



Pramoedya Ananta Toer (1953)

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PERBURUAN 1950 AND KELUARGA GERILYA 1950*

Pramoedya Ananta Toer
Translated by Benedict Anderson

I've been asked: what is the creative process for me, as a writer? This is not an easy question to answer. Whether "formulated" or not, the creative process is always a very private and personal experience. Each writer will have his own experience, again whether "formulated" or not. I've been asked to detail the creative process which produced the novels *Perburuan* [The Fugitive] and *Keluarga Gerilya* [The Guerrilla Family]. Very well, I'll answer--even though there's no real need for other people to know what goes on in my private kitchen. My willingness to respond in this instance is based purely on the public's right to some comparisons . . . to limit undue onesidedness.

1948. I was 23 at the time--a *pemuda* who believed wholeheartedly in the nobility of work--any kind of work--who felt he could accomplish anything, and who dreamed of scraping the sky and scooping the belly of the earth: a *pemuda* who had only just begun his career as a writer, publicist, and reporter. As it turned out, all of this was nullified by thick prison walls. My life was regulated by a schedule determined by authorities propped up by rifles and bayonets. Forced labor outside the jail, four days a week, and getting 7½ cents for a full day's labor. Not a glimmer of light yet as to when the war of words and arms between the Republic and the Dutch would end.

I was in despair.

I opened the *pesangon*¹ given me by my mother before she departed for eternity: *patiraga*²--to be used only in the face of an overwhelming spiritual crisis. So, back to being a Javanist again? Actually, since 1940 my mind had been liberated from metaphysics by Pak Poeh's well-known Javanese book; I was more inclined to focus on reason³ as a rider and the flesh as a horse it had to keep firmly reined.

* *World Authors 1975-80* (New York: H. W. Wilson Co., forthcoming) will contain excerpts from this translation of Pramoedya's account of his writing of *Perburuan* and *Keluarga Gerilya* and his autobiographical sketch and bibliography. As the list of writings, translations, awards, studies, and reviews was prepared by Pramoedya there has been no effort to make it more comprehensive, or to reorder it.

1. *Pesangon*, from the Javanese *pasangon*, means literally "travel money," or "vademecum." Here Pram uses it as a metaphor for the teachings of his mother and later for the accumulated experiences of his life. Since there seems to be no comfortable English equivalent, and one striking feature of this text is Pramoedya's unusually explicit use of Javanese conceptions and traditions, I have left the word in the original.

2. *Patiraga*--literally "body-death" or "death to the body"--a "technical" term in Javanese mystical practice for spiritual concentration so intense that the body is, as it were, annihilated.

3. Pramoedya uses the pair *rasio/daging*, in which *rasio* means something like the

Was it really possible that only 8 years later I had plunged once again into atavism? Was this not something shameful? But the fact was that the life-path on which I'd been proceeding had come to a dead end. By patiraga the servant approaches the Lord:⁴ Here is my I, I give everything back to Thee; take it all, and destroy Thy servant this very instant if he is no more use to Life. So it was; I really intended, quite deliberately, to kill my self by patiraga.

But the Lord did not take back the everything that I surrendered to Him--all was restored to me again. What he gave me was a mountain, on top of which stood a four-pillared Greek temple crowned with a triangular pediment, and a full-blazing sun still higher up. You can see it was no longer a question of reason, or of the flesh. What was as clear as that sun itself was: I was permitted to go on living, I could still be of some use to Life. I felt utterly, immensely happy. All the KNIL and KL⁵ soldiers with their rifles and bayonets, the prison walls and the schedule that regulated my life--suddenly felt miles removed from the island of happiness on which I found myself. This island of happiness (for which I have no name, since I have never studied psychology) contained within it liberation, a total freedom to survive as a self, intense, immune to all political, military, social, and economic power in no matter what system--a sanctuary of meditation, a *conditio sine qua non*,⁶ which provided me the possibility for creative endeavor. This island is a *mysticum*,⁶ an island where the servant merges with his Lord, an island where Time ceases, and where creative work is faith. It's true, creative work is a form of faith.

On that island I composed a number of texts--among them *Perburuan* and *Keluarga Gerilya*. To some people this may well seem a joke. It can't be helped. On this subject, I don't need the belief of others. And later on I discovered that the island could also be brought into being by the power of reason.

The result? I became, continue to be, and will always be, a writer.

Old Jamhur, a one-time globe-trotter [*sic*], woke up and went to sleep with Will Durant's *The Story of Philosophy* always in his arms. Only for a few minutes each day would he lend it to me, with a wide smile on his furrowed face. He bowed his head deeply and slowly, and his soft and wistful voice was like a thunderclap in my ears: I too, Pram, was a writer . . . once. But I stopped . . . quite consciously. Writing, Pram, your writing, will come to curse you. It will become at once your judge and your accuser. It will pursue you all your days. Give it up, Pram; live in tranquillity, in peace, without judge, without accuser. Do not add to your burdens. Too much of your young life has already been devoured by prison. You're needed by your own self.

I promised to bear his advice in mind. I neither argued nor agreed with him. I went my way. I could fully understand the advice he gave me: the writer con-

faculty of reason. It is noticeable that he does not use the conventional Islamic pair *akal/hawa nafsu*, and that the imagery is one first made famous by Plato. The Greek connection is not accidental, as will be seen below.

4. Characteristically Pramoedya modifies the traditional social and mystical dyad *kawula-Gusti* by inserting an ironical "*si*" before the former, and "*sang*" before the latter.

5. KNIL (Koninklijk Nederlands-Indisch Leger, Royal Netherlands Indies Army) was the special military force recruited to police the colony. KL (Koninklijk Leger, Royal Army) was the main national army of the Netherlands.

6. Pramoedya uses the Latin terminology of Christian mysticism. The Latin phrase above--*conditio sine qua non*--should be understood as part of the same vocabulary.

tinues to develop, but not his writing. It remains outside time, or, in the language of *wayang*, beyond the power of Bhatara Kala.⁷

(In memory of that astonishing old man I must tell you here that several months after I was released from the Bukitduri prison--in December 1949--I ran into him unexpectedly at the Hotel des Indes. He was working in the secretariat of Sultan Hamid.⁸ He told me his boss was designing a national emblem. He also whispered to me that he and the Sultan's chauffeur had uncovered Hamid's plan to make a coup. A week later Sultan Hamid was arrested. After that, I never encountered him again. He was the first person to congratulate me on the publication of the texts I had composed in prison, but he did not remind me of his earlier advice.)

On that island that I have termed the mysticum, creative work means honoring that Lord who brings all to life, it means giving birth to a new entity, which then lives on outside time. This entity remains in the same condition as at its birth, no matter whether three or four generations have since come and gone. It is immune to praise or blame, generation after generation. It remains unshakable in the face of criticism, analysis, and academic interpretation--let alone suppression.

At the BMKN Cultural Conference held in the early 1950s Father Prof. Dr. P. J. Zoetmulder SJ⁹ stated: literature creates its own being. I think that he was not mistaken, at least if one looks at the creative process simply from the perspective of the mysticum and ignores the actual mechanism of creativity--which nonetheless is inseparable from that process. It is precisely this mechanism in fact which guarantees that what is created is always human, full of defects, errors, and misconceptions. Its very polyinterpretability is a barometer of the humanity of the thing created. The less polyinterpretable it is, the closer it approaches Father Zoetmulder's formulation, and begins to enter the gateway of religion. None other than Hegel himself once spoke of the human-ness of the thing created as *ein notwendiger Anachronismus* ("an inevitable anachronism"), i.e., as one of the many particles of humanity in an artistic creation.

