

**TEGUH KARYA: A FILM AUTEUR WORKING
WITHIN A COLLECTIVE**

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Abstract

This thesis examines the thirteen feature films written and directed by Teguh Karya, one of the most popular and innovative Indonesian film directors working during the 1970s and 1980s. Teguh helped rebuild and refine the local Indonesian film industry through his collaborations with his theatre collective, Teater Populer, where he trained young people in aspects of filmmaking such as acting and cinematography. This educational collective developed and provided opportunities for talents such as Slamet Rahardjo and Christine Hakim, who themselves became significant figures in the local film industry.

In order to examine Teguh Karya's films, the thesis uses authorship approaches that place the film director as an artist and his films as his personal reflections. It combines auteur-structuralism, which seeks to uncover the underlying structure of a film, and a pragmatic authorship approach that looks at the relationship between the filmmaker (Teguh Karya) and the local film industry. This combination of approaches is important since Teguh worked closely with his theatre collective, Teater Populer, within the commercial film industry. Applying these approaches to Teguh's films, the thesis argues that his films are better explored in terms of their variety, change and development, and their interest in engaging with different issues of his society and its history.

Teguh's films developed in a number of phases, responding to pressures from the film industry and his own growing ability to resist these pressures when determining the kinds of films that he wanted to make. An examination of his films using a combination of authorship approaches in each phase reveals that Teguh Karya was


extremely knowledgeable on the nature of filmmaking, both personally and as part of industrial-collaborative labour. This eventually led to the creation of films that signified he was an auteur. The first phase in Teguh's filmmaking, during which he made his first film with his theatre collective, shows his transition from theatre to filmmaking. His first film was commercially unsuccessful, and this failure made Teguh aware that he needed to demonstrate his capability and flexibility and work within a highly commercial Indonesian film industry. The second phase reflects the period when Teguh made films based on successful commercial formulas. The third phase is the mature period in his filmmaking career. In this phase, Teguh made historical and mature realist films focused on social topics such as the experience and problems faced by the lower class and people living in poverty.

The thesis makes a significant contribution to a growing field of knowledge on Indonesian cinema for it is the first authorship study of Teguh Karya's films, providing insight into his development as a filmmaker from the beginning of his career to the end. The thesis provides a comprehensive study of the work of this unique and important filmmaker and explores his struggles to make films with limited resources while working within a rapidly changing film environment in Indonesia.

Statement of Authorship

The thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other institution and affirms that, to the best of the candidate's knowledge, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Signature:

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the author's signature.

Gaston Soehadi

March 9, 2015

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The role of Sinematek Indonesia (the Jakarta Film Archive with large holdings of feature films) was very important for my research, making it possible for me to see many of Teguh Karya's films in their original cinemascope versions rather than only the video, TV or DVD versions with their changes in screen format and lesser definition.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The individual transcends the society, but society is also and above all within him. So there can be no definitive criticism of genius or talent which does not first take into consideration the social determinism, the historical combination of circumstances and the technical background which to a large extent determine it... The cinema is an art which is both popular and industrial. - Andre Bazin in "La Politique des Auteurs." (1957/2009, p.135)

This thesis explores the films made by the late Teguh Karya, one of the most important Indonesian film directors working in the 1970s and 1980s.¹ He directed plays and films between 1960s and the late 1980s and later also directed several short films and plays for television in the 1990s. This study focuses on his thirteen long-feature films, which I argue establish his reputation as a film auteur. Not only was he a popular and innovative film director, but also one of the filmmakers who helped rebuild and refine the Indonesian film industry in the 1970s after the industry suffered from national economic and political turmoils during the 1960s, leading to a drastic decline in film production in Indonesia in the mid-1960s.

¹ When referring to Indonesian names, this thesis follows the common practice in Indonesian society whereby a person is addressed by his or her first name. After the first mention of their full name, the thesis will, for example, address "Teguh Karya" as "Teguh", "Slamet Rahardjo" as "Slamet", and "Tuti Indra Malaon" as "Tuti".

Teguh Karya's Biography

Teguh Karya was born on 22 September 1937, the eldest of five children born to Laksana Karya and Naomi Karya.² The family was of Chinese descent and they resided in a relatively small but multicultural village called Maja, part of the city of Pandeglang in the West Java province. His father was a small trader who had opened a grocery shop in the village and his mother was a housewife. Teguh spent his childhood in the village with his two brothers and two sisters, but when an ethnic riot that attacked the Chinese people in the village occurred in 1947, Teguh and his family fled to Jakarta. Teguh and his siblings continued their education in elementary and junior high school in Jatinegara in Jakarta and Teguh, in particular, was interested in joining a drama club in the church that his parents attended. Here, Teguh had his first acting experience playing parts in the Christmas and Easter events for the church. It was this acting experience and his love for Indonesian literature as a school subject that sparked an interest to study theatre further. After Teguh graduated from junior high school in 1953 at the age of sixteen, he went to Jogjakarta to study theatre at the first theatre academy in Indonesia called the Film and Drama Academy or Akademi Seni Drama dan Film (ASDRAFI). After one year at the academy Teguh decided to quit because he was unable to continue paying the tuition fee.

Teguh returned to Jakarta in late 1954 and was unemployed for two years before applying for and obtaining a place in the Indonesian National Theatre Academy

² Teguh's Chinese name was Liem Tjoan Hok. The short account I give here of Teguh Karya's biography and his work with Teater Populer is sourced from the following sources: Nano Riantiarno (Ed, 1993) *Teguh Karya dan Teater Populer 1968-1993*. Jakarta: Pustaka Sinar Harapan (this edited book contains thoughts, interviews and anecdotes from Teguh's students, friends and colleagues); and my personal interviews conducted during my fieldwork in Jakarta between June and August 2011 with the members of Teater Populer: Slamet Rahardjo, Alex Komang, Niniek L. Karim, Dewi Matindas, George Kamarullah, Edi STB and Henky Solaiman. I also interviewed Tantra Surjadi, one of former cinematographers in Teguh's films.

or Akademi Teater Nasional Indonesia (ATNI) where he excelled as a theatre student. It was here that Teguh first came under the influence of three prominent indigenous figures in Indonesian film and theatre: Usmar Ismail, who in 1955 had founded Perfini, Indonesia's first indigenous film company; Djadug Djajakusuma, an artistic and film director who joined Perfini in 1951; and Asrul Sani, a literary writer who joined Perfini in 1955. While Teguh said that Usmar and Asrul were his main role models, their influence was more on the development of his career as a filmmaker than on his cinematic style.³

Another important factor in addition to the influence and support Teguh received from Usmar Ismail, Asrul Sani and Djadug Djajakusuma was that in all of his films Teguh Karya tried to reach out to various ethnicities in Indonesia through the story and the film characters. Teguh's ability to embrace cultural differences meant that he was able to work effectively with various film producers, actors and crews of different ethnicities. None of his films (with the exception of *Ibunda*) describes ethnic prejudice in anything more than a minor way. For this reason, this thesis only foregrounds the issues of ethnicity, including Teguh's own Chinese identity, where this is directly relevant to the films being examined.⁴ Due to his acting talent as a student at ATNI, and with a recommendation from Usmar Ismail, Teguh obtained work as a supporting actor and set decorator in two films, *Djendral Kancil* (*Kancil, the General*,

³ Teguh Karya recalled that it was Usmar Ismail who motivated him not to give up his ideals as an artist, although Teguh worked as a film director in a country that has not always appreciated film as an art (1993f, p. 16).

⁴ For discussions of the issue of ethnicity in Indonesia that specifically address the position of the Indonesian Chinese, both in general and with regard to their role in the Indonesian film industry, see Setijadi (2012, pp. 65-82); Setijadi-Dunn & Barker (2010, pp. 25-47); Sen (2006, pp. 119-136); Purdey (2006); and Coppel (1983).

1958) and *Mak Comblang* (*The Matchmaker*, 1958).⁵ These small roles helped him pay his tuition fees.

After finishing his studies at ATNI, Teguh went to study artistic direction for theatre at the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii, in 1961 on an American government scholarship. Due to illness, he left Hawaii before he could finish his studies and returned to ATNI to teach acting until 1968 when ATNI was closed. While working at ATNI as a lecturer, Teguh was also employed as a supporting actor and an assistant to the director in two films: *Pagar Kawat Berduri* (*Barbed Wire* in 1961) and *Sembilan* (*Nine*, 1967).⁶ However, this brief experience working in film did not distract Teguh from his commitment to theatre. His undeterred focus on theatre and theatre teaching led him to form an acting workshop with his students, which in 1968 would become Teater Populer Hotel Indonesia.

Teguh Karya and Teater Populer⁷

... Teguh Karya is not merely a good director and an actor. He also was the builder of the life of a whole circle of theatre people. And his efforts were accomplished by means of the group he created, Teater Populer. Teater Populer is not merely a theatre group; it is an educational organisation. And if we see the exceptional actors that came out of that

⁵ *Djendral Kancil* and *Mak Comblang* were directed respectively by Nya' Abbas Akup and Djajakusuma, both of them for a time close associates of Usmar Ismail working in Perfini.

⁶ *Pagar Kawat Berduri* was directed by Asrul Sani while *Sembilan* was directed by Wim Umboh whose commercially successful film *Pengantin Remaja* (1971) was Teguh's model for his first family melodrama film, *Cinta Pertama* (1973).

⁷ The short account of Teguh Karya and Teater Populer is sourced from Riantiarno (ed, 1993)

group, then we can say that the efforts of Teguh were not in vain. -Asrul

Sani (1993, p 9).⁸

A distinguishing characteristic of Teguh Karya's filmmaking career was that he made his films with his theatre collective Teater Populer, collaborating with its members. Teguh Karya (1993b) states:

I have been working for years with Teater Populer and feel that we understand each other very well. We have gone through difficulties in the early years in theatre and I would like to continue to work with Teater Populer in film. (p.42)⁹

The theatre collective Teater Populer, which consisted mainly of his former students at ATNI, was significant for the development of Teguh's career. For one thing, Teater Populer served as a creative laboratory where he discussed theatre and film projects with members of the theatre collective, wrote film scripts (or adapted Western plays for his theatre) and acted as the films' director.¹⁰ Furthermore, most of the members of Teater Populer also became his actors and crew in all of his films.¹¹ The mutual

⁸ The original text in Indonesian reads as follows: "...Teguh Karya bukan sekedar sutradara dan actor yang baik. Dia juga pembina kehidupan dan lingkungan teater. Dan usahanya itu ia lakukan melalui grupnya, Teater Populer. Teater Populer bukan sekedar grup teater, dia juga sebuah lembaga pendidikan. Dan jika melihat aktor-aktor yang dihasilkan oleh grup ini, maka dapat saya katakan, bahwa usaha Teguh bukanlah usaha yang sia-sia".

⁹ The original text in Indonesian reads as follows: "Saya telah berjalan bersama-sama dengan Teater Populer sekian lama di atas awang-awang, juga di atas aspal sekaligus. Setiap anggota telah menyumbangkan tenaga dan pengertiannya dengan baik. Kami ingin melanjutkan kerja sama dan berkewajiban berpikir jauh ke depan dalam film." (1993b)

¹⁰ Teguh's regular partners for discussing his ideas were Dewi Matindas, Slamet Rahardjo and the late Tuti Indra Malaon. Tuti Indra Malaon, especially, was a great help to Teguh, being the first reader of his scripts, using her academic background in literature to give feedback on the story, plot and dialogue. Dewi, Slamet and Alex are still teaching younger actors in Teater Populer. Dewi's focus is on teaching the psychology of acting while Slamet and Alex teach acting.

¹¹ Almost all of Teguh Karya's films feature at least one of two actors from the Teater Populer collective, Slamet Rahardjo (particularly in the period 1971–1983), and Alex Komang (in the period 1984–1989).

collaborations between Teguh and Teater Populer occurred daily and intensely as they lived and worked collectively in the workshop compound that housed the group. Teater Populer became the base or community where Teguh Karya worked throughout his theatre and film career.

Teguh Karya was the main founder of Teater Populer, which was formed on 14 October 1968. In addition to Teguh, the co-founders of Teater Populer were Slamet Rahardjo and Tuti Indra Malaon.¹² Teater Populer began life as an evening acting workshop taught by Teguh himself in 1967, and was separate from the ATNI curriculum, which Teguh had lectured in since 1963. This acting course was popular among some ATNI students, such as Slamet Rahardjo, Riantiarno and Mieke Wijaya. It gradually also attracted the attention from people outside the theatre academy who had no formal background in theatre, such as Henky Solaiman to join the workshop. In the middle of 1968, ATNI was closed down by its founders for financial reasons, leaving its students and teachers to find other schools or employment.

The closing down of ATNI was an important turning point for Teguh and the members of his acting course. Since it was the only theatre school in Indonesia, they lost the formally constituted institution where Teguh taught and his students could learn from him about theatre. The acting course that Teguh taught then provided an opportunity for students to continue learning theatre. This crucial moment led to the gradual development of a sense of solidarity among the group, particularly for Teguh

The one exception to this is *Usia 18*. Teguh did not cast his main actors from the collective for the film *Usia 18*, although members of Teater Populer were still creatively involved.

¹² Slamet Rahardjo was Teguh's student at the theatre academy, while Tuti Indra Malaon was a lecturer in literature in the English department at the University of Indonesia (UI).

Karya, who was also still working as a stage manager at Hotel Indonesia.¹³ Teguh relates that at one point in these four years before he founded Teater Populer he had an opportunity to visit numerous regional areas throughout Indonesia, in order to familiarise himself with their traditional performance arts, and that this deepened his love for theatre (Riantiarno, ed. 1993). Teguh's acting course initially used the theatre academy building to hold workshops; however, following the closing of the academy the only available venue for the workshop was the small rented room in Tanah Abang where Teguh lived. The desire of the workshop members to be able to make a professional living from theatre led to the establishment of a theatre collective, Teater Populer Hotel Indonesia.

The day Teater Populer was formally established was also the collective's first public performance at Hotel Indonesia, which from that point became their main venue for performances, an arrangement that would continue until Teguh left his permanent job at the hotel in 1972. Besides Hotel Indonesia, Teater Populer also performed at Taman Ismail Marzuki, an art and cultural space built by the government in Jakarta in 1968. Slamet Rahardjo reports that the aim of the original Teater Populer was to create a theatre that was popular, because people wanted to see it, and it spoke to them of their lives in realistic ways, and yet entertaining (in Riantiarno, ed, 1993, p. 21). After Teguh did not work as a stage manager anymore, Teater Populer Hotel Indonesia changed its name to Teater Populer. When it was founded Teater Populer had twelve members: eight males and four females.¹⁴ Most of them were from lower middle class families,

¹³ Hotel Indonesia was the first five-star hotel in Indonesia. It was formally opened on 5 August 1962, by President Soekarno. During the 1960s, Hotel Indonesia often accommodated many cultural events to welcome its domestic and international guests.

¹⁴ The original members of Teater Populer were Teguh Karya, Slamet Rahardjo, Riantiarno, Tuti Indra Malaon, Mieke Wijaya, Dewi Matindas, Sylvia Widiantono, Henky Solaiman, Boyke Roring, Franky Rorimpandey, Dicky Zulkarnaen and Ishaq Iskandar.

diverse ethnic backgrounds and had a college education.¹⁵ Their first film, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, was produced in 1971, and the project was initiated because they had come to realise that they could not rely solely on the theatre to make a living. However, this film was a commercial disaster and had the opposite effect to its intention, leaving Teater Populer in a worse financial situation than before.

The journey of Teater Populer under Teguh Karya can be divided into two phases, a division based on the places where the theatre workshops were located. In 1972, Teater Populer had its first permanent home in a small house located in Jalan Kebon Kacang in a Tanah Abang suburb, one of the busiest and most crowded suburbs in Central Jakarta.¹⁶ From 1980 the workshop has been based in a large old house in Jalan Kebon Pala I, also in Tanah Abang. The period where the group was based in Jalan Kebon Kacang (1972-1980) saw the gradual development of Teater Populer as the most prominent theatre collective and film workshop in Indonesia.¹⁷ During this time, Teater Populer was successfully able to establish its reputation in the Indonesian film industry. Teguh Karya was also decorated as one of the most popular and innovative film directors in the 1970s.

Ever since Teater Populer started working in the film industry in 1971, Teguh only wanted to make films with the members of the collective. He insisted that all of the Teater Populer members were involved in various capacities within his film projects. In

¹⁵ Dewi Matindas and Sylvia Widiatono were students at the University of Indonesia.

¹⁶ Henky Solaiman (personal interview, July 2011) stated that the Kebon Kacang workshop was bought by Teater Populer with the money they borrowed from a generous businessman living in Jakarta who regularly attended Teater Populer performances in the late 1960s.

¹⁷ Teater Populer under Teguh Karya was the only theatre collective in Indonesia that was able to exist successfully in both the theatre and film environments. According to Slamet Rahardjo and Henky Solaiman, this was mostly the result of Teguh's leadership in Teater Populer and his ability to build a network with prominent people who were willing to support the theatre and films made by Teater Populer.

each film project, Teguh negotiated with the film producers to be allowed to have members of Teater Populer as his main creative partners and demanded that they be allowed to handle the artistic aspects of the films.¹⁸ *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, which is discussed in Chapter Two, is an example of how a film was made as a result from the intense collective work of Teguh Karya and Teater Populer, especially in its artistic design. All of the members of Teater Populer worked together to build the film's sets in the historic Sunda Kelapa Harbour in Jakarta and in the Banten Province. Furthermore, the process of making *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* produced by Acehnese born, Turino Djunaedy, not only demonstrated the physical collaborations between all the members of Teater Populer, but also the financial contributions of Teater Populer to the film in which they shared the production cost with the film producer. A similarly intense collaboration also occurred when Teguh made his most ambitious film, *November 1828*, where the members of Teater Populer worked to build the film set in Jogjakarta a year before the film went into the production in 1978.¹⁹ For his smaller and popular film projects, *Cinta Pertama*, *Ranjang Pengantin* and *Kawin Lari*, Teguh used the Kebon Kacang workshop as the setting location. *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*, on the other hand, was shot completely outside Jakarta, in Bandung.

Apart from working together as a team in producing Teguh's films, the nature of the collective among the members of Teater Populer can also be seen in the daily life of the workshop compound in Kebon Kacang. Teguh Karya and the other male group members moved out of their previous rented rooms in order to live in the compound.

¹⁸ In personal interviews conducted in 2011, Dewi Matindas, Slamet Rahardjo, George Kamarulah and Henky Solaiman stated that inclusion of his Teater Populer colleagues in his projects was an absolute condition for Teguh Karya in negotiations with his producers.

¹⁹ Slamet Rahardjo talked about the making of *November 1828* during his visit to Australia in 2011, where he gave a workshop on "Mind, Body and Soul Acting" at Melbourne's Liminal Theatre in May of that year.

The female members, however, continued to live with their families or parents after the workshops. Each member contributed financially to the running costs of the workshop. For example, they would buy equipment necessary for the set decoration of plays and films, pay for meals after training and even pay the electricity bills (“Teater Populer Setelah 25 Tahun”, 1985, p. 15). Writing of this period of theatrical work, the actress Rahayu Effendi (1993) has commented:

Equality and mutual cooperation were characteristics of Teater Populer. There we felt there was no difference between us as players, everyone was the same whether playing leading roles or not, everyone had to direct their energy and thought to how best to cooperate in carrying out their respective tasks (p. 25).²⁰

Rahayu Effendi goes on to say that there was never ever jealousy if someone was assigned a leading role in a play, because all understood that even the smallest role made a contribution to the overall strength of the staging and had to be played as well as possible. As a result the players were very dedicated when rehearsing. As a group, Teater Populer did not have any formal regulations for its members, which meant that a member could leave the workshop at any time.²¹

Teguh Karya and other members of Teater Populer continued to live in Kebon Kacang until 1980, when they bought an old much bigger house in a lane, known as

²⁰ The original statement in Indonesian is: “Kebersamaan dan kegotong royongan adalah sifat Teater Populer. Disana kami merasa tidak berbeda antara sesama pemain, semua sama, baik pemain utama atau bukan, semua harus memberikan tenaga dan pemikirannya secara gotong royong dalam melaksanakan tugasnya masing-masing.

²¹ Alex Komang (personal interview, July 2011) stated that as some of the members began to get married and start families, they generally chose to find other places to live, but continued to come to the workshop for training.

Jalan Kebon Pala I, in the same suburb, and used it as their new workshop until now.²²

The Kebon Pala workshop was a period when Teguh Karya and Teater Populer reached the peak in the film industry through their mature films, *Usia 18*, *Di Balik Kelambu*, *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*, *Doea Tanda Mata*, *Ibunda* and *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*. In the film *Di Balik Kelambu*, Teguh Karya used the Kebon Pala house as the main setting of the story. The Kebon Pala period also witnessed the further development of Teater Populer as a *padepokan* (educational collective) that welcomed young people from across Indonesia who wanted to learn about theatre and film.²³ Having a larger workshop meant that Teater Populer was able to accommodate and train a bigger number of newcomers. These new members were mostly young people eager to train not only in acting, but also directing and scriptwriting in both theatre and film. In order to intensify their study and experience, Teguh Karya allowed some of the newcomers to stay in the dormitory within the compound. Teater Populer also welcomed interns from Jakarta Institute of Arts (Institut Kesenian Jakarta) who learned to work in a professional setting. In addition to these main activities directly related to Teater Populer, the Kebon Pala workshop also hosted public events such as seminars, discussions, youth theatre performances and film screenings. As part of the contributions to the environment where they lived, Teater Populer also opened a library that is full of theatre, film books and general works and open to anyone who visits the workshop.

²² The huge commercial success of Teguh's popular films in the 1970s enabled him and Teater Populer to buy the Kebon Pala workshop in the early 1980s.

²³ Some members of Teater Populer have said that Teater Populer was like a school for them and Teguh Karya was a teacher. George Kamarullah (personal interview, June 2011) for example, acknowledged that he joined the workshop in the 1970s initially in order to be trained in acting. After a few years of training and acting in theatre and film under Teguh Karya, George ended up as an award-winning film cinematographer. Riantiarno, another member of the collective became a playwright and scriptwriter for his very well-known collective theatre, Teater Koma.

Teater Populer was not the only theatre collective in Indonesia in the 1970s and 1980s. Other theatre collectives include Bengkel Teater, Teater Kecil, Teater Mandiri and Teater Koma. All of these collectives were based in Jakarta, except for Bengkel Teater, which had its main workshop in Jogjakarta. All of them also accepted students from across Indonesia who wanted to study theatre. However, the main difference between Teater Populer and the other theatre collectives was that Teater Populer was the only group that was able to set up a link between the local film industry and theatre. Through this working arrangement, Teguh reserved the right to decide who would be working with him in his films.²⁴ Teater Populer also developed not only as a *padepokan* for theatre, but also film training. Finally, by setting several of their films in their Kebon Kacang and Kebon Pala workshops, Teater Populer became effectively a mini studio.

The mutual collaborations between Teguh Karya and Teater Populer distinguished Teguh's films from those of other Indonesian film directors because the collaborations provided a relatively independent position and atmosphere for him to work within the highly commercial Indonesian film industry. Teguh was fortunate as he was able to produce films together with a group of people, his former ATNI students who had joined Teater Populer, with whom he shared similar visions both in theatre and film. Here it needs to be said that most of the screenplays were authored by Teguh alone, so it was not a collective based on group authorship, but one in which its leader wrote screenplay partly as a means of personal expression, but also to develop his actors and so that all of them could have a place in the film world.

²⁴ In the commercial Indonesian film industry, the film producers will generally be the key decision makers in the making a film, much the same as in Hollywood during the studio era.

Two of Teguh's closest collaborators were Slamet Rahardjo and Tuti Indra Malaon. Indeed, Eros Djarot (1993. p.31) has expressed the view that these two were essential for Teguh's creativity, for his creativity thrived on dialogue with at least a small number of key collaborators. Slamet was Teguh's main actor in the 1970s and his last collaboration with him was in *Di Balik Kelambu* where he played the main male lead and co-wrote the script with Teguh. It is only with *Di Balik Kelambu* that Slamet's has claimed a significant contribution or influence in the matter of authorship. In my interview with Slamet, he stated that it was his idea to make the sound aspect of the film naturalistic by bringing in the voice of azan from the nearby mosque in the *kampung* and the traffic sound in the early morning. Slamet also contributed significantly in the acting style in *Di Balik Kelambu* where he suggested Teguh to adopt a naturalistic acting that also distinguished the film.²⁵ Slamet, who was twelve years younger than Teguh, reports that it was only after an eight-year apprenticeship with Teguh that he dared to direct a play himself, and that it was a full ten years before he considered himself ready to direct a film, which he finally did in 1979, although by then he had been acting in Teguh's films for nearly a decade. As regards Tuti Indra Malaon, Dewi Matindas describes her as Teguh's right hand where she would be the first to read Teguh's screenplays and his plans for *Teater Populer* stage performances, and comment on them. As well as being an actress, Tuti became a lecturer in English at the University of Indonesia, where she would lecture on drama (she was particularly interested in American drama and often exchanged ideas on this topic with Teguh). In film, Tuti's distinguished performance in *Kawin Lari* and *Ibunda* were partly the result of close mutual collaborations between her and Teguh.²⁶ The lead actor in three of Teguh's last

²⁵ Slamet Rahardjo (personal interview, 2011).

²⁶ Dewi Matindas (personal interview, 2011).

films, Alex Komang, is credited with some contributions to the script of *Doea Tanda Mata*; and on his last film, *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*, Teguh worked with a new associate, the author and journalist, Arswendo Atmowiloto, who is credited as co-scripting the film. Music for his films was written primarily by two composers, prolific composer of film music, Idris Sardi, and Eros Djarot, the younger brother of Slamet Rahardjo, both of whom might be regarded as associate members of the collective. As a composer, Eros was partly responsible for commercial success of *Badai Pasti Berlalu*, Teguh's most popular film in the 1970s. Eros's decision to use keroncong in *Kawin Lari* defines the mood of the film into comedy, which then made *Kawin Lari* a "bitter comedy".

For the film about nineteenth century Central Java, *November 1828*, Teguh looked more widely for suitable composers, with a young student, Frankie Raden doing most of the music for *November 1828*, which relies heavily on Javanese tradition. Slamet Rahardjo, and noted central Javanese born dancer, choreographer and performance artist, Sardono W. Kusuma, both of whom appear in the film, are also credited for the music. Sardono, of course, had his own organisations, including a long standing relationship with a village dance troupe at Teges, near Ubud in Bali. So the Teater Populer collective did not work entirely alone, as a closed group, but would bring in others, including those belonging to other groups, when they could make an invaluable creative contribution. Additionally quite a few actors who had gained valuable experience by working with Teguh, would then launch out by themselves, especially if work was available (for example Dicky Zulkarnaen), as did an actor soon to become a celebrated playwright and stage director in his own right (Riantiarno, who also co-scripted with Teguh for *Kawin Lari*).

It is difficult to provide a direct comparison between *Teater Populer* and other theatre collectives in Asia and the world or to find an exact model for it. One reason for this is that Teater Populer only evolved over time. Teater Populer was set up as a continuation of Teguh's activities as a teacher at ATNI. The regular performances by Teater Populer at Hotel Indonesia resulted in the growth of a loyal audience of varied economic backgrounds regularly attending the performances. Three years later the group ventured into film, with Tuti Indra Malaon, Slamet Rahardjo and budding satiric playwright, Riantiarno, all playing major roles in *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*. This first venture led into other film projects. While Teater Populer made films and gained success in the film industry, they continued to perform as a theatre, adapting realist plays written by America, British and Europe playwrights such as Tennessee Williams, Robert Andersen, Noel Coward, Harold Pinter, Nikolai Gogol, August Strindberg, Georg Buchner and Hendrik Ibsen.

Teguh Karya and Teater Populer mainly adapted Western plays, as there was a lack of original plays written by Indonesian playwrights in the 1950s and 1960s. He considered adapting Western plays as a practical way to educate his actors who still needed training.²⁷ While adapting Western plays was important for the education of his actors, Teguh seldom adopted Western set-up for the performances. Instead, Teguh draw inspirations from a wide range of Indonesian art and cultural traditions for his Western adaptation performances. One can see for example in the adaptations of Federico Garcia Lorca's *The Blood Wedding*, which was performed in Minangkabau tradition, Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie* in Javanese culture, Jeff Last's *Jayaprana and Layonsari* in Balinese traditional *gambuh* dance and Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in Batakese culture with a title of a slightly different spelling *Makbet*.

²⁷ Riantiarno (Ed, 1993).

Teguh's fascination of local culture began when he worked as a stage director of Hotel Indonesia in the early 1960s where he had a chance of travelling and visiting across Indonesia to meet local people. This encounter with various local traditions in Indonesia inspired each of Teater Populer's performances in later years.

In Indonesia, Teater Populer might be compared to Arifin C. Noer's Teater Kecil and playwright W.S Rendra Bengkel Teater – an experimental theatre workshop. They shared the same cultural root in its schooling model, *padepokan* where Teguh would teach his students with the help of his main associates Slamet and Tuti. Teater Populer distinguished itself early on by becoming the only modern Indonesian theatre group that worked professionally on a regular basis, with an international five-star hotel in Indonesia, Hotel Indonesia, so that it to some extent was a commercial theatre rather than simply an experimental theatre workshop. Teater Populer also became the only theatre collective that managed to consistently work in theatre and film over a twenty-year period. While Teater Populer performed both realist plays and experimental adaptations, Teater Kecil and Bengkel Teater mainly staged experimental plays written by Arifin and Rendra.

Using this kind of mutual working arrangement, Teguh Karya's filmmaking career developed from being a popular film director to a film auteur in which he wrote and directed films that represented his concerns. Also, with Teater Populer Teguh was able to work with people from different ethnicities, as its members came from various regions in Indonesia (his film producers were of Acehnese, Chinese, Javanese and Indian background). Under Teguh Karya's direction, Teater Populer produced more than thirty plays and attracted regular audiences to its performances at the Hotel

Indonesia in the three decades (1960-1990).²⁸ Through its workshops, Teater Populer fostered the talents of several people who would become leading figures in the Indonesian film industry such as Slamet Rahardjo, Christine Hakim, Tuti Indra Malaon and Alex Komang. Slamet Rahardjo and Christine Hakim in particular both established themselves as actors in the 1970s through Teguh's films. As discussed in Chapter Three, Slamet was a main actor in all of Teguh's popular cinema and Tuti Indra Malaon and Alex Komang reached the peak in their acting careers in the films Teguh Karya made in the 1980s. Teater Populer remains active today, with its younger members training under the guidance of senior members, many of whom themselves were trained by Teguh, such as Slamet Rahardjo, Dewi Matindas and Alex Komang.

Teguh Karya directed thirteen feature films with Teater Populer during his career: *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* (*Face of a Man*, 1971), *Cinta Pertama* (*First Love*, 1973), *Ranjang Pengantin* (*The Wedding Bed*, 1974), *Kawin Lari* (*Elopement*, 1975), *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* (*The Short-Lived Marriage*, 1976), *Badai Pasti Berlalu* (*The Storm is Over*, 1977), *November 1828* (1978), *Usia 18* (*At the Age of 18*, 1980), *Di Balik Kelambu* (*Behind the Mosquito Net*, 1982), *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* (*Bitter Coffee*, 1984), *Doea Tanda Mata* (*Mementoes*, 1985), *Ibunda* (*Mother*, 1986), and *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* (*Lover Misses a Train*, 1989). Each of these films is discussed in detail in the chapters to follow.

Teguh Karya was in every sense a writer-director. He was the author of the screenplays of all the films he made. Although four films were co-written with his

²⁸ In his interview with Siyaranamual (1980), Teguh Karya said that although Teater Populer gave its first performance in 1968, by 1972, when they left Hotel Indonesia, Teater Populer had been able to attract approximately 3000 regular audience members. This number increased throughout their performing career and placed Teater Populer as one of the most popular theatre collective groups in Indonesia (pp.145-161).

students, (Riantiarno, Slamet Rahardjo and Alex Komang) and later with Arswendo Atmowiloto, he is still considered as the main scriptwriter of his films. Additionally, only two of his thirteen filmed screenplays were substantially based on the work of others. *Kawin Lari* (1975) was based on Tennessee Williams' drama *The Glass Menagerie* and *Badai Pasti Badai Berlalu* (1977) was based on a popular novel by the Indonesian novelist Marga T. All of his other films were original screenplays. This means that he can be counted as the key author of his works at every stage of production, like other writer-directors as distinguished as Preston Sturges, Ingmar Bergman, Eric Rohmer, Jean-Luc Godard, Michelangelo Antonioni and Federico Fellini.

Film Authorship

This thesis explores Teguh's thirteen feature films through the lens of authorship. While film critics had long accepted the key role performed by particularly creative film directors in both the making of films and in the evolution of cinema (for example D.W. Griffith and Fritz Lang), authorship as a critical concept received renewed and special attention in debates that emerged in France in the 1950s. This was the period where a group of film critics writing for the journal *Cahiers du Cinema* developed the idea of a film director as an "auteur"—the French word for author. The classical authorship approach, which heralds the film director as a true artist with an individual vision that influences the films they make, was developed from the work of Alexander Astruc, who in 1948 conceived the idea of the "camera as pen" (Astruc, 1948/2009). This idea argues that a film director has an equal position in relation to film as a literary writer does to a book or a painter to a painting. Astruc was followed by Francois Truffaut, who in 1954 launched an attack against the "tradition of quality"

style common in French cinema in the 1940s that was heavily dependent on adaptations of canonical French literature (Truffaut, 1954/2009). In his famous essay “La Politique des Auteurs” (1957), Andre Bazin applauds Truffaut and his colleagues for revolutionising the perceptions of film authorship and cinema (Bazin, 1957/2009). However, in the same essay, Bazin also criticises the proponents of authorship for their sole focus on the filmmakers’ role and lack of attention to the role played by the film industry. In 1962, Andrew Sarris, an American film scholar, brought the notion of film authorship to the American film industry and wrote an essay “Notes on the Auteur Theory” where he tried to develop the theory for American context (Sarris, 1962). He used the essay to compile a list of great American directors in his book *The American Cinema: Directors and Directions 1929-1968*, published in 1968. However, Sarris’s effort to develop authorship in American context was criticised by Pauline Kael in her 1963 essay “Circles and Squares”, where she argues that ascribing the authorship of a film to its director is discriminatory because it does not acknowledge the other skills required in a filmmaking team (Kael, 1963). The criticism made by Kael of this early authorship movement is especially relevant in relation to the positioning of Teguh as an auteur, as he was a film director working within a (theatre) collective.

In the early 1970s, the British film critics writing for *Movie* magazine such as Geoffrey Nowell-Smith and Peter Wollen worked to re-establish the significance of auteurism by pointing to the repetitive motives or underlying pattern in a director’s films. This refreshing critical movement gave birth to an innovative approach to authorship known as “auteur-structuralism”, which places the text as the object of analysis. Nowell Smith (2003) argues:

[O]ne essential corollary of the theory as it has been developed is the discovery that the defining characteristics of an author’s work are not always those that

are most readily apparent. The purpose of criticism becomes therefore to uncover behind the superficial contrast of subject and treatment of a structural hard core of basic and often recondite motifs. The pattern formed by these motifs, which may be stylistic or thematic, is what gives an author's work its particular structure, both defining it internally and distinguishing one body of work from another. (p.10)

As we see in this passage, Nowell-Smith stresses that the significance of auteur-structuralism lies in its discovery of a deep structure in a particular work. In his illuminating comparative analysis between the films made by John Ford and Howard Hawks, Wollen concludes that Ford's films supersede Hawks' films as they are enriched by the network of meanings produced through the shifting relationships between various binary oppositions.

The works of Nowell-Smith and Wollen provide us with important tools of film analysis but they pay little attention to the industrial context. Several notable auteurist critics argue that authorship should be perceived in a wider scope beyond the text itself, in the relationship between the author and the industry. This progressive and pragmatic perception frees both the critic and the theory from the romantic nostalgia of the author's identity and the textual boundaries of structuralism. By bringing the theory into this widening perspective, the critic can relate authorship to the various industrial practices, such as the production process, spectatorship, the ideologies within a film and the use of genre, either for critical or popular purposes. This position was also enunciated by Andre Bazin in "La Politique des Auteurs", where he states that "if you will excuse yet another commonplace, the cinema is an art which is popular and industrial" (1957/2009, p.135). It is popular because one cannot deny that film is a mass cultural form, while it is industrial because film is born from collaborative work.

In his article “Ideology, Genre and Auteur” in 1977, Robin Wood proposes a way of examining film that combines the auteur theory with an understanding of genre, ideology and technology. A Marxist film critic whose concerns are with the political impact of Hollywood-produced films, Wood argues that combining these aspects will make film analysis rich and illuminating to the reader (Wood, 1977).

Victor Perkins provides a straightforward and convincing view of the importance of film industry within the career of a particular film director. Perkins (1972) argues:

A knowledge of the film industry’s mechanics and structure help us to understand many things. It explains why many promising projects remain unrealized, why directors are often employed on subjects in which they have little interest, why they must often work in collaboration with people for whose talents they have little respect. In brief, it explains why direction is an activity surrounded by compromise and frustration. (p.170)

Perkins argues that despite the talent that a director possesses, he or she cannot escape from the fact that surrounding factors such as the film’s budget restrictions also determine the success of his or her work.

In the course of exploring the thirteen films directed by Teguh Karya, this thesis will utilise some of the key methods of auteur criticism outlined above, namely the auteur-structuralism approach combined with an approach that looks at the relationship between the artist (the director), and the film industry. However, the thesis will not simply seek to isolate the structures inherent in Teguh’s body of work. Rather, it will see this work as changing and in some ways evolving as his filmmaking career developed and as the Indonesian film industry itself underwent change.

The Indonesian Film Industry

The first Indonesian feature film was a fantasy film entitled *Loetoeng Kasaroeng*.²⁹ The film was made in Bandung in 1927 by Dutch directors L. Heuveldrop and G. Krugers and funding was provided by the Bupati (Regent) of Bandung, Raden Wiranatakusuma V. Shortly after the 1920s, three brothers from Shanghai came to Indonesia or Dutch East Indies in the hope of making films there after a slowdown in the Chinese film industry due to the popularity of American imports. These three were the Wong brothers: Nelson, Othniel and Albert. With them they brought their technical skills and filmmaking equipment and, in the late 1920s and early 1930s, they started to make film productions, first using Chinese stories and then, later, local stories.

Their first films were *Lily Van Java* (*Lily from Java*, 1928), a story of a cosmopolitan ethnic Chinese woman living in Bandung, and *Rampok Preanger* (*The Thief from the Preanger Region*, 1929), also set in Bandung.³⁰ Through their film company, Halimoen Film, they used their technical skills to assist other producers and directors, for example Manus Franken and Albert Balink with their semi-anthropological film *Pareh* (*Rice Fields*, 1935) and *Terang Boelan* (*Full Moon*, 1937).³¹

²⁹ The most comprehensive and detailed account of the film industry in Indonesia in the period prior to 1950 has been provided by Misbach Yusa Biran, founding director of Sinematek Indonesia—the main archive in Indonesia for feature films—in his lengthy book: Biran (2009) *Sejarah Film 1900–1950: Bikin Film di Jawa* (*Film History 1900–1950: Making Films in Java*). Most of the material in this section of the thesis has been derived from Biran’s pioneering scholarship and his writings. Another useful source is J. B. Kristanto’s *Katalog Film Indonesia*, which lists every film known to be made in Indonesia by Indonesian residents, from 1926 to the date of last publication in 2007 (Kristanto 2007). Material in Kristanto’s book, updated to the present, is to be found at the website: <http://filmindonesia.or.id/>. For a discussion of the making of *Loetoeng Kasoerung* see Biran (2009, pp. 60–71).

³⁰ For a discussion of these early films and films by other Chinese Indonesians, see Biran (2009, pp. 77–97 and 134–155).

³¹ For a discussion of *Pareh* and *Terang Bulan* see Biran (2009, pp. 155–182).

Terang Boelan, which was strongly influenced by the Dorothy Lamour film *Jungle Princess* (1936), was not only a huge commercial success in the Dutch East Indies, but also in Malaysia and Singapore. Its success, together with the success of imitations such as *Tjianjoer* (*Tjianjoer*, 1938) and *Alang-Alang* (*The Grass*, 1939) in the following years, resulted in an unprecedented expansion of the film industry within the colony in the early 1940s. *Terang Boelan*, its huge success and the films it inspired, is an important point in the early emergence of commercialism in the Indonesian film industry because, following the success of these films, film producers used stories to increase the appeal and therefore success of their films, trying to exploit folk legends, domestic problems, mysticism and violence as sources of stories. The Chinese producers working in Indonesia therefore played an important role in developing this commercial cinema.

During the period prior to World War II, the most prolific producers of films in Indonesia were Chinese, in particular the producer The Teng Chun who founded Cino Motion Pictures in 1931, which built studios in North Jakarta and, in 1935, changed its name to Java Industrial Film. *Katalog Film Indonesia* an excellent source for film scholars of Indonesian cinema lists approximately thirty film productions made by The Teng Chun in the pre-war period and an additional three films after the war. The Teng Chun specialised in Chinese ghost stories, for example, *Doea Siluman Oelar Poeti dan Item* (Two Ghostly Black and White Snakes, 1934) which was based on a Chinese legend, and *Tie Pat Kie Kawin* (*The Ghostly Pig Gets Married*, 1935) and related popular genres. Nevertheless, his first film *Boenga Roes Dari Cikembang* (*The Rose Flower from Cikembang*, 1931) featured an interracial marriage between a Chinese man and an indigenous woman. *Boenga Roes* was in fact the first sound film made in the Indies, but the quality of sound was very poor. There were also other notable Chinese

film companies, for example Batavia Motion Pictures, and Chinese producers, for example Tan Koen Yauw, who produced films from 1930 to 1941. The Teng Chun was the most successful of producers from this period and after Indonesia declared independence in 1945 directed films until the mid-1950s.

There were also a small number of European producers, most of whom were Dutch. The most important problem for the film producers working in Indonesia was to find a source for their stories. The Dutch often took stories from the local Javanese culture; however, these films were often criticised by the local audiences. The Chinese tried to be more neutral by using characters derived from both Chinese and the indigenous societies, and produced a strategy that seemed to be more successful than that used by the Dutch. Sometimes the Chinese deliberately made a film based on local culture to attract indigenous audiences. These films included *Nyai Dasima* (*Dasima, the Mistress*, 1929) and *Si Pitung* (*Pitung*, 1931) (based on stories set in older and more contemporary Batavia), *Rampok Preanger* (*The Robber from Preanger*, 1921) (set in West Java) and *Lari ke Arab* (*Escape to Arab*, 1930), which had an obvious Islamic theme as the film tells a story about a trip to Mecca. One factor that influenced Chinese producers in this decision was the success of *Terang Boelan*, after which the Chinese producers were more willing to make films based on local stories. They began to employ more local actors, many of them coming from previous work with touring theatre companies who performed Teater Komedi Stambul.³²

³² Komedi Stambul is a form of popular musical theatre in the early colonial in Dutch Indies (Indonesia) in the nineteenth century. Some have argued it is an Indonesian extension of Malay Theatre known as *Bangsawan* ("Aristocrat"). The word Stambul is a reference to Istanbul and indicates that a strong and pervasive source of stories and imagery in Stambul Theatre was stories from the Middle East, especially *Arabian Nights*. Stambul Theatre was first introduced by 1891 in Surabaya, by Auguste Mahieu, a Dutch entrepreneur. For further detail on Stambul Theatre, see my discussion of the film *Doea Tanda Mata* in Chapter Five. A useful reference can be also be found in Yousof (1994).

Based on *Katalog Film Indonesia*, prior to 1948, there were fewer than half a dozen indigenous people employed as directors in the Indonesian film industry. The first was Bachtiar Effendy, who directed *Nyai Dasima* for Tan Koen Yauw's Tan's Film in 1932, and then did not direct again until 1951. A small number of indigenous people were invited to work as directors (mainly as directors of actors), for example Raden Arifien and Inu Perbatasari, at the time of the rapid expansion of the industry in the early 1940s. However, this growth slowed down with the Japanese invasion of Java, where they conquered the Dutch and placed a subsequent ban on filmmaking under the initiative of Japanese propaganda units. After World War II, film production returned only gradually to Indonesia, with a small number of Dutch and Chinese productions appearing in 1948 and 1949.

When Usmar Ismail founded Perfini in 1950 and launched his first film *Darah dan Doa* (*The Long March*) in the same year, Indonesia saw the first film produced predominantly by an indigenous film director.³³ Although *Darah dan Doa*, which tells the story of the long march of the Siliwangi military division from Central Java back to its headquarters in West Java after the second Dutch "police action" in 1948 failed commercially, Perfini continues to make films.³⁴ While film historians such as Misbach

³³ For a discussion of Usmar Ismail's early films in the 1950s see Biran (2001, pp. 219-224).

³⁴ "Police action" was the term used by Dutch authorities for two key military actions by the occupying Dutch army during the Dutch occupation of Indonesia during the period of the Indonesian struggle for independence (1945–1949). The first commenced on 20 July 1947, with the invasion of West Java, Madura and Semarang and parts of Sumatra. According to Ricklefs (2008) the aim of this first police action was to provide access to Indonesian products in Java (sugar) and Sumatra (oil and rubber), to help pay the cost of the war effort, and also to secure all major trading ports (p. 262). This military action was considered a violation of the *Linggarjati* agreement signed earlier between Indonesians and Dutch in Cirebon on 15 November 1946, which signalled eventual Republican authority over Java, Madura and Sumatra (though not over Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Ambon etc.) in a future "United States of Indonesia". A second "police action", was launched in December 1948, when the Dutch invaded Yogyakarta, the Republican capital, in an attempt to crush the Republic once and for all, taking over the Yogyakarta area and holding it for some months. A temporary takeover of the centre of the city by Indonesian forces on 1 March 1949 is the subject of Usmar Ismail's 1951 film, *Enam Djam di Djogdja* (*Six Hours in Jogjakarta*).

Yusa Biran see the works of the Perfini group as the most innovative in the 1950s the Chinese did continue to produce and sometimes direct films. These Chinese films producers made films that were generally more successful in terms of attracting the audience to the cinema than the films that were produced, for example by Perfini. Moreover, in the 1950s and 1960s Chinese producers also dominated film, particularly following the removal of Dutch filmmakers after independence. As the Chinese (and also Indians) continued to play a significant role in film distribution and production in the 1970s and 1980s, Teguh Karya's ability to develop relationships with producers from various ethnic backgrounds for his films was important for their success.

From the late 1950s to the mid-1960s, the Indonesian film industry declined drastically in terms of the number of films released and their success due to the internal political conflicts between the state and the political parties that caused a downturn in the country's economic sector. The growing movement of anti-capitalism led by the Indonesian Communist Party resulted in a ban of American films, although films from Europe and other parts of Asia were still shown in a few cinemas. The gradual transition of the government leadership from Soekarno to Soeharto in 1967, following the events of 30 September 1965 and the subsequent purge of communists led to different economic policies and more foreign investment.³⁵ The Soeharto government

³⁵ The events of 30 September 1965 refer to an abortive coup movement (known as "30 September Movement") by some members of the Presidential palace guard, launched with the knowledge and support of a small number of leaders of the Indonesian Communist Party and some other members of the army. This abortive "coup" involved the arrest, and—in the course of the arrests, or subsequently—the murder of six key right-wing generals. This "coup" was quickly put down by General Soeharto, and his success led to the imprisonment or execution *en masse*, of hundreds of thousands of rank and file communist members, or anyone designated as a member of the Indonesian left (up to a million are thought to have died). It has been claimed that the original abortive coup was meant to be a limited action to forestall an impending right wing coup, but clearly it brought about the very kind of coup it was meant to forestall, and led to the emergence of the repressive developmental Soeharto "New Order" regime (a term used as a contrast to what was now termed Soekarno's "Old Order"), with Soeharto remaining in power as dictator for some thirty years. The most up to date reading of these controversial events is to be found in Roosa (2006).

(also called the New Order regime) rebuilt the economy of the nation, including investing in the local film industry. The film industry and the cinemas were also aided in their recovery after the government reopened the door to overseas films, especially American ones in the late 1960s.

It was during this reawakening period that Teguh Karya and Teater Populer made their first film together in 1971. They were assisted by the government's policy of helping to encourage the production of Indonesian films by giving a financial subsidy derived from a tax on imports of foreign films. At the same time, the New Order government also relaxed film censorship, which in turn helped create a more welcoming atmosphere for the local producers and directors to make films (Biran, 2001, p. 228). From the late 1960s onward, the Indonesian film industry experienced a golden period where there was a considerably free environment in which to produce films with the help of the government and audiences were able to watch foreign films as well as national films in the local cinemas. During this time, there was an ongoing attempt by the government to continue rebuilding the Indonesian film industry in terms of both its quantity and quality so it could compete with the influx of foreign films. The film industry began to function again, attracting more people not only to become film producers but also filmmakers, including Teguh Karya and his theatre collective. While working with senior filmmakers, film producers also sought new talents with whom they could collaborate. Teguh, for example, was fortunate enough to meet Turino Djunaidy, an experienced indigenous film producer who would produce Teguh's first film, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, in 1971. In the 1970s, the number of national film productions reached the highest in its history when 124 film titles were made in 1977 (Ardan, 1992, p. 57). Audience surveys taken by Biran (2001) in the 1970s and 1980s

found that despite the influx of foreign films, a high proportion of viewers watched Indonesian films, while the rest watched foreign films:

Surprisingly, however, audience figures suggest that 35-40% of total viewers watched Indonesian films, only 20-25% watched American films, while 15% watched films from Hong Kong, and 12% watched films from India. (p.238)

The golden period experienced by the Indonesian film industry in the 1970s had both a positive and a negative impact. On the positive side, it provided film directors such as Teguh Karya, Sjaman Djaya and Wim Umboh with the opportunity to maximise their creativity, both by making good films and helping the government to develop new generations of filmmakers, for example through Teguh's theatre collective. The early 1970s also saw Wim Umboh achieve huge commercial success with his film, *Pengantin Remaja* (*The Teen Bride*, 1971), which established a sort of "model" for family melodrama in the Indonesian film industry that was utilised by many film producers and filmmakers in Wim's path. Following the success of *Pengantin Remaja*, family melodrama became the most popular kind of film in the Indonesian film industry. The reason for this popularity of family drama not only came from the stories, which clearly appealed to audiences, but also because family and its values, rather than individuals, are significant aspects in Indonesian society and culture.³⁶ In Indonesian society, particularly in the Javanese society where Teguh spent most of his life, the term "communality" is equal with "family", signifying importance of togetherness as a group value. These cultural aspects of Indonesia can explain, then and now, why the local film industry relies much on family melodrama, which is still the type of film most

³⁶ While Indonesian society has always valued the family, under Soeharto in the 1970s and 1980s the New Order government gave it a particular ideological centrality, making it clear in its program to develop the country that family was to be regarded as the basis and the centre of society. This topic has been discussed in various research studies. See, for example, Blackburn (2004) and Sears (Ed, 1996).

frequently re-produced. On the negative side, this golden period also created an atmosphere for the development of films that focused heavily on sex and violence. A growing industry in a developing country, with an equally rapidly growth in population, Indonesian film was seen as a lucrative business and many people, regardless of their background, decided to try their luck in this developing field. Eventually, in order to protect society from commercial films that relied on sex and violence being made, the government introduced a requirement that filmmaker submit their scenarios before they were granted a license to make the film (Biran, 2001, p. 229).

The presence of new and talented filmmakers such as Sjuman Djaya and Teguh Karya, along with the existing experienced ones like Wim Umboh and Asrul Sani, helped to rebuild the Indonesian film industry. However, among these filmmakers, Teguh Karya was a distinguished film director in Indonesia as he not only worked in the highly commercial film industry but also had roots in the theatre as an acting teacher, theatre director, actor and founder of a theatre collective. In his filmmaking career, Teguh's authorship could be seen in his capability to move from highly generic formula films, such as in his popular family melodrama films from the 1970s, to the mature films that define his craftsmanship and concerns as an artist in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s.

Paradigms for Melodrama and Realism

Melodrama is a very broad term; therefore, it is important to specify in what ways Teguh's films can be considered melodramas and investigate if there is a sub-category of melodrama into which they fit. Mary Anne Doane (1987) has argued that melodrama is such a broad term that there are doubts as to its usefulness. In Film

Studies in the 1970s, the term “melodrama” was explored by feminist critics, particularly in relation to the family melodramas such as the films of Douglas Sirk. Thomas Elsaesser (1987) argues melodrama is a bourgeois form dealing with situations in the private rather than the public sphere that relies on music to express the feelings of the characters. Elsaesser also saw melodrama as an expressive form where these feelings were often embodied in décor, costumes and *mise en scene* generally. Subsequently, the genre has been explored in greater breadth in the work of Christine Gledhill. Gledhill (1987) points out:

Melodrama exists as a cross-cultural form with a complex, international, two hundred-year history. The term denotes a fictional or theatrical form, a specific cinematic genre or a pervasive mode across popular culture...And the phenomena it constructs range beyond art or entertainment to include religious and civic ceremony, politics and informational forms such as broadcast news or the popular press. (p.1)

However, Gledhill notes that it is only since the mid 1980s that the place of ethnic groups in melodrama has been addressed by scholars. More recently Gledhill has argued that rather than being seen as a genre, melodrama should be seen as an “organising modality of the genre system,” where melodrama is seen not as a dramatic form with specific characteristics; rather, as a modality, melodrama appears across and enriches the existing genres (Gledhill, 2000, p. 238). Gledhill (2000) states:

The notion of modality, like register in socio-linguistics, defines a specific mode of aesthetic articulation adaptable across a range of genres, across decades, and across national cultures. It provides the genre system with a mechanism of ‘double articulation’, capable of generating specific and

distinctively different generic formulae in particular historical conjunctures, while also providing a medium of interchange and overlap between genres...Because of its wider socio-cultural embrace, the melodramatic mode not only generates a wide diversity of genres but also draws other modes into its process of articulation. (p. 229)

Melodrama as a mode of describing intensified expression or heightened contrast can appear across genres. It attracts “a range of audiences from different classes, localities, and national groupings” (Gledhill, 2000, p.230).

A variety of discussions of melodrama in an Asian context are found in Wimal Dissanayake’s *Melodrama in Asian Cinema*. Dissanayake (1993) points out:

In Asian melodrama, as in Western melodrama, the family figures very prominently. However in Western melodrama, by and large, it is the individual in the context of the family that is of interest to the filmmaker ... whereas in Asian melodrama it is the family as a unit that generates the most interest. (p.4)

Dissanayake has identified that the cultural context influences Asian melodrama. One question that arises then is whether Indonesian melodrama, and particularly as it is staged in Teguh’s films, has any defining characteristics that amount to a paradigm that is in any way different from the English and American examples commonly discussed in the literature which have been produced in relatively modern secular societies. As this thesis is primarily concerned with examining Teguh’s development as a filmmaker and the variety and significance of his work in the course of its development, my aim here is not to make the question of in what sense Teguh’s popular films are melodramas a major part of the thesis. Nevertheless, Teguh was drawn to a certain kind of

melodrama in his work. This is further discussed in Chapter Three, which examines Teguh's family melodramas.

There are differences with melodramas produced in the context of more modern and secularised First and Second World societies in comparison to Third World societies such as Indonesia. Religion has traditionally been a powerful factor in Indonesia and class formation has been heavily inflected by years of colonialism. Due to these cultural and historical factors, differences in wealth within the population are extreme, with large sections of the population living in poverty and the other smaller sections living in luxury. For many people in Indonesia, modernisation is a recent social change and secularisation has been resisted. One clue as to how these differences might be conceived of is provided by Ravi Vasudevan (2011). In general, Indian melodramas produced by Bollywood and regional industries in Bengal and Tamil Nadu are different from Indonesian melodramas. However, there are some similarities. Vasudevan (2011) writes:

The family form as encompassing public universe provided the diegetic space a key strategy for narrative orientation in the popular format. Its drives were often worked out on the basis of repressive paternal authority...Melodrama generates a field of narrative force that scatters families and individual only to bring them back together again in a differently cadenced public format. It does this in order to raise the stakes of narrative meaning by articulating one form of authority, that of the family, to a superordinate one, which may be the family form itself, now revised, the state, or a new form of public-symbolic authority. (p.48)

Indonesian melodramas are generally centred on the family and how family values affect the relationship between individuals within the family. Vasudevan's formulation above explains further Dissanayake's argument about the importance of the family in Asian melodrama. It explains why the family can work as a key stratagem for providing logic for the narrative organisation and emphasises that the repressive paternal authority often mobilises the need for change that the narrative seeks to address. It is possible that this problem of the father arises because the freedom associated with human action and decisions in modern secular societies is not as present in more traditional societies.

Vasudevan's formulation is certainly relevant when examining Teguh's films. In seven out of thirteen films by Teguh Karya, the father is a key "problem" either due to his conservative class-bound and traditionalist authoritarian attitudes, or due to his power and duplicity. These melodramas not only established Teguh as a popular film director, but also were part of his creative development as an artist. While making melodrama was important in Teguh's early years as a director, especially in the 1970s when he made popular family drama films, his films in the 1980s demonstrate a shift toward films with more realistic stories. These realist films demonstrate Teguh Karya's concerns with the problems of Third World societies, particularly Indonesia. These films are concerned with the life and experience of the lower class and poor people living in Indonesia, particularly in Jakarta. This thematic concern presents a contrast with his family melodrama films, where he dealt with mostly the life of the higher class or rich people. However, unlike the Italian neorealist films that emerged following the end of World War II, where the disbandment of the Italian major film studios and the aftermath of the war disrupted the Italian film industry and resulted in films with distinctive neorealist characteristics, Teguh's realist films were fully the product of a

commercial film industry.³⁷ When considering Teguh's realist films, it is useful to cite Christopher Williams, who proposes that the discussion of realism in film or television should be expanded to include the element of anti-realism or non-realism. Williams (2000) states:

An important part of the excitement and interest of both media is the active interplay between the elements which can be defined as realist, and the others which function simultaneously and have either a non-realist character (primarily formal, linguistic or conventional) or one which can be called anti-realist because the character of its formal, linguistic or conventional procedures specifically or explicitly tries to counteract the cognitive dimensions we have linked with realism. (p.217)

Working within the commercial film industry, Teguh understood that he had to deal with the commercial or popular aspects of film as a business, rather than simply make films that recreate his own sense of Indonesia. As I shall argue in Chapter Five, the continued use of popular song and melodrama in at least one of his more realistic films, *Usia 18 (At the Age of Eighteen)*, made in 1980, is an example of the non-realist aspects in Teguh's work. While *Usia 18* strives for a new more contemporary realism in contrast with some of his earlier exaggerated melodramas, the film still makes limited use of melodrama, and also incorporates popular songs, in order to attract mainstream audiences. Here one can see that the presence of the audience was still a major consideration for Teguh, as he tried to move on in his career to make films that include personal expression. This thesis examines his efforts not only to survive as a filmmaker

³⁷ Italian neorealist cinema (1944-1952) is characterised by the depiction of objective everyday social reality; the use of non-professional actors and naturalistic acting, sound and dialogue; filming on location rather than in studios, and the presence of particular cinematic characteristics such the long-take, and even some use of deep focus. See Andre Bazin (2005).

who created popular films, but also his capacity to make films that represented his vision as an artist.

Main Research Questions and Chapter Breakdown

This thesis poses a number of research questions that frame my exploration of the films written and directed by Teguh Karya:

1. Through what theoretical frameworks are the films of Teguh Karya best explored? Does Teguh have a single or singular vision, and how would that vision be best described? Or rather, is his work better explored in terms of its variety, its capacity for change and development, and its interest in exploring different issues and different aspect of his society and its history? Even if his work is notable for its variety, are there still certain underlying regularities or dominants in his work and what are they?
2. How did Teguh work within and negotiate the commercial environment of the Indonesian popular film industry? What conditions did he experience in making both popular and more stylistically innovative films?
3. Teguh made a number of historical films. What view of history does he give, and what relevance do the historical films have to Indonesia generally and to the time when the films were made?
4. Given that film to an extent is a representational art, in what ways does Teguh engage with the Indonesian society of his time, and what aspects of it does he represent and how?

This thesis is a study of how a filmmaker in a developing society manages to survive in both a highly commercial industry and also to gradually come to have more creative and artistic control over the subjects and meanings of his films. This impulse can be seen in Teguh's first work, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* (Chapter Two), but, with the clear exception of *November 1828*. However, in the subsequent films he made in the 1970s, he grappled with the demands of a commercial industry and created a place for members of his own collective within this industry. The thesis argues that in addition to Teguh's creative use of his collective to establish stars and technical professionals within the industry, Teguh's creativity lay in both the high standards of his work and his willingness to try new and more ambitious projects. At the same time, he incorporates even into his more commercial films, moral questions and social insights with which many other Indonesian filmmakers were not concerned. Some of these insights presented indirectly or allegorically, given the repressive censorship of the New Order regime. Overall his work shows by and large an increasing interest in engaging with the many realities of Indonesia, particularly in later films *Di Balik Kelambu* (1983), *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* (1985) and *Ibunda* (1986). One notable feature of his work is his portrait of males who lack certainty and direction in their lives, in contrast to the usual patriarchal interest in self-assured males in much commercial cinema. While politically his historical film *November 1828* was acceptable to the New Order (and would have been acceptable to the Soekarno Old Order), this film presents a finely honed portrait of cultural aspects of the Javanese, remarkable in the work of a man who himself was born a Chinese Indonesian. While Teguh was not regarded as a dangerous radical by the New Order establishment, a film such as *Ibunda* quietly raises key questions about racism among the wealthy elites in Jakarta, and *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* was seen by some members of the National Film Council as unsuitable for international festivals, because,

as I shall discuss in Chapter Five, what it showed about Jakarta was regarded as an embarrassment to the nation.

The organisation of chapters in this thesis is designed around a consideration of how Teguh's career as an auteur evolved in the context of the demands of working in a highly commercial film industry. As Teguh gained prestige and commercial success with his popular films, it became possible for him to make films that addressed issues of special concern to him rather than resorting to formulas that had a greater likelihood of popular success. Given this fact, this thesis elects to study Teguh's work in its diversity rather than attempting to distil from it a singular vision.

Chapter Two, "A Young Man in Transition", examines Teguh's first film, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* (*Face of a Man*, 1971). This chapter is significant because it describes the transition of Teguh Karya and his theatre collective, Teater Populer, into the film industry after their success in theatre. The chapter begins with an outline of how Teguh as the group leader made the decision to move into film and his attempts to create his first film, which he always later regarded as his most personal film. Teguh made *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* with Turino Djunaidy, a well-known indigenous film producer and an important figure within the local film industry in the 1970s, who frequently saw Teguh's theatre productions at the Hotel Indonesia. I argue that the collaboration between Teguh Karya and Turino Djunaidy was possible because Turino was very confident that Teguh would be able to make a good film, rather than simply a commercially successful film. Although *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* was not commercially successful, this chapter argues that it is a visionary film because it is so original: it has no relation to previous films made in the Indonesian cinema, nor does it have a strong connection to known genres in filmmaking. The film is also important

because it establishes the typical male figure that features in many of Teguh's later works.

Chapter Three, "The Turn to Popular Cinema", examines *Cinta Pertama* (*First Love*, 1973), *Ranjang Pengantin* (*The Wedding Bed*, 1974), *Kawin Lari* (*Elopement*, 1975), *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* (*The Short-Lived Marriage*, 1976) and *Badai Pasti Berlalu* (*The Storm is Over*, 1977). Through an analysis of these five films, the chapter explores how, following the commercial failure of *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, Teguh attempted to find a formula that would ensure success within the Indonesian film industry of the 1970s. The chapter explores the stratagems he used and the success and failure of these films both as commercial works and as coherent dramas. Not all of these five films should be seen primarily in commercial terms, although it appears he did nourish some hopes of commercial success with them. *Kawin Lari* is based on the Tennessee Williams's play *The Glass Menagerie*, which he had already staged with his Teater Populer group. William's play is set in St Louis, Missouri, but in this film becomes a film comedy-drama set in a poorer area of Jakarta. *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*, partly improvised and based on an original treatment by Teguh, graphically raises issues of the exploitation of the marginalised and poor by the extremely rich. As noted above, after the commercial failure of *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*, Teguh made *Badai Pasti Berlalu*, which was based on a sensational popular novel, set among wealthy classes and using a range of top stars including actors who were not members of Teater Populer. Of these five films, three are set primarily among poorer classes in Jakarta rather than among the super-rich or emerging wealthy upper middle classes of Suharto's New Order Indonesia, even though portrayal of the rich was seen by many at the time as a sure commercial formula.

