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SASTRA and SOCIAL JUSTICE

by

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INTRODUCTION

Irony seems to be the best word to describe the relationship between the social workings of contemporary Indonesian literature and what it claims to perform. On the one hand, there are the growing demands, appeals, and optimistic hopes for Indonesian literature to act as a prominent, or leading agent in social change towards social justice. On the other hand, there is the generally overlooked, potent force of injustice inherent in the very basic, constitutive idea of Indonesian 'literature' or sastra itself.

This essay is intended to illuminate the making of that irony. There are three major parts of this study. As may be apparent in the way I view the nature of the irony above, it is absolutely necessary for me to take the first part to discuss some basic ideas of 'language' on a theoretical basis, and in some specific reference to Indonesian contexts. In the second part I would need to examine historically the formation of the current meaning of sastra (literature) in Indonesia, which I see to be responsible to

a considerable extent for the irony previously referred to. Then in the rest of the space in this essay, I will discuss in a rather specific manner the growing tendency among contemporary Indonesian literary figures to relate sastra to the struggle for social justice. To present it more systematically, the last part of this essay will be divided further into three sections. In the first I will make an attempt to note a brief historical perspective on the discussion of sastra as a means to 'social justice'. The second section is a review of the debates on this issue in Indonesia in recent years. The last section will be devoted to show the irony in these debates.

To give a more concrete picture of the major problems involved in this study, let me give an account of a real experience that I will not likely forget for a long time. The experience that complements this introductory note is a story of an 'introduction'.

Over a year ago, I made an acquaintance with a young Indonesian scholar. We met at a small cafe during a lunch hour in the heart of San Francisco.

As we ate, we exchanged self-introductions. I was delighted to know that he was a lecturer from one of the five most acclaimed universities in Indonesia. He had been in the U.S. for a number of years to continue his formal study in political science. At the time we met, he had almost completed

his dissertation. In fact, he expected to graduate within a few months from one of the most outstanding American universities in his chosen field of study. His home university in Indonesia had notified him that they wanted him to go back home as soon as possible, as they needed him badly. In short, I realized I was meeting one of the promising young academic figures of Indonesia.

At one point, he asked me in return what I studied in school, knowing that I was a student. What he did not know was that it was a question I usually tried to avoid. All the friendliness in his attitudes and questions, however, was too impressive for my original reservations in speaking about the topic. After all, I thought, he asked the question incidentally. So I replied casually "sastra". This, nevertheless, led us to an unexpectedly more serious conversation.

Very likely out of his being modest and courteous, my new acquaintance made an apologetic response to my answer. He said that he felt ashamed because he had not been able to follow the recent developments of Indonesian sastra. He said that he felt guilty for having been too busy with his school work to have spared the time to read poetry and novels, either in Indonesian or in English.

I made a reply, saying that he had no reasons to feel that way. But this did not make him feel any better as I had expected it would. On the contrary, he was even more

enthusiastic in asserting his point. He explained that a scholar, like himself, should be ashamed if he/she was not engaged in reading and appreciating works of sastra as part of his/her habitual activities. He went on giving reasons for saying that. Reading sastra, he argued, enabled a person to keep his/her budi pekerti (character) refined, or morally elevated. He believed that ilmu -- in the sense of 'science' in modern English -- had made him preoccupied with works mainly dealing with the brain, thinking, and logic. Therefore, he continued, it is imperative for an ilmuwan (scientist) to be habitually engaged in reading sastra, or appreciating other works of seni (arts). This is to keep a balance between logical, or rational thinking and illogical, emotional, or irrational mental exercises. Only then is our being 'cultured humans' reaffirmed, he concluded.

I wished I could have found a lighter topic to continue our conversation. My new acquaintance, however, wanted a further response from me. It was not an easy thing for me. On the one hand, I did not want to pretend to agree with him, on the other I was not ready to make a spontaneous, short, simple, and clear response. What I finally uttered was something like this:

That sounds like a bit of an exaggeration. I'm not so sure that you've been that far separated from sastra as you may have thought. Still read the newspaper? Listen to the radio? Watch tv or see movies?

(He nodded)

And I'm sure you have no day without reading or writing texts for your school work in the past few years. Well, suppose they are all . . . sastra.

(He stared at me.)

After all, are novels and poems necessarily more elevating (or deteriorating) our 'character' or our cultured 'humanity' than something like the dissertation you are about to produce?

For a moment he tried to make sure that I was not joking. Then he expressed himself, saying that if all of these were to be considered sastra, then how one could distinguish sastra from those things that are not sastra. I questioned which was more important: to distinguish sastra from non-sastra, or to ask why there should be any distinction at all in the first place.

He burst into laughter, and I joined him.

BASIC VIEWS OF LANGUAGE

Among those who have discussed Indonesian sastra we can find some who would be cautious in using the key-word sastra. Among these people who would pay special attention to the meaning of sastra in opening their discourse, there have been only a relatively small number of them who view 'meaning' as basically social "creation" and "re-creation" (Williams, 1977:31), and who believe that in order to understand 'meaning' properly we absolutely need some historical perspective.

It is not uncommon in contemporary Indonesia to open a discussion on sastra (as well as on other topics) with some definition(s) of the keyword concerned. This is particularly conspicuous in text-books of Indonesian sastra. In their attempt to define the meaning of the word, these authors usually trace back the oldest recorded meaning of the word, and by etymologizing it, they suggest (usually implicitly) a 'correct' (because it is regarded the 'original') meaning of the word.

Two decades ago, Arifin Nur (1964:31-32) showed that the word kesusasteraan (currently accepted to be the equival-

ent of 'literature') was derived from a Sanskrit word. He also indicated the differences of meaning as conveyed in that Sanskrit word from the word kesusasteraan used today. There was no suggestion, however, of any significance of that information, or causes and impact of that semantic change in the social life of the people concerned. Apparently, Nur's purpose was only to mention the generally held information about the meaning(s) of the term, "mengikuti pengertian umum[m] sekarang" (following the common understanding at present).

In more or less the same manner, a decade later Usman Effendi (1977:5) discussed the meaning of sastra. He mentioned what meanings the word sastra used to have in the past: "tulisan" (writing), "segala apa yang dituliskan" (all written texts), and "segala apa yang dituliskan mengenai budi-pekerti" (all that has been written about moral character). He also noted what sastra means today: "Tjiptaan manusia dalam bentuk bahasa, tulisan mau pun lisan, jang dapat menimbulkan rasa bagus" (all human creations in the form of language, either written or spoken, that evokes a sense of beauty). In no way did he relate the changes in meaning of the word sastra in the past and the emergence of its present meaning to the history of the society concerned.

Earlier this decade Soedjoko (1981:24) suggested the 'correct' meaning(s) of the word sastra:¹⁾

. . . ilmu, pengetahuan, kepandaian, kecakapan, kawruh, pangawruh, ngelmu, ajaran, weda, widya, wijnana, jnana, parujnana, guna, agama, dan kawihikan.

I am not familiar with some of the terms above. However, that is not the main reason why I chose not to give an English translation of the above quotation. Without having to translate the terms above, my main point will still be clear enough. It is not so much what Soedjoko thinks the meanings of sastra are that matters, but it is his argument that precedes the above quotation: "Jelas bahwa arti sastra itu . . ." (Evidently, the meaning(s) of sastra is/are . . .). Soedjoko based his statement above on his interpretation of meanings of the word sastra as used in ancient time in the archipelago. The question is not how accurate his interpretation is, but why he should think that meanings of words remain unchanged in the course of time.

In the following year, under the same influential mainstream of thought, I made a similar uncritical argument (Heryanto, 1982).

The above are just a few of the many examples one can easily gather from the various writings and discussions on Indonesian literature in the past few decades. What I am trying to show is the mainstream of thought in Indonesia for at least a few decades, which assumes the existence of some kind of 'correct' meaning of a word. A brief account of the workings of language in society is certainly in order.

In a recent essay "Biography of a Sentence: A Burmese Proverb", Alton L. Becker (1984:137-138) discusses "two basic ways to think about grammar", which can be expanded to two basic ways of viewing language. In the first view, as Becker explains it, "Language is 'rule-governed' and the task of the grammarian is to find the most economical, least 'subjective' formulation of the rules". According to the second view, 'language' is seen "in terms of contextual relations" (and Becker discusses in details what he considers those relations are), and thus it "is not a closed system".

It is obvious that the dominant view of 'language' in contemporary Indonesia resembles the first view above. Like Becker, Raymond Williams (1977:21-44) does not see language as something static or stable. In his account of 'language' Williams emphasizes the idea of language as "activity" and seeing it "historically". Rejecting the idea of language as "a tool or an instrument or a medium taken up by individuals when they had something to communicate", Williams (1977:32) argues that language is a "constitutive activity". As both Becker and Williams suggest, language should be first of all understood as a man-made product. Of equal importance is an awareness that this product is neither "an inherited, ready made product" of a past society, nor some exclusive individual creative expres-

sions (Williams, 1977:36,40). Therefore, this view of language critically challenges any attempts at discovering the 'correct' meaning of a word. The dynamic of 'meaning' in language use among living human interactions can be understood in Becker's (1984:138) words: "In all language, there are prior norms and present deviations going on constantly". These deviations, as suggested earlier, are not exclusively individual, but actively social. Stanley Fish (1980:14) who addresses the same issue in the same line, explains that such deviations proceed "from a public and conventional point of view".

Thus, for our specific concerns with the term sastra in relation to 'social justice', it is imperative to examine certain 'social' and 'political' (if the two can be termed separately so) contextual relations involved. In Indonesia, we can easily see similar phenomena to those indicated by Mary Louise Pratt (1977:xviii-xix) as taking place in the West: "Not all books get published, not all societies agree on what constitutes literature, and not all varieties of verbal art are recognized as literature". By denying specific historical "contextual relations" in forming the present meaning of the term sastra in Indonesia today, many leading figures in Indonesian literature today have laboriously sought to find the 'correct' meaning of the term.

Subagio Sastrowardoyo (1983a:132), one of the outstanding poets and critics in Indonesian literature, proposes the importance of scientific endeavour in literary criticism to discover the fundamental question of what is sastra²). After a lengthy discussion of what is and what is not sastra, Satyagraha Hoerip (1979:xvi) admits that defining what is sastra is a difficult (rather than an unnecessary and impossible) thing to do. Opposing Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana's (1982:159) idea of sastra as seni bahasa (verbal arts), Goenawan Mohammad (1982:178) argues that poetry, and literature do not always have to be seni bahasa, but can also take the form of 'pointing at the falling leaves'. Implicitly, Mohammad 'corrects' Alisjahbana's definition. In 1984, the Jakarta Arts Center chose Olengka, a novel by Budi Darma, to be one of the winners of their literary awards for that year. On the occasion of receiving the award, Budi Darma gave a speech. He explicated the thrust of his speech as follows (Darma, 1984): "Dan sambil mengambil hadiah, perkenankanlah saya mengemukakan pendapat saya mengenai apa sebenarnya sastra itu" (And as I am receiving the award, let me say what I think sastra really is). I will discuss what Budi Darma thinks sastra really is later in this essay. For the moment, I wish to emphasize his belief in the existence of the 'real' sastra.

In sum, it is true that the term sastra has stimulated many people to question and argue. Nevertheless, these pursuits are not a sign of a growing awareness of social constraints that mould the dominant meaning of sastra in contemporary Indonesia. On the contrary, those questions and arguments about what constitutes sastra seem to be expressions of a common ahistorical view of language and literature in contemporary Indonesia. It is the view which presupposes the existence of some 'correct' meaning of sastra beyond man's everyday social interaction.

I have not been able to gather enough data to enable me to trace the history of the presently dominant view of language and literature in Indonesia. Alton L. Becker (1982:21-22) notes the powerful influence of the Sanskrit view of language in ancient Java. He suggests that in this old view the meaning of words seems to have been perceived as deriving from divine sources. It seems to me, however, the present dominant view of language in Indonesia could not exist in the way it does today without the great influence from the West in much more recent times. In regard to this recent influence, I am particularly thinking of Western education, Western literature in translation and adaptation, and contact with Western scholars.

Even today studies in both linguistics and literature in many of the universities in Indonesia are noticeably

a continuity of the general tendency of formal learning during the period of colonialization in adopting Western thoughts and their terminology. Rather than seeing these events as something to be regretted, it is much wiser and more fruitful to understand them openly. It is of great significance that the influential National Board of Language Development (Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa) launches (quite successfully) the slogan 'use the Indonesian well and correctly'. With regard to the dominant, ahistorical view of literature in Indonesia today, Keith Foulcher (1984) strongly argues that its present ascendancy is due to the winning hegemony of the 'universal humanist' artists and critics (for which A. Teeuw and H.B. Jassin are greatly responsible) since the 1965 upheavals, and the denial by the winning side of the former alternative view of sastra propounded by left-wing artists.