It is after all the creative mechanism that arouses reactions in others--pleasure or displeasure, hatred or love--leading men even to ban, burn, or idolize the work of art. And these reactions in turn are shaped exclusively by what is in that person's *pesangon*, or, to put it more clearly, by the totality of the information within his self, which is determined by reason or the flesh, or both together. Whereas the work of art itself remains unaffected, so long at least as civilization lends it some support.

Literature is a form of creation: intent and interpretation, with language--oral or written--as the tool for their expression. In the history of art one finds the view that literature is the mother of art, which re-presents the aspirations of religion. Out of literature are born the other branches of art: dance, music, sculpture, painting, and finally drama, which reunites all the branches with their mother, and thus is the art form which manifests the ultimate development. What has all this to do with *Perburuan* and *Keluarga Gerilya*?

7. The God of Time and Death.

8. Sultan Hamid II of Pontianak--a leading collaborator with the Dutch, and a prominent member of the so-called "Federalist" political bloc in 1948-50.

9. BMKN = Badan Musyawarah Kebudayaan Nasional--Consultative Council on National Culture. Father Zoetmulder (a Dutch Jesuit who early became an Indonesian citizen) is the celebrated scholar and lexicographer of Old Javanese.

The answer requires prior consideration of yet another problem. The creative process is utterly individual in character, and can occur only after formation of the mysticum as a *conditio sine qua non*. This mysticum, a condensed personal freedom,¹⁰ which liberates the I¹¹ from the world outside it, and which places the I beyond reach of the power of Time--a condition in which there is only the I in its servant relationship to the Lord, with all the evidences of His lordship--it is here that the [artistic] creator manifests himself with the Creator by means of his [artistic] statements. And, if you'll forgive me for saying so, precisely because this experience is so individual in character, it needs no validation by anyone else. It is only after this begging of forgiveness--which in itself is an inseparable part of a very personal statement--that the creator--that individual, fallible creator--can be distinguished as the sun that makes possible the working of the creative mechanism. For, actually, there are only two types of creation: the manifestations of the natural world, which are those of the Creator; and those of human beings, which are manifested in the statements [*pernyataan*] of the creator.

The individual human being is merely a speck within the entirety of the cosmos, yet it is a speck without comparison. For, unlike everything else in the cosmos, it contains, within its very self, Time in its three dimensions. The first dimension embraces the "pesangon"--all the informational data [*data informasi*] accumulated via the experience of the senses, and the faculties of reasoning and feeling, which form the millions of threads and nodes connecting the person to other persons (concrete and abstract) and objects (concrete and abstract). This first dimension (with the *pesangon* it embraces) leads a person to the second dimension--his present situation. With these two dimensions as *pesangon*, the person can enter the third dimension--the situation that is yet to come.

Technological progress has made it easier to clarify the creative process. If one looks at the methods by which computers work, one sees that they too can give birth to new combinations out of accumulated data. After all, isn't a thing created simply a new form produced by the combination of particular sets of data stored in the *pesangon*? And since each person carries with him a rich *pesangon*, provided only that his brain and nervous system have suffered no damage, then, theoretically at least, he has the opportunity to create. Thus creativity is not in itself something glorious; rather it is quite ordinary. But there remain the factors that distinguish a man from a computer: courage, determination, discipline, faith, responsibility, and awareness [*kesedaran*], which lead him to take initiatives of his own without being commanded. With these mental elements added in, with the support of a normal nervous system and whatever healthy muscles may be needed, creation in fact becomes a necessity.

Individual and social responsibility, plus awareness--none of which the computer shares--make literary works, *inter alia*, function effectively to stimulate rational and emotional awareness and responsibility towards the infinite variety of life. Essentially the greatness of a literary creation depends on the degree to which it can stimulate such awareness and responsibility. Conversely, what is produced, either without, or in rejection of, awareness and responsibility--such as trance or "possession" [*kesetanan*]---not only is not art, but is what one can call anti-culture.

10. Pramoedya writes: "kebebasan pribadi yang padat (condensed)."

11. It is difficult to know whether to translate "pribadi" as "the I," "the ego," "the person," or "the individual." I choose "the I" as the most consonant with Pramoedya's mode of discourse here, and as best assimilated to his frequent use below of "*diri*" (self).

It is the components of the *pesangon* in all their intensity--the experience of the senses, the faculties of reasoning and feeling--from one or all the three dimensions, which are the raw stimuli arousing an awareness of the need to create. Perhaps it is this arousal of awareness which came generally to be called *inspiration* [*ilham*]. Hence various jokes about how people go about "seeking" or "finding" inspiration. The poet A. S. Dharta¹² once said: Inspiration is the result of hard work. Others say one finds it in the toilet. At the very least, experiences that are nonintensive do not have the power to give birth to inspiration. There are thousands of sailors who have circled the globe, year after year, but who have never produced anything creative. And there are only too many men whose *pesangon* are packed with experiences of the most intense kind, but who do not combine them with components in the other dimensions, so that they remain uncreative; or they may be creative in their thoughts but do not have the courage to express them.

Torture, dispossession, deprivation of freedom and civil rights are, for the victim, intense experiences. But this intensity gradually declines through the power of Time. Humiliation, however, is an experience of which the intenseness remains unchanged throughout a person's life, so long as his brain and nervous system remain intact. Thus it is not surprising that in the *Satria* Age¹³ many tales-within-tales were born which were inspired by these two types of intense experience.

Still, for me, the problematic remains the same: without the *mysticum* the creative process cannot be set in motion. The *mysticum*--or condensed freedom--is what makes possible the removal of the I from everything else, a distancing that sets everything apart from the I. The I stands alone by its own self, while what is outside it is an ocean of mere informational data. Without the *mysticum*, a person can only produce or reproduce. At least that is my experience. Of course, creative works are also "products," but they are products which add to the existing treasury of spiritual objects [*benda rohani*]. Mere production is incapable of this; it can only add to the store of existing information; while reproduction simply adds to the store of replications of existing information.

Creativity, production, and reproduction each have their own benefit and value --or the reverse. I say "or the reverse" because everything in this world contains within itself another aspect. Beyond that, there is only the question of technical support: the tools and methods for communicating with the outside world, and the skill to use them. For literature the tool, of course, is language. With simple tools and superior skill, or, conversely, with complex tools and modest skill, various creative works of various kinds will be manifested to the world.

Such at least is the creative process as I have experienced it. And naturally, since it is a personal experience, it is subjective. But in the event that this subjectivity also represents a large number of other experiencings, it is not impossible that it can also be objective. Still, any conclusion born from subjective experience must necessarily be subjective too; and the wisdom that is born from it is also subjective. Its objective quality is always to be discovered only in its identity with, or similarity to, a large number of other existing experienced subjectivities.

It is only after this longwinded preface that I feel ready to speak about specific instances.

12. A. S. Dharta (Klara Akustia), a close contemporary of Pramoedya's, is a well-known Marxist litterateur, and was a prominent figure in Lekra, the cultural organization associated with the Communist Party of Indonesia, in the period up to 1965.

13. *Jaman satria*--presumably the age represented in the wayang stories, the Ramayana and Mahabharata, in which the protagonists are noble warriors (*satria*).

Perburuan. This novel was stimulated 100% by anti-Japanese *semangat*:¹⁴ or, more exactly, hatred for Japanese militarism. Another side of this--for after all there is nothing that has only one aspect to it--was simply patriotic *semangat*. It may be that what I refer to as patriotic *semangat* belongs to another era, and today is felt to be mere rhetoric. Never mind, it was, after all, my personal *semangat* in that period. My anti-Japanese *semangat* arose out of data assembled through the experience of my senses. On March 2, 1942, shortly after sunrise, a unit of Japanese troops entered my native town of Blora. For two or three hours beforehand all the residents of the town had been on the alert, awakened by the rumble of continuous bombardment in the distance. The Japanese came into our town in trucks, flying Japanese flags made of paper, with the Red-and-White¹⁵ fluttering behind. On them a brief phrase: The Japanese Are Your Elder Brothers. The political instincts of the townspeople expressed themselves in the welcome they gave to the arrival of the Japanese, the other side of which was: the collapse of the power of the Dutch East Indies. But within only a few days all that political delight had completely vanished. The Japanese had begun to roam around raping women. The execution of two Japanese soldiers in the town square for this crime did nothing to allay the alarm. Women of all ages, from young girls to grandmothers, made their faces up with soot.

