers to such a situation by presenting a debate between the people and the officer. He writes, “*Seluruh warga keberatan dengan keputusan itu. Kami menganggap wanita itu tidak bersalah, kenapa mesti diamankan. Kenapa orang tidak punya mulut dianggap*

⁹⁰ *Amanken* (*amankan*) means arrest. The standard pronunciation of the word is “amankan.” Suharto was among the Indonesian leaders who could not pronounce the suffix *kan* properly. Instead of saying *kan* /kʌn/, he would say /kʌn/.

bersalah?” (Everyone objected to that decision. We felt the woman was innocent, why should she be arrested? Why should someone who had no mouth be considered guilty?) (p. 47).

Putu questions the logic behind the state’s act of arresting citizens whom it considered a threat. In this case he attacks the regime’s ideology of “uniformity” on which all the regime’s security policy was ultimately based. Putu therefore also questions the government’s concept of “abnormality”: “*Saudara saudara sudah dikacaukan untuk membiasakan yang tidak normal*” (You have been sufficiently confused such that you accept abnormal as normal) (p. 47). This is “*keliru*” (false) (p. 47). Here Putu challenges the regime by asserting that the logic of the ideology is non-existent. Through the residents’ protest against the state apparatus’ arbitrary act, Putu delivers his message. The full passage reads:

“Tapi saudara saudara sendiri secara tidak langsung seperti diajarkan untuk menerima yang salah. Untuk mentolerir yang tidak betul. Saudara saudara sudah dikacaukan untuk membiasakan yang tidak normal. Ini keliru.” “Tapi kami sama sekali tidak terganggu oleh kehadirannya Pak. Ia seorang warga yang baik. Dengan tidak punya mulut, ia bukan orang cacad. Ia justru menjadi seorang tetangga yang baik, buat semua tetangganya.” “Saudara saudara salah kaprah. Itu, itulah yang salah. Saudara-saudara sudah diam-diam ia latih untuk membenarkan kesalahan. Menerima orang cacad sebagai orang normal, apalagi memujikannya sebagai warga yang baik dan patuh, adalah tindakan kriminal. Itu kejahatan pikiran!” (p. 47)

“But you have been indirectly taught to accept what is wrong. You tolerate what is incorrect. You have been disrupted such that you accept abnormality. This is wrong.” “But we are not at all disturbed by her presence, Sir. She is a good resident. Without a mouth, she is not defective. She has been a good neighbour, to all of her neighbours.” “You all misunderstand. That is what is wrong. She has trained you to accept her flaws. Accepting a defective person as a normal, much less praising her as a good and obedient person, is a criminal act. That’s a thought crime.”

Through the issue of imposed uniformity, Putu represents the government's ideology of not accepting any differences. Putu indicates that all people are not the same. They are different personalities. Their differences should be considered as assets, not as dangers to others. Everyone should be treated equally, no matter what defects they have.

Putu then portrays the New Order's continuous effort to deprive its people of their freedom by exposing an episode in the mouthless woman's journey after the regime has created a new figure from the existing one. She is transformed into a woman with a mouth and given extraordinary skills in speaking. In fact, she now always speaks too much. Her speaking begins to terrorise her neighbours. This again moves the state to take action against this woman. Yet the transformation does not provide her with the opportunity to express herself freely. Here Putu shows his readers that nothing can please the regime except oppression itself:

“Tangkap wanita yang kebanyakan mulut itu,” teriaknya. “Kenapa Pak? Apa kesalahannya?” “Ia sudah merusakkan citra kalian. Masak ngomong terus, itu namanya memancing di air keruh. Membakar-bakar itu bukan jiwa orang timur. Itu pengacau, mengapa kalian diam-diam saja, jangan biarkan dia seperti itu, lama-lama kepribadian kalian akan sesat semua!” “Katanya mulutnya itu Bapak yang memberikan?” “Memang. Tapi maksud kita bukan untuk dipakai ngoceh begitu. Memang susah tidak punya mulut, jadi kalau begini. Main gossip, memfitnah, membakar bakar, ayo cepat selamatkan dia!” (p. 48)

“Capture the woman with many mouths,” he shouted. “Why sir? What has she done?” “She has destroyed your reputation. She talks all the time; we call that fishing in murky waters. Burning things down is not an Eastern way. That is the troublemaker's way. Why do you just keep quiet? Don't let her be like that. After a while, you'll all be the same!” “She says that you gave her a mouth?” “That's true. But the intention was not to give her something to babble with. It's hard not to have a mouth, but, gossiping, slandering, and provoking are the result. Catch her immediately!”

The quote indicates Putu's concern about the government's ambivalence towards people's freedom of expression. He protests against the government's unwillingness to give freedom to its people. Putu implies that the government is overcautious in this matter. He seems to say that the government provides a "caged freedom", a freedom to be used only in the corridor provided by the government. If it is disobeyed, the government can take back the freedom it has given.

In the story the New Order is represented as an authoritarian regime which only grants freedom of speech to those who comply with what it wants. If they do not comply, they will live at a zero level of rights. This can be deduced from what the woman experiences after she gets her mouth. A year later when she comes back, her face is again mouthless. Again she has gone through another forced operation.

In dealing with freedom of speech, the story juxtaposes reality with non-reality. Unlike the story "Sket" which depicts terror realistically, this story of "Mulut" presents terror surrealistically. It satirically speaks about the New Order regime, which prefers people's silence rather than their assertiveness. The regime wants its people to follow what the government has decided to do and disagreement is not appreciated. Contradictorily, this story depicts the way in which silence is both required and forbidden in the service of uniformity. Finally, it addresses the issue of abnormality compared with normality.

7.4 PUTU'S TERROR IN THE POST-SUHARTO ERA

Following the change of regime from the oppressive New Order to the Reform era with its openness, the cultural and literary representations of terror also shifted. Previously taboo topics which had been dealt with only by a few writers now became open subjects which any writer could write on. However Putu continued to be an artist interested in depicting terror. His wide interest in writing about the problems and issues of social conditions of the nation did not change.

Putu has enjoyed his freedom of expression all his literary career by setting up a label as a surrealist writer. Putu's surrealist style which remained strong after the

New Order era can be seen in some of his stories such as “Mayat” (Corpse, 2000)⁹¹ and “Merdeka” (Free, 2001).⁹² Shifting from state-related terror to exploration of the terror that characters experience in following their personal destinies, the stories attain a greater intensity of mental terror. “Mayat” is anti-realist. It represents mental terror through the depiction of its two main characters, one whose death becomes an inspiration for the media and the other whose condition is widely ignored. The story reads as follows. A female corpse comes to the office of a magazine protesting at her death being publicised. The publication has taken advantage of her death. On her way out she meets a guard who is also a corpse but has almost nothing, not even his genitals. Because his condition is much sadder than hers, she understands that she still has everything except her soul, while the guard has no head or body

Unlike “Mayat” with its terror based on physical defects, the story “Merdeka” comes up with the terror of “destiny”. Putu attempts to reveal an example of Indonesians who are “terrorised” by their own destinies. Such people have their life changed by unlucky events. Unhappy experiences regularly befall them. The story is an account of an unlucky man named Merdeka (Free) by his father, who joins the Indonesian independence war. Putu describes Merdeka as a brilliant person but he faces a series of failures, including dropping out of school, having no job, and being unable to marry his girlfriend. His father expects him to be able to alleviate poverty, fight for corruption, and defend his country. As “freedom” (merdeka) was the slogan that drove the Revolution, the story is perhaps an ironic comment on the destiny of Indonesia itself.

7.5 CONCLUSION

Putu’s works use the issue of terror to create elaborately psychological and social storylines. Although the terror themes presented by Putu are not the stories dealing with mass destruction or political attacks that most people are familiar with, they offer something politically unique. They are effective in depicting motivated state

⁹¹ “Mayat” was published in *Horison*, April 2000.

⁹² “Merdeka” was published in *Horison*, February 2001.

violence which terrorises the nation. Although they are plotted at the lowest levels of social realities and the characters are marginalised people, they contribute to exposing the oppressive symbolic and physical acts practised by certain individuals or groups within the nation, in order to exercise the powers held by them or to corrupt those powers. They are alternative sources of discourse from which readers can gain an understanding about the issue of human rights violations.

Putu's productive life as a mainly surrealist writer has enabled him to produce a number of works through which he exposes his critique of the social problems of the nation. This style has been able to save him from the censorship policy imposed upon Indonesian writers by the New Order regime. His works have entertained and awakened his readers about social problems and indirectly attacked his intended readers as well.

The various stories analysed above show Putu's protest at the terror aroused by different incidents and cases in Indonesian history. They relate to the issues of violence by the rich over the poor; corrupt practices by government apparatus; inhuman policies in bureaucracy; and the state's censorship policy. All of these indicate Putu's grievances about Indonesia's sociopolitical injustices which have resulted in the violation of human rights. As the analysis shows, the violations were the results of deplorable state practices and policies which caused misery to the victims especially and to Indonesian people generally. Such depictions expose the victims to public attention alongside the perpetrators, whether they are government-related bodies, groups or individuals.

Putu's media stories raise questions about the aesthetics of fictional violence and the dynamics of the people. They suggest Putu's attempts to expose a form of resistance to both the symbolic and physical violent acts done by the state against the people, the rich against the poor, and the poor against the rich. The characters Putu depicts appear to be marginal and weak people. He creates *RT* leaders, *RW* leaders, a poor little boy, and a mouthless woman to relate fiction to the state system and authority, between the narrative and politics, which is the object of Putu's inquiry. With an uncovering of the sources of social terror, readers are empowered to resist that terror

CHAPTER 8 – OPPOSING PATRIARCHAL DOMINATION: SHORT FICTION BY RATNA INDRASWARI IBRAHIM AND HER CONTEMPORARIES

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines how the representation of women characters in the postcolonial narratives by Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim and her contemporaries have opposed the patriarchal ideologies that operated in the New Order. My analysis argues that the works of women short fiction writers can be fruitfully analysed through feminist literary criticism, a critical method of reading literary works centred on women represented by male as well as female writers. As illustrated by many feminists, the literary representation of women has so far been dominated by men and the representation of women by women is a direct protest against such male-dominated representation. As an activist who fights for marginalised people such as women, Ratna's works definitely qualify as literature of resistance. Her stories show how women's rights are violated and how they resist the unjust male treatment of women.

My analysis of this resistance locates how Ratna represents women's rights issues through artistic elements such as theme, setting and characters in her media short stories; how the stories exemplify the theory of resistance literature; and how they respond to the era which produced them. Although Ratna did not publish any of her works in *Horison* between 1990 and 1998, she was a regular contributor to *Kompas* during this time. I will trace the presence of such a representation in the constellation of scholarly projects of gender; the existing representations by dominant male and female writers; and the further depiction of women in general after the New Order.

8.2 THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN INDONESIAN LITERATURE

Postcolonial representations of Indonesian women have been studied by a number of scholars such as Saraswati Sunindyo (1996), Barbara Hatley (1997), Michael Bodden (2002), Tineke Hellwig (2007), Razif Bahari (2007) and Marshall Clark (2010).

There has been relatively wide attention paid to Indonesian male authors' representations of the feminine, including Siti Nurbaya in Marah Rusli's *Siti Nurbaya* (Foulcher, 2002), Tini in Armijn Pane's *Belenggu* (Hatley, 2002) and Nyai Ontosoroh in Pramoedya's *Bumi Manusia (This Earth of Mankind, 1980)* (Bahari, 2007). The strong Nyai Ontosoroh, the culturally oppressed Siti Nurbaya and the Westernised Tini have helped expand women's images in Indonesian literature. The examination of writings by women will present an alternative picture of what happened to Indonesian women's rights during the era after women were formally given their freedom of expression. It is of great importance to see how women executed their rights after their freedom was formally legalised. Critical responses to postcolonial issues in short fiction by Indonesian women are relatively rare, if not entirely absent. Hatley (2002), for example, has suggested some reasons for this:

Given that colonial/postcolonial perspectives constitute a new and untried approach to modern Indonesian literature as a whole, it is perhaps not surprising that the relatively limited, disparate body of works by women has not yet been the focus of such analysis. Another factor, one suspects, is an expectation of difficulty in relating women's writing, seen as narrowly focused on love and domesticity, the search for "a peaceful home" ... to postcolonial issues and experience. (p. 146)

Despite the truth of Hatley's assertion about the difficulty of the applicability of this approach to Indonesian women's writing, her judgement could result in different outcomes if more careful analyses on Indonesian literature were conducted. Critics have not widely focused on the themes of human rights in works by women authors using a postcolonial perspective. Investigations should be conducted of the fiction of women writers such as Nh Dini, Leila Chudori, Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim, Agnes Yani Sarjono and Rayni N. Massardi. These writers deal with "struggles for a sense

of personal definition and self-worth, restrictions placed by culture on freedom of movement and expression for women and girls” (Foulcher, 1995, pp. 41–3), and “violation of the rights of the marginal” (Arimbi, 2006, p. 238).

Looking at how postcoloniality operates in works by women, particularly with regards to issues of human rights, can be fruitful in refuting Hatley’s statement that the women writers’ narrow focus on love and domesticity are difficult to relate to postcolonial perspectives. Such an analysis will contribute to the exposure of the potentiality of the short story to reveal aspects of postcoloniality in Indonesian literature by women. The following discussion will be particularly concentrated on the works of Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim published in *Kompas* between 1990 and 1998, a period when the issue of human rights in the New Order was questioned by western observers but muted nationally. The female response in the short stories is of great importance because it is important to know how women represented themselves in reaction to the contradictory situation. This type of depiction is surely necessary to complement, if not to balance, the discussion of women figures in the earlier Indonesian canons.

8.3 THE FICTIONAL REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN

The literary depiction of women’s rights practice in the New Order shows that women generally still lived under oppression even though some of the many male writers talk about male domination of women and so do some female writers, including those who deal with their struggle and suffering in men’s world. The depiction of oppression can be related to Indonesian culture, especially the culture of the New Order, which was patriarchal in nature in that it took its base from Javanese tradition as practised by Suharto.

Throughout the history of Indonesian literature, there have been many changes in the way how Indonesian women have been described as seeing the world. They have shown themselves in public, gained their own place in society and begun to make new career paths for themselves. These improvements have created new trends, behaviours and actions among them. In gaining this new position among men,

women have also begun to present their own voice. They can express what they want to say to the world, including addressing what men say about them. Beginning with the last phase of the New Order, what was previously taboo now became public topics of discussion. Sex, for example, used to be a topic which was widely spoken about only by men. Women were the object of discussion and their sexual consumption, particularly by the media, such as their bodies, tastes, behaviours, and willingness were described and directed by men. This can be understood from some works by some dominant male and female authors.

Like Indonesian literature in the colonial era, literature in the postcolonial era also deals with the issues of gender and sexuality. In the colonial period, the writers developed these themes to express nationalist attitudes. In more modern times, they have shaped Indonesian postcolonial experience and discourse as a response to modern and global phenomena. Male writers reveal their male perspective on the experience of the doubly colonised being, while female writers express their own feelings and experiences as members of a further marginalised group. The former prevalent and possibly accepted representation and construction of passive, submissive, caring and homely women are presumed to have changed. Previous images prove to be different from the way women express themselves today. Hatley (2002) concludes, in relation to Ayu Utami's *Saman*, for example, that "They provide tentative evidence that the old norms are slowly but surely changing, and that longstanding taboos on the conceptualization and self-representation of women are under challenge" (p. 178). Although this novel was published just after the collapse of the New Order, it refers to that regime and responds to women's conditions created by the government. The restrictive gender ideology applied during the Suharto regime has been challenged by women writers through the realistic exposure of women's bodily experiences.

