



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

Embedded remembering : memory culture of the 1965 violence in rural East Java

Leksana, G.T.

Citation

Leksana, G. T. (2020, May 26). *Embedded remembering : memory culture of the 1965 violence in rural East Java*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/92258>

Version: Publisher's Version

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/92258>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Cover Page



Universiteit Leiden



The handle <http://hdl.handle.net/1887/92258> holds various files of this Leiden University dissertation.

Author: Leksana, G.T.

Title: Embedded remembering : memory culture of the 1965 violence in rural East Java

Issue Date: 2020-05-26

CHAPTER 4

EMBEDDED REMEMBERING: MEMORIES WITHIN THE PATRONAGE NETWORK AND RURAL TRANSFORMATION

The military operations in 1965-66 and 1968 were launched under the premise of creating peace and order, and saving the nation. This, in any case, was the legitimization of the violence. However, when we zoom into the rural context, where most of the violence took place, we will see a different perspective about this particular event. This is what I encountered during my first weeks in Donomulyo, when I met Mbok Menik in September 2016, a local merchant who sells materials for religious prayers (such as myrrh from Central Java) in the Banyujati³⁰² area. She moved to the village in 1963 from Yogyakarta, Central Java, following her father who established a small shop in the Donomulyo market, which had now been inherited by Mbok Menik. During our interview in the Javanese language, I asked about her childhood experiences as a migrant to the area. When I eventually asked her about the period of 1965, she instantly said, “Oh, it was *gégér!*” (*Oh, gégér, mbak!*). *Gégér* is a Javanese word meaning uproar, frenzy or rumble.³⁰³ This was the first time I heard this word used to describe the violence in 1965-66. It is a common term in Javanese language, especially in shadow play (*wayang*) performances, where *gégér* usually refers to wars between good and evil such as in the epic battle of Bharatayuddha or Hanoman’s battle with Rahwana’s army of giants.³⁰⁴ During my interview with Mbok Menik, I thought *gégér* appeared because our conversation was in Javanese. However, after several interviews with other villagers, even when using Bahasa Indonesia, the term *gégér* repeatedly appeared. It was used very often, so that I also began to adopt it when talking about the 1965 violence. “What was it like during the *gégér?*” (*Bagaimana situasinya waktu gégér?*), I asked, followed by answers about numerous violent episodes surrounding the elimination of the PKI in Donomulyo. Although the term is sometimes used as an expression for other war situations such as the independence war, this was the first time I encountered an association between the local perspective of *gégér* with a national turmoil.

This is how the villagers remember the violence. For them, it was not an operation to create peace and order, or to defend Pancasila, as the state constantly argued. The killings and violence in 1965 and 68 were definitely unbearable; a time of chaos, confusion, nearly apocalyptic – a period in which villagers lost everything. These different perceptions of the violence (between the state and society) illustrate the disparity of meaning between a military response to a political coup that happened in the central capital with the killings that occurred mostly in rural areas. Most villagers knew nothing of the September 30th Movement even when the killings commenced in their areas. Moreover, as the use of *gégér* shows, the perception of violent episodes in Donomulyo does not only show disparity, but also connectivity between the national and local.

To return to Fentress & Wickham’s point that remembering is a process of representation (see chapter 1), in this chapter, I will explore how disparity and connectivity of the public and private narratives interplay in the process of remembering the 1965 violence. More importantly, the chapter will also examine how villagers use this interplay to represent themselves – a performative act that does not necessarily relate merely to recalling past events. At the centre of their memories lies

³⁰² The pseudonym for the research area in this study, covering 3 villages in the Donomulyo district.

³⁰³ Zoetmulder 2004, 285.

³⁰⁴ Brandon & Guritno (eds) 1993.

specific figures, such as the military village head, religious leaders (*kyai* from Nahdlatul Ulama – the largest Islamic organisation in Indonesia), or local activists, who played a role as patrons in the village.³⁰⁵ These figures connect the national and local by firstly establishing a connection between the military response to the 30th September Movement and the killings in Donomulyo. They describe to other villagers why the violence *should* take place, under the reasoning of security and order. In return, villagers who complied with this version of the narrative would receive protection from being accused of being a communist, avoid detention or killing, or would be rewarded with property and government positions. Secondly, these figures also became clients of the state during the New Order regime. They became supporters of the New Order's establishment in rural areas, ranging from being political brokers (gathering votes for Suharto's ruling party *Golkar*) to policing the rural area (ensuring all residents follow the New Order policies).³⁰⁶

Memories of violence are very much embedded in these patron-client relationships. When patronage relationships are created, or enforced by the violence, those who are in this network tend to support the narrative that legitimised the violence. While for others who fall outside this network, who were excluded and suffered from the violence, perceived the violence as a form of injustice and a setback for their rural livelihood. The patronage network can also help to explain why one event generates different memories and representations, as well as different forms of silence amongst villagers. Moreover, it also blurred the boundaries between perpetrators and collaborators of violence and the victims, because patron-client relationships are flexible – they will weaken when the relationship no longer provides any benefits. Therefore, this chapter will discuss these questions: who are these patrons? What are their roles in memory formation? How did the patrons' relationships with their clients evolve in the post-violence situation? In what ways did these patronage networks influence different ways of remembering the 1965-66 and 1968 violence?

This chapter is written by putting emphasis on the person, their individuality, and agency, not in a binary position that places memories of violence as a 'counter' to the hegemonic state narrative (see the discussion on the limitations of a human rights approach in chapter 1), but to see how both the private and public narratives of violence converge, diverge and even shape each other. Of course, this type of approach has some shortcomings, and one of them is the conception of time. Villagers in Donomulyo do not record events in terms of years as historians usually do, but relate these to other events (large or small scale) that happened in the village. Starvation, village heads leadership and planting seasons are regular points of reference to refer to certain time periods. Their distinct way of identifying periods also affected the distinction or lack of distinction that they make between the violence in 1965 and 1968. In many occasions, villagers seemed to blur those two events and were unable to differentiate between the Trisula (1968) and Pancasila operations (1965). But this actually shows that, for them, these two events have the same apocalyptic nature. Most of the information that I use in this chapter is based on the ethnographic study in Donomulyo, particularly the life history interviews of villagers who were involved or impacted by the 1965-68 violence.

³⁰⁵ See chapter 1 for a definition of the patron-client relationship and chapter 2 for the historical evolution of this relationship in Donomulyo. James Scott describes the patron-client relationship as an "exchange relationship between roles, involving a largely instrumental friendship in which an individual of higher socioeconomic status (patron) uses his own influence and resources to provide protection or benefits, or both, for a person of lower status (client) who, for his part, reciprocates by offering general support and assistance, including personal services, to the patron". Scott 1972, 92.

³⁰⁶ This is what James Scott refers to as the patron-client pyramid: a client who becomes a patron for other clients – reflecting a vertical extension downward to the patron-client links. Scott 1972, 66.

Patronage in Memory Construction

I first raised the question of connectivity between the local and national event when I met Karsono and his wife, Parminah. Karsono himself used to work as an elementary school teacher in Donomulyo. Now retired, he spends most of his time tilling his land and looking after their cattle. Meanwhile, Parminah is a member of the Catholic Women's organisation and devotes most of her time to raising their grandson, while his parents work abroad as migrant workers. During my visits, we talked in the living room, with a neatly decorated interior showing elements of Catholicism and pictures of their families, including Karsono's brother who is a Catholic priest in Jember, East Java. Karsono began to tell his childhood experiences, including when he was in the 4th grade of elementary school in 1968, where his parents' house was transformed into a military post during the Trisula operation. Karsono witnessed villagers being taken away by the army.

They (the army) stigmatised this area as PKI. The fact is, not all of them [were PKI]. Only a few of them, but others were only accused. So they brought in [battalion] 513, the army. My house was the base ... As far as I know, some people were taken every day to the district office. I didn't know what happened to them. They were usually tied in the back, five, six people, and walked this way. Here (showing his wrist) are all tied. I saw it here (in front of the house).

Karsono was only a child at that time, but he was telling about the army battalion, stigmatisation of the area, and the fact that not all the victims were PKI. But the event that he saw was only a group of people being tied and taken away by the military. How did he know all of this information when as a child, he only experienced one fragment? I asked him about this, and he explained:

They said it was the PKI. **They** said (Karsono emphasised). [Grace: Who told you about that?] well... (stammered)... everybody knows if there were people being taken away, it must be PKI. People were guarded in the posts. The Army, together with the villagers. Villagers were obliged [to guard] at night. And all the women were told to be in one place. For instance, I should be with the others in a house across the street. Nobody dared to be alone in the house. Children were brought along. **They said** (Karsono emphasises) back then, if we didn't do it, the PKI will kill us if we are home alone. We were scared.³⁰⁷

It was an extremely frightening experience for Karsono to have a group of people with guns entering his daily life and taking other villagers away. But understanding what this fragment means is a very different process. Karsono himself repeatedly emphasised the word 'they said' (*katanya*) which implies that this knowledge was provided by an external party. When I tried to clarify who these people were, Karsono was a bit confused and explained as if this was common knowledge ("if there were people being taken away, it must be PKI"). His reactions imply that he was also confused about how such knowledge came into being. Thus, Karsono continued to explain that not all of the detainees were PKI. This statement related to Karsono father's experience, which I found out towards the end of our interview. Apparently, his father, who was assigned by the army as a night guard, slept during his shift. Karsono's father was later punished by being detained in the local military office for half day. Karsono emphasised that this was the reason for his father's short detention and not because his father had any involvement with political parties. Apart from this story, it is also possible that Karsono's criticism of the PKI label stemmed from his father's political experience. Indonesian teachers in 1960s were highly political. Even the Minister of Basic Education and Culture together with the Coordinating Minister of Education, Knowledge, and Culture in 1961

³⁰⁷ Interview with Karsono and Parminah, 3 December 2016 #48.17-49.28; 49.42-50.39

were supported by the PKI.³⁰⁸ It is very likely that Karsono's father may have been involved in leftist activism through a teachers' association, which Karsono did not openly share with me. This also adds to the reason for his father's detention – that he was considered to be part of the communists, and not only because he slept during his guard shift. Karsono's statement that not all people who were detained were PKI originated from his family's experience. He was bringing his personal experience into a general interpretation about the violence in Banyuwati.

