

I AM A LEAF IN THE STORM

Ibu Marni

Translated by Anton Lucas

Translator's Introduction

Most literature on the attempted Coup of September 30, 1965 in Indonesia has concentrated on analyzing events and theories about what happened in Jakarta,¹ as well as discussing the political aftermath of the Coup, especially the killings.² More recently historians have turned their attention to the problem of the massacres, and the lack of an explanation in the writing of Indonesian history since 1965, for why the killings occurred. Because of inadequate documentation or reliable evidence from different regions, we know little about who were the killers and who were the victims, in each particular region.³

A further historical question which must be addressed in any analysis of the Coup is who were the survivors of the massacres? As the PKI was the largest Communist party in Southeast Asia, claiming a membership of 20 million (including affiliated mass organizations) the story of the survivors is important. As with the victims and with the killers, there is a problem of knowledge, because very little documentation is as yet available on who the survivors are. While the Politbureau members were either killed or executed judicially, and few of the Central Committee have survived, we know little about the fate of the middle level party leadership. Yet many of their stories must still live in memory, and have now been passed on to future generations. Killers don't tell their stories unless forced to do so and victims can't, but survivors can pass on fragments

¹B. R. O. G. Anderson and Ruth T. McVey, *A Preliminary Analysis of the October 1, 1965, Coup in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1971), The military's own account is Nugroho Notosusanto and Ismail Saleh, *The Coup Attempt of the September 30th Movement in Indonesia* (Jakarta: Pembimbing Massa, 1967).

²See Harold Crouch, *The Army and Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), pp. 142-57 for a general account of the violence which erupted in different regions after the Coup.

³Robert Cribb, "Problems in the Historiography of the 1965/1966 Massacres in Indonesia," Paper to the 7th Biennial Conference of the Australian Association of Asian Studies (Canberra, January, 1988).

to children, relatives, or friends. These accounts will be important to future generations of historians tracing the origins of both the Coup itself and the massacres, as well as the implications of what happened for Indonesia since 1965.

The following account, entitled "I am a Leaf in the Storm" (original English title by its author), is important for two further reasons. Very few first-hand accounts about events surrounding the Coup have emerged as yet because up to now people have been extremely reluctant to pass on their memories to outsiders. Indonesian literature has produced a number of short stories written from the point of view of those involved in one way or another in the killings, which give us an insight into the various Indonesian perceptions concerning these events. Still these short stories are not the accounts of survivors. Because this is an historical account by a survivor, rather than an author's imagining of what it was like to be a survivor, it fills some of the gaps in our historical understanding. For example, we are reminded of the significance of where and by whom PKI people were apprehended in the immediate aftermath of the Coup. We learn also something of the PKI's response to the military counter-coup of October 1, about which historians know little. There is also the question of residual PKI networks operating after the Coup, and their re-emergence after large numbers of political prisoners were released in 1979.⁴

Secondly, this is a woman's account. Its author, who is called by the pseudonym of Bu Marni, was successful in her struggle for survival over fourteen years because of her own personal resilience and resourcefulness and because of her political network, on which she relied in the first month or so after the Coup. But she survived also because she found economic and cultural niches in Javanese society that were more easy to step into as a woman. For example the means she used to earn a livelihood and which ensured her survival in the first few years were all occupations which in Java are the exclusive preserve of women.

The account which follows was transcribed from a tape recording made spontaneously at a chance meeting with Bu Marni, without any consultation or prior knowledge of the interview on her part. In the few places where the interviewer asked for clarification, where the story repeats itself or where the chronology is confused, the text has been edited. To retain the flavor of the original, Dutch and English words used on the tape are written in italics (with the translator's interpolations in square brackets). Footnotes have been added to clarify some points in the text.

⁴Harry Aveling (editor and translator), *GESTAPU: Indonesian Short Stories on the Abortive Communist Coup of 30 September 1965*, Southeast Asian Studies Working Paper 6 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1975). See also Umar Kayam, *Sri Sumarah dan Bawuk* (Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya, 1975). For a general analysis of Indonesian literature which uses the Coup and its aftermath as the major theme see Kylie Ann Seluka, "Literature and Social Upheaval: the events of 1965/66 as portrayed in Indonesia Novels and Short Stories," B.A. Honours thesis, Flinders University, 1987.

