Against the Flow: Islamic Trauma and the Reinterpretation of Musso in Indonesian Literature

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ABSTRACT

The 1965 events involving the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) are considered one of the greatest human catastrophes in Indonesia. However, the 1948 Madiun PKI uprising also represents a significant historical moment. In 1965, the PKI became associated with victimhood, particularly in relation to the mass killings, while in 1948, the PKI was cast as the perpetrator of violence. This article examines two literary works that address the PKI's 1948 involvement*: Tentang Kamu* by Tere Liye and *Ayat-Ayat yang Disembelih* by Anab Afifi and Thowaf Zuharon. Using Marianne Hirsch's postmemory theory, the study explores how these narratives construct an Islamic counter-memory, framing the PKI as a source of trauma for the second generation of Indonesian Muslims. One strategy, termed "Re-Mussonization," involves the reimagining of the historical figure Musso as a central character, highlighting the PKI's antagonism toward Islam. Additionally, the article examines the concept of post-Musso narratives, which challenge the dominant, 1965-centric memory of the PKI and offer an alternative perspective on Indonesia's communist past.

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has endured several catastrophic events in its history, both politically and in terms of human suffering. One of the most significant of these was the G30S PKI crisis of 1965-1966, which marked a grave political and humanitarian disaster. The Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) was one of the largest political organizations during President Soekarno's administration. On September 30, 1965, the PKI was accused of attempting a coup against the government, an event that culminated in the assassination of six high-ranking military officers. In the aftermath of this crisis, all PKI sympathizers were violently suppressed, leading to the deaths of hundreds of thousands.

The Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) was founded by Hendricus Josephus Franciscus Marie Sneevliet, also known as Henk Sneevliet, a Dutch communist activist. In 1913/1914, Sneevliet established the *Indische Social Democratische Vereeniging* (ISDV) in the Dutch East Indies (Kheng, 1992; McVey, 2006). The ISDV was renamed *the Communist in the Indies* (PKH) in 1921 (Tornquist, 1984), and in 1925, it became the *Indonesian Communist Party* (PKI) (Adryamarthanino, 2021; Isnaeni, 2020). By 1948, under Musso's

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leadership, the PKI aimed to establish a communist state in Madiun, modeled on the Soviet Union. Musso's plans were thwarted when President Sukarno opposed his actions and rejected the idea of a coup against the Republic of Indonesia. After the failed 1948 Madiun Uprising (*Pemberontakan PKI Madiun*), the PKI reemerged in 1951 under the leadership of Aidit, Njoto, and Lukman. However, the PKI led by Aidit and his allies did not maintain power for long, and they were later accused of attempting to stage the 1965 G30S PKI coup (Isnaeni, 2020; Mortimer, 2006).

Numerous scholars have examined the tragic history of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), particularly the G30S PKI Rebellion of 1965. Most consider the events of 1965 to be a form of genocide, with estimates of up to 500,000 deaths (Cribb, 2001, 2002; Eickhoff, van Klinken, & Robinson, 2017; Heryanto, 2014; Leksana, 2019; Melvin, 2017; Robinson, 2017; Wahyuningroem, 2018) Researchers' perspectives on this history are varied, but they generally focus on two main points: first, that the PKI's position in 1965 was one of victimhood, with many deaths that qualify as genocide; and second, that earlier scholars, who adopted this victimhood perspective, did not consider the PKI to be the perpetrators of the violence.

Two works, *Mematahkan Pewarisan Ingatan: Wacana Anti-Komunis dan Politik Rekonsiliasi Pasca-Soeharto* (2004) by Budiawan and *Kekerasan Budaya Pasca 1965: Bagaimana Orde Baru Melegitimasi Anti-Komunisme melalui Sastra dan Film* (2019) by Wijaya Herlambang, examine in detail how the 1965 PKI events have been framed as a victimization, while offering little discussion on the 1948 PKI as the perpetrator. Budiawan relies on biographical data, while Herlambang analyzes literature and film. According to Budiawan, the memory of communism in 1965 is closely tied to anti-communism, with communism often depicted as anti-God, anti-religion, and anti-Islam. This narrative was frequently used to justify the persistent enmity toward the PKI. Budiawan's research concludes that communism and Islam were not ideologically incompatible and that reconciliation was possible (Budiawan, 2004; McGregor, 2013). In contrast, Herlambang's book emphasizes how anti-communism was propagated through cultural practices, particularly literature and film. To justify the assassination of PKI sympathizers, such works often employed character flaws, conspiracies, and other fictitious devices (Herlambang, 2019; McGregor, 2013).

Several texts discuss the 1948 Madiun PKI Uprising, such as *Madiun 1948 PKI Bergerak* by Harry A. Poeze and *Orang-orang di Persimpangan Kiri Jalan* by Soe Hok Gie. However, these works provide less compelling narratives of the 1948 events compared to the books by Budiawan and Herlambang. Poeze and Gie focus on presenting historical facts, while Budiawan and Herlambang not only offer factual accounts but also construct a more engaging narrative discourse. This comparison highlights the fact that there are significantly fewer narratives about the PKI in 1948 compared to 1965. Budiawan and Herlambang draw widely on biographies, literary texts, and films, which allows fictional modes of representation to convey the subjective experience of both physical and ideological trauma.