Bearing in mind the dynamic nature of language, we cannot proceed further with our discussion of sastra without first having some historical perspective on the term sastra itself. Though the term has along history, covering many centuries, the following note only focuses on the drastic change that happened to the term around the turn of this century.

SASTRA and LITERATURE

Today, the term 'literature' in (modern) English has been commonly accepted to be a convenient translation of sastra in (modern) Indonesian. In fact, 'literature' has even been used to refer to various texts belonging to almost all the societies on this planet, and of any time in history, as long as they can be conceived to resemble some of the basic characteristics of what constitute 'literature' in the mind of the observer.

In an attempt to denounce the oft-made distinction between 'ordinary language' and 'literary language',⁴⁾ and thus by extention, the distinction between what is and what is not 'literature', Stanley Fish (1980:109) argues : "All aesthetics, then, are local and conventional rather than universal, reflecting a collective decision as to what will count as literature, . . ." Fish, then, seems to suggest that there is no "universal" convention of what counts a "literature", but there are as many conventions as there are "collectives". One should probably go even further by questioning whether or not there should be any

"literature" at all in every society, rather than questioning the various "conventions" to count what constitutes "literature". Is there some room for conceiving that sastra was once not a 'species' under the general heading "literature"?

In this section I will attempt to review both the use of the term sastra before the idea of 'literature' was introduced and pervasive among people of the archipelago, and afterwards.

Like the English word 'literature', the word sastra has never been a static linguistic entity in its immediate living social environment. The word sastra and its several derivatives (kesusasteraan, of all things concerning sastra; sastrawan, person who composes a work of sastra, are two of the most important ones) are quite old in the archipelago which is now called Indonesia. Their present meanings, however, are relatively new.

In order to understand the moulding of the present meaning of sastra, it is worth noting the equally 'new' meanings of two other words : seni and budaya (they are commonly translated as 'art' and 'culture' respectively today). Probably with no exceptions, nowadays the Indonesian literati speaks of sastra as a cabang ('branch') of (ke)seni(an). At another level (ke)seni(an) is almost always seen as one 'species' of the genus called (ke)budaya(an). For anyone familiar with modern English, the view above appears

strikingly to be in parallel to the notion of the relation between 'literature' - 'art', and 'art' - 'culture' in English speaking societies today.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that evidently this generally accepted notion of how sastra is related to seni and budaya had not come into being more than one or two centuries ago. If we reject the idea of 'logical', and 'structural' "constraints common to all languages" (Becker, 1984:138), if we do not simply consider this parallel as accidental, and unless we deny the past colonialization in the archipelago, we can hardly avoid having a suspicion that the present notions of sastra, seni, and budaya are virtually an 'imitation' of (or expressions of those being intimidated by) the current ideas of 'literature', 'art', and 'culture' in English and other Western languages.

As late as 1939, R.O. Windstedt (1939:100) still translated 'culture' as bahasa, rather than budaya in Malay. Twenty years ago it was still common to hear someone quote the old proverbial saying bahasa menunjukkan bangsa. We hardly hear this these days. A seemingly similar phrase that is popular in contemporary Indonesian discourse is Setiap masyarakat mempunyai kebudayaan sendiri-sendiri (every society has its own culture). The two phrases look similar because bahasa ('language') is presently considered

one of the components of budaya ('culture'), and bangsa is still used in contemporary Indonesian, though it is used more and more exclusively to translate new ideas such as 'nation' or 'society'. However, there is a notable difference of meaning between the common use of the two phrases. The first phrase (bahasa menunjukkan bangsa) has been commonly used to suggest or to judge the quality of specific behaviour, speech, or attitudes which are believed to be in accord with the upbringing, or social class of the person(s) in question. Wilkinson (1901:136) translates the proverb as "manner reveal descent". I think "kind" may substitute for "descent" in Wilkinson's translation. The second phrase (Setiap masyarakat mempunyai kebudayaan sendiri-sendiri) refers to more or less abstract entities without necessarily implying value judgements on individuals. One can probably suggest other differences between the two phrases. Our main concern here is a use of the word bahasa, both in the past and present, that does not precisely mean (ke)budaya(an). Notice the following example of the old use of the word bahasa which is hardly comparable to the contemporary idea of kebudayaan.

La ilaha illa 'Allah; apakah bahasanya
 Tuanku begitu? Bukankah sudah patik sembahkan
 dahulu jangan Tuanku pakai seperti pakaian
 yang demikian ini . . . 5)

Therefore, instead of saying that the old idea of bahasa is

preserved but the term is now 'replaced' by the term budaya, it seems to be more accurate to say that the old idea of bahasa has approached its extinction.

According to Wilkinson (1901:415, 1959:1072) the word seni formerly meant several things, such as "thin", "fine", "delicate", "clear". In no instance, however, does Wilkinson indicate that seni meant 'art'. Wilkinson (1959:1072) based his translations on several classical Malay texts, such as the Bustan-us-Salatin : "Puteri yang seni: a princess delicately fair"; "Suaranya terlalu seni: with a very high-pitched voice"; and the Sejarah Melayu: "... jarum yang seni-seni: needless worn very thin". From reading Hikayat Anggun Cik Tunggal I found the use of the word seni in more or less the same sense:

Maka Bujang Selamat pun segeralah menangkap pinggang Komander Tehling tujuh belit rantai ikat pinggangnya berkancing seni-seni ... 6) (Osman, 1983:13)

A cross examination of the term in question only supports the point I made above. Both W.G. Shellabear (1916:28) and R.O. Winstedt (1939:23) note several Malay words that could translate the English word 'art', but none of those Malay words is seni. They are kepandaian ("skill"), ilmu ("science"), hikmat ("magic"), daya, upaya, elah, akal ("stratagem") in Winstedt's translation, and kepandaian, pengetahuan ("knowledge"), hikmat, upaya, akal, ilmu in

Shellabear's.

The former disconnection between budaya and seni was by no means any greater than that between seni and sastra. The Sanskrit term ṣāstra was adopted into Classical Malay as well into Old Javanese several centuries ago. In Classical Malay the term sastra means "sacred books", "books of divination", and "astrological tables" (Wilkinson, 1901:383, 1959:1025). Sasterawan was used to refer to various meanings, including "skilled in divination", "a sage and seer" (Wilkinson, 1959:1025), and also "an astrologer", as well as "an astrological book" (Wilkinson, 1901:383). The following is an example of what sasterawan refers to in a Classical Malay text, the Hikayat Hang Tuah (1956:5-6):

Maka baginda pun bertitah kepada perdana menteri, suruh memanggil segala ahli'nnudjum dan segala sastrawan. Maka sekaliannja pun datang menjembah baginda. Maka titah baginda kepada segala ahli'nnudjum dan segala sastrawan: 'Hai kamu sekalian, lihat apalah dalam nudjumu, betapakah akan untung bahagian anakku ini' 7)

This example is a good one, because it does not only mention the term sastrawan, but it describes what the sastrawan did in older Malay society.

In the Old Javanese, the term śāstra was used to refer to "any instrument of teaching, any book or treatise", especially "any religious or scientific treatise, any sacred

book or composition of divine authority", or simply "script, letters" (Zoetmulder, 1982:1707). In publishing the 14th century Javanese text of the Nagara-Kertagama and its translation, Pigeaud often translates ḡāstra as "books of learning", for instance: linnin ḡāstra wnan sagatyanika de narendren pura (81:4-2), "(According to) the words of the shāstras (books of learning) allowed are all goings, eventually, to these by Princes in Royal compounds" (Pigeaud, 1960: I-62, III-95).

The Old Javanese had a word that referred to what Zoetmulder (1982:1708) describes as, "accomplished in the literary arts". In modern Javanese and Indonesian, a close corresponding referent would seem to be pujangga or sastrawan. In Old Javanese, however, (if the idea of "literary arts" really existed as Zoetmulder suggests), that person is called śāstrawijña. The Old Javanese also had the word śāstrawān, but it meant "skilled in the scriptures", or the "learned" (Zoetmulder, 1982:1708). This old meaning of śāstrawān in Old Javanese seems to correspond very well to the meaning of the same word in a Classical Malay passage "Panji Samerang arif sasterawan : Panji Samerang wise and devoutly learned" (Wilkinson, 1901:383).

There is certainly a historical continuity between the past and present meaning of sastra, despite their dif-

ferences. Though most of this continuity is beyond my knowledge, there is one point worth mentioning here. Near the conclusion of the Nagara-Kertagama, there are these important lines (Pigeaud, 1960:I-73)

astam/ san paṇḍiten, bhūmi jawa saha san
 cāstradakṣātiwijña, kapwagostyañikēt/
 cloka hana wawacacan/ ṅwānirekin pamārṇna,
 (93:2-1,2)

Pigeaud (1960:III-111) translates those lines as below

Not to mention the honoured scholars of
 Jawa-land, all there are of the honoured
 ones, in the books of learning clever and
 most learned,

equally they discuss making shlokas (Sanskrit
 verses). Then there are wawacans (narrative
 poems), Their places now, for making descriptions.

The ancient Javanese "scholars" were important experts in compositions which we count as "literature". It is now clear that "scholars", "learned", as well as "literature" as used in the above translations and discussions are linguistic products of our present time! To say that śāstrawān in Old Java was not the same kind of person as sastrawan in our present understanding but rather the "learned" can be confusing or misleading if we are naive enough to take the terms "learned" or "scholars" very rigidly and then to interpret them as "scientists", or "academicians" of the 20th century highly specialized societies. Yes, the Old Javanese śāstrawān were the "learned" and "scholars", but they were

the "learned" and "scholars" in their Old Javanese sense, so to speak, and not ours today.

Considering the past fusion of sastra and ilmu, it is interesting, therefore, to notice the common tendency among Indonesians nowadays to think of sastra as almost the opposite of ilmu, as illustrated earlier by my story in the introductory note. H.B. Jassin (1975:323) expresses his fear that in his works dealing with kesusasteraan he may have been ilmiah (scientific).⁸⁾ Apparently in the view of Ajip Rosidi (1976:25) ilmu and sastra are mutually exclusive, when he states that there are two different kinds of translation; the first is secara ilmiah (in a scientific fashion), and the other is secara sastra (in a literary fashion). Y.B. Mangunwijaya (1982:2) describes the nature of sastra by contrasting it to tulisan ilmiah, to the effect that the former is far superior than the latter. Rather than recognizing the differential meanings of sastra and ilmu as arbitrary constructs and critically questioning the relevant values in the social life of contemporary Indonesia, the general tendency has been to accept them and furthermore to confirm them as if they were immanent.

Having a brief account of the development of the words sastra, seni and budaya is not the only means of realizing that our present ideas of sastra as a kind of seni

is both man-made, and rather 'newly' contrived. Earlier I suggested that the present ideas of sastra - seni - budaya take after the modern Western models, 'literature' - 'art' - 'culture'. Considering that this model is itself a relatively recent development in the West⁹⁾ the Indonesian counterpart is conceivably a more recent product.

Therefore, it is seriously debatable to suggest, as Koentjaraningrat (1974:12) does, that there are a set of cultural forms such as sastra or seni which can be found in every society, in any period of history. "One of the most subtle forces of colonialism, ancient or modern", Becker (1984:145) sharply points out, "is the undermining of not just the substance but the framework of someone's learning". Adopting Western categories in the attempt to promote nationalism in resistance to overwhelming Westernization, has often unintentionally been self-defeating for many Indonesians, exemplified by Koentjaraningrat. Lack of critical perspective, which is itself an effect of colonialization, leads many of the colonized to see what is 'Western' to be 'universal', as the colonizer comfortably likes to see it.

It is rather startling to find Marshall McLuhan (1964:66) quoting : "'We have no art', say the Balinese; 'we do everything as well as possible'". It is startling for several reasons. For one thing, many Indonesians take a

great pride in the Balinese for their 'art' that has gained international fame and adoration. In fact, one commonly hears people claim that every Balinese is an artist, whose talent begins to flourish at a very young age. Far from being a self-denial, or disclaimer of one's own reputation, the above quote is virtually a 'liberating' view of one's own image and dignity. It de-universalizes the idea of 'art'. There is something very curious about the above statement. It implies that the Balinese just "have no art" because the very idea of "art" never exists in their mind, not because they prefer to "have no art" after some consideration. "The Balinese", however, would not be able to make the statement, had the idea of "art" not been introduced to, and well understood by them. Even if they were well aware of the idea of "art" in (modern) English, or seni in (modern) Indonesian, it was unlikely that they saw any point of making such a statement, had there not been another peoples' statement to respond to or counter. Likewise, Marshall McLuhan would not have cited the statement, or perhaps have noticed it at all, if he had not been aware of the pervasive notion in his society that 'art' is universal.¹⁰⁾

In the specific sphere of the 'literary arts', I have also found one or two extreme examples of the tendency to 'universalize' Western literary categories. Here is an

account of the earliest novel in Javanese :

Novel kesusasteraan Jawa modern yang pertama adalah Serat Riyanto karangan R.M. Sulardi, yang diterbitkan oleh Balai Pustaka pada tahun 1920 . . .