Then came what hit me personally. One day, no more than three days after it fell under Japanese control, I was going round the town in search of news. On the empty road through the cemetery, I came abreast of two Japanese soldiers on patrol, riding wooden bicycles. They stopped me, and I got off my own new bicycle. This prized possession was immediately seized. A second treasure followed--my wrist-watch--which vanished into one of their pockets. I then went home, stripped and shorn of my treasured possessions, bearing the weight of hatred in my heart: such was the "intense experience" I gained from our Elder Brothers. No more than two days after that, my father's bicycle--on which payments were still outstanding--was also confiscated. There were daily reports of precious items of personal jewelry being seized. The simultaneous deaths of my mother and my youngest sibling, and my own departure from the parental home marked off two months of Japanese domination and terror. As a 17-year-old boy I was now regarded as an adult. I came to Batavia (the Japanese had not yet used their *Osamu Seirei*¹⁶ to turn it into Jakarta), carrying with me a cartload of *pesangon*--wartime experiences which, for a teenager, were sufficiently intense.

At first Jakarta felt calm, safe, and pleasant, but as time passed I became more and more convinced that no place under the control of Japanese militarism was any longer safe. In the schools, in the Taman Dewasa,¹⁷ Japanese barbarities of every kind were the subject of daily conversation: their ban on the use of the languages of Japan's enemies, on flying the Red-and-White, on nationalist schools; torture, often to death, of people accused of quite minor offenses; a large-scale massacre of everyone with an elementary education on up, in West Borneo, to permit the region's

14. *Semangat* is notoriously difficult to translate: neither "spirit," "ardor," "passion," nor "enthusiasm" really fit, so I have left the word in the original.

15. *Sang Merah Putih*--the Indonesian national flag.

16. *Osamu Seirei*--the general term for all decrees issued by the 16th Army's Military Administration in Java.

17. Taman Dewasa--the junior high schools of the independent nationalist school system Taman Siswa, founded by Ki Hadjar Dewantoro in 1922.

"Koreanization"¹⁸ (among the victims was a specialist on malaria said to be a younger brother of Dr. Soetomo);¹⁹ and beatings of students who fainted during *taishō*²⁰ exercises because their parents were increasingly unable to feed them breakfast. In the afternoons I worked in the offices of the news agency Dōmei;²¹ and precisely because the agency only reported the victories, the righteousness, and the wisdom of the Japanese (perhaps the Japanese themselves no longer believed in all of this) it became especially important to listen to the flow of terrifying gossip--which so often proved to be far closer to the truth than anything I typed up in the office as official news.

I always spent my spare time secluded in the reading room of the Gedung Gajah.²² But immediately to the right of this reading room was the headquarters of the Kempei Tai.²³ And the whole time--from the first turning of a page to the moment the library closed, one heard, over and over again, the moan "Have mercy, sir!" And if one heard the sound of chains being pulled, I think everyone knew what was going on in the torture chamber next door: a prisoner was being stretched out on his back and forced to swallow a bowl of soapy water. A rattling of the chains meant that the feet of the poor wretch were being shackled, then hoisted above his head as the soapy water came vomiting out of his mouth. Screams unaccompanied by rattling meant that toe- and fingernails were being extracted one by one, very slowly. And if all one heard were sighs and panting gasps, one knew that a stomach swollen with soapy water was being stamped on by rubber-soled feet. In the office I continued to multiply the victories, righteousnesses, and wisdoms of the Japanese. The thought, of course, occurred to me: what kind of people are they really? Their behavior doesn't simply arouse hatred--but utter loathing. Among the Indonesian writers who fell victim to Kempei Tai torturers was Chairil Anwar--on account of his poem *Aku*.²⁴

18. Korea was annexed by Japan in 1910 and remained a colony till 1945. In Indonesia it was widely believed that the Japanese had purposely decimated its educated class to facilitate its permanent absorption.

19. I.e., the much-loved moderate nationalist leader of the early twentieth century, who died in 1935.

20. The strenuous gymnastics which the Japanese imported to Indonesia and imposed especially on civil servants, military personnel, and school children.

21. Dōmei was the official (and sole) news agency of the Occupation period. It employed a significant number of already, or soon to be, prominent young Indonesian intellectuals.

22. "The Elephant Building"--the popular name for the combined library and museum of the colonial Bataviaasch Genootschap voor Kunsten en Wetenschappen (Batavian Society for Arts and Sciences), derived from the large statue stationed in front of it. After independence, it became the National Library and Museum.

23. The dreaded Japanese military police. After independence, this Kempei Tai building became the Ministry of Defense.

24. Chairil Anwar (1922-49), the most celebrated of all Indonesian poets, wrote *Aku* [I] in 1943. Composed in March of that year, with this title, the poem ran into objections from the censors at the Djawatan Kebudayaan (Cultural Office) on the grounds that it was too individualistic. They forced the author to change the title from *Aku* to the more collective- and patriotic-sounding *Semangat*, under which it was first published. The entire poem is as follows:

It is not my purpose here to go on and on about the behavior of the Japanese militarists; it is rather to describe what gave birth to my anti-Japanese semangat, and its obverse side: my patriotic spirit.

During the second year of Japanese domination the situation got steadily worse. The peasantry's sufferings were even more terrible than under the Cultuurstelsel.²⁵ Hundreds of thousands starved to death as *rōmusha*²⁶ (forced laborers), far from their native homes. Even those who managed to escape could not in the end avoid the claws of famine and expired along the highways under the feet of passersby, who only awaited their own turn to meet the same fate. Meanwhile, on the pretext of sending them to Tokyo for schooling, the Japanese selected thousands of young girls just out of elementary school to be the sexual prey of their soldiery--mainly in the more strategic islands, but even as far afield as Thursday Island in the Torres Straits. (How far the rumors we heard were true I do not know. But at the very least it is certain that 228 young girls were taken from Java to the settlements in Buru. Of these 6 or 7 still survive.)²⁷ Then the Japanese organized a campaign to collect precious stones and metals, officially describing it as a voluntary effort. Combined with the selection of young girls for military brothels, this drive increased the numbers of victimized young girls. Most of them came from the families of government officials, from the *punggawa desa* up to the *bupati*.²⁸

Such cruelties and brutalities thus became, for the first time in my life, part of the data accumulated within my self, and they aroused feelings of hatred, loathing, and revulsion, so intense that they often surface in my consciousness to this very day. The power of Time has proved incapable of erasing them.

Kalau sampai waktuku
 'Ku mau tak seorang 'kan merayu
 Tidak juga kau
 Tak perlu sedan itu
 Aku ini binatang jalang
 Dari kumpulannya terbuang
 Biar peluru menembus kulitku
 Aku tetap meradang menerjang
 Luka dan bisa kubawa berlari
 Berlari
 Hingga hilang pedih peri
 Dan aku akan lebih tak peduli
 Aku mau hidup seribu tahun lagi.

25. Cultuurstelsel (Cultivation System)--the state-monopoly organization of agricultural exports which flourished particularly from c. 1830 to 1870. It brought untold wealth to Dutch coffers, and immense suffering to the Javanese peasantry.

26. *Rōmusha* (J.--literally, volunteer laborer). Impressed by the Japanese primarily for the construction of defense works and roads and railways, some of these peasants were sent as far away as Burma and western Melanesia.