Few works of literature reinterpret the events of the 1948 PKI Uprising. Compared with the research data used by Budiawan and Herlambang, these literary works are relatively insignificant. This raises a key question: Why are the two PKI events depicted in such disparate literary works? Based on my research, there are only two notable works of Indonesian literature that address the PKI of 1948, both authored by members of the second generation of Muslims. The second generation refers to those who did not directly witness

the events but inherited the trauma (indirectly). This study suggests that the subjective voice of this generation can be read in subaltern terms, shaped by conditions that constrain expression and by a tendency toward silence in the face of dominant narratives (Morris, 2010; Jalu Norva, Putra, Rahmawati, & Jia, 2024; Spivak, 2021).

Tentang Kamu by Tere Liye and *Ayat-Ayat yang Disembelih* by Anab Afifi and Thowaf Zuharon are two literary works that explore the 1948 PKI theme. Given that Tere Liye was born in 1979, Anab Afifi in 1968, and Thowaf Zuharon in 1982, these authors were not yet born when the 1948 PKI incident occurred. Despite this, their works portray the physical and ideological suffering caused by the PKI, particularly focusing on the threat communism posed to Islam. These authors present the notion that the PKI was responsible for the murder of Islamic figures and other community leaders, framing the PKI as a threat to the Islamic faith. This narrative stands in stark contrast to the perspective advanced by scholars like Budiawan and Herlambang, who argue that the PKI was a victim of the 1965 anti-communist purges. While Tere Liye, Anab Afifi, and Thowaf Zuharon portray the PKI as perpetrators, Budiawan and Herlambang maintain that the PKI was the victim.

Although the works of Tere Liye and Anab Afifi & Thowaf Zuharon are not vast in scope, they highlight the role of the second generation in amplifying the threat of communism across generations. Their works also reveal that, despite Islam being the majority religion and society in Indonesia, Muslims are marginalized in the communist narrative. Like the scholarship of Budiawan and Herlambang, these literary works align with a stronger '65-centrism, which frames communism as a victim. However, the focus of this study is on how the subaltern narrative is articulated. How, then, can a second generation of Muslims that forms the majority in both religious and demographic terms seek to reclaim the PKI as the perpetrators of violence?

In relation to the preceding discussion, a central figure in Tere Liye's *Tentang Kamu* and Anab Afifi & Thowaf Zuharon's *Ayat-Ayat yang Disembelih* is Musso, the leader of the PKI during the 1948 Madiun Uprising. In his speech, President Soekarno described Musso's actions in 1948 as a rebellion against the Republic of Indonesia (Red-Hidup, 1950). Musso was reportedly influenced by Joseph Stalin (Gie, 2017). Under Musso's leadership, the PKI was accused of orchestrating the murder of key figures, including top administrators, civil servants, police officers, soldiers, teachers, organizational leaders, Kiai (Islamic religious leaders), and village heads during the Madiun 1948 Uprising (Maksum, Sunyoto, & Zainuddin, 1990; PBNU, 2013; Poeze, 2020).

Writing about the issues addressed in this article is crucial for several reasons. First, it is important to challenge the one-sided portrayal of the PKI solely as victims, a narrative that has dominated Indonesian history. This perspective ignores the fact that, in 1948, the PKI was also a perpetrator of violence, particularly through the murders committed during the Madiun Uprising. Second, although authors such as Tere Liye, Anab Afifi, and Thowaf Zuharon belong to a generation born after the 1948 PKI Madiun incident, their works register what may be described as prenatal trauma, suggesting that trauma is transmitted ideologically and psychologically across generations. This indicates that fear and psychological scars related to the PKI still affect them. Third, these authors position the 1948 PKI events in tension with the 1965 narrative, particularly in their portrayal of the PKI as the perpetrator in contrast to the widely accepted narrative of the PKI as a victim of the 1965 anti-communist purges. Finally, the figure of Musso plays a central role in their works. Musso is represented not only as a historical figure but also as a metonymic formulation of how a PKI figure is to be remembered. His legacy comes to signify the trauma and

ideological tensions associated with communism, positioning him as a potent site of both historical and cultural memory.

Marianne Hirsch explores the concept of second-generation trauma in her works *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative, and Postmemory* (2012) and *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust* (2012). Hirsch examines how the children of Holocaust survivors, such as Art Spiegelman in his graphic novels *Maus I* and *Maus II*, engage in a process of resurrecting trauma. She argues that trauma existed prior to the birth of the second generation and that this trauma can be inherited. Hirsch introduces the concept of postmemory, a form of memory transmission that occurs in the future, passed down from one generation to the next. She identifies two primary models of trauma transmission: familial transmission, which occurs within the family, and affiliative transmission, which happens through texts and cultural artifacts outside the family. Hirsch further categorizes second-generation works as heteropathic, a term she uses to describe works that reflect the experience of trauma through the lens of others. In this context, postmemory becomes a way for the second generation to understand and relate to the trauma of the previous generation. Hirsch explains that these works are heteropathic because they offer the second generation an opportunity to experience "my memory" (the subject's own memory) through the narrative of "not me" (the other's experience). In this way, postmemory enables the subject to "participate in the desires, struggles, and suffering of others" (Hirsch, 2012a, 2012b).