Women writers' fiction in the New Order, I believe, has broadened from women's discussion of household problems to protest against oppression. It echoes what Wolf calls an imaginary triumph. Women have moved from a point of silent consciousness to powerful consciousness. Indonesian women writers not only voice their life matters but also express their resistance towards the various forms of

oppression imposed upon them. Ratna and her contemporaries not only depict male oppression but also depict female figures who resist such domination. In such a process of resistance, women become powerful. In order to better understand the background of the representation of women by Ratna, this section will first highlight how male authors represent women characters in their works.

The next main part of this chapter highlights the representation of women and the way they claimed their rights during the last decade of the New Order regime of Indonesia, 1990–1998, as seen in the literary magazine *Horison* and the cultural column of the newspaper *Kompas*.

8.3.1 The Male Representation of Indonesian Women

These male-based perception of women and their roles are still present in contemporary short fiction. In their short stories, male writers such as Waluyo DS, Muhammad Ali and Ahmad Tohari engage with the impact of materialism upon women and the practices of women's survival in a materialistic world. Works like Waluyo's "Seorang Perempuan dan Anak Anaknya" ("A Woman and Her Children", 1990),⁹³ Muhammad Ali's "Pertiwi" ("Home", 1992),⁹⁴ and Ahmad Tohari's "Warung Penajem" ("Food Stall", 1995)⁹⁵ can explain such engagement.

Throughout the three stories, "Third World women" are represented as marginal (powerless) figures whose presence is invisible and unimportant. Their rights are denied by men and the patriarchal sociopolitical culture. They are presented as "victims of male violence" (Mohanty, 1984, p. 338). The three stories are set in the Indonesian economy of the 1990s and depict the poor conditions women experienced. "Seorang Perempuan dan Anak Anaknya" describes a woman who suffers greatly after her husband is declared to have been involved in a subversive act. "Pertiwi" is an account of a woman who is active in the Indonesian revolution and suffers economically at the end of her life. "Warung Penajem" depicts a woman

⁹³ "Seorang Perempuan dan Anak Anaknya" was published in *Horison*, No. 9, 1990.

⁹⁴ "Pertiwi" was published in *Horison*, No. 2, 1992.

⁹⁵ "Warung Penajem" was published in *Kompas* (1994) and republished in *Laki Laki yang Kawin dengan Peri: Cepen Pilihan Kompas 1995*.

who sacrifices herself for the sake of the family business and is victimised by a male *dukun* (magical healer). The story shows a woman whose body is more precious than her intellect. She is nothing but a tool in the production process. It describes an (uneducated) woman who sacrifices herself for material things.

The stories suggest that women must fulfill the needs of men in order for them to function socially. Their presence is meaningful only in the presence of men. The stories depict women as sexual commodities and sex providers. Men represent women as figures who do not own the same things that men have, including their own bodies. They are made to do what men want them to do; their lives are dictated by men and conditioned by social, economic and political situations.

8.3.2 The Representation of Women by Ratna's Women Contemporaries

Traditional politics and ideology contribute to the absence of women writers generally in almost all mass media and to their perceived failure to meet the writing standards expected by the male dominated media, where patriarchal ideology applies. However, publications such as *Horison* and *Kompas* were able to respond to this situation. Between 1990 and 1998, *Horison* carried more than 300 short stories, by 15 female and 150 male writers. *Cerpen Pilihan Kompas*, published from 1992 to 1999, included more than 110 short stories, by 7 female and 50 male authors.

The stories of these women writers are still mostly concerned with things from the domestic spheres such as love, emotions and the household. But they also write about the political atmosphere, such as protest against the environment which downgrades them, including patriarchal domination, and their success among their male counterparts. Most of what they write represents their freedom of expression. This work was mostly published in different mass media and in two books.

In the short fiction published in *Horison* and *Kompas*, there are several themes, including women's loss of identity, the role of women in a materialistic society, women's reasoning and protest against patriarchal practice, and women's rights to their own bodies. The first two themes deal with the effects of patriarchal domination and the last two in particular appear to be an effort to counteract the long-

term patriarchal domination of women where their minds, bodies and freedoms are squeezed to fit into men's expectations. Their freedom to act in accordance with their own way of life constitutes their attempt to rectify men's construct of their being: who they really are. This discussion, through a brief analysis of the texts related to women's roles in society, will try briefly to contextualize the cultural determinants which provide the background for the short story genre featuring representations of women. In the discussion, through the theme each story carries, I will look at how female characters are depicted, how male characters perceive them, and how female characters execute their rights.

To further understand the protest against patriarchy by Ratna's women contemporaries in *Kompas* and *Horison*, I will first examine in detail three short stories by other women: Santyarini's "Mak dan Ikan Teri" ("Mother and the Anchovies", 1992),⁹⁶ Lea Pamungkas's "Warung Pinggir Jalan" ("A Food Stall on the Side of the Road", 1996),⁹⁷ and Nining I. Soesilo's "Angrek Kuning" ("Yellow Orchid", 1998).⁹⁸ These samples of media narrative can be considered reflections of a broader gender construction elucidated by women writers. The three short stories deal with the issue of the invisible women who live their lives in the patriarchal culture. What binds all of the stories is the voice of the subaltern as female.

In the three stories under examination, women are depicted differently from the way they are usually depicted by men. Santyarini and Lea Pamungkas depict powerful women respectively as educational emancipators and as a family saviour. Nining I. Soesilo is the most traditional of the three. Nining represents women as victims of male oppression in household. These writers depict women as marginal figures and have described their being fed up with the condition caused by male domination as a result of direct and indirect effects of sociopolitical practice in the New Order regime. In other words, their stories are their protest against patriarchy and the ideology of capitalism legitimised by the government. The following dominant themes will help to explain these protests. The analysis of the issue of

⁹⁶ "Mak dan Ikan Teri" was published in *Kompas* in 1991 and republished in *Kado Istimewa: Cerpen Pilihan Kompas 1992*.

⁹⁷ "Warung Pinggir Jalan" was published in *Kompas* in 1995 and republished in *Pistol Perdamaian: Cerpen Pilihan Kompas 1996*.

⁹⁸ "Angrek Kuning" was published in *Horison*, No. 3, 1998.

women's rights will concentrate on the following three themes: women's passivity, materialistic women and women's emancipation.

8.3.2.1 Women's passivity: "Angrek Kuning"

Nining's "Angrek Kuning" tells of a woman who is physically and mentally abused by her boyfriend and continues to be abused after they are married. In this story Nining questions the passive attitudes women have when dealing with their husbands. She protests against the sociocultural construction which treats wives as their husbands' complement but not as equal partners. Through the narrator, Mirah's close friend, Nining questions the treatment of women by men and the deplorable human rights violations experienced by women. The narrator shows how miserable life is for women who live under the abuses of their loved ones. Mirah is an educated and good looking woman, but she is also a passive person whose rights as a woman and a wife are denied by her own spouse and whose life is dominated by her fate, just as her mother's was:

Saya sudah coba berkali-kali memutus hubungan dengan Mardan. Tapi saya tak tahu, dia punya daya tarik begitu besar sehingga kami kembali menyatu dan akhirnya saya rela diperlakukan apapun juga sama dia. Mungkin ini nasib saya atau karma yang harus saya tanggung akibat ulah ayah saya yang menyia-nyikan ibu saya sampai ajalnya. (p. 18).

I've tried to break off my relationship with Mardan many times. But I don't know, he has so much charm that we always get back together again and I am willing to be treated anyway he likes. This might be the fate or "karma" that I have to bear because my father neglected my mother until she died.

Nining questions social norms such as women's role in the family, as well as *karma*,⁹⁹ which encourages women to accept anything as predestined for them. Nining also criticises other female attitudes which basically endanger women's lives.

⁹⁹ *Karma* is a belief which stresses that every negative act will result in bad luck which befalls the person doing the act or his/her family members.

The story suggests that women are victimised by the patriarchal culture and by their own submission to the culture, including their belief in *karma*. Their submission and belief cause them to be the victims of men and they tend not to protest against their rights violators because their belief does not allow them to do that.

8.3.2.2 Poor women: “Warung Pinggir Jalan”

Lea’s “Warung Pinggir Jalan” symbolises socially marginal families who live their lives along the streets where new establishments – buildings, dams, streets and other construction sites – were being erected in the New Order Era. This story reflects a common phenomenon in cities as well as sites of large-scale construction projects in remote areas and it encouraged not only formal sectors but also informal sectors to develop. Such projects – national, provincial, and local – which were conducted by government or private agents were meant to trigger Indonesian development. Although the projects were successful in upgrading the Indonesian economy, they also had a negative impact on the change of Indonesian identity, especially for women.

“Warung Pinggir Jalan” is the story of Idah, a girl who becomes a prostitute in order for her to gain material benefits. Seen from the perspective of Mohanty’s idea of women as “victims of economic development processes” (Mohanty, 1984, p. 338), the story reveals the phenomenon of women’s loss of identity as an effect of economic development. Lea suggests that women fail to comply with social moral norms as a result of the inhibitions produced by poverty. In this particular story, Lea, who is also a journalist, portrays a marginal young woman, Idah, who has no education and no prospects. She shows how an uneducated young woman perceives her life among people who live in the hard conditions of a construction site.

Idah symbolises those potentially powerful Indonesian women who look for personal freedom and change their identity in the effort to seek a better material life in a poor environment and who still become victims because they fail to comply with social norms. Her movements and actions denote what Indonesians have described as

the “*cewek matre*”, a “material girl”. In this story, Lea suggests that materialism has colonised Idah’s heart and her love for material things has defeated her strong will to conserve the positive values and norms Indonesian women are expected to have. She cannot differentiate between good and bad. She is infatuated with the glamorous life that her prostitute neighbour lives:

Lebih bersih dari semua perempuan yang ada di desa ini, lebih cantik, lebih wangi, pakaiannya banyak, bajunya banyak, sepatunya banyak, tetapi lebih dari segalanya, Mira lebih gembira. Hati kecil Idah selalu menjawab, “Ingin jadi Mira.” Seorang pelacur. Tapi buatnya, Mira tak ada bedanya dengan dokter atau banyak orang kaya dikampungnya. (p. 135)

She was fairer than all the women in the village, more beautiful, more fragrant, she had more clothes, more shoes, but above all Mira was more cheerful. Idah’s heart always told her, “I want to be like Mira.” A whore. But to her, Mira was no different than a doctor or the rich people in her village.

Through Idah, Lea suggests that some women have no objection to any act that belittles women. Poverty causes them to feel that materialism is the first thing in this world, no matter what profession someone has. Their poor condition drives them to seek a material life where they find freedom. This results in their having a good material life without considering of all the norms of society. In the end they are only victims.

8.3.2.3 Women’s emancipation: “Mak dan Ikan Teri”

The era of “openness” introduced by Suharto in the last decade of his government legally issued women writers a licence to express themselves in new and adventurous ways. They depicted what they thought was wrong with the practice of gender bias ideology in education, where women were often excluded from the practices of schooling. This story negates what Mohanty (1984) calls being “tradition-bound” (p. 337): Women do not abide by their tradition but by their own freedom. Although the

policy of compulsory education in Indonesia was introduced before this story was published, the depiction is significantly effective in elucidating the ongoing restriction men placed on women's education. As the story indicates, education still belongs to men. It is perceived to be no need for women to receive a formal education because they should not get involved in sociopolitical activities. The story suggests that women need to protest against the discriminative tradition so as to improve their quality of life and live their lives as more equal partners of men.

The story is based initially on women's oppression which takes place in the household, between men (the father) and women (the mother as well as the daughter). Mak dares to protest against her husband and makes her own decision for the future of her daughter and for her own freedom. Her husband's mind is occupied by the patriarchal conception of women's position, believing that women do not need to go to school because in the future they will be restricted to domestic duties. Mak tries to protest against male hegemony. Mak's only daughter is pictured as a career woman who is equal to her husband, but is then unable to function as an Indonesian woman taking care of her family. Mak, who understands that her daughter cannot manage all her household chores, decides to leave her husband for her daughter. Mak's decision is a brave act which challenges the domination of the patriarchal culture. However, Mak is not without remorse. She still has feelings of responsibility and regret. No matter how angry she is at her husband, she still misses him. This particular story has come out of the tradition of the New Order's model of womanhood.

In this story, Santyarini, the pseudonym of Melani Budianta, has presented a different image of women from that of the New Order. She challenged the regime's ideology of *Dharma Wanita*, which stressed that the husband (man) is everything and a woman's function is to accompany him. Women are not equal to men. So they have no chance or right to decide how to lead their own lives. She suggests that women should not abide by this ideology. If women want to be intelligent, they need to have education. In short, it is women who make their own destiny.

8.4 RATNA INDRASWARI IBRAHIM'S NARRATIVE: BETWEEN OPPRESSION AND RESISTANCE

Ratna's fiction of the 1990s can be considered part of the "gender quake" (Wolf, 1993) in Indonesia where images of women were no longer defined and pictured by men but also became women's own creations. Representations of women in literature had previously been widely conducted by men because the Indonesian literary world was a male project. Feminist literary criticism had been focused more on male representation of women rather than on what women wanted to represent in their own work. Ratna attempted to break through this tradition by moving from women as victims to women of power.

Ratna was one of the most prolific short story writers in the New Order literary tradition. She was among the few Indonesian women writers whose works strongly describe social marginalisation (Melani Budianta, Professor of literature, University of Indonesia, Personal communication, Jakarta, 26 April 2011). Eko B. Subiantoro (2002) argues that Ratna's fiction represents her disappointment toward "*masyarakat yang memperlakukan orang cacat dan perempuan dalam posisi yang tidak penting*" (a society which treats the disabled and women as unimportant groups) (p. 104). Her stories of the 1990s onwards turn realist and humanist (Elwig PR, Ratna's writer friend, personal communication, Malang, 6 May 2011). These realist and humanist stories can be found among her eight collections of short stories such as *Bukan Pinang Dibelah Dua* (*Not an Areca Nut Divided into Two*, 2003a), her novels such as *Lemah Tanjung* (2003b) and around 300 other stories published in various media (Arimbi, 2006). Ratna was successful in getting five of her stories published in the seven annual anthologies of *Cerpen Pilihan Kompas* where the selection was made by the *Kompas* team, between 1992 and 1999. In these stories, she represents women not only as victims but also as powerful individuals. In general these stories, directly or indirectly, deal with women's reactions to male domination.

Unlike most other women writers in the *Kompas* anthologies, Ratna's stories widely expose the condition of socially marginalised people. She questions the rights

of the marginalised, including women in male-dominated class-based world, and she believes that their rights have been widely violated. As a consequence, based on her analysis of Ratna's short stories and novels. Arimbi (2006) argues:

Most of her writings are interconnected with a single grand theme: the disempowerment of those marginalized such as children, women and the elderly, by a superior power, be it the superiority of the state, the patriarchy, or even the feudalism legitimized by the New Order regime speaking only in the name of authority and dominance. (p. 238)

Ratna's concern for marginal groups indicates her effort to advocate the rights of these groups.

In this section, I extend Arimbi's claim by closely analysing a small number of Ratna's short stories in order to show the issues of women's rights violations, who are the perpetrators and how they are represented. The analysis will focus on four short stories which were all published in *Kompas* between 1990 and 1998:

"Perempuan Itu Cantik" ("The Woman is Beautiful", 1991)¹⁰⁰, "Rambutnya Juminten" ("The Hair of Juminten", 1993)¹⁰¹, "Namanya Massa" ("Her Name is Massa", 1994)¹⁰² and "Tujuh Belas Tahun Lebih Empat Bulan" ("Seventeen Years and Four Months", 1996)¹⁰³. Throughout these stories, Ratna shows that women become the victims of male domination because of poverty, financial weakness and cultural shackles. These conditions make them figures who cannot claim freedom of expression and the right to freely lead their own lives. Such rights are precious but difficult to attain because their oppressors hold economic and cultural power over them. In the four stories, Ratna makes her characters directly or indirectly speak for women's rights. The analysis is divided into subthemes: women's selfhood, resistance towards patriarchal domination, negating children's rights and the exploitation of women.