Subsequently we see a number of changes in the direction of Teguh's work. Chapter Four, "The Historical Films", explores two later films set in the past: *November 1828*, made in 1979, which very quickly gained recognition abroad, and *Doea Tanda Mata* (*Mementos*), which was completed in 1985. In this chapter, I examine two issues: firstly the debates around *November 1828*, the film of Teguh's that is most widely discussed film in academic and critical literature, focusing particularly on issues of local cultural identity as expressed in an historical context. Secondly, I also examine the complexities involved in reading *Doea Tanda Mata*. The two films focus primarily on the role (the success and failure) of ordinary people (anti-heroes) against the Dutch during the colonial occupation in Indonesia. By focusing on ordinary people, these films differed from the majority of the historical films about Indonesian resistance against the Dutch colonial rule made under Soeharto's New Order government (1966-1998), which generally glorified the leadership of Soeharto as a hero, rather than explored the role of ordinary people.

Chapter Five, "The Mature Realist Films: The Break from Popular Cinema", examines three films: *Usia 18* (*At the Age of 18*, 1980), *Di Balik Kelambu* (*Behind the Mosquito Net*, 1982) and *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* (*Bitter Coffee*, 1984). This chapter is significant because it discusses the movement of Teguh Karya from making films that were in many ways tailored to suit the demands of the film industry to films that significantly demonstrate his preoccupations as an artist or filmmaker. Through the analysis of these three films, this chapter discusses Teguh's concerns with the social problems that his society, Indonesia, faces as a Third World country. Each of the films demonstrates Teguh's effort to not only represent the various social problems in Indonesia, but also to do this through an innovative use of film style. Of these three films, *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* is the most representative of Teshome Gabriel's concept of

Third Cinema. Unlike *Usia 18* and *Di Balik Kelambu*, where Teguh largely employs realism, *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* creates an experimental narrative through which the film attempts to portray the extreme experience of people, especially migrants from poor areas, who live in the Third World megacity of Jakarta.

Chapter Six, “Mothers and Families”, mainly concentrates on *Ibunda* (*Mother*, 1986), reading this film as partly a realist and partly a symbolic drama that not only pays tribute to mothers by examining the ways in which offspring can always be a concern for parents but raises issues about racism in Indonesian society and also about issues of the suppression of the poor and the use of mass violence by those in power. This chapter concludes with a discussion of a relatively minor work by Teguh, the experimental popular musical *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* (*A Lover misses the Train*, 1989), where Teguh again used the actress Tuti Indra Malaon to play its central character. Tuti had played the important role of the mother in *Ibunda* and had appeared in Teguh’s very first film, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, nearly twenty years earlier.

All of these chapters engage with the way in which Teguh constantly faced new challenges and engaged with new issues of concern, rather than making films in the same way, despite the fact that there are, as we shall see, certain regularly occurring features of his work.

Review of Related Literature

Despite the fact that Teguh Karya contributed significantly to Indonesian cinema, it is surprising to find that there has never been a full study made of his films. In fact, the number of scholarly works about him is relatively few, primarily due to the

slow development of Film Studies in Indonesia and a lack of knowledge about Indonesian cinema internationally. Only a small number of Western scholars have engaged with film in Indonesia. Nevertheless, there are some key writings on Teguh's work that I engage with to varying degrees at some point in this thesis.

First of all, no detailed auteurist study of a single auteur has ever been attempted of any Indonesian film director, and few have been written of major auteurs in South East Asia. There is a book on Lino Brocka (Hernando, 1993), and an unpublished PhD on P. Ramlee (Rohani Hashim, 2007). There is also a short book of reflections on Malaysian director Yasmin Ahmad by Amir Muhammad (2009), written within weeks of her death, but it is not a detailed study. There is a collection of essays on Thai director, Apichatpong Weerasethakul edited by James Quandt (2009). But, there are no studies, certainly in English, of other major Thai directors such as Chatrith Chalerms Yukol and Cherd Song Sri, nor of the Filipino directors Mike de Leon or Mario O'Hara. This has to do with the relatively undeveloped state of film criticism and theory writing in these developing societies. On the other hand, one can still find an increasing body of literature on Southeast Asian cinema in general (anthologies), such as Tilman Baumgartel (2012) and May Adadol Ingawanij and Benjamin McKay (2012).

There is now an increasing body of writings on Indonesian cinema, most obviously major books by Krishna Sen (1994), Karl Heider (1991), Misbach Jusa Biran (2009), Katinka Van Heeren (2012), Ben Murtagh (2013), Ariel Heryanto (2008 and 2014), and a significant PhD thesis by Thomas Barker (2011), and long essays by David Hanan (1988, 1993, 2009, 2011, 2012). Philip Cheah et al (2002) edited a collection of essays dedicated on Garin Nugroho's films. There is also a book on the film industry by Eric Sasono (2011), and a rather outdated book by Salim Said (1982).

Biran's study is primarily a study of the industry, not really of the films, for less than a dozen films survive in any form from the period prior to 1950, and Biran only takes his study to the end of 1949. While much of these writings are illuminating, the vast majority does not deal primarily with the films themselves, but with the institutions surrounding them. Sen's book examines the institutions regulating cinema in Indonesia during the Soeharto New Order period, and also propaganda films of the New Order. This book also addresses the representation of women during the New Order period. Van Heeren's book addresses similar issues in the Reformasi and post-New Order periods, concentrating in particular on issues such as efforts by young film makers to get their works exhibited, debates about censorship (particularly Muslim attempts to regulate cinema through censorship and to make films themselves), and the extent to which cinema has addressed the ghosts of the past, especially the massacres of 1965-6. Barker's thesis does have chapters on some popular genres, particularly horror films and films about Islam and contemporary Muslim life styles. But even in this thesis there are few really sustained discussions of particular films, partly because Barker treats the popular films as symptomatic of social trends and popular memory, and as examples within his polemics about the cinema, rather than exploring them as works in their own right, with complex internal discourses, the product of sustained conscious authorship and craftsmanship, and requiring complex readings. Cheah et al's book is a collection of essays on Garin Nugroho's films. The essays discuss his films in a wide range of disciplines. However, the book is not a detailed auteurist study as it has no solid theoretical foundation on authorship. While Heider's book does primarily address the films themselves, particular films are not explored in details. At most there are simply two or three pages on a particular film, showing how it illustrates Heider's conception of a national culture expressed through film. Murtagh's study on the

representations of Indonesian gay, *lesbi* and *waria* on film is a fresh look at Indonesian cinema. Murtagh's observation into Indonesian films produced between 1970s and 1990s, combines gender, anthropology and cultural studies resulting in a rich study of the subjects. What this means is that people in Indonesia have the most limited opportunities to read a study of any of their major directors, which establishes the significance and relevance of that director's work. In the absence of significant auteur studies on individual Indonesian filmmakers, this study of Teguh Karya and his films holds a significant position.

The first major study of any film by Teguh Karya is David Hanan's (1988, pp. 25-47) "Film and Cultural Difference: *November 1828*". This article was initially developed from a seminar presented at Monash University in June 1987, at which Teguh Karya and the actress Tuti Indra Mulaon both spoke, along with academic Krishna Sen. At that time, Teguh and Tuti were visiting Melbourne as guests of the Melbourne International Film Festival. This seminar resulted in one of the first major publications on Indonesian cinema published outside of Indonesia, *Histories and Stories: Cinema in New Order Indonesia*, in which all the papers presented at the seminar were compiled, some in an amplified form. Hanan's article is not a study of Teguh as an auteur; rather, Hanan takes one film by Teguh, *November 1828*, and explores the issue of how cultural differences in Indonesia, or cultural specificity, might be found in a film.

In his article, Hanan addresses the issue of the communality of the Javanese as he sees it in the film, beginning his study of the film with an analysis of the contrasting Western and Javanese body languages, in a mid-nineteenth century painting by the noted Javanese artist Raden Saleh, *Diponegoro Captured at Magelang* a painting concerned with the capture of the leader of the anti-Dutch Javanese forces in the Java

War (1825-1830), the war that is also the subject of the film *November 1828*. Hanan (1988) argues that the contrasting body languages in the Raden Saleh painting can also be found in Teguh Karya's film, with the Dutch-trained, Westernised racially mixed *Indo* officers in the film having individualistic body language, while the body language of the Javanese villagers in the film, particularly the males, is communal, manifesting what Hanan characterises as "the body language of a non-institutionalised group identity" (p. 43). Hanan's study of *November 1828* remains the only detailed study of any film by Teguh Karya prior to this thesis.

Krishna Sen (1988, pp.49-59), in her article in the same volume, "Filming 'History' under the New Order", does not disagree with Hanan's view of the importance of group identity in Javanese society, but she does argue that Hanan's article neglects to examine the film's ideological significance in the context of New Order Indonesia. Sen (1988) then asserts that *November 1828* is the perfect New Order film. Sen also reports that the Indonesian censors in New Order Indonesia favoured certain kinds of historical films (particularly those that implied that independence was gained from the Dutch by military rather than by diplomatic means) but not others. Her discussion focuses particularly on the banning of the Dutch film *Max Havelaar*, which shows a Javanese noble exploiting his fellow countrymen and attempting to poison a reforming Dutchman. The merit of the various positions taken by both Hanan and Sen on body language and on New Order ideology in Teguh Karya's *November 1828* will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four, my chapter on Teguh's historical films.

Sen has also commented on Teguh's work in later writings, notably in her major book *Indonesian Cinema: Framing the New Order*. However, Sen is not particularly concerned with Teguh as an auteur. Sen's book is based on her PhD thesis in Politics, which examines institutions regulating cinema in Indonesia during the New Order

period and the dominant ideologies of the New Order and the impact of both of these on cinema in Indonesia. The institutions she examines include the Censorship Board, controlled by the Indonesian Department of Information, which also gave permission for films to be made; the Indonesian Film Festival or *Festival Film Indonesia*, which awarded prizes and was responsible for raising the standard of cinema; the New Order women's organisation, especially the Indonesian Women Association or *Dharma Wanita*; and the Soeharto Cabinet and the army which supported the making of propaganda films, for example *Serangan Fajar* (*Dawn Attack*, 1983), an exaggerated portrait of the young Suharto's role in the Indonesian struggle for independence, and *Pengkhianatan G30S PKI* (*Treachery of the Indonesian Communist Party in the Movement of 30 September 1965*, 1985), a New Order view of the political turmoil in 1965. *Indonesian Cinema: Framing the New Order* is a meticulously researched book, which contains a wealth of information about institutions of the New Order that is of great use in understanding ideology and state control in the New Order period. However, the book does not have a specific chapter dedicated to discussing Teguh's films, although in two chapters Sen discusses in brief three of his films. In Chapter 4, "Narrating the Nation for a Military State", she reiterates her argument that *November 1828* is a perfect New Order Film. In Chapter Six, "Women's Pictures in Men's Fiction", Sen (1994) sees *Doea Tanda Mata* in similar terms, but qualifies this by saying that the story of the wife of the young revolutionary, Goenadi, in the film adds to the picture of the civilian side of nationalism (p.150). Concerning *Ibunda*, Sen (p.135) urges the reader to think critically of female roles within the Indonesian films and its connection to the *Ibuism* or "Motherism" ideology, citing Madelon Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis (1987), who argues that the ideology of *Ibuism* "sanctions any action provided it is taken as a mother who is looking after her family, a group, a class, a

company or the state, without demanding power or prestige in turn.” The question of whether the film *Ibunda* is open to this criticism will be addressed in the last chapter of this thesis, Chapter Six.

In her much later article, “‘Chinese’ Indonesians in National Cinema”, published in 2006, well after the fall of Soeharto and at a time of greater openness when the position of Chinese in Indonesia was changing, Sen (2006) addresses the issue of the Indonesian Chinese in the film industry, both in terms of their changing historical roles, and how they are portrayed in the Indonesian films (pp.119-136). Here, Sen outlines the changing policies of the various Indonesian governments in regard to Chinese Indonesians. She notes that the Soekarno government introduced a name change policy in 1961, which required that every Indonesian Chinese was required to adopt an indigenous name. This policy, which directly affected Teguh (as mentioned earlier, his ethnic name was Liem Tjoan Hok), made the first obvious and discriminative step in diminishing Indonesian Chinese identity. In 1967, the Soeharto New Order government enforced an assimilationist policy which forbade overt reference to Chinese culture (for example, in language, script or imagery) in the public domain and in films. These two pieces of discriminative legislation almost erased completely the presence of Chinese in Indonesian films. Since then, the Indonesian Chinese have had difficulties in expressing their cultural identity in cinema, although they were the producers of a large proportion of the films made.

Interestingly, of the four most highly regarded filmmakers during the New Order (Sjuman Djaya, Wim Umboh, Ami Priyono and Teguh Karya), two were of Chinese descent (Wim Umboh and Teguh Karya). Of the four directors, Sen sees Teguh Karya as the most influential in terms of his legacies. To examine how the Indonesian cinema portrays ethnicity, Sen discusses briefly four films. The first film is *Putri Giok*

(*Beautiful Giok*, 1980), which portrays the love relationship between an indigenous man and a young Indonesian Chinese woman, named Giok.³⁸ For Sen, this film articulates the dominant New Order ideology regarding assimilation, particularly how Chinese families have difficulties in accepting a relationship with an indigenous Indonesian. Two of Teguh Karya's films, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* and *November 1828* are also discussed as examples. Sen (2006) writes:

In the nation that Teguh Karya's film constructs, there seems to be no place for the sons of foreign fathers and indigenous mothers, no matter what moral choices the children make, no matter how warmly they embrace their mother and her people. In that sense, Teguh's own biography, as the son of a Chinese father is never too far from the surface of the narrative. Every one of his overtly nationalist films is also an indictment of a system that refused full citizenship to those of Chinese descent and simultaneously denied them a place to explore their Chineseness. (p. 131)

While *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* and *November 1828* are certainly not films about Indonesian Chinese, Sen considers both of these films as metaphors or allegories of the Indonesians of Chinese descent living under the New Order Government. Sen reads Teguh's films as expressing almost unconsciously certain aspects of Teguh's biography and social position, which might be seen as deep structures consequent upon his social position as a Chinese Indonesian. Sen is in effect using an incipient auteur-structuralist position of the kind advocated by Nowell-Smith and Wollen. However, in Sen's article

³⁸ *Putri Giok* directed by Maman Firmansyah is about a troubled romance between Giok, a Chinese woman from a rich Indonesian Chinese family, and an indigenous man, Herman. The film focuses on the disagreement of Giok's father with the relationship and his insistence on getting a husband of Chinese ethnicity for Giok. But the father changes his mind after he has a dream of Giok and Herman committing suicide because they cannot continue their relationship. See Kristanto (2007, p. 205)

these claims remain simply as brief assertions and little argument is used to fully demonstrate her assertions.

Although both Hanan and Sen write of Teguh as a writer-director in control of what is in his own films and therefore as the primary author of them, only one critic uses the term “auteur” directly in regards to Teguh: the anthropologist Karl G Heider in his book *Indonesian Cinema: National Culture on Screen* (1991). Using a limited number of mainly popular commercial films, this book attempts to define the dominant characteristics of Indonesian national culture as they can be seen and defined within the dominant genres and narrative structures found within Indonesian cinema. However, Heider only briefly discusses two of Teguh’s films. He sees *Ibunda* as an exceptional Indonesian film because it provides a portrait of a strong woman (p.121). Of *Doea Tanda Mata*, Heider (1991) writes:

Doea Tanda Mata is both an auteur film and an unmistakably Indonesian film. In its structure it recalls the Indonesian tradition; in its themes it plays with the tension between individual and group, even as it comes to an untraditional conclusion; and it is at its most original in avoiding conventional Indonesian narrative motifs. (p.132)

The importance of the group and the differences between individualistic and group-oriented societies, discussed by Hanan in his 1988 article, is also a central theme in Heider’s 1991 book, although Hanan discusses this phenomenon in regard to *November 1828*, while Heider discusses it in relation to the tension between the character Goenadi and his peer group of would be anti-colonial revolutionaries in *Doea Tanda Mata*. Apart from these studies on Teguh Karya, very little exists on this important Indonesian filmmaker, and certainly no comprehensive study of all of his thirteen feature films.

The four most significant writer-directors who have emerged in Indonesia since independence are probably Usmar Ismail, Teguh Karya, Sjaman Djaya and Garin Nugroho. Among these Teguh Karya was an immensely productive director, who made many films but also whose relatively unique Teater Populer collective was also the training ground for major filmmakers in Indonesia who are still active today (such as Slamet Rahardjo, Christine Hakim and even Hanung Bramantyo). In this sense his influence as a teacher is at least equivalent to that of Usmar Ismail, often regarded as the “father” of the film industry in Indonesia.

One must make a distinction between Teguh in an international context and Teguh in an Indonesian and South East Asian context. As an Asian director, Teguh was never adopted by Western or international cinephiles in the way that directors such as Satyajit Ray, Akira Kurosawa, Nagisa Oshima and Hou Hsiao Hsien were celebrated. In the case of these directors, each time one of them made a new film it was common for it to almost automatically be shown in Europe and later in the USA. In the case of Teguh, only a small number of his films were shown widely at festivals outside of Asia. The two films for which Teguh is best known internationally, are *November 1828* and *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*.

From an Indonesian and a South East Asian perspective, Teguh Karya is also an important figure in film industry. For one reason, he was a major writer director who wrote as well as directed most of his films and did this without the framework of a studio. He was credited as director who created some key stars in the Indonesian film world, who later becomes leaders in the film world and in communications in Indonesia (Christine Hakim and Slamet Rahardjo). Teguh was a director who gradually evolved a collective where he himself lived as well as worked, and provided an increasing number of people with their first sympathetic introduction to theatrical writing or film direction.

Teguh was also interested in the expressiveness of a variety of traditional Indonesian dance, drama and musical forms and could re-situate them in some of his own productions. Finally, he was a director who taught himself how to make popular films, but who returned also to make films with less obvious popular appeal and in doing so showed the face of Indonesian life and addressed some of its important issues.

This introductory chapter has introduced Teguh Karya, outlining briefly his biography, and in more detail the history of the changing Indonesian film industry in which he worked. It has explored the main theories of film authorship discussed in Film Studies, indicating which ones may be of most use in discussing the work of Teguh Karya. It has also outlined the main academic writings that engage with Teguh's films in detail or analyse the particular ideological context in which he worked. In addition to auteur theory, this thesis will also make use of theoretical writings on aspects of melodrama and realism, which will be introduced where relevant in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

A Young Man in Transition

Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki (Face of a Man, 1971)

Introduction

Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki (Face of a Man) was Teguh Karya's first feature film. It was made collectively with the members of Teater Populer and marked Teguh's transition from working as a director of stage plays to becoming a writer-director of films. As a first film by someone who had not previously directed even a short film, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* is a remarkable piece of work and his most accomplished film prior to making the major historical epic *November 1828* seven years later. The screenplay for *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* was entirely conceived and written by Teguh Karya and it is one of only three films made by Teguh that has a historical rather than a contemporary setting. The acting roles in *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* were mostly played by the members of Teater Populer.

Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki is a significant work in any examination of Teguh as an auteur because it introduces a number of characteristics that are present in many of the films he would subsequently make. The central protagonist of the film is Slamet Rahardjo, who was Teguh's lead actor for more than ten years. Most importantly, the character played by Slamet Rahardjo establishes the figure of hero-antihero as its central protagonist, a protagonist broadly found in many of Teguh's later popular films

(also often played by Slamet Rahardjo).³⁹ This kind-hearted yet restless and often troubled central protagonist was also characteristic of roles played by his later lead actor, Alex Komang, particularly in the films *Secangkir Kopi Pahit (Bitter Coffee)* and *Doea Tanda Mata (Mementos)*, both released in 1985.

Not only did *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* become the bridge by which Teguh first entered the film industry, but in the experience of making the film Teguh also learnt valuable lessons about what it takes to become a successful film director. As he did not formally learn filmmaking, Teguh taught himself to make films through his earlier limited experience as an assistant on sets and by watching foreign and local films. Making *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* without prior training was an influential experience for Teguh, as it led him to subsequently study cinematography and to reflect on what made a commercially successful film (“*Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* Dalam Diskusi, 1972”). Although *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* was largely considered an artistic success, it was not a commercial success. Cinemas, Turino Djunaidy stated, were reportedly reluctant to play the film for it did not subscribe to well-known commercial formulas (Hoerip, 1993, p.135). After the commercial failure of the film, Teguh spent time researching what was involved in making a successful commercial film, research which he would use in his second film, *Cinta Pertama (First Love, 1973)* and in the other successful commercial films he made in the 1970s.⁴⁰ In this chapter, I will focus on *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the film. The discussion is divided into two parts: the background to the film and the film itself. The first part explores how *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* was conceived within the theatre

³⁹ Colin Bulman (2007) argues that the anti-hero is “simply the opposite of the hero” (p. 18). For example, in a particular situation, the anti-hero reveals his weakness while a hero would reveal his strength.

⁴⁰ Teguh Karya was interviewed by Salim Said in 1978 at PT Inter Pratama Studio Laboratorium.

collective. The second part of the discussion explores issues related to the film itself, particularly its expressiveness, style and themes.

The Background to the Making of *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*

The decision to make *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* was motivated by the desire of Teguh Karya and Teater Populer to find a different medium of artistic expression as well as the possibility of finding additional ways of funding Teater Populer. By 1971, when Teater Populer decided to make their first film, they had been performing on stage for three years and had adapted 25 plays, mainly written by foreign playwrights (Riantiarno, 1993, p. 105). During the four years they had been performing at Hotel Indonesia and Taman Ismail Marzuki, Teater Populer successfully gathered a number of loyal spectators, from 400 in 1968 to 3000 in 1972, that regularly came to their performance (Siyaranamual, 1980, pp.154-155). This was a significant achievement by a modern theatre group in Jakarta. However, despite their popularity these regular performances could not fully financially support Teater Populer, so it was necessary to find additional sources of funding (Riantiarno, 1993, p. 16). The play that they performed just before entering filmmaking was *Blood Wedding (Perkawinan Darah)* by Federico Garcia Lorca.⁴¹ While this production was a success, Teguh felt that the future of Teater Populer was not certain.

As the group's leader, Teguh suggested that they try their luck in film and, without too many discussions, the collective agreed to give it a try. Teguh felt that choosing film was sensible because film and theatre were similar in that both of them

⁴¹ Teater Populer performed *Blood Wedding* in September 1971 and the production of *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* began in the early December 1971.

are performing arts (“Resensi Film”, 1974, p. 22). Additionally, in the early 1970s Indonesian cinema had begun to flourish and attract not only new producers but also young people who were inspired to become filmmakers and an audience who wanted to watch Indonesian films. The government also supported the growth of the film industry in this period through its policy that stressed the quantity rather than quality of the films, which resulted in films being made to satisfy the audience’s expectations for entertainment. The members of Teater Populer were enthusiastic about making films, as they saw this as a way to ensure the future survival of the theatre collective. Therefore, the transition of the work of Teater Populer from stage into film was both quick and spontaneous. In an interview with Gunawan and Tejo (1993), Teguh describes it here:

Although we had been successful in creating a community of spectators for our theatre, the money that we received still was not enough for paying the bills. For myself, I could live with my salary from the hotel as I worked as a stage manager at Hotel Indonesia. But I asked myself what about the other members who had to survive from theatre. I had to find a solution for all of us. Then, I asked them: let’s make a film. We immediately made a script and did not try to imitate anything. That’s how *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* was born. (p.5)

As stated earlier, the group had been working together collectively for three years. The first thing they agreed upon together was that they would make a film directed and played by the members of the group. In that way, the film would reflect their identity as a group, rather than as individuals, even though making a film through group work by a theatre collective was not a familiar method of filmmaking to most Indonesian film producers. As Teguh was the only member of the group with any experience in film (he had worked as an actor, set decorator and assistant to other directors while he was at the Indonesian National Theatre Academy), it was inevitable that the other members would

depend on him.⁴² However, Teguh was inexperienced in film directing and scriptwriting, so he also would need a “crash course” in learning these crafts, which he took from his theatre experience. In other words, while the members of Teater Populer relied on his experience with filmmaking, he also needed help from the members of Teater Populer with his direction and writing. The group’s history of working together meant there was solidarity among the members, so this mutual dependency was not a problem. The only obstacle was finding the funding for this collective film project.

The rebuilding of the film industry in Indonesia in the early 1970s promised a good future for filmmaking in the region as more films were produced. However, the expectations for quality were not high, due to the emphasis on producing a lot of films rather than focusing on the quality of the films. Biran (2001) states:

As a result in 1970 there emerged the ‘daring’ Indonesian film. Such films were very popular, all the more so because they were made in cinemascope and colour. But Indonesian films could now be screened in the best cinemas, and capital became available from everywhere. People who did not understand film at all arrived on the scene to become film producers, because they saw films were now among the most profitable areas for investment. People were recruiting from everywhere to play in – or to make – films, so long as they were ‘daring’, which means, had the courage to make pornographic films or films with a great deal of violence. This situation made quite a few people apprehensive. (p.231)

⁴² Slamet Rahardjo (personal interview, June 2011 and August 2011) stated, “We’re just a group of people who practically knew nothing of film. When we made *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, we only knew theatre, but film? Nothing.”

Biran is referring to the fact that in the early years of the re-development in the early 1970s of the almost extinct Indonesian cinema, censorship was for a time relaxed so that Indonesian films could compete with foreign product. Whether any of the commercially released films were actually pornographic in the sense of showing nudity or actual sex scenes is not clear. I know of no such film. More likely they were films the ethos of which offended Biran's Muslim values – for example films with titles such as *Bernafas Dalam Lumpur* (*Breathing in Mud*, 1970) or even the rather tame and moralistic, but provocatively titled *Akibat Pergaulan Bebas* (*The Consequences of Promiscuity*, 1977), made after stronger censorship had been re-introduced. But there were certainly lots of suggestive scenes, and the films frequently dealt with prostitution and other salacious subjects, in order to attract audiences.

The “easy way” to make films was adopted by film producers in the hope of competing with the foreign films that were imported and played in the local theatres. Therefore, the idea of the dedicated theatre actors from Teater Populer making a collective film seemed rather odd. However, the group were fortunate because Turino Djunaidy, the most successful person working in film in Indonesia at the time, was also a regular attendee of the Teater Populer performances. Born in Aceh in 1927, Turino was a film producer distributor, actor, scriptwriter and director who had worked in the film industry in Jakarta since the early 1950s. In 1970, using his own film company, PT Sarinande Film, he produced and directed *Bernafas Dalam Lumpur* (*Breathing in the Mud*, 1970), the most successful commercial film in Indonesia in the early 1970s, using for the first time what was to become the most common formula for film success—sex, exploitation and violence (Kristanto, 2007, p. 76). He had a reputation for benevolence and was helpful in giving young film directors an opportunity to make their first films.

After reading the script of *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, Turino agreed to fund and produce the film. Kristanto (1993) describes that a further negotiation between Turino and Teguh resulted in an agreement where Turino would finance 60 per cent of the project and Teater Populer the remaining 40 per cent (p. 180).⁴³ With this co-production, Turino, as the main producer, permitted Teguh and Teater Populer to determine the artistic aspects of the film, including allowing them to use their own script and players. As this was a group project, all of the members of Teater Populer took part in the making of the film, either as actors or as part of the film crew. In 1993, in his reply to a question as why he would let Teguh direct *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, Turino (1993) said that given the quality of theatre productions he had seen directed by Teguh, he believed that Teguh might also be a good film director (p. 72). Although Turino knew Teguh's work as a theatre director, he took a big risk financially by giving creative freedom to Teguh in writing and directing the film on his own.⁴⁴

The actors from Teater Populer who played the leading characters in *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* were Slamet Rahardjo, Nano Riantiarno and Tuti Indra Mula. Teguh also hired two well-known and senior Indonesian film actors who were not members of Teater Populer, Rima Melati and WD Mochtar, to play other key roles in the film.⁴⁵ Tantra Surjadi, from Turino's film company, was the film's cinematographer

⁴³Slamet Rahardjo (personal interview, August 2011) emphasized that *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* was a collective work and claimed that Teater Populer held the copyright for the film's artistic aspect.

⁴⁴ When Teguh directed *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, he often forgot to call out "Cut!" to his cinematographer, Tantra Surjadi. It was Rima Melati who often called "Cut! Cut!" from the set. See Riantiarno (Ed). (1993, p. 73).

⁴⁵At the 1971 Indonesian Film Festival, Rima Melati and WD Mochtar won awards as Best Actors for their roles in this film.

and editor.⁴⁶ Tantra was Teguh's first "teacher" in cinematography and editing, and he would work with Teguh in many of his later films, including the critically acclaimed *November 1828*. The music composer for the film was Idris Sardi, who would also work with Teguh in the future. Therefore, in his first film, Teguh was helped by an experienced team made up of actors and technicians that he could rely on to help him bring his ideas into the screen.

The Plot of *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*

Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki tells the story of young man of Portuguese descent named Amallo (Slamet Rahardjo) who lives in a Portuguese community near the Dutch colonial capital of Batavia in the 1830s.⁴⁷ The 1830s was a period of consolidation of Dutch colonial power following the conclusion of the Java War (1825-1830) in the region of Jogjakarta in Central Java. The Java War was a major war of resistance against the imposition of Dutch colonialism. The subjection of Java as a colonial state commencing in about 1815, on a model proposed by Raffles, and replacing the earlier penetration of Java by the Dutch East India Company. Apart from indications of

⁴⁶In my interview with Tantra Surjadi, he said that he came to film by accident and learned the craft through experience. He won awards for his work with Teguh Karya on *Ranjang Pengantin* (*The Marriage Bed*, 1973), *Badai Pasti Berlalu* (*The Storm is Over*, 1977) and *November 1828* (1978).

⁴⁷ Batavia is the name given by the Dutch to the city now known as Jakarta, from the time it was first occupied by the Dutch East India Company in the early part of the 17th century. This Dutch trading company was given an authority by the Dutch Empire to supply commodity items to Holland and conduct other colonial activities in Asia. The main characters in *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* may be part of the black Portuguese community in Batavia, known as *Mardijkers*. The black Portuguese in Batavia were originally slaves to the Portuguese in Malacca, after the Portuguese conquered the Malay Peninsula in the 15th century. They were freed by the Portuguese after they converted to Christianity. When the Dutch conquered Malacca in 1641, the black Portuguese were made slaves again, and they were later brought to Batavia by the Dutch. Most of the black Portuguese lived in poverty but they could mix well with other ethnic communities in Batavia. They influenced the development of *Betawi* culture in Jakarta, especially in the evolution of *keroncong* music. See Abeyasekere (1987, p. 28).

widespread resentment against the Dutch, these historical circumstances are not mentioned in the film.

The main plot of *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* follows Amallo's journey to adulthood, grown up but confused and aimless in his behaviour. Amallo lives in the village with his younger siblings Mea (Titi Qadarsih), Aben (Ardianto) and Benu (Ricki Sukardi) and his father, an abusive man, Umbu Kapitan (WD Mochtar). Umbu is seldom at home because he is too busy with his job looking after the horses of the Dutch Company soldiers (*marsose*). Their mother died several years earlier when Amallo was fourteen years old. In a flashback we are shown that Amallo resents his father because the father paid no attention to his wife during her final illness and instead spent his time drinking, gambling and consorting with prostitutes. Subsequently, Amallo was left to take care of his siblings while his hatred of his father grew stronger. As the stable master for the Dutch army in Batavia, Umbu has a privileged and powerful position in the village.

Although Amallo is suspicious of the other villagers, whom he regards as his father's followers, Amallo has two friends, Runtu (Nano Riantiarno), a young man of the same age of Amallo, and Ina (Rima Melati), Amallo's girlfriend. Amallo and Runtu have been friends since their childhood, but they are now rivals since both of them love Ina, who loves Amallo. However, Amallo breaks off his relationship with Ina before he leaves the village to work in the city. Amallo's abhorrence of his father grows even stronger when Umbu decides to get married again, this time to Stella de Vink (Delia Surawijaya), the daughter of Van der Vink, a rich Dutch man and the owner of a cafe in the city. Although the film has a pre-credit sequence, the body of the film begins with Amallo's father's wedding to Stella, and related events, which provide an exposition of the background. Amallo despises his stepmother, and at the conclusion of the wedding

expresses his contempt for her, which leads to his expulsion by Umbu from the village. He leaves the village and goes to work in the city. Before he heads to Batavia, Amallo suggests to Ina that she should marry Runtu, who has a better future than his. Reluctantly, Ina marries Runtu, not because she takes Amallo's advice; rather, she obeys her sick mother.

The city of Batavia is a strange place for Amallo. He finds himself excited and yet alienated and resentful as he begins to live an adventurous life in the city. He gets a job on a fishing boat and also meets a group of rebels who plan to take revenge on the Dutch East India Company or *Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC) because VOC have murdered one of their members.⁴⁸ Subsequently he sees the last person he wants to meet, his father, who comes to Batavia for business. Amallo's life changes when, after stealing a pistol from the home of a Dutch officer, whose wife has become his lover, he joins the rebels and helps them to steal weapons, ammunition and horses from the barracks of the Dutch forces. His decision to join the rebels is possibly also motivated by his encounter with his father, when he sees his father taking fresh horses to the Dutch barracks. Amallo and his friends wage a small war against the Dutch, who continue to hunt the rebels. This means Amallo is also in a war against his father, whose horses he has stolen. With the help of Piping, a prostitute and an entertainer who often visit the barracks, Amallo and the rebels are able to steal even more weapons and ammunition. The chance to go back to his village after two years working in the city brings Amallo back into contact with Ina and also forces him to confront his past. His return to the village further opens his mind further, when he meets Tiur, a woman aged in her late twenties who now takes care of his siblings at her house.

⁴⁸ In *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, the VOC is called *Kumpeni* ("Company") by Amallo and the rebels.

Through his brief conversation with Tiur, Amallo gradually understands what honest communication can be like and realises he needs the presence of a mother figure in his life. However, his brief visit to the village has unfortunate consequences. Runtu sees him expressing his affection for Ina after meeting her again and Runtu accuses Amallo of trying to seduce her. Runtu says that Amallo is no better than his father. Feeling that he has been betrayed by his best friend, Amallo decides to leave his village and move to the city for good. He asks Tiur to leave with him and bring his siblings. When Amallo attempts to steal the horses looked after by Umbu, for the journey back to Batavia, he is shot dead by him (Umbu) who does not know the horse thief that he has been looking for is his own son.

Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki is a bold portrait of an idealistic but confused young man, and almost all the scenes in the film are centred on Amallo and his conflicted feelings, making the film a statement about an individual's identity and identity confusion. Amallo is shown to live alone for most of the time, quite outside any real community except for the rebels whose struggle against oppression he sympathises with. The noted Indonesian critic, Marselli Sumarno (1993, p.84), in his overview of Teguh Karya's films, states that Teguh's films observe individuals who are struggling for identity and they often get lost in their effort to achieve what they want to do. Other key characters such as Umbu, Runtu, Ina and Tiur are also regarded by the director as individuals rather than part of a community, but Amallo's presence in the film is larger than any other character's as he appears in most of the scenes of the film.

Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki deals with an individual who lacks meaning and values in his life. In relation to this, Teguh Karya (1988a) has explained that it is not unusual for someone to come up with reflexive questions in their life such as "who they are" and "what they actually want to do" (p. 3). By drawing attention to an individual's

search for meaning and identity, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* courageously and unequivocally expresses the importance of asking these questions in life. In a film industry where it was popular comedies, action films and romances that were the most popular and common, an existential drama about an individual seeking for identity in a distant historical period was a personal and original idea.

Rather than beginning by exploring at length the underlying causes of the problem faced by the main character of the film, Teguh invites us to follow and observe how Amallo deals with the problems of searching for meaning and values in his life. Amallo is not a one-dimensional type of character, rather he embodies the complexity of real human beings, which makes his actions not only unpredictable for the viewer but also for the other characters in the film. Amallo is an expressive, warm, spontaneous and friendly guy, but he can be reclusive, confused and rebellious as well. In an early scene where he meets Ina, his girlfriend, at the cemetery, he says:

Indonesian	English
<p>Amallo: Apa yang kau lakukan di makam ibuku? Bawa ini pulang atau letakkan di makam orang lain, tapi jangan di makam ibuku. Tapi ya sudahlah tidak apa-apa. Kau cantik, tapi aku menganggapmu sebagai adikku. Aku mungkin butuh seorang pacar. Tapi sekarang aku tidak tahu harus berbuat apa.</p>	<p>Amallo: What are you doing on my mother's grave? Take these flowers home, or you can put them on someone else's grave. But it's okay. You're a beautiful girl. I have considered you as my sister. Maybe, I need a girlfriend. But at this moment, I don't know what I should do.</p>

This scene between Amallo and Ina is brief but important because it shows Amallo expressing his feeling. On the other hand, Ina may act as a stand-in for the audience, who watches and listens to Amallo but is unable to respond to what he says. However, by the way the camera captures her bodily gestures it is obvious that Ina is frustrated. We are probably also a little bewildered too, because Amallo has spoken in these strange ways earlier and now again we are made to feel that he is not going to be a typical hero for us, rather an anti-hero character. The short encounter between Ina and Amallo shows him expressing his personal confusion to her as if we listened to our best friend who came and told us his or her problems. This particular way of saying something speaking directly in a confused and contradictory way is a key characteristic of *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*. However, that scene also shows that Amallo is a fun, playful lad. This is suggested when he asks Ina to take the flowers from his mother's grave and then he sits behind her, gradually smiling in his playful face before taking the flowers back from Ina, saying that it is alright to put flowers on the grave. Amallo is reminiscent of Shakespeare's Hamlet, particularly in his treatment of Ophelia. However, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* does not give the impression of being in any way an adaptation of *Hamlet*: the innovativeness of the plot and characters supports this film being a fully original work. Instead, it is possible Teguh was exploiting the talents of the actor Slamet Rahardjo in developing this playful but ambiguous character and in expressing so directly the theme of identity that so regularly occurs in conversations in the film, as I will further illustrate.

The topic of ambivalence carries over to the next scene, in the bushes, where Amallo and Ina go. This is the continuation of their meeting at the cemetery, where Ina is dissatisfied with what she hears from Amallo. Assuming that Ina does not actually comprehend the point that he makes, Amallo tries to say again what he said earlier. We

see in a long shot that Amallo is chasing Ina, who has gone ahead of him. He finally catches up with her and again tries to be playful in treatment of her. Maybe, Amallo realises that Ina does not feel happy and therefore he tries to cheer her up:

Indonesian	English
Amallo: Jangan menangis nanti matamu merah. Kau cantik dan baik Ina. Tapi aku tidak tahu mau jadi apa. Coba siapa temanku. Mungkin hanya kau dan Runtu. Kau sudah seperti adikku. Apa pendapatmu tentang Runtu?	Amallo: Don't cry, please. Your eyes turn red. You are sweet and kind, Ina. But at the moment, I don't know what to do and what I want to be. Tell me who my real friends are. I only have you and Runtu. What do you think of Runtu?

Unlike the previous scene at the cemetery, Amallo's face and voice are calm when he speaks. He wants Ina to accept that their relationship is over and suggests that she now builds on her relationship with Runtu. Amallo admits that he has uncertainties about his future and therefore suggests it would be better for Ina to turn her affections to Runtu. Amallo also does not want others to know about his problems with his father. It is only with Ina that he talks about his relationship with his father. Again, here we see the real feelings of our anti-hero when he is trying to express his deep sadness and anger toward his father. This scene is intersected by a brief flashback which shows Umbu's betrayal of his family, particularly through his treatment of his dying wife (Amallo's mother). The flashback is told from Amallo's point of view, which also stresses the fact that Teguh is making his audiences in part identify with Amallo. At the end of that scene, Amallo returns to his playful behaviour as he and Ina hear the coming of his friends. The placing of these key scenes with Ina early in the film shows Teguh revealing his

message in a plain and direct manner, in the same way that Amallo himself acts out for Ina the contradictions that are in his mind. A scene later in the film reveals the contradictory character of Amallo in a similar manner. This scene occurs after Amallo has joined the rebels to fight the Dutch in Batavia. It takes place at night in front of the hut where the rebels meet and the conversation happens after they successfully steal some horses that were in Umbu's charge. The name of the young rebel to whom Amallo talks to is never given in the film:

Indonesian	English
Amallo: Kuda-kuda ini milik Kumpeni. Aku mencuri Sembilan dalam sembilan bulan. Tidak berarti apa-apa buat mereka. Sekarang tinggal bagaimana caranya masuk ke dalam markas mereka. Aku punya kenalan seorang pelacur yang mungkin bisa menolong kita.	Amallo: These horses belong to the Company. I have stolen nine. It means nothing to them. Now, we only have to think how we can get into the barracks. I know a prostitute who may help us.
Pemuda: Siapa kau sebenarnya	The rebel: Who are you?
Amallo: Aku harus punya tujuan hidup. Tapi aku belum tahu mau apa aku sebenarnya Berapa usiamu?	Amallo: I must have a goal in my life. But I still don't know what I actually want to do in my life. How old are you?
Pemuda: Sembilan belas	The rebel: Nineteen. Why?
Amallo: Kau kuat, muda dan berani. Modal yang cukup buat berdiri, meskipun banyak saudaramu yang dibunuh	Amallo: You are strong, young and brave. These are what you need to survive although many of your relatives were

Kumpeni. Akan lebih mantap jika kau kawin.	murdered by the Company. It would be better if you are married.
Pemuda: Ya dan mempunyai anak sembilan lalu menjadi petani di tanah Priangan.	The rebel: Indeed, and I will have nine kids and work as a farmer in Priangan.
Amallo: Aku belum siap. Aku masih harus berontak terhadap banyak hal	Amallo: I am not ready yet. I still have many things to sort out.

The film has shown us that the decision to join the rebels in Batavia occurs suddenly to Amallo after he sees Umbu take the fresh horses to the barracks and also witnesses the murder of a rebel by the Dutch. What Amallo says in his conversation quoted above can give us further insight into his manner of thinking. His decision to cooperate with the rebels seems to be motivated by a spontaneous thought, rather than as a result of a careful premeditation. Amallo's impulsive acts may be ways of expressing his anguish toward his father, his step-mother and the villagers, who are incapable of defending him or allying themselves with Amallo while they are in the presence of his father. Most importantly, this scene shows us that Amallo has still not yet been able to determine what he wants to do with his life, and that this in turn is a sort of anguish for him.

Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki also includes other themes, such as jealousy and betrayal, as expressed particularly in the relationship between Amallo and Runtu. These two best friends have known each other since they were children, but are driven apart by their shared love for Ina. Ina finally marries Runtu because Amallo, as a way of breaking up their relationship, tells her he regards her as no more than his younger sister. While Amallo works in the city, Runtu persuades Ina to marry him. Because Amallo

has never told her when he will go back to the village, Ina accepts Runtu's proposition and they get married. Then after two years, Amallo returns to the village and he drops by Ina's house to give her a gift that he bought in the city. Even after Amallo decides to end the relationship and move to the city, he still loves Ina. Here, we see again the complexity and unpredictability of Amallo, because he is always in doubt about what he will do. When he returns to the village, Amallo says to Ina that he probably still loves her. Here, we feel uncertain about what he actually intends to do. Indeed, we never get to learn what he really means, because Runtu comes into the house and finds that his best friend, Amallo, is hugging his wife. Runtu, thinking that Amallo has betrayed him because he (Amallo) still loves Ina, says to Amallo: "The fact is that you are just like your father".⁴⁹ These words come as a shock for Amallo, because he is now seen as similar to his father, who he hates. This "twist" in the story draws attention to the weakness of our protagonist, and Runtu, in his anger, uses this opportunity to put Amallo in a corner and damage his self-respect. Runtu has a grudge against Amallo because, since they were children, Amallo has always been more successful and favoured by their friends than him (Runtu). Runtu, angered by his suspicions about Amallo's behaviour towards his wife and her possible complicity, seeks revenge. He reports Amallo to the Dutch officials at the Company barracks, telling the head of the barracks that Amallo has stolen a pistol from one of the officers there. In fact, in earlier scene, Amallo suspects that Runtu just pretends to be kind to him. He has the feeling that Runtu has a hidden intention against him. Earlier suspicions are now realized as the narrative develops.

These sub-themes of jealousy and betrayal serve the main story well because through them Teguh is able to say that often the biggest enemy comes from inside not

⁴⁹ The original text in Indonesian reads: "Ternyata kau sama saja dengan bapakmu."

outside. Amallo does not seem to be able to resolve his internal conflicts, but his return to the village actually allows him to see partly who he really is. This “journey back to the origin” is also a characteristic narrative stratagem in other works by Teguh.⁵⁰ With the end of the relationship between Amallo, Ina and Runtu and the death of Amallo at the hands of his father, Teguh suggests in *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* that it is important to always keep asking what we are actually looking for before it is too late. The search for meaning and values is an endless journey with constant challenges that must be faced. Amallo’s search for meaning is starting to get result for him but his death comes suddenly and stops him from continuing his quest. His meeting with Tiur has, at least, opened his eyes toward the nature of human beings. Led by greed and jealousy, people betray each other and there are always victims as a result of that conflict. Krishna Sen (2006) argues that there are some similarities between Teguh Karya’s own experience as a Chinese Indonesian and characters in his films, which were denied their political and cultural rights in their own homeland (p.131). However, it is still arguable whether *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* actually speaks about the difficulties of life experienced by the Indonesian Chinese living in Indonesia during the New Order government. In the centre of the story, as this analysis reveals, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* focuses heavily on the personal relationship between a father and his son rather than dealing with a “system” created by the Dutch who occupied Batavia at that time.

The Narrative Structure

To this point, my discussion has largely concentrated on giving a narrative exposition of the plot of *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* and exploring the film’s preoccupations and recurrent themes through an examination of the character of the

⁵⁰ *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* and *Doea Tanda Mata* are also films where the main characters have to face their past, and both use a flashback structure, each however very different from the other.

central protagonist, Amallo, particularly as reflected in the dialogue. I have emphasised that this film presents us with an anguished and confused central male character, who is the first of many similar male characters that appear throughout Teguh's work. I now wish to explore the craftsmanship of the film through an examination of narrative structure, staging and use of the camera.

The film begins with a six-minute pre-credit sequence, which is a flash-forward in the story. This sequence shows Amallo's death, with the scene culminating with an inverted close-up of his face as his body is being carried with the head drooping down towards the camera. It is this face that accompanies the film's title in English – "Face of a Man". The film replays much of this opening scene at its end. This use of a flash-forward, marked with the use of a green filter, might be seen as a stratagem for dramatically engaging the audience's interest, but it also emphasises that this central character will be an ill-fated or tragic figure. However, the opening scene of the film after the credits shifts to a lighter atmosphere of village celebration, as a wedding is about to take place.

Despite the complexities of its central character, the narrative structure of *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* is given clarity through the divisions produced by Amallo's movements from village to city and back again. Here we may invoke some of the concepts outlined in Linda Aronson's (2000) discussion of various exemplary narrative structures in her book *Scriptwriting Updated*. In this book (which is not so much a theoretical work as a script writing manual) Aronson argues that a well-structured narrative should consist of the elements of "protagonist, normality and disturbance, plus the problem that arises out of the disturbances" (p.52). Aronson's suggestions are based on rather widely held views of how films should be structured according to certain kind of narrative progression (which in terms derived from theatre, she describes as "Acts")

in order to successfully engage and continue to hold the attention of an audience. Her arguments here are not dissimilar from those of many other writers of books on how to write a script, such as Cherry Potter (1990) and Robert McKee (1999). Aronson in fact provides later in the book more detailed variations on her basic model, but her book addresses what she sees as universal models for narrative structure rather than focusing on a particular genre.

Amallo is the main character, the protagonist that we should follow because he is in search of something. There is also the element of normality, seen in the way the villagers are preparing to celebrate the marriage of Umbu and Stella. Stella arrives accompanied by her father, a rich Dutch businessman from the city. This gathering also includes a group of *tanjidor* musician.⁵¹ The head of the village organises the gathering for Umbu, and Amallo and his siblings are also present. It is clear that this is a gathering held for someone powerful in the village. The villagers arrive as individuals or in groups and the first person that they meet is Umbu, whose hand they shake. This is the “normality” in the story that is created by the usual event, the wedding. However, this seemingly joyful event in the village is gradually revealed to contain disturbances for our protagonist, because it reminds him of his father’s betrayal of his own mother at the time of her death.

Early within the scene it is shown that Amallo, although present at the events, stands apart, in isolation, brooding. The arrogance of his father is also shown in this scene and in the flashback to the mother’s death, and overall there are numerous hints that all is not well in this family; for example, Amallo’s siblings also refuse to shake

⁵¹ *Tanjidor* is a kind of orchestra or band that originated within Betawi culture in 19th century Batavia but using instruments and styles from both Western (especially Dutch and Portuguese music) and Chinese music. See Heins (1975, pp. 20-32).

hands with their stepmother. These elements of story are well structured in the development of the narrative and explain the protagonist's moodiness, and his rapid changes of mind, even in the scenes with Ina in the forest, which occur during the afternoon of the wedding. This first phase of the film climaxes with the father's angry banishment of Amallo from the village, leaving many issues unresolved and creating new challenges for him when arrives in the city.

The second phase of the film, set in Batavia itself, presents a series of events that challenge and shape the mind of Amallo as a young man. His departure from the village can be a good thing for him because he will not be in conflict with his father again. The most significant thing that reveals itself during Amallo's self-searching is that the biggest challenges or obstacles come from within Amallo himself. He has to struggle to fulfil his desire to find something, but sometimes he is just playful and aimless. Moreover, his father is still his object of hatred, as seen when he meets him in the city; indeed, the hatred of the father is a constant, almost irrational obsession. The critic Seno Gumira Ajidarma (2000) has commented that Amallo actually tries to get attention from his father because he needs him as his parent (p. 278). Here several possibilities emerge. The decision to get involved with the rebels gives him a purpose in life. He may also believe that this is the best way to oppose his father, particularly given that so often he helps the rebels by stealing horses. A further challenge arises when he decides to return to his village, for his innocent though imprudently expressed affection for Ina causes the enmity of Runtu. Runtu's hostility leads to Amallo's arrest and he is brought back to the city as a prisoner. The encounter with Tiur stabilises him by giving him a sense of maternal goodness again, but this occurs inopportunately, just before he is arrested. Nevertheless, Amallo is a more aware and experienced person at the end of this second phase of the film.

The third phase of the film shows Amallo realising that he has to leave the village, as he believes the village has become a place that is inhabited by treacherous people. However, he also has to save his siblings so he enlists the help of Tiur. At the end of the film, as Amallo is preparing to leave the village he is shot by his father. Amallo dies instead of leaving. After Amallo is shot, Umbu is then killed by Runtu. The murder of Umbu by Runtu does not actually relate directly to Amallo. It occurs because Runtu wants to settle the problems that arise for him after he was told by Amallo that Runtu is Umbu's child from Umbu's secret relationship to Runtu's mother. This final act also brings us another surprise, which deepens the sense of complications of the film relationships: Runtu who betrays Amallo to Dutch is not only Amallo's (former) best friend, but also Amallo's stepbrother. It is Runtu who has ultimately taken revenge to the father. After this revelation, the film stops with the camera capturing the face of Amallo upside-down in close-up.

Staging, Camera and Acting

Staging is one of the strengths of *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*. I would like to discuss the staging of actors in the first scene where the villagers are gathering as they are waiting for the arrival of Umbu's bride. The camera captures the villagers in a long shot. They gather in an open field at the left. In the foreground, we see the traditional carriage that will bring Umbu and his wife home. In the right corner, there is a group of *tanjidor* musicians. The head of the village is standing near the carriage. He is looking at the carriage as if he wanted to make sure that it has been well prepared for carrying the couple. Several people newly arrive at the gathering. They are welcomed by the village head, who asks them to go directly to the place where Umbu is standing and

surrounded by some of the villagers. Umbu and some of the villagers stand on the left side of the screen. On the right side of the camera, we see Amallo. He stands near the musicians, alone, while his siblings appear and stand in the background. In this staging, the family (Umbu and his children) stand in different positions forming a loose triangle. Through the camera, we also can see that the horse carriage is placed between the position where Amallo stands and Umbu's place, implying their "separation".

In the story, Umbu is so busy taking care of the horses that he does not pay much attention to his family. From the staging of this scene, the film suggests right at the beginning that the family is divided in some way. Amallo stands alone, an isolated individual, while most of the villagers stand around Umbu, implying that he is the most powerful and respected figure in the village. The fact that Umbu is the powerful man, and that he is not close to his children, is clear through the shots where he orders the village head to tell his children to give flowers when their mother comes. We see that the village head moves from where he stands (near the musicians) to Umbu and then move further back to where Amallo's siblings stands. Then, he goes back to his place near the musicians. A few seconds later, he goes again to Umbu. The only person who comes and talks to Amallo is Runtu. He comes from a corner of the house and goes directly to Amallo to tell that Ina has been waiting for him at the cemetery. The shot of Amallo and Runtu shows their friendship. As Amallo says to Ina at their meeting at the bushes, Runtu is the only friend he has.

The conflict between Amallo and Umbu is revealed in what happens next, and in Amallo's deliberate use of gesture to express it. After Stella arrives and gets down from the horse carriage, Umbu stands beside her and her father. Before he begins his speech, Umbu asks the head of the village to bring Amallo's siblings forward so they can present their flowers to their new mother.

Image 1: Amallo at his father's wedding



The camera cuts to a shot where the village head tries to persuade them to present the flowers. We can see that everyone is waiting for them to come and stand behind their father, after which Umbu will begin his speech. Then, Amallo, who until now has just been an observer in the gathering, moves near the musicians and grabs the drum. He says to the musician, “I want to borrow it for a minute, sir.”⁵² Then he beats the drum, punctuating Umbu’s words as he delivers his speech. What I want to point out in this shot is Amallo’s purpose behind this action and the meaning of his gestures. The way he beats the drum, alternating beats with his father’s words, suggests that he is trying to ridicule his father. Then, he turns his body a little bit and makes eye contact with Runtu that implies Amallo is thinking something like, “Look, my funny father is talking to people.” After he finishes his speech, Umbu asks Amallo’s siblings to shake hands and give flowers to Stella, which they reluctantly do. Seeing this, Umbu says, “Poor kids,”⁵³ to which Amallo replies, “Poor my mother.” It is unclear whether Umbu hears what

⁵² The original text in Indonesia reads: “Saya pinjam sebentar, pak.”

⁵³ The original text in Indonesian reads: “Anak malang.”/ “Ibuku yang malang.”

Amallo says, or whether he just does not care about what he hears. At the end of the first scene, Amallo refuses to shake hands with his stepmother, and leaves the gathering with Runtu. The most important thing here is that, as is evident in this scene, through his first film, Teguh is able to present through staging and gestures, rather than dialogue, the information essential to convey the meaning of the scene.

In reviews, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* is most frequently praised for its acting and most frequently criticised for its camera work (Hoerip, 1993; Ikranagara, 1993; Said, 1991). This is understandable because the performances are mostly excellent and by the time the film was made Teguh already had a reputation as a skilled director of actors, who worked closely with them. However, it was also well known that this was the first film by a company known until then only for its theatre work. In this section, I will examine the criticisms of the camera work and assess their relevance. However, I will also argue that some of the criticism of the use of the camera (for example, an over concentration on close shots and insufficient attention on surrounding milieu) do not always take into consideration what has been achieved by the film, nor of the circumstances under which it was made.

One set of interrelated criticisms of the film is that it does not show enough of old Batavia to establish a fully envisaged view of the city and that similarly it does not establish a sense of where the village is in relation to the city or the overall geographical layout. Added to this is the occasional complaint that too many of the scenes are set in the dark.⁵⁴ However, as I have already established in my detailed analysis of the

⁵⁴ Irawan (1993) argues that the “cinematography” and particularly its framing is the weakest point of the film because it does not function to provide a fully convincing visual description of the story (pp.79-81). The explanation he gives for this is that the restriction of the audience’s view to the actors and the immediate setting is characteristic of one’s experience in the theatre, suggesting that Teguh is still influenced by his theatrical background. But Irawan also suggests that Teguh probably wanted to emphasise the fact that in 19th century, Batavia did not have *enough* means or tools to light up the city at

opening wedding scene, Teguh was adept at establishing both a milieu and a set of psychological relationships within a milieu. This would have been easier to do in a village setting. With regard to the film's creation of a sense of old Batavia, clearly most of the Batavian scenes were filmed in the buildings in North Jakarta that have survived from this early colonial period. Although in the film they are in disrepair, they may not have been in colonial times. Also, in many of these scenes, one would expect that if the camera had been positioned to encompass a wider view, the presence of the surrounding modern city, or at least buildings inappropriate to the film's setting in old Batavia, would have intruded. Indonesian filmmakers have never had the financial resources to create elaborate sets or to improvise extensively within existing locations, so some of these criticisms, if they hold, must be seen as an inevitable consequence of budget constraints. To combat these budget-imposed restrictions while creating a sense of place, one way in which Teguh creates Batavia is through its performance traditions, in particular by including scenes in a brothel where the music that is played for visitors and guests is Gambang Kromong, and the social dance performed there is *cokek*.⁵⁵

Nevertheless, it is probably true that Teguh was not always concerned with providing a fully satisfying sense of how spaces in the film related to one another, hence the criticism arising as to the position of the village in relation to the city. The journey between village and city is shown a number of times and most frequently it is expressed through quite poetic and a variety of shots of Amallo walking through rubber plantations, on pathways or between rows and rows of trees. This is in fact quite

night. Said (1991) also indicates the lack of long shots in *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* (p. 110). The practical circumstances of making an historical film on a limited budget would in my view be the best explanation for the limitations of the film as argued by these two critics.

⁵⁵ *Gambang Kromong* refers to a xylophone orchestra that originated in the *Betawi* culture in Banten. The *gambang kromong* orchestra is usually played to accompany a *Betawi* traditional dance called *Cokek*.

effective, giving the film both a sense of poetry and also a sense that the journey is not only a literal journey through a physical space, but a psychological journey which was always in some ways enhanced by the young man's sense of nature, and his response to nature, further positioning Amallo as the kind of romantic and free character that he is for much of the film (even if he is also eventually doomed).⁵⁶ Additionally, in the early nineteenth century, villagers often did walk great distances and expected to do so, rather than relying on any form of public transport. Regarding the use of darkness in quite a few scenes, this may have been designed to enhance a sense of Amallo's psychological isolation, in contrast with showing his literal surrounding external environment. But, as with the presence of walking in the countryside, in older times, even cities were not uniformly well lit.

What is remarkable in *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* is the use of both actors and camera to explore psychological states. This is done partly through facial expression and partly through the physical movement of the body. Of the face and its uses in film Bela Balazs (1970) has written:

Facial expression is the most subjective manifestation of man, more subjective even than speech, for vocabulary and grammar are subject to more or less universally valid rules and conventions, while the play of features, as has already been said, is a manifestation not governed by objective canons, even though it is largely a matter of imitation. This most subjective and individual of human manifestations is rendered objective in the close-up. (p.60)

⁵⁶ The camera also follows Amallo in slow motion and long shot when he comes home from the city. This particular shot is beautiful because it conveys the meaning of the theme song that represents his thoughts in that he always longs for a home where he might meet his mother.

In other words, the face often reveals the actual motivation of human beings. *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* draws attention to the importance of the face through its use of facial expression to show Amallo's inner confusion, uncertainty, anger and humiliation over his future with Ina, but equally his excitement, ardour and playfulness. In close-up and medium close-up shots, Teguh uses the camera to portray Amallo's facial expression, for example when he talks about his confusion over his future to Ina, or when his face changes from a deep painful and sadness to cheerfulness after recalling his gloomy past, as seen in Image 2. The expression on his face changes as Amallo moves from one event to another in the development of the story. The performance Teguh obtained from Slamet Rahardjo, with his agile movements, dark good looks and alert and piercing eyes, contributes enormously to the film and to the credibility of the ambiguous figure Slamet plays.

But the film does not create an ideal hero, who is always in control, but a troubled and unpredictable anti-hero. Sometimes Amallo is placed in ungainly positions – for example when he is courting Ina he falls into a pool of water. Later in a scene with Tiur, he falls over. On both occasions, he bursts into laughter.

Image 2: Amallo's face



This is in contrast to what one might find in a conventional narrative film, where the male hero would not fall over, certainly not twice. In this sense, Teguh deliberately places his central character against expectations, but he has the confidence that his actor can pull it off. There is also subtlety in the delineation of other characters. Umbu's face also reveals that he is not always abusive in his manner. When his wife dies, the camera captures the change in his face from anger to sadness. This also occurs when he realises that the thief he has just shot is his son. Runtu is also revealed as a young man who changes and becomes an anguished person when he comes to believe that Amallo is trying to betray him when he finds Amallo embracing his wife, Ina. These changes of expression in faces captured by the camera indicate not only the dynamic but also the dramatic quality of the characters created by Teguh. Teguh also uses metaphors in the film to extend its meaning.⁵⁷

The presence of the horses in *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* is important not only because they are an essential part of Umbu's employment, but also because they are metaphors for the barrier between Amallo and his father. The horses separate the two emotionally rather than physically and, for most part, represent the personality of Umbu, wild and arrogant. But Amallo himself has some of these characteristics, except that he is also gentle and reflective. Amallo dies at the hands of his father after he tries to steal a horse, which suggests that he fails to conquer his father. He is murdered when he attempts to bring down his father's business, which is horse keeping. In this way, the horses add dramatic value to the film, rather than being just mere objects, as they

⁵⁷ The film also uses colour symbolism. The characters wear traditional clothes that are black in colour. Clothes worn by males consist of loose-sleeve shirts, three-quarter trousers and a sarong or scarf on the neck. The female characters wear simple traditional blouses in light colours, except for Tiur's blouse that is red. Presumably this is used to symbolically suggest her importance for Amallo and her passionate nature. When Amallo dies, Tiur runs out of the house with a black scarf covering her red blouse. Amallo in the last scene takes off his dark-coloured shirt when he decides to leave his village.

become a key factor in the relationship between a son and his father.⁵⁸ Moreover, these metaphoric qualities of human and animals are also found in the poem that is the lyrics of theme song of the film:

Indonesian	English
Bagai kijang muda ia mengembara	Like a young deer he wanders
Dari senja ke senja	In the gloomy nightfall
Wajahnya si kerbau jantan	The face of the bull
Tampan	Good looking
Bagai kijang muda di gunung	Like a young deer standing at mountain
Ia rindu ibunya	He longs for his mother
Ia mencium udara kampung halamanyan	He smells the air of home

The lyric, written by Teguh and turned into a theme song by the noted film composer Idris Sardi, describes Amallo as if he was a young deer that restlessly wanders, on a journey to find what he wants. Even when Amallo has been in the city of Batavia for some time, his thoughts are never far from his homeland (where his mother is buried and siblings still stay), which is partly responsible for his confusion.

The whole film is designed primarily to provide a portrait of its central character, and Amallo becomes of symbol of a kind of restless yearning person with good intentions and idealism but unable to fit in and find a place for himself in the world. Teguh Karya (1993) has described the film as an “honest self-portrait” (p.43).

⁵⁸ Subangun (1993) states that there are too many scenes that can distract the viewers’ attention from the main story.

He may have felt this way when he wrote and directed the film, but, apart from the fact that Teguh was Chinese and to some extent lived an existence on the margins, it is difficult to see how it is a self-portrait given the fact that Teguh's life was one of creative success surrounded by many friends and collaborators.

Conclusion

Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki is a significant work made by Teguh Karya with his theatre collective, Teater Populer. As a work that marked Teguh's transition from theatre to film, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* is a visionary film. It is original in that it has no relation to previous films made in Indonesian cinema, nor does it have a strong connection to well-known genres in filmmaking. The film not only reveals the themes that would preoccupy Teguh in the future films, but also establishes the typical male figure for many of his later works.