It seems that turning several civilian homes into command posts was part of the military's strategy to mobilise and coordinate civilian involvement in the operation.³⁰⁹ Besides Karsono, I also talked to Sardono, whose house was also used as a command post. As one of the descendants of the village's first settlers, Sardono is regarded as a local and spiritual leader. Although his exact birthdate is not recorded, he remembered that he was in second grade during the Japanese occupation. This is another example of a localising time frame that I have mentioned before. Based on his description, I estimated that he was more than 80 years old when this study was conducted. When I asked him about 1965, Sardono explicitly stated that the army informed villagers about the events that occurred in Jakarta:

It started in [19]65, until [19]68. Oh, [19]65 was intense, coupled with [19]68. People were shot in [19]68. A lot of people were detained in [19]65. [Grace: How did you first hear about G30S and the coup attempt?] Lha, the fact that they were against the *pamong*, police, wasn't that an attempt to destroy the government? I didn't [read newspapers]. I just knew. What newspaper at that time? Compared with the present day, everybody knows everything because of television. Back then, there was nothing. I didn't know about the Generals. I only heard from those ABRI's (*Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia/ The Indonesian Army*). ... they stayed in the village head's house. That was their base.³¹⁰

By bringing local incidents into a national narrative, Sardono's account reflects a connection between the local and national. Through (unequal) collaboration between the army and villagers, information became one directional, placing the army as their main source of news about incidents that occurred at the centre. This was illustrated through Sardono's statement that he did not know anything about the Generals (referring to the army officers who were killed in the September 30th Movement), and that the news was brought into the area by the army. Interestingly, Sardono portrayed communists as trouble makers who always opposed local authorities such as *pamong* (village officials) and police. Although he did not specify the case or incident, he used this image to support the information about the September 30th Movement and the portrayal of communists as 'national traitors'.³¹¹ Localities were used to justify the importance of a military operation in Donomulyo. Moreover, Sardono's account also shows the early stage of new patronage alliances between the army and villagers. Their new patrons became the source of information about the violence that later constituted the villagers' memory of the event.

The army was not the only source of information. Religious leaders, such as those of the NU or Catholic Party, actively disseminated anti-communist propaganda after 1965. I acknowledged this while talking to Aji Marlan, the former village secretary that I described in Chapter 1. In 1965, Marlan

³⁰⁸ On the other hand, the Department of Higher Education and Science was controlled by the army. These factions competed in influencing policy development. In addition, institutions under the Ministry of Education, including professional teachers' organisations were also fragmented. Suwignyo 2011.

³⁰⁹ The selection of these houses were not very clear. I assume that it was because the people living in those houses had close relationships with authority or were members of the village apparatus.

³¹⁰ Interview with Sardono, 19 August 2016 # 31.57-35.26

³¹¹ This portrayal of the PKI as being responsible for the September 30th Movement is actually propaganda launched by the army to provoke and legitimise mass violence. Robinson 2017, 467.

was a member of Ansor (Islamic youth wing of Nahdlatul Ulama, the largest Islamic organisation in Indonesia) and later became the treasurer of the Ansor sub-branch in the Banyuwati area. When I asked him about the situation in 1965, he explained about the NU leaders and the war-like condition in his neighbourhood.

... it was the NU leaders who told us [about the September 30th Movement]. Then it expanded. The army was the one who brought peace. If the army didn't come, perhaps there will be war. Everybody brings their war tools, sickle or sword. Those who didn't have any, brought sharp bamboo. ... But it didn't happen. My father's house in the back [of my current house] was surrounded by shouting communists. But our house was strong, so they couldn't enter. Although my father ignored them, inside the house he was prepared with a sickle. I was with him, because I'm his oldest son. After that, we were too scared to sleep at home. We slept in the field with father, perhaps there were 5 to 7 people. After that, party members were gathered together, NU with NU, the Catholics with the Catholic party. We guarded [the village].³¹²

Aji Marlan's memory presents a different perspective. For him, the PKI and NU were at war; they were attacking each other. The presence of the army was to secure the situation and it brought an end to this situation of 'civil war'. For Marlan, the one who created *gégér* was not the army, but the PKI, who tried to attack his family. Marlan's account resonates with the horizontal conflict approach that I described in Chapter 3. This construction of a 'war' situation between the NU and PKI created a belief among the NUs that the Muslim community would never be safe until communism was annihilated.³¹³ Whether or not this was the actual state in Banyuwati should be questioned because, as I have discussed in the previous chapter, no significant conflicts occurred in the village before the arrival of the army during the Pancasila Operation in 1965.

Both Sardono and Aji Marlan's stories echo the state's narrative of the 1965 violence – that it was the PKI that was the threat to society, and that the violence was the result of an excess of communal hatred. This type of reproduction became important for them considering their background. Aji Marlan's family was a renowned Haji in Donomulyo. Aji himself was one of the Ansor sub-branch officials in the area. Meanwhile, Sardono was the descendant of the village's first settlers. He was one of the acknowledged local leaders in the area, and presumably also owns large amount of land. Both of these people are members of the village's elites, and it is important for them to preserve their position without being threatened by the left. Even long after the violence ended, they needed to maintain the narrative of the PKI as the villain in order to legitimise their annihilation. It became *their* collective memory. While Sardono and Marlan needed to maintain the state narrative, Karsono's story is different because his family was aggrieved by the military operation. Karsono implied that the PKI label was imposed from outside Donomulyo. In this case, narratives and memories depend on what patronage relationships can bring to their clients. It will correspond with the state's narrative as long as patrons and clients both benefited from the violence. When the situation is the opposite and either clients or patrons became disadvantaged from the violence, memories will diverge from the official line.

Nevertheless, although patronage networks affect the representation of the past, in some cases, it does not instantly show this linear causal relation. I came to this conclusion when I met Jono, a local merchant, who owns a grocery shop and other businesses (middleman in a cassava business – collecting the crop from farmers and selling it to larger collectors before going to the factory). He used to be part of the sub-branch of the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P, Indonesia's nationalist party) in 1990s. Though not a formal member, Jono's main task was to gather votes in

³¹² Interview with Aji Marlan, 22 August 2016 # 32.11-34.26

³¹³ See Fealy & McGregor 2012.

Donomulyo for the party. His track record of political activity stretched back to the period of the 1960s, when he became a member of the Indonesian Catholic Students Association (*Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Katolik Republik Indonesia/ PMKRI*). During the 1965-68 operation, at around 14 or 15 years old, he was assigned to assist the military as a civil guard, where he witnessed the disappearance of detainees from the *Koramil/* office of the military precinct command in Donomulyo (see Chapter 3). After the September 30th Movement occurred in Jakarta, Jono frequently travelled from Donomulyo to the Malang municipality to meet and discuss with other PMKRI activists, following the developments of the political situation. Several Catholic activists from Jakarta frequently travelled to different regions to consolidate the movement between central Jakarta and the regions. Among these figures were Harry Tjan Silalahi, Cosmas Batubara and the controversial father Beek, who often visited Malang city.³¹⁴ This shows the structural chain of information within religious organisations such as the Catholic Youth, from central Jakarta to other cities, and later to different districts in the regency. We have to keep in mind that at that time, the military had already established close cooperation with youth organisations which resulted in the mobilisation of anti-communist actions.³¹⁵ Within this background, Jono was summoned to the regional military command (Korem) in Malang municipality to give information about the communists in his village.

So I stayed there [PMKRI office in Malang] for a couple of days. Then I was summoned to Korem. There was the three of us, if I'm not mistaken. Wignyo, the one who is ill right now, was also summoned. Me, and Yusup. We were asked for information about this or that person, their location and what they look like. It was the villagers in here, and perhaps villagers of Lohdalem [another district in Malang regency]. Those who were summoned were Catholics, and the ones that the Korem indicated were also Catholic.