¹⁰⁰ "Perempuan Itu Cantik" was first published in *Kompas* in 1991 and republished in *Kado Istimewa: Cerpen Pilihan Kompas 1992* (Mulyadi et al. 1992).

¹⁰¹ "Rambutnya Juminten" was first published in *Kompas* in 1993 and republished in *Lampor: Cerpen Pilihan Kompas 1994* (Mulyadi et al. 1994).

¹⁰² "Namanya Massa" was first published in *Kompas* in 1994 and republished in *Laki Laki yang Kawin dengan Peri: Cerpen Pilihan Kompas 1995* (Kristanto et al. 1995).

¹⁰³ "Tujuh Belas Tahun Lebih Empat Bulan" was first published in *Kompas* in 1996 and republished in *Anjing Anjing Menyerbu Kuburan: Cerpen Pilihan Kompas 1997* (Pambudi et al. 1997).

8.4.1 Women's Selfhood: "Perempuan Itu Cantik"

"Perempuan Itu Cantik" is the story of a young wife whose potentials and will are ignored by her husband but who takes advantage of the opportunity to enjoy the life she does not get from him. It represents resistance towards male domination by the covert transformation of oppression into a subtle self-centred fulfillment. The story represents women who do not confront men immediately but transform the situation of domination into one where they can enjoy and benefit from it and find a way out of the depressing situations caused by their loved ones.

In this story, Ratna presents women's protest about male supremacy in marriage. Through the depiction of a woman who marries at a young age, she pictures how women are controlled and forced to give up their rights such as the right to life and freedom of expression. Ratna suggests that there are two things which restrict women from getting their rights: financial problems and also patriarchal culture.

Through the story, Ratna shows that financial problems are the main reason why women are subordinated and have their rights denied even by their own family members. Having no independent income causes them to be ignored: "*kecantikan dan jati dirinya tidak pernah diperdulikan oleh seisi rumah*" (her beauty and abilities were ignored by the whole family) (p. 52). Although women have beauty and potential which equip them with abilities, and have "*banyak sekali impian yang ingin diwujudkan*" (lots of dreams to achieve) (p. 52), they cannot make their dreams come true. Because money lies in the hands of their husbands, the breadwinners, they can only hope their husbands will understand what they want. All their effort comes to no avail whenever men prevent them from doing what they want.

In "Perempuan Itu Cantik", Ratna represents how husbands "*menjajah seluruh pribadi*" (completely colonise (women's) body and soul) (p. 54). She argues that it is a mistake for women to be married before having a career: "*kesalahan itu terletak pada perempuan yang mau dibelenggu dan disepelekan oleh suami*" (the fault lies with women who want to be shackled and ignored by their husbands) (p.

55). Because marriage is a “colonising institution”, “*jangan buru buru menikah, kalau ingin berkarir*” (do not rush to marry if you want to pursue a career) (p. 54). Ratna describes women who have experienced this subjugation as “*boneka*” (dolls) (p. 55), who “*akan dicampakkan ke keranjang sampah*” (will be discarded into the garbage bin) (p. 55) when they are worn out.

Ratna criticises the power which positions women as part of men’s needs to continue their “male empire”, not as usual life partners. Once a woman is married, she must submit to her husband and fulfill his objectives. Her beauty and potential are nothing; what remains is that her husband “*tidak pernah memperdulikan ceritanya*” (never cares about her needs) (p. 55). Ratna questions men’s intention to belittle women by disregarding their strengths. She argues that women are betrayed by their loyalty to their husbands because they need their husbands to support them in order to maximise their potential.

In the story, Nikita feels that her sacrifice to her family, most especially for her husband, is in vain. She fails to gain her husband’s respect. Instead her husband “*memperlakukan dirinya seperti pembantu*” (treats her like a servant) (p. 54) by asking her to run a food shop in front of her parents-in-law’s house while still performing her role as a housewife with two children. Yet she has no power to protest, because she loves him and is dependent on him. Ratna further indicates that men increase their domination by weakening women’s power and negating their physical and spiritual potential. Because men do not pay attention to such things, women remain powerless and the men gain domination over the household. Nikita cannot fulfill her ambitions because her husband ignores her potential. Such an attitude, as indicated by Ratna, hinders her from gaining her freedom from her husband’s placing her in a cage. Nikita knows that her husband could encourage her to reach her best achievement, but he does not do it as if he wants to leave her weak. He can then dictate to her what to do and how to behave. It is the domination in this story that Ratna endeavours to reject.

Finally she is submissive to his wants: running the shop and forgetting her dream to be a great artist. She confesses that she “*tak ingin kehilangan mas. Juga tidak ada keinginan untuk meninggalkan depot itu*” (does not want to lose her

husband. Neither does she want to leave the shop) (p. 56). In this unhappy situation, she creates a personal escape, both psychological and financial: “*Di depot ini, Nikita bisa menyibukkan diri, mendapatkan uang dari hasil jerih payahnya. Dia sekarang bebas membeli baju, make-up, dan asesorinya*” (In the shop, Nikita can make herself busy, making money from her own labors. She was now free to buy clothes, make-up, and accessories) (p. 56). She makes an effort to counter the husband’s sociocultural efforts. She seems to believe that women are weakened through lack of financial power. Nikita is so weak financially that she has to subject herself to any decision her husband makes, including the fact that she and her husband have to move to a worse room for the sake of her mother in law. Discouraged by her husband’s making her into a doll, she immediately accepts her husband’s offer to set up a food stall in front of their house to help him make money for the family. She says, “*Nikita tidak ingin menjadi boneka! Nikita capek, oleh karena itu, diterimanya usul mas: mendirikan depot makanan di muka rumah*” (Nikita did not want to be a puppet! She was tired, therefore, she accepted her husband’s proposal: set up a food depot in front of the house) (p. 55). Her being fed-up with the situation leads her to accept the opportunity to generate income herself and she will not be dependent on her husband any more.

Through Nikita, Ratna represents wives who are dominated by their husbands. Conditioned by their dependence and lack of financial ability, they have to abide by their husbands’ demands. If they have a chance to protest, they will silently ignore it. Ratna writes: “*Nikita tidak ingin seperti tanah liat yang dengan mudah dibentuk oleh mas. Nikita tidak ingin menjadi perempuan jelek, yang menghabiskan umurnya di depot ini*” (Nikita did not want to be a clay which could be easily shaped by her husband. Nikita did not want to be an unattractive type of woman who spent her life in the shop) (p. 56). Instead of protesting against her husband’s inability to see her beauty, she amuses herself at his limitations. She creates opportunities for her male clients to enjoy her physical beauty: “*Setiap siang Nikita akan menunjukkan kemolekan tubuhnya*” (Every afternoon, Nikita will show off the beauty of her body) (p. 58). According to her, this is not a sexual desire but “*kegembiraan, kebahagiaan yang sulit dijabarkan. Sebab di dalamnya ada perasaan terharu, gembira,*

kekaguman, dan kemampuan untuk melihat keterbatasan mas sebagai seorang suami” (excitement, happiness which was hard to explain. Because with it, there were feelings of compassion, joy, awe and the ability to see her husband’s limitations) (p. 58).

Nikita begins to gain power after she earns money from the food depot. She is not an idle wife any more but contributes to the prosperity of the family, which she questions as the only way her husband can “*melihat saya cuma dari kepintaran saya memasak yang sangat meringankan beban ekonomi keluarga*” (see me only in terms of my ability to cook, which greatly eases the economic burden of the family) (p. 59). Most importantly, she is able to fulfill her own needs without asking her husband to buy anything for her. Nikita never confronts her husband, but she transforms her situation into one of power and selfhood. She resists her husband’s intention to imprison her at the shop and make her spend her life doing the duties of a shopkeeper. Instead she wants to maintain her beauty and explore her potential. She wants acknowledgement and even lets other men peep at her physical beauty which she admits “*Itu memang harus didapatnya dari orang lain*” (That has to be gotten from others) (p. 60).

In summary, the story suggests that women can indirectly protest against men and gain strength without hurting either of them. It represents Ratna’s cultural protest against women’s marginalisation. Ratna shows that the core problem which hinders women from fulfilling their own expression is money. She suggests that women need to have their own careers in order for them to be free from male domination. It is, perhaps, both a symbolic and physical resistance that is nevertheless nonviolent.

8.4.2 Resisting Male Domination: “Rambutnya Juminten”

Direct confrontation, the type of resistance which is commonly performed by men, is seen in “Rambutnya Juminten” in which women resist male cultural pressures. The

story is contextualised with the Indonesian myth of “Nawang Wulan”,¹⁰⁴ where Ratna offers her readers to a traditional Indonesian image of beautiful hair.

In “Rambutnya Juminten”, Ratna continues to challenge patriarchal culture which places husbands above wives. She argues culture has caused men to subordinate women in households and made women submit to their husbands’ wills. She protests that such a practice leaves women without freedom. She counters the culture by backgrounding the story with the legend of “Joko Tarub” which focuses on women’s beauty and praises male deception of women.

To represent resistance toward women’s subordination through the story, Ratna uses the symbolisation of women’s beauty. She employs symbols which magnify women’s significance Ratna further indicates that men increase their domination by weakening women’s power and negating their physical and spiritual potential. Because men do not pay attention to such things, women remain powerless and the men gain domination over the household. Nikita cannot fulfill her ambitions because her husband ignores her potential. Such an attitude, as indicated by Ratna, hinders her from gaining her freedom from her husband’s having placed her in a cage. Nikita knows that her husband could encourage her to reach her best achievement, but he does not do it as if he wants to leave her weak. He can then dictate to her what to do and how to behave. It is the domination in this story that Ratna endeavours to reject. Ratna’s use of “Nawang Wulan” in combination with women’s long hair challenges the traditional assumption that women’s hair is so precious that they need to let it grow long for the sake of their own beauty. Her telling of the “Nawang Wulan” legend represents the Indonesian patriarchal culture, which prefers women with long hair. Not less than thirteen times, Ratna makes use of the name of the traditional heroine to resist male domination of women, specifically men’s presumed ownership of women as wives. Ratna depicts an obedient wife whose life is dictated by her husband. Her whole life is controlled by

¹⁰⁴ The legend of “Joko Tarub” tells of Joko Tarub who sees some beautiful angels bathing in a pool in a jungle. Looking at their beauty, he wants to trap one of them by taking her flying clothes. When the angels finish bathing and get dressed, the youngest one Nawang Wulan realises that her clothes are gone. She cannot go back home. While she is confused, Joko Tarub comes to soothe her and brings her home. Later they are married and have a boy. A few years later, she accidentally finds her clothes which are hidden under piles of paddy rice. At last she decides to go back home. Indonesian readers interchangeably use Joko Tarub or Nawang Wulan to refer to the legend.

him, even her hair. She needs to do as he wants. When Panuhun says: “*Saya ingin kau memanjangkan rambutmu*” (I want you to let your hair grow long) (p. 78), he actually orders her to do so because when Juminten wants short hair, he replies “*Kamu bersolek untuk suami, iya kan?*” (You make yourself beautiful for your husband, don’t you?) (p. 78). Juminten never refuses what her husband prescribes for her although it is against her own wishes.

Although most of the plot deals with a wife’s obedience to her husband, Ratna instills a feminist idea through the acts of a minor character, Marni, who represents women who disagree with the women who always please their husbands by disregarding their own will. Through Marni, Ratna attempts to articulate women’s defiance against the subordination of women by men. Marni shows her feminist perspective to both men and women. She always reminds Juminten of her mistakes in dealing with her husband. She believes that Juminten’s regular effort to please her husband is a great mistake because she is only going to hurt herself. When Juminten keeps using a hair product she does not like, Marni says “*Ten, saya kira kau tak perlu menyiksa diri, sekalipun agar dicintai suami*” (Ten, I don’t think that you should torture yourself, so your husband will love you) (p. 79). The more Juminten becomes involved in her submission to her husband, the more Marni feels unhappy with Juminten’s acts:

Tapi menurut perasaannya, sebaik apapun suami Juminten, sikap Juminten yang ingin selalu menyenangkan hati Panuhun adalah sikap yang keterlaluan, karena sudah menyiksa diri sendiri. (p. 79)

But in her heart, however good Juminten’s husband was, Juminten’s practice of always trying to please Panuhun was too much because she was torturing herself.

On another occasion, Marni says “*Juminten kamu bodoh, kalau kamu sudah berkorban seperti itu, dan suatu hari Panuwun jatuh cinta dengan teman sekerjanya, bagaimana perasaan kamu?*” (p. 82) (Juminten, you are dumb; if you sacrifice in this way, and if one day Panuwun falls in love with someone at work, how will you

feel?). Here, feminine physical resistance is indeed an appropriate response to masculine symbolic domination.

Ratna argues that modern people's total belief in the legend of "Nawang Wulan" should be condemned, because the men who promote it will only use the traditional myth to justify their action against women and women will make their own prison out of it. Marni's role as a feminist agent to counteract what men do to women is conspicuous when she advises and condemns Juminten whenever she subordinates herself to her husband. When Juminten is again afraid of making her husband jealous if she is active socially, Marni says: "*Mestinya kau tidak terus menerus mengalah, tapi memberi pengertian pada suami. Kalau aku dibegitukan sama suamiku, sudah lama aku minta cerai. Kita bukan burung di dalam sangkar*" (You should not continue to give in; you have to make him understand. If my husband treated me like that, I would have asked for a divorce long ago. We are not birds in a cage) (p. 82). Through Marni, Ratna proactively provokes women to fight for their rights and make decisions for their own good.

8.4.3 Negating Children's Rights: "Namanya Massa"

The story "Namanya Massa" describes a young woman who grows up in a rich but broken home and then later lives her life as single parent with one son. It depicts the issue of freedom of self expression, which is denied to the heroine. The portrayal of the woman's suffering as the effect of a broken home environment underscores the story's imagining of men's power. In this story, Ratna focuses on the issue of rights violations perpetrated by family members over each other. She argues that members of a broken family like the father and mother can abuse the rights of their own children. She believes that popularity, wealth and good careers do not guarantee that parents will avoid such violations of their children's rights. She also implies that the denial of the children's freedom of speech and expression and of the right to a decent life, can lead children to resist these abuses, either directly or indirectly, but not always in a positive manner.

The story suggests that a broken home is a place where disharmony causes victimisation. Disharmonious relationships between parents can cause them to abuse the rights of their partners as well as those of their children. Consequently, the children will be traumatised. Ratna's depiction of the violation of children's rights reveals that she resists women's being oppressed in their own home. Through "Namanya Massa" Ratna criticises such a practice which, she suggests, often happens in cities like Jakarta: "*Kalau kau sudah lama di Jakarta, ada banyak perempuan seperti itu*" (If you have lived long in Jakarta, you have seen many women like her) (p. 21). Ratna depicts such a condition from the perspective of a man, but she is concerned about the women whose lives are ruined and whose rights are violated. She represents what these women resist and how they respond to such acts.

Both parents have contributed to the breakdown of their own marriage. Nevertheless, Massa, the main character, protests against her father more than her mother, which is evidence of Massa's ignorance of the full situation. Although she is traumatised by her parents' divorce, she does not confront them directly. Instead she transforms her anger into a silent attack. She indirectly attacks her parents in two ways: by ignoring them and by benefiting from her relation with men. This silent protest is evident in her change of attitude from being a good daughter when she still lives with her both parents to becoming a wild and immoral daughter after her parents' divorce.