The heteropathic postmemory instrument carries what may be described as a wounding gaze, a notion that can be traced to Roland Barthes' theory of photography. Hirsch's formulation is deeply informed by Barthes' concept of the punctum, understood as the element of an image that pierces the viewer and disrupts the relation between observer and observed, thereby generating an intense affective response (Hirsch, 2012b). This idea aligns with Hirsch's narrative framework for understanding what it means to be a victim. In this sense, the *punctum* is referential: it suggests that the subject not only has the potential to experience the trauma of others but is also compelled to investigate the complexity of trauma itself. Importantly, postmemory does not erase subjectivity. Subjects and objects are always interrelated; literature or photography is not just an objective text, but an experience shaped by the subject's intersubjective relationships. For instance, the interpretation of Hirsch's photography cannot be separated from the historical and literary contexts that inform it. Hirsch also emphasizes that the memories of the first and second generations are distinct, highlighting the emotional distance between them. This distinction clarifies why the heteropathic postmemory instrument is significant: it helps explain why subjects are affected by photographs or literary works. The trauma narratives in these works reshape the subject's perception of the past by foregrounding affective disturbance rather than factual reconstruction. This study, therefore, asks how postmemory operates in the formation of an Islamic counter-memory, how the PKI is reconfigured as a source of trauma for the second generation, and how the figure of Musso is reinterpreted as a central signifier within this narrative.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Postmemory studies have emerged in various countries such as Spain, Korea, Argentina, Italy, Slovenia, Lebanon, Algeria, Uruguay, Iraq, India, and Vietnam, each addressing different traumatic events. In most of these studies, trauma narratives are driven

by a need to not only address past wounds but also to subjectively correct what is perceived as a false or distorted history. The recollections of major events, particularly those involving state violence or regime persecution, are often in direct conflict with official narratives (Bui, 2016; Choe, 2013; Delisle, 2013; Erll, 2011; Kabir, 2004; Keizer, 2008; Knox, 2014; Larkin, 2010; Levey, 2014; Lionis, 2014; Miklavcic, 2008; Nouzeilles, 2005; Oktaviani, 2022; Saeger, 2013; Soto, 2006). In the case of Indonesian postmemory, particularly regarding the 1948 PKI Madiun events, there is a distinct pattern that contrasts with the broader global development of postmemory: the ideological contestation between communism and religion, especially Islam. This ideological conflict had a profound impact on the traumatic events, as the trauma in question involves not only the loss of tangible objects but also the loss of an idealized vision of the future, one in which this ideal object (such as the vision of communism or Islam) is absent. In this way, the trauma extends beyond physical loss to the loss of a future imagined with that ideal in place.

When comparing Holocaust and PKI postmemory, several key factors emerge. First, both events gave rise to narratives of trauma (Rothberg, 2009). Second, as Marianne Hirsch notes, there were no prior events to the Holocaust that shaped its memory, making it a singular, defining event in history. In contrast, Indonesia's history of PKI-related events spans multiple episodes, starting with the 1920s and culminating in the G30S PKI incident of 1965, which is primarily remembered as the central traumatic narrative. The 1948 Madiun PKI incident, however, remains a subaltern or minor narrative in the broader context of Indonesian history. Third, Hirsch identifies race as a central issue in Holocaust postmemory, whereas the dominant focus of PKI postmemory is ideological and religious conflict. These distinctions highlight key differences between Holocaust and PKI postmemory (Kansteiner, 2020).

Postmemory theory offers a lens for exploring trauma across different social groups and historical contexts. Although postmemory is primarily concerned with the individual's subjective experience of history, it is deeply connected to the "world seen"—the broader social and political environment in which the traumatic event occurred. In the case of the PKI, as this study shows, the "world seen" refers to the ideological and political landscape that shaped both the event itself and its subsequent memory. Barthes' concept of the "world seen" emphasizes the importance of understanding the broader context through extensive reading and analysis, especially when examining trauma narratives such as those related to the PKI.

3. METHOD

In addition to postmemory theory, this paper employs a new-insights-based method of analysis (Faruk, 2012; Flick, 2007; Moleong, 2017). The first step involves categorizing Islamic motifs in the narrative of Musso's trauma against the PKI, as portrayed in the works of Tere Liye, Anab Afifi, and Thowaf Zuharon. The analysis proceeds by comparing the literary texts with historical accounts of the PKI to locate the punctum, understood here as the narrative detail that generates an affective disruption. Hirsch's framework allows for the *punctum* to be read not only in photographs but also in works of fiction. Musso, as a character, serves as a metonym for the PKI Madiun 1948, so it is crucial to analyze how Musso appears both in fictional narratives and in historical texts. This includes examining the historical accounts of the PKI Madiun 1948 as well as the 1965 PKI narrative from the works of Budiawan and Herlambang, which will help illuminate the construction of narrative

subjectivity by the second generation of Muslims, such as Tere Liye, Anab Afifi, and Thowaf Zuharon. These authors can be understood as subaltern subjects who construct their own counter-narratives.

This process suggests that the visible world, in Barthes' terms, needs to be examined more closely through an engagement with the historical world of the PKI. The next step involves abstracting the *punctum*'s interpretation to reveal the core of the 1948 PKI trauma. This will show how Islam and Musso have become central narrative forces for the second generation, as seen in the works of Tere Liye, Anab Afifi, and Thowaf Zuharon. The realization of these conclusions will offer new insights into how the second generation has constructed and transmitted their trauma narrative.