Jono's account shows that while the city resonates the official narrative of the PKI as dangerous and should be eliminated, the local narrative tells a different story, that the PKI did not resist, almost helpless, and that they were killed. Jono's experience also reflected the use of the patron-client network. In this case, the network was not based on individual relationships, but on organisational connections that were utilized for the military operation (between the army and the PMKRI). The network was used by the patrons to obtain information on a specific area, such as Jono's story. He eventually did not give the names to the Korem officers. He stated that if he did, it would only give the army an opportunity to extract money from those alleged communists in exchange for their safety or freedom. Jono took a risky decision within a repressive situation at that time. The motives for this decision emerged when Jono continued his story:

When I joined the meeting in Malang, Donomulyo looked very scary. Even when I returned to Donomulyo, I felt scared, because I heard from Malang about this and that. But for the villagers here, everything was normal and fine. But for those, who did not know the real condition in here, it was

³¹⁴ Father Beek, a Catholic priest, initiated the intensive one-month leadership training known as *Kaderisasi Sebulan/ Kasbul*. It succeeded in creating generations of militant anti-communist Catholic leaders, some of them managed to be high level politicians in the Suharto years. The travels of these Catholic figures to the regions, as mentioned by Jono, also took place even before the September 30th Movement, with the purpose to disseminate information, especially about the latest political situation. During the violence in 1965, Cosmas Batubara and NU activist, Samroni, travelled to different regencies in East Java not only to disseminate information from Jakarta, but also to gather reports of the situation in the regions and report them back to the center. Cosmas Batubara was supplied with a gun from Kodim Malang. Interview with FX Trikatmo, Malang municipality, 11 June 2016 # 07.45, 48.30

³¹⁵ On 2 October 1965 in Jakarta, a meeting between the military, and young generation leaders of anti-communist parties established the Action Front to Crush the Thirtieth of September Movement (KAP-Gestapu). Two of the prominent leaders of this front were Subchan Z.E of the NU and Harry Tjan Silalahi from the Catholic Party. Crouch 1988, 141.

scary because the communists here were fierce, able to kill, etc. But there was never a communist movement that killed marhaenists (a nationalist supporter) like me. Nobody was killed by the PKI. It was the other way around, like I mentioned before, a lot of the PKI were killed.³¹⁶

It is highly possible that Jono did not submit the names to Korem because he did not believe that those names were communists, or if they were, they were not as dangerous as the army had depicted. Later on, Jono told me that his family members were politically diverse. While he was in PMKRI, his father was a PNI (Indonesia Nationalist Party – Sukarno’s political party), and few of his siblings were PKI, who also suffered during the military operation. Within this diverse political nuance in the family, the situation and decisions became more complex, and it would be difficult to remain loyal to a patron’s agenda. It led Jono to be more critical of his patron (the army), enabling him to conclude that Donomulyo’s communists were not creating any danger.

In areas such as Donomulyo, where infrastructure, mobility, and access to central politics are limited, information is highly dependent on local patrons. The role of the army, religious leaders, and also village heads was crucial in ‘rationalising’ the violence in Donomulyo. These patrons established a connection between violence experienced at the local level and a movement that occurred in the capital, which later constituted the villagers’ memory of the violence. On the other hand, it was important for clients to maintain the state’s anti-communist narratives because they were benefitting from the elimination of leftists in the village, for example in maintaining their status, properties, or gaining benefits after supporting the violence. In contrast, people who were harmed by the violence remember the event in an opposite way than the state-constructed narrative. Patronage in memory making will be more complicated when a person has a diverse background, either politically or socially, making them more critical towards these patrons such as in the case of Jono and Karsono.

Local Collaborators and Memory Work

The patronage network was not static. In some cases, the network became stronger in the post-violence situation in which villagers obtained concrete benefits from their coalition with the patrons. However, in other cases, where loyalties shifted for various reasons, patronage alliances could have become weaker. As a result, villagers who used to be clients of their patrons were also experiencing the same coercive treatment which was usually directed towards the leftists. In other words, villagers who used to be perpetrators or collaborators could also become victims, once their relationship with their patrons lost its solidity. Furthermore, this dynamic patronage alliance can be seen in the ways individual experiences were used to legitimise national violence, and through practices of distancing oneself from the violence.

Although I was not able to interview perpetrators of the violence, I managed to get in touch with a few of the local collaborators in the Banyujati area. Their collaborative acts ranged from guarding prisoners to assisting the army during house raids. The concept of collaboration itself emerged to include more dynamic relationships of actors in genocide that could not easily be categorised into victims and perpetrators. Anton Weiss-Wendt and Ügür Ümit Üngör describe acts of collaboration as collective actions where subordinate groups, resulting from structural inequality, assist the hegemonic power to destroy another group with the aim of improving the collaborator group’s status.³¹⁷ Furthermore, Weiss-Wendt and Üngör also pointed out that collaborators usually participate without a centralised authority that orders the mass killings, rather there is an unspoken consensus within the minorities that resulted in their participation. Weiss-Wendt and Üngör’s

³¹⁶ Interview with Jono, 23 August 2016 #40.41-46.25

³¹⁷ Weiss-Wendt & Üngör 2011, 427.

explanation of collaborators highlights the beneficial relationship between them and the hegemonic power, which in Donomulyo was reflected by the connection between villagers and their patrons.

Like many villages in Java, victims, collaborators, and perpetrators continued to live together in Donomulyo after the 1965-68 violence (see the illustration about Suparman, Jarso, and Marwono in the beginning of chapter 1). One of the collaborators that I met in the Banyujati area was Parjito, who assisted the army during house arrests in 1965 and 1968. Our first encounter occurred when I visited a monument in Donomulyo where Parjito serves as the guard (*juru kunci*). Although my initial intention was to explore stories about the monument (more about the monument on chapter 5), I became interested in Parjito's own life history. He was born in 1942 and spent most of his life in the Banyujati area. He currently lives with his daughter, son-in-law and two grandchildren; and works as a farmer, growing cassava and corn. His daughter also manages a small store (*warung*) in front of their house. Once in a while, Parjito also taps rubber from a small plantation just a few meters away from his home. He was assigned as the guard of the monument because of his close relationship with the police and army since the 1965-68 operation. He became a collaborator in the operation because he was already a member of the village civil defence (*pertahanan sipil/ hansip* – usually responsible for village security) before the army entered Donomulyo.

I decided to further explore Parjito's experience in the violence, particularly during his involvement in military raids.

I became the civil guard, so I followed the army. I already joined them in 65. I wore a uniform and I was proud. Bayonets [and] rifles were not allowed. Only the army was allowed to carry rifles. If they were tired, they told us to carry them for them. Even before there was the caretaker, I was already a civil guard. Back then it was called *Hanra* (*Pertahanan Rakyat/ People's Defense*), and then *Pertahanan Sipil* (Civilian Defense)/ *Hansip*. I guarded every day. ... I didn't go around the village, but every day I went to guard in the village meeting hall (*balai desa*). There was a post there. ... The army embraced the civilian guards. When they came, they instantly approached us. They gathered every civilian guard in the afternoon, together with the *pamong*. We follow them when it was time for operations or for gatherings.

Civilian guards were automatically used by the army once they arrived in the village. They became close collaborators of the army, although they could not perform all duties, such as handling arms, as Parjito explains. Parjito also felt very proud to take part in the operation. When I asked why he participated, he explain clearly that "They (the communist) resisted, they were the enemy. For the state, they were the enemy of the government". As a collaborator, Parjito mirrors the official narrative that justified the violence against the left. He felt proud to be able to participate in an act to capture the enemies and save the nation, in his perception.

I was curious to know more about his specific role in the operation. Parjito described:

I went with the soldiers to houses. Oh, it was fierce when we go to houses. We brought flashlights, in daylight. Even if there was nobody in the house, the door was forced open, and we searched with the flashlight. We searched inside, upstairs, it was very meticulous. I followed to people's houses every day. They usually did it during the day. ... If someone was caught, we took them to the posts. For example, if the post was in my house, then when somebody was captured, they tied them like a prisoner. Handcuffs were not available at that time. Then they took them to the post and interrogated them, "Why did you become this or that?" ... Back then, there was no limit to beating people. Not like nowadays, where violence is not allowed. The soldiers, they had no mercy. A lot of people confessed but they still beat them, though. My friends were gone because of that. ... Not so many people gave themselves up [to the army]. Rather than giving up, they chose to hide until it was safe. I saw them [soldiers making mass graves]. I followed them everywhere. ... I saw the process. I saw the victims sat. I

saw the soldiers beating the detainees. It was the army who did it, not civilians. We were not allowed and we didn't have the right. It was their *special right* (italic emphasis by author), because it was a heavy issue, about the rebels.³¹⁸

This was an intriguing conversation for me, because there are many confusing aspects, which Parjito stitched together to present it as a reasonable argument. First, he explained how the army was fierce and used physical force to search for communists, interrogate, and later detain them. Second, he stated that his friends also became victims of the army's operation. Third, Parjito seemed to distance himself from the violence by stressing that it was the army who did it. It was the army's 'special right' to kill, because the PKI affair was a serious issue to be dealt with. Parjito implies that not only the violent operation was justifiable, but also that his losses were inevitable. It was the consequence of such critical national interference. There was no statement of proudness in this case. In the first part of Parjito's statement, he implies the importance of civilians for the army. But when it comes to cases of mass killings, he draws a strict line by stating that the killings were the army's business. This is what I frequently encounter when talking to collaborators: on the one hand they emphasise the importance of the operation, but on the other hand, they demarcate their involvement in the killings.