27. Buru, a remote island in the eastern archipelago, is the place where Pramoe-dya was incarcerated, without trial, between 1969 and 1979.

28. Respectively the lowest and highest echelons of the "native" civil service under the Dutch colonial regime on Java.

This does not mean that there were no individual Japanese who were not good people. At the very least Matano, my Japanese boss at the Dōmei news agency, gave me the chance to study full time for one whole year, on full salary, to train myself as a professional stenographer. During that year of study, I received lessons on politics from Ir. Sukarno and later from Sukardjo Wirjopranoto, on economics from Drs. M. Hatta, on sociology from Maroeto Nitimihardjo, on the Indonesian language from Datuk Besar; and on stenography from Karoendeng; as well, of course, as Japanese language and military drill.²⁹ Thus it has to be said that Matano's kindness opened the way for me to a more steady future. I am proud to have been the student of such prominent and patriotic men. One proud milestone in that period was the book *Dipanegara*, which came out of my stenographic notes on Mr. Moh. Yamin's lectures in 1944, and later the initial parts of *Gajah Mada*, in 1945.³⁰

Yet at the same time the Japanese rulers shut down the Taman Dewasa, so that I was unable to continue on to Class 3. They also lowered their samurai swords on the necks of the young rebels of Blitar, on the *kendō* training ground across from the Gedung Gajah.³¹ On the other hand, this resistance in the Peta, which demonstrated that the subjective "Indonesia" factor had still not been destroyed, set patriotic sympathies ablaze, and people talked about it everywhere in whispers.

One event which aroused a bitterness that lingered on long after the Japanese were gone was actually a quite trivial matter. It so happened that I'd finally been able to obtain a bicycle once again: a Fongers, fully equipped even though it was no longer new. Someone needed a sarung, and I had a new sarung stored away. So he acquired a new sarung, and I a used, but fully equipped, Fongers. As was usual in those times, both wheels were fitted with solid rubber tires. In a film it would of course create an elegant effect to see a bicycle rolling along on worn-out, sagging tires. Actually, however, my tires weren't that old, even though they did sag down several centimeters.

In those days all the streets in Jakarta were full of potholes. The surfacing had everywhere worn bald, and every pothole was full of loose stones. One morning I was riding to the office, wheeling from side to side to avoid the potholes. Suddenly from behind me came the klaxon-blare of a military truck. I was so startled that my front wheel plunged into a pothole and the bicycle lurched over into the middle of the road. The truck braked. From its cabin exploded this thunderbolt: "*Nan da kurah!*" ["What the HELL are you doing?!"] and eyes glared.

29. For their own purposes the Japanese hired a number of prominent nationalists to give courses to selected youths. Sukarno and Hatta were the most prominent of these, and, of course, became President and Vice-President of the infant Republic of Indonesia in 1945. Sukardjo had been a well-known member of the "cooperative" nationalist party Parindra in the late 1930s; Maroeto was a maverick left-wing nationalist, who, after independence, became a top leader of the Murba party.

30. Yamin, a well-known poet, controversialist, amateur historian, and nationalist politician, played a prominent role at the end of the Japanese Occupation. His books on the nineteenth century Javanese "rebel" prince Dipanegara, and the fifteenth century Javanese statesman Gajah Mada, were for a long time key texts in Indonesian anticolonial historiography.

31. In 1943, the 16th Army set up an auxiliary "native" military force called Peta (Pembela Tanah Air--Defenders of the Fatherland) in Java and Bali. In February 1945, a Peta unit in the town of Blitar in southeastern Java revolted. The rebellion was quickly suppressed, and most of the youthful leaders executed. *Kendō* is the Japanese art of swordsmanship.

It wasn't that easy to push the bike out of the way: the tires had come off and the steering mechanism had jammed. A soldier jumped down from the truck. As fast as I could I picked up my treasured bike and hurled it to the side of the road. And fled. Behind me came yells of: "*Bagero omae* [You imbecile]! *Genjumin* [Dirty native]!"

Nothing more than a string of curses. But their bitter taste has never gone away.

More shocking than all this was what the Japanese did about 7 days after they occupied Blora. They arrested a certain low-level forestry official and bound him to the rails of the bridge over the River Lusi, which connects the town with the interior to the south. Those whose stealing from the state forestry reserves he had earlier thwarted were permitted to use him as they pleased. First the unfortunate wretch was slapped, kicked, and spat upon; then he was sliced to death, piece by piece. This was the first real instance of violence and savagery that I encountered in my life. It was the beginning of the violence and savagery in which from 1942 on Japanese militarism instructed Indonesia. The law prevailing during the period of European colonialism was replaced by Asian violence and savagery; and along with this change came a change in values. The colonial-*priyayi* literature of the Balai Pustaka came to an end and a literature of satria began.³² As a youngster in the midst of this shift of value systems I felt that I had lost my roots, even though, yes, even though the literature of wayang is also a literature of satria violence, a literature of "war"--and the fact that the entire corpus of wayang *lakon* never once showed Java victorious over the Dutch.³³

In many places in Jakarta there were plots of land encircled with high bamboo fences: prison camps, and brothels for the Japanese soldiers. Whenever I went to the Balai Pustaka to look for a book, I'd always hear the giggles of women (among them a neighbor of mine from across the street) floating up out of the basement windows of the billiard room of the Concordia (which later became the United States of Indonesia's Parliament building).³⁴

As it turned out, even though I passed the exam to qualify as a Stenographer Second Class, Dōmei offered no improvement in my lot. Adam Malik³⁵ gave me the

32. Balai Pustaka was the publishing house sponsored by the colonial Dutch state to provide suitable Malay [Indonesian] and other vernacular literature for the colonized peoples. It exercised a powerful conservative influence, not least by its propagation of Javanese bureaucratic-upper class (*priyayi*) values. By "literature of satria" Pramoedya appears to mean a more militant, war-influenced literature--the embryo of the style of the "Generation of '45."

33. Pramoedya sarcastically notes that the "literature of wayang"--written variations on the Ramayana and Mahabharata and the oral versions found in the shadow-puppet plays (*lakon*)--continued to be popular throughout the centuries of Dutch rule in Java; but its "warrior values" were increasingly make-believe as the colonial grip deepened.

34. The well-known club located just west of the Governor-General's palace and kitty-corner to the Hotel des Indes. The (Federal) United States of Indonesia, installed by the final negotiations between the Dutch and the Republicans in December 1949, lasted less than 9 months. It was replaced by a unitary Republic of Indonesia in August 1950.

35. Adam Malik, a prominent young activist and journalist in the late colonial period, went to work for Dōmei during the Japanese Occupation. After an unusually checkered career, he became Vice-President in the period 1978-83.

job of drawing up a chronology of the Sino-Japanese War. He wasn't satisfied with the result, and I was demoted to indexer. He still wasn't satisfied with my performance, so I was kicked over to the documentation section. Since it seemed I couldn't do anything right, I offered my resignation to Mitano, but was ignored. I then offered my resignation to Adam Malik--with the same result. Socially and psychologically my situation was now intolerable, so I quit. Fearful of reprisal at the hands of the Kempei Tai, I ended up fleeing to East Java, to a peaceful, poverty-stricken village. The news of the Proclamation of Independence summoned me from East Java. In Blora, I found them staging a play called "Indonesia Merdeka [Indonesia Free]." I could only bear watching it for a quarter of an hour. But at the same time I felt this challenge stirring in my heart: to write a tale infinitely better than Blora's "Indonesia Free," a story burning with anti-Japanese and patriotic semangat, which would close with the Proclamation of Independence. I was confident that I could do it. Hadn't my teachers at the Taman Dewasa praised my writings as the best in the two editions of the school's magazine published in 1942-43? Even though, yes, even though none was ever printed in the daily newspaper *Pemandangan*, whereas various texts by my school friends A. K. Hadi and Asrul Sani regularly sparkled from its pages--at least until it was closed down for printing a picture of the Tennō Heika appearing to be slapped by the Hinomaru.³⁶

On my return to Jakarta it turned out that great events pushed private ambitions to one side. Hatred and longing for revenge ensured that every Japanese, *sakura* (civilian) or military, who escaped consignment,³⁷ met his death. Subsequently I heard firsthand that one member of the corps of Indonesian writers--Gayus Siagian--had slaughtered a Japanese with his own hands, by the bridge on Jl. Kwitang.³⁸ Another friend of mine, who'd been tied up and left to "dry out"³⁹ in the open for two days and two nights, simply for stealing 7 nails to repair his house, captured a Japanese, and out of an uncontrollable passion for revenge flayed him alive.

