

*An Act of Not Forgetting: Representation of 1965's Events in Leila S. Chudori's
Pulang and N. Riantiarno's Cermin Merah*

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Abstract

1965's events are one of unforgettable events in Indonesia history. Many of Indonesian people believed that Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI) or Indonesia communist party was responsible for kidnaping and murdering seven highly-ranked Indonesia army generals. Later on, this act was considered to be an act of coup d'Etat to the government. Their cruel acts were immortalized by the historical lessons given at Indonesian school since in the elementary school and the movie "*Pengkhianatan G30SPKI*" aired every year by the "New Order" government under President Soeharto. The propaganda was not only succeed in creating fears among Indonesian people but also triggering hatred towards communism which lead some people to use this opportunity to attack PKI's members and others. Many people at that time have to become a victim because of this false accusation and being murdered. Thousands of Indonesian people were being murdered. In Leila S. Chudori's *Pulang* and N. Riantiarno's *Cermin Merah*, this chaotic situation is highlighted. Both of the novels tell us about the impact of the 1965's events to many Indonesian people at that time and long after that. Although there is a gap of thirty years in making, the two novels depict the same issues. The two novels remind us that there are still historical facts that being forgotten, and we cannot simply forget about them.

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Introduction

The uprising events of G30SPKI or the 30 September Movement, which is done by the Communist Party of Indonesia becomes one of the important historical events in the development of the Indonesian nation. Not only are these events change the political map of Indonesia but also become one of the historical events that would be and continues to be debated despite 50 years after it happened. After the fall of the Suharto regime in 1998, the events G30SPKI back into the public spotlight. Historical facts are being investigated, new order regime propaganda about the events of G30SPKI are questionable.

New Order regime believes that the Indonesian Communist Party had maneuvered by staging a coup against the government of the Republic of Indonesia on 30 September 1965. They became the mastermind behind the kidnapping and murder of seven highly rank military officers. Therefore, the Indonesian Communist Party is considered a banned party in Indonesia, and communism was banned in Indonesia. The anti-communism movement is maintained during the New Order regime (1966-1998).

Anti-communism movement promoted by the New Order government was also a milestone in the establishment of the New Order regime under President Suharto. Anti-communism movement is developing into an ideology of anti-communism maintained by the New Order government. Lots of propaganda conducted by the New Order government to convince the people of Indonesia about the latent danger of communism. Propaganda through teaching in schools and cultural products such as movies *G30SPKI* which continuously aired on the 30 September created fear and hatred among Indonesian people about communism.

After the fall of the New Order regime in 1998, People have the real opportunity to reveal the truth of the events of G30SPKI and most importantly, find out what happened after the incident, especially the efforts of the New Order regime in defending the ideology of anti-communism and pursued a policy of repression to suppress communism. Many works of literature and film published at that time trying to reveal another version of the events of G30SPKI which are the different version of the New Order regime. Some of this works even cannot be published during the new order regime because of its content talks the realty and facts about what happened after the events G30SPKI.

Statement of the problem

Based on the above ideas, I aim to conduct research to analyze two novels, which were published after the new order fall in 1998, that raised the issue and use the background of the events G30SPKI and after the event. The two novel to be analyzed is "*Pulang*" novel by Leila Chudori and "*Cermin Merah*" by N. Riartiarno. I want to know to what extent the author reveals different facts about the events G30SPKI and after the event. Are these two novel trying to deconstruct the readers understanding of the events of G30SPKI, and what are the purpose of the two authors in creating a story using the events G30SPKI as their background.

Objectives and Benefits Research

The purpose of this study was to determine to what extent of both the novel try to reveal new facts of G30SPKI events and post the event. Besides that to know the purpose of the author raised the event G30SPKI in their novels. The benefits of this research are for the students that they can understand how literature can be used as a tool to reveal the truth of an event. In addition, through this research is expected they will be able to know the history.

Literature Review

As a research none has done a comparative study of the two novels, I found only a few studies that analyses one of the novel. One study conducted by Dwina Agustin as the final project of her bachelor degree at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, entitled "Social and Political Conditions in exile in France in novel "*Pulang*" by Leila Chudori". The author describes the social and political conditions in exile in France and her conclusion is that the social and political conditions of political exile affect their interactions to individuals and other groups.

Another study conducted Briyanta Fajar Nugraha entitled "Moral Values in Novel "*Pulang*" by Leila Chudori.". This study is a final paper for his bachelor degree at the State University of Yogyakarta. In his thesis, the author aims to describe the moral values in the novel, the story elements that are used in delivering of moral values, He finds that moral values in the novel is about man's relationship with God, man's relationship with himself, and man's relationship with other humans.

Researchers also found a book entitled "Culture of Violence Post-1965" by Wijaya Herlambang. This book is his dissertation S3. The focus of this book is to question how cultural products can have a great power in creating and maintaining anti-communist ideology and legitimizing violent campaign 1965-1966? How do the proponents of anti-communism, including liberal writers and agents of the military culture, in practical terms, utilize and manipulate product and cultural ideology to legitimize and maintain anti-communism campaign. Are the efforts of cultural activists and writers to deconstruct the tradition of the new order and anti-communist ideology? Is there is any efforts to make changes to the values of the ideological legacy of the New Order?

Analysis of the two Novels

Both of the novels are trying to capture and present fragments of what happened after the 1965's. The New Order Government was trying to swap clean all the members of the communist party and its sympathizers. This include their family, friends, and neighbor. This created fearful situation and uncertainty among Indonesians. This condition was not only happened in Jakarta but also other cities in Indonesia. The fear and hatred of communism was successfully applied for years by the New Order Government during its

reign for thirty two years. The followings are the evidences presented in the two novels of what happened after 1965's events.

a. Massive Arrest and killing of the Indonesia Communist Party's members and sympathizers.

Both of the novels show many Indonesian were arrested and killed at that time, because they were members and sympathizers of the party. As stated in one of the novel, "...the soldiers are the disinfectant, we are fleas and dust that must be cleansed from this world. Without any trace" (Chudori 1). The novels state that most of them are arrested and executed. The novels tell that their bodies could be found drifting at the river and the water is turning red because of their blood. "The water of JTB River in C city and other rivers in Indonesia are turning red because of blood. The smell of blood. The victim bodies were buried secretly. Many families lost their father, mother, uncle, aunt, children, nephew and niece, and nobody know their grave" (Riantiaro 20).

b. Family and close friends are arrested and interrogated (and even killed).

The novels state that the family and close friends of the communist party members are being interrogated intensively in one place, even sometimes they are being abused by the soldier. "I'm sure that many people were being abused here. I could hear their screaming, men and women. So many in turn..." (Chudori 21-22). Some of them even become the victim of the killing. This is evidence in one of the novels, "...the hunting is become worse, not only to the member and sympathizer of the communist party but also to their family being arrested for being questioned. Some of them are returning home, some just missing, and some just found dead and drifted at the river" (Chudori 19).

c. Family of the communist party members and their descendants are being labeled by the government.

In fear of the communist thread, the new order government made a strict policy to label the family of the communist party members. Indonesian people had to have a letter issued by the government that state you do not have any involvement with the communist party. This letter could not be issued if one of your family members were a member of the communist party. This letter was also used if you want to apply for working in the government sector or working in the field that can influence the society, such as in education, journalism, or religious field. It was very difficult for them to get a job. Some of them were trying to change their name and not included their family name to be able to survive from the negative stigma from the society. This rules were also applied for the family members that were born after the incident. The New Order government also imposed the slogan of "*Bersih Lingkungan*" or clean environment. It means that your neighborhood or society is free from the communist influence or communist family members.