For the second generation of Muslims to recall the traumatic events of the 1948 PKI Madiun incident in a subjective, imaginative, and political way, it is crucial that they engage with both postmemory theory and new insights to interpret Islamic narratives. The figure of Musso, in various forms, represents the most significant and enduring memory, as noted earlier. This process of re-Mussonization, understood as the repeated recollection of Musso, becomes a central mechanism in second-generation narratives. On a broader level, the concept of Post-Musso symbolizes the culmination of collective memories of the wounds inflicted by communist ideology, which was seen as fundamentally opposed to Islam. The following discussion section will provide further explanations on these points.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Islamic Narrative and Re-Mussonization

The purpose of the Islamic narrative in this part is to establish the subaltern status of the second generation of Islam. Why subaltern? As indicated in the introduction above, the second generation of Islam, represented by Tere Liye, Anab Afifi, and Thowaf Zuharon, was faced with not just one PKI uprising event, but two events, namely PKI Madiun 1948 and G30 S PKI 1965. In their first event, none of them were yet born; however, in their second event, they were all born at different ages. In the first event, the individuals are post-memory or post-generation, whereas in the second event, they are memory or first generation.

Consequently, how can the second generation of Muslims become subalterns? In this section, it is crucial to examine the perspectives of two researchers, Budiawan and Wijaya Herlambang, who constructed a narrative about '65-centrism in their book. In his book *Mematahkan Pewarisan Ingatan: Wacana Anti-Komunis dan Politik Rekonsiliasi Pasca-Soeharto*, Budiawan explains that the PKI was not only persecuted once, but again from 1965 until after the New Order regime (1966-1998) (Budiawan, 2004). In 1965-66, the PKI fell victim to genocide, and after that, PKI descendants fell victim to anticommunism. This is evidenced by government legislation that restricts communist doctrine in Indonesia, communist stamps on resident identification cards for former PKI prisoners, and the inability of PKI descendants to become civil officials, police officers, or soldiers, etc. Budiawan stated that the most heinous anti-communist tactic was to presume that the PKI was "the devil" by identifying it as an atheist organization (Budiawan, 2004).

Throughout his book, Budiawan seeks to convey several essential points. First, based on the anti-communism narrative, the PKI has been victimized continuously since 1965. Second, the depiction of communists as atheists functions as one of the most effective narrative strategies for casting the PKI as a moral enemy. These narrative formations make it increasingly difficult for the PKI to rehabilitate its position within Indonesia's political

history. What is striking in Budiawan's work, however, is the limited attention given to the 1948 Madiun episode, a moment when the PKI appeared as a source of political unrest. This omission reinforces a 1965-centric framework in which the PKI is primarily configured as a victim. In this way, the party is implicitly positioned as detached from earlier forms of political responsibility, with its historical trajectory largely framed through the lens of victimhood. Apart from telling how the PKI became victims, Budiawan also gave thoughts on reconciliation by developing the argument that the PKI had no problem with religion, especially Islam. Budiawan demonstrates through the biography of a communist who is also a Muslim that communism and Islam share several fundamental ideas. However, this argument remains superficial because it does not represent the views of both ideologies as a whole.

Herlambang's argument in his book *Kekerasan Budaya Pasca 1965: Bagaimana Orde Baru Melegitimasi Anti-Komunisme melalui Sastra dan Film* is nearly identical to Budiawan's. Anticommunism in Indonesia is propagated through literary and cinematic practices. Herlambang demonstrates, through video evidence and literary works, that the PKI is legitimate and deserving of death. As with Budiawan, Herlambang only mentioned the PKI in Madiun in 1948 and not in 1965. This position gives the impression that Herlambang pays limited attention to the possibility that the PKI had also functioned as a political actor prior to 1965. Such an approach reinforces a narrative in which earlier episodes, particularly those of 1948, appear to be treated as resolved rather than critically reexamined. This is why the writings of the aforementioned researchers construct a '65-centric narrative. Nevertheless, Islam is also viewed as a supporter of anticommunism, as evidenced by the involvement of the Islamic organization NU in the assassination of the PKI after 1965.

Even though it is subaltern, the second generation of Islam continues to voice out in similar circumstances. This means that the voices of the second generation of Islam must fight the narrative of '65-centrism, as described above. Even though it is a tough stance, naming the PKI as the murderer when the narrative has been established that the PKI is the victim. Aside from this, Islam itself was complicit in the 1965-1966 murder of PKI members. How do Tere Liye, Anab Afifi, and Thowaf Zuharon compose stories and Islamic narratives against the PKI or communism in light of these conditions? Tere Liye, Anab Afifi, and Thowaf Zuharon employ two narrative tropes: telling communism as Islamic resistance and presenting the character Musso as a metonym for the PKI Madiun 1948. The following quote illustrates the Islamic narrative structure.

> ... It was not the first time this group had betrayed the Indonesian government, as they had also done so in 1948.
>
> Musoh has always been intrigued by communist philosophy. He was captivated by the logic of the texts he read, and his expulsion from the Kiai Ma'sum *madrasah* (Islamic school), envy, and anger, compelled him to hurl himself in, while simultaneously leading the group's Surakarta branch. Meanwhile, Sulastri, who was distressed by Musoh's destiny, compelled her to follow in her husband's footsteps (Liye, 2017: 181).