With the same eagerness for vengeance I joined other pemuda from my kampung in an attack on a hotel on Jl. Gunung Sahari which was used as their headquarters by people from the Japanese Navy (Kaigun).⁴⁰ But though we tightened our encirclement to a distance of no more than 3 meters, the Japanese still didn't shoot. And our eagerness for vengeance dissolved completely when the Japanese colonel in charge took a piece of paper from his pocket and delivered it to our leader--if I

36. Tennō Heika--the Japanese Emperor [Hirohito]. The Hinomaru is the Japanese flag.

37. In the period between the surrender of Japan (August 15, 1945) and the arrival of the Allies in Java (September 29), the 16th Army authorities attempted to protect their personnel from unpleasant incidents by consigning them, so far as possible, to barracks and other quarters.

38. A street in central Jakarta linking today's Merdeka Square to the north-south arterial road, Kramat-Gunung Sahari. Kwitang crosses the Ciliwung river just southeast of Merdeka Square.

39. A common Japanese punishment was to expose someone to the burning tropical sun for hours or days, without food and, especially, water.

40. Although Java was ruled by the Japanese 16th Army, the Japanese Navy, which controlled the eastern part of the archipelago, maintained a small liaison office in Jakarta, headed by Rear-Admiral Maeda Tadashi.

remember aright, Hasan Gayo--and in halting Indonesia said: Letter from Bung Karno. We may live. Take anything, but not our lives.⁴¹

However deep our hatred and passion for revenge, obedience to the Proclaimer was also part of being a patriot in that period. And in intervals amid the tumult of that Revolution I wrote *Sepuluh Kepala Nica* [Ten Nica Heads],⁴² a tale that was more a sort of raptage than anything else. It had to be so. The Revolution led me to wander in many places, so that the tale I had once meant to write increasingly faded from my memory. In its place came a story about the wanderings of a street musician and a translation of a sentimental text by Frits van Raalte.⁴³ After I left military service, it turned out that what I next produced was something else again: *Di Tepi Kali Bekasi* [On the Banks of the Bekasi]--generated by the actuality and vivid memory of experiences I had just undergone. Then came translations of works by Tolstoi, Lode Zielens, and a bit of St. Exupery, from books H. B. Jassin lent me to read.⁴⁴ Finally, my incarceration in prison removed still further any opportunity to respond to that early challenge.

It was then that the moment came when I tried to kill my self by patiraga. I was given a mountain, a Greek temple, and a sun. Anxiety, despair, and psychic stress all vanished. I think the mountain, the temple, and the sun represent a diagram of the creative mechanism. The mountain is simply the pesangon, with its intensenesses symbolized by the peaks; the temple is the knowledge, learning, intelligence, and wisdom that could be abstracted from, formulated out of, the mountain, while the sun was the I in its integrity. It is this sun that makes everything beneath visible or invisible, bright or dark. When all three are present in the mysticum, then the creative process has begun. The mountain and the temple are the tangible, raw materials which only come to life when struck by the sun's rays. A creation cannot be born without the urgings from within the I--it cannot emerge from "facilities" or the fleshly thirst for fame and comfort. It is the sun that is decisive. What its rays do not strike remains dark. But it is not because of the dark that the sun does not shine. It is not because of lack of time or lack of opportunity that a creative work does not get born, but rather because there is no inward urging. No beams shine forth from the sun because there is no sun. Absence of the sun means that only "production" is possible, photographs of the mountain and the temple.

And with the aid of this diagram literary criticism, and art criticism in general, can trace the mountain which makes possible the erection of the temple, and then the sun that illuminates it.

41. Doubtless Sukarno's intervention was a form of thanks for the key role Maeda played in making possible the Proclamation of Independence. For details, see Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), chapter 4.

42. NICA = Netherlands Indies Civil Administration, i.e., the Dutch regime restored late in 1945 under the umbrella of British troops.

43. Frits van Raalte (b. 1876)'s writings include *Chariëssa en andere sproken* (1918), and a three-act play, *Om in het leven te slagen* (1926).

44. Lode Zielens, born in Antwerp in 1901, was killed in a raid on the city in 1944. Editor of the socialist newspaper, *De Volksgazet*, he wrote several novels and short stories, the best known probably being *Moeder, waarom leven wij?* (1932) and *De gele roos* (1933). H. B. ("Hans") Jassin, essayist, anthologist, and literary critic, is in many ways the doyen of modern Indonesian letters.

In creative work the sun can only rise because of the mysticum--a distancing of the sun from the temple and the mountain.

I'm afraid all this is rather long-winded. It can't be helped, that's the way it was. In the mysticum, the sun lit up the Greek temple as a symbol of the anti-Japanese semangat and its other side, the patriotic spirit. Beneath its radiance the data were not only rendered visible, but came alive. Technical aids transferred what was occurring within the mysticum to paper.

Because the original challenge to write *Perburuan* came from my birthplace, I took Blora as my setting. For a setting is very important in providing a convincing space in which a story can solidly proceed.

Now about "technical aids."

In that Dutch jail, prisoners could read whatever they pleased, including anti-Dutch newspapers, magazines, and books. Our "prison library," contributed by the Committee for Political Victims, headed by Miss Erna Djajadiningrat, was pretty good.⁴⁵ Access to this library enabled me to study English by reading John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*--which also impressed me very much by its narrative technique. What was the Nobel laureate's technique? Not interfering in his protagonists' affairs, and depicting the stirrings of their hearts only by the evidence of the senses: sight and sound. And from the writings of Idrus that Jassin sent me, I learned how to build sentences unburdened by a single superfluous word.⁴⁶ Every unnecessary word has to be deleted: then every sentence burdening a paragraph must be removed. By this method one can hope to produce a pure, clear text, in which each word rings true when tested--like a [fine] gamelan under the tuner's hammer.

Finally, there's the story of how I actually wrote *Perburuan*. It was written in moments when I was not doing forced labor. I'd squat on a margarine can topped with a slat of wood, and use as my desk my concrete bedstead. Each time I heard the booted steps of the KNIL soldiers doing their rounds, I'd clear everything away. Since there was a sliding window in the upper part of the cell door, through which the guards could spy on one, at night I could only write beneath the concrete bedstead, flat on the floor with a lantern at my side. I bought the kerosene from comrades who worked in the prison kitchen. Paper I got my sweetheart to send in.

Working in this fashion, I completed the manuscript of *Perburuan* in one week. Judging its literary qualities has now obviously become a matter for the judges. But for me: writing it meant a translation of the situation that my existence still had some value for Life.

The birth of *Keluarga Gerilya* was more or less a sequel to that of *Perburuan*. All I can describe are its mountain and its temple. The sun was the same as always. But in the passage from *Perburuan* to *Keluarga Gerilya* I discovered that the essential mysticum could be attained by rational means: full liberation of the I from the dominion of the flesh or, to use Pak Poeh's terminology, the bestraddled horse--so that all that remains is the I in a state of condensed freedom. To be sure, this path requires uncompromising self-discipline. Bizarre methods are completely

45. Erna Djajadiningrat, scion of one of the best-known, most Dutchified aristocratic families on Java, nonetheless threw in her lot with the revolutionary Republic.