I AM A LEAF IN THE STORM

Ibu Marni

I was born on the 15th January 1932. I came from a middle class family (*keluarga menengah*); my father was a technical teacher during the Dutch period. During that time most people who attended Dutch schools were the children of officials who worked for the colonial power. Because my father was also a government official, I was able to go to a Dutch school, like my brother. I didn't know anything about the nationalist movement during that time because my father wasn't involved in any way.

Before the Japanese came my brother, (who was a *bupati* [regional head] of Cilacap—he's dead now, he died after being released from detention⁵) left home and went away to MULO [intermediate Dutch medium school] in Purwokerto. He was *indekost* [a boarder] in a place called Wisma Putera. I think he had political education about the nationalist movement while he was *indekost* in Purwokerto because at the beginning of the revolution he joined the Pesindo [Socialist Youth of Indonesia].⁶ I was still politically naive then (*masih hijau*); I didn't understand what *perjuangan* [political struggle] was all about. During the First Clash when the Dutch occupied the town of Gombong, I was still in SMP [Junior High School] nearby in Kebumen⁷. Before I finished SMP I had followed my brother's footsteps in joining the revolutionary struggle. I joined the student group called the *Tentara Pelajar* [Students' Army],⁸ and I went to the *front*. I didn't really know what political line I should take, but the important thing was that I was in the independence movement, because I had joined the *Tentara Pelajar*. I still didn't know where my brother was.

⁵I.e., detention in the aftermath of the 1965 attempted Coup.

⁶Pesindo, formed at the first all-Indonesia Pemuda Congress in November 1945, was the largest and most powerful of the Indonesian struggle organizations during the revolution.

⁷The First Clash, or "Police Action" as the Dutch called it, took place on July 21, 1947, when the Dutch attacked areas previously designated as Republican territory in the Linggajati agreement.

⁸The *Tentara Pelajar*, consisting of mainly high-school students, was one of the army's most effective paramilitary units during the revolution.

After the *Cease-fire* and the *Status Quo* Line had been implemented in the Kebumen Area,⁹ I stayed with my parents. Later on my brother landed in jail suddenly and I learned that it was because of the Madiun Affair.¹⁰ The next thing I knew my brother had vanished from Kebumen jail. But my brother found out where I was and sent me a letter. "Don't use my name again," he wrote, "Use my teacher's name." It seemed that my brother escaped from prison after the Second *Clash*,¹¹ during the Dutch attack on the Republic. He said in his letter "If anyone asks about me, say I am dead, but it's not my body or spirit that has died, but my name that is dead." That was what he wrote. I thought afterwards "Maybe this is what is meant by *perjuangan*." I only knew about *perjuangan* from being involved with the group of *Tentara Pelajar* helping at the *front*. Also I helped in the *Palang Merah* [Red Cross]. My experience was limited. Neither my parents nor my brother gave me any instruction or guidance in political struggle. My parents still had contact with my brother, he was still involved in the struggle, but I didn't have any idea how.

Before the Second *Clash* I had started studying again; then the Dutch attacked Yogya in the *doorstoot* [push] in Yogya, and my parents also joined the evacuation of the city. I was in Yogya to continue my schooling, as I had finished SMP. There was no SMA in Kebumen at the time, so my father *blijft* [remained] in Kebumen, while my mother moved to Yogya. After the *doorstoot* Yogya was safe again. Because she was thinking about her younger child's education, she returned with my younger sibling to be with my father in Kebumen. I felt my parents should not have to pay for my education, because all their wealth, all their *funds* and *forces* had been used up in all the expenses of evacuation. To continue studying, I decided I had to work. So I went to work in the Ministry of Health, while I was studying. As I became more mature I kept thinking of my brother. My parents told me that he was working as a teacher in the Taman Siswa school in Yogya¹² under another name. All this had a big effect on me, for the first time I began to realize the meaning of *perjuangan* for myself. It seemed that being involved in the *perjuangan* was a complicated business. Heavens my brother was still alive and teaching in Taman Siswa.

