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

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## CHAPTER 6

## GENERATION OF POSTMEMORY: RETHINKING SILENCE AND TRAUMA IN FAMILY NARRATIVES

As decades have passed since 1965, human rights workers advocating justice for victims of the 1965-68 violence have raised concerns on whether or not Indonesia's younger generations will still be able to remember the violence. Concern also emerges around the lack of significant changes in the national historiography, let alone judicial procedures against the perpetrators of the violence itself. In the last few years, the intergenerational memory of the 1965 violence has been a major highlight in the conversation around human rights in Indonesia. For example, in 2016 and 2017, two books presented compilations of family accounts of the 1965 violence,[392] filled with stories from the children and grandchildren of victims. These books put forward the main themes of the intergenerational connection of victims of the 1965 violenceand pointg to the fact that the second and third generations of victims are also experiencing effects of the violence. This is reflected through their memory and trauma related to the atrocities and more importantly, their silences. This silence is a result of the successful structural memory projects of that New Order that depict the PKI as a threat to the nation, and led to continuous exclusion and stigmatisation of the victims' families. Although some of these families have had the courage to publish their stories for a wider public, other first generation victims have decided to remain silent about the effects of the violence on their progeny. This is unpacked by Okky Tirto, editor in chief of the Humanitarian Creativity Institute (Lembaga Kreativitas Kemanusiaan), in his prologue to Putu Oka Sukanta's (a former 1965 prisoner, writer, and member of Lekra – a leftist culture organisation closely linked to the PKI) book. He calls it a collective forgetting, explaining tha forgetting is not organic, but a structural mechanism constructed by the state to diminish the narrative of violence that the victims have experienced.[393]

Okky Tirto's concept of collective forgetting, is closely related to silence, which can often be interpreted as an absence of memory of violence. However, this is not always the case. As this chapter will show, the connection between intergenerational memory, trauma and silence does not always result in the complete absence of memory of violence. Instead, I argue that the silence that I encountered in both families of victims or collaborators of violence is not merely a result of the repressivemechanism of the state, but also a means of survival of the victims and their families; a instrument to navigate and cope with the aftermath of a violent event. By portraying silence as a form of agency, I will show in this chapter that far from being a result of structural repression, silence is a complex process of distancing and juxtaposing the past and present; also between the private and the political public. By expounding on agency, I do not disregard the structural forces, but instead give attention to an uncommon examination of the ways in which agency is used to negotiate between the individual and the structural. This chapter deals with the following questions: How do the first and second generations remember the 1965 violence? How do they obtain information about the past? How do they react to the silence of the first generation? To what extent does the state (public) narrative intertwine with the family's (private) narratives?

Until now, we do not have any exact information on the traumatic impact of the 1965 violence amongst the victims and their families. However, we can take an example from another similar case of state violence in Indonesia, such as the military operation in Aceh. More than 28,000 conflict-

[392] For the latest publications on this issue, see Sukanta 2016; and Marching 2017.
[393] Sukanta 2016, xv-xvi.

related deaths occurred during the most intensive years of the Indonesian military's counter-insurgency operation (1989-2005) against the Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka/ GAM) who demanded full independence from Indonesia.[394] The conflict ended after the devastating tsunami on 26 December 2004, marked by a peace agreement in Helsinki on 15 August 2005. A study by Grayman, et al. in 2009 estimates that 33% of the total population met the criteria for major depressive disorder, and 19% for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).[395] The symptoms ranged from psychological symptoms (such as sadness, helplessness, loss of spirit, inability to sleep) to psychosomatic symptoms (such as headaches, uncontrollable shaking, and even heart problems).[396] Although the case of Aceh and the case of the 1965 violence were different in duration and scale, this study presents the cases in tandem as an impression of the traumatic impact following the occurrence of state violence.

A different approach from psychological studies highlights how trauma becomespart of the memory of the second and third generations of Holocaust victims. Literary scholars such as Marianne Hirsch proposed the concept of postmemory to portray such a process of intergenerational memory. She describes postmemory as:

> The relationship that the 'generation after' bears to the personal, collective and cultural trauma of those who came before – the experiences they 'remember' only by means of the stories, images, and behaviours among which they grew up. But these experiences were transmitted to them so deeply and affectively as to *seem* to constitute memories in their own right. Postmemory's connection to the past is thus actually mediated not by recall but by imaginative investment, projection and creation.[397]

According to Hirsch, postmemory is not a mere recollection of the first generation's experience in the past, but a (re)interpretation of those experiences by the later generations. In the case of the 1965 violence, postmemory exists in a highly political context, where the dominant power decides what can be remembered and what cannot. However, as this chapter will show, postmemory of the 1965 violence demonstrates not only this constructed official narrative, but also the complexity of the connection between the official-national and the personal-family narrative. This interrelatedness between the national and the private is also shown through Andrew Conroe's study on intergenerational memory amongst the family members of victims of the 1965 violence. Conroe argues that both knowledge and silence surrounding the 1965 violence in the families are dynamic, their meaning transforms over time. Most importantly, families may hide the past in order to avoid the consequences that it brings.[398]

Within the trauma debate, the anthropological approach to mass violence has critically questioned the concept of trauma and silence. Studies such as Carol Kidron's shows that Jewish-Israeli Holocaust and Canadian-Cambodian genocide survivors do not identify themselves as traumatic victims.[399] In the case of the Canadian-Cambodian families, descendants assert that their silence is not a form of repressed traumatic memory, but a cultural normative behaviour based on Buddhist values. Furthermore, it is actually these values that helps them through the aftermath of violence – "Buddhism tells us that suffering is part of life".[400] Thus Kidron argues that the choice not to talk about the past is not an indication of pathology. In the case of families of Holocaust survivors, Kidron

[394] Grayman, et al. 2009, 292.
[395] Grayman, et al. 2009, 298
[396] Grayman, et al. 2009, 299.
[397] Hirsch 2012, 5.
[398] Conroe 2012, 86-87.
[399] Kidron 2012, 723–54.
[400] Kidron 2012, 736.

pointed to the 'silent traces' where memories of the Holocaust are actually present without verbal communication between the first and second generations.[401] These findings also serve as Kidron's criticism of Eurocentric psychosocial norms that view silence as negatively marked absence, which "neglect the phenomenon of silence as a medium of expression, communication, and transmission of knowledge in its own right or as an alternative form of personal knowing that is not dependent on speech".[402]

This chapter builds on Hirsch's and Kidron's work on intergenerational trauma, memory and silence, with particular focus on how silence travels and influences memories within families who experienced the 1965-68 violence. Taking this critical approach does not mean that I neglect traumatic behaviour amongst these families. For example, the case of Marwono in Chapter 1 illustrates the traumatic effect of the violence when he became restless and silent at any presence of an unrecognised car parked in front of his house. In many cases, expressions of traumatic silence can still be found in families who experienced the 1965 violence. But the important point that this critical approach highlights is to examine silence not as a negative effect of violence, but a deliberate choice to deal with the trauma itself. Therefore, the chapter explores further the interplay between trauma and silence or knowledge of violence, and how it (re)creates memories of the past within families. Different from the concern of a 'collective forgetting' that I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, my study in Donomulyo demonstrates how the memory of violence still travels within a community, and through generations. However, their postmemory is not a clear-cut reproduction of the first generation's whole experience, but a mix between a private and contextually embedded memory, with a larger socio-political dimension of the nation.