When the film was eventually shown in cinemas in Jakarta, it was not commercially successful. There are at least two reasons why *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* failed in the theatres. The first is that the commercial success of *Bernafas Dalam Lumpur* followed by other similar films may pose problems for more difficult but original and non-exploitative auteur works such as *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*. Misbach Yusa Biran's description of the Indonesian film industry in the early 1970s as a place where the main interest of film producers was in the creation of commercial films that relied on formulas such as the use of sex and violence to attract audiences reduced the chance of *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* to gain an audience. The second possibility may be found in the fact that the film was the result from the collective work of the members of Teater Populer who were not majority audiences or producers at the time. Although in

theatre circles Teater Populer was well-known, it was unlikely that the group was well-known by mass audience who was accustomed only to going to cinema. The commercial failure of the highly original and creative *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* inevitably poses new challenges for Teguh Karya and Teater Populer. The decision to make *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* had been precisely to enable Teater Populer to survive. But if they were to survive they needed to find ways of engaging with larger audiences.

CHAPTER THREE

The Turn to Popular Cinema

Cinta Pertama (First Love, 1973), Ranjang Pengantin (The Marriage Bed, 1974), Kawin Lari (Elopement, 1975), Perkawinan Dalam Semusim (The Short-Lived Marriage, 1976), and Badai Pasti Berlalu (The Storm is Over, 1977)

Introduction

This chapter examines the five popular films that Teguh made from 1973 to 1977. They are *Cinta Pertama (First Love, 1973)*, *Ranjang Pengantin (The Marriage Bed, 1974)*, *Kawin Lari (Elopement, 1975)*, *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim (The Short-Lived Marriage, 1976)*, and *Badai Pasti Berlalu (The Storm is Over, 1977)*. I argue that the commercial failure of Teguh's first film *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* brought about a crisis in Teguh's career which led him to make popular genre films, mainly family melodramas and romances featuring the upper middle class. His aim with these films was to demonstrate that he could make movies that were commercially successful. The strongly commercial environment of the Indonesian film industry in the 1970s meant that if Teguh wished to continue working as a filmmaker, he had no choice but to succeed commercially with his next films. If his films failed, he would risk both his film career and the future of Teater Populer, since the group was relying on the profit from filmmaking to ensure their survival, and its members depended on him as their leader in securing jobs for them. Therefore, Teguh wanted to make films that would satisfy the demands of the commercial film industry.

The films of this period are also significant for establishing Slamet Rahardjo's film career. Slamet was Teguh's main actor in Teater Populer and was cast by Teguh in all of the five films examined in this chapter. Although *Cinta Pertama*, *Ranjang Pengantin*, *Kawin Lari*, *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* and *Badai Pasti Berlalu* are romance films, the presence of Slamet Rahardjo, who played the typical male character in these films—a young, restless, but rather confused man—is a commonly recurring figure in Teguh's work that supports his positioning as an auteur.

The Indonesian Film Industry in the Early 1970s

The early 1970s was a period of rebuilding of the Indonesian film industry, which had declined in the early 1960s and suffered a serious collapse from 1964 onwards, with the ban on the importation of American films implemented by the left-wing organisation of *Panitia Aksi Pemboikotan Film Imperialis Amerika Serikat* (PAPFIAS) or Committee of Action for the Boycott of Imperialist American Films, late in the period of Guided Democracy.⁵⁹ As a result of this ban, 60 per cent per cent of cinemas had closed, never to reopen, and many prints of films had been burned during mass demonstrations against importers (Biran, 2001. p 54). The New Order government

⁵⁹ Guided Democracy or *Demokrasi Terpimpin* is a term referring to the political system finally created in 1959 by Soekarno, first President of Indonesia, with the return to the Constitution of 1945 which gave ultimate power to the President to govern the nation, including appointing his own cabinet. Guided Democracy was seen by Soekarno as the solution to a number of problems that had built up since about 1957: the difficulty of getting sufficient agreement between political parties on important matters, including even creating a cabinet and deciding upon a Constitution. It began with martial law and Soekarno declaring himself Prime Minister. Political instability had been exacerbated by outer island rebellions in West Sumatra and Sulawesi in 1957. During Guided Democracy Soekarno gave encouragement to the expansion of the influence of the Indonesian Communist Party, but at the same time the army increased its power and wealth due to martial law and the nationalisation of Dutch assets in 1957. The tension between these two organisations resulted in the conflicts of 1965. It was also during Guided Democracy that Soekarno launched his "Confront Malaysia" campaign. See Cribb and Kahin (Eds., 2004, pp. 164-165).

that took power in 1966 was short of money and was therefore anxious to redevelop the film industry as a source of revenue via taxes on ticket sales. Additionally, there were demands from the American Motion Pictures Association in Indonesia for the reimbursement of the property (including prints) destroyed during the riots in the mid-1960s. The short-term solution to these problems was to lift restrictions on the import of foreign films. Restrictions were so relaxed that all kinds of violent and pornographic genres were permitted entry, simply to draw audiences back into cinemas. At the same time, it was essential that the national film production industry redeveloped as it would help developing the economy of the country. The government agreed to liberalise what could be shown in Indonesian films, and for the first time kissing scenes and some indication of sexual activity on screen could be shown. More violence than was previously permitted was also able to be depicted, leading to what Biran has described as the “daring” Indonesian film (*film berani*) (2001, p. 231).

All kinds of new and untrained people entered this growing industry, which provided an opportunity for new talent to emerge. While the local film industry lacked people trained in filmmaking, it did have two major advantages. Firstly, from late 1969, all Indonesian films were made in widescreen and colour. Secondly, audiences returned to watching Indonesian films. Between 1970 and 1988 the average number of films produced was about 70 films per year. The highest number of film releases occurred in 1977, with the production of approximately 120 films (Ardan, 1992, p. 57). An example of this commercial turnaround is evident in the interaction between the Indonesian film industry and other Asian countries. In the 1950s, Indonesian films had to compete with the highly popular Malay language films made in Singapore by the Shaw Brothers and by Cathay Pacific. The Singapore feature film industry went into decline in the late 1960s and the Shaw Studios closed in 1972. Then, in the 1970s and 1980s Indonesian

films became popular in Singapore and Malaysia. In Indonesia, film producers competed to make films that appealed to popular tastes in order to take advantages of the increasing interest of the wider population in watching Indonesian films.

There are other developments in the Indonesian film industry that occurred in this period early in Teguh's career. Concern about lack of training in the industry led to the creation of a film school in the newly established Jakarta Institute of the Arts or *Institut Kesenian Jakarta* in the early 1970s, although Teguh was himself already addressing this need to provide teaching by training his actors and himself in aspects of film writing and film technology at Teater Populer. Secondly, an annual Indonesian Film Festival or *Festival Film Indonesia* was established in order to stimulate some aspirations for quality in the kinds of films that were made, with awards for quality in scripting, acting, camerawork, editing, production design and final product.

Despite the initial freedom accorded to filmmakers in this period, it was not long before the government began to regulate the growing industry in unexpected ways. Before a film could be made, its script was now subject to pre-censorship by the Film Censorship Board that was located in the Indonesian Department of Information. This occurred originally because in 1968, under Sjuman Djaya (at that time the Director of Film Development and Guidance in the Indonesian Department of Information), the government had set up a National Film Production Council or *Dewan Produksi Film Nasional* that would fund quality film projects, with funding being awarded on the quality of the submitted screenplay. In the interests of equity, a requirement of the Council was that all film scripts to be produced should go to them first. Only four films were produced under this scheme, however, and even when the scheme was abolished

after two years, it remained a requirement for much of the next two decades, that all scripts to be produced should first be submitted to the Department of Information.⁶⁰

David Hanan (1997, pp. 691-693) has briefly enumerated some of the film genres that were commercially successful in the 1970s and 1980s in Indonesia. These genres were popular comedy (for example *Benyamin Tukang Ngibul* or *Benyamin the Liar*, 1975), *dangdut* musical (*Raja Dangdut* or *The King of Dangdut*, 1971), martial arts (for example, *Si Pitung* or *Pitung*, 1970), horror and mystic (for example, *Gondoruwo* or *the Ghost called Gondoruwo*, 1981), colonial drama (for example, *Jaka Sembung Sang Penakluk* or *Jaka Sembung, The Conqueror*, 1981) and romantic or sentimental drama (for example, *Pengantin Remaja* or *The Teen Bride* 1971). Although Teguh watched and studied commercial films from all of these genres in his effort to find the successful commercial formula for his next film, he chose romantic drama as it was one of the most popular genres at that time. One of the films in this genre that was a huge commercial success at that time was Wim Umboh's *Pengantin Remaja* (*The Teen Bride*), a tragic love story about two young lovers, one of whom has a terminal illness. It was inspired by the Hollywood movie *Love Story* (Arthur Hiller, 1970), whose plot was based on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. *Pengantin Remaja* was not only a success in Indonesia but also in Singapore and Malaysia. The film became the model for Teguh's *Cinta Pertama*. The success of *Pengantin Remaja* happened precisely at the time when Teguh's first film failed. The actors from *Pengantin Remaja*, Sophan Sophiaan and Widyawati, became the models in visual appeal for Slamet Rahardjo and Christine Hakim in *Cinta Pertama*.

⁶⁰The four films produced by the National Film Council in 1968 and 1969 were *Si Djampang Mencari Naga Hitam* (*Djampang in Quest of the Black Snake*, 1968), *Apa Yang Kau Cari, Palupi?* (*What Are You Searching for, Palupi?*, 1969), *Matt Dower* (1969) and *Nji Ronggeng* (*The Ronggeng Dancer*, 1969). See Hanan (1993, p. 87-115).

The Distinction between Popular and Quality Cinema or *Film Nasional*

In recent years a distinction—often made in film criticism and in debates about cinema in Indonesia—between popular cinema which could often be meretricious, of low value and having purely commercial aims, has been subject to critique, notably by Thomas Barker (2011) in his PhD thesis *A Cultural Economy Of The Contemporary Indonesian Film Industry*. Barker sees this distinction as a mantra of Indonesian film criticism, initiated perhaps by Misbach Biran and Asrul Sani, but was then taken up uncritically, as he sees it, by foreign scholars, such as Krishna Sen, David Hanan and Barbara Hatley.

For critics and historians, such a bland, black and white distinction, where popular films are regarded as bad, and films deliberately representing the nation and its struggles as good, is well worth questioning, particularly where it is clear that the writer sees most popular cinema as bad, most commercial success as bad, and only serious films that can be regarded as exemplary of national cinema as good. To some extent this is the unguarded view of a critic such as Salim Said. Barker also sees this distinction between popular and quality cinema as fundamental to what he regards as an ideology of *film nasional*, present during the 1950s, but strengthened during the New Order, particularly with the increased status given to Usmar Ismail as the founder of the National Film Industry, at the expense, perhaps, of the earlier Chinese producers.

Barker coalesces different positions held by very different critics into this single stereotypical position. For example, while Sen does not profess a strong personal interest in popular cinema, she is critical of many *film nasional*, especially the work of Usmar Ismail, and she does discuss quite a few popular films favourably. Moreover, she is not primarily concerned to distinguish between films of quality and popular film.

Overall she is highly critical of New Order ideologies, and particularly of films that contain these ideologies. Hanan (2011), in his survey articles, does not disparage Indonesian popular cinema, and shows in the space he is given, that much of it is of sociological interest; but he also singles out what—in his view—are major achievements in Indonesian film history, a task he was assigned by his publishers. However, his lengthy article on the songs and the films (actually B movies) of the comedian, Benyamin S, shows that he could take a deep interest in popular culture, and see it as of great sociological significance. Biran, on the other hand, has indeed frequently disparaged popular cinema, but Barker does not look into why this was so. He had worked as a film director in the 1960s, but in the early 1970s, as a committed Muslim, became very discouraged with the direction popular cinema was taking, and decided not to work as a director in the industry any longer. Biran also believed it was his duty, as the director of Sinematek Indonesia, to encourage good filmmaking in Indonesia. Nevertheless, as an archivist he was quite happy to obtain and preserve popular films. Sani was indeed disparaging at times of popular cinema, but he also was writing as a filmmaker, rather than a critic, and like Biran, saw his role as fostering, at least some of the time, the possibility of making films that did not just have commercial aims, including films made by himself.

I contend that Barker seriously conflates the views of filmmakers with the views, most of them independently arrived at, of critics and scholars. Of course it is important for a critic to have an open mind about cinema, and try to understand its relevance, no matter from what genre a film may be, or how commercial its intentions were.

But this will not always be the view of a filmmaker. For a filmmaker who is interested in making films that express something about his/her society, whether it is

popular or not, who wants to make films not primarily to satisfy audiences and audience expectations, but to make a statement via representing situations, there is always a dilemma. The dilemma deals with a struggle about how to make such a film and gain an audience so that the film is seen and understood, and pays for itself, so that the filmmaker is able to continue working as a filmmaker. For some filmmakers (not all of them), this is the point of the distinction, not simply to condemn popular films as bad, but to recognise that making films is not simply about making money.

So while a theorist may well have grounds for questioning the assessment of films on the basis of a distinction between popular/commercial and more serious kinds of films, not simply driven by the market alone, that does not discount the validity of the distinction between popular commercial and other kinds of films for a practising filmmaker attempting to make a film that expresses something and trying to find funding for it. This is the sense in which the distinction is made in this thesis. Teguh Karya was a filmmaker who confronted this very problem and over his career managed to make both kinds of films, popular films that supported his own career and those of his associates in Teater Populer, and, sometimes, films that more directly expressed his concerns. There is in fact a contradiction or an inconsistency in Barker's own arguments. Barker is not really trying to argue that popular commercial cinema is necessarily "good", but simply that it is of sociological interest and therefore should not be ignored.

Cinta Pertama (First Love, 1973): An Impossible Romance

Cinta Pertama is the first popular film that Teguh made. Following the unsuccessful screenings of his first film in 1971, Teguh took a two-year break from filmmaking. He did two important things during the break period: he strengthened his

skills in filmmaking and he continued to direct Teater Populer on stage. As explained earlier, Teguh never learned film in a formal way, as there was no film school in Indonesia at that time. In other words, Teguh never actually studied to be a film director before or after making *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*. In 1972 Teguh directed plays such as *Wabah Putih* or *The White Disease* (Karel Capek, 1937) and *Pacar dan Sketsa* or *The Lover* (Harold Pinter, 1962). The personal learning experience from making a film and his theatre directing meant that Teguh was better prepared for *Cinta Pertama*.

Cinta Pertama not only demonstrates that he prepared for his second film by developing the skills he lacked while making the first one, but it also shows Teguh's willingness to collaborate with film producers. For *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* Teguh had received generous support from Turino Djunaidy. For *Cinta Pertama*, Teguh organised finance from several different film producers. Nurhadie Irawan (1993), one of Teguh's colleagues, described Teguh's preparation for *Cinta Pertama*:

Teguh came to film producers and promised them a popular film. He told also them that he would not repeat his experience of making *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* and would pay attention to the plot and characters that appeal to the audience of the new film. Toward his film crews, he worked hard and followed tightly the schedule that he arranged beforehand. He told his investors that he would make a film that was entertaining and the kind of film that could attract people from all levels of society. The film would be about the problems between the young and older generations or between teenagers and their parents. The story would be fun and easy to understand. (p.93)⁶¹

⁶¹ The original text in Indonesian reads as follows: "Teguh datang ke produser film dan menjanjikan sebuah film yang populer. Dia juga mengatakan tidak akan mengulang pengalaman membuat film *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*. Untuk film barunya, dia akan menjaga plot dan perwatakannya serta akan

Irawan's explanation suggests that Teguh made a concerted effort to make *Cinta Pertama* accessible to the people working with him (particularly film investors) and to spectators. This working experience was different from the way he made his first film, where the entire process was a personal endeavour with primarily artistic rather than commercial aims.

The most obvious way in which Teguh co-operated with his producers was in his choice of story and the way in which he adapted the basic idea to the screen. Of this, Teguh said in an interview with Gunawan and Tejo (1993) years later:

I was offered a synopsis to make *Cinta Pertama*. The title of the synopsis was *Love Always*, and I didn't understand what it meant. So I changed the title to be *Cinta Pertama* and wrote the script. I wanted *Cinta Pertama* to be successful in the market. For that reason I used a luxurious house as a setting and showed expensive cars in the story, which make the film like a dream for whoever watched it. When *Cinta Pertama* was released, it was commercially successful. (p.2)⁶²

Teguh states he deliberately incorporated into this film those aspects of popular feature films which were known to be attractive to Indonesian mass audiences at that time, particularly the craving to see the new affluence being attained by elite and upper circles in Jakarta after seven years of New Order government.

membuatnya menarik untuk para penonton. Terhadap para kru film, Teguh bekerja keras dan mengikuti setiap jadwal yang telah ia disusun sebelumnya. Dia betul-betul berjanji ke pada produser bahwa film barunya akan bisa ditonton oleh penonton dari berbagai lapisan masyarakat. Filmnya berkisah tentang masalah remaja dan orang tua. Ceritanya menghibur dan mudah dicerna.” (Irawan, 1993, pp.74-75).

⁶² The original text in Indonesian reads as follows: “*Cinta Pertama* saya buat dari selembat sinopsis yang ditawarkan kepada saya dengan judul *Cinta Selalu*. Saya nggak mengerti judul ini, makanya saya rombak, dan lahirlah *Cinta Pertama*. Film ini saya buat dengan kesadaran kalau mau membuat film laku, buatlah film dengan lokasi di sebuah rumah bagus, mobil bagus, sehingga semua seperti mimpi. Ternyata *Cinta Pertama* sukses luar biasa.” (Gunawan & Tejo, 1993)

The way he demonstrated his professionalism as a commercially-oriented filmmaker is also evident in his discovery of Christine Hakim, a new figure in the film industry. Teguh decided to find his own leading actress for *Cinta Pertama* after he refused to use a list of professional actresses proposed by his film producers, for none of them fitted his idea of a female character. A former teen model, Christine Hakim had never acted in film before and Teguh was interested in casting Christine Hakim not only for her strong interest in acting but also because of this inexperience. By using a new or amateur person in the role of the female protagonist, Teguh hoped that he could accurately show the story of a girl who encounters her first love (Emond, 2011).⁶³ Teguh's eye for talent proved to be accurate, and within a few years of *Cinta Pertama*'s release, Christine Hakim had become one of the leading actresses in the Indonesian film industry, increasingly known and respected internationally, and by 1988 had won five awards for best actress of the year in the annual Indonesian Film Festival.

Cinta Pertama uses the narrative conventions of the teen romance genre, but here the romance is between an 18-year-old teenager, Ade (Christine Hakim), the daughter of a rich businessman, and a slightly older man, the sensitive and courteous Bastian (Slamet Rahardjo), who is 24 years old. The first two-thirds of the film work as a somewhat slow moving, gentle and spacious romantic drama of courtship, elegantly filmed and with numerous shot-reverse shot exchanges of looks and smiles between the lovers, who first see each other on an intercity train (where they do not speak but Bastian secretly sketches her), but then discover, when he visits her home on a business matter, that—by coincidence—Bastian is working in Ade's father's office.

⁶³ Emond writes that Teguh was finally able to cast Christine Hakim in *Cinta Pertama* although the film producers initially expressed an objection. They said that Christine was "too thin and had no chest". Responding to their objections, Teguh Karya asked the film producer, "Are we selling the film or the breast?" Christine Hakim is not a member of Teater Populer although she is always associated to the collective due to her frequent as an actor in Teguh Karya's films.

Image 3: Bastian and Ade at Cibodas Park



Initially the film is an idyllic romance between young, gentle and artistic people (Bastian is a designer and portraitist; Ade plays the piano). Scenes of an affectionate wealthy family, full of warm and avuncular or solicitously maternal extended conversations, are disturbed by two intrusive factors. Firstly, Ade's mother keenly hopes that she will marry Johnny (Nano Riantiarno), the son of a family friend. Johnny is away studying in Germany but will shortly return to Jakarta. Secondly, although Bastian does not disclose these facts, he has previously been married and has recently been released from jail after four years' imprisonment for the killing of his first wife. On the discovery of these facts about Bastian, which are disclosed by the father of Bastian's first wife 43 minutes into the film (the total running time is 110 minutes), the film's genre begins to shift from gentle and affectionate teen romance to a romantic melodrama, and remains in that mode until the last few minutes of the film.

In contrast to *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, which is highly original, unprecedented and uncompromising in its themes and approach, it is obvious from a viewing of *Cinta Pertama* that Teguh has studied popular cinema and then made a film that, firstly, is unembarrassed by its numerous uses of coincidence and, secondly, is

exceptionally sweetened by numerous commercially successful formulas. For example, the film features a range of different but stereotyped musical interludes. In one long scene Ade plays the grand piano in her family home while talking to Bastian. In another, Bastian takes Ade to a popular fairground, and they spend an idyllic time on a merry-go-round accompanied by music, followed immediately by a song sung by a friend lying in the grass. Subsequently they go swimming with numerous other couples in the rapids of a river in Cibodas Park, near Bandung. This scene is filmed in soft focus.⁶⁴ The traumatic break with Bastian, enforced by Ade's parents after they find out about his past, is softened by a sad song sung by Ade, once again sitting at the piano. Additionally, Ade's wealthy family lives in a formerly Dutch-owned two-storey house in the most exclusive garden suburb of Jakarta (Menteng), thus providing the audience access to the highly desirable wealthy-class lifestyle of the business elites. As noted earlier, this type of story, set predominantly in an upper class milieu, was increasingly attractive to New Order audiences and hence a commonly found story-genre in commercially successful film during this period. At the same time the sensitive Bastian is the son of unpretentious lower middle class flower growers from the hill areas outside Bandung. The film then contains the hope of social mobility and class reconciliation through marriage based on true romance and mutual attraction via the recognition by young people—of whatever class—of a shared destiny.

The film abounds with startling coincidences. It is entirely by chance that the father of Bastian's late wife sees Bastian and Ade shopping for a wedding garment for Ade, which leads to him following them to the home of Ade's parents, where he subsequently informs them of Bastian's past. Then, late in the film (at eighty seven minutes), there is a flashback, filmed in predominantly green and yellow hues to

⁶⁴ The song was sung by Broery Pesulima, who was a well-known Indonesian singer in 1970s .

indicate its status as a nightmarish memory for Bastian, that reveals Bastian's past traumas. It shows that the suitor recently returned from Germany, Johnny, had been friends with both Bastian and his wife, Siska, but that when Bastian was about to go on a short period of compulsory army service, the impatient Johnny had attempted to rape Siska, even before the Indonesian army vehicle sent to collect Bastian from their home had driven away. Hearing her cries, Bastian had run back carrying his army revolver, and in the ensuing fracas with Johnny, Bastian had accidentally shot his wife with the revolver he was still carrying in one hand. Johnny's attempts to rape in their homes women to whom he is attracted is a repeated pattern of behaviour, as earlier in the film Johnny has attempted to rape Ade in her home, just next to the piano. This threatening and unpleasant incident was subsequently smoothed over by a highly managed mutual reconciliation discussion between the two families, from which the silent Ade is largely excluded.

The film's integration into the New Order ethos of pervasive hypocrisy and widespread militarisation is subtly connoted by Bastian's wearing of an Indonesian National Army uniform. He does this along with the many other young men about to go off on army training who are present in the Jakarta suburbs in the flashback to the scene of his wife's death, even though Bastian's departure for the army is only a plot mechanism to explain Bastian's leaving of his wife for a period of time, thus exposing her to the threat that Johnny poses. Ironically, the presence of numerous coincidences in the plot, rather than being a hindrance to the film's credibility as a work of some realism, is almost presented as an indispensable generic requirement for producing a credible Indonesian melodrama, popular with audiences. The excessive use of coincidence is part of the romance drama genre.

One unavoidable question about the film is the figure of Bastian himself. With his second film, the highly skilled and good-looking actor Slamet Rahardjo was established as a major romantic star of Indonesian cinema. This position was consolidated by his subsequent popular films made with Teguh. However, whether Bastian is a suitable partner for anyone is subject to question. While Bastian is established as warm, sensitive and courteous in the early scenes of the film, he does not inform Ade, his fiancée and prospective wife, of his distressing and, at least for Ade, socially embarrassing and compromised background, even though there are extenuating circumstances, which are subsequently revealed. After the disclosure by his former father-in-law that Bastian is a wife killer a little more than a third of the way into the film, it is not even made clear as to whether the killing was regarded by the courts as murder or manslaughter, which complicates the view audiences may have of Bastian. It is almost as though Teguh is challenging his audience to continue to believe in Bastian based on the credibility of the performance and looks of his star, even though no explanation of the circumstance of the death are provided over the next few scenes. In this way Teguh heightens the tension of the film by placing the audience in a “double bind” over Bastian.

At the same time, Ade remains loyal to Bastian, convinced that this news about the killing could not be true or that there must be some other explanation. Additionally, as shown in the flashback to the attempted rape by Johnny, Bastian’s decision to continue to hold the gun (hidden under a coat) even while involved in a physical struggle with Johnny, and facing in the direction of his wife, does not reflect well on his intelligence or reliability. Even more compromising are the decisions he makes after seeing that the Johnny, who is now the fiancée of Ade, is that same Johnny whose behaviour created the circumstances that led to the death of his own wife. Not only

does he resolve to prevent the marriage of Ade to Johnny by eloping with her and taking her to his parent's home in the hills, which may well be his only option if he is to protect her, but he involves his friends Herman and his fiancée, Irma, by asking them to act as Ade's protectors. At the end of the film Bastian is vindicated and the young couple, who have quickly married and spent much of the night before the dawn shoot-out in bed together, are reconciled with Ade's parents. Despite his good intentions and the cosily romantic ending, Bastian remains a highly complex central hero.

Thomas Elsaesser (1987) argues that one of the characteristics of melodrama is that it takes the point of view of the victim (p. 64). *Cinta Pertama* reflects this characteristic of melodrama, for the film takes Bastian's point of view as a victim. Because the film largely adopts the victim's point of view, the audience can see that Bastian is a victim not only of his past but that he also suffers from the social prejudice that is commonly experienced by former convicts, even if innocent. Yet, while Teguh concentrates on Bastian's personal journey and struggle to rehabilitate himself, Bastian as a character is far less honest with other people than he should be. This tendency results in the audience being placed in a contradictory situation: they are to a large extent encouraged to sympathise with Bastian as a suitor but they may also wish to make critical judgements about his behaviour. In his support of Laura Mulvey's (1989) argument of the patriarchal construction of Hollywood classical cinema, Steve Neale (1993) argues as follows:

While mainstream cinema, in its assumption of a male norm, perspective and look, can constantly take women and the female image as its object of investigation, it has rarely investigated men and the male image in the same kind of way: women are a problem, a source of anxiety, of obsessive enquiry; men are not. Where women are investigated, men are tested. Masculinity, as an

ideal, at least, is implicitly known. Femininity is, by contrast, a mystery. This is one of the reasons why the representation of masculinity, both inside and outside the cinema, has been so rarely discussed. (p.19)

For Neale (and for Mulvey writing in the 1970s), in mainstream cinema, while male characters are considered too powerful to become the object of scrutiny, female characters are easily recognisable as an object of male (spectator or character) curiosity.

However the narrative of *Cinta Pertama* can be considered as a means of “investigating” and “testing” the male character of the film, Bastian, particularly when, later in its narrative, it reveals previously hidden facts about him. Through the appearance of the stranger and the use of flashback, we come to realise that Bastian has lied to Ade and her family by saying that he had never been married. He also tells a lie to Ade when he says that he dropped out from university because he had to help his parents. In fact, he appears to have been forced to leave his university because he had to serve his time in jail. His way of speaking to Ade where he sometimes uses the words *kira-kira* (“perhaps”) suggests his effort to hide the ambiguities that surround his past. Bastian lies about where he comes from, saying that he is from the island of Sangir in the northern part of Sulawesi, whereas, in fact, he really comes from West Java. Sangir is very remote to Ade and her family, while West Java is much closer to their home in Jakarta. On the other hand, the film still posits Bastian as a suitable husband for Ade, even after the truth of his past and his deceptions have been revealed. His willingness to marry Ade in the village demonstrates that Bastian dares to love and take the risks of not only revealing himself to Ade, but as his way to become a new person.

This discussion of its narrative and its characters demonstrates that *Cinta Pertama* is not a simple story of a first love. Its story of romance is made complicated

by the presence of a hero (or, really, antihero) from an underprivileged class who struggles to have new life in Jakarta. We may see Bastian's decision to go to Jakarta as part of his attempt to rehabilitate himself. By becoming a professional, he wishes to draw the line between his past and present. But whatever his previous misfortunes, he does lie in order to cover up his past, however blameless he may have been. The film never resolves the tension it creates between Bastian as an ideal romantic lead in a story of a young girl's first love, and Bastian as a male character whose behaviour is the object of investigation.

Despite this contradiction, the film was a commercial success for Teguh Karya and Teater Populer. As a result of the success, the film launched Teguh's career as one of the Indonesia's most popular filmmakers in the 1970s. Through *Cinta Pertama*, Teguh was able to demonstrate that he was capable of making a film that made money. The success of *Cinta Pertama* was also demonstrated in the several awards that the film received at the 1973 Indonesian Film Festival. *Cinta Pertama* also brought Christine Hakim to the attention of the public after she won the award for Best Actress with her very first film.

Ranjang Pengantin (The Marriage Bed, 1974): Portrait of a Couple in a Kampung

Ranjang Pengantin is the story of a poor young man, the garage mechanic, Bram (Slamet Rahardjo), who starts a relationship with and then marries Nona (Lenny Marlina), a young woman from a wealthy family. The film opens with a flash-forward to its penultimate scene, in which the eldest daughter of the couple, nine-year-old Keke, accidentally falls down some stairs at their home in a poor area of the city and is seriously injured. Keke lies bleeding and unconscious on the floor and the camera pans

across the room and zooms into a family picture showing Keke, her younger brother Andre and their parents. In the next scene, the film shifts to the beginning of the story, the church wedding of mutual friends, a wedding where Bram and Nona first meet and are mutually attracted, despite the differences in social background. Bram lives in a kampung with his father, who is sick with tuberculosis, and with his elder and cynical sister, Nien (Mieke Wijaya).

When Nona becomes unexpectedly pregnant, Bram and Nona decide to get married. Their marriage takes place at Nona's house, but her father, Kawilarang, does not attend the wedding because he does not approve of the marriage. Nona moves to Bram's cramped little home after they become a husband and wife. Initially Bram and Nona live happily and have two children, Keke and Andre. However, problems start to occur when Bram is diagnosed with tuberculosis just after their third child is born. He continues to work as a truck driver and mechanic and his condition worsens. In need of money but refusing to ask for her father's help, Nona finds a job, helping to sew clothes for a friend. At one point Nona borrows money from Bram's workshop manager. This causes a misunderstanding between her and Bram, who mistakenly thinks that Nona is having an affair with his manager. Bram cannot handle the situation and he becomes depressed. Shortly afterwards he returns home only to find Keke has died after falling down the stairs. Confronted by economic difficulties and his inability to face his daughter's death, Bram commits suicide.

In contrast to *Cinta Pertama*, *Ranjang Pengantin* presents a more realistic story and one that, in part, is more representative of people's lives. While to some extent formulaic in its approach the film deals seriously with the issue of being in a marriage and raising a family when one is poor. One could say that the majority of the population of Jakarta in the 1970s could potentially face the dilemmas confronted by

Nona and Bram, for Indonesia does not have a social security system and this results in a great deal of social insecurity. Like *Cinta Pertama*, the film presents a romance between a poorer man and a girl from a wealthy family. But there are significant differences. For one thing, *Ranjang Pengantin* is not a film that is heavily dependent on coincidence in the way that *Cinta Pertama* was, which means that *Ranjang Pengantin* is more true-to-life in its storytelling. For another, it is a story of a marriage, rather than simply of romance and courtship and in this marriage for the most part Bram and Nona understand each other's background well. And while *Ranjang Pengantin* has melodramatic elements, and, as I shall demonstrate, is designed to mobilise powerful emotions, in this film Teguh finds a way of integrating the demands of the commercial film industry with his obvious concern to show something of the social face of the Jakarta that he knows, particularly its pervasive poverty and the stress this places on people.

Like *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, the film has a limited flashback structure. The opening of the film is a flash-forward to show the beginnings of its tragic conclusion. But apart from opening the film by showing its concluding tragedy, the rest of the film is linear. This linear narrative leads the viewer from the early courtship of the couple Bram and Nona to the pregnancy and marriage, which is initially happy, to the difficulties that occur as they face pressures of poverty and illness, particularly the problems that arise when one partner is ill. In *Ranjang Pengantin* Teguh demonstrates his developing confidence and competence as a filmmaker and his ability to handle changes of tone. Through an analysis of a number of key scenes I will discuss how Teguh utilises these new skills in the film, particularly his integration of elements of popular cinema. I also argue that in the handling of issues of gender, as evident in this film, Teguh has a tendency to subject his male characters to scrutiny and investigation,

rather than the female characters, thus working differently from the paradigm identified by Mulvey as characteristic of much mainstream (Hollywood) cinema. However, Teguh Karya was not trying to make anti-Hollywood films. Rather, I will show through my analysis of this film that Teguh has a clear position in his treatment on gender.

The first scene I will examine in detail is the scene in the church where Bram and Nona first meet, which follows the pre-credit sequence of the film. But in fact even in the pre-credit flashback, Teguh portrays deftly the poor kampung milieu where much of the film is set. A large old black truck passes the camera and as it moves past, children spiritedly play a game of soccer on reddish earth in a cleared block of land awaiting re-development. The camera follows them, darting back and forth. One little boy, no more than five years old, gets hurt in the scrum and runs home to the little two-storey house where he lives. His sister, hurrying down an interior ladder from the second storey, hesitates between attending to the hurt child and going back to respond to the cries of an infant upstairs, and falls from the stairs. The camera zooms from her prone body to a picture of the family on the wall, and then dissolves to a scene in a large, white baroque church (the Sion Church in North Jakarta, built in 1695 for the Portuguese inhabitants of Batavia), where a wedding is in progress, accompanied by sonorous tones of a magnificent organ and a voice singing. At this point the credit titles appear and our attention is held for a time by the music and the splendid visuals. In symmetrically framed long shots, interspersed with briefer shots of an elaborate 18th century candelabra, we watch the progress of the ceremony before suddenly, after the credits have ended, the camera picks up young people among the wedding guests sitting in the pews, irreverently pointing out acquaintances to each other, in particular a young woman explaining who Bram is, on the other side of the church. Via exchanges of gazes there is an agreement to meet later. The ceremony continues and concludes, with

people streaming from the church out to the portico, at this point the other main characters being introduced, for example Nona's father and his friend, an old woman, who has a son intended as a partner for Nona, conversing about a possible meeting of the couple to organise this arranged marriage. While this conversation is happening, Bram and Nona are playing hide and seek in the church, finding each other under a table near the altar and conducting a kind of secret tryst. They kiss and agree to meet later. The shifts in mood and tone—from the poor children playing soccer, to the accident in the cramped slum house, to the dignified wedding ceremony in the magnificent church, leading to a discussion of an arranged marriage, and the subversive behaviour of the young future couple in the church—are deftly done in the film and work to introduce both the plot and the characters. The opening of the scene of the Church is a *coup de theatre*, a theatrical coup.

This *coup de theatre* is complemented by the climactic concluding scene of the film, staged in the same church and using the same baroque organ. This time, however, there is not a wedding but a double funeral: the joint funeral of Bram, who committed suicide, and his daughter Keke, whose accidental death led him to cut his wrists. In these two church scenes that bracket the narrative, two fundamental components of melodrama, strong emotions and vivid accompanying music, are present. But, while the ending of the film conveys a sense of great sadness and shock, the opening scene conveys a sense of exultation and joy. In the opening scene, the film utilises popular culture. The song that is accompanied by the organ is not liturgical music but is in fact a popular music sung by Tiar Ramon, a song about homing pigeons that is sung in a soft and romantic manner. The pigeons, which symbolise a devoted couple, may reference the fact that pigeons were commonly found in the kampung milieu in Jakarta as pets of

the poorer classes. The lyrics, written by Teguh himself and the music by Idris Sardi, conceive of a married couple as two pigeons flying in the sky.

Indonesian	English
Di antara senyumannya	Among their smiles
Kulihat air mata berlinang	I can see their tears
Bagai merpati sepasang	Like a couple of pigeons
Terbang melayang tak terpisahkan	They fly and are not separated

The words of the song describe the marriage couple as the pigeons, always together wherever they go. By using organ music played on a baroque organ as the accompaniment to a song sung in a popular manner, in *Ranjang Pengantin* Teguh integrates both a sense of the momentous and the traditional and a sense of the contemporary and the popular at the same time. It was daring of Teguh to stage the opening and conclusion of this film in a Christian church, when the film is made for a predominantly Muslim audience. However, Teguh's instincts in this case proved correct and the theatrical power of these scenes won Muslim audiences over.

Religious ceremonies play an important role in the film. For one thing, Teguh may have felt justified in using religious ceremonies in *Ranjang Pengantin* because religious ceremonies are a significant part of the way of life of Indonesian society, which he knew from his own upbringing. Furthermore, religious ceremonies are closely associated to the nation's identity, as in Indonesia, holding a religious belief or being a religious person is encouraged by the government and state ideology. One of the fundamental principles of the state ideology, *Pancasila*, is "Belief in one and the only God". This first and primary principle plays a significant role in almost every aspect of

Indonesian society, as it guarantees the right of people to believe, hold and follow the teaching of a religion. Indeed, it conceives of religion as a fundamental aspect of the society. The church scenes are useful dramatically because, with their music, they are so powerfully done. Psychologically, they make sense because they explain the anger that Nona's father has when he discovers that his daughter is pregnant. Sociologically, they make sense for the reason explained above: that adherence to a belief in a God is regarded as a fundamental aspect of Indonesian society, which in the state ideology is not conceived as a secular society. With these scenes, Teguh demonstrates that religion is not only a part of the Indonesian way of life, but can be part of the popular culture of cinema.

A second scene deserving of attention is the scene of Bram's seduction of Nona by the seashore in North Jakarta, which occurs only a few days after their meeting at the wedding of mutual friends. In its comparative sexual explicitness, this seduction scene is of a kind that could not have been included in an Indonesian film prior to the relaxation of censorship on both imports and locally made films that occurred in 1970, and it is handled by Teguh with both cleverness and tact. The wooing has begun earlier in the afternoon at the slum house, where, when Nona visits him at home for the first time, a high-spirited Bram chases Nona around the house and pulls her to the floor and kisses her, before they go out together on his motorcycle.

Their courtship continues when they move from the Ancol entertainment park to the seashore. It begins with Bram riding his motorcycle a number of times in circles from the sand into the waves of the sea, and back again, a clever way for both Bram and the film to symbolise his willingness—in his excitement with Nona—to court danger even at the risk of accident or loss. It also demonstrates clearly the fact that Teguh understands visual symbolic interaction between humans, even if unconsciously,

expressed. Subsequently, when they lie together in the grass at the top of the beach, half hidden from passers-by, Bram's forwardness in his sexual attention to Nona is shown. Despite her gentle resistance, which is genuine, he persists in undressing her and, at this point—as they say—one thing leads to another. Here we have the first indication that while Bram is attractive and engaging, he does not always act in a responsible way. While *Ranjang Pengantin* is a popular film with two established romantic stars (Slamet Rahardjo and Lenny Marlina) as its protagonists, this is not a film romance where the audience is expected to become equally and uncritically enamoured with both protagonists. Bram's culpability, in the view of this author, is not as serious as that of the main male protagonist, Bastian, in *Cinta Pertama*, who over a very long period of time is not sufficiently honest about his past. Nevertheless, Bram is shown to be hasty and to act without full consideration for the consequence of his actions, following his own immediate feelings only, and not allowing other dimensions of the situation (such as the consequences for Nona) to enter into his calculations. In this way, the film in subtle ways investigates its main male protagonist, while tending to see the character Nona as someone who should be treated correctly and with full consideration of her needs and rights. The film also later shows Bram's tendency to become jealous, on insufficient grounds, which then, subsequently leads to a failure to communicate sufficiently with his wife, and ultimately, due to this irrational state of mind, to his suicide.

Although Teguh could have made a melodrama that exploits female characters, as occurred in many other Indonesian commercial films, this does not happen in *Ranjang Pengantin*. In *Ranjang Pengantin*, Nona is depicted as a brave and devoted woman throughout the film. She dares to refuse her father's suggestion as to whom she should marry, and she chooses Bram as her husband. She also voluntarily moves from

her father's lavish house to Bram's rickety little house in the kampung. When Bram is ill, she works to support the family rather than begging from her father. For reasons stated above, it is Bram who to some extent becomes the object of investigation in this film. From the beginning of their courtship, Bram takes advantage of Nona. As his illness worsens, he becomes irrationally jealous. Finally, his decision to commit suicide might be read as suggesting some truth in Kawilarang's advice to Nona early in the courtship that Bram is not a suitable man for her.

There are other dimensions to the depiction of the couple in this film, in particular the degree of insecurity that impacts their lives once they marry. Poverty is a constant threat and poverty also affects their children, particularly when the couple have their third child. Nona argues that they should not have more children (*banyak anak*) for they need more money in order to feed them. This message in a way contradicts a belief held by common people at that time—*banyak anak banyak rejeki* or “the more children you have, the more fortune you will get”.⁶⁵ With the birth of their third child, Bram and Nona have contravened the government policy introduced early in the 1970s by the New Order government that directed that couples should have no more than two children, as expressed in the promotional slogan “*Dua Anak Cukup*” (two children are enough). The film therefore is alluding to social situations in Indonesia in the early 1970s, a country where, rather than there being “social security”, there is a great deal of social insecurity.

⁶⁵ The family planning program was one of the intensive programs run under the New Order regime in the 1970s and 1980s. Java is the place that received the most attention because it is the most populated island in Indonesia. See Anke Niehof and Firman Lubis (2003).

The depiction of Bram also needs to be seen in this light of the social issues of this period. Bram, like his father before him, suffers from tuberculosis, one of the biggest health issues that the Indonesian government was faced with in the 1970s. The film deals with this in a characteristically popular way. When, later in the film, Bram comes to realise how serious his tubercular condition is, a song on the soundtrack discloses that Bram's life may be coming to an end:

Indonesian	English
Merpati jantan telah hilang	The male pigeon has gone
Terhempas angin topan	He is crashed by the hurricane
Hidup tak lagi berlagu	Life is not cheerful anymore
Telah usia telah berlalu	It is over

Bram, who is represented as the male pigeon in the song, may be aware that his life will be cut short by his illness.

While *Cinta Pertama* is concerned with a story of first love between a young naïve woman and an ex-convict, *Ranjang Pengantin* portrays a young family of low economic circumstances confronting the difficulties of life. Although it is a fictional story, *Ranjang Pengantin* in many ways mirrors the struggle of the lower middle class people facing the problems associated with poverty in Indonesia the 1970s, except that one of the partners is from the wealthy classes, thus heightening the expectations for a better life that the privileged classes enjoy, but which the underprivileged people cannot. The film is a family melodrama, which describes in both a romantic and fatalistic manner a family's struggle, and the different feelings of its members confronting a variety of social and economic burdens. Towards the end, the narrative turns a full

circle, like a wheel of fate, disclosing the circumstances of Keke's fall from the ladder, showing she has died, and redoubling the impact of this tragedy by having Bram commit suicide, overwhelmed by his illness, threats of poverty and the death of Keke.

Popular and Commercial Successes That May Have Influenced Teguh Karya in Finding His Own Formulas for Commercial Success

Here we may ask what other kinds of Indonesian films that Teguh were competing with when he made *Cinta Pertama* and *Ranjang Pengantin* and what were his models for a popular Indonesian cinema. Unfortunately it is no longer possible to ask Teguh this question, but we can look at the kinds of cinema that was popular at the time and so what were the narrative models with which Teguh might have worked. Among the most popular films were the romantic melodramas starring the couple Widyawati and Sopha Sophiaan, the earliest of these directed by Wim Umboh. These had begun in 1971 with Wim Umboh's *Pengantin Remaja* (*Teen Marriage*), its script, written by Wim Umboh and Sjuman Djaja, loosely based on the Hollywood hit, *Love Story*, starring Ryan O'Neal and Ali McGraw, itself loosely based on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. The Indonesian version is a contemporary tale of young teenagers in love, their hopes for marriage thwarted by parental disapproval. As in Shakespeare, the story ends in the deaths of both, Juli struck by cancer and with only a month to live. *Pengantin Remaja* won the prize for the best film in the Asian Film Awards for 1971. The second film in this series, *Perkawinan* (*Marriage*, 1972), also starring the same two, is about Indonesian students who meet in Holland but find their relationship is confronting parental disapproval back in Jakarta. Additionally the male character in *Perkawinan*, Mas Tok, suffers from a disease which prevents him from having children.

The film ends happily with Tok cured of the disease on his return to Holland and the couple being reunited in a snowy scene similar to the one in which they met, but this time with parental approval. *Perkawinan* won eleven Citra awards at the Indonesian Film Festival of 1973.

In his romantic and family melodramas of the 1970s, Teguh retains the parental objections as a narrative obstacle to the fulfilment of the couple (especially in *Ranjang Pengantin*), and there are deaths (especially of children) in both *Ranjang Pengantin* and *Badai Pasti Berlalu*. But in his films Teguh does not idealise the male, showing even his male leading characters sometimes to be deceitful and indecisive. Moreover, Teguh is more willing to show poverty in his films rather than to establish his characters as living in ideal environments. We should note that *Cinta Pertama*, also a drama about frustrations encountered by a couple, won almost the same number of Citras (10 Citras) at the Indonesian Film Festival of 1974, one year after *Perkawinan* won eleven Citras.

It should be noted that while Teguh Karya was starting to achieve commercial success with his second and third films, at about the same time Sjaman Djaja made three highly innovative films which were not based on popular formulas: *Si Doel Anak Betawi*, a commercially successful film which created a popular icon out of a Betawi kid living on the edge of the city in the 1930s; the award winning but not so successful *Si Mamad*, a political allegory about growing corruption in Indonesia, its central hero a clerk in an archive who discovers that his boss, the Museum director, is trading Museum assets (mainly paper) for his own personal gain; and *Atheis*, a brilliant adaptation of a novel of the same name, about a young man experiencing religious conflicts as he encounters modern ideas and historical change in Indonesia in the period 1935–1945, a film that was heavily censored and had little commercial orientation.

Kawin Lari (Elopement, 1975): An Adaptation from an American Play

“Usually people who feel they are lacking in some way, store up within themselves all kinds of potentialities” – Jaka to Anna in *Kawin Lari*.⁶⁶

Kawin Lari was adapted from Tennessee Williams’ *The Glass Menagerie*, which was written in 1943 and is set in St Louis, Missouri, in the United States of America (USA). Teguh and Teater Populer staged an Indonesian translation of the play in 1973 before adapting the play for film in 1975. Teguh also did a third production of the *Glass Menagerie* for television in 1993, making it the play Teguh directed the most times in his career. Teguh’s 1975 film adaptation differs considerably from the source that inspired it. It was also the only film that Teguh directed that could be seen as primarily a comedy, or as having substantial comic elements. My discussion of *Kawin Lari* examines both its comic dimensions and the way the play has been adapted to Indonesian conditions.

Tennessee Williams’ *The Glass Menagerie* deals with a divorced woman’s concern over the marriageability of a partially disabled daughter who lacks confidence. The widow, Amanda Wingfield, lives with her grown-up son, Tom, and daughter, Laura, in reduced circumstances in a small apartment in a tenement building in a poor area of St Louis, Missouri. Amanda has lost contact with her husband, the father of the two children, and she lives in the shadow of the memory of her past, where she was adored by men. Tuti Indra Malaon (1985) in her interpretation of the play states that *The Glass Menagerie* is a dark story because it is mainly about family disintegration,

⁶⁶ The original text in Indonesian reads as follows: “Biasanya orang yang merasa dirinya kekurangan akan menyembunyikan kemampuannya.” (Jaka kepada Anna dalam *Kawin Lari*)

that disintegration primarily the result of the mother being overwhelmed by her past.
(p.1)

The main action of Tennessee Williams' play is set in the winter and spring of 1937 and the dialogue reflects the long-term difficult economic circumstances experienced by families during the 1930s depression. The play features a narrator, the son Tom, who introduces the action and reflects upon it from a perspective sometime in the future after he has left (in fact fled) his family and pursued his own career, thus giving the play a dimension of grief, nostalgia and guilt. The play has only four characters, the fourth character being a "gentleman caller", the long-awaited possible suitor for Laura, who only appears in the last act. The play is effective due to the characteristic pungency of Tennessee Williams' dialogue, which reverberates through the theatrical space, highly suggestive of isolation and echoes of the past.

Kawin Lari is not just an adaptation of *The Glass Menagerie*; it is a significant reworking of the play. Firstly, *Kawin Lari* does not have a narrator, unlike Williams' play where the reflections and memories of the narrator were an important part of the play's structure. Thus, the film does not particularly emphasise one's person's point of view; the Tom Wingfield figure, here called Willy, is simply another character in the film. Secondly, while *Kawin Lari* broadly retains the four main characters of the play, it also uses lower middle class Jakarta as not only the location but also a subject in the film. North Jakarta is seen realistically through its narrow lanes filled with children, and its main streets, where high-rise construction is in progress. There is a crowded garment factory, where Willy works; a nearby adult training centre, where sometimes the characters meet, and a recreational park. We see the keeping of doves and other leisure activities characteristic of life in lower-middle class and poorer Jakarta. This social detail is in sharp contrast with *The Glass Menagerie*, which is essentially set in a small

apartment with a couple of rooms, differentiated by lighting and semi-transparent screens, plus an adjacent fire escape entrance leading to a dimly lit lonely and empty lane in a poor area of the city. With its more numerous characters, *Kawin Lari* presents us not only with a milieu but demonstrates the cultural values of lower class Indonesian society, by showing how people interact and how their family problems are solved. At key points *Kawin Lari* uses *keroncong*, a traditional but popular lyrical musical style that originated in the Jakarta area. The film makes use of *keroncong* to express the playful attitude it is taking towards its characters. Finally, and most surprisingly, the film is largely a light hearted-comedy, with a happy ending—although also with some serious and dramatic moments—instead of a sustainedly serious play with a largely tragic conclusion, as is *The Glass Menagerie*. Teguh himself called *Kawin Lari* a “bitter comedy” or *komedi pahit* (Kristanto, 2007, p. 118).

In *Kawin Lari*, Sumirah (Tuti Indra Malaon), who has separated from her philandering husband and moved from West Java to a Jakarta kampung, is deeply concerned about her daughter, Anna (Christine Hakim). Anna has no friends, is extremely shy and lacking in confidence, and walks with a peculiar gait and introverted expression, both indicative of this lack of confidence. Sumirah asks her son, Willy (Herman Masduki), if he can find a man who might be a suitable husband for Anna in the garment factory where he works. Soon, there is a man from the factory who is willing to come and meet Anna. However, the arrival of Jaka (Slamet Rahardjo), a young teacher from Padalarang in West Java, as neighbour, results in Sumirah’s changing her mind. Sumirah is impressed by Jaka’s attitude and introduces him to Anna.⁶⁷ The relationship between Jaka and Anna gradually develops over the course of the film but it approaches a hurdle when, in the middle of the film, the relationship is

⁶⁷ Padalarang is a small town in West Java.

opposed by Sumirah, who has come to believe that Jaka is the son of a woman who seduced her husband a long time ago. Willy and Jaka then set up a plan to teach Sumirah a lesson about true love.

The credits and opening sequences of *Kawin Lari* establish both the light-hearted mood of the film and its concern to show a social milieu, a concern which is even more extensive than in *Ranjang Pengantin*. In the opening shot the camera pans across the modern North Jakarta of the mid-1970s, and subsequent shots show its increasingly busy roads, newly built hotels, and older government offices, also including a shot of the river Ciliwung. This is accompanied by light-hearted music, composed and played by Eros Djarot. The music is not only joyful but reminiscent of the grinding repetitive strains of a hurdy-gurdy organ, suggesting that the audience of the movie are going to see something that they already know. Then the film gradually shifts its attention from the city, initially via aerial shots, to show both cleared land and lower class housing in an old kampung. Eventually the camera stops in front of a small and ordinary house near which a group of kampung children is playing. This is the house where Sumirah, Willy and Anna live. The playfulness of the film is evident not only in the music but also via the next scene, which shows the interaction between the kampung children and Willy. Willy is taking a shower in the family's cramped bathroom, which has a small window onto the street. A group of children, made up of more than a dozen boys, tease him by trying to spy on him while he is bathing. The playfulness continues when Willy repeatedly throws copious dollops of water on to the boys, in effect hosing them down. This scene with Willy and the boys also establishes the mood of communality in the kampung life, where one household is unavoidably related to the others and children are ever-present.

Kawin Lari, while primarily a gentle comedy about an oddball romance, is at the same time an essay or an allegory on what human beings can do if they are supportive to one another. The film uses a variety of means to achieve these ends. For example, Jaka first encounters Anna when she opens an upstairs window of her small house and releases one of her pet pigeons so that it can fly. Jaka, who is talking to a friend and standing next to the friend's car below, performs for Anna an animated and humorous mime in which he tries to catch an imaginary bird, his hands reaching out to it as he chases it around the body of the car. This act of communication is itself like a spontaneous and spirited (if unconsciously conceived) allegory of Jaka's own forthcoming wooing of the initially elusive Anna, affectionately, if silently, communicated by Jaka to Anna looking out the window. In this way the comedy that the film emphasises lies on the importance of visual communication, body language and acts of kindness rather than dialogue in courtship. Eventually, the two characters do speak, as the fearful Anna comes to accept the good intentions of Jaka and their relationship begins to develop.

The role played by Slamet Rahardjo in *Kawin Lari* is somewhat different from the role he plays in the two previous films discussed in this chapter, *Ranjang Pengantin* and *Cinta Pertama*. In those films, his characters were highly ambiguous (due to their lack of honesty), but presented themselves also as youthful and attractive suitors. In *Kawin Lari*, he plays an unambiguously positive character, whose energetic, supportive and spirited behaviour towards his prospective partner provides an unusual role model for the audience. At the same time, neither is the main female character, Anna, eroticised or investigated by the camera in any way corresponding to Mulvey's (1989) analysis of the patriarchal gaze.⁶⁸ According to Mulvey the workings of the male gaze

⁶⁸ Laura Mulvey (1989). *Visual and Other Pleasures*. London: The Macmillan Press.

in cinema should be seen in the following way. In mainstream cinema the woman is seen primarily from the male point of view: the camera and audience 'look' is usually identified with a male character's position, even when there are 'subjective' shots from the woman's point of view. Moreover, the patriarchal bases of Western society have tended to institutionalise such a way of seeing even when it is not directly identified with a male character. As the object of the male gaze the woman is usually seen in only two ways: either she is eroticised, if she is desired, or she is investigated, if she is perceived as a threat. In this way the woman becomes a fantasy creation, tailored to male psychic needs.

In her famous article "Visual Pleasure in the Narrative Cinema" Mulvey (1989) argued that these structures can be found in a wide range of mainstream Hollywood films, from the films made by Joseph von Sternberg in the 1930s, through the cycle of *film noir* films of the 40s where the woman is both eroticised and investigated (e.g. *Double Indemnity*, *The Maltese Falcon*) to Hitchcock's films of the 50s and 60s (e.g. *Vertigo* and *Psycho*). Mulvey makes use of Freudian and Lacanian theory, arguing that Freudian concepts can explain "how the patriarchal unconscious has structured film form" to suit its own psychic needs (p. 14). Following Christian Metz she employs Freud's notion of *scopophilia* ("taking other people as objects and subjecting them to a curious and controlling gaze") in its voyeuristic aspect to explain the origins of erotic pleasure in looking in film (p. 16).

Kawin Lari observes Anna as someone who may well be brought out of her shy, reclusive and awkward state (whatever has caused this disposition) by another's belief in her and by loving attentiveness. Since the conventions of the romantic comedy used in *Kawin Lari* mean that the relationship will succeed, and that Anna will find a partner, the narrative trajectory of *Kawin Lari* is quite different from that in *The Glass*

Menagerie, where the dramatic power of the play lies in the defeat accorded to all the characters. To give the film dimensions other than scenes of romance, Teguh introduces into the story both an obstacle, with its ensuing complications, and a range of other characters, primarily found in group situations and usually expressive of the community relations and social realities in the *kampung*. The obstacle occurs well into the film when Sumirah starts to mistakenly believe that Jaka is the son of a woman, Saodah, who her husband had an affair with nearly twenty years earlier, leading to him deserting her. In fact, as we subsequently learn, Jaka is the son by an earlier marriage of Saodah's husband at the time, who was himself the victim of the affair between Sumirah's husband and Saodah. The obstacle leads to an enforced separation between Anna and Jaka. A series of ruses initiated by Willy outwits Sumirah and the couple is reunited, after which they elope.

The story told in *Kawin Lari* about finding the right man is interesting for its cultural implications that partly explain Sumirah's behaviour in the film. The film describes the culturally reinforced concerns of many parents across Indonesia where a marriage is important, especially when they have a daughter. The way Sumirah attempts to find a husband for Anna also reflects a popular set of criteria used by Indonesian parents. Although the story of the film takes place within West Javanese culture, it can be equally well explained in terms derived from Central Javanese culture and language. Javanese parents will consider three aspects in any candidate who might become the future life partner of their daughter. These three aspects are *bibit*, *bebet* and *bobot*. *Bibit* or the "seeds" refers to the candidate's family background and upbringing,⁶⁹ which is

⁶⁹ Nancy J Smith-Hefner describes *bibit*, *bebet* and *bobot* as part of traditional path into a marriage for a Javanese single woman, which is now slowly diminishing as young people embrace modern or "Western" values of courtship that includes "a prolonged relationship" without necessarily having a commitment to get married at the end of a relationship. See Smith-Hefner (2005, pp. 441-459).

the factor that assesses the social and cultural quality of the candidate. *Bebet* refers to the “wealth” or the ability of the candidate to look after their partner. This aspect generally refers to physical things such as housing, vehicles, job, salary and other financial matters. *Bobot* is about “moral” matters. To some extent, *Kawin Lari* demonstrates the use of these three aspects by Sumirah in her search for the right partner for Anna. In the case of Jaka, Sumirah approves of his profession and polite manners (*bebet* and *bobot*). Jaka’s family background (*bibit*) is the main reason why Sumirah disagrees with the relationship. However, Willy reminds his mother that his own father, Van Nijs, was also a man who did not look after his family well. Willy’s harsh critique of her ex-husband, made to his mother, makes her realise that she has made a serious mistake in judging Jaka.

The section of the film dealing with Sumirah’s unhappy past commences sixty minutes into the film when she returns from a trip to Bandung. Sumirah, who is clearly tense and very worked up, announces that she has some bad news about Jaka, and this leads to some flashbacks to the past as she explains what her concerns are. Here the melodramatic elements of the film that are characteristic of this period of Teguh’s work appear, as the film explains the context of the triangular relationships that have so upset Sumirah. However, in the flashback to the affair Van Nijs had with Saodah, the film only describes the affair between Van Nijs and Saodah and Sumirah’s meeting with little Jaka, the couple’s son, but does not inform the audience that Jaka is not actually Saodah’s own son. By withholding knowledge from the audience, they become aligned with Sumirah’s mistaken understanding of Jaka’s background. However, the truth is revealed when Jaka tells Willy that he is not Saodah’s son in a conversation with Willy following Sumirah’s mistaken discovery of his past. As Willy attempts to find a solution to his sister’s situation and develops a plan to find another suitor for Anna in

the scenes following this conversation, information as to his real plans (which are to permanently reunite Anna and Jaka) is also withheld from the audience, thus creating a series of pleasant surprises as this comedy-drama moves to its conclusion. Willy works his plan with Jaka, Rudy and Rudy's wife. In particular, the role of Rudy and his wife is to bring Willy's messages to Jaka, as Sumirah has forbidden Willy and Anna to meet Jaka. In the last quarter of the film, this issue of Sumirah's rejection of Jaka on the grounds of his apparently being the son of a woman who destroyed her own married life becomes a major dramatic element in the film, shifting the film away from comedy and towards drama, and evoking in some scenes the sorts of tensions and strains found in Tennessee Williams' play.

Kawin Lari contains a wealth of social detail about the lives of kampung dwellers in Jakarta. The garment factory where Willie works is a cramped low-ceilinged establishment where young men, lined up in rows of tables as in a schoolroom, sit at sewing machines making garments. Despite these conditions, there is camaraderie and good humour between the workers. In terms of pertinent social detail, an important feature of the character of the mother, Sumirah, is her key role in ensuring her family's economic survival through her continual engrossment in numerous small-scale cottage industries, none of which by itself is sufficient for them to survive; for example, collecting old magazines from neighbours to sell at a paper disposal agent; making and selling small snacks and cakes and occasionally selling magazine subscriptions and finding new subscribers. Teguh here is showing the long-recognised characteristic of the Javanese village women who often hold the family together by engaging in many different kinds of small trading, a situation explored in detail by the anthropologist

Hildred Geertz and others.⁷⁰ For her portrayal of Sumirah, a woman of many moods and concerns, Tuti Indra Malaon won the prize for “Best Actress in a Comedy Film” at the Indonesian Film Festival of 1976.

Having established in *Cinta Pertama* and *Ranjang Pengantin* that he could use certain popular formulas to make films that were commercially successful, with *Kawin Lari* Teguh created a film which has commercial elements but which also allowed him to explore new kinds of possibilities in filmmaking. Although Teguh and his Teater Populer group had produced *The Glass Menagerie* for the theatre, Teguh substantially reworked the play as a bitter comedy and relocated it specifically to an environment he knew well and through which he could introduce many local cultural characteristics. By now he was able to use the box office stars he had established with his two previous films, Christine Hakim and Slamet Rahardjo, to get support from producers to try something new.

Indeed *Kawin Lari* uses almost none of the more obvious formulas used in commercial films at that time. For example, the characters do not come from the Jakarta elite class and the story is set entirely in a kampung with middle class or lower class characters. It avoids excessive melodrama, keeping for the most part a light tone, though occasionally shifting into well-played intense naturalistic scenes of considerable psychological insight, particularly in scenes with the mother. Not all of the elements of the film are completely successful in *Kawin Lari*. The actress playing Anna, Christine

⁷⁰ This phenomena is discussed in Hildred Geertz's *The Javanese Family* (1961) and in Lea Jellinek's *The Life of a Jakarta Street Trader-Two Years Later* (1975). In her book, Geertz explains that the Javanese village women are generally able to handle the tasks of managing the household works as well as providing the financial support for their family. Geertz (1961, p. 123) describes the Javanese women as “self-sufficient.” Jellinek observed the life of a Javanese woman living in Jakarta, named Bud. Bud is described as a strong and dominant mother figure in her family. Living apart from her husband, Bud survives through her business, a *warung nasi* (rice stall) in her kampung. She also buys goods such as clothes, radios and televisions, from one market and re-sells them at another market at a higher price.

Hakim, had to work extremely hard to portray the shy, reclusive and extremely awkward Anna (who was very different from the character she had played previously, in *Cinta Pertama*), and the sense that this is highly mannered acting is only too apparent, a fact commented upon by the critic Salim Said (1991, p. 169). For the most part Christine's performance clearly is a manufactured performance by someone cast against type for largely commercial reasons, though there are moments, as Anna gains in confidence and begins to relate to Jaka, where Christine produces some wonderful facial expressions as she looks at her suitor.

Perkawinan Dalam Semusim (The Short-Lived Marriage, 1976): Patriarchal Imperialism in a Third World Context

“How do you do it? You control your wife in the same way you control your wood business in Kalimantan.” - A fellow businessman talks to Pak Kardiman, in *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*.⁷¹

Teguh's fifth film is an experimental family melodrama about the oppression of women and of workers in a Third World milieu in Indonesia. The film is set in West Java and its opening scenes are situated in a poor, mist-laden village located on the edge of a dormant volcano, Tangkuban Perahu. The villagers here survive by working in a local limestone-processing factory and by selling trinkets and local handicrafts to the occasional tourists who come to this otherwise desolate spot. However, the film really has two centres of action: firstly, this poor village with its only partially employed villagers, and secondly, the luxurious mansion of a wealthy businessman, Pak

⁷¹ The original text in Indonesian reads as follows: “Bagaimana kau mengontrolnya? Kau mengontrol istrimu sama seperti kau mengontrol perusahaan kayumu di Kalimantan.” (Seorang kawan bisnis Pak Kardiman dalam *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*).