46. The Minangkabau writer Idrus created a revolution in Indonesian prose writing with the terse, bitter short stories he produced during the latter half of the Japanese Occupation.

unnecessary. For centuries men have created the mysticum, to afford the I an opportunity to meditate or concentrate. Thus anyone can do it. It's only that the further a man leaves his 30s behind him the slower the creative process works--precisely because his intellectual capacities increase and his pesangon expands. All this gives him too many choices, adds too many grand decorations to the temple on the mountain, with the result that the creative process becomes unbalanced. It is not surprising, therefore, that many people over thirty feel they have lost the capacity for creative work. They are overcome by their own temple, they become worshippers of the temple.

Let me now end this long-winded tale, wearisome to me no less than the reader.

Keluarga Gerilya. This novel too was inspired wholly by patriotic semangat, and, from another angle, by humanity [*humanitas*]--a utopian idealism that lives and dies by its rejection of existing reality.

The pesangon was my experience during the Revolution. At one time I commanded a section in a regiment. The top positions in this unit were dominated by Javanese pemuda. Because the colonial era had so recently ended, most of the low and middle-ranking officers knew (and could use) the Dutch language. Those who did not had a hard time finding a place for themselves, or even following discussions--whether formal briefings or ordinary conversations. Even many of the lieutenants and sergeants knew Dutch.

At the time when our unit was in the process of formation, a group of "*anak Betawi*"⁴⁷--about 40 boys in all--came to join us. It transpired that their leader, Wahab, had already had a lot of combat experience in Jakarta. The group was, of course, welcomed, and Wahab was appointed a section commander in one of the combat battalions. For one whole year he faithfully followed orders. But because these "*anak Betawi*" were free spirits, they gave those officers who came from priyayi backgrounds the impression of being "rowdies [*anak urakan*]." When it came down to likes and dislikes their courage and their battle prowess were ignored. In addition, this "*anak Betawi*" section was regarded as "low class" since none of them knew any Dutch. So one day their battalion commander turned them back to the regimental command, which posted them to another battalion. In the course of three months, Wahab's section was transferred in turn to all four battalions. One day I received a written summons from my superior. From him I got a verbal order to take in Wahab's men. I told him I wasn't in a position to take the whole section. My commander gave in on this point, and assigned me only half the section--including Wahab at his previous rank of first lieutenant. He also accepted my conditions: if I could not make use of these men in carrying out the tasks assigned to me, I would return them to the regiment. As it turned out, my position was very difficult. My deputy was a sergeant-major. Wahab was a first lieutenant. The organization of my unit was thus disrupted.

The efficiency report on Wahab and his men bore no relation to the situation. On the whole they were well behaved, especially Wahab himself. But it also became evident over a two-month trial period that not one of them was able to carry out his new assignments. With great sadness I was forced to send them to the regimental headquarters. Before they left, I asked Wahab's forgiveness. He was very discouraged and muttered: "Yes, I'm afraid that's the best we can manage, pak."

47. *Anak Betawi*--"Sons of Batavia"--descendants of the polyglot (and largely slave) population of Old Batavia (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries). Strongly Muslim, and with a characteristic "Malay" dialect of their own, they dominated the city's population until overwhelmed by the huge in-migrations from the interior of Java and the Outer Islands after independence.

Some weeks later, the whole unit was discharged from military service. I felt agonized by what had happened. After his discharge he often loomed up in my memory: ragged, with his tall, slender frame.

He came back to me once again, while I was in Bukitduri prison--this time via the newspapers: he'd been tried before a military tribunal for attacks on various places in Dutch-occupied Jakarta. Wahab, the pedicab driver. He'd been captured during his final operation: the grenading of the Capitol Cinema in Pintu Besi. Then sentenced to death. And finally he'd faced a firing squad in Glodok prison, without betraying the underground guerrilla organization in Jakarta. He who had been kicked out of unit after unit in the military. He who in the purity of his heart gave up his life to defend the independence of Indonesia. He died because the guerrilla leaders in Jakarta lacked experience and knew little about strategy and tactics. I was reminded of a Chinese pemuda who carried a grenade into a night market in Shanghai and dispersed the crowd by shouting angrily: You know that our people and our motherland are being trampled on by the Japanese, and yet still you come here to have a good time! (This was data acquired when Adam Malik assigned me to compile that chronology in Dōmei!)

Stirred by my feelings about Wahab and the immediacy of his dramatic death, in December 1947 I wrote a short piece entitled "In Memory of a Friend" with the appended note "who underwent sentence of death, who must have been willing to be executed" (*Pertjikan Revolusi* [Sparks of Revolution], 2nd ed. [Balai Pustaka, 1957], pp. 147-54--before that it was published in *Mimbar Indonesia*, 1948--this collection of short stories was originally published by Gapura in 1951). All this occurred before my patiraga.

Even though I had faithfully and appropriately carried out my duty as a friend, my conscience still would not rest; that brief text "In Memory of a Friend" hadn't, I felt, adequately and justly situated him as a human being in his environment, position, and situation.

A push on the button released the fitting data from my pesangon. First of all, there was the news of the recent capture of some Siliwangi troops on their Long March back from Central to West Java.⁴⁸ Actually there wasn't much data at all, even though it was a big thing at the time. And with every repetition, the excitement gradually faded away. That same year, 1948, data came in which were pretty upsetting. As usual, we prisoners were sitting or standing in the prison yard near the inner fence which separated us from the yard in front of the commandant's office. We sat there in a row on the base of the iron fence, or stood holding onto the iron crossbars of the drying poles [for clothes]. Many were gathered around someone who was reading aloud from a newspaper. Usually such a circle would be loud in its comments, but now it was silent, stunned: a communist uprising in Madiun.⁴⁹

48. The Siliwangi Division of the Republican army, first so named in 1946, was recruited from West Java. After the first, highly successful large-scale Dutch attack on Republican positions (July-August 1947), a provisional agreement was reached (the so-called Renville Agreement) by which, inter alia, Republican troops in most areas of West Java were to be evacuated to Central Java, where the Republican capital was located. When the Dutch opened their second major assault, in December 1948, most of these troops undertook what came to be called their "Long March" back to their old guerrilla bases in West Java.

49. In September 1948, a small group of middle-level leftists in the Central Javanese town of Madiun went into revolt against the Republican government. The culmination of months of growing violence between left- and right-wing elements in the Republic, it led to a brief civil war, in which the government won a decisive victory.

When the man finished reading, the crowd dispersed. Not a soul rattled off a word of comment. Very slowly I walked back to my cell. My eyes were wet. A friend of mind, Koerdi Satjapraja, followed me into the cell. I sat down on the concrete bedstead. In silence, he sat down beside me. After a long moment I heard him ask: what do you think? They'll be crushed pretty soon. Why? If you look at the totality of our struggle, they're in the wrong.

Intense experiences always form those mountain peaks which are more quickly touched by the sun's rays than those less intense. So it was with the data I gathered from some people who'd escaped from Nusa Kambangan but were later recaptured in Jakarta.⁵⁰ From them I learned about prisoners who had been crucified by the Dutch, and about Japanese war criminals who'd been executed by a Dutch firing squad in Glodok prison. The first datum I discarded as irrelevant for *Keluarga Gerilya*. The second, however, proved the most important element of all. As to how Saäman reacted when face to face with the firing squad, that was purely the product of my imagination: supposing I were Saäman. The truth is that the protagonist in a tale is none other than the I of the writer, the sun poised centrally above everything that it illuminates. That is why, to this very day, I cannot imagine how a writer can "hitch himself" to the authority of already-existing protagonists, for example (above all) those of the wayang stories.