## Memories of an Activist – The Family of Suparman

The families in this chapter have different backgrounds. The first generations had different positions in the 1965 violence; ranging from victims (former activists of Leftist organisations) to collaborators of violence. Some of them are better economically positioned with highly-educated children working in well-paid jobs in the city. Others are in a different situation, with children who have to struggle as labourers to make a living. Meanwhile, almost all of the second generations that I interviewed had lived through the New Order period and became intensively exposed to the anti-communist propaganda either within or outside their school curricula. They also have different types of relationship with their parents. To explore further the younger generation's memory of the 1965 violence, I also spoketo village youths in two separate discussions. These discussions were filled with stories of violence, either those experienced by their own families and relatives, or stories that they heard from surrounding villagers. Local high school teachers were the next group that I visited in order to explore how 1965 is discussed in their classrooms. Interestingly, stories of violence were also brought up by students during their history lessons, including the stories of their families who experienced the 1965-68 violence.

Families of perpetrators or collaborators reflected the specific act of reproducing narratives to their second generations. In one narrative, their parents' experiences that were retold to their children were the ones that supported the national anti-communist narrative. In another narrative, their collaboration in the 1965-68 violence was buried in silence. The memory of the second generation reflects the interconnectedness of the formal narrative with the family's personal experiences. The story that we will see in this family illustrates a narrative of victimisation from the Madiun 1948

[401] Kidron 2009, 6.
[402] Kidron 2009, 7.

affair[403] (see chapter 5) and an intense involvement of rebuilding the village after dire destruction caused by the 1965-68 violence.

Suparman (pseudonym-see previous chapters), is a former Catholic Youth activist in the 1960s, who became a respected local leader in Donomulyo. He was married to a woman with Central-Javanese roots, who previously lived in Malang. Unfortunately, she died in 2009 due to cervical cancer, leaving behind Suparman and their four sons. All of them are married and live in larger cities outside Donomulyo, except for one, who still lives in the district. While he works as a farmer and handyman, the other three are professionals working at well-known institutions. I had the opportunity to meet with Suparman's oldest son, Josua, who lives in Malang and works as the head of an administrative office in a prestigious private high school.

Josua was born in 1971, and spent most of his childhood in Donomulyo until he finished middle school. In 1987, he moved to Malang and continued his high school education until he gained his current position in the administration department of a private school in Malang. As the oldest child, his first memory of the past was his responsibility to take care of his younger brothers. On school days, he had the task to sweep the house, prepare breakfast and help his brothers to get ready for school. He remembered his childhood years as an adventurous time. They usually walked to school, through the sugarcane fields, stealing some of the stalks along the way. During celebrations of the planting season, along with other children, Josua would wait to get the offerings that were used for the traditional rituals. Donomulyo back then was very 'nationalist', according to Josua. People from different religions would visit each other during Christmas or Eid Mubarak. Even when the Catholics were having their communal prayer, the Moslems would join and pray according to their own customs. This situation is different from nowadays, according to Josua, where migrant villagers from outside of Donomulyo have established their lives there and spread a more fundamentalist view. The nationalist view of Josua actually referred to the *abangan* lifestyle (see chapter 2, especially the section on religious conversion), which is characterised by supporting loose boundaries around religious practices.

The relationship between Josua and his father was not an intimate one. As Josua recalls thatafter his father finished his education at the Teacher's Education School (*Sekolah Pendidikan Guru/ SPG*), he continued to study at the Indonesian Catechist Academy (*Akademi Katekis Indonesia/ AKI*) in Jogjakarta. For villagers in Donomulyo, people who attended such a high level of education were highly respected. In my conversation with other villagers, they called Suparman 'Suparman BA', not only to differentiate this particular Suparman from other people in the village with the same name, but also to emphasise his different educational and social status in the community. When Suparman returned to Donomulyo in 1971, he did not only become a teacher in a Catholic school, but also a religious assistant for the Catholic community in Donomulyo. Suparman frequently visited houses of Catholic villagers, led community prayers, assisted in the church masses, or counselled villagers through family problems. With a schedule that involved teaching in the morning followed by Catechist works in the afternoon until late at night, Suparman could not spend much time with his family. According to Josua, his father used a personal approach to the Catholic community in the village through doing house visits. Josua expressed that this intense activity resulted in almost no quality time for the family.[404] Furthermore, Josua also explained that his father's parenting style was quite militaristic. The children usually received physical punishment, including instructions to do

[403] This refers to the revolt by the People's Democratic Front (*Front Demokrasi Rakyat*/ FDR). In national history, the event of Madiun was recorded as another PKI attempt to rebel against the nation. See chapter 5.
[404] Interview with Josua, 23 Mei 2017

push-ups and squat jumps. Josua perceived this as the influence of his grandfather, who had a similar parenting style.

Josua's story about Suparman should be analysed in a larger context. His catechist work, which involved spreading Catholic teachings to the locals, existed during the early years of the New Order. This is highly related to the rise of a religious community and political masses that support the New Order's political party Golongan Karya/ Golkar. After the 1965-66 violence, many villagers who were *abangan* (Javanese-traditionalist) had to convert to the formal religions acknowledgedby the state. This was part of the state-imposed ideological programme to prevent resurgence of communism in society. In Donomulyo, the number of Catholics who were baptised increased from 378 people in 1960-1965, to 3,472 people in 1966-1970.[405] A church document from 1977 explains that religious life in Donomulyo was still unstable, and therefore, the role of the parish's management (*pengurus paroki*) was to change this situation. To assist with the strengthening of religious life, the Malang Diocese paid one Cathecist and two members from ALMA[406] to support apostolic works.[407] It is highly possible that Suparman was involved in this kind of work to help the Catholic converts and explain Catholicism to these former *abangan*. Besides being a Cathecist, Suparman who was previously a member of the Catholic Party moved to Golongan Karya/ Golkar. Against this political backdrop, it is highly possible that Suparman's 'outreach' work during the early New Order period was geared to transforming previously Leftist villagers into the homogenous political masses of Golkar. As Ken Ward suggests, Golkar's strategy in villages was to use the *tokoh* (local leaders) as agents to generate support and votes from villagers (clients). The *tokoh* in general were not economically powerfulindividuals, but those who traditionally had influence over the population, such as religious leaders, teachers, and so on.[408] When Suparman was involved in a traditional Javanese performance *Ketoprak*, the group became the funnel for the government's information, as I described in chapter 4. Suparman was playing this typical role of a New Order patron, a Catholic apostle and a political agent of Golkar, without his family realising what hewas really contributing to . For Josua, his father's work was merely a *pelayanan* or service work for the people.