Pada waktu itu istilah novel (=roman) belum dikenal orang. Ketika R.M. Sulardi mengarang novel Serat Riyanto ia juga belum mengerti arti istilah novel itu. Ia baru mengerti ketika diberitahu oleh seorang sahabatnya yang bernama Wongsonegoro S.H. bahwa cerita yang dikarangnya itu berbentuk novel (Hutomo, 1975:55). 11)

Novel, a relatively recent Western literary term, is perceived as a categorical idea that exists independently of man's consciousness of it, and prior to its material production.

Nevertheless, this is not to argue that there is nothing in the text Serat Riyanto that can be significantly compared to some of the major characteristics of what we conventionally call a "novel". Not having examined the text itself, I have no right to say anything about these matters. Considering the period of the text, it is conceivable that the text has some discernable influence of the Western literature available in Java at that time, and it is not surprising that the text appears to deviate from what we generally ascribe to 'traditional', indigenous, literary conventions. 12)

At any rate, the case above does not look as problematic as when the term 'novel' is used to refer to old texts of a non-Western society which were composed before

there was any contact with the West, and even before the term 'novel' was even used in its homeland in our present sense. Such an extreme far-reaching use of the term 'novel' is best illustrated in a recently published article in an Indonesian magazine :

. . . jenis cerita novel dalam kesusasteraan Jawa sudah lama muncul, yaitu semenjak jaman Jawa Kuno. Cerita-cerita dari jaman Jawa Kuno yang dapat digolongkan kedalam cerita novel antara lain Ramayana, Kresnayana dan Ghatot-kacasraya . . . Jenis cerita novel yang lahir pada jaman Jawa Kuno dan jaman Kapujanggan Surakarta adalah cerita roman pewayangan (Soeprpto, 1983:338). 13)

I have stressed earlier that those examples are rather 'extreme'. It is to be remembered, however, that we should not just consider these 'extreme' views as individual idiosyncracies. Even the most extreme ideas, to repeat my earlier quotation from Fish's (1980:14) statement, "proceed from", and thus have continuity with "a public and conventional point of view".

We can imagine, when the idea of 'literature' (or letterkunde) was introduced and promoted under the auspices of European colonial administrators, teachers¹⁴⁾, and scholars, there was subsequently a search among some Indonesians literati around the turn of this century for an Indonesian word that translates the term, and conveys more or less the same idea. Apparently, there were ini-

tially two words that become the most prominent translations for 'literature', namely pustaka and sastra. These two words were used interchangeably until there was more and more emphasis on distinguishing 'literature' in a broad sense (any printed books, or reading materials) from 'literature' in a narrower sense ('literary arts') in Indonesia, following the earlier trend in the West.

It is of great significant that in writing a textbook on Javanese (Kasu)sastra(n) over twenty years ago, S. Padmosoekotjo (1960:12) makes a remarkably decisive distinction between the meaning of the words pustaka and sastra. Padmosoekotjo states unequivocally that the former means any books or letters, whereas the latter means a special form of verbal texts in which 'beauty' or 'aesthetic' is a dominant feature.

Padmosoekotjo's decisive stance is understandable if we remind ourselves of two phenomena in his time. The first was the pervasive view of language that assumes some 'fixed', and 'correct' meaning of a word. Earlier we have discussed the tendency in Indonesia to search for the 'correct' meaning of sastra, and in so doing some people have sought the ancient meaning of the word. There is a belief that meaning should be preserved as a 'fixed' entity. It is doubtless that this tendency is not restricted to the word sastra alone. The

second was the popular use at that time of the two words pustaka and sastra interchangeably. The first explains what he wants to say (a 'correct' meaning for each of the words) and the second explains why he feels the need to say it (to 'correct' the generally accepted, fuzzy notions of the two words.¹⁵⁾

Prior to, and some years subsequent to Indonesia's Independence in 1945, the most well-known publishing house in the archipelago was the government-sponsored Balai Pustaka (founded in 1917). Balai Pustaka did not only publish 'literary works', but it was the most prestigious publisher of 'literary works' in the early history of Indonesian literature. If the publishing house had been founded in this decade it would most likely have been called Balai Sastra. As recent as 1952 the renowned Javanese writer and scholar, Poerbatjaraka, published a book on the subject which we would call 'Javanese Literature' in English today. The book, however, is entitled Kepustakaan Djawa, not Kesusastraan Djawa. Even six years after Padmosoekotjo made the express distinction between pustaka and sastra, Zuber Usman (1966), another famous writer of text-books of literature, still uses the two terms interchangeably.

From these bits and pieces of information, it seems clear that there was a time when pustaka was more popular

than sastra to translate 'literature'. That did not last very long. As there was a greater emphasis on distinguishing two major meanings of 'literature', the word sastra was re-created with a new set of meanings to espouse pustaka. There was no indication that Padmosoekotjo was the sole, or the first proponent of this new use of the term sastra. The development may have gone for decades before Padmosoekotjo wrote his book, but it doubtedly underwent a gradual and uneven process, which still continues today. Therefore, there is no point in attempting to suggest a particular time or place that distinctively marks the 'replacement' of an old meaning of sastra by a new one.

Though the word sastra originated from Sanskrit, its long adaptation justifies many in regarding it as a domestic term for contemporary Indonesians. Nevertheless, the survey above indicates that to a great extent the history of its present meaning is to be traced back neither to the Sanskrit, nor the indigenous culture, but to the modern Western world.

Earlier in this section I posed a question concerning the validity of speaking of sastra as 'literature'. I think the problems of employing one's own language to refer to alien, distant-past notions and categorical terms still remain. However, such problems are minimal in the case of referring to contemporary Indonesian sastra as 'literature'.

This is not only due to the general tendency among Indonesian authors to take after Western models, but also, and more importantly, due to the basic idea of sastra itself in contemporary Indonesia, shaped by and nurtured to fit the contemporary idea of 'literature'. To summarize my point, sastra is not inherently 'literature' but it is made to be. Words do not have static meaning.

Many Indonesians are very sensitive to the overflow of English words into the writings and speech of the elite. Apparently, they are not yet aware of the more profound and subtle Westernization in language : preserving an old 'indigenous' word and infusing it with the English meanings. Sastra is a good example of this. This subtle hegemony is even more difficult to deal with, just as a friend of mine puts it, modern colonialization is more difficult to confront than the old, because in the former the colonized does not see the presence of the alien colonializer, but rather their own national leaders! Discussions on the relationship between sastra and 'social justice', too, should critically examine the less apparent and the less obvious aspects of words and their meanings.

SASTRA and SOCIAL JUSTICE

a historical perspective

It is not much of an exaggeration to say that the most often discussed issue among major Indonesian literary figures in the first half of this decade has been one concerning the relationship between sastra and 'society'.¹⁶⁾ Of course, in various meetings and writings the issue is formulated in different ways, and the emphases are not necessarily uniform. Nevertheless, they generally center around the basic theme of the role of sastra(wan) in social change towards an ideally just social life. To be more specific, most of these discussions and debates concern the legitimacy, appropriateness or significance of 'didactic' aspects of sastra, and more frequently 'political criticism' against the social establishment in works of literary arts.

In a way it is true to say that this is by no means a 'new' issue in Indonesian literature. Ajip Rosidi (1973: 24) as well as Sapardi Djoko Damono (1977:60) indicate that the whole history of Indonesian literature is in practice a history of 'literature of protest', and thus there is no

reason to think that Indonesian sastra(wan) are not 'engaged' in social problems. But, again, there would be no reason for Ajip Rosidi or Sapardi Djoko Damono to point this out if there had not been some influential notions in the opposite direction.¹⁷⁾ In fact, in the 'traditional' societies, where 'traditional literature' was more a social product than the work of an individual author, and communally consumed (as opposed to reading in private), the whole question of relationship between 'society' and 'literature' was irrelevant, and even unthinkable. Only after the introduction and the spread of the notion of sastra as 'autonomous' do the arguments on the subject matter make any sense.

It is mistaken, however, to assume that the issue remains the same old, stable issue. From a historical perspective, it is not accidental that these issues re-emerge prominently in this decade in a different context than ever before. There are certainly many factors involved here, and I will attempt to discuss only some of the important ones.

Since the 70s there has been a significantly growing alternative trend in Indonesian literary and dramatic arts. Rendra seems to be one of the leading figures of this trend. Rendra himself began to work in this line by the late 60s, but it was not until the 70s that this trend shows its great impact. Unlike the protest-literature in earlier decades,

the current protest-literature can be very cynical, blunt, and sometimes vulgar, but almost always it is mixed with a great sense of humour. Social criticism in works of modern Indonesian literature in earlier decades is generally serious in tone, and often conveys a great deal of didacticism.

For a better understanding of the distinctive character of the current protest-literature in Indonesia, the following two comparisons can be made. First, we can compare the current protest-literature to protest-literature belonging to a time prior to and shortly after the Independence. Secondly, we can compare the current Indonesian protest-literature to protest-literature of the left-wing authors in the 60s.

The early works of modern Indonesian literature, prominently (but not exclusively) around Independence, include protest literature that follows two different major strategies. On the one hand, we find those who worked under the auspices of the Balai Pustaka, which was sponsored by the colonial government. They aimed their criticism at 'traditional' indigenous norms and values (such as arranged marriage), and simultaneously promoted 'modern', primarily Western alternatives. On the other hand, there were the 'underground' writers who launched their criticism against colonialization, and supported awakening nationalism. In contrast to these two kinds of protest-literature, the

protest-literature today reappraises 'traditional' values, and resents 'modernization' projects led by their national leaders.

After Independence, and especially a few years before 1965, there were the left-wing writers. They were committed to producing their literary works 'for the people' (not just 'for art's sake'). Unlike the current protest writers who are more concerned with the issues of 'democracy' and 'civil rights', the pre-1965 writers were more concerned with 'nationalism' (Foulcher, 1984:16,35). The works of the latter are characterized, as Foulcher (1984:50) puts it, by "idealistic yearnings ('sloganeering')" and "imagined realities ('propaganda')". Therefore, it is not difficult to understand why the works of these left-wing authors, like the didactic protest literature of the earlier decades, tend to be serious in tone, rather than humorous as much of current protest-literature. Consequently, and also unlike the experience of current protest writers, the pre-1965 left-wing writers were not mutually antagonistic with the nationalist leaders in power in the central government.

Contemporary protest-literature has drawn a great deal of attention in Indonesia, because it is popular among the masses, it is controversial among the dominant literary circle, and it often questions the leaders in power in the

central government. As many have suggested, for instance Alisjahbana (1982:156), Mohamad (1982:178), Nadjib (1982a:2), or Foulcher (1984:2), after the Old Order, and the left-wing writers were crushed in 1965, Indonesian literature was made as 'depoliticized' as it could be. Literature, and the arts in general have been predominantly valued in terms of their 'autonomous' aesthetic values. Any connotations or implications of social commentary, or any criticism in the text that has immediate reference to social realities in the everyday life of the writer and readers are considered 'flaws', 'propaganda', or remnant of the Communist-sponsored Lekra artistic tradition.

I believe this is one of the important reasons why protest-literature did not re-emerge prominently until the 70s, and it has not been seriously discussed in national seminars until the 80s. To many leading figures in Indonesian literature today (who were in difficult positions until 1965) the pre-1965 experience was too traumatic. It takes quite a while before a more unemotional retrospection is possible. I do not think there is anything new about that.