Parjito also told me a bit about his family's background. His father was a PNI (Partai Nasional Indonesia/ *Indonesian Nationalist Party*), and according to Parjito, this political affiliation saved his family from being a victim in 1965. However, some of his relatives were killed during the 1965 and 1968 operations because they were involved in the PKI. Remembering Jono's family's political diversity and his critical stance against the formal narrative (see previous section), I was very curious to know what Parjito thought about his family's experience and the state's depiction of the violence. I asked him how he felt about his losses.

[It was] not only my friends, but also cousins, uncles. Around nine people, relatives from my parents: uncle, younger nephew. There were even two persons taken from one house, they were brothers. Yes, I joined [the soldiers who took them]. I didn't want to follow people who went hiding. [How did it feel?] Well, horrifying. But what can I do? I think I was also heartless. I told you before that I was stopped on my way home from the Quran recital (*ngaji*). They [members of Pemuda Rakyat/ leftist Youth Movement] grabbed me on the sides, and put a knife. ... They said, "Stop the recital. I'll kill you if you don't stop". They already grabbed me in the rice field. "If you want to kill me, then kill me. If you hurt me, I will kill you and your friends", I told them. Then they retreated. "If you don't believe me, just watch". They backed off [and said], "Okay then, go home". The next day, I went to my Quran recital, and they stopped me again. "Go away, I'm going for my recital. Mind your own business. Go away". And they left.³¹⁹

While answering my question about his feelings of loss, Parjito slowly shifted the conversation to his experience of being threatened by people from *Pemuda Rakyat* (leftist youth organisation affiliated with PKI). In this fragment, Parjito framed the intimidation as something that is more significant and important than his emotions or loss. The tendency to portray communists as anti-religious troublemakers dominated Parjito's story.

All *pamong* of Banyuwati were substituted with caretakers. ... The village head was from ABRI. The *kamituwo* were also from ABRI, not to mention the Babinsa. If they didn't do it, it would be dangerous. The old *pamong* were dismissed from their positions, replaced by the army. They were not even involved. If they did not take this action, it would be hard. It could never be safe here. There would always be incidents; thievery or other things. The main purpose was [to create] commotion in the

³¹⁸ Interview with Parjito, 8 September 2016 # 37.42-39.55; 47.15-56.59; 57.23-58.51

³¹⁹ Interview with Parjito, 8 September 2016 # 01.05.19-01.08.21

kampongs. ... That was the act of people who disagreed with the government. Perhaps they were [PKI].³²⁰

Similar to Sardono's statement before, here Parjito portrayed the PKI as the source of the problems in the neighbourhood. In his view, the army ought to be part of the village apparatus in order to secure the village. It is only through such a way that villagers can live in harmony. Parjito's perspective on this matter follows the military's reasoning for the Pancasila operation exactly, which was to create peace and order.

Parjito's role after the 1965-68 operation may explain his reproduction of the state's narrative. He was appointed as the caretaker of a police monument in 1971 in the Banyujati area. Being proud about his position, he repeatedly emphasised his close relationship to one of the local police officers (*Polsek* Donomulyo) who initiated the monument. He also showed me the decision letter for his appointment as the monument caretaker, which means that he also received a government payment for this task. For an ordinary villager to be appointed in such a position and to have a close relationship with the state authority was regarded as upward mobility. In the case of Parjito, this mobility was made possible by assisting the patrons in the violence and also afterwards, through a new assignment of preserving the symbol of the state (police monument) in the Banyujati area. Therefore, it is important for collaborators such as Parjito to support and recreate the anti-communist narrative by making his personal experience (being threatened for reciting Koran) fit in with the national narrative. It became an individual example of the national enemy, portraying them as troublemakers and traitors of the nation. Furthermore, I realise that Parjito's story, regardless of its truthfulness, was a story that he *wanted* me to believe. The image of the PKI as evil was far more important to maintain, compared to his grief of losing family members and friends in the anti-communist operation. This illustrates 'orientation toward the good', as Steedly highlights in her research, where individuals build certain moral values into their narratives, creating a framework and interpretation of their actions.³²¹ For local collaborators, their moral values served to sustain the national importance of eliminating the dangerous communists.

However, the role of collaborators cannot be narrowed down to supporting the state's narrative alone. The post-violence situation could create changes in patronage relationships, which resulted in ambiguities of the position of collaborators. I acknowledged this through the experience of Suparman, my landlord (*bapak kost*) in Donomulyo, who previously introduced me to Marwono (see chapter 1). Born in 1945, Suparman currently lives with his youngest grandson. He became a central person in my fieldwork, who introduced me to the area, the villagers, and their history. I stayed in his house and after a while I became accustomed to the mixture of elements of Catholicism and Javanese culture. Sometimes I joined them for a Catholic community prayer in a neighbour's house and I became acquainted with Catholic members in this community. While observing his interaction with other villagers, I realised that he is well-known and highly respected amongst villagers for several reasons: his higher educational background, his former profession as a school teacher of Catholicism, and his previous political role in the Catholic Youth organisation (PMKRI) in the 1960s. He came from the family of the village's first settlers, with a *modin* (village apparatus who arrange spiritual or religious matters) grandfather, and a father who introduced Catholicism in the district. Suparman inherited his grandfather's extensive knowledge of Javanese culture, which became his well-known expertise amongst villagers. People from areas in and outside Donomulyo would come to consult him about spiritual matters, from deciding on a perfect day for celebrations (weddings, engagements, and so on) to spiritual problems (such as troubled spirits inside a house). During the

³²⁰ Interview with Parjito, 8 September 2016 # 21.42-24.58

³²¹ Steedly 2013, 56.

Javanese New Year or 1 *Suro*, his house would be filled with *Keris* (Javanese traditional weapons) from various people who asked for a spiritual cleansing of their weapon. Suparman also works as a Master of Ceremony in Javanese weddings due to his intense skill in reciting Javanese *tembang*. Although he never sets a price for his services, it became his source of income besides his pension fund as a former Catholic school teacher.

Around 1955 or 1956, Suparman's father became one of the candidates for the village head. His rival was the PKI leader, Brahmantyo. His father received 515 votes, while Brahmantyo successfully received more than 900 votes. This, according to Suparman, was because the villagers were mainly PKI. After Suparman finished his elementary education, he continued his junior high school in a Catholic seminary. Around this time, his father died and he did not return to the seminary, but moved to a pedagogic academy (*Sekolah Pendidikan Guru/ SPG*) in Malang, based on a recommendation from a Catholic priest. This is where he became intensely involved in the PMKRI. In 1965, he was in Malang, participating in the anti-communist demonstrations:

[In] 65 the G30S/PKI happened. The exam was postponed for 6 months. It was supposed to be in June, but they started in January. So I spent those empty months in politics, in Malang. My mother told me not to come home, but it was calm in Donomulyo, nothing happened. Malang was full of demonstrations. I went to Pasuruan, Surabaya. ... Furniture was dragged outside; books were burned in the education office [of East Java]. For six months, it was only those activities.

Since early to mid-October 1965, these kinds of mass demonstrations were intense throughout the nation. In Surabaya, for example, a mass rally took place on 16 October 1965 at the Heroes Monument, which was organised by the East Java and Surabaya Action Committee to Crush Gestapu (Panitia Aksi Mengganjang Gestapu). This group, presumably a branch of the KAP Gestapu, claimed to have the backing of sixty-seven political and mass organisations.³²² Catholic communities were strongly involved in this group, such as in the case of Suparman. As the secretary of the Catholic Party branch in Donomulyo, he became one of the core activists in the anti-communist demonstration in Malang.

When I returned, around junior high school, I was already the [Catholic] party's [branch] secretary. My name was only written, those who did the work were the other members. But because my name was written, then I learnt about politics. ... I came home during the vacation and became active in the party's meetings. ... Then from the city monument [in Malang], [we walk] to Ijen (main road in Malang) to ask for the Bishop's blessing. We demanded to disband the communists. All of us kneeled, and the Bishop blessed us. After that, there was no fear to join the demonstrations to Pasuruan, Surabaya, Bangil. I read [the declaration] to disband the communists. We read it in the square [in Malang municipality] and also in front of the Bishop. We were The Catholic Students Union (*Persatuan Pelajar Sekolah Katolik/ PPSK*). ... The Catholic Youth then gave birth to the Yellow Cross (*Salib Kuning*). During the 68 cleansing (the Trisula operation), the Yellow Cross was victorious. By chance, the commander of one of the Yellow Cross company was me. I trained them in self-defence.³²³

Yellow Cross is an alias for the Catholic Command Force (*Pasukan Komando Katolik/ Paskokat*), a security group that was established as guards for the church as a response to the September 30th Movement. The first members reached up to 150 people and were inaugurated in Jakarta by Mgr. A. Djajasepoetra, with the main task to guard the church, deliver logistics to demonstrators and accompany the injured to hospital, if needed.³²⁴

³²² Setiyawan 2014, 209-211.

³²³ Interview with Suparman, 21 September 2016 # 37.46-40.12; 45.56-47.09

³²⁴ Djokopranoto et,al. 2010, 307-308.

For the Catholic activists in Malang, Suparman emphasised the prohibition from the Bishop not to participate in the killings.