Kardiman, located an hour's drive away in the regional capital, Bandung. The film deals with the exploitative relations between Pak Kardiman and his family, who own the cotton factory, and the villagers, particularly the women, who are victims of the predatory behaviour of the male members of this family.

The original title of the film was *Manusia Srigala (Human Wolves)*, but at some stage in its preparation the Indonesian Department of Information, that controlled film production at the time, recommended that its title be changed, and the title eventually adopted was the one by which it is known now: *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* (Kristanto, 2007, p. 141). The film was partly improvised: it was shot without a fully developed script, using only a plot outline or treatment, with much of the dialogue improvised on location. This was a new experience for members of Teater Populer. In many ways, *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* is a daring work: a melodrama set in the hothouse atmosphere of a violent and abusive family but which extends outside the family, dramatizing their impact on local poor who are easily open to exploitation. The film therefore has political implications. In feel, *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* is not unlike a Douglas Sirk melodrama, such as *Written on the Wind* (1956), which is also about the unstable private lives of a wealthy business family. The central character of *Written on the Wind* is Kyle Hadley (Robert Stack), the alcoholic son of an oil baron, and Sirk's film was based on an actual scandal.⁷²

Perkawinan Dalam Semusim establishes continuities between the personal and the public, in that the patriarchal oppression that is characteristic of the unhappy marriage of the hard-living Pak Kardiman is also a feature of his public behaviour.

⁷² Douglas Sirk's *Written on the Wind* was based on Robert Wilder's novel with the same title published in 1945. Wilder's novel loosely describes the real life affair in 1930 in America between Libby Holman, a singer and Zachary Smith Reynolds, the heir of R.J Reynolds, the owner of R.J tobacco company in North Carolina. See Evans (2013, p. 14)

Although *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* includes top stars in its cast, including Slamet Rahardjo, Rachmat Hidayat and the emerging and very talented actress Tuti Indra Malaon, its experimental nature makes the film hard to understand for its audience until its concluding scenes, which are primarily resolved not in political terms, but in the largely personalised terms of a family melodrama, ending with an ambiguously happy ending. My discussion will focus on the use of melodrama in the film and the relation of the film to actual realities within a Third World developing society with a very large population, such as Indonesia was in the mid-1970s.

The narrative of the film is not entirely linear. The film uses intermittent flashbacks as an important way of explaining the full Kardiman family situation, with its complicated relationships and history. The film also uses intercut scenes, narrative ellipses and ambiguities as to when scenes occur as a way of forcing the audience to work hard to comprehend the story and its implications. For this reason a detailed exposition of the plot of the film is necessary.

The film begins when a young man from the village, Koswara (Slamet Rahardjo), discovers, in a very dramatic scene, that his wife, Aisah (Anissa Sitawati), has been raped. The furious Koswara is restrained by his sister, who says their family is not powerful enough to seek justice. This scene is followed by the opening credits, where we see that Koswara has been invited to apply for a job as the chauffeur of the Bandung businessman, Pak Kardiman (Rahmat Hidayat), whose son Agus (Herman Masduki) is the owner of the local limestone-processing plant. In subsequent scenes Aisah wanders around in states of mental disarray, eventually dying in childbirth later in the film. However, the child, who was a product of the rape, survives. Koswara is introduced to the Bandung family whose chauffeur he will become. The physically dominant and verbally loquacious, even abusive, father heads a deeply dissatisfied and

dysfunctional family. Pak Kardiman's semi-estranged and lonely wife Bu Kardiman (Tuti Indra Malaon) tries to establish a friendship with the quiet and reserved chauffeur.⁷³ She also cautions her stepson, Agus, against playing fast and loose with village women, behaviour of which she has heard rumours. Bu Kardiman herself has a daughter, Nana (also played by Anissa Sitawati), from her previous affair with an unknown man before she married to Pak Kardiman. Nana is approached by Rahmat, a medical student, but she is not interested in him.

Subsequent shots show Agus' right-hand man at the factory, the villager, Ipik, asking young men for access to their younger sisters on Agus' behalf. It is not long before we see villagers approach both Koswara and Bu Kardiman, requesting compensation for the treatment of a village girl, Juleha, Ipik's sister, who has been impregnated by Agus. To pay him off, Kardiman gives money to Ipik but refuses to allow his son to acquiesce to Ipik's demands that he marry Juleha. As time goes on, Kardiman becomes increasingly furious at the demands being made on him by Ipik, but is prepared to pay if Ipik keeps his mouth shut. A flashback details the hypocrisy of his own marriage when a young Agus and Nana, discover Kardiman in bed with two mistresses. The potential of a major conflict occurring between Kardiman and Koswara over Bu Kardiman are partly allayed through a frank discussion between the two men. Here, Agus's problems with the factory employees whom he has been exploiting emerge as a major conflict, leading to a showdown between Kardiman and Agus in his home office, in which Kardiman is shot dead by his own son while angry workers who have travelled down from the mountain to seek justice, and compensation, stand outside the house and try to gain entrance. Agus is arrested and during his trial further facts about the family emerge (for example, there is a flashback to Kardiman's attempt to

⁷³ The Indonesian terms *Pak* and *Bu* correspond roughly to "Mr" and "Mrs."

rape Bu Kardiman's then teenage daughter Nana), and Nana returns to Indonesia to be with her mother. The film ends with a series of scenes in which Bu Kardiman encourages her daughter to develop a friendship with the gentle and restrained Koswara.

There are a number of aspects of this film that make it a relatively unique work in Teguh's oeuvre, showing an engagement with an entirely new locale and culture. Firstly, there is the degree of sexual explicitness and sexual daring in it which, while occurring in only a small number of scenes and not involving any kind of pornographic display, demonstrates a frankness about sexual intimacy unusual in Teguh's films. Secondly, the film's shows a highly developed interest in portraying marginalised contemporary rural communities. The isolated community of displaced villagers in a mountainous area eking out a bare existence nearby to tourist spots, highlights real class differences (and differences in social advantage and social mobility) in a way that few films attempted during the Soeharto New Order period. Thirdly, this particular mountain community is strongly Muslim and this is the first time in which Teguh has featured Muslim religious devotional practices in his films. Fourth, although not entirely successful, the film is an experimental work, focusing on a complex story about family relationships told through quite numerous flashbacks. In this regard the film anticipates and is perhaps a preparation for a major, more successful work made some years later, *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* (*Bitter Coffee*, 1984).

The sexual explicitness begins with the flashback to the time when the young children Agus and Nana were ushered into Pak Kardiman's house and run to find their father upstairs, only to glimpse him in bed with two young women. But this scene is followed shortly afterwards by a scene in which the previously enraged wife, Bu Kardiman, wearing a becoming blue and white nightdress, stands up on a couch in

which Kardiman is lying, pretending to dominate him with her feet, while he narrates to her his sexual exploits with a range of young women.

Image 4: Pak Kardiman, the patriarchal imperialist with his women



While this scene is brief, it shows a whole level of intimacy in the relationship between Pak Kardiman and his wife, which on occasions is built around his infidelity, philandering and sexual obsessions: the very things that Bu Kardiman rejects. This is an unusual scene in an Indonesian film at the time, and it is a scene of a kind not commonly found in a family melodrama where the emphasis is primarily on the wife as victim. Later on, there is another scene of attempted intimacy. When the lonely Bu Kardiman returns from the zoo with her chauffeur, Koswara, she invites him into her reception room and, sitting down on a couch as he stands over her, attempts to seduce him, drawing him closer to her body and showing her white slip under her dress, another daring thing for an Indonesia actress to do in the 1970s. The film does not condemn her for this; indeed, it suggests she is a sophisticated and independently minded woman who now finds herself trapped in a relationship with a man who gives his unbounded attention to every desire and every violent emotion, no matter with

whom. Later in the film in a discussion she has with Koswara about her marriage, Koswara says to her: “You were attracted to Pak Kardiman because he was a powerful man and now you find that you are the victim of the way he exercises his power.” At which she answers in a moment of self-knowledge: “Who then am I?”⁷⁴

The dysfunctional family relations are complex in this melodrama. Agus is Pak Kardiman’s son by an unknown, discarded partner. Nana is Bu Kardiman’s daughter from a similarly short-lived relationship. A flashback that occurs when Pak Kardiman and Bu Kardiman discuss their relationship and their marriage indicates that Bu Kardiman entered into the marriage because both families saw financial advantage in such a partnership. Agus emulates his father’s predatory sexual behaviour to the extent that this intrudes on his father’s life and is then openly discussed and analysed within the family. Not only have the children been witnesses to Pak Kardiman’s philandering, but Pak Kardiman has attempted to rape his stepdaughter when she was an older teenager.⁷⁵ Pak Kardiman appears to have been blackmailed into paying for her overseas study as a result. We are informed early on that Agus has raped Juleha, Ipik’s sister, and later we learn this has caused her death. We also learn late in the film that it was Pak Kardiman (not Agus) who raped Koswara’s wife, resulting in the pregnancy that resulted in her death in childbirth. Late in the film Koswara informs Bu Kardiman that the child he is bringing up is the child of his own wife and Kardiman. One sub-theme in the film is that it is the servants in the family who hold the family together, or who at least prevent it from falling apart much of the time. When he first arrives at the

⁷⁴ The original text in Indonesian reads as follows: “Dulu ibu tertarik kepada bapak karena kekuatannya, sekarang ibu merasa menjadi korban.” /”Lalu siapa aku sesungguhnya.”

⁷⁵ The fact that Teguh Karya used the same actor, Anissa Sitawati to play the village girl (Aisah) and the city girl (Nana), both of them are raped by Pak Kardiman, shows Teguh’s daring way of emphasising the similarity in the structural positioning of the women in the society described in this film, despite the fact that these women (Aisah and Nana) belong to the quite different classes.

family home, Koswara is unofficially briefed by the two main servants, independently of each other, about the power relations in the family, in two related, humorous scenes. The housekeeper, Mbok, frequently calms down situations when they get out of control. The security man, Leman, is expected by Pak Kardiman to watch out for what Bu Kardiman does and to prevent any unauthorised access to the house, but he is also the recipient of requests from Bu Kardiman concerning who will be allowed in. The supportive and loyal Leman, who can only survive by dissimulation, is the victim of a violent outburst by Pak Kardiman (who frequently sacks his staff) over a minor matter, and is sent to hospital for treatment as a result. The film therefore includes a quite sophisticated upstairs and downstairs theme of servants and masters as a way of presenting a comprehensive picture of the family and, through these moments of insightful humour, providing a more varied tone to the hothouse atmosphere of the film.

On the other hand, the financially deprived poor living at the mouth of the dormant volcano are vulnerable to these rich men who require multiple partners to satisfy their appetites and who are the “human wolves” of the film’s original title, the title suppressed by the bureaucrats of the Soeharto New Order regime. The selection of this kind of village as the locus of the victims of these men is a way of graphically presenting the fact that in Indonesia in the 1970s (and even today) there is a huge gap between the rich elites and the masses of the population, and that this economic disparity, glimpsed at the point where the gap is at its most extreme—a tourist spot—but where two classes can come briefly into contact with one another, with convenient anonymity, makes the extremely poor of the society fuel and fodder for those who have power and money. This point of sociological significance is made in the film itself in a scene where Koswara, in the course of his developing friendship with Bu Kardiman, takes her up to the Tangkuban Perahu tourist area to show her the beauty spots. As they

walk in the distance, local people become ecstatic at the catch that Koswara has seemingly made: they refer to her as “money incarnate”, one man demonstrating his emotions in exaggerated body language, knocking over his stall as he does so. But when later Koswara brings Bu Kardiman to meet some of the villagers selling tourist items, out of what could be the respect the Javanese poor show to the moneyed classes but also perhaps due to the presence of their friend Koswara, the villagers give Bu Kardiman little presents and refuse to accept money from her.⁷⁶ This well-constructed scene is making an acute and historically accurate point about disadvantaged and poor villagers: that they often hold culturally reinforced double attitudes towards the rich in the society.

There are other similar culturally specific attitudes that are highlighted by the film. The sense of respect the poor Javanese show to the wealthy and their acquiescence about whatever happens to themselves, an attitude even found in the character of Koswara, is partly a consequence of the Muslim attitude of submission to fate. This attitude is partly positive as it enables them to willingly engage in a charitable manner with their disadvantage life situations, but which may at times make them vulnerable. In Koswara, this is seen particularly in his willingness to become the stepfather of the child that is the result of the rape of his wife, Aisah. Nevertheless, it also needs to be remarked that Koswara’s willing acceptance of the role of father to Pak Kardiman’s child is not only due to his good nature, nor because it is also his deceased wife’s child, but because in Java, the leasing out of children—the raising of other’s children by those who feel they have the family support to do so—is a Javanese cultural characteristic.

⁷⁶ While the film is set in West Java, *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* reflects the culture and traditions that are closely associated with Javanese Muslim community culture, such as cock fighting, the rituals of burying the dead body and the birthing of the baby. The allegorical nature of the film suggests that its social reference can be extended more broadly than simply with the area in which it was filmed in West Java.

Overall, the fact that this is a Javanese Muslim community is strongly emphasised in the way the film deliberately incorporates Muslim devotional practices and ceremonies into its scenes, as well as scenes of other local cultural traditions, such as a mask dance and a cock fight. In particular, the early parts of the film occur in the days preceding the Muslim festival of *Eid al-Fitr*, the feast of the breaking of the fast at the end of the fasting month. The anguished delivery of the infant by Aisah in the evening, followed by her death, a scene which occurs quite early in the film, is intercut with scenes of the loud chanting of evening prayers (*Maghrib*) in the misty twilight of the impoverished village at the time of the approach of Eid al-Fitr, and Aisah's burial the next day is a conspicuously Muslim event. Nevertheless, this commonly found Muslim attitude of surrender to fate (the word Islam means "submission") is not idealised or seen out of context in the film. In this community it is clear that there are men, whether they be elder brothers (Ipik) or brothers-in-law (Adjat, the husband of Koswara's sister), who can be bribed or tricked into providing—for those who will pay for it—access to the women (younger sisters or sisters-in-law) that the community expects them to protect. In this way, the film provides a critique of patriarchy and patriarchal power, not only as it exists in elite circles, as found in the portrait of the Kardiman family, but, in the repeated instances shown in the film, as it is found in the cult of the *abang* (elder brother) in traditional Indonesian societies.

Perkawinan Dalam Semusim shows an even greater willingness than *Kawin Lari* to experiment with film in a way that works against the dominant codes of commercial cinema and pays little regard to the audience's sensibilities. The film uses a handheld Cinemascope camera in many scenes, sometimes wildly swinging as it follows villagers running on the crater rim of the volcano. Flashbacks are introduced without the usual slow dissolve transitions to them, further increasing the sense of sharp

aesthetic juxtapositions, visual conflicts miming diegetic conflicts and possibly creating confusion for an audience. Furthermore, scenes are intercut with one another. One example is the scene in the reception rooms of the mansion, in which Rahmat, the medical student, with as much politeness and formality as possible, announces to Bu Kardiman his intention to marry Nana, while at the same time, within earshot and in embarrassing proximity, in his office Pak Kardiman shouts at Agus and Ipik about the consequences of Agus' rape of Ipik's sister. This disturbance of protocol highlights not only the hypocrisy within the Kardiman establishment, but also the hypocrisy that much social decorum masks. Moreover, while Koswara is a key character sympathetically portrayed, and the contradictions of Bu Kardiman's relation to herself are explored sympathetically, the film does not provide a central focus on a character whose quest an audience can identify with, and whose quest is followed by the film, particularly given the rapid and agitated cutting between scenes and the sometimes reckless camera movement. Koswara is as much an observer as he is a protagonist.

Compositionally, in contrast to *Ranjang Pengantin* and *Kawin Lari* where Teguh created a sense of community through the shots of kampung dwellers in Jakarta, in *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* the camera tends to isolate individuals in confrontation with one another. These individual confrontations occur in quite a few scenes, especially in the Kardiman mansion where each individual is positioned on the edge of the Cinemascope frame in reverse angle shots, suggesting a constant sense of isolated individuals in conflict with one another. This is consistent with the genre of melodrama that the film seeks to emulate. In its last few scenes, after the shooting of Kardiman and the subsequent trial, *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* suddenly changes in tone, to become more like a conventional commercial romantic melodrama with a happy ending. Here developments in the narrative briefly suggest a potential romance between the gentle

and considerate Koswara and Bu Kardiman's daughter, Nana, who has been rejected by her medical student suitor out of jealousy, when he sees Nana express affection and gratitude to Koswara by embracing him. Given Koswara's social and economic status, such a romance is very unlikely to lead to any more permanent relationship, and the ending of the film is unrealistic and trite. While it is difficult to imagine other possible endings for the film, given the unresolved nature of the surviving characters' situations, the ending it has been given appears to have been designed to satisfy the film's producers and to give the impression to audiences that the film was more conventional than it actually was.

In its full-blown portrait of a hard-living, extraverted and unstable businessman and the hothouse atmosphere created in his home, as noted earlier there are some similarities between *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* and Douglas Sirk's *Written on the Wind* (1956). Sirk's *Written on the Wind*, a family melodrama about an abusive heir to an oil fortune, Kyle Hadley, is a sardonic examination of the abuse of power among the wealthy. The performance of Pak Kardiman by Rachmat Hidayat is comparable in its power to that of Robert Stack as Kyle Hadley. But there are also significant differences. Ultimately, the portrait of Kyle Hadley painted in *Written on the Wind* is not of a man who is powerful but who is weak and obsessed with his own impotence, and this failure is the scandal at the centre of the film. *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* deals with power at many levels in Indonesian society and its targets extend very widely, even if its full implications are found only briefly in the rapidly moving dialogue. One example is the line of dialogue I have used as an epigraph to my discussion of the film, a joking observation made by a fellow businessmen to Pak Kardiman as they come away after a business meeting at a hotel in Jakarta: "You control your wife in the same way you control your wood business in Kalimantan."

While *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* is a family melodrama about the abuse of wives and less privileged women in the society, the film is also an allegory of how elite businessmen in Indonesia relate to the rest of Indonesian society at that time through their uncaring exploitation of resources and manpower. In its reworking of popular melodrama in a highly experimental way, it is a difficult, erratic and yet highly pertinent response to both the ethos of New Order Indonesia and to lasting problems experienced by the Indonesian population at large.

The reason for mentioning Sirk's *Written on the Wind* early in my discussion is that such a comparison underlines the fact that Teguh Karya had the capacity to try different kinds of melodramatic modes, the family melodrama with an emphasis on pathos, as in *Ranjang Pengantin*. *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* is a drama about a brutal wealthy family, internally at war with one another, but also preying on much poorer and extremely vulnerable marginalised members of society. *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* does not employ pathos, but it uses contrasting extremes, emphasizing the viciousness of the oppressors rather than the pathos of the victims, as to some extent does the slightly more humorous (because satiric) melodrama, *Written on the Wind*. Similarly, both films create a hot-house atmosphere of domestic violence and sexual oppression in depicting their characters from the wealthy families. *Written on the Wind* links sex scandals with the excesses of wealth found among corrupt wealthy Texas families who have made their fortunes in oil. We find a similar association between wealth, abuses of power and sex scandals in *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* where wealth is gained via a lime-stone processing factory. Limestone processing has at times been one of the most profitable businesses in Java where there are a lot of poor people who need employment, and where houses in cities need to be built

There is another link between the films. In her notes on the Criterion Collection release of *Written on the Wind*, film theorist Laura Mulvey writes:

When its director, Douglas Sirk, said *Written on the Wind* was “a film about failure,” he hardly did justice to the way pent-up, unfulfilled sexuality spills onto the screen and into the visual excess that has come to be considered his cinematic signature.⁷⁷

Sirk with his deliberately exaggerated *mise en scene*, created in *Written on the Wind* a story designed as an allegory for the emptiness of the lives of the rich in capitalist America. Mulvey goes on to quote Sirk’s own comment on the end of the film regarding the Dorothy Malone character:

Malone has lost everything. And I have put a sign there indicating this—
Malone, alone, sitting there hugging that goddammed oil well, having nothing.
The oil well which is, I think, a rather frightening symbol of American society.

Perkawinan Dalam Semusim was issued on video in the 1980s without major cuts from the censors, despite the depiction of extremes of class difference. While for the censors *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* might seem to be an experimental drama without social reference, the extreme class differences in this film, and, as in Sirk’s film, and the performances of the actors, work to imply that *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* encapsulates the even greater extremes of class difference found in Indonesia in the 1970s, compared with those in the USA.

⁷⁷ <http://www.criterion.com/current/posts/97-written-on-the-wind>

***Badai Pasti Berlalu* (The Storm is Over, 1977): A Popular Film by Teguh Karya from a Popular Novel by Marga T.**

Immediately following the title *Badai Pasti Berlalu* in the opening credits for the film is the statement: “Film Populer Teguh Karya dari Novel Populer Marga T” (Teguh Karya’s popular film based on Marga T’s popular novel). By inserting this statement into the film, Teguh tells the audience that not only is this film made in the popular style, it is also based on a popular novel. If this is taken as a predictive statement, then it was proven correct, as this was the most commercially successful film of all the thirteen films that Teguh Karya ever made. It was also the second most popular film in Jakarta in 1978 (Kristanto, 2007, p. 147). However, the opening statement of the film is not primarily intended to predict commercial success for the film, but rather to make a broad statement about the film’s genre.

This is popular cinema based on a particular kind of novel, and the film combines several aspects of Indonesian popular culture of the time. Firstly, as already noted, *Badai Pasti Berlalu* was based on a very popular Indonesian novel written by Marga Tjoa (or Marga T, as she is commonly known). The film used the same title as the novel, published in 1974. Secondly, in this film, Teguh used one of the most popular Indonesian actors in the 1970s, Roy Marten—who had never been a member of Teater Populer—for the male lead character, playing alongside the star that Teguh had created, Christine Hakim.⁷⁸ The popular appeal of *Badai Pasti Berlalu* was further supported through the use of music composed by Eros Djarot, who had written excellent music for Teguh Karya’s previous two films. In *Badai*, the soundtrack of the

⁷⁸ Roy Marten was one of the most popular and highest paid movie actors in Indonesia in 1970s. He achieved his first commercial success in Ami Priyono’s film *Cintaku di Kampus Biru* (A Love in the Blue Campus, 1976).

film was a huge hit that, in turn, boosted Eros's own career. At every level, *Badai Pasti Berlalu* reflects Teguh's further efforts to utilise elements of romance stories for the commercial benefit of his work. In an interview in *Kompas*, Teguh stated that the reason he made *Badai Pasti Berlalu* was that he had lost money for the producer Sudwikatmono on both of his previous films, *Kawin Lari* and *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*, and that he wanted to make a film that would recoup these losses for his financial backers.⁷⁹

Badai Pasti Berlalu tells a story of Siska (Christine Hakim), a twenty-two-year-old kindergarten teacher from a wealthy family; her father owns a nightclub and two houses. After her fiancé leaves her for another woman, Siska's brother Johnny (Herman Masduki) introduces her to Leo (Roy Marten), a popular medical student who Johnny has invited to stay at their country house. Siska, who still feels betrayed by her former boyfriend and not ready to be in another relationship, avoids Leo. Undeterred, Leo aggressively woos her. At one point it appears that Leo has been injured during his karate practice and may even be paralysed for life. While this is not the case, after this occurs Siska becomes more sympathetic to him, begins to accept and reciprocate his affection and they commence a relationship. They are even ready to become engaged. However, Siska is also confronting her own medical problems. After a medical examination, she has learned that she has diabetes. Later, Siska becomes disillusioned with Leo when she finds out that Leo courted her as a result of a bet he made with other students. But it is too late for Siska to cancel the engagement, as her family has prepared a party to celebrate the occasion. Siska and Leo separate after their engagement. After breaking up with Leo, Siska becomes involved in a relationship with

⁷⁹ Teguh has also been quoted as saying that he cast Roy Marten for the lead role in *Badai Pasti Berlalu* to ensure the success of the film in the box office. See Gunawan & Tejo (1993).

Helmi (Slamet Rahardjo), a popular pianist working at her father's nightclub. Helmi is a thoroughly dishonest and manipulative character, the first time that Slamet Rahardjo had played such a negative type of role in a Teguh Karya film. Initially Helmi blackmails Siska, telling her that, unbeknown to her family, his younger sister is her father's mistress. Because her mother has a heart condition and could not stand the shock of this revelation, Siska agrees to marry him, particularly after he later tells her that although his sister really is involved with her father, he really wanted to marry her and was prepared to say anything to coerce her into this. They marry and have a child. As one might expect, Helmi does not keep his promise and Siska's mother finds out about her husband's adulterous affair. The conflicts between Siska and Helmi take a toll on their relationship, which is made worse when their toddler son dies of an illness while Helmi is out of town. Siska ends her relationship with Helmi after their son's funeral. Leo returns to Siska and asks her to rebuild the relationship. She accepts Leo's request and the film ends.

Rather than seeing this film primarily as an original film by the auteur Teguh Karya, it is more appropriate to begin by relating it to other works by Marga T. Born in 1943, Marga T originally studied medicine, graduating in 1969. In 1971, she published a lengthy novel, *Karmila*, which was adapted into exceptionally popular film, *Karmila* (1974), directed by Ami Priyono.⁸⁰ *Badai Pasti Berlalu* was her second major novel, which first appeared in serialised form in *Kompas*, in 1972. Due to the huge and positive response from the newspaper readers, the story was published as a novel in 1974. Like Teguh Karya, Marga T is a Chinese Indonesian; however, in her creative output during the New Order period she identified with the dominant Javanese indigenous culture rather than that of other Chinese Indonesians and in her public

⁸⁰ The film *Karmila* was based on the first edition of the novel with the same title published in 1971.

persona played down her racial origin, for example by shortening her surname to an initial.

Marga T's early novels deal with difficult situations experienced by young women in their relationships with men and in their choice of marriage partner. In both *Badai Pasti Berlalu*, and in *Karmila*, the central character is a woman who is treated badly by men and, even if there is a man who may be a suitable and loving partner, the young woman makes a choice against her own best interests. This can be seen in both the novel and the film versions of *Karmila*. The twenty-year-old medical student, Karmila, is raped at a friend's party by Feisal, the son of a businessman. Karmila, whose fiancé, Edo, is living and studying in Perth, becomes pregnant as a result of the rape and must put her study on hold during her pregnancy. Feisal, who was arrested for what he did to Karmila, is released, as it is decided by the court that there is no conclusive evidence of rape. Feisal visits Karmila, expressing his willingness to be named as the father of the child and marry her. They agree to marry with the proviso that they will separate after the baby is born. After the baby is born Feisal looks after the baby frequently because Karmila wants to continue her education. Following her graduation as a medical doctor, Karmila wants to continue her education in Perth and live with Edo, who has expressed his willingness to accept and marry Karmila. A day before leaving for Perth, Karmila receives a call from Feisal. Feisal tells her that their son, Fani, has been taken to hospital because of typhus. At the hospital, Feisal begs her not to leave him and their son. Touched by his request, Karmila decides to cancel her plan to study in Perth.

In both *Karmila* and *Badai Pasti Berlalu*, the young woman protagonist is initially treated very badly by at least one man. The story of *Karmila* concludes with Karmila staying with the man who raped her, even though there is another, trusted

partner, a former fiancé, available with whom she might be happier. She makes a choice with lifelong consequences for reasons of family, at a time of an exceptional emergency when her young son falls ill. Since it seems that her chance of happiness would be greater with Edo than Faisal, one may ask, is it the case that popular culture in Indonesia in the 1970s demanded such an outcome? Similarly, in the film *Badai Pasti Berlalu*, which is very faithful to the novel, neither man is presented as really reliable: Helmi is clearly cynical and manipulative, but even Leo is presented as shallow and deceitful in his relationships. In an early scene at the hospital, as a way of showing off to other doctors, he says to a nurse he hardly knows who is passing him in the corridor: “Hello, manis! Kapan kita ke Binaria” (Hello Sweetie! When will we go to the Binaria amusement park?)—an incident which today would be regarded as a form of sexual harassment in the workplace, and which the film includes to illustrate his character. Meanwhile, Siska herself is presented as always willing to make sacrifices for others. For example, it is suggested that one of the reasons she rejects Leo is that she comes to falsely believe that Leo, too, has incipient diabetes, and that such a match could only result in an unfortunate outcome for any children they might have. As a discourse about the position of women in Jakarta upper middle class society, Marga T’s early novels may appear novelettish, particularly with the presence of so many medical symptoms and medical crises in them as key components of the plot facilitating turning points of major moral significance. Nevertheless, these novels may be cathartic for many Indonesian women who face uncertain futures when the happiness of their lives is so dependent, not on a career and through their own initiatives, but on making the right choice of a partner.

However, the problem with these early novels, particularly with *Karmila*, is that, having outlined the hypocrisies and brutalities that a woman may face, the novel

suggests that the woman commit herself to stay in the detestable and unpleasant situation rather than choosing the alternative.⁸¹ Sen (1994) suggests that through its political apparatus such as the Indonesian Film Festival, the New Order government maintained the conventional cinematic construction of women as wives (dependant on men), mothers or prostitutes (p.156). However, this kind of outcome is not a commonly found characteristic of works by Teguh Karya.

Like much of the popular cinema of the 1970s and 1980s, apart from one scene where Siska visits the family of Helmi in a kampung slum area, most of *Badai Pasti Berlalu* is set in the relatively spacious and luxurious homes and social environment of the emerging Jakarta wealthy of the 1970s. Their lifestyle, values, and expectations can be seen through the family's possessions: a large family home in the heart of Jakarta where they frequently hold parties; a nightclub in the same area; an exclusive country villa in Bogor West Java, two hours by car from Jakarta; and a factory. Indeed, Siska's family represents the new milieu of the rising capitalist class, the class that enjoyed the economic development of Indonesia under Soeharto's policies, with its wealth highly concentrated in the capital city, Jakarta, itself undergoing development under the governorship of Ali Sadikin.⁸² The other major location for the film is the Cipto Mangunkusumo State Hospital in Jakarta, the training hospital for middle class medical students at the University of Indonesia in nearby Jalan Salemba. Leo and his friends are final-year students who are interning as assistants to senior doctors there. They may be

⁸¹ In the film *Dr Karmila* (Nico Pelamonia, 1981), a sequel to *Karmila* and also based on a novel by Marga T, Karmila endures the jealousy of Feisal when he discovers that Edo has visited her to renew the friendship, even though on a business trip to Malaysia he himself has acquired a mistress. At the end of *Dr Karmila*, Karmila has three children by Feisal and he has agreed to convert to Christianity.

⁸² Ali Sadikin was the governor of Jakarta between 1966 and 1977. His most controversial policy was to redevelop Jakarta through funding that his government collected from legalising casinos, nightclubs and brothels. See Hadimaja (2012).

seen as representative of the growing middle class in Indonesian in the mid-1970s. As students of the best state university in Indonesia, Leo and his friends enjoy some prestige and status in society. In the early 1970s the students of the University of Indonesia were involved in several demonstrations against the New Order government, but *Badai Pasti Berlalu* does not show any political engagement by the students. Instead, the film chooses to show the students' lifestyle of parties, training in martial arts, and gossip about girls. The actor Roy Marten was cast as the typical character he often played in his previous films: a superficial playboy who is attractive to women. There is strong male bonding among the medical students, to the point where women are often mocked and regarded simply as fair game. It is not clear whether the film is critiquing this behaviour, which is shown on a number of occasions, or whether the behaviour of Leo and his student friends is presented for the light entertainment of the audience. However, this behaviour is unambiguously presented as deeply hurtful to Siska, when she discovers that her feelings for Leo have been the object of a wager.

One important issue raised by the film is the question of how people's relationships are affected by the illness of one of the partners. It could be argued that in both the novel and the film, although Siska is angry with Leo, she breaks up with him not only because of the humiliating circumstances of the wager but because she believes he also has diabetes and that this seriously threatens the health prospects of any children that may result from their union. In the film this issue only receives very slight attention, although the point is made by the consulting doctor that marriage between two people with diabetes is not recommended. At the end of this rather protracted novel the two characters, Siska and Leo, take three suspenseful pages of dialogue to establish that while Siska does have diabetes, Leo does not and that Leo can handle this, because, after all, there is something attractive about diabetics (*Badai Pasti Berlalu*, the novel, p.

473). The film ends with shots of Leo joyfully running to find Siska through the rubber tree plantation on the property at her family home near Bogor, where he had falsely courted her at the opening of the film. In close-up, she looks at him directly, holding an autumn leaf in her hand, her suffering and saddened face posing a question mark.

Image 5: Siska's accepts Leo's proposal to rebuild their relationship



Nevertheless, she goes with him. The concluding lines of dialogue in the film are as follows:

Indonesian	English
Siska: Saya tidak sebersih dulu lagi	Siska: I am not clean anymore.
Leo: Tidak. Kau masih tetap sama, manis seperti biasanya orang sakit gula. (Siska tersenyum pahit). Mereka telah menunggu kita.	Leo: No, you are still the same, sweet like is often found in a person who has diabetes. (Siska smiles wryly). They have been waiting for us.

Clearly the medical dimensions of *Badai Pasti Berlalu* contributed to it becoming a highly popular novel. The extent to which the central character is a victim is also a factor in its popularity. The success of the film was enhanced not only by its source, the novel, and the popularity of stars that were cast to appear in it, but on the success of its music. The film soundtrack was released as an album in 1977 to coincide with when the film was screened in theatres. This soundtrack album was successful in its own right and helped the film achieve commercial success (Sakrie, 2007, p. 37). For his role as the music director in *Badai Pasti Berlalu*, Eros received the Best Music Film Director Award in the 1978 Indonesian Film Festival in Jakarta. An Indonesian music critic, Denny Sakrie, who writes for *Rolling Stones Indonesia*, in 2007 listed *Badai Pasti Berlalu* as number three in a list of 150 Indonesian most popular music albums of all the time (Sakrie, 2007, p. 37). The magazine also reported a brief story of the making of the soundtrack. Teguh wanted to use Anna Manthovani, who sang the theme song in *Cinta Pertama*, on the soundtrack, saying that Berlian's rendition of the song reminded him of *Kuntilanak* (a female ghost in Indonesian folklore). Eros, however, wanted to use Berlian Hutaeruk, a new female singer at that time. As a result of pressure from Eros, Teguh finally agreed to use Berlian as the singer and the resultant soundtrack was very popular, meaning that together, Teguh and Eros made the right decision.

In the late 1990s, the memory of the public about the success of *Badai Pasti Berlalu* both as novel and film was refreshed by the speech made by President Soeharto in 1997 when the nation was going through an economic crisis. The statement "*Badai Pasti Berlalu*" was used to convince the people that they would survive the crisis (Abdullah, 2009, p. 529).

Conclusion

This chapter has surveyed the five films Teguh made between 1973 and 1977, the period in which he established himself as a director capable of achieving the commercial success he needed to go on working as a director. From 1978 onwards his films were not purely commercial in outlook but explored his own interests and vision. The most commercially successful films in this period made by Teguh were the first, *Cinta Pertama*, and the last, *Badai Pasti Berlalu*. While clearly this is the period where Teguh establishes not only himself as a viable filmmaker, but Teater Populer and its key stars as significant members of the industry, not all the films were commercially successful. The two that were not commercially successful in this period, *Kawin Lari* and *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*, were also the two films in which Teguh did not attempt to utilise the obvious stratagems for achieving commercial success and in which he experimented with stylistic and narrative approaches. *Kawin Lari* was his only comedy-drama, while the partly improvised *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* was an outrageously excessive melodrama with a complex plot that featured the unusual use of a handheld camera, together with flashbacks and experimental cutting between scenes. This last film anticipates the aesthetically much more successful *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*, which was filmed in 1984, and which is also a portrait of Third World aspects of Indonesia.

Of the five films discussed in this chapter, one aspect that unites most of them is that four of these films build their narrative development and narrative resolution around popular ideas of romance and the formation of a couple. This is most obvious in *Cinta Pertama*, which ends with a marriage and in *Kawin Lari*, where there is an extended, comic romancing of a difficult if worthy partner. Another aspect of all these film is that the family is central to all of them. More complex situations are shown in

Ranjang Pengantin, which is about the marriage itself, and the family, although it begins with courting, and in *Badai Pasti Berlalu*, where two men woo the same woman at different times, and where the failure of the first marriage, to the second suitor, and the deceptions in the first wooing are shown. Most of the romance films are overlaid with aspects of melodrama, not always found in romance films. In most of these films, and particularly in *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*, and in *Badai Pasti Berlalu*, the father is a key problem, either due to his conservative class-bound and traditionalist authoritarian attitudes, or due to his power and duplicity. Even in *Kawin Lari* the father, though absent, is a problem, due to the way in which he has betrayed his wife. Nevertheless while most of these films pose problems that can arise in traditional Indonesian family situations, they end with a notionally happy ending, at least for the main characters. For a discerning audience, however, these endings are not unequivocally happy, due to the problems associated with the romantic male hero. Perhaps one of the most important characteristics of Teguh's films of this period is that in all of these films it is rarely the central woman who is the "problem" of the film; rather, it is the male characters, the romantic hero himself, that is presented as the problem for the central female characters, in his duplicity, as in the character of Bastian, in *Cinta Pertama*, in his rashness and impulsiveness, as in the character of Bram in *Ranjang Pengantin*, and in his manipulative attitude to the young woman, as in the character of Helmi, in *Badai Pasti Berlalu*. These three characters I have just cited are all played by Slamet Rahardjo, who came to prominence as Teguh's main romantic male lead. But in *Badai Pasti Berlalu*, it is not only Helmi, but Leo, the doctor whom Siska marries at the end of the film who is duplicitous and repeatedly poses problems for the central female character. This presence of the male who is troubling is in contrast with the paradigm of patriarchal cinema as presented by Laura Mulvey (1989)

in her article “Visual Pleasure and the Narrative Cinema”, where it is argued that in classical Hollywood films it is usually the woman who embodies trouble and danger. The main exception to this pattern in Teguh’s popular films is *Kawin Lari*, where the central male is unequivocally supportive to the fragile unconfident central female character. While the central male protagonist in *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* is supportive of women, he is primarily an observer of situations created by others.⁸³

Although Teguh Karya’s five popular films (*Cinta Pertama*, *Ranjang Pengantin*, *Kawin Lari*, *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* and *Badai Pasti Berlalu*) were mainly made to satisfy the general audience’s taste telling stories on domestic problems, we may consider them as melodramas that also attempt to speak about the social reality in Indonesia in the 1970s. While these films depict Teguh’s deep involvement in popular music and stories, they are also able to show, not in great details as his realist films will do, Teguh’s concerns with social issues. The early and mid-1970s were the difficult period in Teguh’s filmmaking career where he was aware of the fact that he worked to regain his position in the Indonesian film industry after the commercial failure of *Wajah Seorang Laki-laki*, but at the same time he still attempted to give a room for his personal expression.

Overall, this propensity of Teguh’s films to explore the problems created by males and not to see women as a problem appears to be a part of Teguh’s own personal vision. Nevertheless it should be noted that Teguh’s aim in this period was to make commercially successful films and this was his primary focus, rather than expressing his personal vision, which is present as a gradually emerging sub-text over a number of films. This aim to make successful films is seen not only in statements he has made in

⁸³See also Clark’s (2008) account on masculinity in the post-New Order cinema.

interviews about his work in the period, which I have cited, but in the epigraph to his most commercial film of all, *Badai Pasti Berlalu*: “A popular film by Teguh Karya from a popular novel by Marga T”.

As I will discuss in the following chapters, in his later work Teguh moves away from the more popular and obvious kinds of melodrama, with their reliance on simplified and formulaic plots, with numerous coincidences in the narrative, and with music used to express emotions, arriving at a more nuanced and dense approach with more specific social and contemporary historical implication. Preparation and experimentation that might lead to this kind of more specific social observation are primarily found in two films. The first is *Kawin Lari*, especially in its interest in providing lower middle class *kampung* life as the context for its story, and *kampung* popular culture and humour as a pervasive element in its light-hearted drama. The second is *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*, much of which was improvised on location in areas populated by marginalised people, which uses a narrative structured around class differences symbolised by different locations and differences in social power (particularly the differences in social power experienced by women), and which frequently deploys deliberately disruptive elements, such as unmarked flashbacks and a handheld camera.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Historical Films

November 1828 (1978) and Doea Tanda Mata (Mementos, 1985)

Introduction

Teguh Karya did not specialise in historical films but he wrote and directed three important period films: *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, *November 1828* and *Doea Tanda Mata*. *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, which was discussed in depth in Chapter Two, is significant in marking Teguh's transition from stage to screen. This chapter examines *November 1828* and *Doea Tanda Mata*, arguing that in these films Teguh explores broader themes against the background of important events in national history. However, neither *November 1828* or *Doea Tanda Mata* (nor *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*) should be considered as providing accurate accounts of an historical past in the form of a documentary. Instead, Teguh presents interpretative stories of ordinary people who become part of historical moments. These films are about people's history.

November 1828 and *Doea Tanda Mata* demonstrate the fact that although Teguh was a Chinese Indonesian, he was a keen observer of all aspects of Indonesian history and, although at times a nationalist, he was more concerned with the history of ordinary people broadly than with the history of particular well-known individuals. Why was Teguh more interested in the people's history than with particular national figures or heroes? There is no easy answer to this question. Teguh (1988b, p. 5) once wrote about his commitment in his filmmaking to make films about ordinary people, and this commitment, I argue, has been shown throughout his career, especially in the films discussed in this chapter: *November 1828* and *Doea Tanda Mata*.

November 1828: A Historical Epic

November 1828 is the most discussed film in Teguh's body of work. For the first time Teguh pays attention, in a visually artistic manner, to the Central Java region of Indonesia, which is the film's setting. Prior to *November 1828*, his films were mainly shot in Jakarta, Bandung and Bogor, and he frequently referred to regions of Indonesia through the names of the main characters such Sebastian Makahanap in *Cinta Pertama* (Sangir), Jaka in *Kawin Lari* (Padalarang) and Koswara in *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* (Bandung). *November 1828* can also be considered a major development in Teguh's formation as an auteur. The culturally specific aspects of the film's setting in Central Java have received ample attention from film critics and academics. For example, the curator who nominated the film for the London Film Festival, Tony Rayns (1979), has praised *November 1828* in his review in *Time Out* in the following way:

Celebrations of anti-colonial struggles are par for the course for cinema from emerging countries, but Teguh's mini epic about the Javanese resistance against the Dutch in the early 19th century isn't just 'another' worthy Third World entry. Apart from the fact that it looks and sounds very accomplished, the movie displays an intelligent grasp of the dynamics of melodrama (there are 'family' tensions on both sides of the clash), and presents traditional Javanese culture without recourse to folksy stereotypes.

The aspects of *November 1828* that are culturally specific to the Javanese are not only shown through its characters, for example in their thoughts, speeches and manners, but

also through other cinematic aspects such as story, costumes, make-up and music. The film also features a traditional dance from Central Java called *Jatilan*.⁸⁴

These cultural aspects that dominate *November 1828* have not only attracted praise from film critics but have also posed theoretical questions for those scholars and academics who have written about the film. Hanan (1988), in an article that explores various aspects of the film, invoked Christian Metz's distinction between "filmic codes" and "non-filmic codes" (p. 26). Filmic codes refer to the universal cinematic codes such as particular kinds of editing and cinematography while, in the context of film, non-filmic codes can include cultural codes specific to a country or an ethnic group. Hanan argues that if more and more non-Hollywood films or Third World films are to be included in the academic discourse of world cinema, then there is a need to explore cultural codes as part of the film analysis of films, in addition to filmic codes such as variations in editing styles. Nowadays, the rapid emergence of, for example, South East Asian national cinemas such as Malaysian and Indonesian cinema, certainly calls for more attention to the need for such theories of cultural difference and cultural specificity to describe the non-filmic codes. The discussion of *November 1828* in this chapter examines how Javanese culture as seen in the film becomes a means of resistance by these villagers toward the Dutch occupation of their village.

November 1828, produced by Njoo Han Siang, is a milestone in Teguh's career artistically.⁸⁵ Teguh's directing "leap" from a series of contemporary popular

⁸⁴ *Jatilan* refers to a traditional dance of Central Java about a group of soldiers who are practicing their combat skills. Each dancer brings a doll horse made from wood and usually wears colourful costume. However, in Ponorogo East Java, *Jatilan* is generally associated with a spirit-guided dance.

⁸⁵ Njoo Han Siang was the founder of Inter Pratama Studio Laboratorium in 1972, the first film company in Indonesia that produced colour and sound films entirely in Indonesia. See Centre for Strategic and International Studies Indonesia. (2007). *Njoo Han Siang: Pertemuan dua arus*, Jakarta: CSIS and Inter Pratama Studi.

melodramas from *Cinta Pertama* to *Badai Pasti Berlalu* to an historical epic in *November 1828* is quite remarkable as it demonstrates his serious interest in making a film that addresses national themes. *November 1828* challenged him both thematically and artistically. Teguh (1990) stated that in this film he wants to answer questions regarding “identity, sense of belonging and defending a nation” (p. 26). For this reason, he uses the Java War (1825-1830) as a background to reflect on these themes. However, Teguh denied that *November 1828* should be seen as primarily, in generic terms, as “a war film”. Teguh Karya (1990) said:

The concept behind this film is about our sense of belonging to the nation. This is not a war film, but it is about the personal identity conflicts of two Dutch-Indonesian mixed-blood military officers. They are in conflict because they have to choose. I would like to reflect on this theme through this film because I think it is nonsense to talk about defending a nation if we do not have a sense of belonging to the nation. It is just a coincidence that the Diponegoro war (Java War) is the period in which the story is set. (p.5)⁸⁶

The above statement, made twelve years after the completion of the film, should be taken seriously. There is no doubt that for Teguh, as a Chinese Indonesian, the issue of belonging to a nation, and how people who are not fully part of a nation may identify with it, was an issue he experienced in his own life. It is also important that Teguh places the historical context of the film, the Java War, including scenes of overt armed conflict, only as a “background” to the main story that he wants to tell: the ordinary

⁸⁶ The original text in Indonesian reads as follows: “Konsep di balik pembuatan film ini adalah rasa memiliki terhadap bangsa, mempunyai peranan penting. Ini bukan film perang, tetapi sebuah cerita tentang konflik identitas dua opsir keturunan Belanda-Indonesia yang harus memilih. Ini yang mau saya tuangkan dan katakan dalam film ini. Saya merasa adalah omong kosong kita bicara soal membela bangsa, andaikata kita tidak merasa memilikinya. Adalah kebetulan, kalau kurun waktu perang Diponegoro merupakan wadah dari cerita ini.” (1990, p. 5)

people's struggle to endure under Dutch colonialism and to struggle for the liberation of their village.

In 1976, two years prior to the production of *November 1828*, Teguh Karya and Teater Populer staged Emanuel Robles' *Montserrat*, an historical play set in Latin America, a play that can be seen to have a similar theme to *November 1828*. This play partly inspired the film.⁸⁷ *Montserrat* was a story of the exigencies of decolonisation, written by a citizen of a French colony on the verge of a war of liberation. Furthermore, it is about a Latin American Spanish colony that initiated a war of independence against Spain, some twelve years or so prior to the Java War. Although *November 1828* uses the Java War as background, the film itself should be mainly considered as a drama of identity, loyalty and courage. Susan Hayward (2006) argues:

Historical films have an ideological function: they are serving up the country's national history before the eyes of the indigenous people, teaching us our history according to the 'great moments' and 'great men or women' in our collective past—our heritage on screen. (p. 205)

Although Hayward's argument is made in the context of American historical films, her argument is also relevant to Teguh's *November 1828*, which was made for an Indonesian audience. Just as Hayward described the function of historical films, Teguh's broad themes clearly need an epic style of film that is able to convey the messages the way he wants to. The Java war itself provides a background for the "personal conflicts" story that Teguh wants to tell because, in reality, the Java War is not just a war between the Javanese and the Dutch, but was also a conflict among the

⁸⁷ Teguh Karya was interviewed by Salim Said, a journalist of *Tempo* magazine, in 1978 in PT Inter Pratama Studio Jakarta.

Javanese or indigenous people. In anticipating the lack of European (Dutch) soldiers, the Dutch recruited many indigenous people across the archipelago to fight for them against the Javanese. This policy, as depicted in *November 1828*, brings confusion for these “Dutch” soldiers drawn from indigenous peoples in the archipelago, as to whom they should be fighting.

The Java War as a Historical Background in *November 1828*

The end of the Java War marked the beginning of the complete domination by the Dutch empire over the Java lands and kingdoms.⁸⁸ The Java War (1825-1830) was caused by two factors: one external, one internal. The external problem was the presence of foreign powers determined to implement a fully organised colonial regime, which involved taxing the Javanese at all levels of society much more systematically than had occurred with the Dutch East India Company in previous centuries. The internal factor came from the unending rivalry between the Surakarta and Jogjakarta courts, both of which were located in central Java. The Giyanti Treaty of 1755 that divided the Mataram sultanate of Central Java into the Surakarta and Jogjakarta courts created the seed of conflict between the two courts, which lasted for years. The source of the conflicts between the Surakarta and Jogjakarta courts was the question of who had the highest authority in Java. This internal problem was exacerbated by the political policy changes that the Dutch colonial government initiated with the arrival of its new leader, Marshal Herman Willem Daendels, who later on were continued and even augmented by Thomas Stamford Raffles, after the surrender of the Dutch in Java to the

⁸⁸ This account of the Java War is a summary of arguments presented by M. C Ricklefs (2008, pp. 126-154).

English at the time of the Napoleonic War. During their periods of administrative power in Java, both Daendels (1808-1811) and Raffles (1811-1816) held strongly anti-feudalistic liberal views, and each arrived in Central Java keen to restructure the relationship of foreign powers with the courts. However, in effect all they were doing was changing a feudal order into a colonial order.

Prince Diponegoro, a Javanese aristocrat, reacted to the social injustice caused by the colonial system by leading his people to rebel against the brutal land tax and other colonial policies. With the support of other Javanese aristocrats, including Sentot Prawirodirjo as his right-hand commander, and farmers, Diponegoro began the fighting that started the Java War against the Dutch in 1825. He and his followers built a strong army and utilised a guerrilla war strategy. Although the fighting initially went in his favour, Diponegoro was gradually weakened by the Dutch strategy called *benteng stelsel* (fortress system), in which the Dutch built small forts in each village that they conquered. The fortress system worked well and decreased the number of people who supported Diponegoro. In 1830 Diponegoro agreed to negotiate with the Dutch, but the negotiation failed and he was captured and exiled to Makasar for refusing to cooperate with the Dutch. He was kept there until his death in 1855.

The Plot of *November 1828*

November 1828 is a fictional story of the resistance of many of the villagers of the village of Sambiroto when it was occupied by the Dutch, which then began to build a small fort there.⁸⁹ The Java War, which is the background to the film, is introduced

⁸⁹ In 1972, Lilik Sudjio directed an Indonesian film about Prince Diponegoro's resistance toward the Dutch colonialism, which involve battle scenes. The film is called *Pahlawan Goa Selarong* (A Hero of

through the voice of a narrator and visual sketch that displays Sentot Prawirodirjo's (Djunaidi Bawat) military strategy designed to encircle the Dutch. The story of *November 1828* begins with the early plan of the Dutch to capture Diponegoro in Sambiroto. However, the plan was leaked to Sentot and, before the Dutch were able to enter the village, Sentot intercepted and attacked them in another village. The remaining Dutch soldiers were able to escape and ask for help in the form of additional soldiers from Jogjakarta. This Dutch group is led by Captain de Borst (Slamet Rahardjo) and Lieutenant van Aken (El Manik); both of them are Dutch-Indonesian mixed-blood men or *Indo*.

With the help of *Demang*⁹⁰ Djayengwirono (Rahmat Hidayat), who is not only the head of the village, but also the landlord and a collaborator, the Dutch are able to arrest Kromoludiro (Maruli Sitompul), a respected farmer from the village, who is suspected as the being Sentot's informant. In its narrative, *November 1828* focuses on three aspects of the ensuing story: the interrogation of Kromoludiro, the personal conflicts between Captain de Borst (the army leader) and Lieutenant van Aken (de Borst's second man), and the liberation of the village from the occupation. The first two aspects (the scenes with Kromoludiro and between de Borst and van Aken) occupy a greater proportion of the film than the battle scenes, and in them some of the main themes of the film are vocalised and explored. The liberation of the village takes place only at the very end of the film, strengthening Teguh's assertion that *November 1828* is not a war film.

Selarong Cave) and was made in full cooperation with the Indonesian National Army (*Tentara Nasional Indonesia*). See Kristanto (2007, p. 95).

⁹⁰ Demang is a Javanese term that refers to a village head.

Kromoludiro insists that he does not know the whereabouts of Sentot and his forces, but Jayengwirono is certain that Kromoludiro possesses the information the Dutch want. The Dutch use Kromoludiro's elder daughter, Laras (Jenny Rachman), to ask for that information, but are still not able to obtain it. Meanwhile, young villagers led by Jarot (Herman Felani) are assigned by Karto Sarjan (Wisnu Wardana), the religious clerk and spiritual leader of *padepokan* in the village, to meet Sentot and inform him of the events in the village.⁹¹ In order to hasten the investigation, Jayengwirono assigns his son, Bondan (Kies Slamet), to visit Kromoludiro in his cell, and attempt to make him speak about Sentot. Before Bondan is able to visit Kromoludiro, two soldiers are found dead due to eating poisonous food at the fort. De Borst suspects that Bondan is responsible for the poison and orders the soldiers to capture him. Bondan is shot dead as he runs away in fear. Karto Sarjan, who tries to help Bondan, also dies after being shot.

Frustrated and tired by Kromoludiro's refusal to give him information, de Borst begins to lose his control over himself and threatens to kill Kromoludiro. In the heated investigation that also threatens Kromoludiro's family, van Aken, in an attempt to prevent further violence towards Kromoludiro, claims that he is actually the one who leaked the information. Kromoludiro tries to intervene verbally as de Borst now concentrates his rage on van Aken, but the situation culminates with Kromoludiro's death after de Borst emotionally pulls out his pistol and shoots him. Van Aken is now made de Borst's prisoner.

De Borst reaches his breaking point when van Aken acknowledges that he lied about leaking the information and identifies Kromoludiro as the person who informed

⁹¹ *Padepokan* is a Javanese term for an informal religious-oriented school.

Sentot. The conversation between de Borst and van Aken reaches a climax when van Aken accuses de Borst of being a lonely man without principles or beliefs. At this point, a dance troupe arrives in the village and the film follows their preparations for a performance. The leader of the dancers is Bambang Supeno (Sardono W Kusumo), and they have been sent by Sentot to Sambiroto after he was informed of events by Jarot and the other villagers, who have managed to meet Sentot secretly outside the village. During the dance performance, the dancers attempt to assassinate de Borst, but they fail to do so. In a later scene, de Borst captures Bambang Supeno and kills him in captivity. This further killing sparks anger among the villagers and the rebellion of the villagers begins. During the uprising of the villagers, de Borst kills van Aken. He himself dies after being shot by Jaduk (Tri Warsana), another young villager who has dutifully served the Dutch soldiers. Sentot comes and helps the villagers to overthrow de Borst and his soldiers.

November 1828 is Teguh Karya's most ambitious film project where, as a film director, he attempted to reach out and observe the Central Javanese people and their culture. This discussion of the film focuses on several aspects. Firstly, it looks *at November 1828* as a cultural narrative where ordinary people become the main actors in the liberation of their village. Secondly, it examines the dialogue between de Borst and van Aken as containing the major theme in the film. Thirdly, *November 1828* should be seen as a film that has a strong anti-colonial message.

***November 1828* as a Cultural Narrative**

Although it is a fiction film, *November 1828* strongly reflects aspects of Central Javanese culture. Therefore, the film needs to be read in terms of its cultural

representations. Two authors have written on this film in terms of its incorporation of cultural elements and cultural contrast. In “Film and Cultural Difference: *November 1828*” (1988), Hanan argues that the film demonstrates the contrast between several aspects of the Javanese, represented by the Sambiroto villagers, and the Dutch, portrayed by de Borst and Van Aken, particularly in relation to themes of communalism and individualism. The second is the more recent article by Sumarsam (2008, pp. 217-240), “Music in Historical Films: Reading *November 1828*”. This article explores ways in which dimensions are added to *November 1828* through the use of song (mainly traditional Javanese songs) and in the use of Javanese gamelan music.⁹² While I agree with Sumarsam that the Javanese song in *November 1828* can be interpreted as a cultural expression, however, I argue that it is also used by the villagers as a form of resistance against the colonial occupation by the Dutch.

In one aspect, Javanese songs are played to represent the villagers’ initial response when the Dutch occupy the village. As the first half into the film reveals, these Javanese villagers respond in different ways to the Dutch. Demang Djayengwirono and his son, Bondan, collaborate with the Dutch to maintain their power in the village, but the majority of the villagers refuse to work for the enemy with a consequence that they are suffered during the occupation. However, these villagers do not continue to just accept their fate: they later move to resist the occupation. Sumarsam illustrates how the use of song adds certain cultural dimensions to the figure of Kromoludiro, the tortured resistance fighter. When Kromoludiro is captured by de Borst and van Aken, Jaduk, the silent young villager, sings the following Javanese song (here translated by Sumarsam, p. 226).

⁹² The composer for the film was Franki Raden, who won the Citra award for the Best Music Score in the 1979 Indonesian Film Festival for his music in *November 1828*.

Javanese	English
Surem diwangkara kingkin	The sun is dim and subdued
Manguswa kang layon	Embracing the departed one
Pindha ilang memanise	As if it has lost its charm
Wada nira kang landhung	Its face is long pale

Jaduk sings the song about one of the moments for him and other villagers (with the exception of Djayengwirono) where a figure respected by the community is caught and taken as a prisoner. This is the song that, as Sumarsam argues, situates Jaduk, a minor character in the film, in the position of the “puppeteer” or *dalang* of the story because he “observes” and “comments” on the situation through his singing of the song (2008, p. 226).

Image 6: The capture of Kromoludiro (middle) by the Dutch soldiers



The song reflects the mindset of these ordinary people expressed and represented by Jaduk where they, as Javanese, accept the reality that their village is now in the hands of the enemy.

Another example occurs when Kromoludiro is being held by the Dutch (Sumarsam, 2008, p. 227). The song he sings celebrates the bravery of defending

dignity, purity and loyalty of the homeland, and so represents the resistance of Kromoludiro and other villagers against the Dutch.

Javanese	English
Ngrungkepi Ibu Pertiwi	To defend our mother of the earth
Beda lan kang watek lumuh	Unlike those who are not willing to struggle
Guna sekti setya ilang	Lost are his skill, power and loyalty

In a sense, Kromoludiro acts as an observer of what happens to him, but at the same time also conveys the anti-colonial message of the film. *November 1828* also uses Islamic music, for example in the dancing and singing of the young villagers. Here, according to Sumarsam, the use of *rebana* signifies the culturalised Islam among the villagers.⁹³ The use of Javanese traditional music throughout the film reflects the geographical aspect of the setting, Central Java. Sumarsam (2008) argues:

As integral part of the film experience, music fleshes out cinematic meaning, either diegetically or nondiegetically; the former constructs a denotative representation, the latter a connotative meaning that addresses the senses. The two meanings often overlap, however. On the basis of film as product of culture, these meanings are culturally bounded. This is especially the case with the music of *November 1828*...The Javanese time and cultural space for the film's narrative does make this musical and sound usage appropriate. (p.226)

Sumarsam identifies other ways in which traditional Javanese performance forms are incorporated into the film. When, during a conversation between de Borst and van Aken,

⁹³ *Rebana* is a small tambourine held in one hand and hit by another hand and used in Islamic music.

the film shows the massacre of the local indigenous village residents committed by de Borst in Kembangarum, Lengkong and Delanggu, it deploys unfolding *wayang beber* scrolls to depict the bloody moments in these areas and these unfolding illustrations modelled on 19th century drawings are accompanied by a Javanese traditional musical instrument, *kecrek*.⁹⁴ For Sumarsam (2008), the music of *November 1828* is used not only as an “ethnographic marker”, signifying the Javanese, but also recreates Javanese feeling in the mind of the audience (p. 237). In this way, *November 1828* attempts, on a very small scale, to combine modern and traditional theatre. While the modern theatre is represented through the players’ performance, the traditional theatre is reflected through the use of the mixed Javanese-Islam musical instruments (appearing only as a non-diegetic music element).

November 1828 is a cultural narrative because it is a story about a group of people, the villagers, who share the same culture and use that culture in order to survive under the Dutch occupation. The Dutch, on the other hand, are also a group of people who share the same culture. The difference lies in the fact that the Dutch and their *Indo* soldiers share a military culture. Through his comparative analysis of a famous painting called “Diponegoro’s Capture at Magelang” by Raden Saleh and *November 1828*, Hanan examines body language and argues that there are similar differences in the body language of the Dutch and the Javanese both in the nineteenth century painting and in the film. Unlike the Dutch and their *Indo* soldiers who share the individualistic and military values, the Javanese hold strongly the sense of belonging toward one another and the village where they live. These values and identity are shared in what Hanan calls “the body language of non-institutionalized group identity,” and has consequences

⁹⁴ *Wayang beber* is an ancient Javanese theatre form, like *wayang kulit* (shadow puppets), that tells often mythological stories, but using a series of scrolls of paintings to depict the figures and actions, rather than puppets.

in terms of agency, where leadership in the village is not based on a single individual but shared among different protagonists (1988, p. 43). In contrast to the Dutch, who rely on de Borst as a commander, the villagers are able to mobilise themselves without necessarily needing the presence of a leader.

However, if the villagers are able to unite without a leader, what then is the role of Sentot Prawirodirjo in this film? The importance of the leadership by Sentot is probably “indirect” rather than “direct” because he inspires the dynamic communality among the villagers through his charisma. Hanan links the idea of Javanese leadership in the film to concepts developed in Benedict Anderson (1972a)’s celebrated article “The Idea of Power in Javanese Society”, particularly the discussion of the concept of “charisma”. Anderson, quoted by Hanan, argues that in the Javanese conception of power, charisma is significant and it signifies the influence a leader may have on his followers. In this conception, charisma as a power is “revealed rather than demonstrated” (1988, p. 33). As a leader, Sentot is the “magnet” for his followers and, no matter where he is located, the followers will always “identify” themselves with him. This type of leadership is the key or base in understanding the dynamic of communality behind the villagers. Charisma and power exist within the hearts and minds of the villagers rather than being embodied by any one person. Sentot is the “spiritual” leader for the villagers and “unites” them, although he (Sentot) is only a participant in the liberation of the village at the end of the film. Ricklefs’ (2008) account of the Java War sees it as having two dimensions. Partly it was generated by feuds between factions within various Javanese royal families, some of whom allied themselves with the Dutch colonisers. But it was fed by mounting opposition to the new systematic colonialism that had increasingly impacted on Java since the early 1820s. *November 1828* is a “political narrative” or, at least might be considered as a form of reinvention of tradition, because

it offers a re-reading of the Java War as an important event in the history where the ordinary people took a significant role in leadership.

The position taken here by Hanan on leadership in the film has been critiqued by Krishna Sen. While Hanan stresses the role of the villagers or ordinary people in determining their own future apart from their “leaders”, Sen argues that the Sambiroto villagers and their movement to liberate the village is influenced or shaped by aristocrat leaders. Sen (1988) states:

The villagers are not in autonomous revolt against the Dutch, they are part of somebody else’s (Sentot or Diponegoro) grand plan. This dalang does not need to be in view, indeed an essential aspect of the dalang’s role is his invisibility, but he is there and the audience is aware of him. (p.38)

Traditionally, in Javanese shadow puppetry, the *dalang* sits behind the stage and controls the story, the puppets and the musicians. The contemporary use of *dalang* during the New Order regime has associated it with “an important man behind an event” or the mastermind. In today’s political atmosphere, *dalang* is used to label the perpetrator of political riots or ethnic violence. Sen’s effort to associate Sentot with *dalang* is clear in that she sees him as the main political actor in this film. As the political actor, Sentot is not only the leader who leads the villagers in the liberation, but he also shapes their vision.