In addition to the above factor, there are still one or two other factors to consider in understanding why the current protest-literature in Indonesia emerges prominently in these recent years. In an attempt to explain historically

why Mubyarto's thesis on Ekonomi Pancasila has been well-received in late 70s and early 80s, despite the fact that the same thesis had been discussed in earlier times, Arief Budiman (1982a:15) writes

Ini disebabkan karena momentum sejarahnya yang tepat. Sejak permulaan tahun 1970-an terjadi ketidakpuasan terhadap politik pembangunan ekonomi yang dijalankan oleh pemerintah Suharto.¹⁸⁾

Dissatisfaction and frustrations confronting social and economic hardships are certainly in great favour in the developing trend of modern protest-literature. On the top of this favorable context, we still find another supportive factor. In recent years there is an ever growing number of Indonesian intellectuals who have overseas training, and they return to Indonesia with a view of social reality and social history which is radically different from the 'universal' and 'ahistorical' mainstream of thoughts in the country since 1965.¹⁹⁾

This new alternative view of sastra in particular and social reality in general put itself in opposition to the thoughts dominant hitherto. But it seems to me this alternative view still has a long way to go in order to counter-balance the established literary values in contemporary Indonesia. Goenawan Mohamad (1981:2) argues that ". . . dalam dunia kesusasteraan dan apresiasi sastra kita sekarang, pusat otoritas telah menjadi berantakan" (in the world of our literature and literary appreciation at present, the central

authority has fallen apart), but he immediately adds "Sekurang-kurangnya telah terjadi polisentrisme" (At least, what we have now is 'polycentrism'). Wiratmo Soekito, who has been one of the early Indonesian proponents of 'universal' literary values, recently makes his sorrowful admission to the effect that Indonesian literature is approaching its Sandyakala (literally : late afternoon, implying a 'dark time', or 'doomsday') because it tends to turn away from 'universal values' (Eneste, 1983a).

post-1965 debates on the issue

In his speech delivered on the occasion of receiving the first (and so far the only) granted, most honorable award for artistic accomplishment from the Jakarta Academy in 1975, Rendra makes the following modest statement :

Pepatah mengatakan : "Didalam ilmu silat tidak ada juara nomor dua, didalam ilmu surat tidak ada juara nomor satu." . . .

Jadi para ahli ilmu surat itu . . . tidak mungkin dipertandingkan. Semuanya nomor satu. Tidak ada yang lebih unggul dari lainnya.²⁰
(Rendra, 1983:77).

Rendra's statement is a good challenge to the persistent idea of 'objective' literary criticism and evaluation, based on a set of 'universal' literary values in contemporary Indonesia. Objecting the 'objective' view, however, may lead one to the equally ahistorical view based on 'subjectivity'.²¹⁾

The same proverb (Didalam ilmu silat tidak ada juara nomor dua, didalam ilmu surat tidak ada juara nomor satu.) is also open to other interpretations which are in opposition to some of the fundamental stances that Rendra has been propounding at a cost that many of his contemporaries cannot afford, or dare to pay. The same proverb, for instance, may be read as to reconfirm the established notion that literature exists in an 'autonomous' realm, independent of our social, everyday life. If 'military' or 'cold war' may be seen as a modern transformation of the ancient ilmu silat, it would be equally problematic, when one reads the same proverb as a confirmation of the notion that views 'literature' and 'politics' as mutually exclusive entities.

In fact, I would argue that the fundamental problem that underlies the great majority of recent discussions and debates on 'sastra for social justice' in Indonesia is the generally shared idea of sastra as decisively separated from social reality. Being free from actual, social "contextual relationship" (Becker, 1984:138), sastra is then seen as "an unambiguously transcendental essence" (Foulcher, 1984:1). Since it is seen as a "transcendental essence", it is apparently believed to exist independently of man's history, his consciousness, and his language. If this observation is accurate, the implication that follows is a view of the word sastra as

merely an arbitrary name, referring to that essence. Once sastra is seen as transcendental, it is easy to imagine it as being essentially free of human traits, errors, and injustice, all of which have generally been regarded as pertaining to the everyday life of human society. Thus, from this point of view, sastra is perceived as the sublime and divine "transcendental essence". The question of 'what is sastra', which some people have tried to answer, is virtually a quest for a 'correct' insight into that transcendental essence.

The above is a summary of what I see to be the basic understanding shared by the great majority of those who appear to be in opposition in various ways when discussing the issue 'sastra untuk keadilan sosial'. The assumption of a separation between sastra and social reality is taken for granted among those who are involved in the argument on the cause and effect of the separation, and/or who is responsible for it. The same basic assumption provides the common ground for the debate concerning the measure of sastra's potentials, whether or not it is expected to be an important agent in social change in the worldly realities. The given sublimities of sastra provide the basis of another series of argument; whether or not it is proper and justifiable for sastra to sacrifice its sublimities and be involved in the worldly matters. Thus, very often the assumed separation between

sastra and society is paradoxically both maintained and regretted. There is a tendency to maintain the idea that sastra is essentially transcendental, so that it confirms the view of sastra as being 'universal' and divinely 'sublime'. Only such a divinely 'sublime' essence is thought to be capable of purifying the world and restoring the society in good order, peace, and justice.²²⁾ It is regretted, therefore, that sastrawans, who are supposedly some kind of medium, are considered not doing what they are expected to do : deliver 'salvation' and 'justice' from the powerful transcendental essence to the everyday social life of the people. With some specific examples and references in the next few paragraphs, I hope, these matters will be more clear.

Now I would like to review three major questions that have been most debated in recent years among leading figures in Indonesian literature, namely (1) the causes of the separation between sastra and society; (2) whether or not sastra should be committed to social problems; and (3) whether or not sastra has any determining force in social change towards social justice. This theoretical categorization of major questions is made for analytical purposes in this essay : in real practice, of course, they often overlap. By proposing these three major problems, I do not suggest to ignore other related problems. To the best of my knowledge, however, those

three questions have been most profoundly debated in contemporary Indonesia, and deserves a review accordingly.

On the question of the cause of the separation between sastra and society, there are two major oppositional views. On one side, we find people like Rendra, Takdir, and Arief Budiman who argue that contemporary writers and critics of Indonesian literature are responsible for the separation. In this first view, there is some sort of allegation, either implicitly or explicitly conveyed, that contemporary writers and critics of Indonesian literature have indulged in "aestheticism" or "individualism", to the extent that they neglect the social function of sastra, i.e. to preserve social justice and provide moral support to members of the society. On the other side, there are people like Abdul Hadi W.M. and Sutardji C. Bachri who consider the 'society' to be responsible for the assumed separation. This second view sometimes suggests an allegation that sastra has been overridden or abused by 'dirty politics', 'greed for economic growth', or 'dehumanizing technological advancement'.

Rendra considers that Indonesian sastra is now in an alarming state, since the great majority of recent literary works consist merely of sastra klangenan (entertaining sastra, just for leisure), and not sastra yang berpikir (sastra of thinking) (Alisjahbana, 1982:149). A stanza in Rendra's

poem "Sajak Lisong" (1977), unambiguously expresses his major concerns about both 'society' and sastra :

Aku bertanya
tetapi pertanyaan-pertanyaanku
membentur jidat penyair-penyair salon
yang bersajak tentang anggur dan rembulan
sementara ketidakadilan terjadi di sampingnya
dan delapan juta kanak-kanak tanpa pendidikan
termangu-mangu di kaki dewi kesenian. 23)
(Rendra, 1978)

Rendra gives further comments on this issue in his interview with Hardi (1982), and criticizes many of his contemporaries' literary works for lack of 'analytical' thinking. Rendra alleges that many contemporary writers are ignorant of the existing serious social problems. In no way, however, I have found that Rendra makes an attempt to show the inseparableness of the phenomenon in contemporary Indonesian sastra and the social injustices. They are usually addressed as two, if related, sets of problem.

In Alisjahbana's (1982) opinion Indonesian sastra, just like other sastras in the rest of the modern world, seems to have come to a 'dead-end' (jalan buntu). And to him, this is due to the fact that modern artists have been tremendously carried away by the 'individualism', that sends them to alienation. Takdir considers the modern literary writers produce merely 'egoistic self-expressions'. Takdir proposes an optimistic struggle of individual artists with commitment to social welfare. Rather than radically challenging the oppositional

idea of 'individual' versus 'society', Takdir idealizes the formerly victimized individual in his society.

Arief Budiman (1982b) alleges that Indonesian sastra has currently been dominated by a certain school of thought which makes an 'unhealthy' development of sastra. He refers to this dominant thought as 'aestheticism'. The problem is, Budiman adds, that 'aesthetic' has been understood as a universal value. In fact, as Budiman puts it, modern Indonesian literature has been adopting Western literary values. Based on his analysis, Budiman argues the need for a more sociological view of sastra. I see nothing to object to in Budiman's preposition, but I would find it more helpful if Budiman had also suggested the importance of a more socio-historical view of the 'problems' of why 'aestheticism' has been the dominant thought and has superseded other views.

Ideas of the three important figures in Indonesian literature above can now be contrasted with the defenders of contemporary sastra below.

Accepting the same assumption that sastra is separable from 'society', Abdul Hadi W.M. (1982:250) writes unequivocally :

Apabila sastra Indonesia kelihatannya masih terpencil dan kurang terasa peranannya dalam masyarakat, hal itu bukanlah disebabkan oleh karena sastra Indonesia tidak memasalahkan kehidupan atau mencerminkan realitas kehidupan manusia sekelilingnya. Yang benar adalah karena sastra

kita yang bernilai belum dibaca benar-benar, belum digali nilai-nilai yang dikandung di dalamnya, belum diapresiasi sebagaimana mestinya.24)

Sutardji C. Bachri (1984:55) has a rather interesting remark on the subject. Bachri feels that Indonesian sastra is, at least, healthy and sound (sehat-sehat saja), if not in the prime state of its history. What concerns him is the work of a number of 'sociologists' who make efforts to enlarge the size of Indonesian literary readership. To Bachri, there is nothing wrong with the good intention of these sociologists. The problem with these sociologists, as Bachri observes it, is that they make an overwhelming critical diagnosis of sastra and sastrawan and prescribe some 'therapy'. Bachri suggests that instead of examining sastra and sastrawan, we - - 'sociologists or not' - - should examine the 'society itself' (masyarakat itu sendiri), and make efforts to improve and instruct the people, so that they are more prepared to appreciate modern/contemporary literature ("memperbaiki dan membinanya ke arah kondisi yang lebih baik untuk bisa menerima sastra modern/kontemporer"). In conclusion, Bachri writes that sastra will not be so greatly isolated from 'society' or even isolated at all, if there is effective instruction for the 'society', to enable them to appreciate sastra.

Recent debates on the question of the need for sastra

to be committed to 'social welfare' seem to reiterate most of the basic voices in the older arguments on 'arts for the people' versus 'art for the art' in the pre-1965 period.

An artist to the society, in Rendra's (1983:82) perception, is what a 'soul' or 'spirit' is to a living human being. Thus, Rendra states that the task of an artist is to guard the spirit of the society, to explore the inspiration and vitality of life ("inspirasi dan daya hidup"). Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the artist, Rendra asserts (Alisjahbana, 1982:149), to guide the society and become its leader in social change. Alisjahbana (1982:158-159) rationalizes the important role of an artist in social change as follows. In Alisjahbana's view, the future of our society needs social 'reconstruction' and 'reintegration'. The work of 'reconstruction' and 'reintegration', he continues to say, needs imagination, feelings and intuition. Since artists, as Alisjahbana observes it, are characterized by their potentials in working with imagination, feelings, and intuition, artists have an extremely important role in social change. The role of the divinely personified sastra as a hero in social change has been popularly projected, and Abdurrahman Wahid's (1983) statement below is a good example :

. . . sastra harus mampu mendinamisasi perlawanan kultural . . . Sastra tidak boleh berpangku tangan menyaksikan pembungkaman dan pemasungan kreativitas, seperti juga ia tidak

boleh berpangku tangan melihat penindasan ber-
langsung di depan matanya. Sastra harus meng-
ekspresikan gairah dan kemerdekaan politik, ke-
merdekaan hukum, kemerdekaan agama, dan kemer-
dekaan ekonomi.25)

Implied in Wahid's repeated use of the imperative words harus, and tidak boleh is the allegation that sastra has not done what it is supposed to do, and has done what it must not do.