For the Bishop, the main thing was that we didn't take part in the killings. For example, if there were people who were placed in trucks, we let them go and we didn't take part. We are not even sure if they were wrong. Sometimes they were just indirect supporters, but because one person accused them, they could be killed directly. It was not a secret anymore that the most frequent questions asked among Ansor leaders was "How many did you slaughter?". But after it was safe, around [19]71 [or] 1973 the leaders of Ansor became stressed. ... They targeted people who were not directly involved [with the communist party], only accused, but then got slaughtered anyway. Most of these perpetrators are already dead.

Nevertheless, the Bishop's appeal was not entirely obeyed in the field. Former PMKRI activist in Malang, FX Trikatmo, told of his experience that Catholic activists were 'invited' by Kodim (district military office) Malang to 'send' prisoners. Sending usually meant killing, which commonly took place in Southern Semeru. Trikatmo himself followed a group of NU and witnessed them killing detainees in fish ponds around Pasuruan. During PMKRI's monitoring observation to other regencies such as Kediri, Trikatmo saw bodies along the road from Malang-Pujon to Pare-Kediri. In a big banyan tree, bodies had been hanged with the trees' tendrils, forming a display of terror.³²⁵ However, during my interview with Trikatmo, he never explicitly stated that he also participated in the execution.³²⁶

Another obvious involvement of the Catholics in the 1965-66 operations was in the screening team of detainees. In the case of Semarang, Central Java, the late Vicaris General of the Archdiocese of Semarang, P. Carri, SJ, wrote letters in 6 November 1965 to forbid priests and religious members of the Archdiocese to join military actions to screen for membership of the Communist Party. However, in 6 January 1966, another letter was released to encourage lay people to support the military actions by taking part as members of the screening team with the prerequisite not to get involved in violent actions.³²⁷ Although this was the case in Semarang, it is highly possible that similar structural instructions or appeals also occurred within the Archdiocese of Malang. For Suparman, the instruction not to participate in killings was an important element. This, as he implies, differentiated the Catholics from the Ansor who lived an unhappy life after slaughtering many villagers in the operation. I continue by asking how exactly the screening process was conducted. Suparman explains:

I was already in Jogja in 68. I returned with KAMI, the Indonesian student group, who was appointed to assist with the screening [of prisoners]. ... For example, the passengers of a whole truck were brought, not only once. ... So [for example] in Mrs Mujanah house, they got off one by one. They were asked, interrogated. For example, "Don't go with them". "No, I follow Aidit". So it's done. "Don't you feel pity for your relatives?". "No, it's fine. I will take the consequences by myself. Send my regards to my relatives". Then they got in again in the truck and were taken somewhere, I don't know. Those who obey the army were listed to *santiaji*. I think [the post in Mrs Mistri] was the second screening. The third was in Sumberoto, on the border with Blitar. They were taken from the detention centre. They were captured and detained in Donomulyo or Pagak. There was a detention centre in the sub-Regency (*Kawedanan*). I don't know how they eat and where they took them from there. But I know several places where they were shot.³²⁸

³²⁵ Interview with FX. Trikatmo, Malang, 11 June 2016, #48.27-52.49

³²⁶ A more explicit case occurred in South Blitar. Vanessa Hearman pointed out the explicit involvement of Catholics in the 1965-66 killings. See Hearman 2018.

³²⁷ Subanar 2001, 239-240.

³²⁸ Suparman, 21 September 2016 # 51.37-52.54, 54.58- 55.41

The screening procedure was not very clear. Without guidelines, screening teams seemed to rely mainly on individual questions to confirm the detainee's political alliance. From Suparman's account, it is very likely that the team's decision depends mainly on the interrogator's opinion. In other words, screening team members such as Suparman had the ability to decide whether or not a person deserved to be killed. Although Suparman seems to differentiate himself from the brutal executors of Ansor, at the same time, he participated in the process of sending villagers to the killing fields. He builds a self-consciousness that distances himself (the collaborator) from the perpetrators, without fully admitting that he also made the killings possible. It is also hard to believe that such a submissive act was expressed by the victim. A portrayal of 'ready to be killed' reduces the coerciveness image of perpetrators and their collaborators, and at the same time builds an image that perpetrators and victims have the same objective: to remove the communists.

Nevertheless, the coalition of civilian collaborators with their military patrons changed in the post-violence situation. When Suparman finally returned to the Banyujati area in 1971, he tried to ease the tense situation by reviving the traditional Javanese theatre performance group (*Ketoprak*). In this post-violence period, as I discussed in chapter 3, the military had put intense surveillance on rural life, which included cultural activities in the village.

I put forward the cultural approach [when I returned]. Why? So I could reach out to [people with] other religions, [and] because the cultural approach was easier. In our first performance, Pak Wahid [and] Mustaji argued with the Babinsa. "Take it (the costumes) off. Do not perform", [said the Babinsa] but I had already prepared the actors. It was during a person's wedding. We were devastated, but we couldn't argue. I still continued the play, but I eliminated their roles. I shortened the play.

The argument with Babinsa happened because two of the players, Wahid and Mustaji, were *santiaji* (a propaganda programme for accused Leftists, where they have to report weekly to the local military office), who were accused of being former BTI members. As the director of the play, Suparman was responsible for the players.

So I was fetched the next day, with a bicycle to Koramil. I had to be responsible for the play where the actors were *santiaji*. We reached an agreement, although through a hard way. They said, "So whose side will you follow: The Catholic Party or Golkar?". "Golkar" [I said]. So that's it, I just wanted to be safe. After we talked, they said, "Hold the microphone". They took me for a motorcycle ride where I had to shout "Come, join Golkar!", along this road. ... I knew one victim, Pak Handi who was beaten in Koramil. Why? Because he remained in the Catholic Party.

The treatment of Suparman shows how patron-client relationships in the New Order period were not static. Once the patrons saw signs that their clients were not in line with their agendas, they acted coercively towards them, sometimes in similar ways as towards the left. In order to maintain the client's benefits from the patronage network, they needed to prove their loyalty to the patron again. In the case of Suparman, this meant aligning his *Ketoprak* group with the demands of the patrons. Moreover, he became a vote-gatherer for the New Order's political party, Golkar, assuring that the newly established regime had a supporting mass in rural areas.

The patronage network was realigned once both parties were assured that they benefited from the same agenda. This was reflected in Suparman's description of his *Ketoprak* performance after the warning from the local military officer:

Not long after I became a Golkar, [the Babinsa said] "All right, you can play. The important thing is that you should arrange it very carefully. The main characters should not be the *santiaji*". That was after Pak Mustaji and Pak Wahid were dismissed. I know it hurt them very badly. Pak Mustaji cried in front of me. "What am I supposed to do?". We still have 3 performances to go. ... I met with the assigned

Babinsa. He was placed in Karangrejo. His name was Pak Dandi. ... I said, "So if you have to report to your superior, tell him that I will still continue the Ketoprak. They had already summoned me [to the Koramil]. You should be there during our [Ketoprak] practice [and] also during our meetings". So he attended [the meeting]. In the end, every time we performed, I took him in his army uniform, to guard. I bought him cigarettes and snacks, and he was happy. ...I gave the opening speech [at the Ketoprak performance] and announced the message from the government. [For example] There is a message: "there will be a public meeting tomorrow", announcements from the government. It was usually announced during the opening speech or through the comedian [in the performance]. It always had to be inserted. Because, if we obeyed and stayed loyal, they gave us the freedom to perform. I had a *sinden* (singer of Javanese songs) who was involved (a victim of the 1965 violence), but she was allowed to perform eventually. At first she was not allowed because she was part of Lekra. They kept an eye on us until [19]78.³²⁹

In the end, the Ketoprak group managed to continue their performances. In return, they had to be a funnel for New Order programmes, and become representatives of Golkar in their community. Both the patrons and the clients regained their advantages in the network. This was the prerequisite for the existence of cultural groups in rural societies in the early years of the New Order. None of them was able to maintain a critical stance and function against authorities as they did before in the 1950s-60s.

These cases of local collaborators show the dynamic patronage relationships. Although established through coalitions in the 1965-66 and 1968 violence, their relationships did not always continue to exist in similar conditions after the violence. Collaborators were used to support and guard the establishment of the new regime, and in return, they gained security to continue their activities in the village (such as Suparman's ketoprak group), or were rewarded with certain positions in society (such as Parjito, who became a monument caretaker). It is important for collaborators to support the official narratives of violence that were spread by the patrons, because collaborators benefited from these patronage relationships. Maintaining such relationships and their narratives, came at the expense of marginalising their own losses. On the other hand, participating in the killings may have triggered a sense of guilt that cannot easily be articulated, because its expression could be regarded as a form of disloyalty to the patrons' past role in the violence. As a result, collaborators distanced themselves from participation in the killings, which reflects their attempts to reconcile their collaboration in violence and loyalty to their patrons on the one hand, with their personal losses on the other.