While I worked I finished SMA, and went on to Gajah Mada University. Out of the blue my brother was appointed *Bupati* of Cilacap. I've forgotten what year it was. But while I was studying at university, the general election was held and Sukarno rehabilitated the PKI.¹³ This was the first time that I had heard about the PKI's activities. I realized that my brother had probably been nominated as *Bupati* by the PKI, which meant he had been a cadre of the Party. I was studying in the Faculty of Political and

⁹The Status Quo Line or SQL (also referred to as the van Mook or Renville Line) referred to the extreme limit to which Dutch forces had advanced on the Republican capital of Yogyakarta before a cease-fire negotiated between both sides had come into effect on August 4, 1947. In the area of western Central Java where Bu Marni was living, the line ran between Kebumen and Gombong, twenty kilometers to the west.

¹⁰The Madiun rebellion was a precipitous attempt by a minority of Communist leaders to take control of the Republic by force using Pesindo units, starting in the East Java town of Madiun.

¹¹During the Second Clash, which began on December 19, 1948, the Dutch tried to use military force to crush the Republic by attacking the capital of Yogyakarta, and arresting Sukarno and the top Republican leadership.

¹²The Taman Siswa was a strongly nationalist prewar educational movement, with its headquarters and main school in Yogyakarta.

¹³The PKI's strong showing in the 1955 election, when it took 16.4 percent of the vote, gave the Party a legitimacy it had not had since the Madiun rebellion, which Sukarno had fiercely condemned.

Social Affairs, in the Department of Social Studies (*jurusan kemasyarakatan*), where I had also studied psychology. If the PKI nominated my brother as *Bupati* did that mean he was a member of the Party?

At the first general election I had the right to vote, and I thought to myself "which party will I vote for"? There was a lecturer in the psychology of education at Gajah Mada, Dr. S., who was involved in the election campaign, so this made me think more about which party should I choose. My brother never told me how to vote, neither did my parents; each member of our family made their own choice. Still I knew about my brother's involvement with the Party and also its record during the Revolution with Pesindo and Lasykar Rakyat [the People's Militia].¹⁴ During the election campaign I saw that those active in the struggle for independence were often PKI people. But I was still not sure.

I asked Dr. S. for the history of the PKI's political struggle and he gave me a brochure about the 1926 struggle.¹⁵ They organized *strikes* against the Dutch. It seemed the PKI struggle was very effective. Although that's all I knew I became convinced about who I was going to vote for, although I wasn't yet a member of the Party. My family all had their own opinion, we didn't influence each other but we all voted for the same party. Even my mother also voted PKI. After the election I didn't follow up my choice in any way, though if I voted PKI I thought that I should have a *jiwa perjuangan* [revolutionary spirit] as well.

After this I went on a *study tour* with Gajah Mada, which was organized by Dr. S. He seemed to be very orientated towards the masses in the way he handled his students, and also towards the kids who were studying agriculture at the SMP we visited at Kaliurang where the *study tour* was held.¹⁶ I asked Dr. S. directly about this. "I'm trying a new experiment," he said. "This experiment must have a basis," I said. "Oh, if you ask me about its basis, its basis is the people themselves, because no knowledge is useful if it doesn't come from the people for the people (*tidak ada ilmu yang berguna apabila tidak dari rakyat untuk rakyat*). So I had learnt something new, and I felt politically more mature.

After the study tour was over I finished my degree and had to work for three years with the government service. I was given a job in the Farmers' Extension Service (*Dinas Pembangunan Usaha Tani*). I was very interested in this work, and I had to go on lots of field trips. I always remembered the lesson I learnt from Dr. S. and always tried to think about the masses, the small farmers. It seemed that the extension service was controlled by the PKI. When I had moved to Semarang the Yogya people had been in contact with them, and without my knowledge my field visits were being monitored to see if I was

¹⁴The Lasykar Rakyat were strongly militant groups, influenced later in the revolution by Tan Malaka's ideology of non-cooperation with the Dutch. Although poorly armed, they successfully mobilized many sections of village communities into a formidable force. See Sartono Kartodirdjo, *Modern Indonesia: Tradition and Transformation* (Yogyakarta: Gajah Mada University Press, 1984), pp. 89–91.