In our conversation, I asked Josua about his father's political activity. The most frequent story that Josua heard from his father was his experience in the AKI (Akademi Katekis Indonesia-Indonesian Cathecist Academy)-Jogjakarta. It was in this period that Suparman was encouraged to be involved directly in the community, and not only to study religious texts. The academy also created a strong brotherhood among the students, which they have sustained until the present. Josua, however, did not know much about Suparman's activism in the Catholic Youth organisation (Pemuda Katolik Republik Indonesia/ PMKRI), let alone his involvement in the anti-communist persecutions. According to Josua, his father's activism in the Catholic Youth organisation was automatically attached to his status as an SPG (Sekolah Pendidikan Guru/ Pedagogic Academy) and AKI student. But Josua did not really know what his father did in the Catholic Youth organisation. When I asked Josua if he had heard stories about the PKI from his father, he only mentioned the loss of Suparman's siblings in 1948. The cause of their death, according to Suparman, was because his brother and sister were exposed to decomposed bodies of the 1948 affair. Suparman believes that the Madiun revolt had reached Donomulyo and caused deaths of a number of villagers, although in the previous chapter, I discussed the difficulty to verify the connection between an affair in Madiun with Donomulyo. The bodies were in the process of burial  when his mother and siblings passed on their way to the

[405] Appendix in Suhadiyono, et. Al. 2002. Also see chapter 2.
[406] A catholic association consisting of Catholic nuns who serve disabled people.
[407] Soedarmodjo 1977.
[408] Ward 1974, 172.

market. His siblings fell ill on that same day, and Suparman suspects the bacteria and germs in the corpses led to his siblings' illness and death. Suparman, who was only 3 years old at that time, was alive because he stayed at home. Before meeting Josua, I already heard this same story directly from Suparman, although it is difficult to verify. It is interesting to see that the retold past narrative in the family is not related to Suparman's involvement in the 1965-68 violence, but to the 1948 event in Madiun, with an emphasis on his family's loss.

The intergenerational relationship in this case reflects a positioning of the family in relation to the violence. A narrative of the past that is considered important to preserve through generations was the experience of loss against the backdrop of the 1948 Madiun affair. Although Suparman's family members were not direct victims of violence in the Madiun affair, it is important to maintain the portrayal of their family who lost their loved ones – as a 'victims'. This can be interpretted as Suparman's act to use his personal family experience to support the state's formal narrative against the PKI. On the other hand, preserving the portrayal of the family memebrs as the victims, and being silent about Suparman's involvement in the 1965-68 violence, may also be an expression of trauma and guilt of the past. In this case, conserving their memory as victims of Madiun is not only an act to support the state's narrative, but also a way to cope with the past guilt of collaborating in violence – by distancing oneself from the violence. Therefore, what the second generation understands about their parents is only about the loss that they experienced in 1948 and the involvement in rebuilding the community after the 1965-68 violence through religious and cultural activities. None of these memories contain traces of their parents' patronage and connections in annihilating the communists and establishing the New Order.

## Memories of the Lost Land – The Family of Marwono

The violence that is retold to the second generation often appears in fragments and is sometimes difficult to understand by people external to the family members themselves. Interestingly, when these fragments intersect with other sources, for example through Indonesian history education, they construct a comprehensive yet critical understanding of the past. Furthermore, memories of violence in this case include conditions that emerged after the mass killings ended. Similar to chapter 4, the second generations of the 1965-68 victims also depict this early period of the New Order as a turning point for their family, in which they lost their property.

In previous chapters, we encountered the story of Marwono, a farmer who supported the BTI (Barisan Tani Indonesia/ Indonesian Peasants Front) in the 1960s. My interaction with him was suspenseful, because it was not until after several meetings that Marwono started to recount his supportive views about the BTI, PKI, and land reform. From here, I became curious whether or not he also shared these views with his children. Marwono has six children, and two of them are living in Donomulyo. The other four are scattered over Malang, Bogor and Surabaya. I first met Burhan, his eldest son, in June 2017. Born in 1963, Burhan went to the elementary and middle school in Donomulyo, but he did not succeed in finishing high school. He originally wanted to study at an engineering school (STM- *Sekolah Teknik Mesin*, vocational school of engineering), but was forced by his parents to enter the Teacher's Education School (*Sekolah Pendidikan Guru*/ SPG). He did not like it, so after one year, he left school and returned to Donomulyo. Unfortunately, his parents did not have sufficient funds to support his education further. Soon after, he followed his grandfather, who was trying to find work in Malang. Since then, Burhan has migrated to different cities to work. He started as a construction labourer (*buruh bangunan*) in Surabaya, building the famous market *Pasar Atom*. Before the project was finished, he moved to another job in an ice factory in Ngawi. From there, he went to Malang to try several jobs in the craft and convection industry. In 1987, he migrated to Palembang, South Sumatera. He married in 1990 and lived in Malang city with his wife.

They returned to Donomulyo in 1999 to settle down and had two children there. Now, his eldest son is still looking for work, and the younger one had almost finished high school at the time that we met during my fieldwork. Burhan himself is currently working in various jobs, such as small-scale construction worker and sand miner in the adjacent district of Blitar.

Born before the 1965 violence, Burhan remembered seeing an army officer holding a weapon in the 1968 operation. He was still very young, but he remembered that in this period, his grandfather was summoned by Babinsa (*Badan Pembina Desa*, a village-level monitoring official). He was taken and later detained in Koramil (the district-level military command) Donomulyo for 8 months. After he was released, Burhan's grandfather was obliged to report to Koramil every month. The same as Marwono, both of them had to follow *santiaji*, an indoctrination programme during the New Order, designed to 're-route' accused communists to the national ideology of Pancasila (see chapter 2). After a few months of *santiaji*, Burhan's grandfather was summoned to produce bricks to build the Trisula community hall. In the previous chapter, Marwono also gave his testimony that the *santiaji* villagers were instructed to bring bricks for the construction of the Trisula community hall. As the first grandson in the family, Burhan spent a lot of time with his grandfather and he admits that he was much closer to his grandfather than to Marwono.