From these cases of local collaborators, it is more fruitful to understand actors in mass violence as a dynamic process rather than identifying them as categories. This approach will help us to understand what makes mass violence possible, and specifically, the relationship between the state and society in such violence. Dwyer & Santikarma's work on Bali in 1965 pointed to the blur and overlap of categories of perpetrators and victims, because the violence in Bali was entangled in local kinship and relationships. Therefore, different roles in violence were not established instantly when the violence erupted, but were attached to their social backgrounds in a specific society and utilised by the military to eliminate the left. In Bali, those who were victimised by seeing their family members killed eventually participated in violent acts themselves.³³⁰ As studies of bystanders during the Holocaust also point out, the category of bystanders should be seen as a "specific and inherently dynamic subject position that arises in the genocidal process". The term bystander and even

³²⁹ Interview with Suparman, 21 September 2016 # 07.09-11.38; 12.35-12.55; 13.49-14.37; 14.59-16.48

³³⁰ Dwyer & Santikarma 2006, 200.

perpetrator or victim should not be considered as a reference to a particular group, but as a process.³³¹

Post-Violence Rural Development

Besides the rural patronage network, another framework that influences the memory of violence is the post-violence rural development. In chapter 2, I described the massive transformation in the village in the early years of the New Order. Political activities were confined to one political party, Golkar, that supported the new regime. All village heads were replaced with military men, who were commonly known as caretakers. The same also happened in the cultural sphere, where traditional theatrical performances were heavily monitored and had to be in line with the New Order national agendas. However, the major transformation in the post-1965 period was the changes in agrarian policy. Under the capitalistic orientation, national agrarian programmes such as the Green Revolution and BIMAS (Bimbingan Masyarakat or Mass Guidance) farming credit brought more problems to rural areas. In Donomulyo, it increased inequality in the village because most of these programmes only benefited middle-class farmers, were not accessible to local peasants, and distribution relied heavily on the local patronage network. The question of 'who gets what' after the violence lingered in the minds of Donomulyo villagers and also constituted their memories of violence. This shows that memory formation is an ongoing historical process, which is not instantly complete once the defining event occurs. Memory is shaped by years of subsequent experiences after the 1965-68 violence.

I started to give close attention to this matter of post-violence transformation when I encountered stories of a central figure in Donomulyo during the early New Order period. I became interested in this figure because villagers, either benefited or harmed by the violence, frequently mentioned him – stressing his central role in Donomulyo's infrastructure development. His name is Ario Dursam, a caretaker village head who won the village election (presumably in a pseudo-democratic election) in 1973 against his predecessor, Susanto, who was also an army officer, assigned directly to Donomulyo after 1965 to replace the PKI village head who had disappeared. Before being stationed in Donomulyo, Dursam was assigned to Kalimantan and West Java. In the later province, Dursam was involved in a battle with Darul Islam and injured his leg. Later, he was assigned to East Java and served in the Subdistrict Military command (Koramil) in Ngajum, another district in Malang, 25 km from the regency capital of Kepanjen. Around 1968, he was transferred to *Koramil* in Donomulyo. He sold all his properties in Ngajum and used the money to buy land in Donomulyo, taking his wife and four children to settle in the new district. Through his appointment in Koramil, he initially became the *Babinsa* (village security apparatus) in the Banyujati area and later, he became one of the *kamituwo* (local leaders) under Susanto's leadership.

Dursam died in 1992, but I was able to talk to his son, Hadiman, who is still living in Banyujati. He was born in 1958 in Ngajum, and moved with his parents to the Banyujati area, Donomulyo, in 1968. He recalled the decrease in their standard of life in Donomulyo, because in his childhood eyes, "rice was very scarce in Donomulyo while it was very abundant in Ngajum". After finishing his middle school in Donomulyo, Hadiman worked as a farmer, tilling his inherited land. Around 2000, together with another villager, he initiated a local NGO to deal with environmental issues in their village, which only lasted for several years. Both Suparman and Hadiman ran as village head candidates in 1998 but lost to Sulaiman Chodir, who became the village headman until 2006.

³³¹ Victoria Barnett as quoted in Ensel & Gans 2018, 112.

In one of our conversations, I asked Hadiman about the start of his father's career as one of the *kamituwo* or village authority. He explained that although the village head was elected by villagers, *kamituwo* was appointed by the village head and district leader (*camat*). The main consideration in this appointment was whether or not *kamituwo* could cooperate with the village head. This top-down nature of their election also suggests that *kamituwo* are more likely to put forward the agenda of village heads (and other leaders above him, i.e. the district officer), rather than villagers. During the New Order, *kamituwo* was an extended part of the army's grip on the village and became the vanguard to establish New Order's policies. This was Dursam's initial position before he was elected as Banyujati's village head.

According to Hadiman, when his father became village head during the 1970s, he gave special attention to programmes for village youth, especially sports. Dursam himself was a sports lover and joined many sports clubs in the surrounding area, such as volley, football, and martial arts. His preference for sports led him to provide villagers with facilities, such as attempting to provide a football field in every hamlet, and organised football tournaments. Sometimes, Dursam even provided transportation by borrowing trucks from the air force or marines, so that all villagers could watch football tournaments in different districts. He also facilitated cultural activities, by creating *Ludruk Karya Bakti* (*ludruk* is a traditional East Java theatre performance. This is different from *Ketoprak*, which originated from Central Java and is closely related to wayang stories). It was famous but also expensive to ask the group to perform, according to Hadiman.³³²

Besides a man of sports and culture, Dursam was also famous for his initiative in coordinating infrastructure development in the village. Before his leadership, roads in Banyujati were made of dirt. Dursam then gathered villagers to do collective work (*kerja bakti*), gathering stones and putting them on the dirt road, making it a semi-solid one so it would be easier for vehicles to use this road.³³³ Obviously, collective work during the New Order and under a military caretaker village head is not fully voluntary. Hadiman noted that this kind of collective work was *instructed* by village authorities. This was a typical situation during the New Order – that authorities would exert their power even for something that was considered a 'communal' effort. However, according to Hadiman, although such coercive instruction existed, his father was still considered to be a good leader and preferred by villagers. Towards the end of our conversation, Hadiman compared his father's leadership with the previous village headman, Susanto. "Before 1975", Hadiman said, "they [village leaders] were militaristic. They gave orders. Perhaps that was what people didn't like. Pak Susanto used to carry guns everywhere. Second, Pak Susanto was appointed as a village head caretaker".³³⁴ The word 'appointed', was what differentiated Dursam from Susanto. While the first was elected by the villagers, the latter was appointed as the caretaker. When telling about his father's life, Hadiman seems to present an image of a responsible leader, who was elected by the people and facilitated people's aspirations. As we will see later, rather than representing a democratic and ideological leader, Dursam actually resembled an authoritative and pragmatic figure of the New Order.

Apart from Ario Dursam's contribution to sports, culture, and infrastructure development, Hadiman pointed to another characteristic of his father that interests me. Hadiman started to mention his father's vicious character.

Probably that was why people were interested, according to me, although my father was vicious. ... If it's wrong, then it's wrong. For example, if people gambled, he would take the people to the police

³³² Interview with Hadiman, 13 December 2016 #11.20-16.58, 22.38-22.58, 29.27-30.51, 41.23-42.35

³³³ Interview with Hadiman, 13 December 2016 # 02.44-09.23

³³⁴ Interview with Hadiman, 13 December 2016 # 41.23-42.35

station. ... This is my analysis today. Back then, Kamituwo and the village head were monitoring their territory 24 hours a day. If there was a burglary, my father would do his very best to find the burglar. He worked with the police. To find the burglar, he sold my mother's necklace, or our goat. We had goats, but a goat was sold and the money was used to cover the cost to find the burglar. For example, if they knew the stolen property was taken to Pucung, he would go there using his own money.

Hadiman portrayed his father as a forceful person against illicit acts and willing to use his own funds to solve criminal cases. From Hadiman's description, I had the impression that Dursam's leadership character was full of commitment, intense attention to youth and cultural activities, forceful and authoritative. However, keeping in mind that Dursam's period of appointment was during the New Order, his leadership reflected how the regime actually initiated development through coercive means. Furthermore, the commitment to resolve criminal cases or illegal activities may not only stem from the motive to protect the village, but also to ensure stability and order, as the prerequisite for New Order policy implementation. Indications of instability in a certain area could put a person's career at risk, which Dursam was definitely seeking to avoid.

I also encountered a similar impression of Ario Dursam when I talked to Aji Marlan, who worked as a village secretary (*carik*) in 1975-1996, during Dursam's leadership. Aji was a son of a Haji in Banyuwati, who later became the treasurer of the Ansor (the NU youth wing) sub-branch in Donomulyo prior to 1965. In the 1968 Trisula operation, he was involved in capturing remaining leftists in Donomulyo (see chapter 2). Marlan's position in the Ansor and his role during the anti-communist operation made it possible for him to be appointed as a village secretary – an illustration of the benefits resulting from the patronage network after the 1965-68 violence. When I explained that I would like to know more about Ario Dursam, who replaced Brahmantyo, the PKI village head who was killed, Marlan instantly corrected my statement. He said, "Not killed, but disappear" – a simple statement that diminishes intentionally aggressive acts targeted against the leftist village head. Although this is not the case, it made Marlan's position clearer – that he will always side with the authorities of the state, no matter how bad the situation is.

He started as an informal assistant during Susanto's leadership and was officially appointed as the village secretary under Dursam for two consecutive periods. When I asked Aji about Dursam's character, he portrayed Dursam as a vicious figure.