The portrayal of Massa's protest against the father figure dominates the story's plot. Examples of this protest centre around Massa's behaviour away from home. Two acts can be highlighted here. Firstly, instead of being a good daughter who obeys her parents, Massa does unexpected things which make them unhappy. At the age of fourteen, she decides to drop out of school because of her parents' divorce. She thinks that her parents have made her "*masuk sumur tanpa dasar ... malu bersekolah*" (plunged her into a bottomless well ... , she was ashamed to go to school) (p. 22). Quitting her school is a serious attack on her rich and famous parents. After leaving school, she works at a discotheque, where she explores her freedom by drinking and playing around with men. She is not shocked by such experiences but

quickly “*mengerti hidup*” (understands life) (p. 23). Massa is empowered but only by living an immoral life like Idah).

The story shows Ratna’s attempt to portray the life of Indonesian celebrities and their fragile households in a negative light. Ratna imagines how they live their lives and how they treat their family members. Concentrating on children, she pictures how the children are denied their rights. Ratna depicts that Massa cannot have her voice heard at home. She is not allowed to concentrate on drawing, even though her father wants her to be an artist. She is not taken care of properly because her parents are always busy. Ratna also shows the results of the denial of children’s perception of their parents. She suggests that fame and wealth are not always things children look for. Although she has everything provided by her parents, Massa turns out to hate them because of their domination of her. Yet she tries at first to be a good child who makes her parents happy. She changes her attitude towards her parents only after they are divorced. She is not satisfied with her father’s domination and it causes her not to respect him and even to dislike him. In this scene, Ratna presents Massa as a woman with a strong personality. The “tragedy”, which possibly causes many women to be frustrated, has turned her into a mature person at a young age. She does not feel sad because of it but realises that she has to survive. She turns calamity into victory. She does not let men steal her life. Instead, she defeats them by taking advantage of their existence. In other words, her act can be interpreted as her silent resistance against male domination.

Her immoral sexual behaviour can also be considered as a form of protest. Dating, which is seen in modern Indonesian society as a natural bond between two lovers or a couple who want to learn from each other, can also mean something else. In this story, Ratna suggests that dating can be a way of symbolic protest. Massa is disappointed by men throughout her teenage life, both by her father and by the men she flirts with until she has a son. Although she does not show her anger with men directly, she undermines their power by dating three men at the same time. She uses them to survive: respectively as the protector of her child, as a great lover and as an income provider. Does she conquer three men with one blow? Has she won at all?

8.4.4 The Exploitation of Women: “Tujuh Belas Tahun Lebih Empat Bulan”

Ratna’s protest against male power within the family is also evident in “Tujuh Belas Tahun Lebih Empat Bulan” where she depicts the life of street children. The story represents “women as victims of the familial system” (Mohanty, 1984) and mirrors violence against women, both domestic and social. Poverty again underscores the story’s picture of men’s domination. Through the theme of poverty, Ratna depicts the issues of child exploitation and violence against women. She presents how such exploitation causes women to lose their freedom. The themes, characters’ attitudes and behaviours in the family can also be read as a representation of a poor Indonesian family’s struggle against poverty, which leads to child exploitation and prostitution. Poverty causes traditional social norms such as togetherness, a caring attitude and love for family to disappear and leads people to prioritise materialism above everything else, including family relationships. Although the story centres mainly on the life of a young girl, Ratna seems to depict all those whose rights are violated and those people who perpetrate such violations in a family. The family experiences not only financial problems but also moral degradation. The representation of Third World women as “poor” figures (Mohanty, 1984) is clearly portrayed. In this hardship, it is children who suffer the most. Poverty is represented as the engine which propels the practice of child exploitation and prostitution. This well portrayed scenario reflects the reality of violence over family members and the effects of poverty on poor people, including women.

In the story, Ratna presents two women as the direct victims: a daughter as a victim of her parents and later a moneylender, and a wife as the victim of her husband. Ratna reminds Indonesians that children, including daughters, can be direct victims of oppression by their own parents. She makes use of Sinik, a 14 year-old girl, whose rights are denied by her parents. Her parents force her to make money for the family for which she is really too young to be responsible: *“Ingat mulai sekarang, kau harus mencari uang di daerah itu. Saya dan adikmu yang baru lahir ini sementara akan dirumah saja, sampai dia cukup umur untuk diajak mengemis”*

(Remember, from now on, you have to make money around her. Your new born sibling and I will stay at home for now, until he is big enough to go begging) (p. 32).

Ratna attempts to show the readers that the father figure is untouchable and adorable. She depicts how weak the mother is before her husband. She has no power to protest against her husband's failure to make money for the family. The man who is supposed to feed the family, according to the traditional norms, does not carry out his duty. Instead of earning money for the family, he prefers to spend his time drinking alcohol, staying away from his own family and coming home only for more money and food. Here, in his role as the father, the patriarchal power has given him power to execute what he wants but not in a culturally appropriate way.

All her life, Sinik has to face violence: domestic, sexual and psychological. Through Sinik's sufferings, Ratna criticises all the family members, no matter what their roles are, who seem to agree with an ideology which insists on male domination by the father, even though he does not act to support them at all: "*Tidak seperti bapaknya yang cuma bisa mabuk dan menyuruh anak istrinya mengemis*" (Unlike her father who can only be drunk and send his children and wife out to beg) (p. 33). Nobody in the family dares to protest against the injustice. The mother, now with a new baby, still respects her husband and has no courage to protest against his neglect of the family, for his not being the breadwinner, for him not nurturing them. Instead, he only "*minta diladeni makan*" (expects his meals to be served) (p. 34) when he comes home drunk. Sinik's mother also oppresses her own daughter, the one who is without any power to fight. The mother's acts indicate that patriarchal power is still dominant. The father's attitude and his behaviour are non-negotiable. The father figure is so powerful in the family that he can do anything he wants. Nobody in the family dares to claim their rights.

Sinik experiences triple oppressions: first as a postcolonial lower class woman, second as one oppressed by patriarchal ideology and third as the one subordinated and oppressed by her own Other (her mother), as she says "*Saya harus menyetor uang kepada Ibu setiap hari. Kalau tidak setor, saya tak akan diberi makan dan tempat tidur*" (I have to give money to Mum everyday. If I don't, she will not give me food or a place to sleep) (p. 34). Her mother considers her a possession she

can take advantage of at any time. Sinik is not a daughter with her own future and personal freedom. Instead she has to surrender her life to her parents. When Sinik tells her mother of her plan to go away from home to study and work, her mother angrily responds “*kamu bisa tega membiarkan saya dan adik adikmu tidak makan? Kalau kau terima pekerjaan itu! Kau tak akan kuakui sebagai anak, kukutuk kau!*” (you can stand to let me and your siblings go without food? If you take that job, you won’t be my child anymore, I curse you) (p. 34). Sinik’s mother considers her to be an indebted daughter who has to pay for what she gets from her parents: “*Hari ini kau tidak akan kuberi makan. Bayar dulu hutangmu ...*” (I am not going to give you food today. You pay your debt first (the money she needs to surrender to her mother every day)) (pp. 35–6). Sinik is made into a “machine” whose only purpose is to help the family to survive.

Poverty can enable those in financial power to oppress the have-nots; even the poor can oppress those with less than themselves. Outside her own home, Sinik has to deal with human exploiters like Samad, her neighbor, who benefits from her financial situation. Samad represents the men who objectify women as sex objects. As the richest man in the neighbourhood, he is willing to help others, including women, for his own interests. He is pleased to lend money to Sinik when she comes to him for help, and lend her enough money to pay her daily deposit to her mother. In return, she needs to pay him back more than the loan: “*bunganya seratus perak setiap hari*” (“the interest is Rp. 100 per day”) (p. 36). After a few loans, Sinik is unable to pay her debt. Samad responds “*Besok kalau kau mau, kita berdua bisa makan-makan dan nonton film bersama. Dan kau tidak usah membayar utangmu, kau masih perawan kan?*” (Tomorrow, if you want, we can eat out and go to a movie together. And you do not need to pay your debt; you are still a virgin, aren’t you?) (p. 36). Gradually he begins to buy the girl’s body.

Sinik psychologically lives between two worlds: her family and her economic future. Despite her being domestically oppressed, she loves to be with her family members. She wants to help her family out of their poverty. She knows that only she who can change their history. However, poverty, her young age and her lack of education, all combine to hinder her freedom. These are the components which

determine her life. Her parents give orders and discipline her but they do not give her money. So when a new situation comes, she resists at first. Despite the multiple colonisation imposed upon her, Sinik can handle what her family burdens her with. She never complains or protests against the responsibility put upon her although she does not deserve it. Poverty does not stop her from having a dream of becoming a policewoman. Through the help of a woman who organises a house for street children, she plans to be adopted and educated at the house, where she must be separated from her family members and neighbourhood for quite some time until she can change her habits from being a street girl to being a school girl. But then, given that she cannot enjoy her freedom, she feels upset and runs away from the house. Being polite and disciplined is a “*penjara*” (jail) (p. 37) for her. Life for her means being free from any other person’s will and rule. She will feel free whenever she can handle her family’s financial problems. So, keeping her in a house for street children means setting her aside from her family and at the same time jailing her. To survive and enjoy her freedom, she is willing to do anything. When she cannot provide the money she has to surrender to her mother, she goes to a male money lender a few times. However when her debt accumulates, she cannot pay it back. She is financially obliged to submit her virginity to him to pay her debt and finally become a “*pelacur*” (prostitute) (p. 37).

This act indicates that poverty is one major factor which causes women to surrender to men’s passion. Here Ratna indicates how many girls like Sinik have experienced the same life where “*Mereka yang telah terbiasa hidup dijalan, tentu akan bermental jalan*” (Those who have lived in the street will have a street mentality) (p. 37). Whatever they do to change their life, they will return to their basic conditioning. Ratna reminds the readers that “*Cuma sedikit yang bisa mengubah nasibnya*” (Only a few can change their destiny) (p. 37). So indirectly Ratna tells of the government’s lack of effort to get people out of the streets and into better social and economic circumstances.

8.5 AFTER THE NEW ORDER

The last four years of the New Order marked a great change in Indonesian sociopolitical life as economic crisis and globalisation contributed to shake the nation. The Javanese cultural values which had previously shadowed the nation began to fade away in line with the weakening legitimacy of the government. The politics of *keterbukaan* (openness) Suharto briefly introduced in 1989 continued to be the fuel for reformists to break through the rigid political tradition (Danerek, 2005). The series of violent acts committed by the New Order against institutions and individuals did not result in any integrated sociopolitical condition, but they eventually encouraged the reformists to be more open and blatant in their protests.

The narratives published in *Horison* and *Kompas* in the reform era after 1998 also indicate a similar phenomenon where the narratives respond to realities surrounding them and becomes the object of entertainment. Many writers chose to concentrate on the problems related to women's lives directly or indirectly. Social phenomena such as corruption, violence, politics and democracy were represented. *Kompas* writers were both male, such as Umar Kayam (2000), Bre Redana (2000) and Jujur Prananto (2004), and female, such as, Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim (2000), Cok Sawitri (2001) and Djenar Maesa Ayu (2003). This was followed in *Horison* by both male writers, such as, Y. B. Mangunwijaya (1999), Seno Gumira Ajidarma (2000) and Yusakh Ananda (2001), and female writers, such as Titis Basino (1999), Oka Rusmini (2000), Nh Dini (2000) and Helvy Tiana Rosa (2000).

Helvy Tiana Rosa's "Jaring-Jaring Merah" ("Red Nets"), for instance, voices state oppression during the military operation in Aceh. In the story, which tells of an Acehnese woman who witnesses the military operation and becomes one of the victims, Helvy strongly criticised the New Order for being brutal and oppressive to its own people who were accused of joining or supporting *GAM*, *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* (Free Aceh Movement). Based on information gathered from some media, she narrated the story, which elucidates the issues of violence such as the burning of houses, the dumping of corpses into the river, people being slaughtered, men being

chained up, and women being raped. Through the eyes of a female victim, Helvy tells us that women are strongly represented among thousands of victims.

Ratna continued to be the voice of the socially marginal. She focused more on the effect of the New Order's failed economic policies on the people. Ratna's "Bunga Kopi" ("Coffee Flowers", 2000),¹⁰⁵ for example, portrays the life of plantation owners and their coffee flower pickers. The story is an account of Lena, a young female university student who, instead of feeling happy to meet her family, has to deal with the anger of her father's workers because they think that their poverty is caused by her family. In this story, Ratna depicts the hard times faced by Indonesian people as the effect of the economic crisis. She culturally criticises the New Order, who failed to tackle the crisis. The story suggested that the failure resulted in poverty and conflict between the poor (the workers) and the rich (the plantation owners).

8.6 CONCLUSION

Male fictional depiction of women in *Kompas* and *Horison* in 1990s indicates that women were still the objects of men's perceptions. Male writers continued to represent women from patriarchal perspective. In general women are represented as "weak" personalities who are unable to live their lives well without men. Women exist to complement men. Although they can perform their own acts and make certain achievements, they cannot successfully carry out their own duties.

On the other hand, women's stories show the change of women's writing focus from being passive to being assertive actors. The freedom of expression executed by women writers has given readers an understanding of how state colonisation, and particularly poverty, influences the way women react to their contemporary situation. This influence results in a change of attitude and behaviour for women and shapes into the psychological condition of contemporary Indonesian women. Their stories depict the marginal status of women: their feelings, attitudes,

¹⁰⁵ "Bunga Kopi" was published in *Kompas*, 16 April 2000, and republished in *Namanya Massa* in 2001 (Suffatni, 2001).

actions and images through women's perspectives. What befalls the main character in the story indicates what Ashcroft (2001) calls post-colonial transformation, where the acts of marginalisation commonly practised in the colonial times reappear in the New Order in multiple layers.

Stories by Ratna's female contemporaries such as Lea Pamungkas's "Warung Pinggir Jalan", Santyrini's "Mak dan Ikan Teri" and Nining I. Soesilo's "Angrek Kuning" not only depict women from women's perspective but also encourage their resistance. These stories represent women's protest against the violation of women's rights. Their attempt to show women's sufferings and encourage resistance to male oppression enacts their disagreement with the treatment they receive from the patriarchal culture. They portray the violence and sufferings that women undergo in patriarchal society and under global capitalism. All of the short stories are realistic in nature and they appear to be real in every aspect when they depict such aspects of the poor and marginal characters: the household settings; the relationships between parents and children, husband and wife; women and work; and the depiction of the postmodern life of Indonesian women. The stories have challenged the set traditional images of Indonesian women, which have been implanted in their minds and legitimised by the New Order government. They have exposed the changes from traditional-patriarchal appearances to postmodern identities. These changes of identity in a capitalist condition do not necessarily bring women to a condition where the world (men) can see and recognise their presence. Instead they remain invisible; they are still a "nobody" group who cannot make changes for their own future or for their world and they are the unseen citizens whose appearance is in the shadow of their colonisers (men and capitalism).

The stories by Ratna directly or indirectly indicate women's protests against the marginalisation of women because of male oppression or the patriarchal culture. Men represent women as objects of desire and oppression. Oppression can be in the form of symbolic and/or physical violence which takes place in "women's homes" (Montero et al., 2011). This form of violence includes men's possessive love, the men's lack of attention and appreciation for their wife and the men's neglect of their household financial responsibility. Men also play with women for fun, as sex

objects. Such men, according to Montero et al. (2011, p. 295), are part of the perpetrators of violence on women other than their intimate partners, family members, co-workers and strangers.