In the aforementioned passage from Tere Liye's work, it is evident that the effort to reintroduce Musso into the figure of Musoh represents a pattern of Islamic narrative in opposition to the '65-centrism narrative. Musoh is a sort of re-mussonization designed to demonstrate that communism has issues with Islam. Musoh, who was once a Muslim but

became a communist for a variety of reasons, including the logic of communism texts, and was subsequently expelled from the Madrasah (Islamic school), is the source of the majority of the trouble, according to the aforementioned quotation. As Hirsch references Barthes regarding the punctum, Musoh, as a subject, is a "wounding story." The opponent, who was once a Muslim, thereafter converted to communism. Musso was historically born and reared in an Islamic or Muslim family (Dhyatmika & KPG, 2011). This suggests that Musoh is not an incidental character in the novel Tere Liye, but rather integral to the plot.

Why is the story of Musoh's transformation from a Muslim to a communist so wounding? This is an illustration of the communist threat to Islam, using the comparison that Islam, which has been passed down from generation to generation for centuries and is the dominant religion in Indonesia, can be controlled by communism using book logic and vengeance. Thus, communism is sometimes defined as a laborious and disruptive ideology. This difficulty also produces a narrative of how Islam, as a local legacy, faces communism, as an alien philosophy. The most probable explanation of the visible punctum is the worry that communism will subjugate, control, or abolish Islam. Nevertheless, why is communism a terrifying philosophy to Islam? Why does this occur? As evidenced in the following quote, Tere Liye describes.

> Sri stared at Musoh and was preoccupied with thought. What do you do to work hard? He never felt the need to clean the toilet. In addition to free housing, students also obtain knowledge and skills. Does Musoh not know precisely about that?
>
> "Religion is nonsense, Sri; the *kiai* are nothing more than idle unemployed individuals selling counterfeit books. Consider the *Kitab Kuning* stacked so high in the *Madrasah* that they could flood the river. But what are the advantages for the small population? Only theory. Religion is opium; it gives false hope to the hopeless." Musoh abruptly exclaimed as he slammed the door and left the house, stating that he needed some fresh air.
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> … And what concerned Sri was that during the time she resided at Lastri's home, from afternoon till dawn, she never witnessed Musoh or Lastri praying. Men and women ludruk players embrace each other informally while drinking beer. Partying, one of them screamed, "To hell with religion. It is preferable to be an alcoholic but honest than to be self-righteous yet hypocritical (Liye, 2017: 185-186).

Musoh's conversion from Islam to communism affected ideological activities that were characterized as threatening to the Islamic faith. As a subject, Musoh demonstrates that communism can subjugate Islam and pose it as an adversary. Musoh then drew a connection between the resistance and the *Kiai* (Islamic religious leaders) by stating that they were indolent, sold counterfeit literature, and that religion was opium, giving false hope to defenseless people. Tere Liye's narrative plainly contradicts Budiawan's narrative above. Budiawan argues that communism and Islam may be joined, whereas Tere Liye, through the character Musoh, demonstrates how communism assaults Islam. In this instance, Musoh refers to re-mussonization, or the resurfacing of the memory of Musso 1948, to demonstrate the PKI's ability to harm Islam.

Tere Liye, through Musoh, appears unwilling to discuss the topic. A puzzle with Musoh as Musso is not difficult. Why does Tere Liye not use an abbreviation or a completely unrelated name? Or, for instance, like Spiegelmann in *Maus I* and *II*, who used animal-headed humans to depict Jews, Nazis, etc.? Numerous punctuation marks must be replied. From a holistic perspective, it is evident that the second generation of Muslims, such as

Tere Liye, were subjected to two narratives regarding the PKI: as perpetrators in 1948 and as victims in 1965. The 1948 narrative was written by Tere Liye; however, it cannot be separated from the 1965 narrative. Therefore, re-musonization as an Islamic narrative structure is not metaphorical like Spiegelmann, but metonymic. Musoh serves as a "mnemonic device" for Musso, a foreign ideology that is capable of supplanting and endangering Islam (as happened with the subject Musoh).

The works of Anab Afifi and Thowaf Zuharon illustrate communism's threat to Islam with more clarity. This hurting narrative is emphasized once more in a variety of ways.

> I must, if necessary, slay or slaughter any kiai or santri (student of *Madrasah/Pesantren* [Islamic school]) who oppose me! As Comrade Muso had always instructed me, I quickly gathered the 1926 rebellious young communists and former PKI.

> I will direct them to instantly create holes across the entire village, which will soon be a gorgeous shade of crimson. Blood and body parts of opponents of communism would soon fill the gaps (Afifi & Zuharon, 2015: 76).

Afifi and Zuharon depict communism as a menace that is not only intellectual, but also violent and murderous in practice. Is this story too lengthy? It is possible that this story is an exaggeration that has little to do with reality. In Hirsch's formulation, postmemory is concerned less with reconstructing historical events than with tracing the affective responses they generate. Her argument rests on the premise that even minor traces of trauma, together with the subjective memories attached to them, can activate a powerful response in later generations. This also indicates that dominant narratives do not exhaust the field of historical meaning, as alternative perspectives persist within subaltern voices that may remain hesitant or unarticulated.