Not all Indonesian writers, however, have the above conviction. Gunawan Mohamad (1980:48-49) questions why one should be concerned about the 'alienation' or 'isolation' of sastra from the general people. After all, in Mohamad's view, neither the extent of the influence of sastra, nor the measure of sastra readership are relevant matters to sastra. Neither is sastra's utility, function, roles, or objectives. On another occasion, Goenawan Mohamad (Nadjib, 1982b) is reported to have compared sastra with the Javanese tiger; they may be well protected in an enclave of preservation, but they are in essence useless. Treating sastra as basically a "transcendental essence", Teeuw seems sceptical of the growing tendency among several writers in Indonesia to claim being committed to 'social justice'. He advises that

Seni tak pernah langsung mengungkapkan masalah sosial. Tetapi secara tak langsung, yang mungkin pengarangnya sendiri tak tahu. Itulah rahasia seni.26) (Alisjahbana, 1982:151)

Wiratmo Soekito (1982) almost immediately expresses his agreement with Teeuw's statement above. Wiratmo Soekito states his assertion : "Buat saya, sastra yang baik tidak boleh ditempatkan sebagai alat melainkan, sebagai tujuan" (To me, a fine sastra must not be treated as an instrument, but an end). In more or less the same line of 'universal' view, Abdul Hadi objects the idea of social commitment in literature :

Saya tak menulis sajak untuk sejarawan dan sosiolog; juga tidak menulis untuk pemimpin perjuangan mahasiswa ataupun ideolog-ideolog. Satu-satunya ideologi kepenyairan ialah universalisme, sedangkan tanah airnya adalah kehidupan dan kemanusiaan itu sendiri . . . 27) (Hadi, 1978:504)

Abdul Hadi believes that it is the work of social scientists to speak about social problems, not of poets (Nadjib, 1982b). Budi Darma (1984) very recently acknowledges that he has been concerned for some time to see the growing issue of "committed" literature, because he considers it tidak benar (incorrect). In his opinion it is not the work of an author to deal with social problems or injustices. An author may be concerned about those matters, Darma adds, but not during his work in creative writing, not as an artist.

Finally, there is the question of sastra's potential to be a determining force in a process of social change. In other words, the question is the measure of sastra's force,

rather than its appropriateness, to struggle for 'social justice'. As it will be apparent in the typical examples below, the general oppositional views, in varying degrees, tend to undermine sastra as socially constitutive.

People like Rendra, Alisjahbana, or Abdurrahman Wahid undoubtedly think that sastra has positively significant force to make contribution for the social change towards social justice. Otherwise, they would not have argued, as previously discussed, that sastra(wan)s should be committed to 'social justice'. I have no certain evidence of Arief Budiman's taking the same stance. Earlier, I have discussed Budiman's criticism of the 'universal' aesthetic preoccupation in the mainstream of Indonesian literary establishment, which he alleges to have caused the 'isolation' of sas-
tra from 'society'. Nevertheless, this is not in itself an argument that sastra is potentially a determining force for 'social change'. On the contrary, there is a slight indication that Budiman doubts the potentials of sastra in relation to 'social change'. On his recent interview with Gunter Grass, in Germany, Budiman (1984:30) poses the question :

Di Indonesia ada perdebatan mengenai sastra dan politik ini. Ada yang mengatakan mengubah realitas sosial politik melalui sastra tak ada gunanya. Karena kekuatan sastra cuma menghimbau. Kalau mau mengubah realitas sosial, lebih baik

terjun ke dalam kancah kehidupan politik yang sebenarnya. Bagaimana pendapat anda? 28)

Though Budiman states "ada yang mengatakan . . .", I have a strong assumption that he is self-effacing his own stance towards the issue. This assumption is not merely based on his single selection of the views in the perdebatan he is referring to, but also on a number of his statements on other occasions. Arief Budiman repeatedly argues that 'social change' can only be effectively implemented by a radical change of 'social structures', if necessary through force (Budiman, 1983:82), and not by means of 'education', 'instruction', 'persuasion', or 'an appeal' (Budiman, 1982a: 18-19, 1983:79,84). Arief Budiman is, I think, one of the most important intellectuals in contemporary Indonesia, at least in regards to his critical and fundamental challenge to the status quo. He may also be important, if my assumption above is correct, for his attempt to de-idealize sastra. However, it is difficult to be sure in understanding why he should maintain the idea of sastra, as opposed to, or at least as separable from 'politics', and formulate the typical question "either" sastra "or" politik as cited above. Even when Gunter Grass answers the above question, that he does both, Arief Budiman still makes further attempt to emphasize a dichotomous distinction between the two. He still thinks of sastra as the sublime, but also the powerless.

Other well-known literary figures in Indonesia simply mock the idea that sastra is an important force in social change. They are not as evasive as Budiman, but very overt about that matter. "Mengharapkan sastra untuk dapat (underlining is mine) memperbaiki keadaan sosial hanyalah sia-sia belaka" (To expect sastra to be able to improve social condition is just futile), writes Budi Darma (1984). Protest-literature in Indonesia, Sapardi Djoko Damono (1977) observes, is just like a bee without its sting. It buzzes, and can be annoying, but it is never harmful to its enemy. However, it seems to be a little far-fetched and unfair of him to ridicule the idea of 'committed' literature by saying that despite a great number of literary works criticizing corruption, by no means has it been curtailed. Even if there have been concerns and efforts in our society to tackle corruption, Damono argues, they are not to be attributed to the works of those literary texts. Damono makes the same comment on the case of a secondary-school student who was seriously interrogated by the local police department, and whose enrollment in school was suspended soon after his reading 'protest-poetry' for the public in Yogyakarta in August 1983. Damono (1983) suggested that the young man has been victimized by the conviction shared among several sastrawans that "puisi (baca slogan) bisa menghentikan korupsi dan penyelewengan" (poetry (slogan) can stop corruption and abuse).

I greatly doubt there is anyone as naive as Damono seems to believe. No less extreme is Sutardji C. Bachri's mockery in the remark that reading poetry before a tank, will not make it melt away²⁹⁾ (Nadjib, 1982b).

From the above review, I hope a few important points that I have wanted to show become more clear. First of all, despite the various and frequent oppositional views previously discussed, there is the general acceptance of the notion of sastra being separable from 'society'. Rather than questioning the validity of this basic premise, they are concerned with the question of whether separation is a normal thing we should accept, or is it something that deserves our great concern, and who is responsible for this. It is also fairly obvious that by 'separation', 'isolation', or 'alienation', they are generally concerned with the 'content', rather than 'form' of literature (moon and wine versus social injustice), or in Becker's (1984:145) terms, they are primarily concerned with the "substance", rather than the "framework". Some, of course, are concerned with the small number of literary readers when referring to 'isolation', 'alienation', or 'separation' of sastra from society. However, most of these people believe that this is primarily due to the choice of 'aesthetic values', as 'substance' or 'content' in modern literary works. It is not surprising, therefore,

that the struggle for social justice has been generally referred to as a work done through (a medium of) literary works. Even when the very basic term sastra becomes the focus of argument, we will find someone as well acclaimed as Budi Darma (1984) suggesting that the 'correct' sastra is defined by its content: primarily concerned about "masalah hakiki manusia sebagai manusia" (the nature of man as human being), not about "kehidupan sehari-hari" (everyday life). Another remarkable point from the subsequent reviews is that in no way is sastra suspected to share some responsibility for existing social injustices. These common attitudes towards the issue are most likely due to the pervasive notion of sastra as the ideal "transcendental essence", even if powerless. In fact, being free of any power precludes this suspicion.

the irony

After presenting rather exhaustively a long list of 'committed' literature that is characterized by its strong political criticism throughout the history of Indonesian literature, Sapardi Djoko Damono (1977) draws a conclusion:

Tidak ada alasan lagi untuk menuduh bahwa sastrawan dan sastra kita tidak terlibat dalam persoalan masyarakat. Namun begitu tetap saja kita dengar ada yang bertanya: mengapa sastra

kita tidak peka terhadap problem sosial yang ada? Saya kira pertanyaan itu sebaiknya disusun menjadi: mengapa kritik sosial yang disampaikan sastrawan tidak efektif? 30)

Damono acknowledges that there can be more than one answer to this question, as some people have already suggested.

To Damono (1977:61), however,

Satu-satunya hal yang bisa dilakukan penulis masa kini adalah bersikap lebih sungguh-sungguh dalam memperhatikan persoalan masyarakat disekitarnya. Hanya kesungguhan itulah yang bisa menghasilkan karya yang baik. Ia harus berusaha terus untuk menemukan nilai dan makna dalam dunia sosial; untuk kemudian menyusun kritiknya . . . Sastrawan tidak sepatutnya cengeng; ia tidak perlu memintaminta perhatian terhadap kritik yang dilancarkannya. Ia harus bekerja keras untuk itu. 31)

Damono implies that the present strategy of working for 'social justice' through the already available 'form' or 'framework' of literature is to be maintained. The success of an author's commitment to social justice, is primarily seen as a matter of his/her competence, or his/her sensitivity and serious attention to social problems. In a way, we are reminded of the similar view, as previously discussed, that belongs to Rendra. It is also worth noting how Damono sees nilai dan makna as something lying or hiding somewhere dalam dunia sosial rather than man-made product in actual social interaction.

It is unfair, however, to suggest that neither Damono nor Rendra recognizes the importance of 'form'. On the con-

trary, they do pay some attention to it, though there seems to be some differences (as well as unsaid similarities) in their views. In response to the cry for gagasan besar ('great ideas') in Indonesian literature, which Rendra coined³²⁾ in December 1982 before a seminar audience in Jakarta, Damono (1983:23) writes:

Tentu tidak ada yang aneh dalam usaha menampilkan ketimpangan sosial sebagai gagasan dalam karya sastra, selama gagasan dianggap sama pentingnya dengan bentuk dan tehnik penulisan karya itu. 33)

This time Damono suggests that those who are convicted to the importance of gagasan besar often neglect the importance of bentuk ('form'). Damono may be right, but our present interest is in Rendra's view. Evidently Rendra is deeply aware of this matter, as he clearly states on the same occasion as he introduces the term gagasan besar: "Adapun 'bentuk seni' tidak pernah terlepas dari kaitan dengan 'isi'-nya"³⁴⁾ (Rendra, 1983:62). Furthermore, Rendra (1983:62) makes a more important point: "Ternyata 'bentuk seni' itu tidak mutlak dan dogmatis. Melainkan selalu dinamis dan berkembang."³⁵⁾

Rendra's last point is important in order to reveal what seems to be undermined in Damono's (as much as his contemporaries') account of artistic form. A considerable number of criticisms have recently been directed to Rendra and Alisjahbana for alleged 'misuse' of the 'correct' artistic

form to convey certain 'content' (positive didacticism, or negative criticism).³⁶⁾ What remains debatable is Rendra's notion of isi (content) being a priori to bentuk seni (artistic form)³⁷⁾, as merely a kind of instrument to communicate isi (Rendra, 1983:66-67). A part from this difference, both Damono and Rendra appear to share the dominant trend in contemporary Indonesian literature in seeing a work of literary text as primarily a result of the 'creative' effort and 'artistic' talent of individual artists. Therefore, any 'failure' to produce a desired literary text, either aesthetically, or politically, is primarily ascribed to individual artists, rather than to the nature of the social establishment of the sastra itself.

In what follows, I would like to examine two major factors that inhibit or avert modern Indonesian literature from being a determining force in social change towards the ideal 'social justice'. In fact, these two factors make the endeavour of devoting literature and literary studies to 'social justice' look formidable, or even ironical. These two factors are not seen to derive from transcendental, natural, or inherited cultural, or individual causes, but are historically social. These two factors are not only related, but closely inter-dependent. The first is a set of causes deriving from the fact that contemporary Indonesian sastra is a victim of the existing social injustices. As a

victim, however, sastra is not a passive but an active one. Being the victim of a greater force, sastra is not only too incompetent to fight against social justice pertaining to the force, but also to be 'neutral', and to avoid being incorporated into the dominant social establishment. Thus, the second factor is the workings of sastra as subordinate to the force of existing social injustice.

Before examining each of these two factors, it will be helpful to have a moment of acquainting ourselves with the idea of 'justice' in the present context. Certainly this broad idea will not be studied in great detail here, partly because of the limited space, and partly because of my poor knowledge. One thing about adil (justice) is of greatest interest for this particular essay : that is its inseparable connection with the idea of ke(kuasa)an or 'power', 'authority', or 'legitimacy' (these English words may not translate the idea of ke(kuasa)an precisely, but one way or another, they come close enough to it). Apparently centuries ago, the term adil was primarily used as an 'adjective' or 'adverb' to modify the traits, or action of a ruler. In a Classical Malay text, Sejarah Melayu, for instance, the word is used typically to describe a king :

. . . terlalu 'adil baginda pada memeliharakan segala ra'yat . . . Maka negeri Melaka pun besarlah, lagi dengan ma'murnya, dan segala dagang pun berkampunglah 38)
(11:4) (Situmorang and Teeuw, 1952:81)

In traditional Javanese society, the word adil is, too, most popularly used to refer to Ratu (king). After the rise of the nation, with a president as the head of the state, the word adil has been used in other ways, but still inseparably with the idea of 'power', 'authority', or 'legitimacy'. Instead of a king, we now speak of Tuhan Yang Maha Adil (God, the Most Just). The word has also been equally popular in the formulaic use masyarakat adil dan makmur, a slogan imagining the utopian state. This last expression, I think, should be understood as something like "a state in prosperity and good order, under (or thanks to) a just ruler", rather than "prosperous and just people" as a word to word translation may suggest. It would sound rather odd to the Indonesian to hear an utterance rakyat jelata yang adil.