To support her argument that the film expresses the New Order ideology, especially through the presence of a political mastermind such as Sentot Prawirodirjo, Sen (1994) quotes from the historian MC Ricklefs: “The Java War was the last stand of the Javanese aristocratic elite...a conservative movement, a vain attempt to turn back the

colonial tide” (p. 83). Then, Sen (1994, p. 84) asks how it was that an aristocratic war could have been turned into a populist war in this New Order film:

What is interesting is how this ‘local’ and ‘aristocratic’ comes to be identified with the national and the popular in the film, without ceasing to be either local or aristocratic.

But if quoted in full, Ricklef’s summary of the significance of the war reads:

The Java War was the last stand of the Javanese aristocratic elite. It had been a conservative movement, a vain effort to turn back the colonial tide which had been rising since 1808. The breadth of the social movement of protest which supported the war effort clearly reveals in retrospect how deeply the colonial revolution had already disrupted Javanese society, and in this respect the Java War prefigured the anti-colonial movement of the twentieth century. (p. 142)

Ricklefs in fact sees the Java War as not only the last stand of the Javanese aristocratic elite, but as supported by a broad “social movements” which were themselves a response to the disruption of society brought about by the new colonial policies. Moreover, in its opposition to colonialism he also sees the war as prefiguring the anti-colonial movement of the twentieth century, which led to the emergence of the nation. If indeed there are aspects of *November 1828* redolent or connotative of the spirit of opposition to colonialism in the 1940s, then this view of the Java War as a precursor to the 20th century independence struggle is not an arbitrary view invented for the film, but is supported by a major historian. Moreover the importance of populist elements in the war is emphasised even more by the biographer of Diponegoro, Peter Carey (2007), who states:

The ever more urgent reports of Dutch officials regarding the crisis in the Javanese countryside in the early 1820s all pointed to one conclusion – a major popular uprising was imminent. Only the timing and leadership were unclear. The combination of the land tax, poor harvests, the 1821 cholera epidemic, the tollgates and the renting of estates to Europeans had turned south-central Java into a powder keg. The popular disturbances of 1817-1822 with their quirky millenarian hopes were a symptom of this deepening despair. In Yogya, in particular, many were united in a powerful sense of humiliation at the outcome of the events of 1812, a humiliation made all the more acute by the events of the fourth sultan's reign. (p. 504)

In fact, Carey argues in a subsequent chapter of his biography that the war “took on the aspect of a classic agrarian insurgency, part peasant *jacquerie* (uprising) as in the Vendée in the west of France in 1793–1795, part organised military campaign” (p. 611). It is with this popular element in the villages that *November 1828* is concerned. Carey's statement, quoted above, also has implications for the debate over whether Diponegoro and Sentot were *dalang*, manipulating the peasants, or charismatic leaders responding to a need created by a popular rising in a changing historical context. It is clear that neither Diponegoro nor Sentot acted as the political mastermind or direct leader of the villagers in *November 1828*. The liberation of the Sambiroto village is an idea fully initiated and orchestrated by the villagers as a response to the occupation.

Communality and Individualism in the Colony and the Emerging Nation

November 1828 is a film that was certainly acceptable to the New Order government. But that its interest in the Java War as a peoples' struggle does find some

validation in historians' accounts of the war suggests that the people are not simply victims of manipulation by Diponegoro or Sentot, acting as the masterminds. Moreover, it is only fair to remark that almost any film with the Java War as its subject would inevitably result in some scenes of armed conflict. The film is an epic that can be related to other films that celebrate the resistance of the indigenous people to colonialism, such as the early nationalist work *Enam Djam di Jogja* (*Six Hours in Jogja*, 1951), which was made only a couple of years after the achievement of independence and is also set in the Jogjakarta region. However, despite being made in 1978, *November 1828* does not present a particularly New Order view of the nation in that it focuses on the actions and thoughts of the everyday people rather than those in power. Rather, like *Enam Djam di Jogja*, it is set in a society still open to domination by a colonial regime where it is also important to focus on the communality of the villagers. It might be argued that the representation of communality in the film by Teguh Karya is a view of the Indonesian people that appealed to the audience.

It might be suggested that the communality in *November 1828* was a Javanese communality that Teguh had experienced in his own life. After all, the distinguishing characteristic of the Teater Populer was that it was a collective where young people came to learn about theatre and filmmaking in an open, democratic and supportive atmosphere. Collective work is a feature of Indonesian artistic work, particularly in theatre, and one can cite examples such as WS Rendra's Teater Bengkel (Theatre Workshop), and also Arifin C. Noer's workshop, Teater Kecil (Small Theatre). But Teguh's Teater Populer was, arguably, the most successful of all the collectives, not only in mounting numerous plays, but in making thirteen films under the direction of Teguh and fostering the filmmaking of people such as Slamet Rahardjo, Christine

Hakim and the theatre work of Riantiarno. In *November 1828*, the solidarity of the young men in the village is made explicit from the start of the film.

A good example of this is seen in Image 7 from an early scene that shows the *padepokan* of Kyai Karto Sarjan. Here the communality of the villagers is demonstrated through a scene where a group of young men or students from the *padepokan* are singing and dancing in the presence of the leader-teacher Kyai Karto Sarjan and several female students. The female students, who are wearing head covers or hijabs, do not participate in the singing and dancing, but sit around the teacher who sits at a slightly higher position than them. Together, they watch the male students perform the song. Hanan (1988) has discussed and described this scene as manifesting “fraternal solidarity” as it symbolises men’s harmonious relationship to one another in group interactions (p. 45). The song sung in this scene suggests that practicing Islamic prayer or *sholat* is more important than social status. Regardless of social class, these men are bound together by their Islamic identity for which they have a responsibility to follow the rules of the religion. One of the lines in the song says that “it would be shameful if you do not pray no matter whether you are rich or poor.”⁹⁵ The singing and dancing is also reminiscent of the Javanese practice of connecting with one’s inner self and the capacity to have self-control.

⁹⁵ The original text in Indonesian reads as follows: “Sayang, kalau orang miskin atau kaya tidak sembahyang.”

Image 7: Fraternal solidarity at the village in *November 1828*



In this dance, the men who dance not only move to follow the rhythm of the song but also internalise its meaning. So, through *November 1828*, Teguh affirms the values of communality.

Communality strengthens the group solidarity in *November 1828*. There are differences in the idea of group solidarity as represented in *November 1828* when compared with Teguh's other historical films *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* and *Doea Tanda Mata*. In both *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* and *Doea Tanda Mata*, the community or group do not live in solidarity like the Sambiroto villagers do in *November 1828*. Rather, their lives are deeply conflicted. In *November 1828*, group solidarity plays an important role as the basis of their resistance toward the Dutch. There is a strong difference in the idea of the group as found in *November 1828* and the drama of individuals in conflict with the various social groups in which they are members, as seen in *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* and *Doea Tanda Mata*.

Dramatic Dialogue between de Borst and van Aken as a Major Theme of the Film

As well as the cultural elements that demonstrate an anti-colonial message discussed in the previous section, *November 1828* contains a major personal conflict between de Borst and van Aken. De Borst's personal conflicts with van Aken are a central theme in the film, even though in terms of plot development Kromoludiro's heroic resistance is a major point of reference. While *November 1828* largely focuses on Javanese culture, the centrality of the conflict between de Borst and van Aken lies in the fact that it deals with what Teguh calls "a sense of belonging" (Karya, 1990, p.5). Teguh articulates this message to the audience without referring to particular ethnicities.

Both de Borst and van Aken are *Indo* officers, and are torn between personal interests and the call to fight for the homeland. The term "*Indo*" or "Indo-Dutch" refers to European and Indonesian mixed-blood citizens, who are partly European and partly of an Indonesian ethnicity (for example, Javanese, Balinese, Sundanese, Makassarese or Ambonese). Regarding the *Indos* as a class, Ulbe Bosma (2005) has argued:

The timing of an emerging Indo class-consciousness was such that it became deeply imbued by an ethnic sense of belonging to an Indies fatherland. Their struggle for social empowerment became fused with a search for citizenship within the colonial context... As a class they did not belong to the colonial elite that were part of a migratory circuit between the Dutch metropole and the Indies. In the struggle to become part of this imperial mobility, the Indos were the first to imagine a concept of an Indies citizenship just at the dawn of Indonesian nationalism. (p. 68)

The *Indos* sought recognition from regions or colonies that they felt they did not fully belong to. Through two brief flashbacks, the film shows de Borst and van Aken

remembering and reflecting on their own identity. The flashbacks show both men with their parents – both have Indonesian mothers and Dutch fathers. Crucially, the flashbacks indicate a major difference between de Borst and van Aken. De Borst is shown to identify with his Dutch military officer father. Van Aken, on the other hand, identifies with his Indonesian mother. The film implies that due to his strong identification with his father, De Borst is very strongly driven by his ambition to be acknowledged as a real Dutchman and a successful military man, and this personal ambition seems to drive him beyond his rationality in the extremes he goes to extract information about the whereabouts of Sentot from Kromoludiro. De Borst knows that being able to get this secret information is significant for his progress in his military career because by becoming a high military officer or a general like his father, his desire of becoming a true or real Dutchman will be accomplished.

Image 8: van Aken (left) and de Borst (right)



Van Aken, on the other hand, is vastly different in personality to de Borst. He has sympathy for the villagers and attempts to prevent his colleagues, especially de Borst, from conducting a brutal investigation, particularly in regards to de Borst's willingness to use women and children as hostages to make Kromoludiro talk.

In the heated conversation with van Aken after the deaths of the three prominent villagers Kromoludiro, Bondan, and Karto Sarjan (and also one of the soldiers of the Dutch forces), the following exchange occurs:

Indonesian	English
Van Aken: Kau harus hentikan pertumpahan darah. Hari ini kau membunuh seseorang yang tidak berpihak kepadamu. Bagaimana kau tahu besok tidak ada orang lain yang melakukan hal serupa.	Van Aken: You must stop the bloodshed. Today you killed one of your people who did not take your side. How can you be sure tomorrow others won't do as he did?
De Borst: Akan kutembak juga dia.	De Borst: I'll shoot them, too.
Van Aken: Bagaimana kalau semua tidak berpihak kepadamu?	Van Aken: What if everyone is against you?
De Borst: Akan kutembak semuanya. Aku mengejar karir militer. Aku sudah mencoba segala cara untuk menjadi orang Belanda. Aku sudah capai menjadi seorang kapiten.	De Borst: I'll shoot all of them. I'm pursuing a military career. I've tried everything to be Dutch. I feel sick and tired of being a captain.
Van Aken: Perang punya sisi kemanusiaan, juga. Lebih dari sekedar taktik dan tujuan, de Borst.	Van Aken: War has its humanitarian aspects. It's more than just strategies and goals, de Borst.
De Borst: Tapi kenyataannya berbeda. Perang tidak membuatku bahagia.	De Borst: But the reality is different. War doesn't make me happy.
Van Aken: Bohong. Kau tidak mencapai	Van Aken: Liar! You achieve nothing

<p>apapun dengan cara yang kau pergunakan saat ini. Kau sedang punya konflik dengan dirimu sendiri. Ambisi pribadimu hanya menambah jumlah korban. Kau telah melihat dengan matamu sendiri. Kau membunuh dengan pedangmu. Mereka adalah kawan dan musuhmu. Pembunuhan semena-mena di Kembangarum, Lengkong dan Delanggu. Mereka adalah korbanmu. Itukah yang kau sebut dengan kemenangan. Biarkan aku bicara. Kau adalah pengecut yang patut dikasihani.</p>	<p>with your present methods. You're in conflict with yourself. Your personal ambitions add to the number of the victims. You've seen it with your eyes. You've killed with your sword. You've seen both friends and enemies fall before you. The arbitrary slaughter in Kembangarum, Lengkong and Delanggu—they're your victims. Is that what you call victories? Let me speak. You're a scum who needs to be pitied.</p>
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In one of the above dialogues, de Borst says to van Aken, “I’m pursuing a military career. I’ve tried everything to be Dutch.” What de Borst says is important, as it underlines the significance of personal identity among the Indos. The contrast between van Aken and de Borst is very clear here. De Borst's overriding concern is to become a real Dutchman. Van Aken’s confession during Kromoludiro’s interrogation that he (van Aken) leaked the information to Sentot shows that Van Aken is prepared to sacrifice his own life to protect Kromoludiro and the villagers from de Borst’s madness, however difficult a decision it is for him, and whatever the consequences he must bear from making it. Through the representation of these actions, in *November 1828* Teguh speaks about the complexity of having a sense of belonging, its importance stretching from the past to the present, and its consequences for defending a nation.

Is *November 1828* a Perfect Historical Text of the New Order?

In an article published in 1988 as part of a collection of papers arising from Teguh Karya's visit to Australia in 1987, Krishna Sen (1988) claims that aspects of *November 1828* make it "the perfect historical film text of the New Order". In this concluding section on the film I examine this claim and provide arguments, which seriously challenge the veracity and relevance of this claim, and the methodologies that Sen uses in arriving at this conclusion. Indeed it might even be argued that, in essence, *November 1828* contains subversive elements, as far as the New Order was concerned, due to its emphasis on the role of the ordinary people in resisting dictatorship, though given the nationalistic subject of the film, the New Order might well not detect this aspect of the film.

Sen is a media sociologist, whose initial research assiduously investigated government bodies regulating and controlling film during the Soeharto New Order period, and one of her aims was to examine ways in which New Order ideologies penetrated the Indonesian film industry. But Sen is neither primarily a film critic nor deeply steeped in film theory; her training was in politics. Moreover, when she seeks to demonstrate the impact of the New Order and its ideologies on particular films her analyses are based on limited criteria and terminology she supplies, rather than based on a comprehensive engagement with the film itself, and its terms. Her discussion of *November 1828* is a case in point. Sen's discussion of the film culminates in the following argument:

With every advance in the story the war moves closer into view. The liberation of the village, the microcosm of the nation, comes as a result of the military defeat of the Dutch at the hands of the Indonesian army. The nation is thus

born out of the war under the leadership of military heroes. In the spirit of official New Order historiography, national liberation becomes a “war of independence”, rather than a “revolution”. (1988, p. 58)

To some extent the power of *November 1828* probably arises for audiences because its concerns are resonant with the events of the period of struggle for independence that occurred between 1945 and the end of 1949. Nevertheless, that does not mean that the film is in any sense making a statement to the effect that Indonesian independence in 1949 was achieved primarily by military means rather than by a combination of diplomacy (on the part of Soekarno and Hatta) and occasional strategic military or guerrilla action (by the embryonic Indonesian army and the people), nor does the film make a statement denying the necessity of a social revolution in the period 1945–1949. While, at the end, *November 1828* alludes to the desirability of one having a nation of one’s own (i.e. not being either the hireling or the victim of colonisers), there is nothing in the film’s semiotics or narrative that make it a comment on the events of the period 1945–1950. The film is a story of resistance by early nineteenth century Javanese villagers, whose defence of their village is ultimately, in the closing stages of the film, supported by superior forces led by Prince Diponegoro’s second in command, Sentot Prawirodirjo, also involved in opposing colonialism by the Dutch, and with whom they are in contact. The spirit of the film is about rebellion and the need to rebel to protect one’s own rights and one’s own land, even if one’s victory is only temporary, as it was in *November 1828*. In 1830 Diponegoro was captured and sent into exile and resistance to Dutch presence and policies ended. Most audiences would know that, for they knew that Dutch colonialism continued for another 120 years in Java, only ending at the end of 1949. It is quite perverse of Sen to suggest that in any sense the ending of *November 1828* represents the achievement of “the nation”.

Furthermore, the importance of the role of ordinary villagers in resisting Dutch colonialism in this film (which Sen plays down), as opposed to the role of the Sentot and his militia, might be read to affirm that it was not only military institutions that were important in opposing colonialism, or foreign oppression, but ordinary people who collectively mobilise themselves, and individuals, such as the characters Kromoludiro and Van Aken, neither of whom are conformists or cowards in the face of threats and torture by the Dutch military. Indeed the idea that the people can be mobilised to resist repression was an idea that was anathema to the New Order, certainly as far as contemporary Indonesia was concerned. By making a film about resistance to dictatorship by an external power, Teguh might well have had in mind the importance of some form of resistance to *any* form of state repression. However, given the films broadly nationalist ethos, New Order officials and their lackeys would not have seen this implication.

Sen, however, without stating this directly, in effect, reads the film as an allegory of the nation and the period of struggle for an independent nation in the 1940s. In her discussion she claims, quite wilfully, early on, that the village in the film is “the future nation”; hence, within the terms of this allegory the (temporary) “victory” at the end of the film represents the establishment of the nation, achieved by military action. Sen (1988) then goes on:

I would argue then that the film’s definition of the Indonesian national identity, and its affirmation of the unity of the Indonesian side (breached only by the individual greed of the villain Djayengwirono) that makes it a perfect historical film text of the New Order. It defines the nation as a moral cause, which can incorporate ethnic difference, and at the same time define the Indonesian “us”

in contrast to, and against, an “outsider”. It argues that the participation in the war against the Dutch defines what and who constitute the nation. (p.58)

With regard to the presence of ethnic difference in the film, at no point does Sen acknowledge that the Dutch used forces from other parts of the Indonesian archipelago to fight the rebels in central Java, and that this is the reason there are many ethnicities in the film, and not because Teguh is creating a systematic and thorough allegory of the modern Indonesian nation, and how it won independence through military action. Moreover, with regard to the issue of “us” in contrast to the “outsider”, in most films where conflict has reached the point where a war is in progress, there is an element of “us” and “them”, for the participants are engaged in a life and death struggle.

Given Sen’s criteria used in her allegorical reading, it would seem that no Indonesian director should make a film that portrays an historical incident in the Indonesian archipelago, involving physical resistance against colonising foreign powers by people of different ethnic groups, set in whatever historical epoch prior to the New Order. For, if such a film is made in Indonesia, following the “logic” of Sen’s arguments, it will automatically be allying itself with New Order historiography, implying that independence, achieved in 1949, was won by Indonesian military action alone. Please note that earlier in this chapter on *November 1828*, I have already shown that one of Sen’s other key arguments about the film—to the effect that the Java War, led by Prince Diponegoro, was really a conservative or reactionary war of only local interest—was based on highly selective quoting from Ricklef’s *A History of Modern Indonesia*. Sen is unsympathetic to *November 1828*, and in all her articles and book chapters where she discusses the film, she works hard to find arguments to support her case. But in fact in her later book, *Indonesian Film: Framing the New Order*, published in 1994, Sen does not repeat the claim that *November 1828* is “a perfect historical film

text of the New Order”. This may be because in that much longer book there are many other films discussed that would better fit this statement. For example, Sen argues well that propaganda films such as *Janur Kuning* which exaggerates Soeharto’s role in the March 1949 rising in Jogjakarta, and state-funded propaganda films by Arifin C. Noer, such as *Serangan Fajar* (about Soeharto’s role in earlier events at the time of the surrender of the Japanese) support New Order historiography (1994, pp 89–104). But as I have shown, it is really stretching credibility to see New Order historiography being exemplified in *November 1828*. Of course there is nothing in *November 1828* to which the New Order might object, but that does not mean the film supports New Order historiography in the specific ways that Sen suggests. Indeed, in terms of its ideological implications *November 1828* could have been made in the Sukarno “Old Order” period, if the skills and resources were available to do it, for there is no New Order revisionist historiography in it to which officials of the Old Order might have objected.

***Doea Tanda Mata* (Mementos, 1985): A Historical Chamber Film**

In *Doea Tanda Mata*, the last film in the “trilogy” of historical films, Teguh Karya again uses a period from Javanese history as the backdrop for a fictional tale of the people whom he champions most: the ordinary or common people. It is a popular film that recounts a particular period in Indonesian history (the 1930s) in which the Indonesian youth movement and political parties began to flourish. *Doea Tanda Mata* is not a historical film, but is a fiction set in a particular historical period. The film is set in

Bandung in the 1930s when the city became the most important centre in Indonesia for the emerging youth movement that was demanding the end of colonialism.⁹⁶

Doea Tanda Mata can be considered one of the very few period films about Indonesia that specifically looks at the youth movement. Usmar Ismail's 1951 film *Enam Djam di Jogja* (Six Hours in Jogjakarta) does provide a portrait of young people involved in activities against the Dutch during the Dutch occupation of the Republican city of Jogjakarta that began in December 1948. These activities culminate in the six-hour re-occupation of central Jogjakarta by Republican forces on 1 March 1949, an event that drew international attention to the plight of the new republic of Indonesia, with questions being raised in the United Nations about the Dutch occupation of Republican-held areas. *Enam Jam di Jogja* also portrays the role of the pemuda (the young people) in the struggle for independence, and is perhaps a precedent for *Doea Tanda Mata*. However, *Enam Djam* is an optimistic film, which, despite the individual tragedies that occur in it, is fundamentally a celebration of the idealism of the young people who in this period were acting in coordination with the Republican army in the hope of producing a victory by diplomatic as well as military means. *Doea Tanda Mata*, on the other hand, is a film that describes the personal conflict of a single youth movement member, and the strife between him and the other members of the same anti-colonial movement at a time when Dutch colonialism and Dutch repression in the Indonesian islands was not an object of world attention or world interest and when the leader of the movement (Soekarno) had been exiled. While the early 1950s film, *Enam Djam Di Jogja*, may have been something of an inspiration for Teguh's 1985 film, there are numerous differences between these two films.

⁹⁶ Bandung was the city in which Soekarno, who later became the first Indonesian president, began his political activity as a young man in the youth movement, founding the Partai Nasional Indonesia or Indonesian Nationalist Party there in 1927. See John D Legge (2003).

The Plot of *Doea Tanda Mata*

Doea Tanda Mata opens with titles that use old photographs mixed with photos of the cast of the film all in sepia colour, accompanied by excited voices and the sound of a train, all designed to evoke a sense of the mid-1930s, the period in which the film is set. Heider (1991, p. 55) has argued that *Doea Tanda Mata* reflects “a strongly individualistic creation of Teguh.” The film is divided into four interrelated sections with different titles. This narrative division into interrelated sections is unprecedented in Indonesian cinema

The credit titles end with the first section title, *Semangat* (Enthusiasm). This section is about Goenadi (Alex Komang), a young man who is a member of an underground youth movement in Bandung. Goenadi is assigned by the movement to print out the pamphlets that are to be distributed to the public. Accompanied by Asep (Umar Chattab), Goenadi goes to a Stambul theatre owned by Juhari (Sunarto Soenarjo) and Ining (Jenny Rachman), Asep’s sister, to print the pamphlets. Ining is the main singer and dancer at the Stambul theatre, which is located in Tasikmalaya, a town about 80 kilometres from Bandung, and she is a supporter of the movement. Goenadi is attracted to Ining due to her skilful singing and dancing, while Ining is impressed by Goenadi’s ability to play the violin during his brief visit to the Stambul theatre. Through her assistant, Nyi Rohaya (Sylvia Widianono), Ining gives Goenadi a memento, a handkerchief.

On the way to Bandung, Goenadi and Asep encounter Dutch police forces on patrol, and turn and flee for fear of being discovered with the pamphlets. Goenadi is able to escape, but Asep is shot dead by the Dutch. Asep’s death deeply affects Goenadi. He feels guilty for not being able to save Asep, whom he considered a brother. Goenadi

also feels guilty for Asep's death because of his feelings for Ining. As Goenadi becomes increasingly overwhelmed by a sense of guilt, the viewer is made aware that there is another dimension to his life. He has a wife, Rukmini (Hermin Chentini), in Klaten in Central Java, who is a feminist teacher who encourages her pupils to look forward to a time when Indonesia will have independence. Back in Bandung, Goenadi decides to voluntarily resign from the movement because his friends in the movement, Duduh (Eka Gandara), Ibing (Aria Kusuma Dewa) and Soeripto (Bambang BS) cannot trust him anymore, as his guilt and self-doubt are making him unreliable. Goenadi intends to join Ining, but she has left Tasikmalaya without telling him.

In the second section, called *Kehilangan Jejak* (Losing One's Way), the film shows Goenadi in search of Ining. Because of his violin-playing expertise, Goenadi is hired to work at a Dutch restaurant. He also tries to return to the movement, but he does not feel welcomed by his friends. Goenadi then continues to work as a violin player and begins to develop a plan to find the Dutch commissioner (Corbi) who ordered his men to shoot Asep. Goenadi uses an opportunity at the restaurant to track down the commissioner, but is unsuccessful in his efforts. Meanwhile, Goenadi's friends in the movement now know that Goenadi works at the Dutch restaurant and begin to suspect that he will betray them. They consider Goenadi as a threat for the movement.

The third section of the film is called *Pertemuan* (Encounter), and it shows the encounter and renewal of the friendship between Goenadi and Ining, through the help of Leman (Piet Pagau), Ining's friend and musician at the Stambul. In their conversation, Goenadi admits that he is confused and not actually convinced that he can complete his plan to kill the Dutch commissioner. Ining works at another Dutch restaurant as a singer and dancer and, to Goenadi's surprise, she is now the mistress of the police commissioner. Goenadi is initially shocked but is calmed down by Nyi Rohaya (Sylvia

Widiantono), Ining's assistant. Meanwhile, in Klaten, Rukmini's school is closed down and she is arrested by the Dutch for teaching the pupils the national anthem.

Back in Bandung, the youth movement is delivering pamphlets in the city. One night, Duduh, Ibing and Soeripto see Goenadi driving the commissioner back home in the car after watching Ining's performance. They are now convinced that Goenadi has become a collaborator. Later that night, when trying to deliver the pamphlets, Ibing is killed by the Dutch. Soeripto blames Goenadi, thinking that Goenadi has been a spy for the Dutch. Goenadi finally murders the commissioner with a pistol provided by Ining, and rushes back to the city, intending to inform Ining and his friends. When he has almost reached the city, he sees Duduh, Soeripto and other young men. Soeripto stops Goenadi's car and shoots Goenadi with the pistol. Goenadi dies.

The last section, which is called *Tanda Mata* (Memento), follows Ining and Nyi Rohaya, who visit Klaten to meet Goenadi's family. They also meet Rukmini in the prison. Ining returns all of Goenadi's belongings, including a letter that Goenadi wrote just before he died. For the first time, Ining and Rukmini realise that both of them have the same mementos. The end of *Doea Tanda Mata* shows Rukmini as she opens and reads Goenadi's last letter to her in which he says that he has lied to her in his previous letters.

In concentrating on the conflicts experienced by Goenadi, *Doea Tanda Mata* follows the "pattern" of Teguh's first period film, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, in which the main character is also a rather isolated male hero with flaws. The fact that the hero in *Doea Tanda Mata* is flawed, and the story actually focuses on his flaws, has made *Doea Tanda Mata* the target of criticism. A London based critic, Tony Rayns (1985),

who in the late 1970s had championed *November 1828*, now writes of *Doea Tanda Mata*:

Karya's film suffers from the Hamlet syndrome: a hero who spends the whole movie doing nothing but go through agonized introspection. The script problem (compounded by the shortcomings of Komang in the lead) finally works the film into an impasse that no amount of beautiful set-period direction can relieve. Karya cunningly invests his story (of anti-colonial resistance in the 1930s) with contemporary resonances, but his daring counts for little when the material is so un compelling.

In my discussion of *Doea Tanda Mata* I will provide an exposition of the film that shows the film to be one of substance, where Teguh deliberately sets out to deal with a fictional minor figure, left behind by history, rather than a successful historical figure, at the same time showing the context of his life. *Doea Tanda Mata* does focus on Goenadi's personal conflicts and I argue that Teguh presents the story of a young man driven by his own ambition, who comes to believe that he is not who he thought he was before. Tony Rayns' criticisms of the film are a reasonable response; he is not clearly convinced by the character of Goenadi. However, not all critics take such a negative view of the film as Rayns, as can be seen in the discussions of the film by Karl Heider (1991) and by Krishna Sen (1994). That this film tells the story of this ordinary young man makes *Doea Tanda Mata* a relatively unique story about the Indonesian revolution, and links it to concerns shown in his first film, *Wajah Seorang Laki-laki*, revealing some consistency of pre-occupation in Teguh's output as an auteur. My discussion will also focus on the elegant style of the film and on Teguh's interest in recreating aspects of Indonesian society in the 1930s, in particular the *pemuda* and the theatrical world of Komedi Stambul.

Structure and Style

There are a number of aspects of *Doea Tanda Mata* that make it a very distinctive film within Teguh's oeuvre. It is a very exotic film, particularly in its use of colour in the evocation of the world of Stambul Theatre, but also in the way it photographs Bandung and its surrounding hills and forests. Secondly, it is filmed not in Cinemascope but in a 4:3 standard aspect ratio. This was because Teguh wanted the film to be reminiscent of an album of photos from the past – the film itself being a memento. The connotation of a photo album is extended via the different section headings, which denote different encounters and episodes of the central character's journey. I describe the film as a chamber film. Each section of the film is introduced by light chamber music of the kind played by Goenadi on his violin, giving the film a brio and an economy as developments are succinctly rounded off or advanced to the next phase. Another effect of this is to give the film a certain self-reflexiveness.

Despite the melodrama of some of the incidents in the story, the viewer is made aware not only of the story, but of a story being told in a stylish way, with a musical accompaniment. Additionally, although the film is divided into four sections, the section headings tend to work in an ambiguous way. For example, the second section is entitled "Losing One's Way", but in fact one might well feel that Goenadi lost his way quite early in the first section, when, rather than travelling by train alone, he allows Asep to take him from Tasikmalaya in West Java to Bandung on a motorcycle, the two of them ferrying banned pamphlets, resulting in Asep's death when they are forced to flee when they encounter Dutch troops. The guilt he exhibits and his decision to resign from the youth group show that he feels he has lost his way well before the end of Section 1.

Indeed, one might feel that in the “Losing One’s Way” section, despite Goenadi’s strong sense of remorse, he has already embarked in a single-minded way on his quest to find the Dutch commander who ordered the shooting of Asep. This means that the film has a surface clarity and succinctness, which belies many of the uncertainties within it, uncertainties that are augmented by the sense of confusion Goenadi himself feels. Additionally, the restlessness in the central character and in the film’s exposition is complemented by the use of many short shots in some scenes, where the camera jumps from one set up to another as it widens the film’s sense of social detail.

Despite this surface clarity and succinctness of exposition, the film at times places the viewer into a confusing position by not giving him or her knowledge that some characters have. In doing so, it emulates the general sense of confusion to which many of the Bandung characters in the film are subject. In the scenes in Central Java, however, the characters are quite sure of themselves and their aims (even though Goenadi is not being truthful in his letters to his wife), and these scenes, while peopled with modest characters, work as a clarion call for independence for Indonesia. The film is not unrealistic, but it does not follow a basically consistent naturalism that is present in Teguh’s films *Usia 18* or *Di Balik Kelambu*. It is as though because his story is not set in contemporary Indonesia, Teguh feels he can take liberties with style and even with demands for historical consistency. The extensive use of Stambul Theatre and the stories Stambul Theatre featured, echoes back into the film itself, so that in subtle ways it becomes a deliberately theatrical film. The overall effect is not simply of theatre and scenes of theatre within a film, but theatre and theatrical stories within a film.

Goenadi as an Idealistic Freedom Fighter

Doea Tanda Mata is a film about a generation of Indonesian youths in the 1930s. This generation is made up of individuals in search of identity and recognition, which is the central theme in *Doea Tanda Mata*. The atmosphere of the first half of the 20th century in Indonesia reflects what Takashi Shiraishi (1990) calls the “movement” or *pergerakan*, which refers to something that is dynamically moved.

In 1901, approximately thirty years before this fictional story began, the Dutch Queen, Queen Wilhelmina, released a policy called the Ethical Policy, which stated that the Dutch empire would henceforth take responsibility for maintaining and improving the social conditions of its colony in the East Indies (Vickers, 2013, pp. 16-17). The Ethical Policy was one factor in the emergence of the national awakening movement, especially among the native young people, and it was in this period that the spirit of a unity of aims began to grow among the youth movement. In Java, sustained armed opposition to the presence of the Dutch had been absent since the defeat of Diponegoro, though armed opposition continued in some other parts of the archipelago, most notably in Aceh. Now a different spirit took hold in Java. The indigenous people who had the privilege of studying at the elite schools in Indonesia or the Netherlands were the first generation that called young people’s attention and awareness to the social and economic conditions in the colonies under Dutch occupation. As early as 1908 the first Indonesian youth movement, *Budi Utomo* (Noble Character) was formed, founded by Wahidin Sudirohusodo. Its members were mainly aristocrats.⁹⁷ The youth movement is also an important theme in *Doea Tanda Mata* because the youth movement is

⁹⁷ *Budi Utomo* was initially a youth movement that developed into a political party. It was the first native political party in Indonesia whose aims were, among other things, to help improving the social, cultural and educational aspects of the ordinary people.

inseparable from Indonesia's national history. Figures such as Soekarno, Hatta and Sjahrir, the future leaders of the nation, as young people, learned much about political, social and economic issues when they became members of the movement. The youth movement, as acknowledged by scholars of Indonesian history, was the place where the radicalisation of youth occurred as they began to be aware of the problems in the Indies at that time. Out of this awareness, there grew a sense of militant nationalism towards the homeland (Vickers, 2013; Legge, 2003). The youth movement has a respected place in Indonesia's national history and there is a special day called "National Awakening Day" (*Hari Kebangkitan Nasional*), 20 May, when Indonesia remembers the contribution of the youth movement to the achievement of independence.

As a result of developments early in the 20th century, by the mid-1920s key figures who would lead Indonesia to independence in the 1940s had begun to emerge, most notably Soekarno (born 1901), and Mohamad Hatta (born 1902) who throughout the 1920s was studying in Holland, one result of the Ethical policy. *Doea Tanda Mata* is not about these leaders, of course, but explores in fiction the experience of the movement for ordinary people.

Shiraishi, in his book *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism 1912–1926* has written of the national awakening movement. For Shiraishi it is important to see that the word "movement" can be used to describe not only a physical movement but also the movement of minds (for example, among young people) that seek to engage and find new ideas and perspectives. As the turn of the century came in Indonesia, the movement of this body and mind was motivated by the desire to find a new identity for Indonesia. (Shiraishi, 1990, p.xi). Shiraishi further explains:

The rise of a popular movement, expressed in such forms as newspapers and journals, rallies and meetings, trade unions and strikes, associations and parties, novels, songs, theatres, and revolts, is the phenomenon that most vividly struck the Dutch as the “natives” awakening in the Indies in the first quarter of twentieth century. It was and still is called the *pergerakan* (movement), in which “natives” moved (*bergerak*) in their search for forms to express their new political consciousness, put in motion (*menggerakkan*) their thoughts and ideas, and confronted the realities of the Indies in the world and in an age they felt to be in motion. (p. xi)

We can see the situation of Goenadi through these perspectives provided by Shiraishi. Goenadi is inspired by his dream to become a member of a national youth movement. So he moves to Bandung, presumably unsatisfied by his previous job as a teacher. He needs a new medium that enables him to “move forward” in search of new expression. In his letter to his wife, Rukmini that he writes from Bandung he states:

Indonesian	English
Aku beruntung menjadi bagian dari perjuangan. Pergerakan pemuda disini tumbuh cepat dan kami menyaksikan keberhasilan yang dicapai banyak orang, termasuk masuk <i>mas</i> mu. Aku beruntung karena aku mampu menyumbangkan pikiran dan tenaga kepada pergerakan kebangsaan ini. Aku selalu berhasil menempuh berbagai jebakan yang	I am fortunate to be part of the struggle. The youth movement here grows fast and we witness some progress being achieved by these people, including your husband. I’m lucky and happy because I’m able to contribute my thoughts and energy to the national movement. I am always able to go through traps set up by the Dutch and their people. I hope that the success of

dipasang pihak Belanda dan orang-orang di sekelilingnya. Aku berharap kesuksesan mas mu di Bandung memberi inspirasi bagimu dan kawan-kawan di Klaten untuk membangun sekolah putri. Ingat bahwa pendidikan adalah satu-satunya jalan agar bangsa ini mempunyai laki-laki dan perempuan yang terdidik. Aku bahagia dan sehat adanya.	your husband in Bandung inspires you and your friends in Klaten to build schools for female students. Keep in mind that education is important because this nation will not only need men of spirit but also educated women. I'm happy and healthy.
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Goenadi is an exemplary of those nationalist youth or intellectuals who were inspired to be the hero of their people, who were facing various basic problems in the 1930s such as poverty and access to education. One of the most important social issues for the Indonesian people in the early 1930s was the situation of the workers in the cities. This was the beginning of the Great Depression, and it was the workers who experienced the greatest impact from the Depression and many lost their jobs. The welfare of these workers became an issue that was often the focus of various youth movements. In relation to the problems of the workers, Adrian Vickers (2013) states:

Many nationalists, especially progressives with an aristocratic background, saw ignorance as the problem and education as the solution to a better life. Conservative aristocrats wanted to return to tradition and improve cultural life, religious leaders sought moral reform, others saw the development of indigenous enterprise as a major goal and others campaigned for better wages and healthier conditions for workers, to ban prostitution, or to eliminate child marriage and polygamy. (p. 75)

The film implies that Goenadi comes from an upper class Javanese background because he and Rukmini have had what in the 1930s was, for an indigenous person, a privileged education: he and she had studied at an elementary school. Although it is not made explicit in the film, in his letter to Rukmini Goenadi states that he has an interest in making education his main focus in the movement.

Image 9: Goenadi (right) is trying to prevent the Dutch from disbanding Komedi Stambul



The desire to pursue his dream leads Goenadi to write another letter to Rukmini, described in Section 1 of the film, in which he informs her that in Bandung the movement is working on the improvement of teacher's welfare:

Indonesian	English
Usahamu untuk membuat gaji guru pribumi setara dengan gaji guru Belanda harus dilanjutkan. Kau harus bekerja keras dan pantang menyerah. Kau harus	Your effort to make the indigenous teachers' salary equal to the Dutch teachers must be continued. You should work hard and never give up a day. You

mengambil contoh dari mas mu dan kawan-kawan yang juga sedang berjuang di Bandung	must take the lessons from your <i>mas</i> and his friends in Bandung who do the same.
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The letter-writing becomes the medium through which Goenadi shares his dream with Rukmini on what should be done in education.

However, we know that Goenadi actually lies to Rukmini about his success in Bandung. The death of Asep changes his life forever, because he becomes burdened by an overwhelming sense of guilt. Here, *Doea Tanda Mata* begins to show the personal conflicts within Goenadi, which conclude with him asking himself if he is able to carry out his plan of killing the Dutch commissioner who was responsible for Asep's death. In the last letter that he wrote before he is shot dead by his friends, Goenadi admits to Rukmini that he lied to her in her previous letters:

Indonesian	English
Istriku, aku perlu jujur kepadamu bahwa mas mu ini masih harus belajar banyak. Aku tidak bisa terus menerus berbohong kepadamu sebagai orang yang berhasil. Adalah bohong jika mas mu ini bergabung dalam pergerakan untuk orang banyak. Bagaimana aku mampu untuk menolong orang banyak jika untuk mengatur diriku sendiri saja aku tidak mampu. Aku	My dear wife, I need to be honest with you that your husband still needs to learn a lot about life. I can't keep deluding myself that I am someone who is successful. It is nonsense if your husband joins the movement for the sake of the people. How I can join the movement and work for the people if I cannot even manage myself? I'm just a person who has ambition, yet

hanyalah orang yang punya ambisi tapi tanpa kemampuan. Sekarang, hasilnya adalah kekonyolan.	without ability or skill. Now, the result of this is just failure.
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Doea Tanda Mata is about an ordinary young man who, as a result of a tragedy in his life, now lacks what he needs to be an adult: self-control and confidence. As a result of the unfortunate death of Asep, Goenadi has become a person who suffers from obsession and carries a heavy burden of guilt. Of course, joining the youth movement means struggling, sacrificing and having the strength to face challenges. These are the qualities that are required generally from a member of the youth movement. After the death of Asep, Goenadi suffers from a personal crisis as he is torn by his own doubt about whether he should stay within the movement, how he can avenge Asep's death, and whether he could carry out his plan to kill the general.

The Film's Portrait of the 1930s Youth Movement in the Context of Java in the Mid-1930s

So far I have discussed the significance of the character of Goenadi as an idealistic if confused and disoriented member of the youth movement. At this point I wish to widen my discussion to address the issue of the portrait in the film of Goenadi's associates in the youth movement. At this point we should note that while the Nationalist movement emerged most decisively in the thirty-year period after the introduction of the Ethical Policy in 1901, the 1930s ushered in a period of repression carried out by Dutch administrators who had no sympathy with the aims of the *pemuda*, or even with the Ethical Policy. The period in which the film is set, the mid-1930s, was

the moment when there is a most decisive clash between the ideals of the young nationalists, and the repressive attitudes of a new generation of Dutch administrators. Ricklefs (2008) has described the attitudes of the Dutch authorities during this period – noted as well that by the time the film is set, that under the Governor-General's emergency powers, both Soekarno and Hatta have both been exiled to outer islands, without trial:

From 1931 to 1936 the Governor General was Bonifacius C. de Jonge, a former Minister of War and director of Royal Dutch Shell. He was opposed to any form of nationalism and unwilling even to see the *Volksraad* play any significant role. Political meetings were frequently broken up by the police, and speakers arrested.... The Minister of Colonies in The Hague from 1933 to 1937 was Hendrikus Colijn, a bitter opponent of Ethical ideas and sometime director of Shell. In this environment, it is hardly surprising that nationalism made little progress. (p. 224)

Doea Tanda Mata is therefore a portrait of aspects of the youth movement at a time of increased Dutch repression, and this is symbolised by the arbitrary shooting of the fleeing Asep that occurs early in the film, ordered by a senior military man.

The role of the idealistic young people in the Indonesian struggle for independence has been the subject of a number of studies, particularly studies concerned with events from the mid-1940s onwards. Here is Ben Anderson (1972b) writing on the *pemuda* as they appeared in 1945:

The central role of the Angkatan Muda (Younger Generation) in the outbreak of the Indonesian national revolution of 1945 was the most striking political fact of that period. For the returning Dutch and their British allies, as well as

for the Eurasian and Chinese communities, the once innocent word *pemuda* (youth) rapidly acquired an aura of remorseless terrorism. On the Indonesian side, a whole literature of glorification attests to an exultant consciousness of the sudden emergence of youth as a revolutionary force of those critical times. Students of the development of nationalism in Indonesia have also stressed the relative newness of this phenomenon in a society where the values of respect for and submission to the aged were traditionally paramount. (p.1)

In an earlier work, Anderson (1967) cites David Wehl, who in 1948 suggested that “at the time of surrender of the Japanese in 1945, there were two nations in Indonesia... the young and the old” (p.1). *Angkatan Muda* means young generation, and it was the younger generations of *pemuda* that brought about the awakening of the nation, their numbers vastly increased beyond the intelligentsia by the defeat of the Japanese. By using the word “terrorism”, Anderson highlights the fact that older established groups with a relatively privileged position in Dutch colonial society found the radicalised *pemuda* to be a somewhat threatening phenomenon. It was this radicalisation of the *pemuda* that Anderson explores in his book *Java in a Time of Revolution: Occupation and Resistance 1944-1946*, concentrating on the generation of 1945.

Doea Tanda Mata, on the other hand, imagines how the so-called “radicalised” *pemuda* in the intelligentsia responded to the challenges of this new age in the 1930s. The revisionist historian and feminist author Jean Gelman (2003) Taylor has emphasized the different meanings that *pemuda* can have historically. She argues that “official versions of the revolution produced a sanitized history of devotion, fervour, unity of purpose” where the *pemuda* were depicted entirely as heroic and patriotic. Gelman Taylor explains the different meanings of *pemuda* in different contexts and for

different groups of the population at different times, ranging from the 1930s to the 2000s.

In Indonesian history the term *pemuda*, meaning (male) youth, has a specific significance, for it designates young people devoted to the cause of national independence. Pemuda first had the connotation of privileged urban youth, students of the newly established Dutch universities and vocational training schools. Upon graduation they chose teaching in nationalist private schools over jobs with the colonial government; their leisure hours were filled with debating clubs and political action. When Japan ruled Indonesia, young nationalist men had their first experience of mass organization and paramilitary training. (p.376)

During the course of the revolution, pemuda came to mean any young man with a gun and developed the connotation of breaking free from established codes of conduct. Official versions of the revolution produced a sanitized history of devotion, fervor, unity of purpose. Novels, short stories, and memoirs of women who lived through these times stressed the populations fear of young men with guns who gathered at railway stations and markets (376).⁹⁸ If initially at the beginning of the century the meaning of *pemuda* was those youths concerned with the cause of independence, it changed during the revolution era, where the number of young male soldiers fighting led to the association of the word with guns. It might be suggested, in line with Taylor, that a large part of the narrative in *Doea Tanda Mata* presents a depiction of the reality of

⁹⁸ Jean Gelman Taylor (2003) also points out to the fact that at different times during the Soeharto New Order period the word pemuda had a range of different connotations, arising from the different roles played by youth in organisations such as Pemuda Pancasila, which could “put thousands of hired men on to the streets to intimidate Parliament, politicians, Chinese, Christians, or any group they are hired to threaten or attack.” (376)

pemuda that has never been described in the history books. Clearly all the *pemuda* in Teguh's film are idealistic in one way or another, even if in some situations given to organizational power plays and recriminatory violence. These characteristics of the *pemuda* partly arise due to the repressive political situation they are facing.⁹⁹

Doea Tanda Mata does not try to glorify the youth movement; rather, it portrays the frustrating journey of one of the movement's actors, and the conflicts among his "idealistic" associates. It also shows the "environment" in which Goenadi begins his journey as member of youth movement. *Doea Tanda Mata* can be described as a historical chamber film because it wants to show closely the "inner" development of one unknown youth in the movement, and those who surround him in the movement, and not be an historical film focusing on a known figure. The youth dormitory or *asrama pemuda* is a crucial "sanctuary" for the nurturing and nesting of future radical youth. Anderson (1967) has given an account of this:

The psychological atmosphere of the *asrama* is crucial to understanding the development of the *pemuda* consciousness. The removal from society created in itself a sense of "weightlessness," a free-floating sensation of liberation from the hierarchies and constructions of the rural communities, a heightened sense of exaltation, a deepening (however transitory) of the religious sense, and in many heterodox (or orthodox) religious schools, initiation into various magical arcana, the secret sources of power, the concentration of virtue. This

⁹⁹ Other studies on *pemuda* during the Indonesian revolution have concentrated on the period, beginning with the defeat of the Japanese in 1945, or at least in the period after the arrival of the Japanese to Indonesia. See Cribb (1991) and Lucas (1986),

solidarity of this quasi-monastic community (this of course being the image and ideal, not necessarily the practice), tended to build up a sense of linearity, singleness of purpose, asceticism, purity and dedication, which was a necessary stage before the rebirth into the secularity, sexuality and routine of adult existence. (p.8)

The youth dormitory not only functions as a place where young people who came from other regions, or who did not have accommodation provided by relatives, could stay, but also as a place where they could begin to lead independent lives. While in the dormitory, these young people were also taught the values they would explore and apply in society once they were considered as having the capability to do so. Anderson (1967) sums up the dormitory in an interesting metaphor of “the transmogrification of caterpillars to butterflies” (p. 7). This means that the young people were isolated from the wider society in order to deepen their education and experience transformation in their mind. By the time they left the dormitory, they should have developed an independent and mature personality. Goenadi, as revealed in his conversation with Asep, has been radicalised during his time in the dormitory but, surprisingly, Goenadi is unable to handle the risks to which he is exposed by the struggle.

In the youth dormitory, the concepts of solidarity and equality are applied, but a cultural aspect also plays an important role, especially in the relationship between its members. The member who has stayed longest in a particular dormitory will be considered as senior to the others. He will also be considered the “leader” of the group. The senior or junior status, however, does not necessarily represent the experience of a person. In Javanese culture, the senior is addressed by the terms *kakak* or *mas* (elder brother) and the junior is called *adik* (younger brother). The relationship between *kakak* and *adik* in this student dormitory generally reflects the sibling relationship at home:

kakak must look after *adik* and *adik* respects *kakak*. In *Doea Tanda Mata*, the leader of the group is Duduh, who is called *kang* or elder brother by other members¹⁰⁰. Ibing calls Goenadi *mas* because he (Ibing) is younger than Goenadi. Duduh is the mastermind of all the activities, including distributing the pamphlets. The relationship between Goenadi and Asep is shown to be special because they are close to each other.

This closeness occurs because Asep often helps Goenadi to print out the pamphlets for the movement. Asep considers Goenadi as his elder brother and Goenadi considers Asep as his younger brother. Goenadi is deeply affected by Asep's death. His strong feelings of guilt after Asep's death imply that he (Goenadi) must have felt anguish that, as an elder brother, he cannot look after his younger brother, especially when the younger brother has expressed his interest in becoming an apprentice in the youth movement. As the leader of the group, Duduh decides that Goenadi should be sacked from the movement because he has risked the safety of the other members and the continuation of the movement; however, Goenadi resigns voluntarily from the movement. Nevertheless, although he has made serious mistakes, he is aware of his responsibilities and this is why he blames himself, even though to succeed a member of an underground organisation needs to be pragmatic, self-assured and not tortured by guilt. When Goenadi resigns from the movement, there is a sense that this is a moment when the communality, solidarity and equality among the members of the revolutionary cell are breached.

In *Doea Tanda Mata*, Teguh creates a visually rich and striking artistic work for representing his imagining of the world of the youth movement in Indonesia in the

¹⁰⁰ *Kang* or *akang* is a Sundanese term for elder brother, which also has an equal meaning of *mas*, in Javanese or *kakak* in Indonesian.

1930s. We can see this in almost any shot in the film, as for example the following shot of a meeting of the youth movement.

Image 10: The meeting at the youth movement's dormitory



As the location of an underground movement, the dormitory should be “invisible” to the Dutch. The film often uses minimal or even just one single light in the dormitory at night. For example, in one of the scenes at the dormitory, the youth meeting is only lit by a single light from the top, leaving the rest of the room dark. This lighting is of course aimed at preventing the Dutch from finding out about the youth meeting. Papers, pamphlets and posters are scattered in the dormitory, suggesting that the members of the youth movement are always working. It is a claustrophobic world. Goenadi and his friends wear simple clothes. In the opening scene, Goenadi and Asep wear white shirts and white trousers with a black tie, suggesting that they are part of an intellectual generation at that time.

Komedi Stambul in *Doea Tanda Mata*

The underground youth movement and the Stambul theatre are two “worlds” in which Goenadi moves. These two worlds are the space of Goenadi’s gradual decline into a blind obsession with seeking revenge for the death of Asep. In each case, the

props, décor, costumes and lighting help us to differentiate the dormitory as the space where Goenadi struggles to be in the movement, and the more complex space of the Stambul as another space that distracts him and gradually turns him to a different path of journey. At the same time, the “nourish” subversive underground world of the youth movement, and the smoke and mirrors atmosphere of the Stambul Theatre, while very different, mutually reinforce the exotic and heady atmosphere of the film.

The reconstruction of Stambul Theatre¹⁰¹ in *Doea Tanda Mata* was one of Teguh’s major motivations in making the film. From its birth in the late 19th century until its decline in the early of 20th century, Komedi Stambul was the most popular form of theatre in Java. The popularity of Stambul was caused by the fact that it could reach spectators of many social levels. In its theatrical performances, Stambul delivered more than just stories. Vickers (2013) states:

¹⁰¹ Stambul was the most popular form of entertainment in the Dutch Indies. Cohen (2006, p.2) states that Stambul was a “peripatetic cultural formation and a popular movement in the arts and culture of Indonesia.”¹⁰¹ The theatre of Stambul was itself a “hybrid in its dramaturgy”, representing various cultural roots such as Europe, Africa and Asia (Cohen, p. 4). In its presentation, Stambul was an opera, combining songs, dances, costumes and melodramas where its main repertoires were taken from middle-east as they represented the closest culture for the most people in Dutch Indies. What made the Stambul attractive for the audience was not only the repertoire that they adapted for the audience, but also the fact that most of the actors were recruited from people of Eurasian descent and there were also a few actors from other cultural backgrounds, such as Asia and Africa. These two features of Stambul Theatre brought refreshment for the audience, as it gave them an entertainment with more international look. The most glamorous aspect of Stambul was the fact that it was the first kind of entertainment that was performed on “a proscenium stage with wing-and-drop scenery and offstage musical accompaniment initially took place exclusively in a theatre in the city’s Chinatown” (Cohen, 2006, p.2). In addition, there were also properties such as “bright-lights”, “trapdoors”, “flies”, “posters”, “box-seats” and stall and “leaflets” that supported the performance. The popularity of Stambul across the islands and among people of various backgrounds really began when it became a touring company, which moved from one place to another. Suddenly, there was increasing interest, particularly on the part of wealthy Chinese, in setting up their own Stambul companies, and this involved recruiting local people who were interested in becoming Stambul actors. The source of the repertoire also grew, using various materials. Stambul theatre has become regarded as the first example of modern Indonesian theatre.

The staging of Stambul reflected its modern dreams of cosmopolitan Asian city life. European-style backdrops and curtains were popular innovations, and costumes incorporated fantasy versions of Arab, Indian and Chinese clothing, European stockings and football shorts, and lavish traditional jewellery. This strange mixture of elements was a rejection of the formalised and highly conventional nature of indigenous theatre in favour of novelty and exoticism. (p.70)

Through its performance, Stambul offered new perspectives concerning life and arts to indigenous spectators and theatres. Vickers states that Stambul projected the near future possibilities in lifestyle for these indigenous spectators, though its innovative performances deploying many types of exotic costumes, ancient or modern.

The evocation of Stambul theatre stage performance with Ining as the star is the most ambitious artistic element in this film. One gets the impression that for Teguh Karya a major reason in making *Doea Tanda Mata* was the opportunity a story set in the 1930s offered for reconstructing on screen the legendary Stambul theatre of the early part of the 20th century in the Dutch East Indies. This kind of careful historical reconstruction is not often found in other Indonesian historical films, though there is a precedent in the performances Teguh created of old Betawi dance and music in some scenes set in a Chinese brothel in *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*. In *Doea Tanda Mata* Teguh reconstructs both the performances as seen by audiences, and the various situations emerging back-stage. In the first scene that shows Stambul Theatre in *Doea Tanda Mata*, Ining sings and dances on a stage with the music played on violins and guitars. She wears a traditional Javanese *kebaya* (blouse) and a shawl; her hair is in a bun with a flower, and she carries a small red fan in her hand. The dancers also wear *kebaya*, shawls and carry small colourful fans in their hands, but they do not wear their

hair in buns. Instead, they wear mixed ethnic-European colourful head coverings. In the middle of the song, these dancers exit the stage and change their head coverings to the Javanese hair bun with a flower on it. The rather mixed traditional and modern costumes that Ining and the dancers wear look bright, colourful and exotic on the stage, augmented by the theatrical lights of different intensities. All of the musicians are male, and in contrast to the female dancers, they wear more informal costumes of white shirts and black trousers. They place small brown shawls on their shoulders and wear the traditional *kopiah* hat. Behind the stage, players and crews are busy. These crews are led and coordinated by Ining's assistant, Nyi Rohaya.

The film also shows briefly the Stambul spectators, who are dressed in both Javanese traditional clothes and European styles.¹⁰² They sit on wooden benches and shout out to the players. They throw coins and paper money on the stage if they feel satisfied with the performance. When the spectators throw the money on stage, the camera captures the images of the dancer's legs (Ining's) as she picks up the money from the floor. In a later scene (shown in Image 11 below), Ining (sitting the porch of her stage house on the right) performs a melodramatic fantasy tale about a mother who defends her baby from being taken by her former husband (played by a part-European *Indo* actor), who has married another girl (at the front wearing white clothes and hat). This scene illustrates that a Stambul Theatre might consist of players from different ethnic backgrounds

¹⁰² In relation to spectatorship, Cohen states that one particular Stambul Theatre troupe, called *Komedi Peranakan India*, had a mixed audience of Europeans, Chinese and Javanese when it was performed in the town square of Solo in Central Java in 1899 (2006, p.282).

Image 11: Ining's performance (front) of melodrama fantasy



With Ining as the central figure, the performance of Stambul in *Doea Tanda Mata* reflects Teguh's attempt to describe the arrival of a new kind of multi-ethnic era in modern theatre in Indonesia at that time, available to a range of different ethnic groups and social classes and with characters from diverse backgrounds. Also, it shows us Teguh's personal interest in the artistic aspect of the Stambul performance itself.

However, a rather "unusual" role of Stambul performers and crew shown in *Doea Tanda Mata* is its collaboration with and contribution to the youth movement, as revealed in Ining's help in providing the printing machine to print out the pamphlets. In its real history, in Bandung and other areas in West Java, as far as I can ascertain, Stambul was not regarded in any way as connected with radical movements, rather it was a form of entertainment easily co-opted by the Dutch East Indies establishment. Cohen, for example, cites an occasion where Stambul Theatre played a significant part in the entertainments held to welcome new figures in the Dutch colonial government (Cohen, 2006, p. 179). However, in *Doea Tanda Mata* the Stambul troupe playing in

the West Javanese town of Tasikmalaya is banned by the Dutch after the Dutch discover that it has been helping the resistance movement.¹⁰³

The discussion of the role of Stambul in helping the youth movement cannot be separated from its main figure Ining. The fact that Ining is the most important figure in the group enables her to socialise with different levels of society, whether they be indigenous people or the Dutch. In the film, Ining is played very effectively by the Chinese-Indonesian actress Jenny Rachman. The casting of Rachman as Ining is very appropriate as there were many Chinese actresses working in the Stambul theatre, although the film *Doea Tanda Mata* does not draw any attention to Miss Ining's racial or ethnic origins. The benefits that Miss Ining receives from her position as lead singer within the group also enable her to silently support the struggle of the underground movement. Ining has a strong reason why she wants to help the movement: both her father and an elder brother were killed by the Dutch. Her motivation to help the movement becomes even stronger after her younger brother, Asep, is also murdered by the Dutch.

¹⁰³ I have not been able to find very much information regarding participation by any Komedi Stambul groups in the struggle of the underground movement during the 1920s and 1930s. There is no doubt that the story told in *Doea Tanda Mata* is a fiction. Nevertheless, one can ask questions about what basis it might have in general in Indonesian history. As one would expect, however, there are cases of journalists associated with radical politicians finding employment in theatre groups. One example is the progressive journalist Inu Perbatasari, an associate of the anti-colonial politician Sjahrir in the late 1920s who became co-founder of the 'People's University' named *Cahaya*, in Bandung. *Cahaya* (which translates as light) aimed at teaching basic literacy to the underprivileged, and provided funds for the performance of patriotic plays in the West Javanese rural areas (Legge, 1988, 26). Perbatasari worked in the Bolero theatre company in the late 1930s and later become one of the first indigenous Indonesians to find employment as a director in the Indonesian film industry. The Bolero Company founded by the Indonesian writer Andjar Asmara and the Indonesian theatre and film director Bachtiar Effendy had been described as increasingly political in its outlook. Bolero was particularly prominent in its role not only in making local people aware of social problems, but also in raising nationalistic feelings. Some of its anti-colonial political activities took place in Malacca in Malaya, where it remained during the Japanese occupation (Bayly & Harper, 2007, p. 116).

Ining is very different from Goenadi. Her life experience has helped her to become more mature and cautious than Goenadi. She shares with Goenadi a desire to seek revenge for the death of her brother, but she has her own plan to do so. She uses her skills to become the “friend” (mistress) of the ageing Dutch commissioner, and therefore places herself in a position where she can avenge her brother’s death. It would be a simplification to say she uses her sexuality to gain control of Goenadi. She is genuinely attracted to Goenadi (as he is to her), which is made clear when talking to her maidservant Rohaya early in the film she refers to Goenadi’s “deep and hollow eyes” (*pandangan matanya yang dalam*). In the film, people of the Stambul theatre troupe, such as Ining, Nyi Rohaya and Mang Djoehari, have strong hearts and a great sense of mutual solidarity. These Stambul people make many sacrifices to provide help to Goenadi and his friends. Mang Djoehari is even taken to prison after the Dutch discover that the Stambul troupe has helped the underground movement. Sen (1994) is probably right when she argues that Ining uses her beauty not only to attract an innocent person such as Goenadi but also to carry out her plan of vengeance (151). However, Ining is more than just a temptress, and respected, because she is the main voice of the film through which the harsh criticism of fake heroism is conveyed. Ining is more than just a passive or erotic object: she is politically active and in many ways more so than Goenadi and his friends.

Ining has doubts as to whether she might be mentally strong enough to carry out her plan of killing the commissioner, and she discusses this question with the lame violinist, Leman, who recommends that someone else do the actual killing. At the end of Section Three, on learning from Leman of Goenadi’s death, Ining in a moment of passionate sadness cries out:

Indonesia	English
<p>Mana janji <i>akang</i> kepada saya soal keselamatan dan ketenangan. Aku sebenarnya bisa menembak sendiri. Tapi <i>akang</i> membujukku dan aku setuju. Karena apalah artinya seorang perempuan. Tapi jika begini jadinya, maka tidak ada tempat untukku lagi. Aku telah berhubungan dengan kurcaci-kurcaci yang berpikiran picik. Tidak peduli terhadap gerakan itu sendiri, tapi hanya peduli kepada dirinya sendiri. Mereka tidak bisa membedakan mana kepentingan sendiri dan mana kepentingan orang banyak. Katakan kepada kawanmu bahwa mereka hanyalah orang-orang yang penuh prasangka dan picik.</p>	<p>Where're your promises about safety and peaceful life to me, <i>akang</i> (elder brother). I would have shot him myself. But you persuaded me not to and I agreed. That's because, as you said, woman is weak. But if this is what it is like, then there's no place for me anymore. I have been associating myself with losers pretending to be leaders, narrow-minded fools. Not caring about the movement, but only themselves. They are unable to distinguish between personal needs and the hope of the masses. Tell your friends that they are prejudiced and narrow-minded people.</p>

Here, the film could be thought to be criticising the youth movement in Indonesia in the 1930s. Is this in fact the case? We need to remember that the film is a fiction in which Teguh unites two different focuses: his own preoccupation with young people who lose their way and are not able to cope with the destinies life puts before them, and the chance to make a film in which a story about the *pemuda* in the 1930s provides an opportunity to recreate scenes from Stambul Theatre. Few would probably believe that Teguh wanted to make a comment on the *pemuda* of that period in general. The group

of *pemuda* he shows in his film are not necessarily intended to be representative of the *pemuda* of the 1930s as a whole. Rather, the film is an opportunity for him to tell a story. Nevertheless, the *pemuda* have been idealised by nationalist historians through history books during the New Order government.¹⁰⁴ Teguh's film, while not based on an actual historical incident, does allow for different understandings of *pemuda* than those perpetuated by an idealised view of the Indonesian struggle for independence. I will now discuss the scenes set in Central Java in the film.

The Non-Violent Struggle in *Doea Tanda Mata*

Rukmini, Goenadi's wife, is another important female character in the film because she provides a contrast with the youth movement in Bandung and the activities of her husband, Goenadi. Her struggle is a non-violent one. Rukmini teaches her pupils the national anthem of Indonesia and songs that glorifies the beauty of nature and the role of farmers as the guardians of nature. Rukmini's resistance against the Dutch takes place not only at the school where she teaches, but also at a youth gathering in which she reads out loud a newspaper that reports on the independence struggles in other parts of Asia. It is this representation of non-violent struggle that is one of the strengths in *Doea Tanda Mata*.