It is possible to conclude that the author is anti-communist based on this quotation. Especially if it is linked to the narratives of Budiawan or Wijaya Herlambang. However, with assumptions like those, it increasingly indicates that the narrative of Budiawan and Wijaya Herlambang, and also the overall narrative about '65-centrism, is truly quite strong. How, for instance, could the PKI commit such heinous murders in an effort to eliminate *kiai* and *santri* by slaughtering them; something that could only be done to animals and not to humans? In contrast, the PKI is the victim in the '65-centrism narrative. In addition, it may be questioned whether the PKI could be so cruel as to dig graves for the deceased *kiai* and *santri*. In Islam, and possibly in other religions as well, the burial of the deceased is accompanied by a religious ceremony. The narrator "I", who also claims to be a student of Musso's character, appears to appreciate the view: ... *the village that will soon be beautiful is the color of blood. The pits would soon be filled with the blood and body parts of opponents of communism.* Why does the narrator's "I" sound strange? Would a similar narrative not conflict with the '65-centric narrative? How is it possible that the PKI, which was portrayed as a victim in 1965 and had a very weak position, later appeared in a strong narrative and posed a danger to Islam? In the context of the massive influence of the '65-centrism narrative vis-à-vis the second generation of subaltern Islam, these sorts of questions arise.

This comment demonstrates the extent of 'comrade Musso's' influence. Musso replicated, reinvesting, and affixing PKI Madiun 1948 to how it should be remembered. What is associated with Musso is also associated with the PKI and vice versa. Tere Liye, Anab Afifi, and Thowaf Zuharon have constructed a narrative of Islam and re-Mussonization

through an open debate on the contestation of Islam and the PKI. The story of the three contradicts the findings of Budiawan and Herlambang's investigation. This condition suggests that, despite their subaltern positioning, the second generation of Muslim authors continues to articulate its perspective, even at the risk of being seen as reinforcing anti-communist discourse, reopening unresolved historical tensions, challenging victim-centered narratives, or complicating projects of reconciliation. However, postmemory is not the same as history, as it is far more dynamic and subjective, incorporating not only unpleasant memories but also emotional and ideological determinations.

4.2 Musso and Post-Musso

In this section, it is crucial to describe who Musso was and why his image was so significant to the second generation of Muslims, including Tere Liye, Anab Afifi, and Thowaf Zuharon. Even though this page does not examine history directly, it is necessary to briefly discuss Musso's role in the PKI Madiun 1948 to establish the framework in which Musso's image was formed. Aside from that, there is a possibility that Musso and the Madiun PKI in 1948 made mistakes that had not been "inherited," meaning that the narrative about them was not as strong as the story from 1965.

Munawar Musso was born in Kediri, Central Java, in 1897. In addition to being reared in a very wealthy family, Musso was also renowned as an adherent of Islam (Dhyatmika & KPG, 2011). As an adult, Musso was renowned for his organizational skills. Musso earned his training as a teacher in Batavia. Additionally, he attended Hogere Burger School. Musso was friends with key people in the Indonesian movement, including Tjokroaminoto, Alimin, and Soekarno. In reality, Musso reportedly met with Henk Sneevliet while in Surabaya (a Dutch communist figure). When Musso returned from Moscow and led the PKI in Indonesia with the "new road" ideology, he became a significant figure.

In a secret document from Amir (one of the PKI figures in Madiun in 1948) about the "new road," it is stated that: first, the Madiun area was prepared as the strongest guerilla stronghold for long-term struggle; second, at least five battalions were stationed in Madiun; and third, the city of Solo was transformed into the "Wild West" in order to attract attention there. This document provides evidence that Musso prepared the PKI Madiun 1948 for something significant: capturing the Indonesian state government from Soekarno-Hatta and pressing for a communist revolution.

Aside from the "new road," which could be considered one of Musso's fatal faults as a party leader in his aim to build communism into a large government or country in Indonesia, there were other events that were fatally flawed. This occurred after Musso failed to prevent the death of over a hundred political hostages by paramilitary members of the PKI, led by Pesindo. Since the majority of captives executed by Pesindo members were Muslims, this momentum was attributed to the PKI's inability to garner sympathy among Muslims and Islam (Budiawan, 2004). Consequently, it does not appear that the PKI is to blame for the ensuing war between the PKI and Islam in Indonesia. Why does this happen? Due to the fact that after the PKI collapsed in 1948 under Musso's leadership, it rose again, only to collapse again in 1965-1966. As noted previously, the dominant truth or fiction narrative of 1965 focuses on the PKI as victims, not as culprits like Musso and Pesindo.

Musso is also remembered as a representative of the ruthless and tyrannical PKI, in addition to his failure to garner the support of the Muslim group due to Pesindo's execution of mostly Muslim hostages. Musso's PKI dictatorship did not arise from the nobles, but

rather from the lower classes, a type of dictatorial proletariat. The murder committed by Pesindo in 1948, which prevented the PKI from gaining the support of Muslim groups, was not only a mistake, but it also contributed to the perception that the PKI was antagonistic towards Islam. The following Tere Liye passage illustrates this point.

> *…* Onstage, Musoh was spotted standing. Providing a speech.

> Sri frowned once more. He did not comprehend what Musoh was saying. Concerning the inequities that exist in society. Concerning landowners controlled by Kiai who are also Priyayi (Javanese nobility). Rich people who conceal themselves behind religion appear to be religious and profess to be holy while selling a charade. The Dutch were gone, but the people were colonized by new feudal rulers. Musoh gave a rousing speech in which he mentioned other countries with strange names (Liye, 2017: 182-183).