Burhan told me that he has no knowledge of his father's and grandfather's involvement in the PKI or other Leftist organisations before 1965. This statement should be considered critically. Reflecting on my own process with Marwono in obtaining his views and support on the BTI, it is possible that stories related to Leftist groups before 1965 are not passed onto the children. On the other hand, there is also a probability that Burhan himself was holding back information from me, just as Marwono did in the first occasions of our meeting. Burhan explained that he witnessed directly the violence, encountering an army officer with a weapon and hearing sounds of gunshots. As a five-year-old child, he remembered how frightening the situation was at that time. When he was older, he also heard stories from other villagers about mass graves and that people were killed at these locations. All of these accounts were like fragments or pieces of puzzle that he obtained directly and indirectly. Another fragment that he acquired emerged during his school years. Burhan's history lessons appeared when I asked him how he knew about the PKI and September 30th Movement:

> When I was in school. Before that, I did not understand the reason (of the violence in Donomulyo). The locals only said *geger.*[409] I knew it from school, through history lessons. They discuss it there that in 1965, there was a revolt of the G30S/PKI in South Blitar. I paid attention, and I daredmyself to ask the elderly in the village (on whether or not this is true). … They told me the story (about people being killed). I do not know whether the story is true or not. I think it was related to G30S, but people used the opportunity, taking advantage [for themselves] of the political situation. … About the September 30th Movement, this village was not recorded in history. If there was really a revolt, why wasn't it recorded? Was it really a revolt? Of course, people were afraid, and that is why they hid. They were frightened, they ran away, but they were pursued.[410]

We can see how Burhan's memory of violence combines different fragments that he received since his childhood years. Stories of killings and detention are connected with the state's narrative of the September 30th Movement that he learned from school. Interestingly, these fragments not only resulted in an almost-comprehensive understanding of the violence, but also in scepticism regarding the cause behind it. The history lessons that he received at school were compared with his own

[409] A Javanese word that describes an apocalyptic situation. This is a common word to describe situations of war and violence. I discussed the juxtaposition of the word *geger* with the local violence of 1965-68 in Donomulyo in chapter 4.

[410] Interview with Burhan, 12 July 2017 #12.07-13.43, 01.07.00-01.09.00.

experience and other adults in the village. Burhan saw a connection between this national rupture and local violence, and questioned it. He implies that the agenda of exterminating the rebellious communists was not reasonable, and that civilians were also taking advantage of the situation. This is an example of how the official and counter narrative coexist in the younger generation. Different sources of fragments constituted a peculiar postmemory, making the 1965 violence understandable (the violence happened under the pretext of annihilating communists behind the September 30th Movement), but also highly questionable.

Another interesting aspect of Burhan's story relates to land confiscation that happened during the early years of the New Order. One day after his grandfather was released, a Koramil officer came to his grandfather's house. Burhan was there, so he still remembered the incident. The Koramil officer demanded an 'expression of gratitude' because his grandfather was released from detention. Because the family did not have any money, the officer started to raise the idea of giving land as a 'token of appreciation'. The whole process washighly pressurized, Burhan said, because the family was still 'traumatised' (Burhan's own words) from being accused as PKI and then killed or detained. In the end, the family relented in giving up their land. Burhan described this method of creating fear and terror as a common strategy by village officials to mobilise their villagers. Those who did not comply with or obey requests from the village apparatus could easily be accused of being PKI and taken away from their homes. In the context of land confiscation, Burhan was certain that the village head also obtained advantages from this act. Again, the name Ario Dursam (the military village head or caretaker in Donomulyo during the early New Order period – see chapter 4) appeared during our conversation. Burhan realised that during Ario Dursam's leadership, the village was considered developed. However, Burhan argues that this was done through coercion; people were forced to paint their houses, build roads and construct bamboo fences.

Burhan also went on to explain that corruption and nepotism practiceswhich were once visible during Dursam's leadershipstill exist in the village. The recent Farmer's Credit (*Kredit Usaha Tani/ KUT,* a national farming credit programme) that is currently being implemented in the village exists only in rumours, as the villagers themselves in Burhan's hamlet never accepted it. It is suspected that the credit is only used by a certain group of villagers. Burhan also explained the common practice of credit corruption in Donomulyo. To access the funds, the village leaders need to gather copies of their villagers' identity cards, either directly or through farmer's groups (*kelompok tani*). The copies have definitely been made, but when the funds had arrived from the central government, they were not distributed to those villagers who gave copies of their identity cards. The funds were used only for the advantages of the village apparatus. Burhan said that during the early years of the Farmer's Credit programme, a number of villagers became rich because of such practices.

For families of victims, such as Burhan and Marwono, the violence in 1965-68 did not end when the killings ended. On the contrary, it continued during the early period of the New Order by instigating fear and oppression amongst villagers. This was an efficient means for local patrons and village apparatus to gain benefits (land, position, status, and so on) under the guise of rural development. In this case, intergenerational memory shows an interconnectedness of the past and present. Second generations linked past violence against the PKI with continuous inequality in the village, marked by a stronger patronage relationship that benefits certain groups, and excludes others. Another important conclusion that we can draw from the case of Burhan's family is the way the second generation uses different fragments of information (sometimes incomplete) to develop an interpretation of the past. This information comes from local and national narratives, showing the co-existence of the state and the counter narrative that grows not only into understanding of the violence but also criticism against it.

## Escaping Lifetime Imprisonment – The Family of Baharjo

Like Burhan, many children of victims experienced the horror of witnessing their parents being taken away during the military operation in 1965-68. However, when it comes to the reason for these detentions, narratives are modified. Involvement and activism in Leftist organisations were usually kept silent or transformed into a different narrative that distanced the parents from such activism. Interestingly, memories of violence are often anchored in objects, which juxtapose domestic elements with a national event. This is illustrated in the case of Baharjo family.

My encounter with the family started when I was trying to search for the living descendants of Donomulyo's first settlers. One of the villagers suggested that I go to the house of Mrs Baharjo, who is currently living with her daughter's family. Although we were not accompanied by fellow villagers, on our first visit we were welcomed warmly by Mrs Baharjo and her daughter, Lastri. From this visit, I understood that Mr Baharjo had died in 1982. Nevertheless, the life of Mrs Baharjo interested me, so I continued to visit the family. Mr and Mrs Baharjo met in Solo, Central Java, when Mr. Baharjo replaced his sister to teach at Mrs Baharjo's school. They got married in 1958 in Solo, and two years later moved to Donomulyo, where Mr Baharjo's parents lived. His father was the first Haji and *penghulu* (state religious officer) in the village. He also owned a large plot of (inherited) land and a slaughterhouse business, which made him one of the wealthiest residents in Donomulyo.