From this experience I understood that the fusion of writer and protagonist is only made possible by understanding, love, and spiritual affinity. Yet the writer does not only put forward a main character, he also creates supporting and minor characters, some showing up only for a moment and others reappearing over and over again. Here too the writer fuses himself with them, no matter whether they are antagonists of the main character or are on his side. The problem is understanding human beings with all their sorrows and moments of happiness, with their dreams and with their stumblings, their successes and their failures, their resistance and their surrender to the conditions of their lives. The truth is that the problematic of literature is the problematic of man in his living existence. Understanding literature means understanding man, and it may be that the reverse is also true.

In *Keluarga Gerilya* there is a conflict between a father and his sons, culminating in a fatal act. The material for the novel's pesangon I mostly took from my own life. By chance, I lived--like those of my generation--through periods of transition: from colonialism to militarism, and from militarism to independence. In such times of transition it is natural that among the older generation there are some who are no longer capable of adapting themselves to progress. At the outbreak of the Revolution it is not surprising that fatal conflicts arose, which on first hearing seemed deeply shocking. I took my data about the older generation (of the type of the father of Saäman and his brothers) from a demobilized navy man who had returned from Australia, and for a time was my neighbor in Kemayoran, after I'd left military service.⁵¹ The row of houses across from me was inhabited by Dutch families from the ranks. One or two demobilized servicemen from Ceylon, and, at the

50. Nusa Kambangan, a small, bleak island off the south coast of Java, has served as a penal colony for "hardened" criminals since colonial times. After the Dutch capture of the Republican capital of Yogyakarta in December 1948, it was also used as a place of detention for political prisoners.

51. With the fall of Java to the Japanese in March 1942, many employees of the Dutch colonial government, civil and military, Dutch, Eurasian, and "native," were hurriedly evacuated to Australia. Most of them did not return to Java until 1946. Kemayoran is a neighborhood in east Jakarta.

end of the row, a Menadonese from the KNIL.⁵² Meantime, I'd plenty of opportunity to study the behavior of KNIL people--in prison and while doing forced labor under their guard. The lives of pedicab drivers? Ever since the beginning of Japan's domination, I had observed their lives very carefully. Moreover, a friend and former playmate of mine had become a pedicab driver in Semarang, and every time he returned home he poured out all his experiences to me.

I have now described almost all the data in my *pesangon*--that mountain--which became the raw material for my novel. What remains is to say something about "technical aids."

It turned out that the technique Steinbeck had bestowed on me became a permanent possession. At that time I was still very young, not yet 25 years old. Before that, I had greedily swallowed the technique of Lode Zielens--to the last drop. It's normal, after all: an empty barrel will swallow anything poured into it. He taught me that there is no great distance between objective and subjective reality. Everything decisive comes from their mutual motion. And this motion does not always end up in a completed resolution. Very often there are only unconnected explosions. The same reciprocal effect applies to the organization of sentences. Then came Steinbeck who freed action from interpretation. And in writing *Keluarga Gerilya* William Saroyan, with his *Human Comedy*, was also by my side. Steinbeck arranged his plain, terse, highly charged words in neat, completed sentences. With Saroyan, however, it was rather different: he taught me how the most basic human feelings are the quickest bridge to communicate with one's fellow human beings and thus his sentences were steered towards scenes in which these basic feelings could be displayed.

Thus what Lode Zielens, Steinbeck, and Saroyan gave me became, as it were, my hoes, spades, tongs, and hammers--the technical tools making possible the birth of that novel. But tools remain equipment, what is decisive is always the I. The I that subjects itself to its tools is simply an I that has reached its ceiling [*plafond*], the limits of its development, and its activities are purely routine. From experience I also learned that subservience to one's tools leads to confusion, destroys the element of awareness in one's work, obliterates the function of illumination, and plunges one into an orgy of artistic pretentiousness. It has always been so throughout the history of art--this is another side to art: despair in the face of one's own ceiling.

I repeat once again: the creative experience is extremely private, extremely subjective, and very often has no need of logic. The proof of this is the creative work itself, once the creative process has run its course. A "creation" is still not really a creation, either theoretically or in practice, till it has become a "creature [*makhluk*]" or a social object, till it is supported by its society. A creation fossilizing permanently in a cupboard in practice *does not exist*. Or, conversely, a creation supported by its society is the thought, and above all the feeling, of a creator who represents the thought, and above all the feeling, of his society--local, national, and international. That is why the linkage between the person and his society is decisive.

Now let me conclude this long-winded tale about the creative process which, I must confess, gives me no pleasure in the writing.

Conclusion. Both *Perburuan* and *Keluarga Gerilya* are creations which have become "creatures" or social objects, which proceed along their own paths. Though

52. A number of colonial government personnel had been attached to Louis Mountbatten's Southeast Asia Command HQ in Ceylon during the later phases of the war.

both were at one time given birth, they could nonexistent if they did not reach society and secure its support. I say "could nonexistent" because a creation can easily be ruined or destroyed, quite deliberately, simply because men have insufficient respect and attachment to fundamental human rights. This in turn simply reflects the still-low level of civilization and culture of those who attempt its destruction, indeed of the whole system of values of the society concerned. In this connection let me express my respect and untold thanks to Prof. Mr. G. J. Resink,⁵³ who in 1948-49 saved my manuscripts--including those of *Perburuan* and *Keluarga Gerilya*--from Bukitduri prison. But for him, all these works would certainly have been destroyed, as happened to a number of my manuscripts from before 1947 and after 1965.⁵⁴ His rescue of these texts in itself represents part of what I mean by social support. Of course my thanks are also due to H. B. Jassin, who immediately brought out a large proportion of my shorter writings of 1948-49, while I was still in prison. What he did consolidated Resink's rescue work.

Two closing stories about these two books.

The first: As soon as I was released from Bukitduri--round about December 12, 1949--I asked Prof. Resink (or, as I usually called him, Han) about the fate of *Perburuan*. His reply: it's been turned over to Jassin. Jassin's reply: I've no idea. On a visit to Darmawidjaja, then editor of *Merdeka*, and my history teacher during the Japanese Occupation, he suddenly offered me his hand: Congratulations! I asked: What for? His answer: Don't you know your text has won Balai Pustaka's first prize?⁵⁵ My question: What text? I've never entered any competition. The reply: I was a member of the jury, didn't you know? Go and ask Jassin. It was then that Jassin told me what had happened: Yes, as a matter of fact, without your being informed, we submitted *Perburuan* to the Balai Pustaka prize committee--well after the official deadline; because the writings submitted up till then weren't very satisfactory; Idrus agreed. So it was that when the verdict was announced, I got the first prize, 1,000 rupiah in cash; and almost exactly one month after my release I used the money to get married. Han (Resink) and Hans (Jassin) attended the wedding.

The second: About two months after the wedding, in the course of a family conversation, I discovered that Wahab had once lived in the kampung near my new home in Tanah Abang. It turned out that he came from a very poor family. After his execution his mother tried to retrieve his body for proper burial, but her request was rejected by the authorities until she could find the money to pay their fee. So the wretched mother returned to her kampung empty-handed. Only after she managed somehow to scrape together the 2.50 rupiah required did the body return to its own home, wrapped in a blood-drenched mat. On hearing this, I felt the bitterest regret that I had known nothing about it before my manuscript reached the printer. I felt that what I had done for him had a gaping hole within it, which could never be closed. Now, too, that I have finished writing his story here, I still feel that hole. Wahab: victim of patriotism and inadequate leadership.

Jakarta. June 1, 1983.