It [Dursam's leadership] was good. If it was not, then I would not have stayed that long. The way he leads: if it's not right, he will be angry. He was harsh. Back then, it was not like today. Apparatus had to struggle, not like today where there is a lot of money from above (central government). In the old days, village heads acted like the coloniser. ... but village heads were prestigious. If someone was wrong, he or she would be scolded. People were frightened, because it reflected colonisers. But the relationship was good with the people. He was elected, so he must have been good. The village was further developed during his period. ... I liked Pak Ario Dursam the most, because I was his man. He built the village meeting hall (*balai desa*). The offices surrounding it were also Pak Ario Dursam's [initiative].³³⁵

This conversation with Aji Marlan depicted how he was actually trying to make Dursam's negative character sound justifiable. First, he explained that Dursam was harsh and could easily get angry. Then Aji Marlan stressed that this was understandable, because during the New Order, the challenges and workload of the village head were very different compared to the current situation. In Marlan's example, these days the local authorities have abundant funds from the regency and central government, which was not the case during the New Order. I assume this was not because there were less funds during the New Order period, but because the structural administrative

³³⁵ Interview with Mr and Mrs Aji Marlan, 31 August 2016 #01.08.33-01.11.32, 01.15.10-01.17.04

hierarchy was also filled with informal connections of patronage between villages and their district or regency officials to access such funds. While at present, policies and budgets for village development are regulated clearly in the Village Law (*Undang-undang Desa*). Second, Marlan described Dursam's character as harsh and feared by the people. But Marlan continued by saying that people still voted for Dursam despite his character, because he brought infrastructure development to the village. He then compares Dursam's leadership to the former colonial authority, where viciousness was legitimised for modern development. Keeping in mind the military's domination of the village, it is hard to believe that the election process was free from coercion. Overall, Aji Marlan's description of Ario Dursam was full of legitimisation of his negative behaviour towards the people, presenting loyalty to the authorities. I received a similar impression when collaborators of violence explained the 1965-66 operation in Donomulyo.

The image of Ario Dursam as the motor of Donomulyo's development soon shifted into a different perspective once I heard the story from Marwono, a simple farmer. Compared to most of the villagers' houses that I had visited, his was very plain with no decorations on the table and walls. Their living room furniture only consisted of old wooden chairs and a table. A small television was located in the family room with a small bed in front of it to lie down while watching their favourite channels. He had six children with his wife, who still lives with him. All of them already have their own families and only two of them still live in Donomulyo. Although Marowono's identity card stated his year of birth as 1940, he is certain that he was born earlier, perhaps in 1936 or 1937. His age has led to several health problems which has made it difficult for him to work on his own land. Nevertheless, with the help of his wife, he still tries to plant timber (*kayu sengon*), cassava, a few cacao trees, and tend their livestock.

Marwono had a rough past. Living in poverty during his childhood (see chapter 2), he and his father-in-law were accused of being BTI members. The head of the village neighbourhood (*ketua RT*) arrived at his house one day in 1968, and told him to go to Koramil Donomulyo. Since then, he had to undergo *santiaji*, where he was obliged to report once a week at the same time for around two years, and listen to lectures given by the military officers at the office. Despite this treatment, Marwono still considers himself fortunate compared to other villagers, because his friends who were leaders of the BTI were summoned and never returned. Their property was confiscated, including their land and houses. "They (the authorities) will collect whatever they want. If necessary, even the wives will be taken. ... *Babinsa* (*Badan Pembina Desa*, a village-level monitoring official) came to the village. Nobody could resist", said Marwono. Compared to the previous description by Aji Marlan and Hadiman where they made the impression that village officials were crucial in village development, Marwono presented a different picture. For him, these officials were actually destroying villagers' lives.

Marwono's father-in-law also lost his land. He stated, "It was confiscated because he was accused of being a BTI. It was only one reason, a member of the BTI is PKI". This act of confiscating land was implemented under the same 1960 Agrarian Law. However, the aim of the law was twisted. Instead of distributing it to peasants, they were used for individual advantages. When Marwono explained these practices of land confiscation, the name of Ario Dursam appeared.

Ah, there was this committee, formed in the village. The village head was Ario Dursam, who is already dead. [They included] members of village head, the village apparatus, ... and the *pamong*. [How about the Koramil?] Although they did not participate, they received some amount. It would have been impossible without their support. So the committee said to me, "You have this much land, [it should be] reduced to this". They took more or less 18 aré, which is 1800 square meter. It was 66 aré before. We bought it with three cows. My mother and father bought the land that was confiscated. [What

about the documents?] We didn't have the certificate yet, only the Letter of Land Tax Payment (*Surat Pembayaran Pajak Tanah/ SPPT*). I had the letter for each year's payment. When they confiscated, they changed it, arranged by the village head. They changed the letter because the village head had the power. Then the land was sold by the committee.³³⁶

Here, Dursam was a very different figure. He was not the figure of development, as some villagers mentioned before, but as an extortionist. Dursam used his position as a local patron, and the labelling of villagers as communists, to confiscate their properties. Marwono's story reflects a transforming village under the New Order, where patronage alliances between the military and the village apparatus became stronger and drove village development, but at the same time, this was executed under exploitation and extortion practices against villagers.

Land was not the only element that the authorities took advantage of. Farmer's credit, such as BIMAS, also developed as a breeding ground for corruption by village authorities. Initially, according to Aji Marlan, the former village secretary, BIMAS seems to benefit the villagers. From his observation, around 50-60% of the villagers participated in the programme. It involved a series of seminars or meetings about farming techniques, new varieties of rice seeds and fertilizers. These seminars were organised by the Agricultural Department, and also attended by the district chief, police, and Koramil. For farmers who participated in this programme, using new types of rice seeds with shorter harvesting period (such as the famous PB or IR), rice production increased threefold.³³⁷ Nevertheless, Marlan's observation actually only pertains to a particular group of farmers. As a research in the Pagelaran district shows, BIMAS was only accessible to middle- or upper-class farmers, because they tended to have larger plots of land and capital to access farming credit, compared to lower-class farmers.³³⁸

This discrepancy with regard to credit access resonated with the Marwono's experience. He described that the village apparatus actually used their position for corruption and to gain advantage from the credit programme.

It [BIMAS] existed, but I didn't join. BIMAS, as far as I knew, was assistance for the people. They gave credit in the form of seeds. Farmers were given seeds by the government. (Marwono whispers) But it was controlled by a group of people, those in power, the *pamong* (village authorities). So if there was a credit, the money was gone. People didn't know. The programme existed, but we never received the money. I heard from the *pamong*, but they did not say anything about money. BIMAS was like this, there were seeds, but they never told us there was money. They gathered us in the village meeting hall for a lecture by the *pamong* and district leaders. ... Pamong were rich. I had one friend who became a *pamong* back then, until now he is still rich. Because of that [BIMAS], but it was not our money, it was the government's. Although they said it was for the people, but it was only for a group of people.³³⁹

Pamong, or village apparatus, controlled the distribution of BIMAS by selecting and listing potential beneficiaries.³⁴⁰ Those who received the credit were more likely to be the people who were close to this group of patrons. This clientelist relationship lasted until the present, in the practices of the KUT (*Kredit Usaha Tani* – farming credit) distribution. To access the credit grant from the regional budget,

³³⁶ Interview with Marwono, 16 September 2016# 01.12.13-01.22.32. Conversation with Rimando and his wife, another farmer who was accused of being a BTI in Donomulyo, also confirmed that land confiscation after 1965 only started during the period of Ario Dursam.

³³⁷ Interview with Aji Marlan, 15 May 2017# 00.16-10-22

³³⁸ Kano 1990, 120-21.

³³⁹ Interview with Marwono, 16 May 2017#07.33-12.04

³⁴⁰ Interview with Suparman, 19 July 2017#15.20-20.15

village officials collected copies of the villagers' identity cards, because the number of eligible villagers would influence the amount of funding granted from the budget. After receiving the funds, village officials would embezzle it, instead of distributing it to the villagers who had hand in copies of their identity cards.³⁴¹

The story of Ario Dursam and the village authorities reflected two interesting yet conflicting aspects. First, it showed the circle of patrons, consisting of village heads and their apparatus, and army men; that controlled most of the rural development projects after the 1965 violence. The question of 'who gets what' after the violence, also affected how villagers perceived the violence. 1965 can be seen as a point where a village that had once fallen behind, was transformed into a modern and developed one. Its progress lies in the success of the village headman in endorsing infrastructure development. Second, this progress that Donomulyo experienced, was achieved at the expense of a specific group that consisted of peasants, accused of being BTI, and *santiaji*. Ario Dursam is not just a story of multi-faceted leadership in a village, but a reflection of how a memory framework is established. For people who were involved in the violence or were representatives of the state in the New Order period, individual and communal gains in the post-violence New Order developed into a memory of progress and village improvement. On the contrary, for villagers who experienced losses during and after the violence, the early years of the New Order were not about development, but a memory of marginalisation and extortion. This shows that memories of 1965 are not only influenced by structural memory projects at the national level, but are also deeply embedded in the rural transformation which followed the violence.

Navigating Silence

Some scholars believe that the national anti-communist memory project repressed narratives of violence, and turned them into 'silenced memory'. The New Order is considered successful in creating the 'wholesale destruction of the memories of 1965-1966, especially because the stigma and fear are still alive and strong in relation to the incidents of 1965-1966'.³⁴² I agree that fear and stigma against the communists are still present in Indonesia today. However, it should not be seen merely as a passive reaction to repression which resulted in silenced memory. In other words, being stigmatised and silenced do not automatically result in diminishing memories. If we zoom in to the everyday lives in rural areas such as Donomulyo, we will have a different understanding of silence – that it is a navigating device to continue living within a community, years after the violence took place.