Mrs Baharjo did not get along with her husband's family mostly because of class difference Yet, she managed to stay in Donomulyo until now. During their first years in Donomulyo, Mr Baharjo started working as a teacher in the Catholic middle school and Teacher's Higher Education School (*Sekolah Guru Atas/ SGA*) in the district. Mrs Baharjo also worked as a teacher in the local private school Taman Siswa, but she quit to raise three small children. Mr Baharjo was also a vanilla farmerwhen the crop was one of the important commodities in the area. According to Mrs Baharjo, her husband was a teacher, a businessman, an artist, who was not into activism or political organisations. He also had a good relationship with everybody in the village, including those of different religious backgrounds. Mr Baharjo's father was a close friend to the village's Catholic priest. The priest often visited the family and spent time talking with Baharjo's father. The interaction with the priest made Mrs Baharjo interested in Catholicism and later converted to it, while her husband remained Muslim.

Our conversation became more interesting when I asked Mrs Baharjo about the situation in 1965-68 in Donomulyo. In 1965, Mr Baharjo was doing business as a kerosene agent. He was on his way to deliver money to his supplier in Porong, another district in Surabaya, but he never returned. Later on, a stranger came to Mrs Baharjo's house with a small note made from a cigarette-box label, informing her that her husband was detained in Koramil Batu (another district in Malang). According to Mrs Baharjo, her husband had written that message himself, although she did not recognise the messenger. It is hard to believe that a complete stranger would make a long journey from Batu to Donomulyo only to deliver a small note to Baharjo's family. It may be possible that the messenger was someone who was quite well known by Mr Baharjo, whom his wife did not know (or pretended not to know). Following the message, Mrs Baharjo went to Koramil with her baby accompanied by her niece:

> My youngest child was just 29 days old. Then I went to Korem in Malang, with my baby. A military officer, his name was Pak Noto, gave the name for my baby, Trisula.[411] I asked him why my husband did not come home. He only said, "I'll take care of it". There were a lot of weapons in his room, terrifying. People said Pak Noto was vicious, tough, but to me, he was very soft. It was because one

[411] Trisula also refers to the Trisula operation that occurred in 1968. It is not clear why the name Trisula was given to the baby, but it illustrates the close relationship between the officer and the Baharjo family.

> time, he slept in our place for seven days. Then I was informed that Mr Baharjo can return after 7 days. I picked him up from Koramil in Batu, and then we went to my niece's place in Malang, where she bathed Mr Baharjo. After that, we went home to Donomulyo. But my husband was stressed. He had asthma, and it recurred many times. He saw many things in the detention centre, people were beaten and tortured. We sacrificed a lot in one week. I mean, the guard should be given cigarettes… what do you call it? Incentives. "I want to see this person, sir", then [we should give him] money, food, cigarettes, although we already gave it to the front officer. In the examination desk, we should give another one. In the back, all of the officer's friends should get a portion. … There were a lot of people in Koramil Batu. I don't know if they were PKI or not. They were taken there, and gone at night, nobody knows where. If I didn't fetch him, Mr Baharjo may have been gone too.[412]

Mr Baharjo was one of the fortunate victims from Donomulyo. His family probably had a certain connection with the military officer in Malang that Mrs Baharjo mentioned, Mr Noto, who was able to order his release. Another factor was the family's wealth that made them able to bribe the Koramil officers, which was a common practice at that time. In order to escape the killings, detainees had to provide a large amount of 'incentives' for the army officers.[413] Furthermore, based on information obtained from other villagers, Mr Baharjo was not only a farmer and businessman, but he was also one of the leaders of *Pemuda Rakyat* (the youth organisation affiliated with the PKI) in Donomulyo.[414] This ishighly possible, as Mr Baharjo was not only detained in Donomulyo, but was sent further to Batu, where high-level organisation leaders were usually detained.[415] While it's also possible that Mrs Baharjo was not aware of her husband's activism, but it is more likely that she was hiding this information and disguised the reason for Mr Baharjo's detention as merely a result of business rivalry. While experiences of violence are easierto discuss with others (including their children), the preceding events, such as activism and involvement in Pemuda Rakyat, are kept hidden. It is highly possible that Mrs Baharjo thinks that this information may put her family in danger, or that it would legitimise the violence against her husband. Mrs Baharjo also told me that she did not tell her children about her husband's detention to avoid it becoming one of the 'bad memories' in the family. In this case, rather than seeing Mrs Baharjo's silence as trauma or fear of repression, I consider her act of silence as an expression of agency – a conscious decision to protect the family, and therefore, to enable them to continue living in the same environment where violence previously erupted.

A few months after my conversation with Mrs Baharjo, and driven by curiosity to explore her children's knowledge of the 1965 violence, I had a chance to talk to her daughter, Lastri. Born in 1966, she spent her elementary and high school years in Donomulyo. After finishing high school, she tried to register for Brawijaya University, but unfortunately was not admitted. Lastri then chose to follow administrative courses and was able to find work in Malang. After three years, she moved to Semarang, Central Java, to work for her brother's shop. She did not like it, so she returned to Donomulyo in 1994. Lastri is now married and her husband works in Kepanjen, another district in Malang. She has two children. The oldest works in Malang city as a cashier in a noodle restaurant, while the second child is a high school student in Donomulyo. When Mr Baharjo died, Lastri was only two months away from her middle-school final exam. Her memory of her father was quite mixed. In one instance, Lastri remembered her father as a smart, art-loving person, but in another instance,

[412] Interview with Mrs Baharjo, 20 January, 2017 #01.03.33-01.10.53
[413] This was also mentioned during the interview with Jono, 23 August 2016.
[414] Field notes 26 May 2017. Information from Jono and Suparman.
[415] The Pancasila Operation report from the Brawijaya military archive collection also mentioned that activists from Donomulyo were 'secured' in Batu. See chapter 3.

she recalled his character as harsh and how he sometimes used physical punishment to educate his children.