¹⁵The attempted Communist rebellion of 1926–1927 failed because of poor leadership, organization and tactics. The PKI's version of the rebellion can be found in Lembaga Sejarah Partai CCPKI, *Pemberontakan Nasional Pertama* (Jakarta: Yayasan Pembaruan, 1961[?]).

¹⁶Kaliurang is a hill resort on the slopes of Mt. Merapi north of Yogyakarta.

cadre material. Then they said to me “*Sus*,¹⁷ it seems that you are suited to join a Party organization.” “Which one would be the best?” I said. “For your first experience, as you are a government employee, why don’t you join your own union”? So I was nominated as a committee member of the union to which all employees in my department belonged. This was my first education in union matters. Also because of my degree I felt better able to tackle the social issues (*soal kemasyarakatan*) which came up.

Then the Party people said to me “*Sus*, now you know a lot about the struggle of the workers, and you’re still single why don’t you join a *pemuda* [youth] organization?” “Which one?” I replied. They suggested the *Pemuda Rakyat* (People’s Youth).¹⁸ At the time I didn’t know that it was the youth affiliate of the PKI; I only knew about the Party, although I wasn’t a member or even a cadre. This was about 1960. After I had done a stint in the *Pemuda Rakyat*, they said “As you’re getting older, and you might be married soon, why don’t you join a women’s organization?” “I’m happy to do what you suggest,” I replied. So I joined Gerwani [Indonesian Women’s Movement].¹⁹ So I had experience in a trade union, with youth, and in Gerwani.

After I joined Gerwani they asked me “*Sus*, who did you vote for in the general election?” I was a bit doubtful about how to reply to this, I didn’t know much about the Party’s affiliates (*onderbouw*). Then I thought why not put my cards on the table, so I said “I voted for the hammer and sickle.” “Oh, you should become a cadre if you voted PKI.” “I’m ready if you can use me,” I said. So I became a cadre, which meant that I took a political course organized by the Semarang *Komite Kota* [City Committee].

It was on this course that I studied Materialism, Dialectics, and History, or MDH as it was called. This was very useful for solving social problems, we were taught. Materialism meant dealing with concrete facts, not just talking about ideology, or empty phrases (*angan-angan saja*), about real things (*fakta yang nyata*). Dialectics, well that meant that everything had its own dynamic (*segala sesuatu bergerak*), that’s all I know. History (which was related to Materialism) meant that we should investigate things from their historical point of view. Then we learnt about the laws of dialectics, everything comes back to laws about how society works.

After I had finished this political course I was asked to write down my impressions, and then I became a member of the PKI. I was sent to work with the dock workers and *bakul* [women petty traders] at the port; I taught them about MDH, then I got them to organize a union. Slowly we got them in. At that time there was the academic movement in the Party, which meant that we had to raise the level of education of Party cadres. So I worked with these groups on the docks; I would leave study notes in the rooms of these people, to give them some education. Our aim was to get the women to join Gerwani and to get the workers to be politically strong (*buruh yang tangguh*). Then I moved from the *Komite Kota* to the *Komite Daerah Besar Semarang* [the Semarang Regional Committee]. Nowadays you would call it being *upgraded*. I now had to work on a more organizational level. The women had their own organization, Gerwani, the

¹⁷*Sus* (from the Dutch *suster*) is an egalitarian term of address, which became popular during the immediate post-independence period, the equivalent for women of *Bung* (brother).

¹⁸The *Pemuda Rakyat* was engaged in direct political action as well as promoting cultural and sporting activities, amongst both urban and rural youth.

¹⁹Gerwani, the Communist-led mass organization for women, was active in social work, savings and credit groups, literacy classes, and kindergartens; it claimed a membership of 1.5 million in 1963.

pemuda had the *Pemuda Rakyat*, but there was no organization for children. The Party felt that I was the person for this work. The organization was called *Harian Rakyat Muda* [People's Daily Youth],²⁰ and I was the leader. We sang our national songs, and songs composed by PKI people, and we celebrated International Children's Day on 1st June every year.