Marwono brought me to this conclusion. Our first encounter was made possible through Suparman, one of the prominent local leaders that I described in the previous section in this chapter. Suparman presented Marwono as one of the ex-*santiaji*, as "Our brother who became a *victim of history*" (*Saudara kita yang menjadi korban sejarah*). *Victim of history*, and in other cases where victims such as Marwono are depicted as 'accused of being communist', is a common phrase often used by victims of the anti-communist purge to suggest they were falsely accused and that they have nothing to do with the left. This evasive term is understandable, given the demonic status that communism has acquired in Indonesia, and the social ostracism against those associated with it. But, as we shall see below, the portrayal of a victim of history as someone who did not have any knowledge or support for the left is not necessarily always the case.

In our first meeting, Suparman played a perfect role as a mediator. In a very simple way, he gave a brief explanation of my background, my research and my purpose in the village. After that, he let me

³⁴¹ Conversation with Burhan, 12 July 2017.

³⁴² Marching 2017, 33.

introduce myself. I wanted to change the atmosphere to be more informal, so I started to talk about everyday things, such as family, church, and so on. The conversation flowed, but in this first meeting, I did not ask anything yet about the 1965-1968 violence.

As I continued visiting Marwono on my own, we became close friends. Apart from Suparman's term of victim of history, I sensed that Marwono knew more about the left in Donomulyo. But every time I asked something about the BTI before the 1965 violence, he always said that he did not know much about it. This statement was usually followed by questions regarding my research. At first, I thought my explanation was not clear enough or too academic, so I repeated it in a simpler way. I also stressed the confidentiality aspect in my research because I thought Marwono was too afraid to talk. However, after several visits, I realised that Marwono was not confused, but he was trying to convince himself that I could be trusted.

As our relationship grew closer, and on a mission to find out more from Marwono, on our third meeting, I began to speak openly about my thoughts on the 1965-66 violence. I told him that I thought that the violence was a form of state violence which caused injustice for the victims. I also expressed my fascination of the leftist movement in the context of anti-colonialism in Indonesia's pre-independence era and that I regret its exclusion from Indonesia's historiography. As a student during the New Order, I am one of those young generation who wanted to know more about this particular history, and that I considered Marwono as a source of this history. That meeting reached into another level of the relationship, where Marwono started to realise that we were on the 'same side' of history. In the conversation, he told me that although he was not a member of the BTI, he knew about caderisation courses that took place in Donomulyo. He also read a book about agrarian reform which he borrowed from his BTI friend. He continued to share about his involvement in the measurement of land in the Banyujati area, for the purpose of land distribution before the 1965 violence happened. It did not proceed because the PKI village head, Brahmantyo, had already been detained and killed. He then continued to express his admiration of Brahmantyo, even placing him in contrast with Ario Dursam, the caretaker village head. We were talking about this particular experience, when a car parked in front of Marwono's house and he suddenly became silent (see Chapter 1). The situation was very different when he told the story of mass killings in the village. He was very open, and was not hesitant to talk about this horrifying period. For Marwono, it is not the killings that were kept hidden, but his admiration and support for the leftist movement in Donomulyo. This latter part is not in line with the 'working consensus', to use Erving Goffman's term, of a *victim of history* – a portrayal that places Marwono as an individual who has nothing to do with the left. The working consensus refers to the informal agreement in everyday interaction, where individuals usually suppress their own feelings or thoughts to deliver an impression or situation that is viewed as acceptable by others.³⁴³ Silence is a way to maintain oneself within this consensus.

Even when my life history interview with Marwono was mostly finished, I still visited him for a friendly meeting. One week after his story about the BTI activities, we were talking about trifling things related to our families and the current national situation. During this conversation, he suddenly asked, "Did you tell my stories to Suparman?". I was quite surprised, because we were not even talking about Suparman at that time. I only replied, "Not all of them". After a few minutes of silence, I asked him why he asked such a question, but he did not answer and only smiled. I continued by saying, "I understand who Suparman is and his position in 1965-68". Suparman, as a Catholic Youth activist at that time, participated in the anti-communist demonstration in 1965-66 and became a member of a screening team for PKI prisoners in 1968. Marwono said, "Ah, that's it

³⁴³ Goffman 1959, 9.

(*Nah, itu dia*)”, and laughed. It was more than enough for me to understand his complex relationship with Suparman. Both of them stand in very different position in the past. Suparman, a devoted Catholic and activist in 1960s, was surely anti-communist. Meanwhile, Marwono, an *abangan* who became Catholic after 1968, was supportive of the movement of the BTI and PKI in the 1960s. Today, Suparman is a highly respected cultural and religious leader, while Marwono is an ordinary farmer with no such status in society. For Suparman (and perhaps other villagers), Marwono was only a victim of history. But this victim, apparently, was also a Leftist supporter. He kept silent about this particular aspect, realising who Suparman is and their contrasting roles during and after the violence.

On a different occasion, I accidentally became involved in a conversation about Suparman with Jardito, another one of the Banyujati villagers that Suparman introduced. He was an army officer, who was detained in Malang’s Lowokwaru prison for seven years because his battalion and commander were accused of being involved in the September 30th Movement. After his release, he returned to his parents’ house in the Banyujati area and rebuilt his life. Together with his wife, they owned a grocery store in the main road of Banyujati. On one of my visits, I specifically asked about Suparman’s position after the violence.

It is hard to find out his [Suparman’s] exact position. Which side is he on? Sometimes he follows that side, or this side.... When I first return to this village, I heard that he participated in the [anti-communist] movement. But I didn’t ask directly, “How was [19]65?”. Suparman was still young at that time, and we never talked openly. ... if we see his life at that time, most of his friends are actually the *santiaji*. Suparman was also involved in *Ketoprak*, *Reog*, and there were many *santiaji* in that group. I do not dare talk about it, but I know his position. ... We should be careful. I don’t want to blame the past, because that is how history is.³⁴⁴

As is clear from Jardito’s statement, he could not categorise Suparman on one side – either as a victim or a perpetrator. Jardito understands very well that Suparman was basically anti-communist, but he also acknowledges that Suparman had many friends that were later accused of being BTI. Similar with what I mentioned in the earlier section, Suparman was highly involved in reviving traditional cultural groups where most of its members were *santiaji*. This complex position of Suparman made Jardito keep some distance from him. He remained silent about Suparman’s contrasting role in the village, not due to fear of repression, but because he realised that in order to move forward, some things should remain hidden.

These silences reflect the strategies of different individuals within society to be able to keep living together with others who had different positions in the violence. Silence is a negotiation between past and present, between the individual and the communal, and not necessarily a direct result of repression from the state. People who experienced violence, consciously select narratives that they want to express or hide. In other words, being silent is in the first place an active process of reconciling the past, and not exclusively a passive act caused by fear or structural stigmatisation. Silence should be seen not as an absence, but a co-presence of memory of violence in everyday life.³⁴⁵ I will elaborate more about the notion of silence in Chapter 6.

Conclusion

The case study in Donomulyo has shown that memory of the 1965-66 and 1968 violence is not directly formed by the national memory project (such as museums, books, films about the 30th September Movement) or state repression, but is embedded in social relationships in a particular locality. Throughout this chapter, I have pointed to two main features of the memory culture of the

³⁴⁴ Interview with Jardito, 13 Mei 2017 # 20.13-23.41

³⁴⁵ Kidron 2009, 16.

1965-66 violence. First, within the context of the salient rural patronage network, memory of violence is also embedded within this network. Patrons and clients who benefited from the violence maintain the anti-communist narratives (i.e. PKI as traitors to the nation) to provide legitimate grounds for their violent operations and support for the establishment of the New Order. This can be seen in cases of local collaborators, where their personal experiences were performatively extrapolated to fit in with the national narrative, sometimes at the expense of marginalising their personal losses. At the same time, collaborators also distanced themselves from the act of killing, by differentiating themselves with the army or Muslim groups who directly executed the left. This was a way of reconciling their past guilt with the need to sustain the official narrative. Meanwhile, for other villagers who were harmed by the violence, they remember the event as a turning point of continuous exploitation by authorities. Moreover, relationships between clients and their patrons are not always static. They can change once the clients do not comply anymore with their patron's demands, as shown in the case of Suparman; the local collaborator who included victims of the 1965 violence in his cultural performance group.

The second feature of memory culture of the 1965-66 and 1968 violence is their function as a survival strategy. In situations such as in the rural society in Donomulyo, villagers who were at opposite sides before and during the violence (i.e. as perpetrators and victims) needed to continue their lives in the same space, under post-violence rapid changes of agrarian policies. Therefore, the process of remembering (and forgetting) the violence is part of their effort to be able to continue living together in their community after the violence. Memory, in this case, becomes a strategic performance and representation which reconcile the past and present. In some cases, it also becomes a way to conform to a certain identity, or certain aspects of identity that seem acceptable; for example, maintaining the reputation of a victim of history – someone who had no connection at all with the left. By comprehending memory as a strategy, we can understand that silence is not exclusively a passive reaction to state repression, but also an active mechanism of agents to navigate through post-violence situations.