CHAPTER 9 – CENSORSHIP, RESISTANCE AND TRANSFORMATION: SENO GUMIRA AJIDARMA’S SHORT FICTION

9.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the representation of human dignity in human rights-related works by Seno Gumira Ajidarma during the late New Order. Seno’s objects of critique and concern are multiple, and most of his human rights stories explore specific types of sociopolitical incident in Indonesia. Between 1990 and 1998, Seno’s numerous works were published in a range of publications including *Kompas* (13 stories) and *Horison* (2 stories). Eight of these stories can be categorised as having human rights content. In these works, he uses a wide variety of styles: satire, realism, magic-realism and surrealism. In this chapter, I particularly discuss four primary texts, varying in style from realism to magic-realism. They are “Maria” (1992)¹⁰⁶, “Telinga” (“Ears”, 1992)¹⁰⁷, “Misteri Kota Ninggi” (“Mystery of the Town of Ninggi”, 1994)¹⁰⁸ and “Jakarta, Suatu Ketika” (“Jakarta, at a Certain Point in Time”, 1998).¹⁰⁹ The selection of the four is based on the themes they carry rather than wanting to provide a fully representative number of stories published by each outlet. Each of the four stories proposes alternative perspectives to the issues presented. Seno’s short stories, I argue, can be interpreted as an alternative to officially sanctioned historical accounts of human rights violations in Indonesia. They include references to human rights violations which took place in East Timor in 1991 and the Jakarta riots of May 1998.

¹⁰⁶ “Maria” was published in *Kompas* in 1992, in the anthology *Cerpen Kompas Pilihan* in 1993, in *Saksi Mata* (1994), in the English translation entitled *Eyewitness* (1995), in the novel *Jazz, Perfume, and Incident* (1996) and finally in *Trilogi Insiden* (2010).

¹⁰⁷ “Telinga” was published in *Kompas* in 1992, in the anthology *Cerpen Kompas Pilihan* in 1993, in *Saksi Mata* (1994), in the English translation entitled *Eyewitness* (1995), in the novel *Jazz, Perfume, and Incident* (1996) and finally in *Trilogi Insiden* (2010).

¹⁰⁸ “Misteri Kota Ninggi” was published in *Kompas* in 1994, in the anthology *Cerpen Kompas Pilihan* in 1995, in the English translation entitled *Eyewitness* (1995), in the novel *Jazz, Perfume, and Incident* (1996) and finally in *Trilogi Insiden* (2010).

¹⁰⁹ “Jakarta, Suatu Ketika” was written on 20 May 1998 (one day before Suharto resigned). It was published in *Horison*, July 1998, and republished in *Iblis Tidak Pernah Mati* (1999).

This chapter aims to demonstrate how Seno's short fiction represents a form of political protest by depicting human rights violations and the victims of such violence in the late New Order. By making such perpetrators visible, I argue, Seno compels readers to condemn the soldiers, state apparatuses and civilians who performed such deplorable acts of violence. This chapter is divided into four main sections. The first section provides the reasons why Seno turned to resistance literature to protest against human rights offences. The second section deals with Seno's concern about incidents in East Timor. It provides the context of the incidents and how Seno represents his protest through his allegorical stories of "Maria" and "Telinga" and his intertextual story of "Misteri Kota Ninggi". Section three describes the Jakarta riots of 1998 and how Seno depicts them in his "Jakarta, Suatu Ketika". The last section describes Seno's protest writing after the New Order ended.

9.2 BEING SILENCED: SENO'S PERSONAL MOTIVE TO DISSEMINATE FACTS

How do we locate Seno in the context of censorship? Lisa Siregar (2012) writes that Seno's works are critical to the understanding of recent cultural and political issues in Indonesia. His fiction of the 1990s particularly provides "trenchant criticism of Suhartos New Order regime" (Errington, 2001, p. 1). The critical contents of Seno's works cannot be separated from his journalistic experiences. Seno has had potentially contradictory careers: he is simultaneously a journalist and a literary writer. As a journalist, he is expected to use facts in his reportage, but as a fiction writer he is free to use his skills and imagination to deliver a wider story. Interestingly, he has been successful in maintaining both forms side by side: the facts to be used as sources of fiction and fiction to be used to deliver the facts. His literary career boomed after he was threatened with being banned for disseminating the humanitarian facts of the Dili incident his team had gathered in East Timor.

In the early 1990s, Seno and his colleagues fell victim to state censorship. They strayed away state guidelines for press releases, by which the state attempted to control the national press. So when the magazine *Jakarta Jakarta (J-J)* released its

reportage of the “Dili incident” of 1991, the state could not tolerate this and used the state Information Centre of Defense and Security of the Armed forces to oppress the company to which the magazine was affiliated; finally the managers of the company had to “fire”¹¹⁰ him from the magazine.

After he was dismissed from his editorial position at *J-J* in 1991, he wrote some stories relating to other incidents potentially related to East Timor. Such realities, which are based on media reportage, are portrayed allegorically in the stories. Seno took advantage of the allegories to convey important political information to his readers. As editor of *J-J* in 1991, Seno was confronted with 15 testimonies about the incident of 12 November 1991 in Dili (Ajidarma, 1995, p. 12). The facts, gathered through interviews with the victims of the incident by his reporters, were reported in the magazine, and this led to his dismissal. He explained: “As a result of reports of this sort I and two journalist friends were dismissed from our work as editors of the magazine, and moreover were not allowed to work for *J-J* for almost two years, because we were regarded as having done wrong in letting the reports go through” (Ajidarma & Bodden, 1999, p. 166).

To be precise, Seno’s reportage and literary works were never formally censored by the government. His dismissal from *J-J* had nothing to do with the laws of censorship but with his “negligence”¹¹¹ in releasing the story of the humanitarian tragedy that the Indonesian military unleashed in Dili on the East Timorese people. As an Indonesian media editor, according to the state censoring agency, he was not supposed to release such reports, as they were considered to endanger national stability. In effect, this national security order amounted to censorship which could be applied to silence the media, particularly *J-J* and Seno himself, from exposing certain politically sensitive facts to the public. For Seno, what befell him was:

keangkuhan kekuasaan, yang begitu tidak rela terusik meski melakukan kesalahan, kesalahannya adalah karena harus mengorbankan orang lain.

¹¹⁰ Seno was formally suspended rather fired from his position as the editor of *J-J*. However, for a couple of years he was inactive with the magazine until he was appointed again as the editor.

¹¹¹ When he was interrogated by the Indonesian military, Seno was accused of being negligent in releasing the report of the Dili massacre without the approval of the government censor.

Jika orang lain itu adalah saya, meski tanpa saya kehendaki, saya akan melawan”. (Ajidarma, 2010, p. 370)

the arrogance of power that was unwillingness to be disturbed even when it was wrong. The mistake was to have sacrificed others. If the other person were me, even if I didn't want to, I would resist.

It was the process of silencing which motivated Seno to protest and, more importantly, it was the violent oppression of people with which he disagreed. Although he was not known as a controversial or subversive writer at that time, Seno's experience as someone who was banned by the government and his own institution inspired him to resist the hegemonic and political powers of the Indonesian government. These powers preferred to conceal facts rather than to tell the truth to the public. In other words, Seno resisted any type of gagging or pre-censorship: governmental, institutional or self-censorship.

Seno has further explained:

I only feel that I'm resisting being silenced. I concentrate completely on ensuring that the forbidden text which has been banned can be disseminated – in a way that is safe and according to the rules. I choose not to publish anonymous leaflets, because I'm not an activist. I can only write, and I write to confront silencing. I'm gagged in the official print media, and I'm happy to resist in the same place – something which I can mainly do through my short stories, which to be sure, only find a place in the newspapers. (Ajidarma & Bodden, 1999, p. 167)

Seno believed that his best place to resist was to use the media as a way of embedding facts into fiction and thus avoiding censorship. Seno made use of realist, surrealist and magic-realist techniques to amalgamate fiction and facts. Seno's creative work responds to Ashcroft's (2001, p. 2) claim that “All cultures move in a constant state of transformation.” Seno could not agree with the silencing culture that his own government practised and he deplored the colonial violence suffered by the colonised East Timorese from the Indonesian state. That is why he believed that his literary credo must be applied. It is literature which can speak for him, where he

transforms the facts into fiction by manipulating fictional elements such as alternative plots, magic characters and dissimilar locations to set aside any media editor's self-censoring eyes.

In these ways, Seno applied his opposition in a practical way to the government, the cultural imperialism that did not allow him to release the truth to the public. Such attempts, according to Harlow, are "the general parameters of a collective opposition and concerted resistance to the programmatic cultural imperialism which accompanied Western economic, military, and political domination of the Third World" (Harlow, 1978, p. 10). They were an effort to protest against "the cultural institutions ... which define and process information and cultural production participate not only in the dissemination of specific and hegemonic forms of social organization but also in determining the content of cultural commodities." Through the power of methods such as allegory and intertextuality, Seno made his political statement in what Ashcroft (2001) calls "the deconstructive moment" (p. 6), the time when "the post-colonial subject lives within the consequences of imperial discourse while denying it" (p. 6).

Seno attempted to resist the practice of censorship both within the publication to which he sent his works and from the government censoring agency itself in a practical way. Seno (2010) says that: "*Saya dengan sadar ingin membuat pembungkaman itu tidak berhasil. Saya melawan. Ini membuat setiap detik kehidupan saya menjadi jauh lebih bernilai dari sebelumnya*" (I consciously wanted to make the silence fail. I fought back. This made every second of my life much more valuable than ever before) (p. 371). Being unemployed after his dismissal, Seno had many opportunities to express his resistance. He found his most effective instrument in literature. The ideas he had in his mind were then transformed into fiction. For example, he sent his stories containing the facts of the incidents in East Timor to the national media which had a wider readership. Through his journalistic experience, which provided him with the skills to avoid the self-censorship that an editor of the publication might apply, he indirectly included the facts in his stories by mixing them with fictional elements such as bizarre characters, imaginary settings and an alternating plot. In this way he was able to ensure that his stories such as "Saksi

Mata”, “Pelajaran Sejarah”, “Telinga”, “Manuel”, “Maria”, “Misteri Kota Ninggi” and “Klandestin”, were published. Ignited by his own silencing, Seno was motivated to write a number of protest stories, which amounted to the rewriting of misrepresentations.

The term *resistance* can be applied to Seno’s East Timor narratives. Although these are not literally resistance literature, that is, stories written by the colonised East Timorese themselves, they do speak on their behalf. The stories resist what Kanafani (as cited in Harlow, 1987) calls the “occupying power”, the Indonesian military operation in East Timor. Unlike Palestinian literature, which resists the Israeli occupation, Seno’s stories seek to claim independence from the invader. However, they do speak the forbidden truth Seno was not allowed to tell.

To pass state censorship, Seno devoted his time to rewriting the history related to the incident into 13 short stories, first published between 1992 and 1994 in a number of media: *Horison* (1 story), *Republika* (2), *Suara Pembaruan* (3), and *Kompas* (7), and later collected in the anthology *Eyewitness* (1994).¹¹² The publication of these stories was in line with Seno’s effort to let the public know what was going on in East Timor and to get through the government’s tight censorship of things which could endanger the New Order credibility nationally and internationally. So Seno, the “truth revealer”, with his journalistic and literary eyes, found a new way of telling the truth by writing stories based on the facts his former team of journalists had gathered in East Timor. Three of them are examined here: “Maria”, “Telinga” and “Misteri Kota Ninggi”.

9.3 THE DILI INCIDENT 1991

The Dili incident was possibly the major turning point in the 24-year history of the Indonesian occupation of the former Portuguese colony. Historian Peter Carey (2003, p. 28) divides the Indonesian occupation in the region into three periods. They are:

¹¹² Seno’s *Saksi Mata* was translated into English by Jan Linggard with Bibi Langker and Suzan Piper. The anthology is entitled *Eyewitness: Protest Stories from Indonesia* (1995).

(1) the initial years of conquest between 1975–79; (2) the middle period of the partial “consolidation” of the occupation regime during the next decade (1979–89) that lasted until the “opening” of East Timor by the Suharto regime in January 1989; and (3) the final decade (1989–99), which witnessed the rapid unraveling of Jakarta’s authority as the situation in East Timor became internationalized through events such as the November 12, 1991 Santa Cruz massacre and the October 11, 1996 Nobel Peace Prize award to Bishop Belo and Jose Ramos Horta. At the end of this decade, the collapse of the Suharto regime (May 21, 1998) and President B. J. Habibie’s (in office, 1998–99) impetuous January 27, 1999 promise to give East Timor either autonomy or independence hugely accelerated events in East Timor, leading directly to the deployment of a UN Assistance Mission (UNAMET) to prepare for the August 30, 1999 independence vote.

Carey clearly describes the context and the key elements of this time. His description provides readers with a very short version of the Indonesian colonisation of East Timor across the 24 year period. His initial stage provides readers with a picture of the four-year conquest; his second period marks the time of annexation; and the last one describes the move towards the insecurity the East Timorese felt during their “sleeping with the enemy” (Carey, 2003, p. 27). As the quote denotes, the Dili incident stands as an important moment in the occupation, a moment which attracted the attention of not only Indonesians and East Timorese but also of international audiences.

The Dili incident involved the shooting of East Timorese protesters at the Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili, the capital of the Indonesian province of *Timor Timur*, on 12 November 1991. As reported widely by the international media, the incident took place when a crowd, mainly students, protested against the Indonesian government over the death of a fellow student the previous month. While waiting for the coming of a Portuguese parliamentary delegation in the cemetery, the students had first called for independence. As the procession entered the area, Indonesian troops opened fire and killed hundreds of protesters and injured hundreds more, still many more were reported missing. The incident was soon broadcast worldwide on

some international TV stations, whose pictures of the massacre caused the Indonesian government severe embarrassment.

9.3.1 Seno's East Timor Stories

East Timor greatly concerned Seno, not only because of the crimes against humanity that took place there but also because the Indonesian government banned him from releasing the facts of what happened. The four works that I discuss represent terror and traumatic writings. Seno ideologically narrates the terrorist acts committed by both the Indonesian government agents to East Timorese and the protesters to Indonesian Chinese people in Jakarta. Through their characters, the narratives confront readers with traumas Indonesians had gone through, including death, violence, loss, and rape. The stories are, to borrow Ashcroft's analysis, *testimonio*: "the strategic attempt to control representation, to interpose a voice that has been silenced, oppressed or misrepresented, a goal which lies at the core of all interpolating strategies" (Ashcroft, 2001, p. 114). It suggests that Seno's testimony is a strategy to have his silenced voice heard.

Questions of corrupt policy, suffering, and violence dominate the simple trajectory of the plots and the thematic content in all three of Seno's East Timor stories. Generally the formal structure of the stories revolves around rights violations committed by individuals, groups or government apparatus. The notion of human rights is obvious in all the stories and their depiction of human rights violations is explicit. Clearly the appearance of human rights issues in the stories provides a literary contribution to the deeper understanding of human rights, particularly the "unreported cases" and the sociopolitical contexts to which they refer. The stories offer a unique vision of human victimisation and the social and psychological effects on the victims and people around them. All of these present a form of advocacy as well as correction towards people's lack of care for human rights in Indonesia.

In "Maria", "Telenga" and "Misteri Kota Ninggi" Seno not only offers a very obvious representation of rights, but their characters present incidents staged both to create public awareness about and to document rights violations. Each set of the

stories demonstrates that the injuries and the degree of sufferings that problematise symbolisation reveal the consequences for human consciousness during Indonesian military operations in the region. Furthermore, the stories suggest that widespread violence was a corollary to the deplorable state of human rights in Indonesia. Despite the psychological, surreal description of the suffering and physical damage of the victims of the “war”, the symbolisation of the victims, dead or injured, serves to introduce the polemical and artistic representation of violence.

These three stories create a literary documentation of human rights violations and offer humanitarian condemnations, pointing out the guilt of the perpetrators, disagreeing with the characters who do not sympathise with the victims, denouncing the brutal acts imposed upon the victims and rebuking the government for causing mass violence to happen. They reflect, I argue, an evaluation by Seno of the journalism-based and literary project which had become part of his fiction.