Sen (1994) argues that the portrait of civilian life in *Doea Tanda Mata* provides a different picture from what is found in most other Indonesian historical films:

The film needs to be seen in the context of other New Order films about the struggle for Indonesia's national independence...These films consistently

¹⁰⁴ See, for example, Marta, Wibisono & Anwar (1984); and Poesponegoro & Notosusanto (1992).

reproduce and legitimise the military's interpretation of history, where independence is seen as having been won in a war in which the Dutch were defeated. *Doea Tanda Mata* while not challenging the military interpretation directly adds to the picture of the civilian side of nationalism through the story of Goenadi's wife. More than that, by implication it raises questions about armed action whose valorisation is fundamental to the military's interpretation of history. (pp. 150-151)

Rukmini is a strong Javanese woman. She has three roles: a housewife, a teacher and an activist. She has an interest in providing an education for female pupils, which she tries to do after Goenadi leaves for Bandung. She receives three letters from Goenadi who lies as he tells her about his success story in Bandung. Rukmini respects Goenadi as her husband. The audience knows that Goenadi lies in his letters, but Rukmini does not. She never questions the truth of her husband's letters. She represents a Central Javanese woman who knows her position within society, in the sense that she is expected not to question her elders. When Goenadi decides to leave for Bandung, she can only see him from a distance with the face that expresses the sense of *ikhlas* or acceptance of reality. The scene in which Goenadi farewells Rukmini as he departs for Bandung is presented as a flashback, and the camera captures slowly Rukmini's face as she looks at Goenadi off-screen. Both Rukmini's body language and her voice are quite different when she functions in her different roles as a housewife and education reformist. When she is performing her role as a housewife, she speaks slowly and softly and her body language tends to be passive. As an education activist, she speaks firmly and with a strong tone and her body language is active. Her firm steps and actions present the figure of a strong woman. When the Dutch officer asks her to stop teaching the national anthem, Rukmini refuses and keeps asking the pupils to sing the song. In fact, the film shows

Rukmini as the one who fights the most against the Dutch and does not give up, although her safety is threatened. She is put into jail with her parents for teaching the village children the national anthem. It is Rukmini who actually signifies the meaning of fighting against the Dutch in a non-violent way.

For its portrayal of the civilians' experience and bravery, *Doea Tanda Mata* won many awards at the annual Indonesian Film Festival held in Bandung in 1985 (Best Actor, Best Music, Best Cinematography, Best Art Design and Best Music), and at the Asia Pacific Film Festival in 1986 it won prizes for Best Film and Best Cinematography. *Doea Tanda Mata* also won a Best Film Award in Asia Pacific Film Festival in 1985.

Conclusion

In concluding this chapter, I would like to emphasise the differences between *November 1828* and Teguh's two other historical films, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* and *Doea Tanda Mata*. *November 1828* is not only an epic historical film, but also a film that has no central hero or even central character: it is a multi-character film in which different characters have key roles at different points in the plot development. In both *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* and *Doea Tanda Mata* the narrative is dominated by a rather isolated young male character who becomes increasingly alienated from society, including his circle of friends. In both films the protagonist is a kind of anti-hero, with whom the film has some sympathy, as it shows how he is unable to handle his destiny. As we have seen, this is quite a common theme for Teguh, even in his popular movies, such as *Ranjang Pengantin*, where the relatively young father of the family, for all his good intentions, commits suicide in the face of family problems. *November 1828* has no central hero. Perhaps de Borst can be considered its villain because he represents an

ambitious military officer who identifies completely with the Dutch colonial regime and wants to succeed within this career framework in any way he can. The more sympathetic characters in the film are the Javanese villagers defending their village, their comrades or the musicians led by Bambang Supeno, who come to the aid of the villagers and attempt to assassinate de Borst, and finally the Javanese military forces led by Diponegoro's lieutenant, Sentot.

In *November 1828*, it is not so much any individual but the village as group who are shown to be engaged in a struggle, with new protagonists emerging to take up the fight as earlier leaders (such as Kromoludiro) are eliminated, whether it be the group of young men surrounding the Islamic preacher, Kyai Karto Sardjan, the almost anonymous stable hand Jaduk, who plays a major role in the action of the film even though many of his key actions are not observed by others. In this sense, the film is interested in the decisive roles played by minor characters, who are working together at some level but who are, however, apart from each other. At the same time, the film is not entirely unsympathetic to the characters on the side of the Dutch. It suggests at times that de Borst and van Aken are victims that are trapped in their own positions by bigger forces, which have to do with their ethnic positions and the historical events they are caught up in due to their ethnicity. The canvas of *November 1828* is a much bigger canvas than that of the two other period films.

Nevertheless, both *November 1828* and *Doea Tanda Mata* do have something in common. They both want to explore the different experiences of ordinary people (and the contributions made by them) at a time of historical change, through a description of their ordeals. These ordinary people are unrepresented in Indonesian school's history books nowadays, which are usually filled by national heroes. In this way, these films offer valuable ways of imagining people's history in the colonial

occupation era.¹⁰⁵ However, *Doea Tanda Mata* provides an ironic view of history. Its vision of the *pemuda* is in striking contrast to the portrait of the *pemuda* in Usmar Ismail's 1951 film *Enam Djam di Jogja*, which depicts an alliance between the young people in the city and forces of the nascent Indonesian army outside the city in organising a six-hour occupation of Jogjakarta with the aim of creating a diplomatic incident. This film, which dealt with an incident that had occurred only about two years before the film was made, was a film that Teguh admired. But in making *Doea Tanda Mata*, Teguh reworks the *pemuda* sub-genre of Indonesian historical film. In *Enam Djam di Jogja* the *pemuda* are not only idealistic (apart from a few exceptions who turn out to be traitors), but they are well organised, in contrast to the anti-heroics of *Doea Tanda Mata*.

¹⁰⁵ *Soekarno*, released in 2013, is a film about the first president of Indonesia. It describes Soekarno from his birth in 1901, until the moment Soekarno, jointly with Muhammad Hatta (later Vice-President of Indonesia), declared Indonesian independence from the Dutch on 17 August 1945. The film was directed by Hanung Bramantyo, who, incidentally, was briefly a student of Teguh Karya in the 1990s. Before making this biopic Bramantyo had become well known for making films about Islamic characters and subjects, both popular romances and serious history films. Because the figure of Soekarno is such an important historical figure in Indonesia, the release of the film biography resulted in some controversy, particularly accusations by one of Sukarno's daughters, Rachmawati, who had been an advisor on the film, that it was too commercial and that the actor who plays Soekarno was not the one that she would have chosen. Bramantyo, who attended this film's screening in Melbourne in 2014, defended his choice of Ario Bayu as the most suitable actor to play Soekarno.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Mature Realist Films: The Break from Popular Cinema

Usia 18 (At the Age of 18, 1980), Di Balik Kelambu (Behind the Mosquito Net, 1982)
and *Secangkir Kopi Pahit (Bitter Coffee, 1984)*

Introduction

This chapter examines three films made by Teguh Karya between 1980 and 1985: *Usia 18 (At the Age of 18, 1980)*, *Di Balik Kelambu (Behind the Mosquito Net, 1982)* and *Secangkir Kopi Pahit (Bitter Coffee, 1984)*. With the commercial success of *Badai Pasti Berlalu* in 1977, and the critical success of *November 1828* in 1978, Teguh no longer needed to make primarily popular films in order to survive as a filmmaker. He therefore began to look at different possibilities in vision and style for his new films. *Usia 18*, *Di Balik Kelambu* and *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* are all innovative works, and as I will demonstrate, each of the films displays its own distinctive characteristics from the formula-based popular films Teguh had previously made. These three films also show Teguh's innovative talents as an actor's director as he introduced at least four new performers: Dyan Hasri and Jessy Gusman in *Usia 18* and Alex Komang and Rina Hassim in *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*. *Di Balik Kelambu* was the last film Teguh worked on with his favourite actors Slamet Rahardjo and Christine Hakim.

Usia 18 (At the Age of 18, 1980): Friendship and Solidarity

Usia 18, produced by Indian producer, Manu Sukmajaya, is the only teen film in Teguh Karya's entire career as a film director. Teguh's eighth film marks his break from the popular melodrama found in films such as *Cinta Pertama*, *Ranjang Pengantin*,

Kawin Lari, *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* and *Badai Pasti Berlalu*. However, his intention to make a teen film surprised film reviewers, who had thus far tended to see Teguh as a filmmaker capable of making serious adult films, not a film which when it was first announced was believed to be just a commercial teen movie. In a press conference that marked the beginning of the film shoot, Teguh was accused of trying to follow the trend in Indonesian cinema in the late 1970s in which teen films such as *Gita Cinta dari SMA* (*A Love Song from High School*, 1979) and *Puspa Indah Taman Hati* (*Beautiful Flower in the Garden of the Heart*, 1979) achieved considerable commercial success (Martha, 1980; and Iskandar, 1980). However, Teguh Karya as quoted by Manik (1980) rejected the criticism, stating:

A film director has the right to make a film that he wants to make. I make *Usia 18* because I want to say that at the age of eighteen, a teenager faces crucial moments such as what he wants to do with his life. (p. 35)¹⁰⁶

Looking at Teguh's career as a theatre and film director since the 1960s, it is evident that he had for many years engaged with young people in his collective and been vitally interested in how to develop them as both professionals and as people. His background working extensively with young actors and young film crews may be one of the factors that led him to make a teen film.

Usia 18 deals with the question of what happens to a young man when his father, who is the sole family breadwinner, dies. The question is important as it reflects a common belief in Indonesian culture that the male should generally play the more

¹⁰⁶ The original text in Indonesian reads as follows: "Seorang sutradara film berhak membuat film apa saja yang dia mau. Dan saya membuat film ini karena ingin menggambarkan bahwa usia 18 adalah usia yang penting bagi seorang remaja, misalnya di usia ini dia dihadapkan kepada pertanyaan apa yang mau dia lakukan dalam hidupnya (Manik, 1980, p. 35)."

central role as the breadwinner of the family rather than the female. Also, in 1980, average life expectancy in Indonesia was well below that of developed countries, so the situation encountered by Edo, the young hero of *Usia 18*, was not uncommon.¹⁰⁷ The fact that *Usia 18* addressed a significant socio-cultural issue was confirmed in 1980 when the film received a special award given by the National Committee of Indonesian Youth through the Indonesian Film Festival.¹⁰⁸

The lead male actor of *Usia 18* was a previously unknown young man, Dyan Hasri, who was an architecture student at a private university in Jakarta. He had never acted in film or theatre prior to making this film.¹⁰⁹ *Usia 18* also featured a popular young female actress, Jessy Gusman, who had become a teen idol in the late 1970s following her frequent appearances with another young Indonesian screen idol, Rano Karno, in several films, including the two mentioned above.¹¹⁰ Teguh also cast older actors such as Zainal Abidin, Dahlia and Sofia WD to play the parents and grandmother. This combination of young and old actors suggests that *Usia 18* was aimed at embracing both the younger and older audiences in Indonesia. Yet, although it announces a concern with teenage years in its title, and although at its centre is a teenage couple, the film is not a typical Indonesian teen movie, for the subject is not

¹⁰⁷ According to a report by Indonesian Central Agency on Statistic (Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia), life expectancy in Indonesia for babies born in Indonesia in 1970s was 47 or 48 years old; in 1980, it increased to 52 or 53 years old; and in 1990, life expectancy became 59 or 60 years old. Babies who were born in 2000 would have life expectancy up to 66 or 67 years old.

¹⁰⁸ The National Committee of Indonesian Youth or Komite Nasional Pemuda Indonesia (KNPI) is one of the largest and independent national youth groups formed in 23 July 1973. .

¹⁰⁹ During his brief career, Dyan Hasri's appeared in only four films: *Seputih Hatinya*, *Semerah Bibirnya* (*As White as Her Heart and As Red as Her Lips*, 1980), *Usia 18* (1980), *Merenda Hari Esok* (1981) and *Putri Seorang Jendral* (*A General's Daughter*, 1981).

¹¹⁰ Jessy Gusman was often paired with Rano Karno to create a box office success in films such as *Romi dan Juli* (*Romi and Juli*, 1974) and *Buah Terlarang* (*Forbidden Fruit*, 1976).

teen romance but an encounter with an unfortunate reality of life in Indonesia, and the kinds of loyalties that are developed and are tested in such an encounter.

Usia 18 tells the story of a friendship between Edo (Dyan Hasri) and Ipah (Jessy Gusman), both of whom live in Jakarta. Edo is from a lower class family, and his father, Terparse (WD Mochtar), is a mechanic for the state-owned train service centre. Ipah's father, Suhud (Zainal Abidin), is the director of his own travel agency, this giving his family upper middle class status. Edo and Ipah study at the same tertiary educational institution, the prestigious Jakarta Institute of the Arts or Institut Kesenian Jakarta (IKJ). The initial focus of the story is on Edo's family. Edo's effusive and affectionate father, who is very much the centre of the family, is unexpectedly killed in a car accident. This occurs quite early in the film, immediately after the characters have been established. The death of Edo's father creates a crisis for the family, and the main body of the film deals with how the family copes. To support her family, his mother opens a stall in front of the house and sews other people's clothes. At the same time, the young Edo decides to abandon his privileged position as a film student at the Jakarta Institute of the Arts, and applies to work as a railway mechanic to help his mother pay living costs and for the education of his younger siblings. He refuses an offer from Ipah's father to work in his travel agency.

Due to his lack of working experience as a train mechanic, Edo is assigned a place in Jogjakarta (in Central Java and nine hours by train from Jakarta). He lives in the dormitory with three other workers, Faisal, Parjo and Pono. As he has to work far from home, several problems emerge in his family. Edo's mother is so busy with her jobs that she is unable to pay attention to Edo's siblings. Ipah helps Edo's mother by looking after them, so she often stays at their house, but her frequent absences from her own family irritate her father. This leads to conflicts between Ipah and her father, and

also between her paternal grandmother, who takes her side, and her father. There is also a misunderstanding between Ipah's father and Edo's mother during which Edo's mother has a heart attack and needs to be taken to hospital. Ipah helps pay the hospital fee by becoming a singer in the Jaya Pub, a well-known nightclub in Jakarta.¹¹¹ Edo cannot accept the fact that Ipah is a nightclub singer and threatens to break off their relationship. When Faisal reveals that Ipah sings to help Edo's mother, Edo realizes that he has made a mistake. He travels back to Jakarta to apologise to Ipah. At the same time, Ipah and her father travel to Jogjakarta to explain what actually happened. Having been told by his mother in Jakarta about Ipah and his father Edo returns in a hurry to Jogjakarta on the same day. The film ends humorously with this coincidence, which also expresses the good will each has towards the other, as eventually they all meet at the Jogjakarta railway station.

There are several aspects in *Usia 18* that suggest it marks a new phase in Teguh's work. Firstly, I would argue that my analysis of *Usia 18* in this chapter goes on to explore empirically at length, and illustrates, what is meant by the combination of impressionistic-naturalistic observation and realistic melodramatic narrative in this film, especially in contrast to what Teguh does in films made before and after. Others have written on this in the context of the novel and painting. A good example is Jie Chang's article "Quasi-scientific Approaches Made by Impressionist Painters (Claude Monet) and Literary Naturalists (Emile Zola)".¹¹² Jie Chang writes:

¹¹¹ Jaya Pub is the name of a real bar in Jakarta. It is located in Jalan Thamrin, one of the main roads in the heart of Jakarta, not far away from Tanah Abang, the place where Teguh Karya and his collective theatre members lived.

¹¹² Jie Chang, "Quasi-scientific Approaches Made by Impressionist Painters (Claude Monet) and Literary Naturalists (Emile Zola)", *Review of European Studies*, Vol 1, No 2, December 2009, p 133–137.

Naturalism in literature and impressionism in paintings, in a broad sense, both belonged to the Positivistic cultural movement. Emile Zola, a French Positivistic Realism-Naturalism novelist, took Impressionism as an ally of literary Naturalism in the search for quasi-scientific procedures and finding. In his defence of Impressionism, Zola declared, “Here then is what the Impressionist painter exhibits, exact research into the causes and effects of light, flowing in upon the design as well as the color”. (Chang p. 133)

Chang argues that the realism inherent in Impressionism lies in the capture (by the impressionist painter) of sense impressions of light, and particularly of changes in light (for example in a series of paintings of the same subject). This suggest that there is a sense in which reality is always changing and its perception is subject to a number of different processes that themselves change, and also that can be scientifically observed. This is the technique used by Teguh Karya who begins *Usia 18* with a series of still shots (family snapshots) of the different characters of the film, taken in different places and at different times of the day with different light values, thus opening the film with a series of changing impressions as a way of showing the changing reality of his characters. Chang also emphasises Zola’s support for Impressionism. Although Zola was a Realistic-Naturalistic writer, who wanted to convey some of the more sordid aspects of life in France in the late nineteenth century, and wrote novels that were both realistic and melodramatic, he welcomed impressionism because he believed that reality is always changing. This is one reason Zola sets his many different novels in very different social settings and emphasised change in the lives of his characters. We might note as well, there is a naturalistic theme in Teguh’s film *Usia 18*. In Darwinian terms it is a film about the survival of the fittest – how the young hero accommodates himself to his father’s premature death (and so adapts to change), and becomes the breadwinner for

the family, even though this means giving up, at least temporarily, some of his more cherished cultural aims.

Secondly, the film opens up a range of different spaces in the society that embody its optimism and sense of diversity, rather than confining itself to an elite circle, as in *Badai Pasti Berlalu*, or concentrating only on the extremes faced by the very rich and the poor, as in *Ranjang Pengantin*. Additionally, in showing the roles and responsibilities a young man has towards his family, the film presents as its central character an idealistic young man who succeeds in his goals. The character of Edo is significantly different from the cynical character of the medical student Leo in *Badai Pasti Berlalu*, or the troubled and somewhat opportunistic Bram in *Ranjang Pengantin*.

Thirdly, along with the focus on the role of the male, the film also takes a deep interest in describing friendship and solidarity, particularly among the workers at the train service centre. The role of settings or shooting locations is significant in this film in enhancing the effects of its impressionistic-naturalist style. In this regard, *Usia 18* can be considered as a preparation for *Di Balik Kelambu* and *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*, neither of which could be described as a popular melodrama.

The impressionistic-naturalistic style of the film is evident from the opening credits of the film, which show a series of black and white family photographs, creating an impression of the audience watching “a slice-of-life realism” (Hayward, 2006, p. 285). Instead of music telling the audience how they are to feel, the soundtrack in this opening credits sequence consists of a series of brief snatches of conversation not directly linked to the still images. Among these sounds we hear Edo and Ipah when they were children, trying to spell their own names (and thus giving definition to themselves) and of conversations between each of their parents. This series of still photographs is

like a photo album that impressionistically recollects the past of Edo, Ipah and their families. Like these photographs, which only reveal the surface of their objects, *Usia 18* also does not try to move too quickly into a deep social observation of the main characters and their problems, thus implying that life is very much to be valued in how it is lived from moment to moment by ordinary people. The use of the changing voices and images creates continuous changes in the mood and tone in the opening of the film.

The opening scenes of the film quickly link the different spaces that are focal points in the film, while at the same time creating a sense of the ethos of each of them. The film opens with Edo and Ipah visiting Edo's father Terparse in the gritty Jakarta railway workshop where he works as a railway service mechanic. Edo brings a lunch box for his father, and Ipah gives Terparse tickets for a theatre performance at the Jakarta Institute of the Arts, where she has a main role in a student play. The father is with his assistant, Faisal. The film emphasises several natural gestures of the workers, for example Faisal wipes his dirty hands on his shirt before he shakes Ipah's hands. When he is talking to Edo, Faisal moves his hands like a person winding a camera, for he knows that Edo is a film student. This suggests the mutual solidarity and the goodwill the workers have towards the young people. The diegetic sound from the machines in the workshop makes their conversations little bit difficult to understand, creating a natural atmosphere to the scene.

The film then cuts to the performance of the play at the Jakarta Institute of the Arts. The students' play in *Usia 18* is not a naturalistic play, but is staged as a kind of ritual, with elaborate, almost formal dialogue and with traditional West Sumatran Minangkabau costumes and traditional Minangkabau musical instruments: the *saluang* or flute, and the *rebana*, a small Malay tambourine. This suggests the dedication of this institute in bringing into modern theatre elements of traditional Indonesian society. The

modernistic stage contains a small and imaginary house whose frame is built with minimal use of steel and wood. Ipah speaks from within this house. Despite the stylisation of the performances and the set (where the modernistic stage and the deliberately archaic performance style are in striking contrast with one another), some of the actors sit in the rows, in front of and beside the stage, suggesting that this theatre-in-the-round performance does not try to separate the audience from the players. Among the audience we glimpse Edo and his family, including Terparse.

The story in the play is in a way related to the story of Edo and Ipah in the film. It is a one-act play about the relationship between two Minangkabau people, Ramadan and Hamidah, who must separate because of their different social backgrounds. Ramadan, the male, comes from a lower class background, while Hamidah has an upper class background. Hamidah is not bothered by Ramadan's social background and her desire is to have Ramadan as her lover ("Don't tell me who you are, so that we can be lovers").¹¹³ At one point, they are parted because their parents do not allow them to continue their relationship. However, Ramadan and Hamidah believe that their separation will benefit their relationship in the future ("However painful, our separation will bring luck").¹¹⁴ This traditional story, therefore, anticipates what will happen to Edo and Ipah, though their separation will be caused not by differences of social status, but by the needs of Edo's family after his father's death.

Other scenes that follow show more of the ethos of the relatively informal but highly creative Jakarta Institute of the Arts (IKJ). IKJ had only been established for about ten years when *Usia 18* was made. It accepts students from all over Indonesia and

¹¹³ The original text in Indonesian reads as follows: "Jangan katakan asal-usul dirimu supaya kita bisa menjadi sepasang kekasih."

¹¹⁴ The original text in Indonesian reads as follows: "Perpisahan kita akan membawa keberuntungan."

much of the teaching at IKJ is done by practitioners rather than by full-time academics; for example, in IKJ's early years, the Dean of the Faculty of Cinematography was the dynamic film director, Moscow-trained Sjuman Djaya, Teguh Karya's most important contemporary.¹¹⁵ In these scenes at IKJ we see groups of female students in excited conversation and male and female students going on a bicycle tour together. Here, among the IKJ students, we also hear conversations about real events such as the sinking of *Tampomas 2* car-ferry in the south sea of Masalembo, a major Indonesian tragedy that occurred in early 1981. We also see rehearsals by the IKJ theatre students involving ritualised columns moving in formation being filmed by the students of the Faculty of Cinematography, where Edo is a student, illustrating that at IKJ it is not uncommon for theatre and film students to join in a collaborative work. IKJ represents a different space from that of the railway service centre. While both show solidarity

¹¹⁵ Teguh Karya and Sjuman Djaya were directors who had rather different careers, although they were contemporaries. Unlike Teguh Karya, who had a strong background in theatre from ATNI Jakarta, Sjuman Djaya, ethnically Javanese graduated from the All-Russian State University of Cinematography in 1964 and had little experience of theatre. Upon returning from Moscow, Sjuman was appointed Head of the Film and Television section in the Ministry of information. So for a few years, in the late 1960s, he was the senior official responsible for overseeing the development of the film industry in Indonesia. One of his initiatives was to set up a National Film Production Council to provide funds for quality projects. The Council was abolished after four productions, due to lack of funds. Like Teguh Karya, Sjumandjaya had some role in education, for in the early 1970s he was appointed the first Dean of the Faculty of Cinematography in the Jakarta Institute of the Arts (a part time position). In 1971 Sjuman Djaya wrote and directed his first feature film, altogether being the primary auteur (writer and director) of some fifteen films, before his early death, in 1985. Generally Sjuman Djaya was a more adventurous and less cautious director than Teguh Karya, and he initially established his own company, Matari Film, to make his films rather than working with known producers. As noted in Chapter Three, Sjuman Djaya very early in his career made films that challenged orthodoxies in Indonesia, making *Si Mamad* in 1973, a film that openly satirised corruption in Indonesia, and in 1975 completed *Atheis*, a film that posed many questions about the impact of Islam on a person's ability to handle the modern world (even though Sjuman was himself a Muslim). Teguh, as we have seen, started by making an artistic film, then turned to popular films to establish himself as commercially viable, but returned to more personal, artistic films from the late 1970s until the end of his career. Sjuman Djaya, in his early film career, was well known for making films quite daring in their social criticism, especially *Lewat Tengah Malam* (1971), *Si Mamad* (1973), *Atheist* (1974) and *Yang Muda Yang Bercinta* (1977). Another important film he made was *Si Doel Anak Betawi* (1973) where he celebrated the Betawi popular culture that he experienced as a child. However, with the eventual financial failure of his Matari Company, and after making the heavily censored *Yang Muda Yang Bercinta* for another producer in 1978, Sjuman Djaya turned to film adaptations from Indonesian pop novels. While he did write and direct the fine historical film *R.A. Kartini* in 1983, the majority of his later films included many commercial elements, which is how he managed to still get funding from his producers.

among their workers, IKJ represents the passion for the imagination and a cosmopolitan space that Edo must leave behind when he goes to work at the railway service centre in Jogjakarta.

Thematically, *Usia 18* is a culturally specific work. Although his mother tries to convince him that she will be the one who goes to work, Edo knows that the family needs a lot of money to cover their living expenses and the school fees for his younger siblings. So, he quickly decides that he should get a permanent job that earns him a regular salary, thus replacing his father as the family breadwinner. In an Indonesian family, it is not uncommon for parents to give the eldest child a bigger responsibility than the younger siblings, especially when the first child is a male. The eldest son, especially, is trained by his father from a young age to look after his younger siblings and his mother when the father is absent from home. He is taught to become a model for his siblings, particularly in regards to honouring his parents (Geertz, 1961).¹¹⁶ His parents rely on him and hope that he becomes a good man who not only respects his parents, but also his society. The eldest son learns his responsibilities not only from his interaction with his father, but also from watching how his father carries out his duties as the head of the family. *Usia 18* shows much of this, as Edo behaves like the eldest son brought up in a traditional family. His father is the sole family breadwinner and the mother is a housewife whose primary responsibility is to look after the children. There is an obvious gap in age between him and his siblings (he is a university student and his younger siblings are secondary and primary students; the youngest one is perhaps still in kindergarten). So, Edo learns naturally about his roles and responsibilities within the home and society from his family situation. This is evident in the Jakarta station scene,

¹¹⁶ See also Niels Mulder, *Individual and Society in Java: A Cultural Analysis* (1983).

when as Edo leaves to go to his job in Jogjakarta; he “performs” his role as a “father” by telling his siblings to look after their mother during his absence from the family.

This sense that Edo is behaving in ways that emulate traditional Javanese ideals and values is echoed in his behaviour towards others outside the family, for example in his relationship with Ipah and with the friendships he forms as he becomes a worker in Jogjakarta. *Usia 18* also stresses that friendship is the strong underlying basis of the relationship between Edo and Ipah. Broadly speaking, typical teen movies will concentrate on the topics closely related to teenagers such as first love, rebellion, alienation, conflicts with parents and the difficult transition to adulthood (Driscoll, 2011). Of these common topics, Indonesian teen movies generally have first love or romance as their themes, while Western teen movies can be about any of these topics.

However, *Usia 18* plays down romance and takes a relatively uncommon approach when it places friendship as the central theme. Friendship is primarily what the film is about. In their brief conversation at the station just before Edo leaves Jakarta for Jogjakarta, Edo tells Ipah that their parents still consider a friendship as a strange thing in a relationship. Then, Ipah replies to Edo that both of them should fight against such a belief because the belief is not true.¹¹⁷ This conversation perhaps demonstrates the main point of the film, where Edo and Ipah are aware of the fact that they do not share the most common perception held by their parents about a relationship.

¹¹⁷ The original text in Indonesian reads as follows: “Orang tua masih menganggap persahabatan sesuatu yang janggal.”/Kita harus lawan karena pendirian itu salah.”

Image 12: Edo and Ipah at their farewell meeting at the Jakarta main railway Station



The rejection by the couple of their parents' belief is shown twice, in two different scenes where Edo and Ipah only smile and do not answer the question when they are asked how far they have loved each other. The film shows that Edo and Ipah's relationship is not only strengthened by sharing the same ideas about friendship, but also through the necklaces they exchange and wear with their initials on them. For Edo and Ipah, the necklaces demonstrate their friendship and love, acting as constant reminders of each other even they do not live in the same city anymore.

In *Usia 18*, friendship leads to solidarity both on individual and family levels. On the individual level, there is a clear sense of solidarity between Edo and Ipah. Ipah expresses this to Edo when she criticises her father for the crude way he offers help to her close friend. The film does not depict the moment where Ipah's father, Suhud, tries to offer his help to Edo; but, from the subsequent scene, it is clear that Edo is angry when he leaves Ipah's house. Ipah believes that her father is too rude and not sensitive enough when he talks to Edo about the possibility that he works in Suhud's travel agency. Ipah's grandmother tries to suggest that her father just wants to help Edo, but Ipah insists that she cannot tolerate Suhud's attitude and will refuse any help given by her father if the father does not change the way he talks to his friend. The solidarity with Edo is again demonstrated by Ipah through her use of the word "we" (*kami*), rather

than “he and I” (*dia dan saya*) to signify the bond between her and Edo. Her father notices this, and expresses irritation at her use of the word *kami*.

In addition to the relationship between Edo and Ipah, the solidarity at the individual level in *Usia 18* is also shown in Edo’s relationship with the lower middle class workers that Edo meets on his first train journey to Jogjakarta: firstly Parjo, and later Pono (Parjo’s younger brother) and Faisal. There is immediate solidarity between Parjo and Edo when they realise that both of their fathers have died, meaning they have to find work so that their younger siblings can stay in school. Parjo has to work to help his younger brother Pono stay at school. To demonstrate his friendship with Edo, Faisal offers to take letters and gifts from Edo to his mother and siblings in Jakarta if Edo is busy with his work at the railway yards.

Image 13: Solidarity among friends at the dormitory in *Usia 18*



The solidarity is also seen when the four of them share a small dormitory in Jogjakarta. Edo is the one who often encourages Pono, the youngest person in the group, to study hard, because Pono is the only one of the four who can still continue his study. In one of the dormitory scenes (Image 13), Edo’s attention to and encouragement of Pono is seen when Edo talks to Pono, who is studying at a table. Edo walks toward him and gently touches Pono’s hand to signify his friendship. This kind of gesture, the gentle touching

of hands to signify solidarity, which in the West might be regarded as ‘unmanly’, is quite common in traditional Java, once again confirming that Teguh’s interest in presenting his characters in a culturally specific way that relates to Indonesian and Indonesian cultural practices. Edo identifies with the situation between Parjo and Pono, and hopes that Pono will fulfil Parjo’s expectations. In contrast to this scene, the film also shows how angry Edo becomes after he is told by Faisal that Pono has stolen a friend’s motorbike. The same hand that Edo used to indicate his friendship is now used to slap Pono’s face. This scene indicates not only that Edo disapproves of the crime that Pono has committed but also that he is deeply disappointed with Pono because the theft was a betrayal of the trust that his elder brother, Parjo, has placed in him, and of the solidarity between the four men. This series of scenes appears designed specifically to illustrate that mutual solidarity, particularly in the face of economic deprivation, is commonly found in Java village society. Mutual solidarity is therefore found not only within the family but has spread its influence more pervasively across the society, particularly amongst the poorer classes.¹¹⁸

Unlike *Ranjang Pengantin* and *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*, *Usia 18* demonstrates in the links between Edo’s and Ipah’s family the value of solidarity across social class boundaries. The inter-family solidarity is seen when Ipah tries to earn money by singing at a well-known bar in Jakarta, the Jaya Pub, to help pay the hospital fees for Edo’s mother, after being introduced to the world of popular music by a senior

¹¹⁸ In contemporary Indonesia, one commonly used, relatively modern (stemming from the 1940s) term for systems of mutual cooperation and mutual solidarity is *gotong royong*. On the many forms of *gotong royong* in Indonesia and its political usage at various levels of the society, see Bowen (1986, pp. 545-561). While there have been academic debates about whether *gotong royong* is a value that is actually practiced or whether it is an ideology used by politicians, and the various forms both can take, it might be considered that, given that mutual solidarity is embodied in dramatised encounters that involve expressions of feeling in *Usia 18*, Teguh’s film would be as much influenced by his sense of the society around him and his own practices and encounters as it would by academic or political arguments.

student friend at IKJ. These musical interludes in the Jaya Pub scenes, in which the popular actress Jessy Gusman sings the songs herself, link *Usia 18* with Teguh's earlier popular films, all of which except one have musical interludes or use music as part of their "formula" to achieve commercial success. While I have argued that the movement in this film towards naturalism and away from melodrama mark *Usia 18* as a later period film, it still retains elements of the popular or non-realistic aspect, and even—in Edo's anger at Ipah earning money by singing—moves briefly into temporary melodrama. The two other films discussed in this chapter, *Di Balik Kelambu* and *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*, have no musical interludes and, especially in the case of *Di Balik Kelambu*, reveal a further movement towards naturalism and, in *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*, a shift to experimental narrative.

Family solidarity can also be observed in the last scene in the conversation between Edo and Ipah's father. Suhud tries to understand Edo's arguments for why he refuses to work in the travel agency. Edo states that he will keep working as a mechanic and learn about life through the job he himself chooses to do. This last scene suggests that, by choosing his own employment Edo is able to stick to his principles yet he also now respects Ipah's father for trying to help him and his family. Therefore, in so far as the film has elements of a patriarchal melodrama, the conflicts are resolved by the end of the film. Unlike *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*, *Usia 18* is a very Javanese film in its interest in systems of solidarity and mutual support and in conflict reduction, moving the film from the generic sphere of melodrama, where conflict and the consequence of conflict play a central role.¹¹⁹ Through this last scene, I suggest that Javanese values as

¹¹⁹ Although Teguh Karya was born Chinese, he grew up, received his education and worked as a director closely within Javanese culture. With the exception of *Wajah Seorang Laki-laki*, Javanese cultural influence of solidarity and mutual support can be seen in different ways and to varying degrees in many of his films (*Kawin Lari*, *November 1828*, *Usia 18*, *Di Balik Kelambu*, *Ibunda*, *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*) where the main characters live and work within a Javanese community. In *Perkawinan Dalam*

presented by Teguh in *Usia 18* inherently work against ways of feeling that are commonly found in melodrama.

Usia 18 not only attempts to give an impressionistic-naturalist background through the narrative, but also in the setting. The presence of the train service centre, for example, is significant as part of the narrative, providing a contrast between IKJ and the real world where Edo works. Even though the film only describes the Jakarta railway service centre briefly in the opening scenes, this kind of working environment is shown more frequently in the later parts of the film, particularly after Edo moves to Jogjakarta. The scenes that relate to the train service centre are shot on location, thus providing the authentic atmosphere of the workplace to the audience. The centre is presented as it is. The presence of the actual workers or mechanics of the centre might remind us of the use of non-professional actors in several Italian neorealist films. Edo, Faisal and Parjo are always seen working among these train mechanics. In giving a glimpse of the real situation the film shows the train service centre at three different times, presenting the activities of the centre in the morning, afternoon and late afternoon.

Usia 18 was not a typical teen film but a transitional film in Teguh's move to develop new ways of engaging with realities of Indonesian life, substantially reworking the teen genre as he sought to engage with new dimensions of experience and deal with Javanese life in a more culturally specific way. Although the film has two young main characters that have a close relationship, they behave in a way that does not represent

Semusim, mutual support is practised by the poor, but not by the rich. In *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*, its absence in Jakarta is lamented by one of the characters, but signs of it are occasionally found among the Jakarta poor in this film and in the Batak community in North Sumatra. *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* is an existentialist story of a lonely individualist who isolates himself from his family and his community of origin, and in this sense one would not expect the film to display values of mutual support, even if to some extent found amongst the Portuguese community in early nineteenth century Batavia. In *Usia 18* mutual solidarity and support, although manifested by young Javanese, are seen as exemplary virtues of national significance, and hence endorsed by the film.

the common actions of teenagers in popular teen films. In contrast to most popular teen films, *Usia 18* does not address the predictable issues and formulas commonly found in Indonesian teen movies, such as first-love jealousy, luxurious life styles. Instead, the film positions teenagers as part of society in general, where they may have to come to face various responsibilities.

Di Balik Kelambu (Behind the Mosquito Net, 1982): A Naturalistic Film about Family

After he wrote and directed *Usia 18*, Teguh returned in 1982 to make a naturalistic adult family drama, *Di Balik Kelambu*. This tenth film brought the forty-five-year-old director back to his most familiar theme: a family living in a Jakarta suburb. Unlike *Usia 18*, *Di Balik Kelambu* is entirely set in Jakarta and closely observes the life of a married couple who share a house with the wife's father. In an interview (Hanan, 1996), Teguh stated that unlike *Cinta Pertama*, which is melodramatic in its narrative, *Di Balik Kelambu* is "more realistic and closer to people living in a kampung".¹²⁰

Di Balik Kelambu represents a further movement in the early 1980s towards a greater realism in Teguh's work, away from ideas of the popular that, apart from some notable exceptions, were a part of the majority of films he made in the 1970s. Although the two key protagonists are played by the two main stars Teguh created in the early 1970s, Christine Hakim and Slamet Rahardjo, now playing a couple in their late twenties and early thirties, the film has few of the features of his earlier films. There are no songs at all in the film, no flashbacks or flash-forwards to create a dramatic sense of

¹²⁰ The interview was conducted in Teguh Karya's Sanggar Teater Populer, located in Jalan Kebon Pala I/295 Tanah Abang Jakarta Pusat.

fate in the lives of the protagonists, no sensational deaths or other calamities and no dramatic revelations or twists and turns in the plot development. Rather, the film has a Chekhovian naturalistic surface that subtly dramatises a quite complicated but realistic psychological situation arising from living in an extended family situation, with much of the story revealed through a surface concentration on the ebb and flow of the mundaneness of life. Indeed, there is not even the stylistic variation in the treatment of different spaces that we find in *Usia 18*, for there are no factory or theatre scenes and no locations outside the middle to lower middle class suburbs in Jakarta. My analysis of *Di Balik Kelambu* explores this naturalism, which Teguh takes further in this film than in any other of his works.

The story of *Di Balik Kelambu* is concerned with Hasan (Slamet Rahardjo) who lives with his wife Nurlela or Lela (Christine Hakim) and their two little daughters in Bachrum's (Maruli Sitompul) house. Bachrum, Nurlela's father, is a widowed old man, probably in his sixties, who is a little bit senile. The other family members who also live in Bachrum's place are Rosnah (Sylvia Widianono), Lela's elder sister, and Ismed (Hendro Djarot), Lela's younger brother. It is not uncommon in Java for a son-in-law and his family to live with the family of his wife, usually for reasons of economic need and family respect. Indeed, this is a more common arrangement than for the young family to live with the husband's family. However, in *Di Balik Kelambu* Bachrum has a troubled relationship with his son-in-law, Hasan. Bachrum is disappointed that his daughter married Hasan, because Hasan does not have a well-paid job (he is a middle-rank employee working as a controller at a bus station) and he appears not to have expectations of getting a well-paid job. Hasan, like Bram in *Ranjang Pengantin*, is someone from a lower class family than his wife. Bachrum often

openly contrasts Hasan with another son-in-law, Bakri (August Melaz), a successful businessman and a husband of Ida (Rima Melati), Nurlela's elder sister.

Due to Bachrum's unfair treatment of him, Hasan desperately wants to move out of Bachrum's house; however, his lack of money prevents him from renting a house for his young family. This gradually puts Hasan in a difficult situation, making him feel like an outsider in his wife's family. Hasan resigns from his office job at the bus station after he argues with his superior. He does so without telling Nurlela and Bachrum, and starts to work as a taxi driver. In the meantime, Nurlela borrows money from Bakri so that she and her family can rent a house, and when Hasan finds out he is very angry and slaps Nurlela on the face in front of her sister and his father-in-law. Unable to cope with the unpleasant situation at home, Hasan often stays out late at the tiny home of his friend and workmate, Basuki, who has a wife and child. The film also shows him developing a friendship with a neighbor of Basuki, Martini (Nungki Kusumastuti), who has separated from her husband. Hasan often offers to drive her home from work in his taxi, and he helps her when her mother has to be hospitalised.

Hasan increasingly seeks the company of Martini, after he leaves home in a rage. This irrational, unjustified and destructive rage expresses his feeling that his fragile sense of his role as provider has been challenged. As well, his relationship with Martini sparks rumours in Nurlela's family that Hasan will remarry. In the following scene, Nurlela tries to overdose on her sleeping pills, but is prevented from doing so by Rosnah, her elder sister. Having been told by Ismed about what has happened to Nurlela, Hasan expresses his anger and frustration in front of Bachrum, Bakri, Ida and Rosnah. He threatens Bachrum and the rest of the family if something happens to Nurlela. Fortunately, Nurlela survives. The night when they get back together Hasan gives

Nurlela the key of the house he is already able to rent for them and their daughters. He is able to rent a small house in another kampung with the money he earned from taxi driving and the money he has borrowed from his friend who employs him as a taxi driver.

Di Balik Kelambu demonstrates Teguh's continuing commitment to producing more mature films by using more sophisticated conventions of realism, rather making them dependent on popular genre conventions or music, which can be seen by contrasting *Di Balik Kelambu* with some of his earlier films such as *Cinta Pertama* and *Badai Pasti Berlalu*, and particularly *Ranjang Pengantin*, which also depicts tensions within a marriage. Most importantly, the style of *Di Balik Kelambu* demonstrates Teguh's interest in developing a new kind of surface naturalism, hitherto not seen in an Indonesian film. This surface naturalism, which I have described as Chekhovian, creates a sense of a surface flow of life within the extended family environment of a large house where the family live, in which much of the dialogue seems inconsequential but is ultimately revealing. Naturalism in literature and theatre was an art movement that attempted to describe "an objective portrayal of daily life that appears to be true to the spectator or reader's actual experience (Innes, 2000, p. 4)."¹²¹ Influenced closely by Charles Darwin's theories of human evolution described in *On Origin of Species* (1859), the French writer who propounded naturalism in the mid-19th century, Emile Zola, strove to describe, in his first work, *Therese Raquin* (1867), and in numerous subsequent works, how nature and heredity shape human behavior in everyday life. Subsequent prominent literary writers in the late 19th century and early 20th century such as Henrik Ibsen, August Strindberg and Anton Chekhov chose their own paths of naturalism in their works although they admired Zola. Unlike Ibsen (*Doll's House*,

¹²¹ Innes (2000)

1879; *An Enemy of the People*, 1882) and Strindberg (*The Father*, 1887; *Miss Julie*, 1888) whose plays often deal with the raw experience of individuals in a constrained space (a home of the main character, for example), Loehlin (2010, p. 109) states that Chekhov's major naturalistic plays in his later years, s *The Seagull* (1896), *Uncle Vanya* (1897), *The Three Sisters* (1900) and *The Cherry Orchard* (1904) are generally characterized by "expansive environment (outdoor and indoor locations)", "naturalistic detail", "psychological insight" and "poetic intensity."¹²² Furthermore, Loehlin also argues:

Any successful Chekhov production will highlight the qualities that make Chekhov's plays unique: a balance of interest among a large cast of characters, an attention to the subtleties of social interaction, and an awareness of the powerful submerged longings that animate even the most apparently mundane lives. (p. 109)

In a number of ways *Di Balik Kelambu* uses Chekhovian stratagems to achieve its surface naturalism. There are frequently different centres of action as members of the family live out their dramas in different parts of the house, yet these separate events frequently flow into each other, with arguments that suddenly involve others, or with the arrival of visitors whom all greet. This is not unlike the way in which, in his mature plays *The Three Sisters* and *The Cherry Orchard*, Anton Chekhov populated his stage with different conversational groups of relatives in an extended family living together, the action flowing from one group to another.¹²³ While I described *Usia 18* as having moments of impressionistic naturalism, each scene in *Usia 18* still works as a self-

¹²² Loehlin (2010)

¹²³ In 1976, Teguh Karya directed Teater Populer performing Anton Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* at the theatre complex in Taman Ismail Marzuki.

contained dramatic unit. However, in *Di Balik Kelambu* the scenes flow into one another. Moreover, in *Usia 18*, dramatic units have their own distinctive style, sometimes with ritual elements (such as the scenes of theatre at the Jakarta Institute of the Arts), or very distinctive *mise en scene*, such as the factory scenes, whereas in *Di Balik Kelambu* the scenes take place almost entirely in middle class or lower middle class homes, a bus station or in the protagonist's taxi, all observed with a similar style, watching a constant surface flow of the mundane. There are no alternative spaces, giving the film a slight sense of claustrophobia but emphasising the restricted milieu in which young families often live.

This emphasis on naturalism rather than melodrama is most strikingly seen if one compares *Di Balik Kelambu* to the 1974 film *Ranjang Pengantin*. Although *Di Balik Kelambu* has a very similar theme to *Ranjang Pengantin*—in both films a lower class man wins and marries a girl outside his class, and the films follow how their marriage progresses—in *Di Balik Kelambu* there is neither the dramatic histrionics of the opening wedding scene and concluding funerals, with their use of a baroque organ and choir that we find in *Ranjang Pengantin*, nor is there any use of flashbacks or extremely tragic moments such as the death of a child or the suicide of the male protagonist. With regard to music and sound, in contrast to *Ranjang Pengantin*, although *Di Balik Kelambu* does occasionally use non-diegetic music, the most distinctive organisation of sound in the film is the use of silence in scenes of quiet intimacy between husband and wife, particularly late at night, or the mundane sound—often heard at low volume in the evening or at breakfast—of the patter of Indonesian state television (TVRI) news broadcasts, particularly the official news characteristic of Soeharto's New Order period at the time, for example announcements of new

government initiatives that were so important to that regime's developmentalist ideologies.¹²⁴

But the stratagems of naturalism are evident from the first scene of *Di Balik Kelambu*, which shows a conversation between a doctor and Nurlela at a clinic. The scene opens with a medium close-up shot of a woman (Nurlela), taken from behind as she puts on her clothes after a medical examination. Her identity is not revealed, nor that she is at a clinic, until later. While the camera still focuses on Nurlela, we can hear through the soundtrack the voice of someone off camera calling the names of "Bapak Sukanto", "Ibu Sintawati", "Nona Aisah" and "Ibu Hutabarat". Rather than concentrating on the woman only, these sounds build a sense of the surrounding environment into the scene and make us question where the scene is set, a characteristic of naturalism. As scene develops, we realise it is set in a doctor's office room at a hospital and the person who is calling the names who was heard earlier is a hospital officer who is calling the names of the patients who are waiting for meeting the doctors.

The conversation between Nurlela and the doctor, who is later identified as Dr. Nurdin, Nurlela's family doctor, describes goings-on in Nurlela's family. This conversation contains important information about the situation in the family that enables the viewer to interpret what is going on below the surface of life shown in immediately subsequent scenes. This exposition also provides a sketch of family life from Lela's point of view, and the fact that she is troubled by aspects of her situation.

¹²⁴ During the New Order government, Televisi Republik Indonesia (TVRI), the state-owned television station, and Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI), the state-owned radio station, were two of the most effective mediums for the government's propaganda. For an account on radio in Indonesia, especially in the last stage of Soeharto's government and during the period of Reformation, see Jurriens (2009).

Indonesian	English
Nurlela: Saya tidak bisa tidur, om.	Nurlela: I can't sleep, uncle.
Dokter Nurdin: Jangan mengikuti perasaan. Buang saja mana yang mengambil hati. Soal bapakmu dan suamimu mau diapakan lagi? Keduanya sudah sama keras. Orangnya sudah begitu, kolot. Tapi suamimu juga Jangan merasa selalu terhina dong. Keadaanya begitu, ya begitu harus diterima dong. Bagaimana pekerjaannya sekarang?	Dr Nurdin: Don't be too emotional. Don't take things seriously. As for the behaviour of your father and your husband, what can you do about it? Both of them are hard-headed men and old fashioned. Your husband should not get easily offended. If that's how things are, so be it. He should simply accept it. How's his work?
Nurlela: Baik.	Nurlela: Fine.
Dokter Nurdin: Kehidupan seks kalian bagaimana?	Dr Nurdin: How's your sex life?
Nurlela: Biasa.	Nurlela: Normal.
Dokter Nurdin: Bagus. Nah apalagi? Itu yang penting. Om cuma kasih kamu obat penenang. Makan satu kalau perlu.	Dr Nurdin: Good. That's the most important thing. I'm prescribing a tranquiliser. Take one when necessary.
Nurlela: Makasi om.	Nurlela: Thank you, uncle.

In this brief scene, conducted initially with Lela facing away from the camera and shot from Nurdin's point of view, we are made aware that there is a problematic relationship

between Nurlela's father and her husband, and that this is having an impact on Lela. The style of the conversation implies that Dr Nurdin and Lela know each other well. In the Indonesian language it is significant that Nurlela addresses Nurdin by using *om* or "uncle" rather than "sir" or *bapak*. Nurdin also uses *kamu* or "you", instead of using "Ms Nurlela" or *ibu Nurlela*. The use of other informal colloquial expressions such *ngantuk dong om* ("I am sleepy, uncle") and *makasi' om* ("Thank you, uncle") also indicates their conversation is intimate, informal and relaxed. While this scene provides information about the family situation and is presented naturalistically, with voices from the surrounding environment heard off-screen, unlike a scene in a play it is accompanied by gentle rising non-diegetic music, heard initially as a piano only, expressing the sense of desire of the central protagonist, Nurlela. This musical accompaniment begins to include other instruments as her husband in particular is mentioned, and the sound overwhelms the early parts of the conversation between family members that happens in the front garden of the family home in the second scene of the film. The reason for the presence of this brief opening scene with the doctor-relative is because not only does it alert the viewer to the fact that conflicts exist below the surface of the ebb and flow of daily family life, it also helps us to identify them later. The aural, visual and stylistic devices identified here support *Di Balik Kelambu* being considered a conscious experiment in cinematic naturalism.

This informality and concentration on the surfaces of everyday life is continued in the next scene, which takes place in the morning in the front yard of Bachrum's house. Here we see Hasan for the first time. He is affectionate to his children, and Hasan and Nurlela are each shown holding one of their two daughters. Hasan leaves, soon after, to go to work, after which family members are shown doing specific house chores in different areas in the large house: Rosnah sweeps the floor,

Ismed washes his motorbike and Nurlala bathes her children in an outdoor bathroom. But a conversation soon brings them back together after Bachrum appears from his room and asks everyone in the house about when his daughter Ida and her husband, Bakri, his “favourite” son-in-law, will be visiting them. The whole family immediately get involved in the conversation concerning the arrival of Bakri and Ida at their house. The location and movements of the characters within the house are outlined in brackets.

Indonesian	English
Bachrum: (keluar dari kamarnya) Rosnah, jam berapa kakakkmu Ida mau datang kemari?	Bachrum: (coming out of his room) Rosnah, what time will your sister come here?
Rosnah: (menyapu lantai di depan rumah) Bagaimana sih Abah ini? Datangnya besok bukan hari ini.	Rosnah: (sweeping the floor) What are you on about, father? She will come tomorrow, not today.
Bachrum: Kata si Hasan hari ini. Lela, mana yang benar, besok atau hari ini?	Bachrum: Hasan said she will come today. Lela, do you know if she will come here today or tomorrow?
Nurlala: (berbicara kepada Bachrum dari dapur) Di suratnya bilang apa? Khan Abah yang terima?	Nurlala: (calling to Bachrum from the kitchen) What does she say in her letter? You received the letter, didn't you?
Ismed: (mencuci sepeda motor, di dekat	Ismed: (to Lela while washing his

Nurlela) Maksud Abah, Kapan bang Bakri datang kemari?	motorbike) Father wants to know when Bakri will come here.
Bachrum: (ke Ismed) Jangan banyak omong kamu. Kalau tidak ada dia, tidak ada tuh sepeda motor. Rosnah, jadi kapan dia datang kemari	Bachrum: (to Ismed) Shut up! If it weren't for her there wouldn't be a motorbike. Rosnah, when will she come here?
Rosnah: Iya datangnya hari ini	Rosnah: She comes today [from Singapore].
Ismed: Kemarinya besok.	Ismed: But she visits us tomorrow.
Nurlela: (membawa anaknya ke kamar mandi) Jam tujuh, jam tujuh besok malam.	Nurlela: (as she takes her daughters to the bathroom) Seven o'clock tomorrow night.
Bachrum: (masuk kembali ke kamarnya) Orang bilang jam tujuh. Jam tujuh kapan? Ngomong pada seenaknya.	Bachrum: (returning to his room) They say seven o'clock. When is seven o'clock? Everyone says what they like.

There are a few things that can be observed from this scene of domestic interaction. Firstly, unlike the conversation between Nurlela and Nurdin in the first scene, where the doctor dominates the conversation, no one character monopolises the conversation in the second scene. Each adult member of the household gives an answer as to when Ida will be visiting them. Secondly, the interactions move fast and lines of dialogue intersect or overlap each other so that at times one person's speech continues another person's speech, a phenomenon characteristic of much naturalistic drama (and used also in many scenes in Orson Welles' expressionist, *Citizen Kane* made in 1941). Moreover, there are unstated assumptions that are understood by the family. For example, when

Rosnah says, “She comes today,” she means that Nurlela (and her family) arrive back from their holiday in Singapore today (and hence are unlikely to come to visit their relatives on the same day). The next person, Ismed, says, “They will come here tomorrow.” Ismed provides information that Bakri and his family will come to their place tomorrow. Nurlela then completes the information by specifying the time, saying, “At seven o’clock tomorrow night.” Thirdly, while the conversation is flowing in a short and fast manner, we also see each of them doing particular activities. This second scene ends inconclusively, as no one knows for sure when Bakri and Ida will arrive.

This flow of conversation, interspersed with various different activities, also takes place in the third scene of the film, which is set in the control booth of the bus station where Hasan works. The transition from the second scene to the third scene signifies the essence of naturalism as the film moves from one inconclusive situation to other events. This scene shows the flow of work that Hasan must cope with in the course of the day. In the beginning of this scene, in an extreme long shot (shot with a telephoto lens), Hasan and his friends are seen returning from a meeting with his superior that addressed the issue of the relocation of some of the key staff from the control booth to other divisions of the office. Much of the dialogue overlaps or is heard in snatches, yet in the conversation while they are walking back to the booth, Hasan implies that he cannot accept the policy of his manager, as it will reduce the efficiency of his division. As they go into the booth, Hasan is back to his routine, calling through the microphones to the mini-bus drivers who are to depart for the suburbs of Petojo, Tomang and Grogol.¹²⁵ A minute later, Hasan is showing talking to a female colleague about the result of the meeting. In the middle of their conversation, Hasan talks to another colleague about housekeeping matters. After that, he continues to talk to the

¹²⁵ The names of busy suburbs in Jakarta.

woman about the meeting, which does not result in any actions. At the end of this scene, Hasan and his female colleague walk out of the office, possibly to talk privately about this work matter. Again, the viewer is left with uncertainty, for we do not hear any more of what they are talking about.

The second, third and fourth scenes take place on the same day, and they illustrate the different activities of Hasan and Nurlela. In the fourth scene, which occurs at night time, Hasan and Nurlela talk about what happened after Hasan left the house in the morning. Nurlela cautions Hasan about telling Bachrum about a possible visit from Bakri and Ida, if Hasan does not really know exactly what day and time their sister and elder-brother-in-law will visit. Both of them try to find a way to prevent Bachrum from asking the same question about Bakri and Ida next time, for it always leads to minor conflicts. Not long after that, Hasan and Nurlela change to other topics, such as whether Hasan has bathed yet and to Nurlela, who feels a little bit tired and sleepy. While they are talking, music played by Ismed and his friends outside the house can be heard, overlapping with the sound of the television news in Hasan's room. Throughout the film, the sound of the television news is quite frequently heard in the background, as each family (Bachrum's and Hasan's) has their own television set. These four early scenes show the importance of sound, which is part of the naturalistic style of *Di Balik Kelambu*. Additionally, in the middle of the film the sound of *azan* (the Muslim call to prayer) from the mosque in the early morning can also be heard, indicating that the family live in a predominantly Muslim kampung. The scene of Bachrum's place in the early morning accompanied by the sound of *azan* is followed by the scene where Bachrum asks Ismed to perform his morning prayers. Unlike the sound of *azan* in *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*, which serves to dramatise and make more momentous the scene where Koswara's wife is delivering her baby before dying, the sound of *azan* in

Di Balik Kelambu is used in a naturalistic style to help create a sense of real life in the middle of a crowded Muslim kampung.

The handling of the intimate scene between Hasan and Nurlela at the end of the fourth scene works in similar ways. Naturalism is built through the atmosphere and the lighting. Unlike the intimate scene in *Ranjang Pengantin*, which takes place on the beach in the late afternoon and is presented in a visually erotic way, the intimate scenes in *Di Balik Kelambu* occur in silence and semi-darkness in the couple's small bedroom at night. The room is only lit by a dim light from the outside of the room, and the emphasis is on sensations of touch, for example showing the couple's hands gently touching in the course of a quiet conversation. The couple are happiest at these times, and we sense that despite their problems they are relaxed with one another and with their children, and share mutual love. This is shown in an oft-cited and memorable detail in one of these scenes. As the younger daughter, who is also in the room, cries in her cot, Hasan lies on the bed and stretches out his leg and gently rocks the cot with his foot to make her fall asleep again.

The strength of *Di Balik Kelambu* also lies in the natural performances given by Christine Hakim and Slamet Rahardjo, the two main actors. Christine plays with great subtlety and restraint the demanding role of Nurlela, a housewife with two small children and ongoing and complex domestic problems that lead to mild depression. Playing Hasan, Slamet must portray a character that is trapped between his strong wish to live independently from Bachrum and the respect he has for Bachrum as his father-in-law. Until they can afford to rent a house, Hasan and Nurlela try to repress their feelings to avoid conflicts with Bachrum.

Image 14: Hasan is angered by Bachrum



They are successful until the end of the story, where finally Hasan expresses openly his anger toward Bachrum. There is a sense in *Di Balik Kelambu* (unlike the roles in the previous films) where they need only to act as themselves. Moreover in *Di Balik Kelambu*, Slamet and Christine are the same age as the characters they play. Nevertheless, *Di Balik Kelambu*, despite its apparently simple and uncomplicated naturalistic style, is quite a complex psychological portrait of a family. As a result, moments in the drama required subtle nuances in the performances. Both Slamet and Christine received best acting awards at the Indonesian Film Festival in 1983 for their roles in this film. It can be argued that of all the films they made with Teguh, *Di Balik Kelambu* contains their most mature performances.

Despite these moments of intimacy and closeness with his wife, the pressures of living with his prejudiced and irascible father-in-law lead Hasan to behave in ways that threaten the marriage. Hasan behaves in ways reminiscent of other male protagonists that Slamet Rahardjo has played in Teguh's films in the 1970s. Although attractive and engaging, he is unreliable in his behaviour, does not tell the truth, is over-sensitive to criticism, becomes jealous easily and is prone to seek the company of

people other than his family—in particular his friend Basuki, and his sympathetic neighbour, Martini—to alleviate his partly self- created miseries.

Image 15: Hasan and Lela during their heated quarrel over money given by Bakri



The culmination of this behaviour is a scene, the most dramatic scene in the film, where Hasan strikes Lela on the face in front of her father and sister, because she admits to him that she has borrowed money which could enable them to rent a house and move out. While this money will provide a solution to their problems, Hasan's reaction is to assume that there is no way Lela could obtain money without betraying and humiliating him in some way. In his suspicions and jealousy he goes further than Bram in *Ranjang Pengantin* in his dalliance with the widow, Martini, almost talking himself into the idea that a relationship with Martini might provide a solution for his troubled life. Here the film deliberately avoids making clear how enamoured Hasan is with Martini and whether, when later he and Martini jointly organise to rent a house, the house is for him and Martini or for Hasan and his young wife and family. In this way, *Di Balik Kelambu* is thematically similar to *Cinta Pertama*, *Ranjang Pengantin* and *Badai Pasti Berlalu*: the film has an attractive male hero, who is also found wanting, is easily prone to

jealousy and is not completely honest, while the female protagonist and romantic partner is the norm and the ideal to which he should aspire. This conception of male-female relations recurs in the films of Teguh Karya. Overall, *Di Balik Kelambu* shows Lela to be quietly resourceful in seeking a solution to their problems. However, when Lela comes to believe that Hasan may have been unfaithful the film does dramatise her despair when she attempts suicide by taking all of her tranquilisers.

Nevertheless, *Di Balik Kelambu* successfully moves between scenes of everyday life, crises of everyday life, and quiet humour. The film ends with another intimate moment in the middle of the night. Lela has got a job with a travel agency so she can now afford to rent a house without relying on money borrowed from her brother-in-law Bakri (the acquisition of which led to her being struck by Hasan), and she has found a house to rent. But Hasan, with the help of the young divorcee, Martini, has also found a house to rent. The film ends with Lela and Hasan amusedly discussing which little house they might choose to live in, given that they now have a multitude of houses to choose from.

As an appendix to this discussion of the film, we might note that the main family home in *Di Balik Kelambu* also marks a new phase in the fortunes of Teater Populer. In *Di Balik Kelambu*, the house in which the family lives is actually the large house and adjacent buildings in Jalan Kebon Pala I, Tanah Abang, where Teguh had recently relocated his Teater Populer collective. In 1980, Teguh Karya and Teater Populer had moved from the tiny two-storey house in nearby Jalan Kebon Kacang, where the collective was originally located and which had served as the primary location of two of his films, *Ranjang Pengantin* and *Kawin Lari*. They did this with funds from Teguh's recent successful productions with the collective (*Badai Pasti*

Berlalu and *November 1828*), enabling them to relocate to this large old house, with its wide hallway and spacious verandahs, in Jalan Kebon Pala I.

In *Di Balik Kelambu*, the whole of the quite large main house and its front garden is used as the family home of Pak Bachrum. In later years, as with the house in Jalan Kebon Kacang, redecorated parts of this house would be used to provide sets for rooms in most of his films, most notably for *Ibunda*, though the whole house was not used again in the capacity it was in *Di Balik Kelambu*, as one large family home. The names of both the suburb Tanah Abang, and both of the streets where the Teater Popular was (and still is) located, reflect the history of these areas in old Jakarta: Kebon Kacang meaning Peanut Plantation, and Kebon Pala meaning Clove Plantation, while Tanah Abang means “the land of the older brother”. When Teguh moved to the area, these were crowded, densely populated suburbs consisting of lower class mainly Muslim people with a strong community ethos. There were also many poor people. Scenes from *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*, notably the scene with the old Batak bottle and cigarette recycler conversing eloquently about his life (an actual person and not an actor), were filmed along the nearby Tanah Abang railway line, notorious for the crowded slums that sprung up on the edge of the train line where numerous displaced urban migrants lived.

Di Balik Kelambu won Six Citra Awards at the 1983 Indonesian Film Festival and was one of the most highly awarded films that Teguh ever made. In addition to the awards to Slamet Rahardjo and Christine Hakim for best leading male and female roles, *Di Balik Kelambu* won the awards for Best Film, Director, Best Supporting Actor (to Maruli Sitompul as Bachrum) and for Editing. While not a difficult film, *Di Balik Kelambu* was something of an innovation in popular Indonesian cinema: a realistic

work and a subtle psychological portrait which in most regards systematically avoids the sorts of gratuitous stratagems that made a film popular in the 1970s.

Secangkir Kopi Pahit (Bitter Coffee, 1984): Bitter Life in Jakarta

Secangkir Kopi Pahit is one of the most significant of all of Teguh Karya's films. Unlike *Usia 18* and *Di Balik Kelambu*, which deal with social problems confronted by families, *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* takes on social issues of a national and global significance, including the migration of people from rural regions to the national capital, the increasingly large megacity, Jakarta. In this film, the narrative focuses on the experience of a young Batak Indonesian, a migrant from the Lake Toba area in North Sumatra, Togar, who, like many other people from regional areas, is moving in search of a better life in Jakarta. While *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* is particularly concerned with the journey of its main character, the story also gives a glimpse of the lives of other internal migrants' living in the same city. Indeed, most of the main characters in this film are people from other regions of Indonesia who are trying to make a living in Jakarta. Given its theme, length of shooting (two years) and shooting locations that include Jakarta, West Java (Cirebon) and North Sumatra, *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* may be considered as Teguh's most ambitious effort to make a film that illustrates the social problems of the Indonesian nation as a whole.¹²⁶

If *Usia 18* is an impressionistic portrait of a young man as a family breadwinner, and *Di Balik Kelambu* a naturalistic picture of the struggle of a married

¹²⁶ The original title of the film was *Merobek Angan-Angan (Tearing the Dreams)*, and this was the title of the screenplay. In the course of the filmmaking, it changed to *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*. See Kristanto (2007, p. 266) According to Alex Komang (personal interview, 2011), Teguh Karya changed the title because he wanted the film to give hope to the main character at the end of the story.

couple living in a kampung, *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* attempts to describe one's man's experience as a young migrant, his life becoming a microcosm for the pressures placed on many people by the conditions of existence in this difficult city. One important reason why Jakarta is often seen by regional people as a kind of magnet towards which they must inevitably move is that all economic activities are concentrated there, rather than in their own regions. This was particularly true of New Order Indonesia (Mamas and Komalasari, 2008, p 109-149). The concept of "third cinema", developed by Teshome Gabriel (1989), is relevant to an analysis of the film. Although in earlier essays Gabriel views third cinema as mainly representing the political interests of the Third World as opposed to the First and Second Worlds with their highly commercial filmmaking or "bourgeois" art films, in his later writings, Gabriel revised his views, doing away with binary oppositions and emphasising that third cinema is dynamic and always changes over time.