I asked Lastri about her father's detention, curious to know whether or not she acknowledged that event. She immediately told a story similar to Mrs Baharjo's story; that her father had been detained in Batu, and her mother had tried to arrang his release. This story was shared by her mother when Mr Baharjo was still alive, including the way the family knew of Mr Baharjo's detention: the message on a cigarette box label sent by an anonymous messenger. Mr Baharjo himself, never said anything about this bitter experience. I asked if Lastri knew why her father was detained, and she explained:

> It was a mistake. My father likes to sew. He was asked to sew a uniform. He didn't know, but it was the uniform of those people. So, he was detained. … It was the uniform of the PKI. … Many villagers disappeared, they were taken by Kodim. We didn't know where. But my father was taken to Batu. … My mother gave compensation. She sold her jewellery. Every time my father got his business profit, my mother bought jewellery with it. That was what she used to released my father.[416]

Looking at Lastri's account, we can see how the memory of violence is reproduced and then modified in the second generation.. Narratives of activism are still concealed in a similar fashion to the way Mrs Baharjo explained the reason for her husband's detention. A progressive organisational involvement transforms the event with reasoning that does not sound harmful: benign business rivalry and sewing uniforms. Since my first visit to the family, Lastri was quick to share her father's art work, which includes a number of decorative sewing patterns, paintings, and sketches. She described her father's talent in art, painting and decoration, which apparently was produced to distance him from the actual progressive character. For this family, the detention and violence against Mr Baharjo appears to be more 'acceptable' to remember than the memory of his previous Leftist activism.

Through her research on Sumatran-Karo women who were involved in the 1945-49 independence war, Mary Steedly portrays how major public events are anchored in domestic elements in the memories of these women, such as a white hand towel, bathing, or doing laundry. This illustrates a sort of mnemonic link between then and now, between domestic activities and the grand events of national history, according to Steedly.[417] The intergenerational memory in the Baharjo family also reflects a similar case. Through stories of a cigarette box label, selling jewellery, or sewing a uniform, Mrs Baharjo and Lastri connect their private domain to a much larger and violent historical event. For this family, remembering 1965 is far from memories of September 30th Movement, the kidnapped generals, or anti-communist military operations. The national violence became a story of a mother who tried to release her husband. This is what Luisa Passerini called self-representation that features the personal and collective memory.[418] Moreover, this domestic way of remembering does not mean that they are trivial memories and irrelevant to the discussion of 1965. On the contrary, these memories are a reminder that the national violence *is also* a private matter.

## Memories of a Survivor – The Family of Jarso

Postmemory, as Hirsch argues, represents the past not only by recalling the event, but also through imaginative investment, projection, and creation.[419] In the case of the Jarso family, postmemory is constituted upon human rights values, considering the unjust mistreatment of the first generation who became victims in the 1965 violence. While the first generation chose to 'forgive and forget', the second generation moves toward a progressive attitude of 'straightening history' (*meluruskan*

[416] Interview with Lastri, 26 July 2017 #21.15-24.02
[417] Steedly 2013, 52.
[418] Passerini 1987, 19.
[419] Hirsch 2012, 5.

*sejarah*). This generational difference has resulted in a memory filled with imagination of human rights advocacy, which highlights critical questions, disappointment, and anger against the national government.

Jarso was born in 1942 in Blitar, but later moved with his parents to Donomulyo. After finishing middle school in the local Catholic school and doing odd jobs, he decided to join the army in 1960. After following basic training in Kediri and advance training in Malang, Jarso was assigned as military staff in Situbondo, Jember and Kalimantan. At first, he prepared to be part of the army's general reserve command (*Cadangan Umum Angkatan Darat*/ CADUAD) for the West Irian campaign. But rather than being sent to Irian, Jarso was assigned to Kalimantan for the Crush Malaysia campaign. He was part of Brigade IX, battalion 509 Jember, serving the communication company (*kompi perhubungan*) with five other staff members.

During his assignment in Kalimantan, the September 30th Movement took place. At that moment, Jarso was still serving in his battalion as usual, without any significant ruptures. He married in 1967, and lived in Jember until September 1971 when he was arrested. Leaving behind his pregnant wife, Jarso and 6 other communication company staff members were detained first in Jember for one month. From there, he was transferred to Lowokwaru prison in Malang, where he received the news that his wife had given birth. He did not see his child until his release in 1978. It was also in this prison that Jarso converted to Catholicism. After his release, Jarso went back to his family in Jember, only to discover that his wife had remarried and rejected Jarso's return. After that, Jarso decided to return to and live in Donomulyo.

Jarso was detained because his commander was accused of being involved in the September 30th Movement. At that time, Jarso had lived in a rented room (*kost*) in his commander's house, who already died in 1962. During his detention, Jarso was interrogated with questions about the commander's guests who visiedt his house and about Jarso's family-like relationship with the commander. During Jarso's imprisonment in Lowokwaru, he met around one thousand military officers and staff members from other brigades and regions. Even before Jarso was captured in September 1971, many of his fellow staff members had already been detained previously. Looking at this period and the number of the military staff's detention, it is very likely that this act was part of the East Java's New Orderisation campaign (see chapter 3). In this campaign, led by East Java's military commander M. Jasin, a purge was launched against government and military officials, to 'clean' those institutions from communism and to ensure support for the New Order. This explains why Jarso was detained years after his commander died in 1962, because the communist label was not only attached to individuals but to the whole group that individual was assigned. Apparently, Jarso was one of the victims of this state campaign.

Ever since his release, Jarso's identity card was marked ET (*Eks-Tapol*/ Ex-political prisoner) and he was assigned to follow the *santiaji* programme. Despite all of this, Jarso did not find it difficult to reconnect to the society with his ET background. There was no significant stigmatisation from other people in the neighbourhood. According to Jarso, being an ex-political prisoner in Donomulyo was very common; many other villagers shared the same situation because the area used to be a PKI base. Five years after he moved to Donomulyo, he married a local resident and had three children. His eldest son lives in Pasuruan and works in a mineral water factory. The second child, his daughter, lives in Gresik, and Jarso's youngest son is currently following an education in Malang to become a Catholic priest. Although Jarso's pension fund was abolished right after his imprisonment, he is able to finance his family from their small grocery store (*warung*), timber plantation (on Jarso's inherited land), and his wife's savings from her previous occupation as a migrant worker. According to Jarso,

he never told his children about his imprisonment because he did not want it to be "a burden for this family" (*menjadi beban untuk keluarga*).

Curious to discuss the family's experience of 1965 (I only approached Jarso's current family, and not the previous one), I went to meet Rio, Jarso's youngest son, at his education centre in Malang. Born in 1994, he spent his elementary school years in Donomulyo and joined the Catholic seminary in 2009. A dominant topic in our conversation was Donomulyo's latest phenomena: migrant workers. According to Rio, waves of migrant workers from Donomulyo that left to go abroad toHong Kong, Saudi Arabia,and other countries brought massive changes to the cultural life in his village. Lifestyle in Donomulyo has become increasingly cosmopolitan, while traditions and interactions between villagers have lost their communal character. The conversation also addressed the fact that Rio's mother worked as a migrant worker in Brunei for approximately 10 years.