To be adil, one must be in power, or have authority, or legitimacy, so to speak. To be adil, generally means to exercise or execute one's power, authority, or legitimacy in the 'right' and 'appropriate' manner intended to protect the interest of all the innocent under one's power. Therefore, rakyat is not the source of keadilan, since rakyat does not hold the 'power', even though in a supposedly democratic nation-state rakyat is said to have the sovereignty. The common term keadilan rakyat then virtually means keadilan for,

not of, rakyat. Rendra (1983:61) writes that in the past rakyat could only wish that their king would be a generous, wise, and adil one. Rendra mentions this to differentiate it from what should happen today in Indonesia. The difference, however, is remarkably slight. Rakyat no longer 'wish', but 'appeal', or at the most, 'demand' keadilan. What remains the same is they have no 'power' :

Maka seniman sebagai anggota masyarakat, sebagai sebagian dari rakyat yang tidak ikut berkuasa, akan sah dan wajar pula kalau menyuarakan hasrat dan pendapat mengenai keadilan sosial . . . 39) (Rendra, 1983:62)

Thus, we came back here to the idea of sastra(wan) as the victims of social injustice. Rendra projects the view of sastrawan, as powerless persons, whose right to justice has been denied. With regard to Rendra in particular, one tends to think of him speaking about his personal experience of being banned from expressing himself to the public. This is especially clear in his speech in 1975 on the occasion of receiving the honorable award from Jakarta Academy (Rendra, 1983:77-85). In his interview with Hardi (1983:358), Rendra stresses that he is not concerned with personal affairs when discussing the government's repression, but he claims to speak on behalf of the general people.

Indeed, Rendra is one of the Indonesian artists today who suffers seriously from government censorship. Never-

slogan prior to 1965 : ". . . 'art must be free of politics' was itself a part of the political struggle in which they were engaged" (Foulcher, 1984:35).

Initially I consider Foulcher's statements important as an attempt to counter the pervasive notion in contemporary Indonesian literature that views sastra as either inherently apolitical/non-political, or to be made apolitical/non-political. Not until recently, however, did I become aware that Foulcher's statements are themselves self-defeating. Implied in Foulcher's statements is the idea of 'literature' as 'merely' an instrument of 'ideology'. 'Ideology' and 'literature' are in practice mutually constituting. Discussing the transition from the original ideas of Marx to the mainstream of Marxism, and with specific reference to the notion of 'superstructure', Williams (1977:78) notes :

It is then ironic to remember that the force of Marx's original criticism had been mainly directed against the separation of 'areas' of thought and activity . . . by the imposition of abstract categories.

At another point, Williams (1977:19) writes that the tendency to separate 'base' and 'superstructure' led some Marxists to weaken "the constitutive" and strengthen "a more instrumental perspective". Thus, "Instead of making cultural history material, . . . it was made dependent, secondary, 'superstructural' : a realm of 'mere' ideas, beliefs, arts, customs,

determined by the basic material history."

By accepting and perpetuating the basic idea of sastra as "free of politics", modern Indonesian literature has suffered from a double self-defeating deprivation. On the one side, as Nadjib (1982a) suggests, it builds its own internal censorship.⁴⁰⁾ It inhibits authors and critics or students of modern Indonesian literature from having a wide perspective of 'society' and 'literature', in writing literary texts, as well as in discussing them. The inhibition can take various forms. It appears quite clearly in the selection of 'content' and 'form' of writing literature, as well as in the selection of texts to be published, reviewed, and studied. On the other, as Edward Said (1982:18) remarks on a similar phenomenon in the West, literature as a social institution greatly distances writers, critics, and students of literature from an interest in, concern with, and access to important texts directly dealing with relevant 'economic' or 'political' issues in their society. It is not surprising that people who are deeply involved in modern Indonesian literature in the country have often lost both chances to contribute intellectual ideas on anything but the rigidly defined sastra, as well as to obtain maximally the contribution of others who work 'outside' the domain of literature.⁴¹⁾

Seeing from this perspective, it is understandable

that there is hardly any need for the ruling group in the country to implement labouriously the practice of overt censorship. Two empirical events can illustrate this point.

The first has been perceptively discussed by Damono (1977:60-61) in reference to the most prestigious Art Center in the country, Taman Ismail Marzuki (TIM) in particular, and art/literature in Indonesia in general. Commenting the bold student criticism of the Legislature Council (DPR) for allegedly being tame and subservient to the executive power in the nation, Admiral Sudomo was reported to say that if students wish to do farcial clowning they should go to TIM, not to DPR. It reveals, as I have mentioned earlier, that political criticism in contemporary Indonesia has not only been noticeably embedded in the arts, but also often mixed with humour. But more importantly in Sudomo's cynical comments, as Damono indicates, is the identification of artistic criticism as 'merely' humour, and the recognition of TIM, a hallmark of modern Indonesian art activities post-1966, as the house of the harmless, ineffective, powerless protest-arts.

The second illustration comes to my mind from a chat about modern Indonesian 'music'. One evening, I was incidentally saying to a guest during a very casual chat that it sounded funny to me to hear social criticism from songs recorded in a well-sold tape-cassette Dasa Tembang Tercantik

'79.⁴²⁾ As the titles of the songs and the recording album suggest (not to mention the style and orchestration) these songs are remarkably 'elite' oriented. In Indonesia, these songs are generally called musik gedongan (music to be heard in mansions/halls/auditoriums). Titles, and lyrics of these songs are heavily derived from Old Javanized Sanskrit words that are never part of the daily vocabularies of the general population, or even their elites! I asked my friend what he thought of what I saw as the incongruous fusion of the oppressed-oriented 'content' of the lyric and the modern Indonesian bourgeois 'form' of these songs. He replied that this is exactly the reason why there is no need on the part of the government to censor these kinds of songs, unlike music of the dang-dut⁴³⁾ that embraces the great majority of the common people throughout the country. A good parallelism, I believe, can be made to Indonesian literature not only because sastra is, too, an aristocratic Javanized/Malay version of a Sanskrit word.⁴⁴⁾ Having this parallelism in mind, one can be easily tempted to pose the question : does Indonesian sastra have within it something like dang-dut? If not, should attempts be made to create one? This kind of question, however, is based on the premise of sastra ('literature') which is clearly separated from musik ('music'). It is the basic premise that I have so far

tried to denounce.

Indonesian sastra, as suggested earlier, is not only subject to become a victim of 'social injustice' domestically, but also internationally. It is not accidental that the dominant view of sastra not being 'political', but 'universal' or 'transcendental', as Foulcher (1984:2-4), among others, has recognized, was based on the idea of a 'literature' that originates from the influential modern European literature, and the American New Criticism. It is, therefore, not too difficult to understand some of its great impact on modern Indonesian literature.

Many Indonesian authors have been inclined to write for international readership, as Arief Budiman (1982b:1) implicitly suspects. Furthermore, Budiman specifically suspects that they write for American and European critics, or even the Nobel Prize committee, rather than the small number of people in their immediate context. In a speech delivered on the occasion of receiving the title Doctor Honoris Causa from the University of Indonesia, in Jakarta (1975), H.B. Jassin discusses "Indonesian Literature as a Member of World Literature". He argues that the reason why no Indonesian authors has thus far received the Nobel Prize is because of their own inferior quality (Jassin, 1975:334). The same kind of regretful view is still to be found in the writing

of Pamusuk Eneste (1983a), one of Jassin's former student. To make things even worse, the same belief in the Nobel Prize as a valid measurement of literary achievement is shared among those who have expressed a sympathetic stance towards the idea of 'committed literature', for instance Sitor Situmorang (1983), and Satyagraha Hoerip (1984).

It hardly needs to be pointed out that the ideal of 'committed literature' (to a specific, immediate social context) is virtually incompatible with the endeavour to receive formal recognition, and awards on the international scale. For modern Indonesian sastra, this means an additional inherent counter-productive force in reference to its possibility to be socially committed.

Once modern Indonesian sastra is seen as a product or victim of the existing social injustice, it will be fairly easy to see it also as an extension of the persistent, if complex, force of social injustice. It is not a far-fetched comparison, I think, to see the position of contemporary sastra in Indonesia as to a great extent in parallel with the position of the nationalist elites in the country. Speaking about the history of political economy in Indonesia, Arief Budiman (1983:80) states that nationalism only physically got rid of the Dutch but did not restructure the social system, and "Memang yang terjadi adalah apa yang disebut

internal colonialism. Stratanya sama hanya yang dulu ditempati Belanda, kini diisi oleh elite group bangsa sendiri" (In fact, what really happens is the so-called internal colonialism. The same strata are maintained, only what was formerly occupied by the Dutch is now replaced by an indigenous elite group). The comparison between Indonesian 'literature' and 'political economy' is important here not only because of their similar 'internal colonialism'. The comparison is also important because they are not separable, but interrelated, even though such interrelationships are not always direct or obvious, but complex.

Earlier, in discussing the idea of adil I have noted that it is inseparable from the idea of kekuasaan. We can actually see sastra as being a victim of the existing social injustice in terms of competing forces for 'power' as much as we can see sastra as the constitutive force of social injustice. The cry for justice on behalf of sastra has been made mostly in reference to government censorship. But to say that sastra has neither any kekuasaan, nor the need for it, is self-defeating. The fact that literary censorship exists is an evidence of the government's awareness of the threatening political power of sastra. To argue that sastra is working as a constitutive force in generating or regenerating social injustice implies an argument that sastra has significant power to exercise and execute in order to do so.

Abuse of social power in the establishment of the present sastra in Indonesia can be seen in two different levels, just as we have discussed the idea of sastra as a victim of social justice. The first is taking place within the formal realm of (kesu)sastra(an), and the other in a wider social context.

Within the formal realm of sastra, there are a number of cases that deserve our attention. In a broad sense, these cases consist of 'internal' conflicts between notable figures in contemporary Indonesia. I purposefully avoid mentioning the conflict between Lekra and Manikebu, which seems to be the greatest and most important example of 'internal' conflicts in modern Indonesian literature, partly because Foulcher (1984) has studied it at great length, and mainly because I am committed to deal with post-1965 Indonesian literature, when sastra is strongly claimed to be free of kekuasaan, and politik.

The first case that I want to mention is concerned with Yudhistira A. Noegraha's anthology of poems, entitled Sajak Sikat Gigi. In 1978, this anthology was announced to be one of the four winners, entitled to receive awards from the Jakarta Arts Center. This decision, however, was cancelled a few weeks later, and the Jakarta Arts Center decided to withhold the award prepared for Noegraha. This final

decision was made to satisfy the persistent protest of the other three winners, Sutardji C. Bachri, Abdul Hadi W.M., and Sitor Situmorang, concerning Noegraha's anthology. These three other winners considered Noegraha's poems to be much inferior in quality to their own works. Accordingly, these three 'senior' poets objected to being considered the equals of young Noegraha.⁴⁵⁾ Part of the sensational event is due to Abdul Hadi's challenging article in the press, in which he attacks both the judges and Sajak Sikat Gigi. Concerning Sajak Sikat Gigi, Abdul Hadi (1978:10) writes :

Sedangkan menurut dia [Sitor Situmorang] sajak Yudhis merupakan parodi yang gagal dari sajak, karena penulisnya tak mengerti apa itu puisi dan peranan Penyair.⁴⁶⁾

A very reliable source, who prefers to be anonymous, informs me that one of the three poet-protesters explained confidentially to Noegraha that the protest was not primarily intended to attack Sajak Sikat Gigi or Noegraha but the judges, particularly Goenawan Mohamad, who was seen as a rival in the central domain of modern Indonesian literature.⁴⁷⁾

Another striking example of this kind, even though it got less public attention, is to be found in Budi Darma's attack against his fellow-writer, Suparto Brata. Budi Darma (1983:389) criticizes the great majority of Indonesian novel as works of craftsmanship. Therefore, he is resentful to hear Suparto Brata's admission that to him writing literature

does not necessarily require special conditions.⁴⁸⁾ Budi

Darma (1983:390) ferociously attacks Suparto Brata :

. . . sampai sekarang Suparto Brata belum mempunyai kartu penduduk warga negara sastra Indonesia. Maklumlah dia menulis bagaikan tukang ketik kantor kecamatan, tanpa pernah menulis dengan gairah pengarang yang benar-benar pengarang.⁴⁹⁾

This statement is made by a highly educated scholar (currently the head of a college level institute in Surabaya), an accomplished literary writer (recently received the first-prize award from the Jakarta Arts Center for his novel Olenka) and presented publicly both at a lecture at TIM, the most prestigious art center in the country, and in publication in Horison, presently the only national literary magazine in Indonesia. Unless Suparto Brata had significant recognition and powerful influence, I could not imagine why Budi Darma would take the trouble to attack him so strongly. It is significantly revealing while Budi Darma despises Suparto Brata by comparing him to a governmental official (not one in the 'apolitical' realm of literature), Budi Darma sees sastra Indonesia as negara (nation-state), writers as warganegara, and stresses the value of bureaucratic formalities : kartu penduduk. Undoubtedly he is aware of his political status and position within the structure of Indonesian literature.