I began, in short, to think of third cinema less in terms of typologies and structural oppositions than in terms of various cultural metaphors that suggested more complex, non-binary relations. This shift was, no doubt, a reflection of changes in third cinema itself, but also of more general changes in cultures and cultural theories. (n.d)

Gabriel departs from this early view of third cinema as primarily the radical voice of Third World people to his mature understanding that third cinema is less unified in its shape than he had argued in his earlier writings. In its representation of the emergence of diaspora, third cinema represents not one but many voices, each of which has its own cultural dynamic. For Gabriel, the term "third cinema" becomes "third cinemas", in order to signify various identities in the movement. A case could be made that with its extensive use of flashbacks *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* does emphasise memory and identity.

However, what the film mainly tries to do is to experiment with the film form in order to portray as starkly as possible people who are culturally and economically displaced in the city, and subject to the pressures of an economy in which they must fight to find a place. This further represents the way third cinema should be perceived as “a space for a variety of approaches, styles and projects” (Gabriel, n.d). Therefore, my analysis of *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* will explore the way the film conceives the experience of its characters as they live in the Third World megacity of Jakarta.

Apart from its experimental narrative, the film is important sociologically speaking because it is the only film where Teguh openly and directly talks about Jakarta. Under the New Order government’s centralised system, Jakarta was developed as the main city in Indonesia and it became the centre of various aspects such as government, politics, economy and education. Census figures showed that in 1980 Jakarta had a population of 6,503,449, while in 1990, the population had grown to 8,259,639 people. In 1995, the population was 9,112,652 (Indonesian Central Agency on Statistic, 2014). These official figures do not include people without permits to live in Jakarta (estimated in the 1980s to be at least two million people), nor do they include the increasingly densely populated areas surrounding Jakarta, known initially by the acronym Jabotabek and more recently as Jabodetabek (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang and Bekasi), which in 2011 were estimated to have a population that approached a total of 28 million people, if central Jakarta is included. The city now has one of the largest urban population densities of any city in the world (United Nations, 2010).¹²⁷ Moreover, Suryadinata, Nurvidya and Ananta (2003, pp. 138-142) claim that due its centrality in economic development, Jakarta has the most diverse ethnic population in the country.

¹²⁷ For a specific information about Jakarta and its population, see Si Gde Made Mamas and Rizky Komalasari, “Jakarta” (2008, 109-149).

While Javanese comprise the largest proportion of the population (35.16%), there are also numerous other ethnic groups, including Betawi (27.65%), Sundanese (15.27%), Chinese (5.53%), Batak (3.61%), Minangkabau (3.18%) and Malays (1.62%). *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* is unique among Teguh's films in its sustained emphasis on migrant people, and with Sumatrans, especially Bataks, as the central figures in the story.

Secangkir Kopi Pahit is concerned with the journey of Togar (Alex Komang) from Lake Toba in North Sumatra to Jakarta. The film opens on Lake Toba with a dramatic scene in which a drowned woman's body is brought ashore from the lake, while her distraught husband, Togar, cries out, exhorting local citizens never to be tempted to go to Jakarta. The woman's name is Lola (Rina Hassim). An investigation is to be held as to the circumstances of Lola's death, and because Togar was driving the boat from which she fell and drowned, his role in her death is the focus of the investigation. The film then moves into flashback mode, as the court judge begins to examine the case, with Togar sitting in the chair as the main suspect. Most of the subsequent film is told in flashbacks, with the film returning to the court a number of times, most importantly at the end where the verdict is announced. In the first flashback, we learn that Togar was sent by his parents to study in Jogjakarta, but he found that he did not like what he studied. Although his parents wanted him to study economics, he actually wanted to become a journalist. Dropping out of university, Togar goes to Jakarta to fulfil his dream of becoming a journalist. His friend Buyung (Ray Sahetapy), who is already a journalist working for a newspaper, promises to help Togar find work at his newspaper.

However, Togar cannot get a job at the newspaper straightaway, and must work for a while at a cement factory to earn money to support himself in Jakarta. He

often has meals and stays at the nearby food stall or *warung nasi* owned by Lola, a widow from Manado in North Sulawesi, who has three children. While he works at the factory, Togar writes and publishes several articles for the newspaper in which he describes life in Jakarta. He interviews his friend, Mangara (Zainal Abidin Domba), who also comes from North Sumatra and studies economics at a Jakarta university. Due to the quality of his writings, Togar gets a job at the newspaper where Buyung works. Togar's first assignment as a journalist is to write about social issues in the city, but he is suddenly assigned to replace Buyung, who has been temporarily suspended from his position, in covering a story of a girl named Sukarsih (Dewi Yull) from Banyuwangi East Java, who has become a victim of slave traders running a prostitution ring. Sukarsih, who had been promised a job as a housemaid in Jakarta, is raped by one of the leaders of the ring, Parjo, whom she believed was an employment agent, and who is actually also from the same town as Sukarsih.

Due to his lack of journalistic experience, Togar has difficulty in carrying out this assignment. Sukarsih becomes afraid of him, seeing him as someone who threatens her life, rather than as a journalist. As he tries to interview her, she rushes into a washroom to escape him, and he follows her in there. Shortly afterwards Togar is accused by Parjo of kidnapping Sukarsih. While Togar struggles to investigate the case of Sukarsih, he is told that Lola is pregnant with his child. Although this news upsets him in the beginning, Togar gradually accepts his responsibility and comes to realise he must marry Lola. Buyung, who gets back his job after being suspended by the paper while an accusation of minor corruption is investigated, continues Togar's work and finds Sukarsih working at a food stall in the crowded lower class market area at Tanah Abang. Buyung brings Sukarsih to the police station and she says she escaped from the traders because she was raped by one of them. Togar is cleared of any accusations. The

sudden news from his village of his father's death causes him to return back home to Toba. Togar's fears that his mother (Sylvia Widiantono) will refuse Lola because he married her (Lola) without telling the mother, disappear as she (the mother) welcome them and the children. However, his return with Lola and the kids to his village turns into a tragedy after a boat accident where Lola is drowned on a lake. The film then flashes forward to the judge's verdict on Togar. It is announced that he is free from all the charges.

There are several aspects that make *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* one of Teguh's most significant films in his journey as an auteur. Firstly, in relation to form, the film uses a non-linear investigative narrative structure to tell the complex story of an urban migrant coming to live in Jakarta. Secondly, thematically speaking *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* represents Teguh's most powerful portrait of exploitation and distress experienced by groups living in Third World conditions in Indonesia. This film is more capable of dealing with the complexity of these issues than the more formulaic melodrama *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*, where exploitation is seen largely in personal terms rather than as a systemic problem. Thirdly, although *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* describes the exploitation of human beings in the megacity, the film should not be mainly regarded as a melodrama, for the use of the flashback structure allows the film to explore experience, motivation and cause, rather than to highlight victimisation, while at the same time providing ironic contrasts and parallels in its vision of the city, as individuals discuss Jakarta with Togar or report to the court (via voice overs) what they have witnessed. Fourthly, through its contrast between the city and the village, *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* raises the important issue of the economic viability of regional areas. Interestingly, the issue of the economic viability of regions and the contrast between city and village had been raised powerfully in a slightly earlier film made by the Teater

Popular collective, *Rembulan dan Matahari* (*Moon and Sun*, 1979), the first film written and directed by Teguh's lead actor, Slamet Rahardjo. These issues will be explored in my subsequent discussion.

Firstly, I want to address the different kinds of realism in the film. To a certain extent the opening credits of *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* are reminiscent of *Usia 18*, because both films use black and white still photographs as background to the credits. However, unlike *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*, the opening credits of *Usia 18* show a series of family photos, as if the credits were displaying images from a family photo album as a way of introducing its characters. The generic style of the stills used in the credits of *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* is not of the family photograph, but photojournalism. The film uses journalistic still pictures of citizens of various backgrounds located outside of a family context, for example in their workplace or the street, as illustrations of the lives of ordinary but anonymous people, un-posed photographs mainly of poorer people. The photos in the opening credits show (in the following order): a group of poorly dressed migrant men and woman, looking anxious, filmed obliquely, partly in silhouette; a young boy selling newspapers at a traffic intersection, seen from a bus; a group of primary school children in school clothes, emerging from their village school; and a young man clutching a still camera, standing by a van. This last image, which is of Togar, is held for much of the credits. As the film continues to display these pictures as background to the credits, the sound of energetic typewriting on an old typewriter starts up on the soundtrack. As we discover later, most of these photos were taken by the central character, Togar, as part of his work. Togar is shown to be personally obsessed with the city. But the series of still shots are the means by which the film discovers a more complex kind of realism, not simply the naturalistic observation of family life in the city, as we have in *Di Balik Kelambu* and *Usia 18*, but reportage of the visual face

of both city and village. Similar images of anonymous people occur throughout the film, sometimes not simply as individual still photos but as montages of moving images. In its concluding moments, the film shows a series of shots that depict young boys selling newspapers on the street (presumably to pay for their education); a young boy who is washing a car; crowds of school children coming out of their school at the end of the day; a group of factory workers (this time posing for Togar who is now back at work); and a smiling tricycle driver. In a way, these last documentary-style images sum up a potential future for Indonesia.

It is within a context of this more urgent and graphic realism that we find the complex jigsaw-puzzle-like investigative flashback structure used by the film. The film begins with the death of Lola but then moves into the past to investigate the circumstances of her death. Two other films by Teguh, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* and *Ranjang Pengantin*, also begin with a tragic event and then move into the past to show the personal history of the central characters that culminated in the tragic circumstances with which the films open. In these two films, the reason for beginning in this way is simply to engage the audience emotionally in the stories. In *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*, however, this stratagem of beginning at the end is used in order to initiate an investigation, which, while being conducted by a court, is in fact an investigation into the set of social circumstances surrounding the death and the moral behaviour of the central character within these circumstances, all of which reflect upon the difficulties—for a migrant—of living in Jakarta. Moreover, whereas the two earlier films are primarily linear in structure, except for the opening flash-forward, the subsequent development of *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* after its opening flashback, is not linear but a further series of flashbacks (and flashbacks within flashbacks), in which the film jumps from one situation to another, and then forward again to the court before returning to

another set of events, which we sometimes discover are retrospectively told by another observer. Additionally, the movement between different parts of the past is not accompanied by a facilitating transitional device such as a slow dissolve, but by direct cuts, which further emphasise the abrasive nature of the story the film is unfolding.

The original title for the film was *Merobek Angan-Angan* or *Torn Imaginings* and, in the scene immediately following the death of Lola, the central character, Togar, is shown flailing a coat around himself and with despairing anguish exhorting people in a nearby procession on a street in the lakeside town not to go to Jakarta, for this will be the source of tragedy. This procession is celebrating the departure of a young man who is leaving the region to begin his education in Jakarta. The use of handheld camera and the sardonic music in the background sets up an irony even in the beginning of the story. We see Togar with his *ulos* (a traditional Batak cape) trying to disperse the parade, and we hear him cry out “What’s all this for?” and “There are still many things that you can do here!”¹²⁸ Before he is able to stop the procession, Togar is punched by the leader of the parade, in order to stop him interrupting the procession. Then the film shifts to the tribunal where it will conduct the investigation of Lola’s death and Togar’s possible involvement in it. It is from here that the film transitions to the past, and it does so in a way where the viewer is positioned as a judge of Togar’s actions, not simply examining his inattention as the driver of the boat at the time of Lola’s fall into the water but all of his actions from the time he left home to go to Jakarta. These include scenes that show not only his growing attachment to Lola, who is older than him, but scenes of domestic violence towards Lola, as the lonely and drunken Togar is unable to fully understand his need for Lola and expresses his ambivalence towards her. These scenes are also

¹²⁸ The original text in Indonesian reads as follows: “Untuk apa ini semua? Masih banyak yang bisa dikerjakan disini.”

witnessed by the children from her first marriage, so that children become judges of adult behaviour.

One of the events that the film investigates and in which the use of flashbacks within flashbacks is most interesting is Togar's own investigation, as a junior reporter, of the case of Sukarsih, a village girl from East Java who is being forced into prostitution. This story begins, about twenty-five minutes into the film as Togar goes to the Central Javanese northern coastal town of Cirebon to try to interview Sukarsih. The professionally immature Togar focuses his journalistic attention on Sukarsih, who is sitting with female friends (also being forced to work in Jakarta) outside a small hotel, and Sukarsih reacts towards Togar not as if he were a helper but rather an intrusive stranger. As she flees to a bathroom, Togar follows her and grabs her, trying to use force to entice her to talk about her experiences, and as she fends him off the film cuts back and forth between this scene and the attempted rape of Sukarsih by Parjo, which had occurred earlier in Surabaya but which was witnessed by Buyung. This parallel montage between two incidents graphically suggests that Togar's presence reanimates her memories and original trauma of being raped.

Image 16: Togar (right) is trying to convince Sukarsih (left) that he is a journalist



The film subsequently flashes forward to an interview, where Togar's employer, the newspaper editor, is giving his testimony for the court. The editor expresses his bewilderment at Togar's obsession with reality in his work as instanced by the numerous photos he takes. He goes on to narrate the subsequent history, explaining that, as a result of covering the Sukarsih case, Togar came to the attention of the police, having been reported by Parjo as having kidnapped Sukarsih, though Sukarsih has in fact simply fled and disappeared in order to escape her oppressors. The film uses flashback within flashback to reveal that Togar and Buyung worked in cooperation to solve the case of Sukarsih and get help for her, with Sukarsih's eventual return proving that Sukarsih herself had fled the employment agency/prostitution ring because she had been raped by one of its key operatives.

The film also uses the convention of interviews (conducted for the court) as part of the investigation of Togar. Togar's mother, his colleague and friend Buyung, the newspaper editor and Rudi (Lola's eldest child) all speak to the camera (and hence to the viewer) when they provide information or testimonies about Togar and Lola. However, these witnesses do not appear to be present in the court. For example, the newspaper editor speaks from his newsroom, across his desk, and Rudi speaks while sitting in a corner of a house. In a flash-forward, Togar's mother speaks from her house. In presenting the court itself, for much of the time, the film uses only voice-overs of statements by officials of the court, heard as background to images. For example, during the court examination, the film does not visually focus much on the court judge or court officials. They are mainly present as off-screen voices, or as a voice over, particularly at the end of the film when Togar is found not guilty of the murder charges. Both the direct address by the interviewees to the camera and the relative absence of the

visual presence of court officials further helps position the viewer as primary judge of Togar's behaviour.

As the narrative progresses, the examination of the crime turns into an examination of the moral struggles of its main character, including his humanity. In addition to showing Togar's confusion, the film also takes an interest in how Togar attempts to address the problems of his life in Jakarta and to become more compassionate and generous in his outlook. Although Togar's life is nomadic, he is described in the interviews as showing tolerance towards his friends. For example, when Buyung needs money to help his parents-in-law come to Jakarta Togar lends money to him so they can stay in a cheap motel. Although Mangara refuses to let Togar stay in his apartment, Togar does not dismiss his friendship with Mangara but does reject Mangara's offer to bribe Parjo to withdraw the accusation of kidnapping Sukarsih. However, it is the changes in his relationship with Lola that receives the most emphasis in the narrative. Initially, the film presents a critical portrait of Togar, who lacks self-confidence and can also be violent. Togar is psychologically affected by several facts in his life: his failure at university, his inability to realise his parents' dreams, and the subsequent uncertainty of his life in Jakarta as a cement factory worker, writer and journalist.

By showing these two sides of Togar, the film attempts to reveal a complicated life of a young migrant in Jakarta. Visually, the film demonstrates his growing maturity through the sequence of shots when Togar is informed that Lola is pregnant by him. The first shot is a close-up of Togar's face upon receiving the news of Lola's pregnancy and the demand that he must marry her. This shot is followed by the shot in his village where his mother sits on the floor, making *ulos*. She speaks about her hopes for Togar. The next shot shows Togar on his bed, having become ill as he comes to realise that he

must take responsibility for Lola. The last shot describes in a flashback (within a flashback) of him in the procession that occurred to celebrate his departure to Java few years ago. This sequence of shots, emphasising Togar's feeling, is excellent in signifying another "bitter" transition in Togar's life, as he moves from being single to becoming a husband. However, Buyung states that Togar becomes a more mature person through dealing with this situation. We also see the ecstasy on his face as he sees the child that Lola has borne him.

Given the complexity of *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*, and the vision of the modern Third World city it offers, the film is clearly a milestone in the work of Teguh Karya. But *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* should be not be perceived primarily as either a melodrama or a naturalistic film. Unlike *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*, which explores the exploitation of women and the poor people who live around the volcano by the males of one rich local family, *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* explores the negative impacts of living in the city in the lives of migrants. What *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* does here is to expose the exploitation mainly committed by the system towards the people who live within it. In other words, *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* tries to define the kind of exploitation committed in the Third World city and the experience of being exploited by the pressures that exists in the city. It is not only Togar and Lola who suffer in the city; the film presents the even more extreme case of Sukarsih, who is tricked into becoming a prostitute and victimised by one of the traders, Parjo. Sukarsih should also be perceived as a victim of the system because Parjo is part of the system that exists in the city. In this way, *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* attempts to demonstrate the pervasive impersonal kinds of exploitation toward human beings that one finds in the city environment. In the period shown in this film, the centralisation of the government, business, politics and economy in Jakarta forced people from various regions in Indonesia to come to Jakarta to search

for a better life, including education.¹²⁹ Through its observations of the experience of being victimised by the system or the city, *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* shows that these characters are not actually aware of the fact that they are being victimised. For example, it is only when he loses Lola that Togar expresses his hostility to the city.

There are a number of reasons why *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* should not be considered a primarily melodramatic film. For one thing, it uses an unusually complicated narrative structure that does not allow for the usual satisfactions of melodrama. While the underlying story (the *fabula*) told in *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* is simply about Togar's journey in Jakarta, the plot (the organisation of the telling of the story, or *syuzhet*) is not linear.¹³⁰ David Bordwell (1986) points to the fact that the *syuzhet* plays a significant role in the viewer's ability to construct the *fabula*:

Thus, the *syuzhet* aims not to let us construct the *fabula* in some logically pristine state but rather to guide us to construct the *fabula* in a specific way, by arousing in us particular expectations at this or that point, eliciting our curiosity or suspense, and pulling surprises along the way. (p.52)

In *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* the narrative organisation breaks down the story into a series of flashbacks, flash-forwards and sub-stories that gives the viewer more than just the description of the main character. The use of this complex narrative form from the beginning of the film puts pressure on the viewer's capacity to comprehend events. With a complicated jigsaw-like flashback narrative structure, numerous unmarked transitions between scenes and different chronological times and an average shot length

¹²⁹ See "Part II Indonesia" in Meng, Manning, Shi & Effendi (Eds) (2010).

¹³⁰ Bordwell (1986, p. 49) defines the *fabula* as the narrative element that "embodies the action as a chronological, cause-and-effect chain of events occurring within a given duration and a spatial field." On the other hand, the *syuzhet* is the actual arrangement and presentation of the *fabula* in the film (p. 50)."

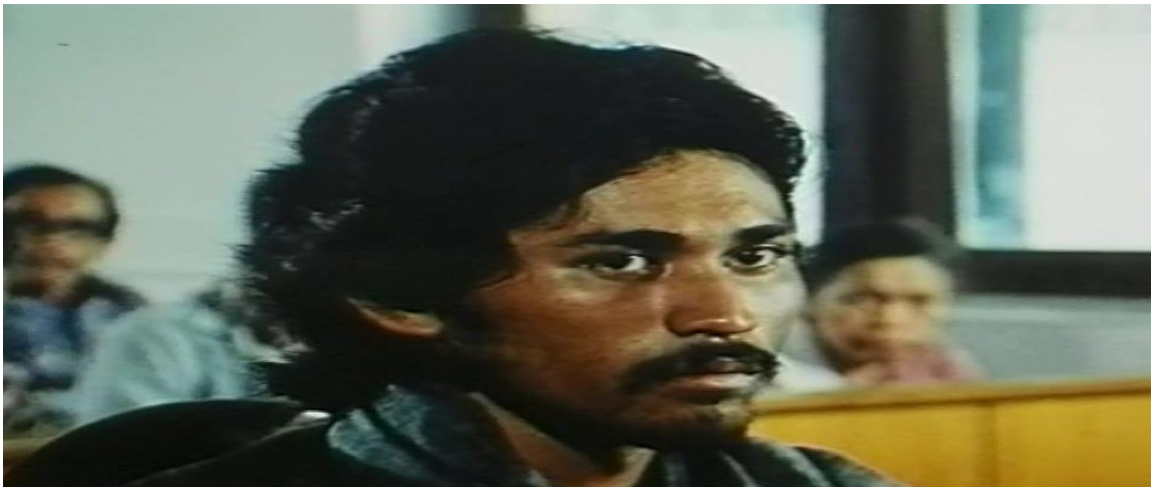
of five seconds, the film demands that the viewer work hard to relate and comprehend the images and events presented by the film.

Moreover, *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* should not be mainly perceived as melodrama because, along with the criminal investigation, the film also examines the moral struggle of Togar in his relationship with other characters, and this is not seen in terms of the simple Manichean oppositions between good and evil that are characteristic of melodrama, but in terms of more complex judgements about moral struggles and human failings. At its end, *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* does not attempt to reach an easy conclusion about the Togar's journey and his moral struggle.

Finally, *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* differs from *Di Balik Kelambu* because it is not usually seen as a naturalistic work. *Di Balik Kelambu* portrays the flow of life or events over a continuous period of time, with as little reorganisation of the temporal syuzhet as possible, as is characteristic of naturalistic drama. The narrative of *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*, on the other hand, does not work linearly over a single slice of time, but is broken up into various dramatic units in different times so as to define the meaning of the experience of the characters, rather than simply to tell a story.

Thematically speaking, Togar represents the migrant, who wants to make a living in Jakarta. It is important to see the way the film establishes this feeling of aspiration in relation to Togar—he is the man who is to fulfil his parents' dreams of participation in Indonesian development. In doing so, he must obey his parents and try to realise their wishes which, in his case, means he must study economics, the field his parents have chosen for him. But he fails because he has little talent for economics and more talent as a writer.

Image 17: Togar at the trial



Because he feels ashamed at not being able to do what his parents want him to, he does not tell them that he has quit studying and moved to Jakarta. But it is not only his parents who have expectations for him: Togar is seen as one of the few fortunate young men from his poor Sumatran village who can study in a university town in Java. He is meant to embody not only his parents' hope of realising their dreams, but also the hope of his fellow villagers that one day when Togar finishes his economic study he will come back to them and bring change to the village. The flashback in the middle of the film to the scene where the young Togar is taken by his parents and villagers in a procession before he leaves for Java as a teenager (paralleled at the opening of the film by the celebration of the departure of another young man) clearly represents not only the rituals of the villager, but also the hopes of his family and the villagers for him.

Secangkir Kopi Pahit also demonstrates the contrast between rich and poor as well as between the city and village. In several scenes we see the lives of the lower class people in the city as well as in the country. For example, the film contains an interview with a rubbish picker, another Batak migrant, who salvages cigarette butts and turns them into whole cigarettes. This man lives along the Tanah Abang railway

line in Jakarta. Quite unlike *Usia 18*, where mutual support and mutual solidarity are presented as part of the everyday life of Jakarta families and young people, the concept of mutual solidarity does not come easily in *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*. There are several examples where even among migrants mutual solidarity is not a common experience. Togar and Buyung help each other, for example when Togar is looking for a job in Jakarta. However, we also see that when Togar asks his friend Mangara if he could stay with him, Mangara refuses him by saying, “In Jakarta, we can’t mutually help each other”.¹³¹ This is a significant statement because it demonstrates that President Sukarno’s earlier ideal view of the Indonesian people, that they are people involved in *gotong royong* (mutual support), does not apply to all of New Order Jakarta.

In contrast to Jakarta, the depiction of Togar’s lakeside village in North Sumatra suggests mainly two things. Firstly, the film presents the villagers who live as a group or community, unlike the characters in Jakarta who largely live as individuals. Secondly, the film presents us with traditional ceremonies in the Batak village, ceremonies that signify people’s group identity. Although in one early scene the film describes a group of cement factory workers who often get together in Lola’s cafe in Jakarta, similar images of group solidarity among urban workers do not emerge anymore in the rest of the story. After Togar marries Lola, her food stall gradually become quiet. The workers move the place where they meet to the nearby nightclub and brothel where violence frequently breaks out among them. In the beginning of the film, community support is shown when the villagers get together to help carry Lola’s dead body. When the police officers bring Togar from the village to the police station after the discovery of Lola’s dead body, most of the villagers are seen walking as a group

¹³¹ The original text in Indonesian reads as follows: “Hidup di Jakarta, kita tidak bisa tolong-tolongan.”

following Togar and the police officers, as if the villagers have lost one of their members.

The idea of community support also appears in several other scenes. For example, the solidarity and group identity of villagers, and the continuity of their rituals, is evident in the repeated scenes of the parade, with villagers and musicians celebrating the departure of a young teenage man from the village. This procession is presented as a contemporary phenomenon, occurring more or less at the time the film was made, in the early 1980s. Togar's departure parade, seen in flashback in the middle of the film, presumably occurred in the early 1970s. However the most significant moment with regards to the life in the village is the acceptance by the villagers as a group (especially Togar's mother) of Lola and her children as members of their community. The acceptance of Lola and her children is marked through a traditional ceremony where she and the children are given a *marga Batak* or clan name. This ethnic ceremony is accompanied by traditional music, specifically musical instruments used by Batak villagers, *gondang* (drums) and *sarune bolon* (flute).

As a film that deals with social injustice, *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* describes the exploitation of young people as they attempt to search for a better life in Jakarta. In relation to who exploits whom, it is interesting to briefly compare *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* and *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*. The story of *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* depicts a situation where the majority of poor villagers living in the village near the mountain are exploited or victimised by a small group of rich people or a family living in the city. These rich people take advantage of poor people through the factory that they build near the village. Here, *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* clearly shows that there are exploitations toward a group of human beings by other human beings based on the difference of social class background.

Unlike *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*, *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* describes the fact that these migrants, most of whom are of a lower economic background, such as Togar, Buyung and Mangara, struggle against the exploitation created by the environment or the system under which they live, and are changed by it. Togar, for example, is perceived by his mother as a different person when he finally returns to the village. The film reveals that after his departure to Jakarta and Jogjakarta, Togar never sent news to his parents regarding his life in Java. It suggests that he felt so ashamed at what he regarded as his failure in Jakarta (given their aspirations for him) that he was unable even to communicate with his parents. On his return to the Lake Toba area, his mother tells Togar she cannot regard him as her son anymore because Togar did not send a single letter to his parents or visit his village until he heard of his father's death. She also considers him as not a Batak person anymore because he was too ashamed of telling the truth about his life in Java. However, following Lola's death and the investigation of Togar, the mother states clearly that it is the environment (the system) in Jakarta that should be blamed.

Secangkir Kopi Pahit exemplifies a further journey of Third Cinema (or rather Third Cinemas) in that it attempts to portray the experience of people living in a late 20th century Third World megacity. The film provides a portrait that helps the viewer understand the difficult experience of urban migrants in Jakarta. The use of experimental narrative in *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* together with location shooting in some of the tougher areas of Jakarta, presents a way of life in a Third World city that is perhaps not easily imagined by the citizens of developed countries. *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* is one of Teguh's most innovative films and it establishes him as one of the finest and most original film auteurs in Indonesia, able to make films that truly depict important aspects of the national experience that are rarely addressed in Indonesian

cinema. The film also marks the first collaboration between Teguh Karya and Alex Komang, who replaced Slamet Rahardjo as the main actor of Teater Populer. In the Indonesian Film Festival in 1985, *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* competed with Teguh's *Doea Tanda Mata*, which also featured Alex Komang as the main actor and for which he won the Best Actor award. *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*, unfortunately, did not win any prizes. Perhaps this was due to the fact that the portrait of Indonesia it presents is too realistic and too embarrassing to the nation and its leaders.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the movement away from melodrama (romantic melodrama, family melodrama and class melodrama) to more realist dramas in Teguh's films made between 1980 and 1985. Two points need to be noted. Firstly, there is no single model of realism by which one can characterise Teguh's films in this period. Secondly, the movement away from melodrama consists in Teguh finding stories and narrative structures that are less dependent upon each film consisting of a series of strikingly dramatic but calculated plot developments and the resulting emotions which hold the audience's attention.

There is no single model of realism we can apply to films of this period, because in Teguh's three contemporary dramas made over this period, we see evolving stylistic changes that lead to a greater realism, but each film is very different from its predecessor. I have characterised the style of *Usia 18* as one of impressionistic-romantic realism. The film opens with a series of impressions – snapshots taken by the family of themselves; and the director manages to preserve the lightness and joy inherent in these sorts of everyday occasions, despite the fate that befalls the family

through the death of the father and the responsibilities that the son willingly takes upon himself. Moreover, the potential for melodrama arising from the obstacles posed by this realistic situation is alleviated by the youth of the film's characters, their flexibility (in contrast to the rigidity and anger shown by the young father and husband in *Ranjang Pengantin*) and by the film's incorporation of elements of popular culture (pop music) and high culture (experimental drama at the Jakarta Institute of the Arts) performed by young people.

Di Balik Kelambu is rather different. It makes no use of popular music (except for a little heard on the radio) or high culture, and its realism (its engagement with common realities) consists in the fact that the married couple in this film are mired in the responsibilities of raising a family without a family home of their own, and they feel this as stressful and as causing tension in their relationship. In terms of influences and antecedents, *Di Balik Kelambu*, appears to be influenced by the naturalism of the great plays by Anton Chekov. In *Di Balik Kelambu*, as in Chekov's *The Three Sisters* and *The Cherry Orchard*, the action is largely confined to one family and their close acquaintances, and the audience watches the moment to moment interaction within a complex, always moving group of people, much of it in one locale, the family home. *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*, to which I shall return again shortly, is again very different, having a flashback structure unlikely to be found in a play, but possible in both a novel and a film.

My second point in this conclusion is that the movement away from melodrama consists in Teguh finding narrative structures that are less dependent upon each film consisting of a series of strikingly dramatic but calculated plot developments and the resulting emotions which hold the audience's attention, a stratagem which he had used in *Cinta Pertama*, *Ranjang Pengantin*, *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* and

Badai Pasti Berlalu. This is easily demonstrated. In both *Usia 18* and *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* the basic plot dilemmas are established early on. The young man in *Usia 18* confronts a situation very early in the film where his father has died and he becomes responsible for his younger brothers and sisters. The film then traces how the young hero handles this situation, and how it impacts on his career and on his relationship with his young female friend. But the major traumas have been presented almost at the beginning of the film, and in thoughtful and reverent rather than highly dramatic ways. *Di Balik Kelambu* contains no highly dramatic incidents: as in Chekov it works through the depiction of the mundane and the day to day. In *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* in the very opening scene we witness the death of Lola, and shortly afterwards we witness Togar being placed on trial to determine the extent of his responsibility for her death. Not only have the traumas for the central characters occurred at the commencement of the film, but the complex flashback structure in this film reduces identification with the central hero. In all these films, to varying degrees, the audience's attention is directed to observing the situation and contemplating its social implications, rather than emotionally reacting to dramatic plot developments.

Here, I wish to stress that Teguh is drawing upon a range of different dramatic and filmic possibilities, stimulated to some extent by his knowledge of drama as much as of film. If one talks of the history of realism in film, a major point of reference is Italian neo-realism. The main stylistic elements in Italian neo-realism were the use of black and white photography which had about it a newsreel quality; a large amount of location shooting; use, to varying degrees of non-actors, and improvisation of situations to varying degrees.¹³² Also central to Italian neo-realist films (though not all) was the

¹³² There are some key books on Italian neo-realism: e.g. Arnes (1971), Bazin (2005), Sitney (1995), Wagstaff (2007), Brunette (1987), Snyder and Curle (2000) and Nowell-Smith. (2003).

evocation of impoverished, traumatised and dislocated immediate post-war Italy. Clearly, also very important to neo-realism was the use of black and white photography having a newsreel quality. This arose initially from the varied quality of the film stock used of necessity by Roberto Rossellini in *Rome Open City* (1945), and the reduced use of professional lighting equipment as a result of extensive location shooting and non-availability of professional equipment when the film was shot, shortly after the end of the German occupation of Rome. This early neo-realist film, *Rome Open City*, established, almost inadvertently, a style which was then to some extent adopted by other neo-realist directors over the next five years.

In Indonesia, Teguh came to film directing at a time when it was obligatory for all Indonesian films to be shot in colour. Of all Teguh's films, only one achieves a powerful reality effect comparable with, though not similar too, Italian neo-realism. That film is *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*. This reality effect is achieved partly by very extensive location shooting: in streets and busy intersections of Jakarta; in slum areas along the Tanah Abang railway line with its marginalised population and its numerous shanty dwellings (used earlier, in 1979, by Slamet Rahardjo in his first film *Rembulan dan Matahari*); in a run-down *losmen* in Cirebon; in slum dwellings in shanty towns located near industrial developments. Nevertheless, the film is shot in colour.¹³³ How does Teguh manage to compensate for the effects of visual pleasure normally produced by the use of colour? The powerful reality effect of *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* is enhanced by having its central character be a reporter working for a newspaper, who is also a photographer, obsessed with the city in which he lives. Togar himself is not simply a character in the film, but contributes to the realistic presence of the city by his photographs of its poorer inhabitants which are there in the credits sequence, and

¹³³ *Losmen* is equal to inn

elsewhere, and which we see him taking in the course of the film. We are encouraged to see people in the film not only as part of a narrative, but with a photographer and reporter's eye. Additionally, the complex and rapidly moving flashback structure emulates the sense of pressure and crowding that is the experience of the city. Of all the repertoire of neo-realist stylistic effects that I have listed above, Teguh uses only one—location shooting. But for *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* he develops a new and unique repertoire of stylistic effects (complex flashback structure in addition to location shooting; central character a photographer and reporter obsessed with the city and with exposing situations). This produces a reality effect—in filming the growing Third World megacity of Jakarta in the early 1980s—comparable with the power and immediacy of Italian neo-realism's representation of post-war Europe.

CHAPTER SIX

Mother and Families

Ibunda (Mother, 1986) and Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta (A Lover misses the Train, 1989)

Introduction

This chapter examines Teguh Karya's last two films, *Ibunda (Mother, 1986)* and *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta (A Lover Misses the Train, 1989)*. These two very different films, both with mothers as central characters, show that Teguh still aspired to make films in new and experimental ways. In *Ibunda*, which is an intimate family drama, he blends a narrative about a mother and her family with scenes from a theatrical work—an expressionist folk opera—in which one of the mother's adult children is acting. Teguh also integrates the folk opera and a poem in the narrative to distil his sense of the often-neglected spiritual dimensions of the maternal figure, especially her wisdom. In Indonesia, *Ibunda* is regarded as an important film. In the Indonesian Film Festival of 1986 it won the Citra Award for the Best Indonesian Film of that year, together with eight other awards, the largest number of Citras awarded to any of Teguh's films.

Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta is a lighter, less serious film, more obviously aimed at a popular audience, with the inclusion of an actor new to Teguh, Onky Alexander, star of the highly popular *Si Boy* series of films. *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* combines a narrative with original music by Idris Sardi, composed especially for the film, integrated into the dialogue, making the film a musical about a family with a mother at the centre of conflicts. Both of the films confirm not only that Teguh was interested in continuing to deal with domestic topics in his films, a subject matter to which he was frequently attracted, but also his restless artistic struggle to make innovative films.

Ibunda and *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* also marked the return of Teguh's main female actor, Tuti Indra Malaon, playing the role of the mother in both of the films.

In this chapter, I will concentrate on three main issues: the representation of motherhood, the different social dimensions of the films, and their respective significance as experimental works.

Ibunda (Mother, 1986): Mother and Motherhood

"Mother, the book you just finished reading, I am beginning to read, I am still on the first page." (A voice-over, in *Ibunda*).¹³⁴

Ibunda is a naturalistic melodrama about a mother and her family.¹³⁵ It is a film that largely focuses on what a widowed mother does when her sons and daughters are in conflict or disagreement. The film can be described as the filmmaker's love letter to mothers, where he passionately paints a portrait of this figure caught in the center of a family conflict. The use of the term "Ibunda" rather than "Ibu" as the film's title is significant: both words mean "mother" in Indonesian, but "Ibunda" is a particularly respectful form of address. Mothers figure prominently in many of Teguh's films. In addition to *Ibunda*, they are important characters in *Ranjang Pengantin*, *Kawin Lari*, *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*, *Usia 18*, *Di Balik Kelambu* and *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*. While it can be said that there is something personally important for Teguh in

¹³⁴ The original text in Indonesian reads as follows: "Ibu, buku yang habis kau baca, kini mulai kubaca, baru halaman pertama." (*Ibunda*)

¹³⁵ Teguh Karya states that he was closer to his mother than his father. He was proud of the fact that although his mother only had an elementary education background, she taught him many useful things in his life (Sularto, 1993, p.13).

the story he tells in *Ibunda*, however, it should also be noted that *Ibunda* is not a biographical film about Teguh's relationship with his mother, although the story suggests a deep and emotional connection between a mother and her son.

Ibunda concerns a mature-age Javanese mother named Ibu Rahim (Tuti Indra Malaon), who is shown as constantly faced with problems created by her (largely grown-up) children, which she helps them to solve. Ibu Rahim lives a simple, middle class life in Jakarta, in a modest but comfortable home, financially supported by a son-in-law. She has three adult sons and two daughters. They are Farida or Ida (Ninie L Karim), the eldest daughter, who is married to a businessman and lives with him elsewhere; Zulkifli or Kifli (Joni Kusnandar), a marine soldier stationed in Surabaya; Zulfikar or Fikar (Alex Komang), a theatre actor; Fachri (Umar Chattab), a university student; and Fitri (Ria Irawan), an upper-level high school student. The family faces several problems that threaten its unity. Fitri dates a young West Papuan man named Lukas or Luke (Onny Mayor), who is a final-year university student studying anthropology.¹³⁶ The relationship is criticised by her eldest sister, Farida, and by Farida's Javanese middle-class businessman husband, Gatot (Galeb Husin). Gatot is the one who strongly disagrees with the relationship and tries to influence his wife and her family. However, Fitri refuses to break off her relationship with Luke and runs away

¹³⁶ Papua is the name of one of the Indonesian provinces. Before it formally became part of Indonesia in 1969, it was occupied by the Dutch colonial government, which gave the name to the island, Dutch New Guinea. In 1961, Indonesia, under the Soekarno government, formed a military operation that would take over the island. The military operation was named Trikora and was led by Soeharto. The operation was successful and the Dutch left the island. In 1962 the name of West Papua was adopted to indicate that there was to be a transition period overseen by the United Nations. In 1969, the United Nation held a referendum and the result was West Papua joined Indonesia and, under the New Order government, the name changed to West Irian or Irian Barat as an official Indonesian name. Those who opposed the referendum result joined the rebel's group (Free Papua Organization) which still exists today. In 1973, the name changed again to Irian Jaya or glorious Irian. After the fall of Soeharto, the name of Irian Jaya was changed to Papua in 2000 by the Indonesian government and it is still used until now. See Chauvel (2003)

from home. Fikar, a struggling stage actor, has an affair with his producer and manager Norma (Rossi S Drajat), although he already has a wife, Yati (Sarah Azhari) and a baby. Fikar lives together with Norma because she promises him major roles in theatre and film. Ibu Rahim learns about the affair from a newspaper, but she tries not to get involved in her son's life and chooses to wait for Fikar to exercise his own initiative in solving this problem. Fachri is a frustrated and spoilt young student who financially depends on his elder sister, Farida. Fachri wants to go to college in Jogjakarta, but Farida refuses to send him there, as she wants him and Fitri to be company for their mother by living with her in her home. As for Ibu Rahim herself, she feels very lonely even though she has Fachri and Fitri living with her. The only people with whom she can really share her thoughts are Budi (Wawan Sarwani), a male worker who rents a room in her house, and Juju (Ira N), a female domestic helper in the house. When her children are unable to find ways to solve their various problems, Ibu Rahim tries to help them find solutions. For example, she suggests that Fikar avoid getting involved further with Norma and asks him return to his family. Ibu Rahim also helps to find Fitri, when she disappears. One by one, the problems are solved, beginning with Fikar's decision to go back to his family. Fitri is found to be hiding in Fikar's place, sharing the house with Fikar's wife while Fikar is absent. Fitri is willing to return home after she hears that her mother is ill. Gatot realizes that his attitude to Luke, the West Papuan, is wrong. Luke also helps the family to find Fitri. At the end of the film, the family has a reunion and the film concludes with the taking of a group family picture in the front of Ibu Rahim's house.

Ibunda has several features that make the film an interesting portrait of a mother. First of all, the film attempts in both its opening and closing sections to describe subtly the way in which the Javanese characteristically deal with conflicts

through silence, sympathy and acceptance. Secondly, the film uses what might be described as an expressionist folk opera, in which Fikar is acting, and a poem, heard recited by a voice-over, as well as the main narrative, to explore further the role of a mother, and to introduce social dimensions that cannot be portrayed simply through the depiction of a middle class family. Thirdly, *Ibunda* deals with the topic of racial discrimination among Indonesian ethnicities, represented here by Farida as the Javanese and Luke as the Papuan. Fourthly, *Ibunda* presents us with a portrait of a mother who is a traditional as well as a modern and progressive Javanese woman.

The ten-minute long opening scene of *Ibunda* immediately reveals one of the main issues in the film: the racial discrimination shown by a Javanese middle class individual towards a lower class person from West Papua. However, as part of the narrative strategy, the moment where Farida expresses her rather racist point of view is delayed up to the end of the opening scene. At the end of the opening credits, *Ibunda* begins with a stage curtain slowly rolled up to reveal the interior of the family home (the film ends with the curtain rolling down), creating for the viewer a momentary sense that s/he is watching a performance in a play. This unique and simple opening momentarily draws attention to the film as an act of representation, and also anticipates the theatre performance of the expressionist folk opera, which is first seen following the end of the opening scene in the home.

Apart from the curtain being rolled up, *Ibunda* starts in a conventional naturalistic mode. The first scene takes place entirely in Ibu Rahim's middle class house, the filmmaker creating the household atmosphere of an older generation of Javanese people through snatches of low-key quiet conversation and a visual emphasis on antique props such as a teapot, a mug, an old dining table, old photographs, a partition and a clock. The housemaid prepares a welcoming drink for Luke, the family guest on that

morning, and serves it to him. Luke is in a conversation with Farida, who has come from her own home to meet him. In a nearby section of the house, the dining room, there is an antique wooden table where Ibu Rahim generally puts the traditional cakes that she makes herself and serves whenever guests or her own family members come to visit her. The house interior is furnished in a simple way, demonstrating that the owner is not a high-class figure. In this first scene, the film moves between three spaces: the living room, dining room and bedroom. As we go through the opening scene, the film gradually reveals that what on the surface seems ordinary is actually complex.

The topic of conversation between Farida and Luke is one that interrogates the appropriateness of the West Papuan having a relationship with a daughter of the family. Farida, as the eldest child, gives the appearance of representing her mother in talking to Luke. In her best manner, accompanied by the smiles and the polite use of the Javanese term *dik* or “younger brother” to create an intimate atmosphere in the conversation, Farida tries to discourage Luke from continuing in his relationship with Fitri. She tells Luke that her younger sister is too young to get involved in a serious relationship with him, for Fitri has not yet finished high school. Farida tries to convince Luke that all the members of the family have the same concern about this matter, and that she speaks on behalf of them. However, as the narrative develops, it is revealed that Farida is not telling the truth to Luke—she only speaks on behalf of herself and her husband. In the next moment, as the conversation continues, Ibu Rahim enters from the kitchen, dressed in a traditional Javanese costume, a *kebaya*, bringing an empty container to the wooden table in the dining room.¹³⁷

¹³⁷ *Kebaya* is a Javanese traditional clothing item that generally combines a blouse, silk, lace and brocade.

Image 18: Bu Rahim wearing a *kebaya* is looking at Farida and Luke



From the dining room, she can hear and watch Farida and Luke in the living room, where we see Luke promising not to meet Fitri again. The film then cuts to a slightly later conversation about Luke between Ibu Rahim and Fitri in Fitri's room. Here Fitri complains about her elder sister's intervention in her relationship with Luke.

As the film moves to the end of this opening section, it reveals through the conversations between Ibu Rahim, Farida, Fitri and Fachri that the problem regarding Fitri and Luke is not simple. While the relationship has been presented as a big issue for the whole family, in fact Farida and Gatot are the only ones who clearly disapprove of it. Fitri says she is tired of Farida and Gatot always telling her who she can have as friends. On the other hand, her other siblings are too busy to express an opinion. Fikar and Kifli seldom come to visit, and Fachri, who lives at home, is too busy with his study and his own friends to pay attention to his little sister's relationship. Farida expects that her siblings will obey Gatot because her husband is the eldest member of the extended family and its main financial contributor. At this point, Ibu Rahim is neutral; instead of directing her children, she suggests that her sons and daughters meet and discuss the relationship. At one point late in the scene Farida gives to her mother the monthly stipend provided by Gatot. This moment may suggest that the attention to the mother is

only shown through the giving of money, rather than through love and care.¹³⁸ Indeed, the family suffers in a number of ways from a lack of communication. An example of this occurs when Ibu Rahim only finds out about Fikar's involvement in a theatrical performance through the newspaper that Farida gives to her. This quite lengthy opening scene (or set of inter-connected scenes), which provides an exposition of the family's inter-related problems, ends with a shot of a newspaper report giving information about Fikar's forthcoming theatrical performance.

The expressionist folk opera in which Fikar performs is a further imaginative exploration of a relationship between a mother and her family, especially the son. The folk opera story is entitled "Hearts of Steel" (*Hati Baja*), and concerns a poor young man who is sentenced to life imprisonment because he steals rice to feed his family (his mother, wife and baby).¹³⁹ Scenes from the opera performance are shown three times within the film, and each performance shown describes a particular moment of the story. The first scene from the folk opera occurs after the end of the film's opening scene at the home, when Ibu Rahim, for the first time ever, comes to know about Fikar's performance. She decides to watch the folk opera, and goes there accompanied only by Budi, her sympathetic tenant. The performance is done as theatre in the round and it is

¹³⁸ In Indonesian culture, especially in regard to Javanese culture, it is common to find that the eldest son-in-law has a responsibility to help look after his wife's family. This is because he is considered as the eldest son in his wife's family.

¹³⁹ The expressionist folk opera 'Heart of Steel' has its origin in modern Western opera, which can be observed from the use of music and from its pervasive use of highly stylised chorus-like theatrical movements. However, Teguh adapted this Western genre into an Indonesian context, as shown in the use of Indonesian lyrics to tell the story, and the costumes of the actors. The performance of the 'Heart of Steel' opera reflects Teguh's years of theatrical work with Teater Populer, in which he adapted Western plays for Indonesian audience, sometimes bringing in Indonesian arts and traditions, one good example of this being his adaptation of Lorca's *Blood Wedding*, which he staged twice, firstly in 1971 and then again in 1987.

set is a prison, where a group of prisoners wearing black clothes are sent outside to do hard labour. When they are taken out from the prison gate, one of them, the young man played by Fikar, sees his mother and wife. He releases himself from his chains and runs to them. They finally meet again after years in which there has been no contact or communication between them. The main components of the opera are the song and music, which are expressively played to express the emotional relationship between the young man and his mother. Among the lyrics spoken by the mother are the words:

Indonesian	English
<p>Ibu: Kau anakku, buah hatiku. Kejahatanlah yang kau perbuat. Sebungkus nasi kau curi dan hukuman ini yang harus kau terima. Lari nak, lari.</p>	<p>Mother: My darling, my child. You committed a crime of stealing a handful of rice and this is the punishment that you must accept. Run, son, run.</p>

The mother encourages her son to escape while the guards are not aware of where he is. The young man tries to run and is followed by some of his inmates, but the guards suddenly see what is happening and shoot at the escaping prisoners. A bullet kills the young man who dies in the arms of his mother.

This folk opera can be considered expressionist due to the singular amplification of emotions created in it: firstly, by the powerful music by Idris Sardi that accompanies the singing; secondly, by the operatic style of the singing and the deliberately exaggerated acting, which mimes the very basic emotions that are being expressed vocally; and thirdly, by the simplified but expressive sets which create a sense of confinement and claustrophobia.

There are several ways of interpreting the folk opera. The experience of the young man and the passionate concern of his mother reflect the nature of love between a mother and her son, even in the most difficult situations in life. On the other hand, the story can also be perceived as an allegory of an undemocratic country in which an authoritarian regime—represented here by the guards and their leader—sentences ordinary people, like the young man, to hard labour for stealing only a handful of rice. The ageing mother also suffers under this authoritarian regime, not being able to see her son for a long time, and even having to witness his death when she finally meets him again.

The second performance of the folk opera in *Ibunda* occurs in a context where the opera is being rehearsed for its presentation in a film. In the context of the story of Ibu Rahim's family, lead actor Fikar's busy schedule, due to his responsibilities as an actor in this rehearsal, prevent him from attending the wedding of Gatot's nephew. This rehearsal shows a broadly similar encounter between the prisoner and his mother, except for the fact that the mother and wife are now played by different actors at the insistence of the film's Chinese producer (Rita Zahara now plays the mother and Sari Manumpil plays the young man's wife). The scene that takes place near the prison shows the mother coming to meet her son to tell him that his wife had given birth to a son, but the baby sickened and eventually died. In song the young man expresses his sadness at the misfortunes of his life: he has been sentenced to hard labour as a result of committing a small crime and he now finds that his baby has died before he is released from jail. The music changes to express a gentle lament as the wife tries to encourage her husband to stay positive and to convince him that they will be together again soon. The music suddenly changes to a more strident and anguished tone as the young man expresses his feelings of both guilt and anger at what has happened. *Ibunda* reminds us

that the scene is actually a film shoot, by showing the rehearsal suddenly interrupted by the director (played by co-scriptwriter of Teguh's film, Arswendo Atmowiloto), because he is not satisfied with Fikar's performance and insists that Fikar repeat the scene. This is followed by the arrival of the producer, Norma, Fikar's de facto partner, who enters the set, offering Fikar a drink in a glass. Fikar throws away the glass, and refuses to continue shooting. In the next scene, Fikar admits that he is angry with Norma because she did not tell him that his mother came to see him at the first performance.

The third performance of the folk opera is preceded by a scene where Fikar and Norma quarrel after she finally learns that Fikar is in fact a married man and that he has a family of his own. This scene and the performance anticipate the end of Fikar's acting career. This third scene showing the opera, here again being rehearsed for a film with cameras present, depicts the moment where the prisoners try to escape from the prison, resulting in chaos and imminent danger. The prisoners run from one side to the other side, trying to find ways of escaping from the authoritarian guards and their leader. The young prisoner played by Fikar is again seen here trying to find an opportunity to escape, but in this filmed version eventually comes across his mother and wife among his fellow prisoners. When he tries to lead them away from the chaos, the guards find them and shoot him. The young man dies in the arms of his mother.

How may we interpret the presence of this expressionist folk opera in the film *Ibunda*? Firstly, it results in the film having two dimensions of expression: naturalistic family drama and expressionistic folk theatre. The contrast between the two is striking but, more importantly, the expressionistic folk opera introduces dimensions of social conflict and social injustice only mildly gestured at within the story of the family. The repeated scenes of the opera all emphasise poverty and its consequences: life-

threatening malnutrition, anxiety, desperation and infant mortality; unjust imprisonment; social coercion (the mother, wife and child, who are innocent, are caught up in the violence of the shootings); and massacres carried out by prison guards who, in effect, are indistinguishable from the military. The operatic style of the presentation of these events results in a sustained emphasis on the suffering of the protagonists and their compassionate emotions for each other. Discussing *Ibunda* in an article on political allegory in Indonesian cinema, Hanan (2009) has written:

In his film *Ibunda* (*Mother*, 1986), Teguh Karya openly criticised the racism of the Javanese middle classes towards darker-skinned Papuans living in Jakarta, and included in the film an expressionistic folk opera (in which one of the film's characters is acting) that develops an allegory of state-sanctioned military violence towards the poor. *Ibunda* was scripted only shortly after the notorious 1984 Tanjung Priok massacre, in which hundreds of poor Islamic youth were fired upon by the military on a road near the dockland area of Jakarta. However it is not clear in the film whether the victims of the massacre depicted in the folk opera are communists, or whether the massacre is perpetrated by communists. *Ibunda* spread its allegory of state violence so widely that it could be interpreted by either party to suit their own agenda, and the film won numerous awards. (pp. 28-29)¹⁴⁰

The ambiguity as to the political affiliations and alliances of the protagonists in this folk opera may be understood in a number of ways. The fact that the young male prisoner has stolen a small amount of food to provide for his family might identify him with socialism and the left, although at the opera's climax, there are clearly Christian

¹⁴⁰ For a dossier on the Tanjung Priok massacre see Tapol (1987).

connotations of the *Pieta* (the dead Christ in the arms of his mother) in the iconic imagery of the mother and executed son, while the imagery of wife and child makes allusion to the Madonna and child. The film therefore could be seen to identify Christianity and socialism. But secular political affiliations and allegiances and what they might refer to outside of the film are also confused, particularly at the moment of the massacre. While clearly the prison guards who perpetrate the massacre (dressed curiously in capes and hoods) are in some sense functionaries of the state (and hence, conceivably, a representative of the Indonesian state), their leader wears a distinctive red scarf, suggesting he might be a communist functionary in an allegory of a communist state.

To some extent the political allegory in *Hearts of Steel*, which is at the heart of the film *Ibunda*, is side-tracked by developments in the story of Ibu Rahim's family, particularly the way in which the backstage scenes now become the main means of forwarding the narrative of the main film. Unlike the student theatre performances included in *Usia 18*, the backstage scenes of *Ibunda* present us with a professional theatre situation with paid professional people: there are professional actors, a director and a producer, all of whom earn their income from the show. Therefore, as well as dramatising the backstage atmosphere of the event, *Ibunda* gives the viewer a brief look at the film and theatre business and its power relations, such as the negotiations between the Norma and the Chinese film producer, and how the media focuses on the private life of Fikar, who is potentially a rising star in the film and theatre world.

Eventually, this business world (based as it is in *Ibunda*, on sexual politics) and Fikar's family life come into conflicts. Fikar's producer (and lover), Norma, prevents Ibu Rahim from talking to Fikar by turning his attention to the contract that he must sign and to the journalists who will interview him. It is obvious that Norma is the

main player in this business and its politics. She controls Fikar and even the play, as shown when she gets involved in a debate with the director in the second performance. The third part of the opera performance marks the end of Fikar's acting career working with Norma as his producer, after Norma discovers that she has been having an affair with a married man. At the end of the rehearsal, Fikar sees Norma arriving with a new actor who she introduces to the director. Fikar immediately leaves the set, as he knows that Norma will not use him anymore. To some extent this portrait of the female film and theatre producer, Norma, is a sexist portrait of a professional woman, at a time when there were few women working as film and theatre producers in Indonesia. The film's sympathies tend to be with Fikar rather than with Norma. Norma is played as an aggressive woman, wearing sexually provocative clothes and accentuated make-up, who is always trying to control people or play them off against each other in crude ways. Yet is it Fikar who is the real transgressor, for he is the one who is married with a family, while Norma is an independent unattached person without responsibilities to children or a partner.

Nevertheless, shortly before Fikar's break up with Norma, the narrative uses Fikar's situation to thematise the importance of the perceptions and value system of a mother. While driving his car, Fikar is shown to be thinking deeply about his relationship with his mother. Fikar feels guilty towards his mother and is angry with Norma because Norma did not tell him that his mother had attended the first performance of the opera. At this point a poem, "Mother" written by Rik A Sakri, is used to illustrate the particular emotional connection between Fikar and Ibu Rahim. A flashback shows a very young Fikar (Iwen Darmansyah) selling food that his mother has made to earn money to support the family after his father had died. A voice-over narrator (Teguh Karya himself) reads the poem, "Mother, the book you just finished

reading, I am beginning to read. I am still on the first page”.¹⁴¹ The content of the poem is concerned with a mother who teaches her son the lessons of life, and the book is a metaphor for the mother’s long journey in life, which her son now begins. The reading of the poem is followed by a brief conversation between the child Fikar and Ibu Rahim, in which Fikar expresses his desire to become a rich and famous actor in the future. Ibu Rahim advises him that becoming a rich and famous person may also create problems. As an adult, Fikar learns the consequences of becoming famous, for example, in this particular instance, where his success is dependent on his sexual relationship with his female producer.

The negative portrait of the female producer, Norma, might allow *Ibunda* to be included among those numerous other Indonesian films made during the Soeharto New Order period that have been criticised by Sen (1994) because they present positive portraits of women only when they are wives and mothers, and exclude any positive portraits of a professional woman. This critique in turn can be related to arguments put by the Indonesian feminist writer, Julia Suryakusuma (1996), who argues that the demand that women be seen primarily as wives and mothers was a characteristic of New Order society, in contrast to the encouragement of women to take on a wider variety of roles, characteristic of the Soekarno period. Nevertheless, while *Ibunda* does contain a negative portrait of a professional woman, it is by no means simply yet another film about the idealised wives and mothers of New Order businessmen and New Order bureaucrats, in line with dominant New Order patriarchal ideology. For one thing, in the film Ibu Rahim is a widow who has had to struggle to bring up her children after the death of her husband. Secondly, her son-in-law, Gatot, is criticised in the film

¹⁴¹The original text in Indonesian reads as follows: “Ibu, buku yang habis kubaca, kini mulai kubaca, baru halaman pertama.” The writer of this poem, Rik A Sakri, is one of Indonesia’s best young contemporary artists. He has his own collective theatre, named Teater Aquilla, which consists of young people.

not only for his racism but also for his materialism and conformity. Most importantly, *Ibunda* is a carefully worked out and considered study of the ways in which a mother (or in fact, any parent) finds her life not only taken up with her children but, as she grows older, becomes preoccupied with and unable to avoid the destinies, moral dilemmas and even moral failures, of her own children. In this sense, the poem by Rik A Sakri is only a starting point for considering how a mother might view her children. She may be a source of moral wisdom, and hence “a book of life” (as the poem sees her) but in fact the mother in *Ibunda* is continuing to read that book of life as the film continues, even if her own children, as young adults, are only on the first page. *Ibunda* is not just about “motherhood”, but is about a mother’s perspective on her children as moral agents.

The subsequent scene shows Fikar finally visiting his mother and helping her to find Fitri. This scene is performed in a slow and dramatic manner, accompanied by stirring music on the soundtrack. Upon seeing his mother, Fikar is initially speechless and it is Ibu Rahim who breaks the silence by saying simply, “Let’s find Fitri.” The scene is important in the narrative because it opens the path for the family reconciliation. The return of Fikar is important to Ibu Rahim because Fikar is her eldest son still living in Jakarta and it is essential he fulfils the role of the closest eldest son.

If *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* looks at the social problems experienced by the migrants in a Third World megacity, *Ibunda*, in its smaller scope and lighter tone, is concerned with the issue of racial discrimination, particularly a prejudiced belief in the superiority of one particular ethnic group, the Javanese. Such issues arose from a situation where the governing political system had created a considerable gap in the relationship between the centre and the periphery. The Javanese, taken as a whole (grouping West, Central and East Javanese together), are the largest ethnic group in

Indonesia. In *Ibunda*, the person who becomes the object of racial discrimination is the Papuan. In three different scenes Gatot and Farida express their dislike of Luke, a dislike arising simply from a prejudice based on racial stereotypes. Central to the film, therefore, is a critique of Javanese racial attitudes. Here the film attempts to demonstrate that this ethnic superiority is related to Farida and Gatot's conformity with predominant Javanese xenophobia. This is particularly emphasised when Farida expresses her and husband's fear that the family will be considered mongrel or *blasteran* if it accepts Luke as a family member. In one family scene early in the film, Gatot also makes the insensitive comment, "Negro ya Negro, America ya America" (Negro is one thing, America is another).

Ibunda also provides a glimpse of West Papuans in Jakarta as represented by Luke and his friends. The fact that the film does not portray much about West Papuans in Jakarta may be viewed as the filmmaker's effort to represent the reality, which is that there was (and still is) a lack of knowledge and appreciation toward these people and their culture. This criticism is addressed by the film to the Javanese, who position themselves in the centre of the system. There is an obvious gap between the Javanese and the West Papuans presented in this film. The Papuans (mainly students) are all of lower middle class backgrounds. They live in an alley and take the public bus as the means of daily transportation. This can be contrasted with Gatot and Farida, who enjoy a good life. But, unlike the Javanese, the Papuans in this film are presented as consistently demonstrating a positive attitude. Luke and his friends, for example, are willing to help Ibu Rahim find Fitri. In a scene where Fikar and Ibu Rahim explain Fitri's disappearance from home, Luke convinces them that his mother in West Papua raised him to be a good young man, not a kidnapper of someone's daughter. This brief statement by Luke assumes that many Javanese might expect him to be capable of

kidnapping someone's daughter, and so further reinforces the filmmaker's concern at Javanese xenophobia.

Played elegantly by Tuti Indra Malaon in a finely modulated performance, Ibu Rahim might be seen as a portrait of an ideal Javanese mother, who simultaneously embodies both traditional virtues and a modern outlook. In writing of the traditional Javanese mother, Niels Mulder (1996) states:

Mother is the prime source of nurture, goodness, dependability, teaching, and authority; she is considerate, anticipating the feelings of her children, and knows what is good for them. (p. 108)

Ibu Rahim brings up her children and grandchildren by stressing that while money and fame are important, they do not necessarily become the source of happiness. It is simple, perhaps old-fashioned, yet meaningful advice, and it is embodied verbally and visually in the narrative of the film. Verbally, it is spoken in the scene where Ibu Rahim talks to her grandchildren in the dining room. Visually, it is symbolised in the problems of Fikar and his family. Ibu Rahim's traditionalism may also be seen in the way she dresses; for example, she always wears the Javanese *kebaya* on any family occasion. This Javanese traditional costume signifies her identity as a Javanese woman. This is in contrast to her adult children, who have internalised different values of life. While the businessman Gatot expresses both his cultural fanaticism and his racism in his vocal espousal of Javanese values, in fact the lifestyle of he and his wife reflect Western consumerist values. On the other hand, Ibu Rahim's view about the family is of harmony and communality. This can be seen through her repeated suggestion to her children that they should communicate with each other regarding their individual views about Fitri's relationship with Luke. She also tries not to get involved in the married lives of her

children, Farida and Fikar, opting to observe the situation and accepting the views of all before finally deciding to act to solve problems.

However, aside from her traditional values, Ibu Rahim also exemplifies a progressive woman in her views toward family and relationships with other ethnicities, although she has no modern education and comes from an ordinary family. Ibu Rahim, who tends to restrain herself in the early part of the film, begins to show her opposition toward Farida and Gatot after she hears her eldest daughter make an offensive comment about Luke. She also openly criticises Gatot's pretentious lifestyle when he employs a security guard for his house. In criticising her son-in-law she is quite brave, given that he is the sole financial contributor to the family. In one scene where she talks to Farida's young teenage children, Agus and Ais, she shows she can tolerate the fact that Agus sometimes drinks alcohol. This is an unusual attitude for a Javanese Muslim, for Islam strictly prohibits Muslims from consuming alcohol. Ibu Rahim also encourages Fikar to get away from Norma's influence and return to his family. She becomes a centre of strength for her children as the story progresses to the turning point where they begin to realise that they still have a mother.