From a young age, Rio was already involved in managing their family's small grocery store. As his brother and sister had their own families and moved out of the village, Rio was the only child left in the house. When I asked him about his father, he immediately explained that Jarso was an ex-army officer, but was imprisoned because his commander was involved in the September 30th Movement. I was surprised to hear about this, because Jarso said that he never mentioned this past to any of his family members. Even his wife did not know about this part of her husband's life.[420] I asked Rio about how he had obtained the information:

> Father told me directly. … I heard it when I was in junior high school, but I was not paying close attention. When I was in the seminary, I understood it. Because I had already learned history, so I knew more and became more aware. There was more information that I obtained from school. When I was in the seminary or junior high, father's ex-military friends, the ex-political prisoners, gathered and applied for a court appeal in Jakarta, to clean their names, that they were innocent.They succeeded. They were cleared; they were innocent and were only victims. Their retirement funds are now accessible. Previously, because of the case, they did not receive their pension funds. When the court decided that they were only victims, the funds were released again. But my father did not want to take it, because the amount was very low. He was probably already offended by the imprisonment.[421]

I was really surprised and confused when I heard Rio's side of the story. At first glance, I sensed a similar interconnectedness between the official and counter-narrative as in the case of Burhan, son of Marwono. Rio's memory fragment of his father was not easily understood at that time, but became clearer once he was exposed to history lessons at school. But when he continued his story, matters became more complicated, at least for me as an outsider. First, contrary to what Jarso told me, Rio seemed to know more about his father's imprisonment – the innocence, victimisation, and the retirement fund. More than that, Rio even shared a story that I never heard before from Jarso himself: the court appeal case. In a situation in which the 1965-68 violence has not yet been resolved in Indonesia, a court appeal by a group of ex-political prisoners had to be a huge breakthrough. The only court appeal that resembles Rio's story is the one arranged by Indonesia Legal Aid (*Lembaga Bantuan Hukum/ LBH*) together with a number of ex-political prisoners of 1965-68 in 2005 through the Central Jakarta Court. They prosecuted five Indonesian presidents from Suharto to Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono for their complicity in the 1965 violence.[422] The victims demanded rehabilitation and financial compensation for their losses, but the result was disappointing.

[420] In my first meeting with Jarso, we were introduced by Suparman. During our conversation, Jarso already started to share his experience related to 1965. His wife was sitting beside him during our visit, and at the end of our meeting, she admitted that she never knew about this particular story.
[421] Interview with Rio, 6 June 2017 #25.30-27.18.
[422] For the court appeal case, see Conroe, 2017.

Meanwhile, what little involvement Jarso had in this court appeal was hazy, at best.. Rio was pretty certain that he remembered seeing preparation meetings at his house where many of his father's fellow officers came from outside of Malang. Rio even argued that they won the case.

I was very puzzled with this conflicting account between father and son. After my meeting with Rio, I thought that Jarso did not tell me his whole story. With an agenda to clear up this consfusion, once again, I approached Jarso. I asked him directly whether or not a court appeal had taken place, without stating explicitly that I obtained this information from Rio. Interestingly, Jarso was also surprised at this information and said that such a thing never took place. He repeatedly emphasised that he was already 'at peace' after his release. Jarso also explained that he had no resentment against the government nor a drive to demand the rehabilitation of his name. He is quite satisfied with his current life, even generating more money compared to his retirement fund for serving the country. In Jarso's own words, he was 'saved by God' and has reconciled his life.[423] When he repeated that he never told his family about his imprisonment, I asked him how Rio knew about this. Jarso suspected that the story was told by his ex-wife's family in Jember, as they are still in contact. Their relationship may have come to the fore during Rio's admission to the seminary, where the pastors usually investigate the background of each candidate meticulously. I realised that I had taken a step to interfere with a family's life by confronting a son's story with his father's. Therefore, I decided not to take further actions to verify Jarso's family story (i.e. return to Rio and explain my conversation with Jarso about the court case). However, the intergenerational memory of Jarso's family shows an interesting distortion that has resulted in a whole new narrative about the past. This narrative may be constituted out of hope or an 'imaginative investment', as Hirsch's describes, for justice against victims of the 1965-68 violence.

My assumption about Rio's imaginative reconstruction became stronger when I heard about his views on his father's status as an ex-political prisoner. He clearly stated that he was proud of his father's survival of the years in prison especially as he was not guilty. His family story became a sort of 'testimony' of hardship and survival in his circle. For example, during a workgroup about 1965 in his history class, Rio combined his family's history with the textbook information. He also shared his father's experiences during a few sessions of a Catholic group-faith meeting, where life stories are used as testimonies of God's power. Rio continued to explain to me about his concerns about history lessons, which he thinks are urgently in need of revision He stated that a 'true' history is needed to replace the fabricated previous version. But Rio doubts whether this will happen, because he thinks that the government is no longer interested in such issues. From his statements, I assume that Rio, to some extent, has an understanding of human rights values. Depicting 1965 as a fabricated history by the government, Rio stressed the need to straighten out the details of history (*meluruskan/ membenarkan sejarah*). In his own way, Rio tried to advocate the victims based on his father's case, by telling his family's experience of violence to a wider audience. At the same time, Rio may feel the injustice and anger of mistreatment of his father, and perhaps became disappointed about his father's non-confrontational attitude. With his background in mind, I understand why such an imagination of a progressive advocacy for victims of the 1965-68 violence appeared in Rio's narrative.

The intergenerational memory in the case of Jarso's family shows the complexity of how memory works. Not only does it illustrate the entanglement between the official and counter narrative about the past, but also about the future. To be precise, about *how the future should be* for the family. Past injustices are projected towards the future, which resulted in testimonies of survival, and in a larger discourse, to advocate the national history. Through the study of children of ex-political prisoners of

[423] Fieldwork notes, conversation with Jarso, 26 July 2017

1965-66, Andrew Conroe pointed to these similar intergenerational linkages that also trigger a challenge to the state's authority.[424] Furthermore, this intergenerational memory actually took shape within silence in the family. Fragments of information received by the second generation from various sources (such as other families, school textbooks) outside the first generation, constitute a narration of criticism, confrontation and progressive approach against the state. Silence in the family, in this case, became elevated into a projection of justice.

## Beyond Families

Outside family circles, narratives of violence also circulate among young generations in Donomulyo. There are at least three contexts where these stories appear: in places or sites of violence (I have elaborated this in chapter 5), communal celebrations, and history lessons at school. All of them show intersections between private or family experiences with the national grand narrative of anti-communism. By examining how stories circulate in these contexts, we shall see how young generations are continuously exposed to other narratives of violence, despite the ongoing official narrative that denies this revealing.

