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Writing novels under the New Order: state censorship, complicity, and literary production in Indonesia, 1977-1986

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WRITING NOVELS UNDER THE NEW ORDER

State Censorship, Complicity, and Literary Production in Indonesia, 1977-1986

van Taufiq Hanafi

1. Censorship was not a dichotomy of state repression versus victimized literary producers. Instead it consisted of a complex complicity between the state, publishers and authors. (Darnton 2014)
2. Censorship oscillated between liberal impulses of the regime and its intrinsic insecurity. (Yamamoto 2011)
3. The ambit of censorship research should be expanded. It can be studied as an external repressive force, but also as an internal driving force in the world of literary production that creates new forms of discourse and new genres of speech. (Bunn 2015)
4. New Historicist approach helps to investigate literary works in connection with their position in history and society at a given time. (Gallagher and Greenblatt 2000)
5. Against the dominant scholarly view and popular imagination, censorship in Indonesia under the New Order was NOT erratically carried out by understaffed, unskilled, and uncritical censors. (*This thesis*)
6. The authoritarian New Order regime was marked by a simultaneous tension between growth and repression. They stimulated publication of literary writings, but at the same time closed certain domains, as indicated by the Indonesian writers' virtual silence on the background and meaning of the killings of 1965-66. (*This thesis*)
7. Almost always during their creative processes, literary producers in Indonesia anticipated probable censorship by making sure that they did not contradict the grammatical discourse outlined by the state. (*This thesis*)
8. Literary authors give meaning to their personal experiences. Even if their story failed to inform on the factual elements of historical events, they would still shed light on the prevailing ways of thinking or doing at that specific period. (*This thesis*)
9. At the heart of censorship in Jakarta, researchers must not immediately be concerned with asking the right questions but they have to first dive into and take part in the censors' institutional habits and personal praxis, namely their religious performance, gastronomic delights, and nicotine addiction.
10. Researching censorship requires that one consistently moves forward. *Maju terus pantang mundur. Moedig Voorwaarts*. (President Soekarno 1964; M. Bloembergen 2020)