9.3.2 Seno’s Use of Allegory to Resist

Scholars such as Clark (1999), Bodden (1999), Wachid (2005) and Fuller (2010) argue that Seno’s allegorical stories raise some questions regarding the abuses of human rights. How did Seno write allegorical stories about East Timor and the Dili incident which were able to be published without being censored? Clark (1999), for example, agrees that Seno’s fiction collected in the later *Eyewitness* is an allegorical attack on the Suharto New Order regime. Clark continues that Seno created anti-realist stories by employing “bizarre characters and enigmatic symbols, often highly metaphorical, to convey his message of cultural resistance” (Clark, 1999, p. 39). Pam Allen (2002, p. 177) argues that “Seno often wrote at the risk of being censored because of the sensitivity of the issues he addressed in many of his short stories – in particular military violence in East Timor, which is at the core of the stories in *Eyewitness* and his 1996 *Jazz, Parfum dan Insiden (Jazz, Perfume and an Incident)*. These critics suggest that Seno told stories about East Timor by transforming the facts of Indonesian military violence in East Timor into fiction in order for him to be

able to tell the truth to the public: the oppression the East Timorese underwent during the Indonesian military operation in the province.

Seno's stories "Maria" and "Telinga" represent Seno's attempt to "*menyatukan kejadian kejadian bersejarah dalam karya fiksinya*" (integrate historical incidents into his fiction) (Fuller, 2011, p. 77). The stories make no explicit mention of East Timor and yet they suggest that Seno allegorically tells stories about the oppression of the East Timorese in order to criticise the Indonesian military's operations.

9.3.2.1 Physical deterioration: "Maria"

"Maria" tells of a son who goes to a war and comes back a year later with a terrible physical condition. His face has changed and his body is damaged, so he looks like an old man. His mother fails to recognise him. In "Maria", Seno is critical of the effects of the war not only on the combatants of both sides but also on civilians. Through the story, Seno reminds readers that the East Timor war caused physical and psychological losses. Seno allegorically exposes the feelings of a mother – of many mothers – whose family members have died and become victims of the war. "Maria" expresses the agony of a poor mother who loses her family members as she "dreams" of a totally damaged man who claims to be her son. It is a sad feeling of endlessly hoping for her son: "*sudah setahun semenjak peristiwa itu Maria duduk di sana, memandang cahaya yang gemetar setiap senja, dengan perasaan bahwa suatu ketika Antonio akan muncul seperti biasa*" (for one year after that accident, Maria sat there, watching the light that glows every dusk, with the feeling that her son Antonio would appear as usual sometime) (p. 112). Such a depiction of psychological suffering invites readers to sympathise with Maria through the psychological pain she and her fellow citizens have experienced. He uses the phrase: "*sudah setahun*"¹¹³ (already a year) more than ten times to indicate how long she has been in pain since the war broke out. Maria herself, the main character, is pictured as a mother and wife whose

¹¹³ The East Timor conflict began in 1991 and "Maria" was written in 1992.

losses are multiplied, who loses her husband and oldest son, and cannot recognise her long lost son after he has been kidnapped and tortured for a year in the war.

The story of “Maria” evokes deep feelings of sadness for the loss the East Timorese families experienced in the war. Seno pictures a family of four with only two members left: “*Maria telah kehilangan Gregorio, suaminya yang perkasa. Maria telah kehilangan Ricardo, anak sulungnya*” (“Maria lost Gregorio, her able husband. Maria lost Ricardo, her hotheaded son,”) (p. 109). Another mother tells her: “*Aku juga kehilangan anakku Maria, tiga orang. Aku juga kehilangan suamiku Maria*” (I also lost my children, three of them, Maria. I lost my husband too) (p.109). Seno represents the feelings of the mothers through Maria as he writes of the progressive deterioration of her emotions and mind: “*Kehilangan Gregorio menghancurkan hatinya, kepergian Ricardo mematikan jiwanya, dan kehilangan Antonio mengacaukan kerja otaknya*” (The loss of Gregario crushed her, the Ricardo passing killed her soul and the loss of Antonio disturbed her sanity) (p. 110). These psychological traumas understandably cause Maria to use her feelings more than her logic. When her lost son comes back home, Seno depicts the misery an indigenous boy would go through after he is reported missing and his mother is unable to even recognise him due to the physical damage he has suffered after the abduction:

“Mama! Aku telah kembali Mama!” “Antonio?” “Ya, aku Antonio, Antoniomu! Mama tidak mengenalku?” ... Kepalanya penuh pitak seperti hutan gundul, dengan cukuran yang tidak teratur. Matanya yang sebelah kiri tertutup, sedangkan yang kanan meskipun masih terbuka, tapi juga terpicing picing setengah tertutup. Wajahnya penuh dengan bekas luka, codet yang diagonal dari kanan ke kiri, dari kiri ke kanan. Ia tidak bertelinga. Hidungnya seperti pindah dari tempatnya semula. Mulutnya mencong dan gigi depannya ompong. Bajunya lusuh, tidak bersandal, dan segenap kuku jari-jari kaki dan tangannya telah dicabut dengan paksa. Ia sangat kurus dan kering. (p. 114)

“Mama! I’ve come back Mama!” “Antonio?” “Yes, I’m Antonio. Your Antonio! Don’t you know me, Mama?” His head was shaved like a hewn

down forest, with irregular clumps of hair. His left eye was closed, although the right one was still open, but constantly squinted. His face was full of scars, scars that ran diagonally from right to left, from left to right. He had no ears. His nose seemed to have moved from its original position. His mouth was twisted and his front teeth gone. His clothes were worn out, he had no sandals, and the nails of his toes and fingers had been pulled out. He was very thin and had no vitality.

Graphically and in considerable detail, Seno presents the result of the physical violence on the victims of the war. The physical destruction, as he presents it, is really beyond description. Regardless of whether Maria only dreams of her son's coming back – or perhaps because the fantasy takes over from logic – she fails to recognise him because of his physical damage: "*Kamu bukan Antonio, Antonioku tampan sekali seperti malaikat*" (You are not my Antonio, my Antonio is as handsome as an angel) (p. 114). Maria does not believe that the man is her son. The man who claims to be her son Antonio must be somebody else, as his body is so damaged that no one can tell who he is. She cannot believe that he is her Antonio as he has been gone only for one year. Seno evokes what happens to a victim like Antonio who is suspected to be a spy or a member of the East Timorese militia and Fretilin:¹¹⁴ "*Mereka menghajarku setiap hari karena aku tidak pernah mau mengaku! Mereka hancurkan tubuhku*" (They beat me every day because I never wanted to confess! They destroyed my body) (p. 114). So the mother is tragically made complicit with the enemy in destroying the son's identity. In a paragraph in the middle of the story, Seno attempts to tell his readers how many more mothers like Maria there are, who have waited for years for their sons to come home: "*tidak ada keluarga yang tidak kehilangan. Ada yang jadi korban, ada yang hilang*" (There is no family that hasn't lost someone. Some were victims, some were missing) (p. 111).

Seno never mentions who the perpetrators are. Instead, he transforms the perpetrators into unnamed and insidious character known simply as "*mereka*" (they).

¹¹⁴ Fretilin, Frente Revolucionaria de Timor-Leste Independente, (the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor) was one of the militia groups in East Timor and is now a leftist political party.

Here, Seno's character Antonio lets the readers register the expanding, insidious effects of those who have caused him to disappear.

9.3.2.2 Bodily dismemberment: "Telinga"

Seno's use of surrealist techniques is also clear in "Telinga". The story of "Telinga" represents a further critique of Indonesian military brutality in suppressing the issue of rebellion in East Timor. Through the character's behaviour and thoughts, Seno prompts Indonesians to contemplate the horrible effect of Indonesian military policy on the people of the land. Seno addresses the issue of "*kekejaman*" (cruelty) (p. 88) in the form of bodily dismemberment.

The story describes a woman whose boyfriend is at war and who regularly receives presents of ears from him. Her boyfriend cuts off the ears from his enemy's heads. The story is developed through letters the characters send to each other. The letters inform readers what happens in the war and how the man catches his enemies, kills them and cuts off their ears to send to his girlfriend at home. Their communication through the letters presents two things. Firstly, Seno allegorically presents a soldier who is pictured as someone who is "*sibuk membantai orang*" (busy slaughtering people) (p. 92) and committing rights violations in the form of physical disembodiment. Proudly he sends "*telinga ini untukmu Dewi, sebagai kenang-kenangan dari medan perang*" (these ears are for you Dewi. They are souvenirs from the battlefield) (p. 88). Secondly, Seno represents ordinary Indonesians through Dewi, who is happy to receive the gifts from the acts of rights violations undertaken by her boyfriend: "*aku sangat senang menerima kiriman telinga telinga itu*" (I was very happy to receive the ears) (p. 92).

The story, according to Seno, is based on a report to *J-J* which said that Governor Mario Viegas Carrascalao in October 1991 "*menerima empat pemuda dikantornya. Dua dari empat pemuda itu, telinganya sudah terpotong*" (met with four youths in his office. Two of them had had their ears cut off) (Ajidarma, 2010, p. 372). Seno argues that the story aims to show "*Betapa menindasnya tentara yang bertugas di Timor Timur itu*" (how oppressive the military personnel who worked in East

Timor were) (Ajidarma, 2010, p. 420). His surrealist techniques suggest that military personnel were sadistic, cruel and inhuman in their treatment of the East Timorese. The army inhumanly “*melawan suara-suara yang menganjurkan pemberontakan*” (opposed those who supported rebellion) (p. 93); “*menembaknya*” (shoot them) (p. 93); “*membantai semuanya*” (slaughter them all) (p. 93); “*memenggal saja kepala orang-orang yang dicurigai*” (cut off the heads of the people who were suspected) (p. 93); and “*memotong telinga yang kukirimkan kepadamu*” (cut off the ears I sent to you) (p. 93).

Seno transforms these brutal acts into artistic truth by playing with words in the soldier’s letters to his girlfriend. The transformation changes the tension from a mere reporting of facts into an artistic mixture in which the truth of the facts still remains. Seno asks readers to condemn atrocities such as dismemberment and death, as he criticises the frivolous reception of the ears by the woman. Seno continues by writing “*Setelah itu, hampir setiap hari Dewi menerima kiriman telinga dari pacarnya. Kadang-kadang satu, kadang-kadang dua, pernah juga satu besek banyaknya. Isinya barangkali 50 telinga*” (After that, Dewi received a package containing ears almost every day from her boyfriend: sometimes one, sometimes two and once even a bucket of them. There might have been 50 ears) (p. 17). Seno clearly suggests that one soldier’s acts of victimising the East Timorese may have affected not just a few but hundreds of victims. Seno employs satire and the comic effects of overstatement and excess, to get his point across. The military operation, as pictured through the soldier’s brutality, has taken the lives of a large number of victims: “*memang terlalu banyak telinga di rumah Dewi*” (There really were too many ears at Dewi’s house) (p. 92). Instead of telling the number of dead victims, Seno uses the ears to represent the victims.

Seno’s concern for the killing of the East Timorese is further expressed in the soldier’s second letter to his girlfriend. He writes “*Kalau musuh datang menyerbu, kami tinggal menembaknya. Jadi kami bersepakat untuk memenggal saja kepala orang-orang yang dicurigai*” (If the enemy attacks, we just shoot them. So we agreed to just chop off the heads of the people we suspected) (p. 93). Here, Seno describes the Indonesian soldiers’ torture and bloody killings of the East Timorese.

He makes his readers pity the unnamed victims whose ears have been cut off:

“telinga telinga itu dari kepala orang orang yang dicurigai” (those ears are from the suspects’ heads) (p. 92). These sadistic acts translate Seno’s effort to attack the government about military brutality into a dramatic communication between two lovers.

Dewi is not the only one who thinks that: *“kiriman dari medan perang itu sesuatu yang luar biasa”* (the souvenirs from the war were incredible) (p. 90). Her mother thinks *“telinga telinga itu dijemur lantas digoreng saja, siapa tahu rasanya enak dan bisa dijual”* (if the ears were dried and then fried, who knows, they might taste good and could be sold) (p. 92). There is also the depiction of Dewi’s friend, who is happy to be offered some ears of her own: *“Aku masih ada banyak kalau mau. Mau mau”* (I still have a lot if you want some. I really do) (p. 90). In this way, Seno condemns Indonesians like Dewi who are proud of what the soldier does: *“sangat bangga akan dirimu”* (so proud of you) (p. 90). Dewi’s visitors *“mengagumi”* (admire) (p. 90) the ears but do not sympathise with the victims and even praise what the soldier has done: *“bangga padamu”* (proud of you) (p. 92). In fact they consider him a hero *“menganggapnya pahlawan”* (p. 93).

9.3.3 Intertextuality: A Strategy for Exposing the Facts in “Misteri Kota Ninggi”

Besides the use of allegory and surrealism, many of Seno’s stories are also created in relation to other texts. Thus the journalistic texts written by both his former media and by others, as well as the information he received on East Timor with their references to human rights violations, consistently reappear in Seno’s stories as a crucial part of the text.

Seno makes use of intertextuality, that is, “a text between other texts” (Plett, 1991, p. 5), to transform the forbidden information into a public reading which can pass without censorship. Situated between the literary text and reports, Seno creates an intertext which borrows its allusions, methods of writing, quotations and analogies from the discourse of both literature and journalism. The intertextual dialogue

produces an alternative exposure of reality in East Timor. It enables the readers to understand reality from the perspectives of literature and journalism.

Seno's intertextual strategy produces a literary representation of a people whose freedom of expression, right to life and right to assembly were denied. The strategy that Seno applies in "Misteri Kota Ninggi" is beneficial in counteracting the Indonesian government's claim about East Timorese victims. The Indonesian government claimed that the military operation in East Timor was undertaken to help eradicate the Fretilin guerillas who were terrorising the East Timorese and that the Dili incident was an accident which befell only a few Falintil¹¹⁵ victims. The story "Misteri Kota Ninggi" suggests that such a claim was untrue. The story, despite these explicit remarks on the reality behind the incident, has been often interpreted as a story which resists the concealment of the facts about Indonesian military oppression in East Timor. The analysis of the story that follows deal with humanitarian themes such as oppression, violence, rights violations and the brutality the East Timorese have endured as reported in *J-J*.

The story "Misteri Kota Ninggi" is presented through the eyes of a census collector. The story begins with the collector's first day of work, arriving at the house of a family occupied by seven people, one of whom is dead but is still present spiritually. As the collector moves from one house to another, he continues to find the same situation. He is surprised to discover that while the population of the town of Ninggi has decreased, the population of "*saudara kami*" ("our relatives", those who are missing and coming back in invisible forms) (p. 124) is increasing.

Like the previous two stories, "Misteri Kota Ninggi" shows the public how bad the oppression in East Timor was and how many victims it took. Its telling of the violent acts of abduction and killing provides clues to the extremity of the human rights violations. Seno speaks for thousands of East Timorese whose rights to life and freedom of expression were denied. In doing so, he makes use of magical characters to represent their voices throughout the story. Through the census collector who counts the town population from house to house, Seno shocks his readers by the mass

¹¹⁵ Falintil stands for Forças Armadas de Libertação Nacional de Timor-Leste, National Liberation Armed Forces of East Timore (Klinken, 2005) Gerry van Klinken, "Indonesian Casualties in East Timor, 1975–1999: Analysis of an Official List," *Indonesia* 80.October (2005).

deaths that took place. Seno focuses on the decrease in population instead of the actual deaths: “*Di kota Ningi, dari tahun ketahun, penduduknya makin berkurang*” (in the town of Ningi, from year to year, the population fell) (p. 123). He presents the deaths through magical figures: “*penduduk kota itu terdiri dari orang-orang yang kelihatan dan tidak kelihatan*” (the population of the town consisted of people who were visible and those who were not) (p. 124). When the collector visits the family of Adelino, he finds that Adelino is among those whose right to live has been denied: “*Dia Adelino, saudara kami yang ditangkap, diinterogasi, dan dipukuli sampai mati. Tapi dia masih disini, coba lihat*” (He is Adelino, our brother who was kidnapped, interrogated and beaten to death. But he is still here, have a look) (p. 123). Although Adelino is dead, he is still spiritually alive. He becomes part of the unseen population.