To explore how young generations in a rural context are exposed to stories of the 1965-68 violence, I conducted two focus group discussions (FGD) in two different hamlets. In order to arrange this, I coordinated with the head of village neighbourhood (*ketua RT*), who gathered young people in the area. Most of them are members of the youth organisation *Karang Taruna*, which exists in every hamlet in the district, although not all of them are active. Unfortunately, this mechanism of gathering participants through *Karang Taruna* resulted in FGDs filled with male villagers age 20 to 40. This reflects how youth (*orang-orang muda/ pemuda*) is interpreted in rural Indonesian society, which is predominantly men in their 20s (and possibly) up to mid-40s. As a result of rural-urban migration, only a small number of young people in their productive age stayed in the village, while others left agricultural work to work in urban areas or even to go to foreign countries as migrant workers. The trend of the migrant workforce is also one of the contributing factors to the lack of females in youth organisations.

Even in such a male-dominated discussion, many of the family experiences of violence emerged in the discussions. The first context where stories of violence usually appear is through stories of places in the village. During these discussions, villagers mentioned some of the mass killings sites that they heard from their parents, grandparents, or aging neighbours. Sometimes young villagers occasionally saw offerings (*sesajen*) placed on the road or in the middle of the rice field, to commemorate the victims of mass killings. These offerings are part of Kejawen/ Javanese practices to pay respect to the spirits of the deceased. For example, in one of the discussions, the youth group mentioned a mass grave located in a five-intersection in a nearby hamlet. The regular offerings on the location mark the mass grave in the absence of a tombstone or other commemorative signs. Another site that was also mentioned in the discussion was the 'lost lands' that were confiscated after 1968. Young people heard stories about certain locations that they pass on their way to farm work (such as tilling, looking for grass to feed the cattle, checking irrigation, and so on) with their parents or other adults. These locations were previously owned by a villager that they know, but were confiscated after 1968. In other words, certain locations trigger memories about the 1965-68 violence, and it is through these places that stories were retold to the younger generations.

The second context where stories of violence has emerged is during traditional communal activities. One example that the youth explained was the tradition of birth celebrations (*slametan*). In Javanese tradition, when a baby is born, extended family members and neighbours will gather continuously for

[424] Conroe 2017, 216.

five or sometimes seven days in the newborn family's house. This is the community's contribution to the family, to assist the recovering mother, care for the newborn, and ensure that the whole family stays healthy. During these traditional rituals, villagers usually gather until late at night (they used the Javanese term *jagong*) and it is within this moment that stories of the 1965-68 are usually unfolded, sometimes in passing, but also often in great detail.[425] Horrifying stories of the 1965-68 killings often appear at this moment (similar to the FGD excerpt in chapter 5). These communal activities became an opportunity for interaction for young and old people to talk about the past.

The third context, and also the most intriguing one, of exposure to stories of violence exists through history lessons in schools. Besides two FGDs with village youths, I also visited two high schools in the village. One is a private school called Taman Siswa high school and the other is a *Madrasah Aliyah Negeri* or MAN (state-sponsored Islamic high school). In both schools, I was only able to talk to the teachers and not to the students, because another formal mechanism of a permit is needed to arrange discussions with the students. Nevertheless, by talking to the teachers, I understand that the topic of 1965 history is the most debated issue in class. Internet has become increasingly accessible for the students in those schools, which contributes to the exposure of diverse information about 1965. According to the teachers, students show a high level of curiosity, asking which version of history is true.[426] Since 2003, the Indonesian Ministry of Education has taken major steps to transform the educational curriculum to replace their top-down approach and accommodate diversity in educational level, local potentials and students' capabilities. This curriculum is known as the Competency-Based Curriculum (*Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi*, KBK), and it also gives teachers the independence to develop their own teaching materials.[427] It seems that this curriculum has made significant changes in the discussion of 1965 in history classes. Teachers usually return to textbooks as references, and keep the debate as an open discourse, without drawing conclusions based on only one interpretation of history.[428] Moreover, from the experience of one teacher, a student also brings his/ her family's experiences to the class. It is usually the grandparents' experience as victims, or stories of mass killings that they have heard from the village elderly, that were never mentioned in the textbooks.

The contexts that I discussed above show that even when the official narrative still dominates national history, other narratives of violence still circulate in localities. This is one of the effects of Reformasi, where there is more room to talk about the violence compared to the years of the New Order. As a result, current younger generations are slowly acknowledging stories of violence. In the case of Donomulyo, village youth are being introduced to the 1965-68 violence through history education, communal activities, and stories about sites. Through these channels, narratives about families have expanded to others outside the family circle, and sometimes mingle with the formal

[425] Focus Group Discussion RT 15, 15 May 2017.

[426] The history textbook for class XII (high school) released by the Ministry of Culture and Education explains seven different analyses about the actors behind the September 30th Movement. However, the New Order version of the September 30th Movement still resonates in the textbook, by depicting the event as a threat to the nation's integration and by presenting a simplified narrative of the 1948 Madiun event. Abdurakhman, et al. 2018. However, information on 1965 that is available on the internet covers many other aspects of the violence, (i.e. victims' experiences of violence) which is not always similar to information in the textbooks.

[427] Leksana 2009, 184-5.

[428] According to the teachers in Jakarta, this is kept open because the main objective of history lessons is for students to be able to analyze historical events, rather than concluding the truth. See Leksana. Reconciliation Through History Education, ibid. From another conversation with a teacher in 2006, returning to the textbook is recommended for students to be able to pass the exam, although the teachers discuss more materials than those in the textbooks.

narrative. Years after the Reformasi, formal memory construction that was imposed by the state is still continuously challenged.

## Conclusion

The case studies centre on different generations of families who have had various experiences in 1965-68. Postmemory in these cases illustrates the complexities of representations in the past. In some cases, memory of the past is connected to the present, such as the case of Marwono's family, who remembered 1965 as the turning point that increased village inequality and clientelist practices in the village. Postmemory in the second generation also reflects interconnectedness between the public and the private, or the local and the national. In the family of Suparman, private experiences were retold to sustain the image of the PKI as troublemakers. Meanwhile, in the case of the Baharjo family, the national event was coined in private elements in their family.

These family cases also point to the dominant existence of silence in their families, which is not always the same as forgetting or the absence of narratives. Silence may be a covert expression of guilt for collaborators by distancing themselves from the violence, as in the case of Suparman's family. It can also be projected into an imaginative investment of reconciliation and justice, as reflected by the case of Jarso's family and the court case that did not take place. All of these practices show that silence is not merely an expression of trauma, but also a navigating device, a strategy to be able to continue living together in a community where members have had different positions in the violence, either as individuals who participated and benefited from the violence or as those who were harmed by it. To add to Hirsch's concept of postmemory, the way young generations remember the 1965-68 violence is not merely within family relations, but also in larger communal interactions. In rural contexts such as Donomulyo, traditional communal activities, sites of violence, and history education provide spaces where stories of violence circulate.