A final note must be made concerning the opposition movement (if I may call it so) that arises in Yogyakarta and Semarang to challenge the persistent hegemony of the literary circles at TIM, Horison, and the Jakarta Arts Center, all in the capital city of the nation. For years, there seems to have been an ongoing resistance, criticism, or protest among literary circles from various parts of the country, especially from outside Java, concerning the domination of artists in Java in general and Jakarta in particular. Almost all of these oppositions, however, are sporadic, discontinuous, and make little impact. None of these, I believe, makes a persistent, focal and coordinated 'front' as those writers in Yogyakarta and Semarang.⁵⁰⁾ To a great extent I think their strength is due to their being close to the source of 'political' back-up and major mass media which are centralized in Java.

Externally (that is, beyond the formal realm of Indonesian (kesu)sastra(an)) the establishment of Indonesian sastra is working no less vigorously in generating or regenerating social injustice. Ironically, one of the important ways to recognize this social injustice is by examining the very claim that sastra and sastrawan are essentially the 'saviours' of the people from the threat of social injustice.

The myth of the divinely heroic sastrawan is best

exemplified in the words of H.B. Jassin, who has been considered the "Pope" of Indonesian literature in the country for the greater part of the history of modern Indonesian literature :

Pengarang dan seniman sejak dahulu kala selalu menegakkan keadilan dan kebenaran. Musuh mereka adalah kebohongan, kepalsuan, kekerasan, kebatilan. Karena itu mereka disamping menjadi sahabat-sahabat yang baik dari masyarakat, juga kadang-kadang menjadi musuh penguasa-penguasa yang angkara murka. 51) (Jassin, 1970:21)

To be fair to Jassin, it must be noted here that the above statement was presented as part of a defense at the court (1968), in response to charges against the publication of the short story Langit Makin Mendung (by Ki Panji Kusmin) which was felt offensive to certain groups of people. It is possible that Jassin would not idealize a sastrawan so highly under casual circumstances, and it is possible for him to have changed his views recently. Be that as it may, the stereotypical image of a sastrawan remains popularly the same, even if in varying degrees of idealization.

In this respect, the story of my new acquaintance in the introductory note of this essay seems to be a story of my acquaintance with a person who has been victimized by such a myth. My acquaintance felt deeply embarrassed and probably guilty, because he thought he had not been a faithful follower of contemporary Indonesian sastra. This also explains why

there has been no suspicion that sastra shares some responsibility in the existing social injustice. The fiercest attacks on Indonesian sastra and sastrawan only go as far as 'being indifferent and unconcerned' about social injustice that is taking place around (rather than under) them (Wahid, 1983) or by their side (Rendra, 1978).

The social injustice that sastra is to be responsible for begins from the creation of this pompous image. On the next level, this highly-valued activity is removed from the reach of the general population by defining notion of sastra as primarily 'written' and often 'printed' texts. In a society like contemporary Indonesia, where literacy has never been maximally acquired, or has been a major means of communication, sastra naturally does not belong to the common people, especially the underprivileged, to whom the 'committed literature' is ideally dedicated. To make things still worse, the highly-valued sastra is twice removed from the common people by the dominant notion of sastra as a special kind of writing, so that even the literati do not necessarily have the privilege of being part of it. The 'special' nature of sastra is to be understood in two different terms. First, there is the idea that a sastrawan is to be born and not 'made' (Hadi, 1978:502) or 'educated' (Rosidi, 1976:27). Secondly, it is believed that the sastrawan works to produce sastra within

and towards 'universal' (not socio-historical or contextual) 'rules' and 'values' as discussed above.

In collaboration with this sastra, there are both formal teachings of literature in schools, as well as the various projects and workshops under the title of pembinaan kesusastraan (literary education), or memasyarakatkan sastra (out reach programs in literature). Despite the sincerity, good intentions, and commitment involved in these projects, in effect most of them ironically confirm the belief that the general population are both ignorant of the sublimities of sastra and imperatively in need of its teachings.

It is not accidental that both the contemporary establishment of Indonesian sastra and formal education are greatly derived from the Western counterparts and still to a great extent resemble the Western models. A literary award serves as a symbol of supremacy or championship. Having the belief in the Nobel Prize as the highest level of such supremacy (in so-called World Literature) on the one hand, and having felt inferior for lack of international recognition on the other, the Indonesian literary institution creates a similar symbol, but on a lower level (in so-called Indonesian Literature) which lies within their control. I think for more or less the same reason, authors of ASEAN countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, The Philippines, Singapore, Thailand,

and only recently Brunei) gladly support the new annual ASEAN literary awards practice. To support the legitimacy of the national literary awards practice, and to sustain the power of the present establishment of Indonesian sastra, the Indonesian centralized school system plays an important role. The school is responsible for selecting what texts the students need to read, as well as why and how they should perceive the significance of the texts. The school is also responsible for producing texts on the history of Indonesian literature, and disseminating the desired ideological norms thereof. This does not mean there is never any tension between those who hold power in the establishment of Indonesian literature and teachers of literature. Teachers of literature have often been the target of attack from authorities in the literary establishment, whenever the work of the former is regarded not to be in line with the expectations of the latter.

To project an effective 'committed sastra' that would work on behalf of 'social justice' essentially requires a social re-creation of the idea of sastra. Such a requirement inevitably means demanding a new view of 'language', of 'social activity', and the inseparable relationship between them in the formation of new 'meaning', new 'consciousness' and a new 'reality'. This may look like a decisively radical change. From the previous discussion we have witnessed that

the process of that change in that direction has already begun to make its way. I have suggested some of the important contributions that Rendra, Arief Budiman, and Emha A. Nadjib have made in response to the debates on 'sastra and social justice'. Rendra is notable for emphasizing the notion that social life is essentially man-made, and so are social injustices. Therefore, man is both capable of and responsible for making changes in society towards justice. Arief Budiman stresses the importance of a de-universalized and de-universalizing notion of sastra, the need to reconsider the standard history of Indonesian literature. Emha A. Nadjib pinpoints the fact that the counter-force in the attempts of many Indonesian writers for social justice is indeed 'internal'. However, many of the basic problems involved in the issue of 'sastra for social justice' and its complexities still need further investigation beyond the scope of this essay.

In attempting to examine the issue in this essay I have never had any intention to reduce the complexity of the problem, and suggest a practical solution. Neither have I had the intention to narrow the focus of this study by putting blame on certain individuals or groups of individuals. My primary interest is to examine the generally overlooked irony in the debates on 'sastra for social justice' by con-

sidering factors that seem not to have received sufficient emphasis. These factors have either been taken for granted (for example the history of the term sastra), or deliberately avoided (for example, the inseparable connection between 'literature' and 'politics', as well as between 'language' and 'social activity'). For that matter, perhaps we need a new pepatah⁵²): "dalam ilmu surat ada ilmu bersilat, dalam ilmu silat ada ilmu bersurat".

NOTES

1. There is an irony in Soedjoko's (1981) paper here. This paper is written primarily to criticize the pervading Westernized notion of ilmu among the Indonesian intelligentsia who consider ilmu inferior to 'science'. Rather than rejecting the Western measure radically (i.e. that ilmu does not have to be made or understood as 'science'), Soedjoko argues that throughout their history, the Indonesian people have 'scientific' faculty, activities, and great achievement, because, in Soedjoko's view, they have high ilmu and ilmu is identical to 'science'. Similarly, Soedjoko sees the history of the term seni rather ahistorically. He agreeably cites Soekmono's notion of the history of Indonesian culture as overwhelmingly full of accounts of the 'arts' (Soedjoko, 1981:7-8).
2. He reiterates the same point in his interview with Hardi (Sastrowardoyo, 1983b:540).
3. For some insight of a more indigenous view of 'language' in relation to 'reality' among the Javanese, who make the largest influence in the present moulding of Indonesian language (Anderson, 1966), see Becker (1979:234-239). Among others, Becker notes the frequent and significant practice of 'etymologizing' among Javanese shadow puppeteers, and the difference of such practice with the common "etymology" and "explication" in the West.
4. Mary Louise Pratt (1977) makes a similar argument at length.
5. I am aware of the 'impossibility' of transferring the meaning of this text, or any other, without 'transforming' and thus changing it in a translation. Nevertheless, I am attempting to suggest a crude translation of this (and other Indonesian texts in this essay) for practical purposes; I do not present this essay only for those who read Malay/Indonesian.

Oh my God; why did you do this,

my Lord? Have not I previously requested thee, not to put on this outfit . . .

This passage is taken from a Classical Malay text, Hikayat Anggun Cik Tunggal (Osman, 1983:14).

6. A rough translation :

(Then) Bujang Selamat immediately caught Commander Tehling's waist; around which his delicately buttoned chain-belt wound seven times.

7. A rough translation :

(Then) His Majesty commanded his prime minister to summon all the astrologers, and all the seers. Then all of them came and made obeisance to the King. Then His Majesty said to all of the astrologers, and all of the seers: "Hey, you all, look into your astrological tables, and find out the fortunes of this child of mine."

8. On the contrary, Subagio Sastrowardoyo (1983a) argues that to deal with literature it is essential that we need to have sufficient scientific outlook.
9. For an insightful account of the history of the terms 'literature', 'art', and 'culture', please see Raymond Williams (1977:11-54).
10. Referring to a different subject matter, Fish (1980:349) makes the following statement that has important relevance to our present concern:

Rhetorically the new position announces itself as a break from the old, but in fact it is radically dependend on the old, because it is only in the context of some differential relationship that it can be perceived as new, or for that matter, perceived at all.

11. A rough translation of the passage may read as follows:

The first novel in modern Javanese literature is Serat Riyanto, by R.M. Sulardi, published by Balai Pustaka in 1920 . . .

At that time the term 'novel' or 'romance' was yet unknown. When R.M. Sulardi wrote the novel Serat Riyanto he, too, did not know what the meaning of 'novel' was. He began to know it after his friend, Wongsonegoro S.H. told him that the story he had written was a novel.

Jakob Sumardjo (1982:397) uncritically cites the above passage in his own writing on "The Dialectics of Indonesian Literature".

12. Hutomo (1975) does not explain why Wongsonegoro considers Serat Riyanto as a novel. According to J.J. Ras (1979: 13) Serat Riyanto marks a new period in early history of the modern Javanese literature. "This is the first book [Ras does not call it "novel" - AH] which is not marred by moralizing or didactic tendencies and which contains a story with a really good plot built up around a clear theme." The early history of Indonesian literature is full of literary works, considered as novel or roman, which are conspicuously "moralizing" or "didactic".

13. A rather free translation :

. . . novel as a genre in Javanese literature has long existed, i.e. since the Old Javanese period. Stories from the Old Javanese period which can fall under the category of novel are, among others, Ramayana, Kresnayana, and Ghatotkacasraya . . . Novels from the Old Java and Surakarta literature era; include the wayang romantic stories.

14. A good illustration of the role of Dutch teacher in promoting the universal idea of sastra or literature is found in the historical novel Bumi Manusia (Toer, 1981:205). Magda Peters, a teacher of Dutch language and literature in HBS in Surabaya explains to her students:

Suatu masyarakat paling primitif pun, misalnya di jantung Afrika sana, tak pernah duduk di bangku sekolah, tak pernah melihat kitab dalam hidupnya, tak kenal baca-tulis, masih dapat mencintai sastra, walau sastra lisan.

(Even the most primitive society, such as those in the hearts of Africa, having no education, having never seen books in their lives, having no literacy, can still appreciate sastra, though an oral one.)

15. See note # 10 above.
16. A number of seminars involving primarily the top literary figures in the country have been conducted in the most recent years (primarily in Jakarta) to focus on this issue. Reviewing major events in literature during the year of 1983, Pamusuk Eneste (1983b) writes

Ke dalam berita rutin ini mungkin masih bisa dimasukkan issue mengenai 'sastra terlibat', 'peranan pengarang dalam masyarakat', dan sejenisnya. Persoalan semacam timbul tahun lalu dan juga pernah dibahas tahun 50-an dan 60-an ketika jaya-jayanya Lekra.