To tell how many people died, Seno travels alongside his census collector: “*Di setiap rumah yang kumasuki selalu ada saja makhluk-makhluk yang tak kelihatan itu*” (In every house I entered, there were always these intangible creatures) (p. 124). The denial of rights culminates in the conclusion revealed by his reports on the population of the town of Ninggi. The reports tell of the decrease from census to census, but at the same time suggest that nobody has died because those who have been abducted and remain hostages survive as invisible people who continue to live their lives alongside their visible fellow inhabitants. This implies that the total population should equal the population as noted in the census plus those who have gone missing. Seno’s emphasis on population statistics becomes a way of telling the number of East Timorese who have become victims of the Indonesian military occupation.

Instead of making the story realistic, the character names, statistics and the length of time all operate to avoid censorship in order for Seno to tell the truth about East Timor. The naming of the town of Ninggi is Seno’s way of masking the city of Dili. Seno says that the story was written: “*Memenuhi pesanan “cerpen Natal” dari Kompas, saya ceritakan bagaimana Natal berlangsung di tempat seperti itu, kata Dili saya sulap menjadi Ninggi*” (“By request from *Kompas* for a Christmas story, I narrated how Christmas was being celebrated in a place like there; I changed the

name Dili to Ninggi”) (Ajidarma, 2010, p. 421). Seno realised that writing Dili as Dili was not possible as any publication would almost certainly censor it. If it failed to do so, it might have its permit revoked. However, his readers would read this to refer to Dili, East Timor, from some of the clues he provides. First, he makes use of “*Basa Walikan*”¹¹⁶ to represent “Ninggi” for Dili. Second, the use of a Portuguese name Adelino, together with a military operation undertaken in Indonesia in the 1990s, suggests that it refers to an East Timorese name. Third, he quotes the statistics of the town twice: initially when the narrator of the story finds out something strange in the town, where, unlike other towns whose population increases, and secondly, when the population of the town decreases:

Ketika aku membongkar arsip, catatan pada 1974 menunjukkan jumlah 688.771 orang. Namun, ketika aku menghitungnya kembali pada 1978 ternyata penduduknya sudah menjadi 329.271 orang. Ke mana yang 359.500 orang itu pergi? (p. 73)

When I unpacked the archive, the records for 1974 showed there were 688,771 people. However, when I counted again in 1978, it turned out there were 329,271 people. Where did the other 359,500 people go?

By detailing the statistics of the town of Ninggi, as related to the city of Dili, Seno questions the government about the decrease in the population of Dili by more than half. He also implies that the government itself is responsible for the huge number of people missing. Here Seno does not reveal the number of dead people vividly but uses magic figures to provide this information.

Where had the hundreds of thousands of people gone? Seno does not kill his characters. Instead he leaves them alive but as ghosts. For instance, Seno gives an example of a village:

Dalam sebuah desa, yang penduduknya pernah mencapai 9.607 orang, sejak 1976 telah kehilangan 5.021 penduduknya—mereka itulah yang menjadi

¹¹⁶ According to Seno in the 2013 Walter Mangold Visiting Fellow lecture in Melbourne University 4 September 2013, he used *Basa Walikan*, a special language used by a youth group in Yogyakarta, to obscure certain facts in some of his stories. In the language, “Ninggi” is the word for Dili.

makhluk makhluk tak kelihatan, menjadi setan setan gentanyangan? (pp. 75–6)

One village, whose population had been 9,607 people, lost 5,021 people since 1976 – did they become invisible creatures, wandering demons?

Seno believes that there is no literature available to explain the mystery: “*Di kota itu tidak ada catatan sejarah. Buku-buku sejarah yang kulihat di perpustakaan lebih mirip dengan dongeng*” (In the town (of Ninggi), there are no historical records. The history books I (the census collector) saw in the libraries were more like fables) (pp. 124–5). The character suggests that there are no accurate references to the missing people. If there are any, they have been falsified. Instead of the written documents, he finds the answer to the deaths from the town dwellers’ mouths.

The town dwellers also rumour that “*gerombolan orang bertopeng*” (masked gangs) (p. 125) like to enter houses and take their occupants away. From their words, he knows that “*tidak selalu orang-orang yang diculik itu kembali. Mereka yang kembali sudah tidak kelihatan wujudnya dan tidak bisa berbicara*” (People who are abducted do not always come back. Those who do not seem like themselves and are unable to talk) (p. 125). Most importantly, he finds more answers in public places like the streets and the cemetery: “*mereka ada di segala ruang dan segala waktu*” (They are present in all places and at all times) (p. 126). These people were heard “*merintih*” (moaning), “*mengerang*” (groaning) and “*meneteskan darah*” (shedding blood) (p. 126) and they were “*sengaja dihentikan kehidupannya*” (had had their lives ended deliberately) (p. 126).

In this second statistical depiction, Seno again urges readers not only to contemplate the number of casualties but also the degree of pain they have suffered. Consider the following.

berdasarkan data dari tahun 1970 sampai 1973, maka pada 1980 jumlah penduduk kota itu mestinya 667.100 orang. Ternyata ... jumlahnya cuma 555.350 orang. Tidak ada wabah, tidak ada perang, tiada pula perpindahan besar besaran, tapi kemanakah lenyapnya makhluk bernama manusia yang jumlahnya 111.750 itu? (p. 125)

based on data from 1970 to 1973, the population of the city in 1980 should have been 667,100 people. But, it turned out ... there were only 555,350 people. There had no epidemic, no war and no large scale movement, but where had the 111,750 creatures we call human beings gone to?

Right until the end of the story, Seno continually asks his readers to deal with the fact of such a large decrease in population. Almost at the end of the story, Seno also gives references for the length of time the decrease in population has been going on.

Through the lonely character of the census collector, I argue, Seno makes use of the character's powerlessness to represent himself as a reporter in order for him to provide clues about how the people are missing, who did it, and over what period it has happened. Yet the questions remain: who were the ninjas? Why did they commit such violent acts? What did they do? And what was behind all of this? These are the questions readers are asked to answer for themselves.

9.4 THE JAKARTA RIOTS OF MAY 1998

After criticising the New Order for violating the rights of East Timorese, Seno again opposed the government in 1998. During the last decade of Suharto's presidency, the New Order entered into a dark political period where many political tragedies and incidents took place. Among these were the riots of May 1998, which took place in some major cities in Indonesian such as Jakarta, Medan, and Solo.

To understand the story, its political background needs to be explained. A year after the 1997 general election, Indonesia, like other countries in Southeast Asia, experienced a major economic crisis. This had a dramatic and immediate impact on people, causing extreme hardship and the further policies undertaken to handle the problem contributed to people's unhappiness. A number of political analysts conversant with Indonesia, such as James Siegel (1998), have written on the subsequent outbreak of violence.

Riots broke out on May 4–8 in Medan, North Sumatra, the 13 and 14 May in Jakarta and on 14 and 15 May in Solo, Central Java. They were initially intended as

protests against government economic policy but were soon turned against Indonesian Chinese. Further rioting also occurred on 14 May in a number of other cities and towns including Surabaya, Padang, Palembang, Boyolali and Salatiga. Initially students and activists marched to express their aspiration to serve as the people's representatives in the capital of each province and ultimately students from Jakarta and elsewhere surrounded the National Assembly building in the capital. They occupied the grounds and the roof of the building to make their voice heard and have their demands considered. There was also intense pressure from the Chairman of the Consultative Assembly, Harmoko, for Suharto and fourteen of his cabinet members to resign and an announcement by Amien Rais, the Head of Muhammadiyah, that Indonesia's second largest Islamic organisation had joined the student demonstration and that bloodshed would follow. Suharto resigned on 21 May.

The student demonstrations were joined by different groups and this resulted in widespread and more general rioting. Although the riots did not last long, less than ten days in all, the effect they caused on Indonesian life was tremendous. The long-held hope for a new regime was soon put in place but a sociopolitical catastrophe had already taken place.

9.4.1 Social Jealousy: “Jakarta, Suatu Ketika”

Unlike the East Timor stories which depict physical abuses in war, “Jakarta, Suatu Ketika” depicts the moral collapse in the minds of many Indonesians who had been defeated by the economic crisis which affected Asia in 1997 (Tay, 2000). Blaming the government, which was unable to tackle the situation, and Chinese Indonesians, who have long been accused of having a close economic relation with the government, the rioters protested against the government and committed crimes such as looting, damaging property, intimidation and rape. This acted as a reminder to those in power that they had ignored the national welfare. Their wrong policies had led to the destruction of people's concern for human rights as these rights related to both indigenous Indonesians and Chinese Indonesians.

The story “Jakarta, Suatu Ketika” depicts the chaotic situation in Jakarta where many demonstrations took place; people ran around; cars crashed; cars were burned, mass destruction occurred; shopping centres were destroyed; widespread looting took place; and violence was perpetrated against women. The story employs an alternating plot which consists of two different narratives: one of a journalist’s reportage with five parts, and the other like story of a Chinese family whose house is looted. The first strand starts with the journalist’s coverage from the top of a building, driving home, taking a taxi to continue the coverage, being among looters, walking around the crowds, seeing an acquaintance, getting back home in a car while watching people going in and out of supermarkets and shops to take anything they can carry, and in the end calling his friend Alina. The four parts of the second narrative narrate the life of Sari, a Chinese girl whose father employs a local boy servant Bagyo to work in his house during the day. Bagyo has been fired because he steals ice cream from the freezer. When the riots start and rioters come to loot her house, Sari sees Bagyo among them, taking ice cream from the fridge.

Unlike the stories on East Timor, “Jakarta, Suatu Ketika” is an account of two significant human rights incidents which are linked by one theme: social jealousy based on a class antagonism. The story uses both realistic and fictional modes: “capturing in breathtaking fashion the confusion, terror, and sense of historical moment which many Indonesians felt during the fateful riots of May 13–14, 1998” (Bodden, 2002a, p. 6). The story ultimately provokes readers to condemn the government, which has failed to listen to the people’s voices or to alleviate the gap between the lower and middle classes. It reflects the government’s socioeconomic policy, which failed to bring equality and prosperity to all Indonesians but benefited only the very rich.

As it was published immediately after the end of the New Order, Seno found it possible to write the story openly in the form of reportage by a person who witnesses a great incident. Seno’s use of the various scenes provides a great enrichment of the setting and characterisation. For example, his use of the pillaging scene depicts the bad effects the victims underwent and the rights violations committed by the perpetrators. Seno’s use of almost documentary realism in this

story is understandable as it was written and published after the New Order collapsed. Seno no longer needed to self-censor his own story.

The story provides an alternative set of understandings about the mass human rights violations that occurred in Jakarta. Equipped with fictional elements of the story, Seno is able to build a detailed miniature of the event. Starting with the problem of the riots, he narrates a one day personal experience of the journalist narrator in covering the tragedy in a number of places in Jakarta. Seno's unusual use of the photographic techniques of TELE SHOT, LONG SHOT, CLOSE UP and MEDIUM SHOT helps readers to travel along the street among the rioters. The method not only provides readers with fictional elements but also enriches them via journalism-based methods by concentrating on certain events the journalist cameraman finds shocking.

In this narrative, resistance is registered in the grand theme which connects the two plots – the social jealousy which divides the lower class and the middle class. Seno in this story depicts the terrible effects of such jealousy in the forms of riots which victimise the two classes and the different ethnic communities. The text does not detail what is behind the riots which pushes the lower class to commit such crimes. Instead it provides a detailed answer through the use of the two plots: the story of Sari becomes the background to the story of the journalist's travel among the rioters. The journalism plot delivers the facts of what happened during the riots: while the Sari plot fictionalises the background to the incident. The strength in the characterisation of the first plot is Seno's way of including a larger number of observers, actors and victims: looters, taxi drivers, journalists, crowds, demonstrators, students, men, women, the little boy and girl. Such characterisation provides clues for the readers about the elements of the crowds involved in the riots and explains indirectly who the rights violators were and why they committed such violent acts. In the second narrative, the story pointedly positions as victims Sari, whose family is prosperous, financially stable, and modern, and Bagyo, a poor boy whose future depends on the Sari's father. Seno symbolically uses Sari to represent the middle class and Bagyo the lower class. Both are represented as victims of New Order policies which created a wide gap between rich and poor and supported the

accumulation of wealth by a small group of Chinese cronies of Suharto. Benefiting from the plot, Seno effectively attacks the government and posits the economic and social reasons for the riots. These reasons include: first, unemployment: “*orang orang duduk, ... tidak mengerjakan apa apa. Mereka tidak punya pekerjaan*” (People were sitting around ... doing nothing. They had no jobs) (p. 34) and “*Tidak cukup banyak pekerjaan untuk semua orang*” (There was not enough work for everyone) (p. 34); second, the educational system: “*sekolah juga tidak memberi kepandaian apa apa*” (schools didn’t teach any skills) (p. 34); and third, child exploitation: “*Bagyo tidak punya uang, semua penghasilan dia serahkan ke orang tuanya*” (Bagyo had no money, he gave it all to his parents) (p. 35). Seno delivers this critique as an ongoing part of his two plots.

The second narrative strand also reflects other angles of Seno’s attempt to tell readers why the riots took place. As the narrative progresses, there are further clues which relate to the grand theme of social jealousy, including the issues of poverty and robbery. Seno describes the people who have no employment “*Anak anak muda berambut merah dan bersandal jepit mengatur lalu lintas, kemudian mengulurkan tangannya meminta uang receh*” (youngsters with red hair and thongs directed traffic and then stretched out their hands for coins) (p. 34); “*Bagyo mencuri es krim*” (Bagyo stole ice cream) (p. 35). No money also means no education: “*Tidak punya uang untuk sekolah. Tidak punya pekerjaan*” ((The poor) have no money to go to school. (They) have no job) (p. 37). All these tell of profound poverty among Indonesians.

As the story concludes, Seno also raises the issue of robbery, “*Perampok kalian! Perampok!*” “*Perampok? “Apa kalian bukan perampok?”* (“You are thieves! Thieves!” “Thieves?” “Are you not thieves?”) (p. 37). The quote demonstrates Seno’s sense that, in fact, both classes accuse each other of theft: the looters steal the belongings of the rich and the rich steal the opportunity of the poor to prosper. The Sari narrative further reflects the ethnic violence of the riots, showing how the Indonesian Chinese communities were looted. The story suggests that the economic hardship coupled with the government economic policy which prioritised the minority above the majority energised the demonstrators, rioters, arsonists and looters to take revenge against those who were perceived by the public to have

benefited from the government's economic policy. Their acts unintentionally resulted in chaos, property damage, death, injuries and mass pain. Both the rich and the poor became the victims of the tragedy and their right to live is shown to have been denied by the violence of the situation.

9.5 SENO'S POST-NEW ORDER WORKS

The issue of the violation of human rights, such as freedom of speech, the right to life, and the right to assembly, are among important themes which have interested Seno throughout his whole career as a writer. Using the same narrative style, he continued to critique the government after the end of the New Order. His following stories remained in the area of social criticism. They include "Telepon dari Aceh" ("A Call from Aceh", 2000), "Legenda Wongasu" ("The Legend of Wongasu", 2003b) and "Cinta Diatas Perahu Cadik" ("Love in An Outrigger Canoe", 2008). Seno was critical of the current events Indonesia was struggling to cope with. His journalistic eyes helped him to criticise such issues.

"Telepon dari Aceh" tells of a government official who embezzles a large amount of money through his position and lives a luxurious life with his family. The story represents Seno's reaction to corruption which continued to flourish after Suharto's departure. In the story, Seno attacks an Indonesian government that has failed to eliminate the practice of corruption. For him, the corruption which happened during the New Order should not have continued but unfortunately, the new regime was not able to eradicate it.