Meanwhile the Farmer's Extension service had been investigated and found to be under the control of PKI people, so it was disbanded. I moved to the governor's office, as an employee of the Department of the Interior, with the rank of assistant *wedana* [district head] as a member of the *pamong praja* [civil service].

It was then that the Central Committee of the Party asked me to organize the children on the national level. "This would mean becoming a 'full timer,' *Sus*," they said. For me this was a calling. As a responsible member of the PKI I left my government job and went to work as a *full timer* for the Party. I lived in the Party *asrama* [hostel] at Kramat Raya 81. Now it's used as a tourist office isn't it? I stayed in the *asrama* there until the conflagration of 1965. We referred to that event as the opium war, from Chinese history. If we were talking with fellow Party members (*kawan*) we would ask "Where were you at the time of the opium war?" The government calls it G. 30 S., [*Gerakan 30 September*, the September 30 movement]. Our code for that was the opium war. Ex-prisoners would ask each other "Where were you sent to school?" meaning what prison were you in? This was a kind of training (*penggemblengan*) for us. "Oh I went and got lectures on Buru Island, or Plantungan, or Bulu prisons."²¹

So I was in Jakarta at the time of the Coup. I didn't know what was happening at the time; only one morning I heard a commotion and the sound of gunfire. Someone shouted "It's begun, it's begun, the revolution has begun." Then I waited for the 8 o'clock news; there was an announcement over the RRI by Untung, from the Cakrabirawa battalion.²² "Things are happening now," I thought to myself. It seemed it was the beginning of the revolution. What was I to do? I didn't get any directions from the Party, so I went out onto the street and saw army people, with helmets and stripes on their sleeves, but I didn't know which side they were on. I think the *asrama* was attacked after that. Three days later it was burnt. No, it couldn't have been on the third day, because that was the day the police came to get us all in a truck. "We're taking you to safety (*nanti kita selamatkan*)," they told us. It turned out they took us to the Kramat Raya police headquarters. "You'd better stay quietly here, rather than be beaten up by people," they told us. So we stayed there.

Then one morning the police commander woke us up, and told us we had to leave and find our own safety. There were a lot of us, maybe about fifty from the Kramat Raya *asrama*. The police commander told us "Return to your own areas, or go wherever you can get protection, because if you stay here, you won't be safe." We didn't know which

²⁰*Harian Rakjat* was the name of the PKI daily, published in Jakarta.

²¹Over ten thousand prisoners were kept without trial on Buru Island in the 1970s; the camp is now a transmigration settlement. Plantungan is a women's prison in Central Java, Bulu prison is in Semarang.

²²This broadcast was actually a statement read after the daily 7 am. news on October 1 announcing that Lieutenant Colonel Untung, a battalion commander with the Cakrabirawa palace guard, had arrested members of a CIA-sponsored Council of Generals. As leader of the "Thirtieth of September Movement," he claimed that this action was to prevent a coup by the Council of Generals. See Crouch, *Army and Politics in Indonesia*, pp. 97-101 for the events of October 1, 1965.

side the police were on, but the fact was they didn't arrest us; they told us to leave. He gave us money, I've forgotten how much it was, and told us to return to our home regions if we wanted to. The line we were to take was, find your own safety, say you know nothing about the Coup, and don't have any connection with it. This was the line that Comrade Aidit gave us through his aide, I've forgotten the man's name now. It was called the *Tri Panji* formula: find your own escape, say you know nothing, you don't know each other and have no connection with each other (*menyelamatkan diri, kemudian tidak tahu, tidak saling mengenal dan tidak ada hubungannya*). So if you were arrested you didn't know anything.