53. Prof. Mr. G. J. Resink--poet, historian, legal scholar, and retired professor of law at the University of Indonesia.

54. I.e., in the wake of Pramoedya's arrest and the ransacking of his home in the aftermath of the October 1, 1965 coup.

55. After the transfer of sovereignty in December 1949, Balai Pustaka passed into Republican hands.

Pramoedya Ananta Toer (Blora, February 6, 1925)

Eldest child of M. Toer, director-headmaster of the nationalist school, "Institut Boedi Oetomo" (IBO) in Blora, a locally prominent figure in political and social affairs, who replaced Dr. Soetomo when the latter was transferred to Surabaya.

Pram took 10 years to complete the 7-year elementary school course at the IBO, graduating in 1939, and for the next year did not go to school at all because his father refused to grant his wish to go on to the MULO, and ordered him to return to repeat the last year of the elementary school course. By dint of diligently saving money along with his mother trading in rice, in 1940 he went to Surabaya to continue his schooling, graduated from the Radiovakhschool (Radio vocational school) at the end of 1941 taking 6 months for each of three classes, and directly thereafter was conscripted into the radiotelegraph section of the Stadswacht [City Civil Defense], which led him to flee home to Blora. For the first four months of the Japanese Occupation, together with his next younger sibling, he had to look after his family until his mother's death, whereupon they both left their family home and settled in Jakarta.

Pram went on to study up to class 2 of the Taman Dewasa, as well as working in the Japanese news agency "Dōmei." When he was about to enter class 3, the Japanese closed the school. His office paid for his training as a stenographer, and he joined the first training course at the Chuō Sangi-in (now the foreign ministry building), Jakarta. In 1945 he attended lectures at the Islamic University (now the immigration building).

Because "Dōmei" did not promote him, he fled to East Java, where he heard the Proclamation and returned to Jakarta after a brief visit to Blora. He joined a pemuda paramilitary organization, then entered an army unit of the Siliwangi Division's Regiment 6, which operated in East Jakarta. When the Republican government carried out its rationalization program, he voluntarily resigned, with a final rank of 2nd lieutenant, commanding a section (60 men). Returning to Jakarta he edited the journal "Sadar," the Indonesian edition of "The Voice of Free Indonesia," together with Naipospos.

From July 23, 1947 to December 18, 1949, he was imprisoned by the Dutch in various places. From May 1950 to the end of 1951 he was editor in the Modern Indonesian Literature department of Balai Pustaka, and held the post of editor of the magazine *Indonesia* (before this was taken over by BMKN) and of the children's magazine *Kunang-kunang* [Firefly].

In 1958 he was appointed a member of Lekra's Plenum, following a decision at its First National Congress in Solo. In 1959 he was appointed member of the Executive of the Indonesian Peace Committee following a decision at its National Conference in Bandung. National Chairman of the Conference of Afro-Asian Writers, editor/adviser to the journal *Orient*, Prague. Assisted the Great Soviet Encyclopaedia on Indonesian literature.

1962-65, Editor of *Lentera*, the cultural supplement of the daily *Bintang Timur*; gave lectures to the Literature Faculty, Res Publika University, Jakarta; was one of the founders of the "Multatuli" Literature Academy, Jakarta; Teacher at the "Dr. Abdul Rivai" Academy for Journalism in Jakarta.

October 13, 1965–December 20, 1979: Arrested, imprisoned, and exiled in various places in Jakarta, Tangerang, Nusa Kambangan, Buru (August 1969–November 1979), Magelang, and Semarang.

Travels: Singapore, Malaya, India, Egypt, the Netherlands, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Greece, Poland, the Soviet Union and several of its member states, China, and Hongkong.

*Writings:*⁵⁶ *Krandji-Bekasi Djatuh* (n. 1947); *Perburuan* (n. 1950; trans. into English); *Keluarga Gerilya* (n. 1950; published in Indonesia and Malaysia; trans. into Chinese, Russian, Japanese); *Subuh* (kc. 1950; among other languages translated into Dutch, German, English, Portuguese, Spanish); *Percikan Revolusi* (kc. 1950; some of these stories translated into English); *Mereka Jang Dilumpuhkan I & II* (n. 1951); *Bukan Pasarmalam* (n. 1951; published in Indonesia and Malaysia; translated into Dutch, English); *Di Tepi Kali Bekasi* (n. 1951; trans. into: Czech, Russian); *Dia Yang Menyerah* (n. 1951; trans. into Dutch, English); *Gulat di Jakarta* (n. 1953); *Tjerita Dari Blora* (kc. 1952; translated into Russian, Turkic, Rumanian, Vietnamese, English, German, Dutch, Portuguese; several sections into Chinese); *Midah Si Manis Bergigi Emas* (n. 1954); *Korupsi* (n. 1954); translated into Dutch, French); *Tjerita Tjalon Arang* (n. 1957); translated into Bulgarian); *Suatu Peristiwa di Banten Selatan* (n. 1958; translated into Czech, Russian); *Hoakiau di Indonesia* (1960); *Panggil Aku Kartini Saja I, II* (1962); *Realisme Sosialis & Sastra Indonesia* (1963); *Tjerita Dari Djakarta* (kc. 1957; several parts translated into French, English); *Bumi Manusia* (r. 1980; published in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Netherlands; distribution forbidden by the Attorney General in May 1981; translated into Dutch, English, German, Russian, Japanese, Chinese; English edition published in Australia, England and (shortly) the United States; the English edition in Australia was No. 2 on the bestseller list in 1982 and was made "basic stock" (must always be available in bookshops); *Anak Semua Bangsa* (r. 1980; published in Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Netherlands; distribution forbidden by the Attorney General in May 1981; translated into English, Dutch); *Tempo Doeloe* (kc. 1982); *Gadis Pantai* (n. July-October 1962); *Sikap dan Peran Kaum Intelektual di Dunia Ketiga* (1982; published in Malaysia, France; translated into English, Russian); *Karya Tulis, Larangan dan Penghancuran* (1981; published in Malaysia, France; translated into Dutch, English); *Sunji-Senjap di Siang Hidup* (1956; translated into Dutch, English); *Jakarta* (1956; translated into English, Swedish).

Translations: Lode Zielens, *Bunda, Mengapa Kami Hidup?* [*Moeder, waarom leven wij?*] (1947); Frits van Raalte (1946); J. Veth (1943); John Steinbeck, *Tikus dan Manusia* [*Of Mice and Men*] (1950); Leo Tolstoi, *Kembali pada Tjinta dan Kasihmu* [*Return to Your Love and Affection*] (1951); Leo Tolstoi, *Perjalanan Ziarah jang Aneh* [*Strange Pilgrimage*] (1954); Mikhail Sholokhov, *Kisah Seorang Pradjurit Sovjet* [*The Fate of a Man*] (1956); Maxim Gorki, *Ibunda* [*Mother*] (1958); Ho Ching-chih & Ting Yi, *Dewi Uban* [*The White-Haired Girl*] (1958); Alexander Kuprin, *Asmara dari Rusia* [*Love from Russia*] (1959); Boris Polewoi, *Kisah Manusia Sejati* [*A Story about a Real Man*] (1959); Blaise Pascal, *Buah Renungan* [*Pensées*]; *Kristoferus*; *Albert Schweitzer*.

Awards: First Prize for *Perburuan* (1950); Prize for the best work of 1952 for *Tjerita Dari Blora* (1953); Prize for *Tjerita Dari Djakarta* from the Yamin Foundation (1964; refused); Letter of appreciation from the Army Chief of Staff for assistance to the Armed Forces (Padang, 1958); Candidate for membership to the DPA (1963); Adopted Member of the Netherlands Centre of P.E.N. International (1978); Honorary Member of The Japan Centre of P.E.N. International (1978); Nominee for an Honorary Degree of the Vrije Universiteit (1979); Honorary Life Member of the International P.E.N. Australia Centre, Sydney (1982); Honorary Member of the P.E.N. Swedish Centre (1982); Nobel nominee.

56. n = novella; kc = *kumpulan cerita* [collection of short stories]; r = roman.

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