Several recollections of Musso are associated with the figure Musoh in the preceding quotation, particularly in relation to the parallel that *kiai* are also feudal rulers. Feudalism was concealed by Islam. In Indonesia, Dutch colonialism had ended, but feudal "colonization" by *kiai* circles, who were also landowners, seems to have remained. In this instance, the enemy targets Islam. Is this simply a provocation by Tere Liye to revert to Islam's subordinate position? Is it accurate that the memory of Musso or Musoh is the memory of Islam-hating communism?

Indeed, this quotation correlates with historical records of Musso's public speeches in 1948. According to Musso, the bourgeoisie and landowners were the revolution's leaders at the time. Musso also highlighted in his speech that all *bendoro* (Javanese landlords) would be abolished if the revolution were led by the proletariat (laborers and/or farmers) (Poeze, 2020). The word "eliminated" is never clarified in detail, and it has the potential to be taken as extreme elimination, such as incarceration and murder.

In relation to land ownership, Musso continued his statement by stating that land would be handed to farmers. This speech could be problematic if it is not accompanied by a detailed explanation of how the system for distributing land that was once owned by someone is later distributed to the farmer-proletariat. Will there be new laws? Or do you employ the rules of the "jungle"? This is the basis for the idea that Musso will lead the proletariat to power, and that he is open to becoming a dictator over what he labels feudalism, landlords, *kiai*, and Islam.

Musso, as portrayed in the Musoh picture above, is undoubtedly regarded as a reminder of the PKI's errors that were harmful to Islamic values. Even th*ough the Kiai* have substantial land ownership, Islam will highlight that they are not landlords. *Kiai* are not feudal, slothful people who use religion to sell themselves and their families while profiting from the religion itself. Islamic groups and especially members of the second generation of Muslims, such as Tere Liye, will deny this.

Other Muslims of the second generation, such as Afifi and Zuharon, saw Musso as likewise being opposed to Islam. In their account, Afifi and Zuharon emphasize the "new road," the arrest of the *kiai*, the Indonesian Soviet Republic in Madiun, and the mobilization of villagers to slay the *kiai*. This is evident from the following quote.

> I just learned of this later on. The arrest of Kiai Imam Mursyid Muttaqin and other *Kiai* and community leaders was widespread, and not just in Takeran. Nevertheless, also a number of regions in Magetan, Madiun, Ponorogo, and Ngawi.

> Beginning on September 17, 1948, everything was orchestrated by a PKI figure named Musso and lasted a week.
>
> On December 19, 1948, in Madiun, Musso proclaimed himself president of a communist state named the Indonesian Soviet Republic.
>
> When PSM Takeran was encircled by People's Democratic Front (FDR) forces, Musso eliminated them with machine guns.
>
> On their heads, they wear crimson bands. Musso also galvanized the villagers who were slaying the *kiai* with ferocity (Afifi & Zuharon, 2015: 63).

The quotation exemplifies multiple points: first, Musso, who is portrayed as opposed to Islam in the quotation, is post-Musso. If linked to the PKI narrative of 1965, post-Musso is the antithesis of the 1965-centrism narrative. If '65-centrism attempts to enhance the narrative that the PKI is the victim, then the post-Musso narrative is that the PKI was not only alive in 1965, but also in 1948, and made grave errors as the murderer. As evidenced by Afifi and Zuharon's narrative construction in the preceding sentence, *Kiai*, as Islamic religious leaders, were not only detained but also murdered. This narrative does not simply retell history; rather, it develops a "Wounding narrative" as punctum, as Barthes described.

Second, Islam's subaltern status. In the memory of the PKI in Indonesia, Islam became subaltern, as mentioned in the preceding subchapter, because the PKI was the victim of genocide in 1965 and was legitimized by experts and scholars. In 1965, members of the PKI were murdered by one of the Islamic organizations, specifically NU. Under these circumstances, if assumed in an animal fable, the PKI is the "rabbit," typically represented as the victim. It will be challenging to refute the parallel that bunnies cannot potentially prey on other creatures. The notion that the PKI are "rabbits" is particularly strong, as proven by the writings by Budiawan and Herlambang mentioned previously. In 1948, the second generation of Islam, including Tere Liye, Anab Afifi, and Thowaf Zuharon, attempted to convince the public through Musso that the PKI was a "tiger" responsible for murder and a menace to Islam. The issue, however, was whether the "rabbit" could grow as ferocious as the "tiger." Consequently, Islam is subaltern.

5. DISCUSSION

This study analyzes two literary works, *Tentang Kamu* by Tere Liye and *Ayat-Ayat Disembelih* by Anab Afifi and Thowaf Zuharon, which reinterpret the 1948 PKI Madiun Uprising, positioning it as a traumatic event that shaped the postmemory of the second generation of Indonesian Muslims. Through the lens of postmemory theory, this study highlights how these works construct an Islamic counter-memory within a contested field of historical narratives. By focusing on Musso and the 1948 Madiun Uprising, these authors foreground forms of violence that have been largely marginalised in dominant accounts, thereby situating the PKI simultaneously as victim and perpetrator and reflecting multidirectional memory dynamics (Rothberg, 2022). This dual positioning demonstrates that literary postmemory does not simply reproduce inherited narratives but actively negotiates competing historical meanings.