So I returned to Semarang via Solo and found that Semarang was still safe. People were still meeting at the *Komite Daerah Besar* office. Bung P., a comrade of mine from the CDB, who was also on the Semarang *Badan Pemerintah Harian* [Municipal Executive Committee]—he is still alive and is now living in Jakarta—told me to stay with his family in Jalan Lingga in Semarang. Several weeks later operations against the PKI began in Semarang. Bung P. was trying to escape. At the end he came home and told me, "Sus, someone is on your track from Jakarta. You will have to leave this house." That same night Bung P's house where I was staying was the target of an attack by a mob. "I'll be killed if I surrender here," he said, and he jumped over the back fence into a neighbor's yard and gave himself up to the police. He was unharmed there and he was handed over to the military. So he escaped torture by the masses. But his wife and children faced the *Pemuda Marhaen* [Marhaen Youth] and Muslim youth from HMI [the Islamic Students Union].²³ "Mbakyu, what are you doing here?" they asked me roughly. "I came here to collect a debt," I said, "I'm a trader, I wanted to collect money owing to me, and look what's happened." "If that's the case, you'd better leave, in case you get into trouble as well." So I went. There were also KTP [I.D. card] checks.

So I left Semarang and went to Ambarawa to meet Dr. J. who worked in the local hospital. I asked him how I could save myself. Dr. J. took me to *tukang gigi* [dental assistant], and he pulled out nine teeth in three days, so I would be *vermomming* [disguised], so people wouldn't know me any more. Dr. J. said "Here's some money to buy soap or other goods which you can carry around to sell along the road or in the markets. You'll be safe doing that. You don't need to run away any more. In the late afternoon you should get away from the busy roads and from where people live. It's up to you." So off I went. I bought sticks of soap which I took to sell in the small village markets. At night time I walked around the main roads until I found a valley that was a long way from settled areas, and also far from wet rice fields, because I was worried that farmers would come to irrigate their fields at night.

I stayed there for about three years. I didn't build a hut, but I slept under a railway bridge, in a viaduct used for carrying irrigation water. It was quite close to the Kopi Eva restaurant. It was clean, far from both settlements and from rice fields, like a cave really. I would get up at 5 a.m. and wait for the sun to rise, then I would go to the main road to see if there was any transport. I would be careful to avoid military patrols. Once the following happened. Two buses were *kruising* [passing each other from different directions], and some military man gave a code meaning "It's safe." I didn't know at the time what this meant until one day I went by bus in the direction of Magelang. A bus

²³Both the *Pemuda Marhaen*, the youth affiliate of the PNI, and the powerful HMI were involved in the arrests and killings of PKI members and supporters after the Coup.

from the other direction gave the "stop" code. Our bus stopped immediately and we were told that there was a KTP operation, so those without KTP should get off. I was one of the ones who didn't have a KTP and I got off too. But I thought at the time, why do they want to tell the passengers? In the end I worked out that they always gave the code, and this gave passengers the chance to get off. I thought that it was because the drivers had probably been members of the *Sarekat Buruh Kendaraan Bermotor* [Motor Vehicle Worker's Union] the SBKB. It seemed that giving each other code signs when these KTP operations were on showed that there was still a feeling of solidarity between drivers for people without KTP.

I went on selling soap and I always ate in the local markets. If I sold soap, I was able to eat, otherwise I didn't. That's how I lived. After about three years I thought things were getting safer as the KTP operations were not so frequent any more. So I thought that I would try and go to Magelang. I had seen *gelandangan*, people with no homes or who lived in slums, who lived in the *kerkhof* [European churchyard] in Magelang. So I got on the bus and went to Magelang and found these people living under the old grave monuments. So I joined them. It was a long way from the main road and buses, the area hadn't had any *pembangunan* [development] then, the place was full of *gelandangan*. I stayed there for ten days or so, then I remembered that I had had a driver from Magelang called Sudarso who came with me on field trips with the Extension Service. This driver wasn't a Party member or sympathizer. He was of a different political persuasion from me, but I was always good to him (*saya selalu bersikap baik terhadap dia*). So I walked from the *kerkhof* to his *kampung*, and I found the house and Pak Darso. He held out his hand and said, "Welcome." He knew exactly who I was. "It seems something urgent has brought you here," he said. "Yes, I need your help." "Don't worry, you can stay here." I was amazed at his attitude, for politically I was different, but he just let me stay in his house without any fuss. "I'll find a way to help you," he said.