(Among the 'routine' news, we can probably still include the issues concerning 'engaged literature', 'role of an author in society', and that sort of things. The same problems were also present in the previous year, and were discussed in the 50s and the 60s during the Lekra's ascendancy.

One can notice the tone of voice in the statement above is rather resentful, especially with the reference to Lekra. This is an important point we will discuss further in details later in this essay. Suffice it to say, at the moment, how this stance is in opposition to Arief Budiman's (1984:30) view of the same issue. Some people are unhappy to see the interference of 'politics' in discussion on sastra, because they fear that the former will impair or pollute the latter. Eneste seems to have this kind of view. On the contrary, other people, I think Budiman is one of them, are impatient with sastra because it is seen to be an ineffective force in a process of social change.

17. Again, see note # 10.

18. A suggested translation :

This is due to the favorable (correct?) historical moment. Since the early years of the 1970s there have been dissatisfactions with the implementation of economic development policies by the Suharto's regime.

19. According to Arief Budiman (1983), the currently called

"Indonesian economics technocrats" are those who graduated mainly after the Independence from American schools of social sciences in the 60s, and returned to Indonesia sometime before the 1965 upheavals. However, since then, Budiman indicates, there has been new trends in American schools towards a more historical approach in social studies, while those Indonesian technocrats no longer follow the new discussions among the academicians. Budi-man was glad to study in the US during this past decade, during which the new development in social sciences takes a good shape. When he returned to Indonesia in 1981, Budiman saw that the old liberal, 'ahistorical' thoughts were still the mainstream in Indonesia.

20. (A proverb says : "in the martial arts there is no second champion, in the literary arts there is no first champion"
So, there is no way to have a contest of men of letters. They are all number ones. No one is superior to the other.)

Seven years later, however, in an interview with Hardi (1982), Rendra does not only claim to have a 'champion mentality' but he disparages most of his contemporaries.

21. Some authors already cited in this essay discuss the opposition of 'objectivist' and 'subjectivist' views of language and literature. I am inclined to follow their arguments. While admitting that there is a room for individuals to have new inventions in language use, Williams (1977:40) warns us that such invention "need not be internalized" socially. He notes further that language "has to be internalized, if it is to be a sign for communicative relation between actual persons" (Williams, 1977:41). In a very similar perspective, Fish (1980:332) shows how "the opposition between objectivity and subjectivity is a false one" in literary interpretation. It is "because neither exists in the pure form that would give the opposition its point." Both Williams and Fish accentuate the idea of language essentially as a dynamic social activity.
22. Compare to the idea of power, its source, and its way of attainment in Javanese culture as B.R.O'G. Anderson (1972) interprets them.

23. (I have questions
but my questions
bump against the foreheads of saloned poets
who write poetry about wine and the moon
while injustices taking place by their sides
and eight million children with no education
helplessly dazed before the feet of the Goddess of Art)
24. (If it appears that Indonesian sastra is still detached from the society, and its social role appears to be insignificant, that is not because Indonesian sastra does not address problems of life or reflect realities of the surrounding human life. The truth is people have not yet read our sastra of great values correctly, have not explored and appreciated the internal values as they should.)
25. (. . . sastra should be able to make cultural oppositions dynamic . . . Sastra must not remain indifferent and unconcerned before the execution of silencing and shackling, and the oppression that takes place right before its eyes. Sastra should express the desire for political freedom, freedom of the law, religious freedom, and economic freedom.)
26. (The art never expresses social problems directly. It may do so indirectly, to the extent that even the writer himself may not be aware of it. That is the mystery of art.)
27. (I write poetry, neither for historians and sociologists, leaders of the student opposition movements, nor for any ideologists. The only ideology of a poet is universalism, and his homeland is life and humanity itself.)
28. (In Indonesia there are debates on sastra and politics. Some say that it is a vanity to attempt to initiate a change in socio-political reality through sastra, because sastra has only the power to appeal. Therefore, in order to do so, one is recommended to get involved in the real political activities. What is your opinion?)
29. In his interview with Hardi (1982:358), Rendra provides us with a little more information about Bachri's stance. Rendra appreciates Bachri for having honestly admitted not to have enough courage to oppose the ruling group: "Kita hanya punya kata-kata, mereka punya tank, panser" (We only have words, they have tanks, and panzer troops).

To this, Rendra makes an interesting response: "Mengenai itu saya punya pendapat lain: 'Justru mereka hanya mempunyai senjata, kita mempunyai kata'." (For that matter, I think differently: 'In fact, they only have weapons, we have words'.)

30. (There is no longer any reason to allege that our sastrawan and sastra are not involved in social problems. And yet we keep hearing people question : Why our sastra is not sensitive to the existing social problems? I think the question should be put this way : why social criticism presented by the sastrawan is ineffective?)
31. (The only thing that today's author can do is to be more serious in attending to the social problems around him. Only this serious attention can result in a fine literary work. He must constantly seek to find social values and significance to enable him to organize his criticism . . . Sastrawan is not supposed to be so childish as to beg others' attention for his criticism. He must work hard for it.)
32. The original version of Rendra's statement in his paper presented in the seminar is as follows:

Karya sastra yang besar selalu mengandung gagasan yang menyangkut kebutuhan dasar . . . Gagasan yang disebut sebagai "gagasan besar" sebenarnya lebih tepat disebut "gagasan penting" karena sifatnya yang mendasar itu. Dan itulah pula sebabnya kenapa "gagasan besar" itu rumusannya sederhana, tidak di-komplekskan atau di-muluk-kan. (Rendra, 1983:67)

(A great piece of literary work always contains ideas that deal with basic need . . . The so-called "great ideas" should better be termed "important ideas", because of its basic traits. This is the reason why "great ideas" have simple formulation, not complicated, or pompous.)

33. (Of course, there is nothing strange about trying to depict any social inequity as ideas in a literary work, as long as ideas are regarded as equally important as the form and the technique of writing that literary text.)

34. ("Artistic form" is never to be separated from its "content".)
35. (Evidently, "artistic form" is not an absolute and dogmatic idea. Rather, it is dynamic and developing.)
36. Alisjahbana (1982) reviews some of these criticisms, and makes a response to them. In the interview with Hardi (1982:354), Rendra protests :

Lhhhaa sekarang, tiba-tiba saja kalau seniman melihat kepincangan dalam pembangunan, dan merugikan rakyat jelata pada umumnya, lalu tak boleh berbicara . . . ditabukan bila hal tersebut dibicarakan dalam keseniannya. Karena hal tersebut dianggap rendah . . . Lhhha bagaimana maksudnya? Apakah seniman hanya boleh mengungkapkan masalah kejiwaan serta filsafat saja?

(Now! Now! Suppose an artist witnesses inequalities in national development, which do harms to the common people, and then he is not supposed to speak up . . . Is it considered a tabo to say it in his art? Just because it is considered inferior? . . . What are they talking about? Should artists only talk about psychological and philosophical matters?)

37. Certain isi naturally exists a priori to some bentuk, as every text has its set of prior texts. My point here is a little different than that. There is no isi without bentuk and vice-versa. Sometimes we do not want the bentuk that our certain isi takes, and we make attempts to transform that isi into a different bentuk. However, though it is not always immediately or clearly apparent, a change of bentuk means a change of isi, and vice-versa.
38. (. . . the King was extremely just in ruling all the people . . . So the state of Melaka developed and became prosperous, and all the traders settled in.)
39. (It is perfectly normal and legitimate for artists, as part of the people who do not share the power, to voice their feelings and opinions about social justice . . .)
40. Oddly enough, Nadjib (1982a:259) is still preoccupied by the generally accepted distinction between 'literature' and 'politics' in writing this cited essay: "Dalam forum kesusastraan agak kurang enak untuk memakai frame yang

'politisi'." (In a forum discussing literature, it is not desirable (to me) to employ 'political' frame-work). Following the mainstream of antagonizing 'politics' among literary figures in contemporary Indonesia is Hadi (1982: 250). Upon reflection on the pre-1965 literature in Indonesia, he states that from the past history we should be able to learn that Indonesian literature is nothing but a propaganda whenever it is involved in 'politics'. In discussing the birth of Indonesian literature, Ajip Rosidi (1964:6) argues that it should be understood as 'literature' of the Indonesian 'nation'. However, he immediately adds cautiously that by proposing this idea, he has no intention, either to 'politicize' literature, or to mix up 'literary' and 'political' issues. The impact of this dominant thought in Indonesia goes beyond the formal discourse upon literature. Apparently it has been internalized in the everyday life of many artists. Upon hearing the news about the assassination of Benigno Aquino in Manila last year, Arifin C. Noer (1983) expresses his anger and condolence in the press. He feels necessary, however, to ensure the public that:

Saya tak pernah berminat dalam soal politik (apalagi politik praktis!). Dan saya tidak tahu serta tidak perduli sikap dan faham politik almarhum. Namun saya tidak dapat menahan diri untuk mengecam serta mengutuk keras pembunuhan . . .

(I have never been interested in politics (let alone 'practical' politics). Neither do I know, nor care the political thoughts and stance of the deceased. But I just cannot reserve my desire to condemn and curse at this assassination . . .)

41. I do not think it is too much of an exaggeration for Rendra to make an allegation that many writers and critics of modern Indonesian literature is "ignorant", or blind of politics (Rendra, 1983:69) (Hardi, 1982: 354, 356).
42. An example of songs compiled in the collection of the cassette (Prambors, 1979):

Bahana Jelata

Tolong, tolong diriku
 Dari himpitan neraka
 Belenggu sengsara ini
 S'lalu menggenggam diri

Dunia semakin kelam
 Tiada belas memandang
 Hei ningrat, lihat sini
 Hidup yang penuh roda duri

Tiada banding kaya dengan jelata
 Hari-hari santap jelaga
 Sampai mati menjadi bangkai
 Mana sejahtera, mana sentosa Bu Pertiwi?

(Cry of the Underdog

Help, help me
 From the hellish oppression
 Shackles of sufferings
 Always hold me tight

The world gets darker
 No pity takes a glance
 Hi, the nobles, look down here
 Life full of wheels of [?] thorns

No way to compare the rich and the poor
 Days to consume soot
 Till I die and become carcass
 Where's peace, where's happiness, Mother land)

43. For an introduction of dang-dut within its social context, see William H. Frederick's (1982) "Rhoma Irama and the Dangdut Style : Aspects of Contemporary Indonesian Popular Culture".
44. Keith Foulcher (1984:18,20) also addresses a similar question with specific reference to Lekra's pre-1965 literary endeavour. To Foulcher (1984:29) to employ the "aesthetics of the buorgeois nationalist tradition" in producing literature for the people "was possible, even if its "successes" were rare".
45. A complementary appraisal of Noegraha's Sajak Sikat Gigi is provided in Savitri Scherer's (1981) essay on the bio-graphy and the general works of Noegraha.
46. (According to him [Sitor Situmorang] Yudhis' poems are unsuccessful poetical parody, because the writer does not know what poetry is and what the role of a Poet is.)
47. For information about Goenawan Mohamad's response to the incident, see (Mohamad,1978).

48. For an introduction to Suparto Brata (b.1932) and his works, see (Hutomo, 1975:63-64), and (Ras, 1979:25-26). Hutomo (1975:63) sees Suparto Brata as a prolific author, while Ras (1979:26) considers him "the best Javanese novelist" during the period of 1945-1960.
49. (. . . up to now Suparto Brata does not yet have an 'identification card' to make himself eligible to be a 'citizen' of the Indonesian sastra. It is understandable, since he writes just like a clerk of a district office, never writes with the spirit of a true author.)
50. Much of their opposition is expressed rather evasively in public, of course, with a few exceptions. See Nadjib (1982a) for an example of an attack to the Jakarta-based literature establishment. Also refer to Jakob Sumardjo (1982) for an appraisal of the Yogyakarta-based artist 'coalition', Pamusuk Eneste (1983b) and Noeng Runua (1984) for a brief response to the attack on the Jakarta-based artists.
51. (Since time immemorial writers and artists always stand for justice and truth. Their enemies are deception, falsification, violence, iniquity. Therefore, they do not only make good allies to the people, but at times become adversaries of vicious authority in power.)
52. Compare the old pepatah "di dalam ilmu silat tidak ada juara nomor dua, di dalam ilmu surat tidak ada juara nomor satu" quoted earlier in this essay (see note # 20).

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