In "Legenda Wongasu", Seno shows Indonesians who lived a miserable life during the current economic crisis. The story depicts the life of Sukab, who becomes a dog catcher after he loses his job because of the crisis. Seno implies that the crisis not only caused unskilled people to lose their jobs but also tore their families apart. Having no money to feed his family after he loses his job, Sukab has to let his wife sell herself to other men right in front of his eyes. Sukab decides to hunt dogs because his family has to survive and people are forced to eat things they normally do

not. Applying a surrealist technique, Seno tells the state that the poor have to do any jobs they can to survive, no matter how terrible that job may be.

Unlike the previous two stories, which describe the government's inability to deal with the state's problems and its failure to fulfill its people's rights, the story "Cinta Diatas Perahu Cadik" deals with freedom of expression and individual choice. The story depicts a love affair between a married woman and man who go sailing and make love in a canoe. It shows Seno's concern about people whose rights are denied by tradition. In this story he demonstrates how tradition limits people's choice of marriage partner and what society does to those who break with tradition. Seno reminds readers that society does not always look at what someone achieves but will inevitably condemn those who do not accept its norms.

9.6 CONCLUSION

Seno's stories are conspicuously concerned with human rights as they grapple with real historical humanitarian incidents in Indonesia. They represent both the philosophical and practical problems related to human rights discourse and the difficulty of enforcing rights. They suggest reasons for the failure to enforce rights, such as the inability of state policy to handle important issues such as military operations and poverty, and the effect of a corrupt state apparatus that allowed the state and the people to violate the rights of weaker citizens.

The stories also illustrate the wrong mechanisms a nation can apply to tackle its problems. They suggest that the state, through its general policies, can cause human rights violations to occur. They imply that human rights violations happen not only between two individuals or two groups but also between the state and its own people. An incompetent and ambitious ruler or state apparatus can cause the state to produce harmful policies, which might initially have been aimed at creating a harmonious and strong nation. Such policies do not solve national problems but lead to social crisis among the people, who then react and this directly or indirectly causes them to perform further acts which negate or violate the rights of their fellow citizens.

My reading of Seno's stories expands on the assumption that they merely depict the sociopolitical realities in Indonesia's New Order of the 1990s, like newspaper reports. I argue that the stories are a definite form of cultural resistance. In the stories analysed, Seno especially resists the state policy of political and military aggression in the province of East Timor and Aceh, as well as the later economic crisis of 1998. The inappropriate policies resulted in the oppression of the people who could not accept the violent acts of certain individuals, and benefited the personal interests of those who profited from these injustices. Through the use of surrealism, allegory, intertextuality, symbolisation and its breakdown, satire and images of excess, Seno records and mourns the violations of the rights of three groups of victims: those living in dominated region; the rich and the poor, especially the marginalised people of Jakarta; and the ethnic Chinese people, especially women.

The works blend fiction with journalistic reportage, offering something which makes them unique. They are special in their incorporation of facts into fiction, which is then able to convey a humanitarian understanding to readers. They can be sources of discourse from which readers can gain understanding of the issue of human rights violations, alternative to but building on more straightforward reportage.

10 CONCLUSIONS AND THE POSSIBLE IMPACT OF THIS STUDY

10.1 CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has explored the literary and ideological treatment of human rights in the Indonesian short story, from the beginning of the short story tradition to the end of the New Order in 1998. It has particularly focused on the works of four influential writers: Ali Akbar Navis, Putu Wijaya, Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim and Seno Gumira Ajidarma. The theory of resistance literature has been applied to evaluate how the short story has been used to protest against violations of human rights in Indonesia.

The application of the theory sought to answer four main questions:

1. How have human rights issues developed in the Indonesian short story?
2. What forms of human rights violations have been central in these stories?
3. Who are the perpetrators and the victims in the stories?
4. What are the sociopolitical motives behind the violations?

In the first part of this thesis, I have examined the position of human rights in Indonesian society and literature. The examination is based on a brief history of human rights which contextualises the concept of human rights in Indonesia and locates it in reference to the concept advocated by the UN in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Throughout its history, Indonesia has sought to implement various human rights, particularly civil, socioeconomic and political rights. Historically, Indonesia's concern with human rights dates to the beginning of the twentieth century. Before independence, rights such as women's rights, the right to independence, and the right to political and economic freedoms were asserted. These represent the rights of the colonised who tried to escape from the domination of the colonisers, both politically and socially.

Indonesia constitutionally acknowledged the rights of its citizens in August 1945 when the "1945 Constitution" (*UUD 1945*) was declared the state constitution. Through the constitution, this nation stated its ideology of *Pancasila*, including social and economic justice, and provided several articles related to its people's rights.

These rights, ranging from freedom of expression to the right to defend the nation, explicitly stated the rights to which Indonesians are entitled.

The central government system of both the Old Order and the New Order regimes was frequently authoritarian and corrupt and this led to many violations of basic human rights. Issues of poverty, corruption and personal safety were often infringed. These infringements included violations committed by the state, particular groups and by particular individuals. The government's inability to distribute wealth to the regions equally also led to their disagreement with the central government in Jakarta. The worst violations were perhaps committed during the suppression of the local *PRRI* revolts in Sumatra during the late 1950s, the massacres of communists in the mid-1960s, and the invasion of East Timor during the 1970s. These caused thousands of Indonesians to suffer. All of these factors suggest that this nation did not always observe human rights. This is evident in the literary works analysed in part II.

In the second part of this thesis, I have attempted to examine the representation of human rights issues in a number of Indonesian short stories and to describe the various ways in which literary resistance has been expressed. As the analysis has shown, the representation of human rights has been a recurrent theme in Indonesian short fiction. Short fiction writers from the colonial era of the 1920s to the 1990s have constantly depicted it and at the same time contributed to the overall consideration of human rights. The range of short stories published show that the genre of the short story has played a significant role in the representation of human rights issues such as colonial violence, state violence, military operations, corruption and poverty. Violence against women is also an important theme in many stories. Stories by Indonesian short story writers dealing with human rights have been published in various popular media such as newspapers, magazines and literary anthologies. The analysis has demonstrated that the human rights issues represented by those authors have been their tools to respond to the situation around them. Because the situations have been different from one era to another, their responses have also been different.

Short story writers have articulated various types of human rights. Chief among these have been civil rights such as freedom of speech and expression and the

right to assembly, as well as social and economic rights such as right to education and right to live as one prefers without interference by other persons.

In representing human rights, writers have presented both actors and victims. Their stories suggest that there are a number of perpetrators and victims. The state's apparatuses such as army, police and government officers dominate the writers' representation of the rights violators. Many writers represent the Indonesian army as frequent violators. Although they are also included as victims on some occasions, this only occurs when they are among those who disagree with state policies which repressed the people. In these stories the victims include *PRRI* soldiers, innocent Sumatrans, the *PKI* members and the people associated with them, and the East Timorese. Other stories implicitly criticise the police. Oppressors may also include government officers such as the governor and government-sponsored bodies like the *satpam*, down to the *Lurah*. Some stories present not only superior groups such as the rich and men in general as rights perpetrators but also the poor, parents and women. Parents who are expected to take care of their children sometimes violate the rights of their own children. Women oppress other women and their own daughters.

Writers directly or indirectly depict a variety of reasons that have motivated actors to commit violations of human rights. The state may violate the rights of its own citizens in order to maintain its status quo and perpetuate its ongoing policies. When the state does this, its apparatuses translate those policies in the way the state wants but also and in ways which benefit themselves. For example, during the *PRRI* war, the *PKI* revolt, and the East Timor military operation, the state apparatuses applied what the state wanted and at the same time committed further personal violations. These include stealing wealth, taking personal revenge, and committing acts of madness or passion. While the rich commit crimes against the poor for the sake of their own wealth and personal security, the poor commit acts such as mass destruction and rape against the rich whom they accuse of having taken their right to a better life. Husbands oppress their wives and children because of their feeling of superiority and tradition. Patriarchal tradition places men above women and, as heads of households, it allows them to commit various crimes against women. Women are

also able to oppress other women. Mothers oppress their own daughters for financial reasons.

The topic of human rights in Indonesian short fiction can be seen in each era. In the colonial era, issues such as colonial violence, poverty and oppression against women inspired a number of writers. They represented Indonesians whose rights to assembly and to live a better life were denied directly or indirectly by the colonial government. Wanting to maintain power, the coloniser enforced all means possible to keep Indonesians weak and live in poverty. The violation of women's rights was also significant. Writers such as Suman, Saadah and Armijn depicted women whose rights were violated by men domestically through cultural tradition. Patriarchal tradition allowed men to enforce their power against women.

Few works were published during the Japanese occupation. Later, the works of Idrus were concerned about the behavior of the Japanese soldiers and the effects of the occupation on Indonesian people. He suggested that the Japanese soldiers and their Indonesian counterparts directly or indirectly perpetrated the rights of Indonesians on many occasions. The Japanese took advantage of Indonesian people to maintain their supremacy and caused the poor and the weak to lose their rights. In the era of Revolution, writers such as Utuy Tatang Sontani and Pramoedya Ananta Toer represented the ongoing effects of colonisation on Indonesian people, which caused them to live in poverty. Systemic poverty allowed the colonisers and their men to commit crimes against the people. In this era, the colonisers included foreign soldiers, Indonesians who joined the colonial army, and Indonesian military personnel and militia groups. Maintaining colonisation and gathering wealth motivated the Dutch and their allies to constantly oppress Indonesians. On the other hand, pride and arrogance caused Indonesians who joined the colonisers to violate the rights of their own fellow citizens.

Violence dominated the works of many writers during the Old Order era. Writers described various forms of violence: colonial, state and gender. Although the coloniser had already left Indonesia, writers were still concerned with the ongoing effects of colonization. The politics of ruling with an iron hand, cruelty and violence, continued after independence. Such experiences were intensified by national traumas

such as the *PRRI* war. There was no decrease in patriarchal violence against women in the domestic sphere.

During the New Order era, writers made use of various human rights concerns. Among them are colonial violence, state violence, poverty, corruption, capitalism and violence against women. Protest against the Japanese occupation still interested a few writers. This indicates the wide impact the Japanese colonial period had on Indonesians. Writers also still dealt with the issue of the *PRRI* civil war and the *PKI* revolt. As the New Order regime progressed, writers' attention turned to more recent Indonesian national problems. They represented the issues of social crimes as being the result of the government's inability to bring prosperity to its people because of the corruption which flourished among its officials. The cultural patriarchal practices which marginalised and oppressed women continued to be a topic of major interest.

Four authors have been selected to show the discussion of human rights throughout the New Order period in more detail. When looking at the works of these authors, I have especially scrutinised 16 of their stories. Underlying different forms of communal violence, terror, marginalisation and religiosity, the four writers have expressed their opposition to the perpetrators of human rights offences, whether they are individuals, groups or the state.

Almost all of the human rights violations represented in the 16 short stories were conducted by the state and its apparatuses. The writers' of these stories provide new, alternative, literary ways of looking at these universal human concerns. Through their literary representations, the writers claim that human rights in Indonesia are still under pressure. When responding to the issue of rights violations as represented in a variety of works, they draw on the various sociopolitical incidents this country has gone through. The four writers might be considered among Indonesian "literary activists" (Rooney, 2009). Central to these writers' literary protests is their refusal to accept the patriarchal and oppressive powers as instilled in state policies and the culture they construct. These four writers raise a voice for those whose rights have been violated.

Navis uses sociohistorical narratives to represent the issues of human rights during the late 1950s and the beginning of the New Order. He widely explores Minangkabau settings and incidents to deliver his opposition to the untouchable powers of the state and its apparatus which violated the rights of its citizens. In the four stories analysed in detail, Navis is critical of three things: state violence, the marginalisation of women, and cultural distortion. Firstly, Navis widely portrays state violence in which the state, through its policies, politicised situations so as to be able to stay in power. In doing so, the state negated people's freedom of speech, freedom of choice and right to assembly. Secondly, Navis also portrays women's subjection during the Old Order era. His fiction suggests that, during the Revolution, women suffered more than men. Their freedom of speech and of choice of a work environment was denied. The patriarchal system caused them to lose such rights. Thirdly, Navis also criticised state officials who take advantage of culture to gain wealth and positions. He suggests that such officials violate people's economic rights.

Putu is a social critic, who was concerned with social matters, particularly human rights violations during the New Order, such as freedom of speech and freedom of choice. Putu portrays such denial through two forms of violence: state and class. First, he captures the vulnerability of lower class people such as the poor, the marginal, public service leaders and the ordinary people whose rights are denied or violated by the state, directly or indirectly. Here, he suggests that the needs of the state are superior to group or personal rights and that the state through its apparatuses can take these rights from the people who are considered dangerous to the state. Second, he portrays the terror committed by powerful groups such as the rich against the poor and the poor against the rich, in order to expose social discrepancies in Indonesia. He also suggests that rights violations are committed not only by the rich against the poor but also by the poor against the rich.

Unlike the above two male authors, Ratna is more concerned with violations against women. Ratna's writing is concerned with social problems. Her narratives depict women of various statuses, such as wives and daughters, whose rights are violated by their loved ones. She describes how women's freedom of choice and

freedom of expression are denied in their own homes. Husbands can violate the rights of their wives. Both fathers and mothers can violate the rights of their daughters. Ratna's representation of women being silenced by their family members such as husbands, mothers or fathers, helps to explain the denial of women's rights across Indonesia. Ratna thus depicts how the effects of the patriarchal culture itself cause men to violate women's rights.

Of the four writers, Seno is probably the sharpest social critic. He is concerned with people's freedom of speech, right to life and the right to work and receive an education, all of which are denied by the state. His narratives show his resistance against human rights violations perpetrated by the state in East Timor and his disagreement with the state's narrow economic policies. By embracing a surrealist mode of writing, he successfully delivered his protest against the state to the readers. His style of delivery helped his stories to pass the censoring eyes of the institutions where he sent his stories, as well as those of the state. Through this approach, he portrayed how the state through its military forces committed violence against the East Timorese, taking away their freedom of speech and right to live in their own land. By combining literary and journalistic modes, he was also able to describe the terrible effects of state economic policies on the lives of both the poor and the people of non-Indonesian ethnicity.

There have been gaps regarding human rights between what the law enshrined in the Indonesian constitution says and the policies made by the state. Although writers never cease writing about what interests them, including violations of human rights, there can be conditions which hinder them from disseminating their works. State censorship, the policies of individual publications, the different interests of individual writers, and the general social atmosphere, have all informed and affected the production of stories dealing with human rights, particularly during the New Order. The works of the four writers selected have shown the role of these restrictive elements in the process of the production of stories which resist the powers behind the violations of human rights occurring in the nation. Their writings exemplify how writers of different ages, origins and genders react to the situations they face and what forms they choose in order to protest against such situations.

10.2 THE POSSIBLE IMPACT OF THIS STUDY

The debate on the representations of human rights in fiction is extensive and multifaceted. In light of the production of thousands of fictional narratives in Indonesia, this thesis is a very partial attempt to present a project on human rights, one which engages not only with the issues but with the imaginations of those who experience and represent oppression. The writers whose works are analyzed in some detail in this thesis, together with many other writers who are also concerned about the issues of human rights, have worked to make readers understand and respond to the issues better and to remind the perpetrators – whether they are institutions, apparatuses or powerful individuals – of the impact of their acts on their victims. The writers' efforts are aimed at improving the quality of human life in Indonesia. To generate a more comprehensive understanding of human rights in Indonesia as represented in literature and the variety of ways writers protest against violations of human rights, there is a need for further related studies which concentrate on different time frames, writers, publications, genres and perspectives.

It is expected that this study will attract not only academics but also general readers whose numbers will exceed the first group. This study should not belong to those who sit in libraries or other learning centres, but can disseminate the authors' messages more broadly, so that readers can translate the messages into actions, which in the end can help to create a better Indonesia. After all, these short stories, when they were first published, reached out to a wide Indonesian audience and still continue to do so.

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