The main results support the hypothesis that the second-generation Muslim authors of these works use their literary narratives to challenge the established view of the PKI as victims in the 1965 anti-communist purge. By focusing on Musso and the 1948 Madiun

Uprising, these authors emphasize the violence committed by the PKI against Islamic figures, such as Kiai and community leaders. This narrative contrasts sharply with the victimhood narrative presented by scholars like Budiawan and Herlambang, who frame the PKI as victims in the 1965 massacres, thereby reflecting the ongoing politics of memory in Indonesia. It also suggests that historical memory is shaped by ideological contestation rather than a single authoritative account (de Cesari, 2020), while the re-Mussonization of Musso positions him as a symbolic figure through which trauma, religion, and political conflict are articulated (Kattago, 2022).

The other main result is a broader understanding of Indonesian history, highlighted by the ideological conflict between Islam and communism. The conflict of memory and trauma aligns with Marianne Hirsch's concept of postmemory, where the second generation engages with the traumatic experiences of their predecessors in a way that shapes their subjective understanding of history. This process also reflects broader transcultural dynamics in which memories travel across generations and cultural frameworks (Erll, 2021). In this context, the second generation does not merely inherit trauma but actively reconfigures it through narrative strategies that connect affect, religion, and ideology. Such transmission shows that trauma operates not only at the level of historical reference but also through emotional and symbolic mediation (Crownshaw, 2020).

This study builds on the work of scholars such as Budiawan and Herlambang, who focus on the PKI's victimhood narrative. However, it challenges their one-sided perspective by highlighting the 1948 events, where the PKI is portrayed as the aggressor. This study also incorporates Marianne Hirsch's postmemory theory, which helps explain how trauma is passed down through generations and how this affects the way these authors engage with the past. This reinterpretation of history through literature is not merely a reflection of the authors' subjective views but also a political act of reclaiming the narrative from a dominant discourse that has silenced or minimized the violent acts of the PKI in the earlier period.

The implications of this research are profound in the context of post-conflict societies where the collective memory of traumatic events is often contested. By revisiting the events of the 1948 PKI Uprising, this study not only adds a new dimension to the Indonesian historical narrative but also provides insights into the role of literature and memory in shaping national identity. This research suggests that memory is not static; it is constantly being negotiated, rewritten, and transmitted across generations.

The works of Tere Liye, Anab Afifi, and Thowaf Zuharon are significant in that they challenge the prevailing narrative and offer a platform for the subaltern voices of Indonesian Muslims who have historically been marginalized in mainstream accounts of the PKI, reflecting the intergenerational transmission of trauma (J Norva, Putra, Rahmawati, & Jia, 2024). The study demonstrates how literature can serve as a tool for resistance and reconciliation, allowing the second generation to confront inherited trauma while questioning the narratives imposed by dominant political and ideological forces.

This study suggests that reinterpreting historical events through literature is a form of postmemory transmission. The second generation of Indonesian Muslims, through works such as *Tentang Kamu* and *Ayat-Ayat yang Disembelih*, offers a counter-memory that challenges hegemonic narratives about the PKI. Musso, once seen as a communist figurehead, is reimagined as a symbol of Islam's resistance against a foreign ideology. This reimagining not only confronts the trauma of the past but also questions the future of national reconciliation, showing how literature can shape both collective and individual

memory. Through these works, a new understanding of the 1948 events emerges, one that acknowledges the transformative power of literature in negotiating traumatic memory and shaping the future.

6. CONCLUSION

Postmemory readings of the 1948 Madiun PKI in the works of Tere Liye, Anab Afifi, and Thowaf Zuharon reveal several recurring patterns of trauma narration. Their texts move against the dominant narrative by consistently presenting Musso and the PKI as agents of violence toward Muslim communities during the Madiun uprising. This position forms an Islamic counter-narrative that challenges the strong orientation toward 1965, where the PKI is primarily remembered as a victim of political and cultural persecution. Through the mnemonic process of re Mussonization, the figure of Musso is reconfigured as a central signifier that metonymically represents the PKI as a whole and anchors an Islamic experience of trauma. In this narrative framework, the recollection of Musso transmits an alternative historical understanding in which the PKI, while widely positioned as a victim in 1965, is recalled as a perpetrator in 1948. Trauma narratives of this kind foreground affective memory rather than factual reconstruction and complicate the assumption that victimhood is always aligned with innocence by drawing attention to earlier moments of political violence. At the same time, the notion of post Musso functions as a broader narrative of wounding that marks the persistence of unresolved memory after the historical figure himself. It refers to a layer of remembrance that remains present within PKI discourse yet is only weakly transmitted in Indonesian literary production. Hence, the recollection of Musso becomes a narrative device for linking the Madiun events to an Islamic experience of trauma and for constructing a sequence of representations that portray the PKI as antagonistic to Islam and responsible for acts of violence.

The Indonesian case also calls for a reconsideration of postmemory as a framework. In Hirsch's work on the Holocaust, postmemory emerges from a context in which Jewish communities are positioned primarily as victims, so the transmission of memory tends to take the form of resistance to Nazi domination. The reproduction of memory, therefore, becomes a way of opposing historical violence and preserving subjectivity. The history of the PKI presents a different configuration. It is marked by a complex political conflict in which the party has been represented both as a victim and as a perpetrator, producing competing layers of narration rather than a single directional memory. This condition generates a more contested field of transmission in which postmemory is shaped not only by intergenerational affect but also by political discourse, ideological rivalry, and religious tension. The inheritance of memory in Indonesia cannot be understood solely as an affective process because it is mediated by struggles over representation and authority that determine which narratives gain prominence and which remain marginal.

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