I stayed for one night with my former driver, then I asked him if my presence wasn't endangering his family. He just replied in the same way, that he would find a way of helping me. Early in the second morning of my stay there, Pak Darso arrived back at the house carrying a baby. "This is the only way you will be saved," he said. "Look after this child. Whether it lives or whether it dies it's yours." I took the child, I remember, and I thought about Pak Darso's intention in giving me this baby. "How old is this baby?" I asked him. "Four months," was the reply. "Has the baby been weaned yet?" "It has to be weaned, it has to be weaned; for your own future you must look after it," he said. Then I wondered how on earth I was going to support myself let alone this baby. Pak Darso asked me about what I was going to do. "Well, I need a place to stay," I said. "What kind of a place?" he asked. I thought for a while, then I said "I want to find a *santri* [strict Muslim] area, an area that is totally Muslim (*daerah yang mutlak Islam*). That would be the safest, wouldn't it?" "Oh, if that's what you want, I know a place that is not far from here, on the edge of the city. I have a friend there who is a retired village headman."

So I was taken to the house of the retired village headmen. It was not far from the Military Academy past the Giriloyo Heroes' Cemetery. There Pak Darso handed me over to the former headman. "Pak Lurah, Look after this family because they are by themselves. Treat them like your own family." "Oh yes, they can live here. My children have all left home and have their own families. There is only one person here at the moment, a widow." So I stayed there; it was a village house, very roomy. It had been the

kelurahan [headman's office]. As a former headman, my host still had authority in the village.

Now I want to talk about my life there. At first the baby and I lived off my savings from when I had been a *bakul*, but gradually these were used up. So I asked the headman's wife how I could work in the village. She told me that would be easy, as there were lots of *juragan daging* [meat traders] because the village was a place where animals were slaughtered. So I looked after the children of these people, also the children of *bakul* who worked in the market. I could live on what I was paid to look after these children. They were left in their own homes during the day under various arrangements. Sometimes I had sole responsibility for each household. Other children were left in the hands of a servant, while I supervised the meals. Some parents didn't trust their servants to give their children food which they had been given money to buy (eggs for example), and they wanted someone to supervise this. My baby and I were able to live from what I was paid for this work.

I have already talked about the frequent patrols which carried out security checks, and this village was no exception. If there was going to be a patrol, Pak Darso my former driver would come and tell me "Bu, there is going to be a security operation. You don't have a KTP." "No, that's right, I don't." "Take the child to the river or somewhere." The village was quite close to a big river called the Progo. I would walk there carrying my baby and a pile of dirty nappies. Pak Darso would tell me every time there was going to be a security operation.

One day Pak Darso arrived and told the former headman that all families living in the village were going to be registered again. This meant new KTP would be issued to everyone. He suggested that I be registered as a member of the former headman's family. So that was what happened, and I was able to get a KTP, as a legal person.

My baby was growing up, and now I had a KTP and was free, I wanted to have a look around elsewhere. So I said to the former headman's wife: "Bu, I would like to work somewhere outside, where I can earn more for the baby." The baby was already one and a half years old. I thought that I could work as what used to be called a *kinderen vrouw* [nurse] in the Dutch time, what you'd call a *baby-sitter* nowadays. "Why don't you get a job in Pecinaan?" [Chinese quarter] she said. So I got a job as *bediende* [housekeeper] for a family who were members of the Protestant Church Synod, who lived at the back of the Protestant missionary hospital in Magelang.

One day the family asked me "How did your husband die?" Rather confused, I said without thinking "The doctor said he died of *darmkronkeling* [twisted bowel]." I was confused, and I didn't know what the term was in Indonesian. The Chinese family were amazed, they asked me how I knew Dutch. I said that I had learnt a bit from my parents, and that was what the doctor said my husband had died of. I forgot that as a servant, I wasn't supposed to speak Dutch. But the outcome was that the family appreciated me more because they thought that I was educated. They handed over the running of the household to me, and I had to do things like take telephone calls. I pretended that I knew such things, though in fact I just watched how they answered the telephone. It wasn't hard.

One day there was a telephone call from a Chinese family that had arrived from Holland. I replied in Dutch, "*Mevrouw is niet t'huis*" [the lady of the house is not at

home]. They told my employer that I could speak Dutch. "Oh, yes she went to a Dutch school," they replied. So I got *waardering* [appreciation] from this family.

I ended up working there for about eleven years. I got a monthly wage, and every month when I was paid the former headman's wife would bring my child to see me. Then one day *mevrouw* said "Instead of having your daughter brought here every time, why don't you have her stay here with you?" So my daughter, who was about three years old, came to live in the house as well. In front of the house there was a Protestant school, run by the church. My daughter wanted to go to school, but I thought that wasn't possible. I was baptised as a Christian before, and I went to SMA Bobkri [a Protestant High School in Yogyakarta]. My brother was also Protestant. The Chinese family didn't know that I had been *opgeheven* [raised] as a Protestant, and I taught my daughter Christian songs such as *Tuhan Melihat* [God is watching]. *Mevrouw* was delighted when she found out that my daughter could sing *Tuhan Melihat*. "Your daughter isn't old enough to go to pre-school. Why not send her to Sunday school?" she asked. So my daughter went to Sunday school, then to pre-school, then on to the primary school also run by the church, and nearly finished sixth grade.

The Chinese family ran a food business at home, a small home industry, where I worked. Maybe because I was too tired, maybe because my hands were always wet, they began swelling up all over. I asked *mevrouw* what to do and she told me to see a doctor, so I went to a doctor. Then on one occasion there was a guest who suggested that acupuncture would help my hands, and I agreed to try. Before the acupuncturist came to the house, *Meneer* said to me, "Don't be afraid of this man, he was detained in Buru." So he came to treat me. He had been a teacher, but I didn't say a word to him.

My brother who had been released from detention was in Jakarta. He had a degree in Biology from Gajah Mada University. I wrote to him and he wrote back and told me to get treatment from a friend of his in Yogyakarta. He was an acupuncturist and also a *kawan* [Party member]. I knew that he was a Party member, because he used the word *kawan*. Do you know what that means? Amongst members of the Party, we used that term to refer to fellow members.

So I went to Yogya, and met Bung T., my brother's friend. I told him that I had been receiving treatment from Pak K. a teacher in Magelang, who had been on Buru as a prisoner. "Oh, Bung K, he is also a *kawan*, and my friend, you should continue your acupuncture with him. I will give you some medicine." But neither of them found out who I really was. They just knew I was a sympathizer.

While I was being treated, I had another letter from my younger brother who told me to go to an address in Semarang. So I came here to Semarang with my hands still not better. Now what year was that? It was when my daughter had just finished primary school and was starting junior high school. In Semarang I met a doctor, a pediatrician, Dr. BW. I'd known him as a lecturer at Gajah Mada. He told me that he would find work for me in Semarang. So he came to Magelang to get me. I told the family that my older brother didn't want me to work anymore, and that I had to rest. "Will you leave your child at school here?" they asked me. "I can't leave my only child," I told them. But I still have good relations with them, and every Christmas we go back there to see them. My child had asked to be baptised in Magelang, and we were considered as part of the family by then.

My work with Dr. BW in Semarang was with disturbed children, who could not go to school. One child I had wouldn't talk, wouldn't say anything, because when he was learning to speak his parents kept forcing him to correct himself. I called it the result of *over demand*. So the child became dumb. After a year with me the child was able to go to a *play group*, and also managed pre-school. The parents thanked me and I left that job.

Then I came to work here, and I've been here ever since. My daughter is now in second year of SMA [senior high school]. She was seventeen on her last birthday, so *sweet seventeen*. I'm now a legal person. I mean, I can have a KTP and this means I have the right to vote in the general election which is coming up. So I'm all right at the moment. My daughter, she's well and lives with me. *I am a leaf in the storm*. Yes, that could be the name of my story, *a Leaf in the storm*.