The elegant simplicity and strong-willed nature of the Javanese mother as represented by Ibu Rahim is also shown through a scene, seventy minutes into the film, where she is dictating a letter to her maid, Juju. No one in the family knows where Fitri is and Ibu Rahim has fallen ill because she is so worried about her. Ibu Rahim is shown lying on her bed, her face very pale, while Juju sits on the floor, writing a letter. Ibu Rahim wants to send a letter to Zulkifli in Surabaya, to ask if Fitri is staying at his place. The sitting position adopted by Juju reminds us of the respect a lower class person expresses towards a superior in traditional Javanese culture. While the scene shows Ibu Rahim's effort to unite her family, it also shows the fact that the servant Juju is the only

person to whom Ibu Rahim can turn for help in an emergency situation. The scene also suggests the presence of a bond between the maid and her employer, which for most conservative Javanese may not have been easily tolerated at that time due to class differences.

The last scene in the film depicts the family reunion and reconciliation. Given that they have not seen each other for a long time and that there are problems in the family, there exists the potential for conflict on this occasion. However, the film shows how these potential conflicts between the family members do not take place, or are avoided. Mulder (1996) has given an explanation of the way the Javanese deal with conflicts:

Emotion and feeling, intuition, empathy and sympathy, self-consciousness and appreciation of each other's dignity, these are the valued guides in interaction, along with the suppression of conflicts, the denial of frustration, and the mastery of one's negative emotions. (p. 111)

It should be added that when dealing with a conflict, ideally the Javanese discuss the problem in the spirit of communalism or *kekeluargaan*. But there is also another way of avoiding conflict; namely, that people are silent about it. In this last fifteen minutes of *Ibunda*, a respectful silence pervades the family reunion and reconciliation, before this silence gradually disperses and they begin to talk when they take the family picture. It is obvious Ibu Rahim, as the person who has suffered most from the conflict, tries to control her feelings when she receives each of her family members in turn at the reunion visit to her home. When Fitri meets her, neither of them says anything. Fitri approaches and hugs her mother in silence. When Fitri passes Gatot, who sits in the

dining table, they also do not say anything to each other. Gatot only smiles at Fitri, who goes directly to the kitchen.

Silence continues to prevail when the film shows Ibu Rahim holding Fikar's baby, shown together with Fikar and his wife, Yati. When Fikar and Yati meet Gatot, the three of them also say nothing; they only smile. It is as if each of the family members speaks through the silence, trying to understand and appreciate each other without actually talking about it. When Fikar apologises to his mother, she suggests that his career is not yet over. She further adds that he should be thankful to God that he has finally been reunited with his family. In another moment, Ibu Rahim denies in a light tone and smile that there has been a conflict, when Kifli asks her what has happened in the family. Kifli has come to Jakarta from his army posting in Surabaya in response to the letter Ibu Rahim wrote to him about Fitri's disappearance. The family, especially Gatot, is shown as now happy about accepting Luke among them. When Luke shakes hands with Gatot, they do not say anything about what has happened. Gatot only asks Luke to address him as *mas* or "elder brother". The main problems are solved and the conflicts are avoided. The next moment, all of them take the family picture together in front of the family house (Image 19). Unlike the family portraits in *Usia 18* and *Doea Tanda Mata*, the family portrait in *Ibunda* signifies the reconciliation and beginning of a new chapter for the family.

Nevertheless, there is an anomaly about this photograph, or rather the place in which the photograph is taken. The family line up in front of the modest house, standing behind the low front fence, facing the street, from where the group family photograph is taken. But the fence is made of barbed wire. Indeed some older Jakarta houses in middle class areas do have barbed wire fencing installed as a form of protection from intruders. But the family is positioned in the photograph standing and

sitting not in front of the barbed wire, in effect partly hiding it, but behind it. The effect of the photograph is that the family is photographed as a group standing behind barbed wire, and hence there is a connotation of the family being imprisoned. It is in these concluding moments that the director links the family of Ibu Rahim with the semiotics of imprisonment, oppression by the state and even massacres that are major themes of the expressionist folk opera, *Hearts of Steel* that appears intermittently in the film. Of course open and direct criticism of the government was not acceptable to the New Order regime, even in film. *Ibunda* might be considered as at least implicitly (or in a disguised way, by means of allegory, hidden symbol and allusions) critiquing the social divisions in the New Order society, the control of the society through military rather than democratic means, and the violence inherent in carrying this out.

Image 19: The family portrait at the end of *Ibunda*



It is certainly difficult to imagine that the scenes from *Hearts of Steel* shown in *Ibunda* might have nothing to do with what was going on in Suharto's New Order Indonesia in the 1980s, whether it is in Jakarta or in East Timor or elsewhere.

Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta (A Lover Misses the Train, 1989): A Musical Film

Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta is an experimental musical. The film was Teguh's last film before he turned to television due to the collapse of the Indonesian film industry. From 1978 to 1986, Teguh made his best films. Quite a few of them gave him national and even international recognition for his artistic explorations: *November 1828* (1978), *Usia 18* (1980), *Di Balik Kelambu* (1982), *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* (1983), *Doea Tanda Mata* (1984) and *Ibunda* (1985). While *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* was no less innovative than his previous personal works, the film was meant to be a popular work. The intention to make an innovative but popular film can be seen from the choice of the actor cast in the main male role. Like *Usia 18*, where Teguh relied on Jessy Gusman, a teen idol in the late 1970s, to boost the appeal of film to audiences, in *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*, he cast Onky Alexander, a rising teen idol in 1980s to play one of the characters in the film.¹⁴² The use of this popular figure, along with some of his regular actors, such as Alex Komang and Tuti Indra Malaon, illustrates that Teguh sometimes tried to accommodate the demands of the popular film industry.

Apart from scriptwriting and directing his films, Teguh was also known as a writer of the lyrics of the songs used in his films, for example in *Ranjang Pengantin* and *Doea Tanda Mata*. *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* shows on an even wider scale this talent for music. His final film demonstrates a range of Teguh's artistic abilities in film, which was arguably not possessed by any other Indonesian film directors at that time.

¹⁴² Onky Alexander is an Indonesian film and television actor. He was known by the public when he starred in the popular teen film *The Diary of Boy* or *Catatan Si Boy* (1987). The film is a fictional story about a teenager and girls' idol named Boy, who is the son of a rich businessman in Jakarta. Before the story was made into the film, it had been very popular among teenagers as a radio play in the Prambors radio. Due to its commercial success, the producers of *Catatan Si Boy* made the sequels in 1988, 1990 and 1991.

Considering that Teguh had never before made a musical film, *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* was an experimental work for him, as well as for his actors.

Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta, as described in the opening credits of the film, was dedicated to Usmar Ismail, Teguh's teacher at the Indonesian National Theatre Academy in the 1950s and 1960s. *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* was also produced by Usmar Ismail's son, Irwan Usmar Ismail, who had replaced his father as the head of Perfini after his father's death in 1971. Moreover, Teguh (1989) affirmed at one stage that *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* was inspired by one of Usmar's commercially successful films, *Tiga Dara* (*Three Girls*, 1956), which was also a musical (p.5). However, *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* is different from *Tiga Dara*.¹⁴³ *Tiga Dara* has a simple plot about romance centered on a family of three young women living with their widowed father and paternal grandmother. It has a progressive theme in the context of Indonesia in the 1950s, for it affirms the right of a young woman to choose her husband, rather than being forced to accept an arranged marriage, and it presents this in an amusing way. It differs considerably from *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* for the reason that, while *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* has a large number of young characters, the key characters central to the film's main conflict in Teguh's film (Bu Padmo and her

¹⁴³ *Tiga Dara* tells a story of three teenagers, Nunung (Chitra Dewi), Nana (Mieke Wijaya) and Nenny (Indriati Iskak). As the eldest one, Nunung is encouraged by her grandmother to get to know as many men as possible, so that Nunung herself can decide who should be her husband. The search is not easy because Nunung is a shy woman. One day, when Nunung is crossing a busy road, she is hit by Toto's motorcycle. Toto feels responsible and pays her a visit in her house. He begins to like Nunung, but is unable to express his feeling because he is also shy. Nana is attracted to Toto. The grandmother plans to help Toto win the heart of Nunung, but Nana opposes the plan because she would like Toto for herself. The youngest, Nenny, tries to help her grandmother with the plan. She makes up a story that Nunung has a boyfriend, named Joni. This story makes Toto jealous and encourages him to propose to Nunung. Toto meets Nunung, who is on holiday in Bandung, and expresses his love and intention to marry her. Nana has her own admirer, Herman (Bambang Irawan), who has been a close friend to her. The film ends with a happy ending for all. See Kristanto (2007, p. 46).

husband) are people in their late forties. In *Tiga Dara* the main characters central to the plot are teenagers.

Tiga Dara differs from *Pacar* not only in the differences of age in the central characters, but also in the fact that the number of characters in the film is quite small, and it does not contain the very large group scenes (for example large parties and gang fights) that we find in *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* and the complicated plotting and spectacular groups scenes that result. Additionally, one does not feel that Bu Padmo and her husband are innocent in the way that Usmar's three young women are presented as innocent. Nevertheless, Teguh may have believed that his musical film was built on foundations provided by Usmar Ismail that were still relevant to Jakarta in the 1980s. The following analysis of *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* attempts to show how *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* works as a tribute to *Tiga Dara* as well as how the film represents Teguh's own ideas as film artist.

Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta is about family conflicts and misunderstandings between two families that stem from a housewife, Bu Padmo, who thinks that her husband, businessman Pak Padmo, is having an affair with his secretary, Bu Retno. Although they were initially friends, Bu Padmo's suspicions and jealousy spark a silent conflict between her and Bu Retno. But Bu Padmo is also anxious about other matters, as well. We see this in Bu Padmo's sarcasm towards her son Heru's (Ongky Alexander) slightly lame girlfriend, Ipah (Nurul Arifin), Bu Padmo's attitudes resulting in the breakup of this relationship. Bu Padmo's hostility towards Bu Retno also worries her own daughter, Riri (Ayu Azhari), who warns Bu Retno's son, Aarsal (Iwen Darmansyah), that his mother should avoid creating tensions for her parents. After Ipah breaks up with Heru, she and Aarsal become closer. Both of them share the same feeling that they are victims of Bu Padmo's hostility. The conflicts within the upper-middle-class families

affect even their servants, Martubi (Alex Komang), the Padmo family's driver, and Martubi's girlfriend, Juminten (Nani Vidia), a maid in Bu Retno's family. Both of them are sacked from their jobs. Martubi is dismissed because Bu Padmo disapproves of him driving Bu Retno and Juminten in the Padmo's car, and Juminten is fired for she does not follow Bu Retno's instructions that she (Juminten) has to end the relationship with Martubi. Martubi then goes to stay with his friends, underprivileged people who live in slums near a bridge. He also has a problem with Samingun (Didi Petet), his childhood friend in the village, who comes to the city because he wants to take Juminten from Martubi and marry her. At the end of the film, Bu Padmo and Bu Retno manage to resolve the conflicts and this brings back together all the family members. The story concludes with the marriage of Martubi and Juminten at Pak Padmo's place.

The opening credits of *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* blend the choreographed musical scene with scenes from everyday life on the streets of Jakarta. This four-minute-long credit sequence is a combination of a carefully planned well-arranged *mise en scene*, and non-directed more spontaneous elements. The opening scene shows a street corner in Jakarta in the morning. The camera remains still while cars, a motorcycle, traders and pedestrians pass by on the street. It is a realistic scene, with a documentary quality. However, gradually the popular and energetic music composed by Idris Sardi fills the film soundtrack and the film shifts to the second scene, which takes place in a quiet and upper middle class housing complex. A group of youths, both men and women, appear from behind a building. Seconds later, a black car also comes out from a particular corner of the suburb and passes these men and women at a junction. As the car disappears from the scene, the youth group starts singing and dancing a modern and dynamic dance. As the singing and dancing start, the camera alternates between the scenes of the youth group, the car (owned by Pak Padmo), the pedestrians

and the streets of Jakarta. The dancing scene, in a realistic context, is visually striking as it is performed on location, outdoors, near the housing complex where a group of workers are building a house.

The opening scene after the credit sequence takes place in Bu Padmo's house and in its initial complexity it recalls the naturalistic scenes in *Di Balik Kelambu*. Here, *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* depicts two different activities within and outside the house: the preparations for the party and the youth meeting between Heru and his friends. The use of the camera creates a sense of an interactive flow between these two activities. The film director also creates a naturalistic atmosphere through the movement of the events and characters, as they talk quickly to each other and move about. Through the camera work, the film shows the fluidity of events and people who talk and work. In one scene, in the youth group meeting, the camera moves around the pro-filmic space almost 360 degrees without editing, following Arsal and Riri. The scene portraying the various activities occurring simultaneously in Bu Padmo's house is interrupted by brief shots showing scenes in other places, for example where the film shows Pak Padmo in his office taking a call from Bu Padmo, Martubi driving Pak Padmo's car with Juminten for a date, and then Bu Retno, his secretary, giving a wedding gift to Pak Padmo in the office. This stratagem helps to establish economically the characters and their relationships, but also expands the range of activities described in one morning from two to five kinds of activities.

The next scene is the wedding anniversary party at Bu Padmo's house. The party is attended by the guests, business partners of Pak Padmo and friends of Bu Padmo, Heru and Riri. The star of the party is obviously Bu Retno, who sings a song and in doing so steals the attention of all of the people in the scene. At first, Bu Retno sings the song alone, then she is joined by the party guests and the party host, Pak

Padmo. A group of young party guests dance, following the rhythms of the music. Bu Retno walks among the guests, some of whom pay attention to her, while others talk among themselves. Teguh tries to maintain the naturalistic situation in parties, where people keep moving around the room, while showing Bu Retno singing among them. Here the editing is important, and shots are cut quickly to show different shots of the guests and the food. In one shot the camera captures Martubi and Juminten who also try to sing the song.

The music soundtrack composed by Idris Sardi for *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* is worth discussing. For one thing, it is the main medium through which Teguh in this film paid tribute to *Tiga Dara*, whose music was composed by Syaiful Bachri.¹⁴⁴ Both Syaiful Bachri and Idris Sardi, respectively, received the Best Music Film Award in the Indonesian Film Festival for their music for these films. Idris's previous collaborations with Teguh Karya (*Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, *Cinta Pertama*, *Ranjang Pengantin* and *Doea Tanda Mata*) saw him frequently use orchestral music, but in *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*, Idris shifted to popular youth music. The opening credit scene in *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* demonstrates how Idris, through his musical versatility, captures not only the youthful spirit of the young people, but also the essence of the scene where the film portrays the atmosphere of a city in the morning.

While in the opening credits of *Tiga Dara* the popular music did not have lyrics, Idris provided music for a song called "A Young Deer" or *Kijang Muda* written by Teguh for the opening credits of *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*. In the rest of the film, the music for Teguh's film works in a similar context to that composed by Syaiful in

¹⁴⁴ Syaiful Bachri was an Indonesian composer who began his music career as a musician for a theatre group called *Cahaya Timur*. He began composing music for films in 1951, working mostly for Perfini led by Usmar Ismail. Among the films on which he was a music director were *Terimalah Laguku* (1952), *Heboh* (1954) and *Tamu Agung* (1955). See Sinematek Indonesia (1979, p. 438).

Usmar's film. For example, in both films the first singing and dancing scene takes place inside a house during a party. However, in *Tiga Dara* the song is sung by the three girls, while in *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* the song is performed alone by Bu Retno. Additionally, the dance in the first singing scene in *Tiga Dara* is performed only by the three girls, while in *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* the party guests take part in the dance. The party scene in *Tiga Dara* is attended by just six people, while the house of Pak and Bu Padmo during the party is crowded with guests.

As in Usmar's film, *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* contains both Western and traditional dance. Teguh pays a tribute to *Tiga Dara* through the scene where Riri and her friends perform a Minangkabau dance. However, the difference is that in *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*, both the music and the dance movement are composed in a contemporary and popular style, known as "Pop Minang".¹⁴⁵ Here, Teguh not only expresses his respect for Usmar as a teacher, but also pays tribute to Usmar's cultural background (he was born in Padang, in West Sumatra, the home of Minangkabau culture). In addition to that, *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* contains similarities to *Ibunda*, where two scenes depict a film being made. In *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*, Teguh shows four film crews filming the contemporary Minangkabau dance.

Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta portrays two different kinds of lifestyles: the upper middle classes, and, more briefly, the underprivileged classes. The comfortable and established life enjoyed by the Padmo family, who are upper middle class, is characterised by the presence of a particular lifestyle that includes cars, housemaids, parties, nice clothes and social status. They also display Western taste in music and dance, as seen with their wedding anniversary. On the other hand, the underprivileged

¹⁴⁵ Pop Minang refers to music and dance performed in a popular style to gain wider audience, especially from young people.

class, represented by Martubi and his friends, live in a slum in the middle of the city. The difference between these two classes is obvious. People like Martubi and Juminten do not have access to the kind of items owned by Pak Padmo and Bu Padmo. However, unlike *Ranjang Pengantin* and *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*, Teguh did not portray conflicts between these two social classes in *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*. Teguh depicts these poor people as being comfortable in their lives, enjoying the party with the dangdut music performed by Martubi's friend.¹⁴⁶ The atmosphere in the slum is more informal and relaxed in attitude than the party thrown by Pak and Bu Padmo.

Like in *Ibunda*, *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* also deals with a story about a mother at the centre of family conflicts. However, the portrayal of women (especially mothers) in Teguh's last film tends to follow stereotypes. While *Ibunda* portrays an uneasy struggle of a mother who helps her children solve their problems, *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* shows a housewife who is unable to overcome her suspicions of her husband, leading to conflicts with her family and with other people. Bu Padmo is shown to be emotional, suspicious and irrational in her dealings with people. She is depicted as herself causing all of her conflicts, and she is also partly responsible for the gang fight between Heru and Aarsal. On the other hand, Bu Retno is a free spirit and energetic career woman (she is a secretary) who will be close friends with anyone, including Pak Padmo and her family.

¹⁴⁶ Dangdut is the most popular music genre in Indonesia. It is influenced by India, Arab and Malay musical aspects. According to Andrew N Weintraub, dangdut songs are distinguished by their wide range of lyrics that voice social issues such as "drunkenness and gambling, poverty, prostitution, infidelity broken families." See Weintraub (2010). In the scene in the slum, the dangdut song is sung by Camelia Malik, a well-known Indonesian dangdut singer in the 1980s, who plays a minor part in the film.

Image 20: Bu Retno is singing at the Padmo's wedding anniversary



As a single mother, Bu Retno enjoys her friendships with people from different economic and social classes. However, she is negatively perceived by Bu Padmo and Riri, Bu Padmo's daughter, and even by her own son, Aarsal, who thinks his mother is trying to attract Pak Padmo's attention sexually. So, here, *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* falls into the trap of perpetuating negative stereotypes about housewives and career women.

The superficiality of the story in *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* is also aided by the fact that the film also does not explore in depth the character of Pak Padmo or his actual role within his own family. In *Ibunda*, the film portrays a businessman whose racist comments against one particular ethnic person in Indonesia represent a deep criticism made by the film of the dominant ethnicity in Indonesia which, through history has always held a powerful position in the government. *Ibunda* uses the mother figure to reflect on this racial issue during the New Order regime and thus, in a sense, it also makes the film a "political" expression of the filmmaker. *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* is not critical of Pak Padmo, the businessman who inspires such jealousy in his wife. There is no attempt in the film to explore the actual relationship between him and Bu Retno and in particular his own subjectivity and motivations.

Friendship and solidarity within a group is also at the centre of *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*. There are at least two different groups that show these qualities in *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*. Based on the order of their appearance, the first group is the youth group, which appears in the opening credit scene of the film. The second group is the underprivileged poor people, who appear frequently after Martubi is fired by Bu Padmo. These two groups are led loosely by Heru and Martubi respectively. The friendship and solidarity within each of these groups is initially strong, but is threatened by problems of misunderstanding. The group led by Heru breaks up when some of them take Aarsal as their new leader. Strong bonds of friendship and solidarity are shown within this group, especially by the group members to their leaders. It is two of the individuals within the groups who actually have the problems: Heru and Martubi. Heru is in conflict with Bu Retno's son, Aarsal, after his own relationship with Ipah worsens and Ipah becomes closer to Aarsal, while Martubi feels betrayed by his old friend, Samungun, who tries to take Martubi's girlfriend, Juminten, from him and marry her. Friendship and solidarity do not just exist within the group, but is also inter-group, for example when Martubi and his friends help Pak Padmo, Bu Padmo and Riri to find Heru, who intends to challenge Aarsal to a fight. Unfortunately, the fight happens and some members of the group, including Martubi and his friends, are wounded. At the end of the film, the misunderstanding between Heru and Aarsal is resolved at the police station, which leads to a reconciliation between Bu Padmo and Bu Retno.

Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta is an entertaining story, but it is hardly a film that represents Teguh's best artistic work. The film's story and the way it is told does not result in a particularly deep exploration into characters or social situation. The story only revolves around the suspicions of a conservative housewife toward her husband, suspicions that lead to conflict within and outside her family. The strength of *Pacar*

Ketinggalan Kereta, however, lies in Teguh's experimentation in combining naturalistic drama with music and dance. It is as though the rather simple story, superficially told, and using stereotypes of character and narrative, is simply a peg on which Teguh can hang his experimentation with the genre of the film musical. The attention paid toward the variety of the music, the dance and the fluidity of the events is obvious from the beginning of the film. Although *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* is not one of Teguh's best films, the film won the prize as the Best Picture at the Indonesian Film Festival in 1989. Tuti Indra Malaon, as Bu Padmo, received the Best Performance award in what turned out to be her last acting role.

Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta was also Teguh's last film. In the early 1990s there was an unexpected decline in the production of Indonesian films. The number of films produced dropped from 115 films in 1990 to 57 films in 1991 and 37 films in 1992. This decline reached its lowest point in 1999, when the Indonesian film industry was only able to produce three films (Biran, 2001, p. 242). The cause of the decline in the Indonesian film industry was not clear, but Misbach has identified at least three possible contributing factors: the growing popularity of imported films in Indonesia, especially from America, and the emergence of a monopoly by one particular company called Group 21, the only company granted by the Indonesian New Order government a license to import the foreign films; the growing popularity of Sinepleks 21, a cinema chain that was also owned by Group 21; and the increasing number of Indonesians who owned television sets (Biran, 2001, p. 243). The strong position of American films in the market and the preference of Group 21 to show foreign films rather than Indonesian

films in the cinemas heavily affected the Indonesian film industry, forcing Teguh and Teater Populer to turn to television.¹⁴⁷

Conclusion

This final chapter has surveyed Teguh's last two feature-length films, *Ibunda* and *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*. These two films demonstrate another shift in Teguh's career from experimental narrative in *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*, to naturalistic melodrama in *Ibunda* and naturalistic melodrama combined with singing and dancing in *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*. *Ibunda* is Teguh's symbolic work in which he portrays a tribute to mothers through the use of naturalistic melodrama, expressionistic theatre and poetry. The film shows a mother who becomes the source of morality for her children during family conflicts. The expressionistic theatre performance that intercuts the main story tells the story of a mother who witnesses the journey of a nation under the authoritarian government whose army, here represented by the prison guards, murders her only son. The film features a poem, read by Teguh himself in a voice-over that becomes a manifestation of the son's love and respect for his mother.

Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta is a more entertaining and superficial treatment of the story of a mother than *Ibunda*. While *Ibunda* shows reverence for the figure of the mother, *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* is a musical drama that portrays the conflict within members of a family and their relationships with friends in a light and amusing tone. It is obvious from the story that the mother in *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*, particularly Bu Padmo, makes little contribution to the unity of her family. The main or prominent

¹⁴⁷ As a result of the decline in the local film industry in the early 1990s, most of Indonesian film directors shifted to making television programs.

characteristic of *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* is obviously not in its narrative but lies in Teguh's attempt to combine a naturalistic melodrama with music and dancing. However, it is obvious from my discussion that Teguh did not focus on depth of narrative and character in this film. Rather, he paid attention to the music and other non-naturalistic performance elements, and gave them a prominent position in the film.

As well as Teguh, as the director of these two films, credit should also be attributed to two people involved in the production of these films: Idris Sardi and Tuti Indra Malaon. Idris, the music director for both of the films, shows an impressively wide range of music capability. He had collaborated with Teguh on many occasions since *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* and created many different types of music for Teguh's films. However, Idris' best musical compositions can be found in *Ibunda* and *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*. In *Ibunda*, Idris creates a piece of music for the expressionistic theatre and naturalistic film. In *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*, he made a shift to completely popular music for the film.

Ibunda and *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* were the last collaborations between Teguh Karya and Tuti Indra Malaon, one of Teguh's senior actors. She passed away few months before the 1989 Indonesian Film Festival, where the jury awarded her the Best Actor award for her performance in *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*. Tuti was an active woman, teaching in the English Department at Universitas Indonesia, but also working as an actor for both stage and screen, and also as a journalist, contributing feature articles for *Matra*, a sophisticated monthly popular magazine dealing in an informative way with both contemporary personalities and the contemporary issues. Tuti appeared in various plays and films, but mainly under the direction of Teguh Karya. Although Tuti had a strong educational background in English and American literature and theatre, she was able to show an acting quality that represents her identity as an

Indonesian woman, especially a Javanese woman. The best example of her acting style can be found in *Ibunda*, where she played Ibu Rahim. In *Kawin Lari* and *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*, Tuti appeared as two different types of characters. In *Kawin Lari*, she played a dominant mother, and the strength of her acting in the film is in the fact that Tuti was able to turn the serious mother character in *The Glass Menagerie*, which was the basis of the film script, into an amusing one. She received the Citra award for Best Actor at the Indonesian Film Festival for this role in *Kawin Lari*. In *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim*, she appears as a victim of an authoritarian husband who tries to find solace with her driver. In this film, Tuti was able to portray a woman, wife and mother who is sexually and emotionally suppressed but sexually desirous. When Tuti Indra Malaon was still alive, she and Slamet Rahardjo were Teguh's closest working partners in the film produced by Teater Populer, Tuti being the first person asked to provide comment and feedback on screenplays Teguh had completed. Tuti was most certainly one of the best and most versatile talents with whom Teguh ever worked.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has explored thirteen films written and directed by Teguh Karya, one of the most popular and innovative film directors working in Indonesia during the 1970s and 1980s. It has argued that these thirteen films are best explored through a combination of approaches based in authorship theories (auteur-structuralism and pragmatic approaches). While auteur-structuralism examines how narrative is represented in Teguh Karya's films, the pragmatic approach considers these films through the context of Teguh Karya's relationship to the Indonesian film industry. This combination enables us not only to see the strengths and weaknesses of Teguh's films but also to understand his experience of making films within the highly commercial Indonesian film industry of the 1970s and 1980s. Through this thesis, I have examined Teguh's film for its variety (genres) and ability to engage with different issues (themes). This shows Teguh Karya as a person who understood filmmaking not only as an artistic form (that centres on himself as an artist/director), but also a collaborative engagement (with his theatre collective, Teater Populer, and the film industry).

Throughout Teguh's filmmaking career, the role of Teater Populer was crucial. The theatre collective had a significant role in that it not only became the creative ground for Teguh to develop his ideas, but members of the collective also worked as the actors and crew in his films. All of Teguh's films were born as a result of his collaborations with Teater Populer. Through Teguh's ability to negotiate and build a network with Indonesian film producers, Teater Populer was able to establish a link between theatre and film where Teguh was able to develop his theatre collective not only as an educational collective, but also a mini-studio where he made several of his

films. This thesis concludes that Teguh Karya was a film auteur who worked within a theatre collective and at the same time developed a broader network within the film industry. This network benefited him because he was able to stand as both an insider and as an outsider of the film industry. As an insider he collaborated with various film producers such as Turino Junaedi, Nyoo Han Siang and Sudwikatmono, and as an outsider he worked together with his excellent actors from his theatre collective who were also his closest and most trusted working partners such as Slamet Rahardjo, Tuti Indra Malaon and Christine Hakim. The films that this thesis has examined reflect the fact that although Teguh made some popular films, he also was able to direct films that reflect his passion as an artist.

As an emerging and talented filmmaker, Teguh Karya was fortunate that when he entered filmmaking in the early 1970s, the industry was growing in commercial and popular terms, despite the substantial decline in production in the previous decade. In the late 1960s, the Indonesian government made it compulsory for film importers in Indonesia to help produce national films, especially by providing funds for the film producers. The government even established a short-lived National Film Production Council that funded several film projects. As competition with overseas films increased, the Indonesian government also decided to relax censorship to support local filmmakers. Lastly, the government also made it compulsory for local cinemas to play an Indonesian film once in a month to encourage local film production (Biran, 2001, p. 231). These positive steps helped to grow the Indonesian film industry in the 1970s and attracted business people to try their luck in the industry and encourage new and talented directors, including Teguh.

Working closely with his theatre collective, Teguh Karya seized this opportunity to make his first film, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* (*Face of a Man*, 1971),

discussed in Chapter Two. It is a visionary film in the sense that the film establishes the typical male character found in many of Teguh's later works. *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* contains an original story not seen previously in Indonesian cinema. While it is historical in its narrative background, the film examines the transition of a young male from immaturity to maturity. Although it was filmed with limited resources in terms of technology and filmmaking experience, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* is a relatively artistic and financially independent film. Artistically, the film was entirely conceived by Teater Populer with Teguh Karya as writer and director. Financially, Teater Populer and Teguh Karya shared the film production costs with the main film producer, Turino Djunaidy, which earned and strengthened their position as co-producers of the film. *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* also set the working conditions and arrangements that Teguh would continue to demand from his film producers, namely, that he would be able to work with members of Teater Populer.

Chapter Three explores primarily how Teguh was able to find popular and commercial success for his films within the highly commercial Indonesian film industry of the 1970s, and to establish his reputation as a major Indonesian filmmaker over the period 1972 to 1977, working with talented young people who under his tutelage became film stars over this period, and who by and large could attract audiences to his films. In particular the chapter explores his conscious use of popular genres over this period in order to achieve this commercial success. *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* failed to fulfil the demands of the local film industry, because it did not attract audiences, except those who had known Teater Populer and Teguh Karya long before they entered the film industry. The commercial failure of his first film forced Teguh to think about filmmaking in more commercial ways. So that he and his Teater Populer could survive in a commercial film industry, Teguh subsequently made a study of commercially

popular genres, and used them to varying degrees in his next five films, making the commercially successful romantic family melodramas *Cinta Pertama* (*First Love*, 1973), *Ranjang Pengantin* (*The Marriage Bed*, 1974), and *Badai Pasti Berlalu* (*The Storm is Over*, 1977). Nevertheless even in this commercially oriented period of his career from 1972 to 1977, he did allow himself the freedom to make *Kawin Lari* (*Elopement*, 1975), a thorough reworking of a Tennessee Williams' play, *The Glass Menagerie*, which is not entirely calculated in commercial terms. Notable in this semi-comedic film is his interest in utilising as context and location for the story the lower middle class milieu of the Jakarta kampung, and aspects of its language and popular culture, something he does not do by and large in his most popular films, *Cinta Pertama* and *Badai Pasti Berlalu*. In this period he also made one very experimental melodrama, *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* (*The Short-Lived Marriage*, 1976), which had both artistic and commercial aspirations. Neither of these two films was commercially successful. Films that have romances at the centre of the story, and which are set in the milieu of emerging New Order upper class society proved the most commercially successful formula for Teguh, as demonstrated by the success of *Cinta Pertama* and *Badai Pasti Berlalu*. These two films enabled Teguh to obtain continuing financial support from film producers and to continue his film work with Teater Populer. In my analysis, although I consider *Badai Pasti Berlalu* as the work that least reflects Teguh's own creative and moral instincts as an auteur, the film saved his career.

While these films were made predominantly for commercial purposes, they should be viewed alongside the development of Teguh Karya as an auteur. These films he made in the mid 1970s are important as they serve as a kind of training ground not only for Teguh Karya, a new and relatively inexperienced film director at that time, to strengthen his directing skill, but also provided the actors from Teater Populer, such as

Slamet Rahardjo, Christine Hakim, Tuti Indra Malaon and Riantiarno, with opportunities to gain useful experience in film acting and to achieve star status. During this period of commercial filmmaking, Teguh developed a network between theatre and film by working with well-known producers such as Nyoo Han Siang, the Indonesian Chinese producer who owned Inter Studio and helped him make *November 1828* and *Secangkir Kopi Pahit (Bitter Coffee)*. Teguh also developed a relationship with Sudwikatmono, who had a close connection with the leader of the New Order regime, being a relative of Soeharto, and produced *Kawin Lari*, *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* and *Ibunda*.

In Chapter Four, the thesis explored two of Teguh Karya's historical films: *November 1828* (1978) and *Doea Tanda Mata (Mementos)*, 1985). *November 1828* is the most ambitious film in Teguh's body of work thematically and artistically. *Doea Tanda Mata* is less ambitious, yet it shows his personal efforts at tracing back and re-interpreting the role of Komedi Stambul, a theatrical form popular in Indonesia in the early 20th century, particularly in regards to the non-violence resistance movement during the Dutch colonial period in the 1930s. The two films focus primarily on the experience (the success and failure) of ordinary people during the Dutch colonial occupation in Indonesia. The anti-hero themes in these two films distinguish them from most of the historical films made under the New Order regime, which commonly play down the role of political leadership, diplomacy and the role of ordinary people in the struggle to gain independence in the period 1945-1950, and exaggerate the importance of the emerging military, with military figures as heroes. The relevance today for the younger generation of Indonesians of these two historical films Teguh made about the struggle for independence is the way they imagine in two different periods (1828 and the mid 1930s) the struggles and significant contributions of ordinary people in the

making of the nation. Unlike the historical books and films that often only portray leadership by well-known figures, *November 1828* and *Doea Tanda Mata* seek to imagine resistance efforts, in a less heroic way, of groups of ordinary people who are hardly accounted for in the official histories of Indonesia.

Having achieved both commercial successes with his popular films, and acclaim for his skill in directing the highly ambitious *November 1828*, Teguh was in a position to make films that expressed his perceptions of Indonesian society rather than working within commercially assured formulas designed primarily to satisfy audience tastes. From 1980 onward, we see in his films a variety of approaches to representing problems confronted by lower or middle class people living in contemporary Indonesian society, with its different social pressures depending on which social group an individual belonged, their gender, and the support networks and financial resources available to them. The three key films of this period of a “mature realism” discussed in Chapter Five are *Usia 18 (At the Age of 18, 1980)*, *Di Balik Kelambu (Behind the Mosquito Net, 1982)* and *Secangkir Kopi Pahit (1984)*. Each of these films demonstrates Teguh’s effort to tell these stories through an innovative use of film style; and if it is looked at chronologically, each of these films is more daring in its approach than the previous one. In Chapter Five, I analyse the stylistic approaches he uses in each of these films to achieve a different kind of realism and a different kind of perspective on Indonesian society. My detailed analysis aims to show how there is a shift, for example, from what I describe as elements of impressionistic naturalism combined with elements of popular melodrama in *Usia 18*, to a sustained surface naturalism in *Di Balik Kelambu*. In *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*, the last of these films, Teguh makes a film that in both style and substance might be seen to exemplify aspects of Teshome Gabriel’s concerns in his writings on “Third Cinema”, as it uses a highly experimental flashback

mode of narration, and makes no concessions to popular taste, to portray the extreme experience of migrant people, from poorer outlying areas in Indonesia, struggling to find a way of living in the Third World megacity, Jakarta, a city which appears to promise much to these migrants, but often gives little.

In Chapter Six the discussion is focused on Teguh Karya's last two films, *Ibunda* (*Mother*, 1986) and *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* (*A Lover Misses the Train*, 1989), both of which films have a mother as the central character. In these two films Teguh's portraits of women are very different. In *Ibunda* Teguh not only examines the complex and enduring special relationship between a mother and her children, even when they are grown up, but also the social problem of racial discrimination towards a particular ethnic group in Indonesia, the West Papuans. *Ibunda* can also be considered as one of Teguh's key auteur films and the artistic culmination of his filmmaking career, where he deploys naturalistic melodrama, expressionistic folk opera and poetry to explore the theme of motherhood. *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* was Teguh Karya's last film before he shifted into directing short films for television in the early 1990. The film is an experimental musical which uses the story of a jealous wife of a businessman (and mother of a family) as a vehicle for making an experimental musical. *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* employs character stereotypes to do so, and deploys a complicated melodramatic plot and an upper class social milieu which make the film reminiscent of the popular melodramas he made in the 1970s. Although *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* is not one of his best films, the film demonstrates Teguh's continuing effort to make films, which are at least in some ways innovative, here the innovation residing in the musical elements.

There are some remaining questions about Teguh's work, which are of a general nature because they involve an assessment of all his films and the body of his

work as a whole. The questions are as follows. Did Teguh Karya being of Chinese ethnic origin impact on his films, and if so how? Even while Teguh in his first film conceived of Indonesia and Jakarta in multi-ethnic terms, the majority of his characters ultimately are Javanese. How, then, did Teguh see the Javanese, and was he ever critical of them? Related to this is the question of Teguh's portraits of Indonesian males: they are different from the kinds of dominant discourse about males representing authority and "the law", as critiqued by Laura Mulvey (1989) in relation to Hitchcock and other Hollywood filmmakers. I address the question, as far as possible, as to why this is so. Regarding issues of ideology, Krishna Sen has claimed that *November 1828* was the perfect film text for the New Order (Sen 1988, p. 58). I believe I have refuted this claim in a carefully argued reply at the end of my discussion of *November 1828* in Chapter Four. Indeed I have suggested that on one reading of the film, *November 1828* is opposed to military control of villagers by a coercive state and so could even be seen as critiquing the militarism of the New Order. Nevertheless there is still the question of whether ideologies and institutions of the New Order had an impact on Teguh's choice of topics and stylistic treatment of his films?

What impact did being Chinese have on Teguh's films? This is an issue that in many ways is difficult to discuss. In my thesis, I state that "none of his films (with the exception of *Ibunda*) describes ethnic prejudice in anything more than in minor way" (p.3). In my research interviews I raised this issue a number of times, including with Teguh's longest standing collaborator, Slamet Rahardjo, who simply replied that it made no difference.¹⁴⁸ Also Teguh appears never to have discussed this. So, in addressing this question one must speculate and hypothesise on the basis of the films themselves. There are some salient points. For one thing, it is possible to see Teguh's

¹⁴⁸ Slamet Rahardjo (personal interview, 2011).

first film, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, a film about an alienated young man in the Portuguese community on the edge of Batavia, as a film, not about being Chinese, but about being ethnically different and as a film about the Indonesian islands as having a long tradition of multi-ethnic interaction. One should point out as well that the film contains a finely staged and directed scene of a bordello nightclub run by Chinese women in Batavia. So, the film includes Chinese ethnicity in its range of characters, the Chinese women being connected with theatre and forms of nightlife. Teguh was also keen to show the presence of Chinese in the Eurasian theatre known as Stambul Theatre in *Doea Tanda Mata*.

Continuing on this theme of multi-ethnicity, in *November 1828* some of the central characters, the officers of the Dutch army, have mixed blood, being the sons of Dutchmen and local women, and being under pressure for this, as a result even having divided loyalties. De Borst, who the film suggests is identified with his Dutch father, is unwaveringly militaristic in his outlook, perhaps even more so because he is unsure about being part Indonesian, while Van Aken, who it is suggested has a strong identification with his mother, is sympathetic to the Indonesian captives, and claims at one point to be supplying information to the Diponegoro forces. In *Ibunda* Teguh shows the presence of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity—not in relation to Chinese—but discrimination towards West Papuans, in particular, those living in Jakarta. Here the concern with ethnic discrimination in contemporary Jakarta is addressed explicitly.

It is not only the fact of Teguh being a Chinese that should be addressed, when one considers his minority status background, but of him being a Chinese Indonesian Christian in a society where nearly ninety per cent of the population are at least nominally Muslim. While the Javanese director Sjuman Djaya made no film in which central characters were Christian, at least four of Teguh's films have Christians as

central characters, *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, *Ranjang Pengantin*, *Badai Pasti Berlalu* and *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*. *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* opens with iconography of the dead Christ in the inverted face of the deceased Amallo. *Ranjang Pengantin* opens and concludes in a magnificent Christian church, with sonorous devotional music playing and the community singing. *Badai Pasti Berlalu*, one of the key families is Christian, and the film has the devoutly Muslim actress, Christine Hakim, playing the younger daughter of this family, Siska. Siska is the romantic lead, paired at different times with Leo (Roy Marten) and Helmi (Slamet Rahardjo), who is depicted at one point in the film attending a Christian religious service. Moreover, Christianity is often foregrounded in the imagery of the films. In *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*, the two leading characters, Togar, a Batak, and his wife, Lola, a Manadonese, are Christians and regularly attend church.

In foregrounding Christianity in this way, Teguh was speaking on behalf of the ten per cent of Indonesians who are Christians, and on behalf of those ethnic groups that are predominantly Christian (West Timorese, the people of Flores; Bataks; Manadonese and quite a large number of Chinese—according to one report, more than seventy per cent of Chinese Indonesians are Christians).¹⁴⁹ Sen (2006) has upbraided Teguh for not including many Chinese characters in his films, but she neglects to speak about his foregrounding of Christianity in his films. So Teguh may not have included minority Chinese Indonesians in his films, but he did include Christian minorities as central characters in nearly thirty per cent of his films, indicating that while Indonesia is a multi-ethnic society it is also a society where, while Muslims predominate, there are significant religious minorities which the society tolerates and should accept.

¹⁴⁹ Roderick Brazier (27 April 2006). Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/27/opinion/27iht-edbrazier.html?_r=0

Nevertheless, ethnic difference and marginalisation are themes in different ways in at least four of his films, ethnic difference being a theme in *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki*, *November 1828* and *Ibunda*, while marginalisation of newcomers to Jakarta (from North Sumatra, Manado and East Java) is a core theme in *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*. So, in at least three of his later films, marginalisation or ethnic difference figure prominently. Indeed in 1991, late in his career, when he no longer made movies, but only tele-dramas, Teguh (1990) made a statement about discrimination towards ethnic minorities, which re-iterated the theme of his penultimate film, *Ibunda*: “I need to remind you that Indonesia is not only Java. People from the Moluccas and West Papua are also Indonesians, even if their skin is black.”¹⁵⁰

Can we make any generalisations about Teguh Karya’s portraits of the Javanese? If Teguh Karya was drawn to depict Javanese and other ethnicities in his films, rather than Indonesian Chinese, are his portraits positive or negative? And here we can say that we find elements of both. Hanan (1988) in his discussion of *November 1828*, has made a strong case for Teguh seeing Javanese village people, in this film, as inherently communal or community oriented, a concept that was later proposed as central by Karl Heider in his discussion of Indonesian national culture as a whole in film, published in 1991. To some extent, ideas of Javanese family and community mutual support are found also in *Usia 18*. But not all of Teguh’s films show this idea of a mutually supportive community. It is a lack of supportive community for the newcomers in Jakarta that is a theme in *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*. In *Ranjang Pengantin* the individual family, threatened with impoverishment feels very much alone, even though they are not newcomers to the city, in this case due to the fact that their families

¹⁵⁰ The original text in Indonesian reads as follows: “Saya perlu mengingatkan bahwa Indonesia bukan hanya orang Jawa, tapi juga orang dari Maluku dan Papua. Walaupun kulit mereka hitam, mereka juga orang Indonesia.”

disapprove of the marriage. In *Perkawinan dalam Semusim*, we see vicious sexual exploitation and brutality by a rich Javanese family towards the poor, and this example might be seen as a parable of the position of the rich in the society as a whole, even though the film is not directly political. In other words, the melodrama in *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* presents through its narrative oppositions a structural view of the more extreme elements of Javanese society, as a parable concerned with the most extreme distortions of Indonesian society as a whole. In lesser ways we see Teguh observing class power and class oppression. For example in *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*, one can clearly see a sense of the persistence of Javanese feudalism in Bu Padmo, when she demands a total respect from Martubi, her family driver. When Martubi does not follow what his employer says, Martubi is immediately fired. The same also occurs to Juminten, a housemaid, who is sacked by Bu Retno, without Bu Retno giving any reasons. Poor pay and long hours for domestic servants in Java and in Indonesia as well, together with arbitrary and high handed behaviour by their employers, is still the norm, and is offensive and disconcerting to many people who witness it. By showing that both Bu Padmo and Bu Retno behave in similar ways, Teguh is showing that this is a social code of upper class Jakarta society, perpetrated by the most direct employers of the servants, the women heads of the households, but usually endorsed without reflection by their partners. This is certainly a conscious criticism by Teguh of one aspect of the behaviour of wealthy Jakartans, rooted both in Javanese feudalism and in Dutch colonial attitudes, and made possible by the large population, and by the ease of finding new servants who will accept low wages.

Teguh at times has been cited as presenting negative stereotypes of women in his films (Said, 1991, p. 183). This is certainly true of one character in *Ibunda*, where the young woman with a career as a theatre producer is shown to be both ambitious and

highly manipulative. It is significant that this woman is a career woman. As numerous feminists have pointed out, it is the transgressive woman, who does not adhere to the expected norms of being only a housewife or mother who is designated as bad in many films, particularly those films made before feminism had an influence on writers and directors. But, we should also note that in most of Teguh's films the women in his films, frequently Javanese—even if performing more conventional and what are sometimes termed stereotypical roles, such as wife and mother, or grandmother—are respected and honoured in the films, and usually shown to be the stronger characters.

On the other hand, in quite a few films, including those starring Slamet Rahardjo, the leading male characters are shown to be slippery, evasive characters who are not honest about their backgrounds and personal histories (*Cinta Pertama* and *Badai Pasti Berlalu*) and are sometimes confused and irrational (*Ranjang Pengantin* and *Doea Tanda Mata*). This is a characteristic of many of the films Teguh made in the 1970s and it is difficult to explain why he chose to do this, except to say that it provided plenty of options for the development of melodramatic plots.

Teguh rarely openly theorised why he did things in a film, and was usually courteous and evasive when asked questions about them, rarely agreeing with the way in which a question was framed, and reluctant to make categorical statements about his films. It is possible that he was following the portraits of men in novels written by women; this is certainly the case in *Badai Pasti Berlalu*. It may also have been partly instinctive. The thesis states that Teguh, in a particular period of time, especially in the 1970s, was mainly driven to make commercially successful films (p. 127). Also, although in film, as Mulvey (1989) has argued, it was not common to find confused males, rather the male was the authority and “the law”, it was common in American drama, which Teguh knew well. It is said that coming to adulthood in the 1950s, and

later, studying in Hawaii, he was influenced by the films of Elia Kazan, the director of *East of Eden*, starring James Dean, and *On the Waterfront*, starring Marlon Brando, both of whom often played tortured heroes.¹⁵¹ Kazan's films are relatively exceptional in American cinema in their links to American drama and the American novel, and have rarely been discussed by film theorists who deploy the Mulvey paradigm. Whatever the reason for Teguh favouring this kind of character, a confused and anguished, if handsome, male was a recurring figure in many of his films, both those made in the 1970s and in the 1980s, from Amallo in *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* to Goenadi in *Doea Tanda Mata*.

In most of the 1980s films it is easier to discern why it is that Teguh creates portraits of males who clearly have limitations. *Di Balik Kelambu* is a very well thought out study of how miscommunication and unsuitable domestic arrangements can seriously threaten a marriage, and threaten male pride. *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* is a film that clearly sets out to portray domestic violence perpetrated by males, in all its ugliness, including in particular, domestic violence perpetrated by his anguished central male character, the disoriented internal migrant, Togar. In *Ibunda*, the Javanese businessman, Gatot, who is the son-in-law of the central character, the mother, is shown to be deeply racist in his attitudes towards the West Papuan boyfriend of his niece. The implication is that through this character Teguh is critiquing the racist attitudes of many Javanese, but particularly conservative middle and upper class Jakarta business people, some of whom are making money out of investments in West Papua at the same time as these men hold racist views towards the indigenous people there.

¹⁵¹ Slamet Rahardjo (personal interview, 2011).

Teguh's rationale for his male characters seems more clearly thought out in all his films from *November 1828* and *Usia 18* onwards. In *Secangkir Kopi Pahit*, one of the most startling sequences of this film deals with slave trading by Javanese, of young girls from East Java, who are promised work as domestic servants in Jakarta, but who are often being forced into prostitution. To prepare them for this, they are raped by the entrepreneur—in fact a petty East Javanese standover man—who has promised them a good job. Teguh does not idealise Javanese males or Javanese society, though the portraits he presents of both the society and its males vary considerably. Finally we should remember that at the end of his penultimate film, *Ibunda*, Teguh stages the family photograph in the front garden of the mother's home, with all members of the Javanese family seated or standing behind a barbed wire fence, a pointed critique of the militarised state of the Soeharto New Order regime, where the enemy of the state is not the foreigner but its own citizens. This allegorical image appears not to have been noticed by many, because some older lower middle-class houses do have barbed wire fences as a form of security, if one thinks about the film only in terms of the veracity of social detail.

In the context of repressive New Order censorship and New Order ideologies and institutions, it was not be possible for artists to produce works or topics that opposed the government. The Soeharto's government would ban such works and prohibit the artist from working. Teguh was deeply concerned about the reputation and future of the collective he had created, as well as his own acceptability in society and the film industry. In his early years, he was more frightened of commercial failure that would prevent him and his collective from working, than he was of the New Order censors. These were probably the reasons that he was very careful, particularly when he chose topics and style for films. His contemporary, Sjuman Djaya, from early in his

career as a writer-director, was much more explicit in his criticisms of New Order society than Teguh ever was. Krishna Sen's obituary for Sjuman Djaya effectively details much of this.¹⁵² Quite early on in the New Order Sjuman Djaya had made a film that through allegory raised the issue of pervasive corruption in the society (*Si Mamad*, 1973) and this film was well received, at least by the film community, winning awards in the newly established Festival Film Indonesia. This was before the Soeharto crackdown of 1974 following the Malari riots.¹⁵³ Sjuman followed this up in 1978 with a film which dealt with a student groups including protest groups, *Yang Muda Yang Bercinta* (*The Young Lover*) and this film starred W.S. Rendra, who read his radical poetry on screen. This film was substantially cut before being released. Sjuman Djaya's penultimate film, *Kerikil-Kerikil Tajam*, is clearly an attack on pervasive poverty and the ill treatment of women in New Order society, and contains scenes, not subject to censorship, which suggest corruption in the Ministry of Information (the presentation by state officials of a black and white TV to a village community, the colour TV having disappeared) and women contacting women's support groups and reporting victimisation by employers.

Eventually, with *Ibunda* Teguh made a film that did raise a number of important issues. *Ibunda* deals not only with racism, but also possibly alludes to the massacre perpetrated by the Indonesian army at Tanjung Priok harbour in Jakarta in 1984. However this is done in allegorical theatrical scenes, when the film alludes in general to

¹⁵² See Krishna Sen <http://www.insideindonesia.org/weekly-articles/the-people-s-culture-sjuman-djaya-a-film-maker-as-social-critic>.

¹⁵³ The Malari riots occurred on 15-16 January 1974 in Jakarta during the Japanese Prime Minister, Kakuei Tanaka's visit to Indonesia. The demonstrations were reactions toward the increasing prices of basic needs (food, housing, oil, etc.), the corruptions and the mistreatment of foreign aids. The protests turned to be anti-Japanese riots as the protestors accused Japan of dominating the Indonesian economic sector at that time. See Schwarz (2000).

massacres, but it is an extremely cautious allusion, with the perpetrators able to be interpreted as communists rather than army. The film also concludes with shots of the family sitting behind a barbed wire fence at the front of the mother's house (a still from this scene is to be found on page. 292 of this thesis). Apart from the critique of racism towards West Papuans, the other issues were well concealed in *Ibunda*, and the film, that was produced by Sudwikatmono, Soeharto's half-brother, won an exceptional number of prizes at the 1986 Indonesian film festival. On the other hand, earlier, in August 1985, a well-known writer and film critic, Rosihan Anwar, disclosed to a representative of the Melbourne International Film Festival that the international sub-committee of the Dewan Film Nasional (National Film Council)—of which he was a dissenting member on this matter—did not want to encourage the screening of *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* at foreign film festivals, for “what it showed about Indonesia, and particularly about Jakarta, was regarded as an embarrassment to the nation”.¹⁵⁴ On the other hand, probably Teguh Karya was regarded by the New Order as a safe director, at least compared with Sjuman Djaya.

This thesis contributes significantly to knowledge about Indonesian cinema, for it is the first authorship study of one of the most popular and innovative filmmakers working in Indonesia during the 1970s and 1980s. The thesis has demonstrated that Teguh Karya was not just an important filmmaker working within the growing commercial film industry but, most importantly, that his films were also the result of his continuing collaboration with Teater Populer. As the first authorship study that explores all the films made by Teguh Karya, this thesis provides only an overview of the significant aspects of Teguh's films and filmmaking career. Areas for potential future

¹⁵⁴ Hanan (personal communication, December 2012). Nevertheless *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* was shown at the Melbourne International Film Festival in June 1986.

research on Teguh Karya might include a comparative study of his theatre and films. Teguh Karya was an established figure in theatre before making his films and, in his theatre works, he directed Western plays that he adapted for an Indonesian context. A comparative study of his works in theatre and film would be important to reveal his artistic struggles in directing film and theatre.

It would also be worthwhile to examine the contribution of Teater Populer to the development of Indonesian cinema, for example in the field of acting, the development of acting skills being at the core of training at Teguh's Teater Populer workshop. As several members of the theatre collective became leading film-stars and regularly received awards in the acting category at the Indonesian Film Festival, a study of Teater Populer's contribution to film acting in Indonesian cinema would be valuable.

This PhD thesis examines his feature-length films made for cinema as they reflect Teguh Karya's best known and most lasting works as a writer-director, working within a competitive film industry. These films reveal not only the journey of his struggle to help rebuild the film industry, but also to make films that personally address issues of concern in Indonesian society.

However, this thesis is neither a comprehensive biography of Teguh Karya, nor a complete study of his works. To include a study of his telemovies would be to over-extend the PhD and the result would be a loss of focus.¹⁵⁵ Most of his twenty-two telemovies (known in Indonesia as *Sinetron*) were filmed records of his stage productions, and only two were scripted as well as directed by him. One might also ask

¹⁵⁵ Teguh's telemovies would have been made on most restricted budgets, as part of Indonesian state television, not part of the film industry, which this thesis studies. For a full listing of his *sinetron* from 1969 to 1993, see Riantiarno (Ed, 1993, p. 149).

why the thesis does not study his plays, for there would be video records of some of his later productions. As it is the thesis is already long. A study of Teguh's tele-movies would examine Teguh's authorship through a different medium, television.¹⁵⁶ Unlike feature filmmaking, where Teguh Karya co-wrote four films, he co-directed and co-wrote five of his films made for television, which suggests that television was more collaborative for Teguh than the film industry. A comprehensive analysis of Teguh's theatre, long feature-films and his short films made for television would present a full picture of Teguh Karya as an auteur.

Finally, this thesis suggests that Indonesian film scholars and critics should develop authorship studies that examine the works of Indonesian filmmakers. Scholarship on Indonesian cinema is lacking serious scholarly works on film pioneers such as Usmar Ismail, Djajakusuma, Asrul Sani, Sjuman Djaya, and more contemporary filmmakers such as Garin Nugroho, Riri Riza and Nia Dinata. While it is understood that this lack comes from the fact that Film Studies in Indonesia is still under-developed, one cannot deny the vital role that film and filmmakers (not just film directors) contribute to the cultural development of the nation.

Teguh's filmmaking career ended in 1998 after he suffered a heavy stroke. He passed away at the age of 64, on 11 December 2001. Through an authorship study of his feature-length films, I personally am able to appreciate him as a filmmaker and more importantly as a historical figure who has contributed greatly to the development of Indonesian culture, its cinema industry, and its people.

¹⁵⁶ Caughie (2000, pp. 127-128) discusses the different perception on the use of "authorship" in relation to medium of television. In cinema, the director is regarded as the author whereas in television the term is often associated with the writer.

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Alang-Alang (The Grass, directed by The Teng Chun, 1938).

Akibat Pergaulan Bebas (The Consequences of Promiscuity, directed by Matnor Tindaon, 1977).

Badai Pasti Berlalu (The Storm is Over, directed by Teguh Karya, 1977).

Banteng Betawi (The Bull of Betawi, directed by Nawi Ismail, 1971).

Benyamin Tukang Ngibul (Benyamin, The Liar, directed by Nawi Ismail, 1975).

Bernafas Dalam Lumpur (Breathing in the Mud, Turino Djunaidy, 1970).

Boenga Roes dari Tjikembang (The Rose from Cikembang, directed by The Teng Chun, 1934).

Cinta Pertama (First Love, directed by Teguh Karya, 1973).

Darah dan Doa (The Long March, directed by Usmar Ismail, 1950).

Di Balik Kelambu (Behind the Mosquito Net, directed by Teguh Karya, 1982).

Djendral Kantjil (Kantjil, The General, directed by Nya' Abbas Akup, 1958).

Doea Tanda Mata (Mementos, directed by Teguh Karya, 1985).

Doea Siluman Oeler Poeti n Item (Two Invisible Black and White Snakes, directed by The Teng Chun, 1934).

Enam Jam di Jogja (Six Hours in Jogja, directed by Usmar Ismail, 1951).

Lari ke Arab (Escape to Arab, directed by Wong Brothers, 1930).

Gita Cinta dari SMA (A Love Song from High School, directed by Arizal, 1979).

Gondoruwo (The Ghost called Gondoruwo, directed by Ratno Timoer, 1981)

Ibunda (Mother, directed by Teguh Karya, 1986).

Jaka Sembung Sang Penakluk (Jaka Sembung, The Conqueror, directed by Sisworo Gautama Putra, 1981).

Janur Kuning (Yellow Coconut Leaf, directed by Alam Rengga Surawijaya, 1979).

Kawin Lari (Elopement, directed by Teguh Karya, 1975).

Lily van Java (Lily from Java, Nelson Wong, 1928)

Mak Comblang (The Matchmaker, directed by Djajakusuma, 1960).

Max Havelaar (directed by Fons Rademaker, 1975).

Njai Dasima (Dasima, The Mistress, Lie Tek swie, 1929)

November 1828 (directed by Teguh Karya, 1978).

Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta (A Lover misses the Train, directed by Teguh Karya, 1989)

Pagar Kawat Berduri (Barbed Wire, directed by Asrul Sani, 1961).

Pareh (Rice Field, Albert Balink and Mannus Franken, 1935).

Pengantin Remaja (The Teen Bride, directed by Wim Umboh, 1971).

Perkawinan Dalam Semusim (The Short-Lived Marriage, directed by Teguh Karya, 1976)

Puspa Indah Taman Hati (Beautiful Flower in the Garden of Heart, directed by Arizal, 1979).

Putri Giok (The Beautiful Giok, directed by Maman Firmansyah, 1980).

Raja Dangdut (The King of Dangdut, directed by Maman Firmansyah, 1978).

Rampok Preanger (The Robber from Preanger, directed by Nelson Wong, 1929).

Ranjang Pengantin (The Marriage Bed, directed by Teguh Karya, 1974).

Secangkir Kopi Pahit (Bitter Coffee, directed by Teguh Karya, 1984).

Sembilan (Nine, directed by Wim Umboh, 1967).

Senso (directed by Luchino Visconti, 1954).

Serangan Fajar (The Dawn Attack, directed by Arifin C. Noer, 1981).

Si Pitung (Pitung, directed by Nawi Ismail, 1970).

Terang Boelan (Full Moon, directed by Albert Balink, 1937).

Tiga Dara (Three Girls, directed by Usmar Ismail, 1956).

Tjianjoer (Tjianjoer, directed by The Teng Chun, 1938).

Usia 18 (At the age of 18, directed by Teguh Karya, 1980).

Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki (Face of a Man, directed by Teguh Karya, 1971).

Written on the Wind (directed by Douglas Sirk, 1956).

Appendix: The Members of Teater Populer

Benny Benhardy (1937-1985) was a jazz musician before he entered the film industry. He received his formal education in music from Indonesian Music Academy or Akademi Musik Indonesia in Jogjakarta. Beside playing jazz as a pianist, Benny was also a radio broadcaster at *Radio Republik Indonesia* or Radio of Indonesian Republic. He joined Teater Populer in 1970 and frequently acted as an artistic director of the collective. He received awards as the Best Artistic Director in *Ranjang Pengantin* (1974), *November 1828* (1978).

George Kamarullah (1949-) was an actor in his early career before he turned to cinematography and editing. As a film actor, he acted in *Kawin Lari* (1975) and *Badai Pasti Berlalu* (1977). He won the awards for the Best Cinematographer in *Doea Tanda Mata* (1985), *Ibunda* (1986) and *Tjoet Nya Dhien* (1990). As an editor, he won the Best Editing Award for *Usia 18* (1980), *Di Balik Kelambu* (1982) and *Ponirah Terpidana* (1984).

Alex Komang (1961-) is an actor and producer. He began to act under Teguh Karya's direction in *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* (*Bitter Coffee*, 1984) and continued in *Doea Tanda Mata* (1985), *Ibunda* (1986) and *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* (1989). Alex Komang won the Best Actor award in Indonesian Film Festival for *Doea Tanda Mata*. He also teaches acting at Teater Populer workshops.

Ishaq Iskandar (1942-) is an actor and director. He studied theatre at Indonesian National Teater Academy or Akademi Teater Nasional Indonesia (ATNI). He acted in more than twenty films, including *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* (1971), *Rosita* (1977). He

directed films such as *Ali Topan Anak Jalanan* (*Ali Topan, The Street Boy*, 1977) and *Gadis Kampus* (*The Campus Girl*, 1979).

Tuti Indra Malaon (1939-1989) was an actor. She was a graduate from the English Department, University of Indonesia. Her acting credits included *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* (1971), *Kawin Lari* (1975), *Perkawinan Dalam Semusim* (1976), *Putri Seorang Jendral* (*The General's Daughter*, 1981), *Seandainya Aku Boleh Memilih* (*If I Can Choose*, 1984), *Ibunda* (1986) and *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta* (1989). She received the Best Actor award for *Kawin Lari*, *Ibunda* and *Pacar Ketinggalan Kereta*. Tuti Indra Malaon was also an accomplished Javanese traditional dancer and an editor for a popular male magazine, *Matra*.

Dewi Matindas was an actor and senior lecturer at the School of Psychology, University of Indonesia. Dewi Matindas was often assigned by Teguh Karya as a film crew, rather than an actor. She is also a teacher of the psychology of acting at Teater Populer workshops.

Slamet Rahardjo (1949-) is an actor, producer and director. He studied theatre at Akademi Teater Nasional Indonesia under the guidance of Teguh Karya. He was Teguh Karya's favourite actor, acting in eight of thirteen films written and directed by Teguh Karya. He won the Best Actor awards for *Ranjang Pengantin* (*The Marriage Bed*, 1974) and *Di Balik Kelambu* (*Behind the Mosquito Net*, 1982). He directed thirteen films, including *Rembulan dan Matahari* (*The Moon and the Sun*, 1982) and *Langitku Rumahku* (*My Sky, My Home*, 1991). He won the awards for the Best Director in Indonesian Film Festival for *Kembang Kertas* (*Paper Flowers*, 1985) and *Kodrati* (1987). He also acts in several films for television and is a host of several popular

television programs. Slamet Rahardjo teaches acting and directing at Jakarta Institute of Arts and Teater Populer workshop.

Nano Riantiarno (1949-) is an actor, producer and director. He studied theatre acting at ATNI. Nano acted in three films directed by Teguh Karya: *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* (1971), *Cinta Pertama* (1973) and *Ranjang Pengantin* (1974). In 1977, he left Teater Populer and started his own theatre group, Teater Koma. Riantiarno is a well-known playwright and theatre actor and director. Following in the path of his teacher, Teguh Karya, Riantiarno writes and directs for Teater Koma, now the most popular theatre group in Indonesia.

Franky Rorimpandey (1943-2010) was an actor and a director. He studied at ATNI. He directed twenty-three feature films. One of the films that won him the award of Best Film Director was *Perawan Desa (The Village Virgin)*, 1980). The film was loosely based on a true event in Jogjakarta in 1970s.

Boyke Roring (1946-2013) was an actor and director. He was also a former theatre student at ATNI. He acted in *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* (1971). Boyke often worked as a film crew in Teguh Karya's films. He directed several films, including *Saskia* (1989) and *Isabela* (1990).

Henky Solaiman (1941-) is an actor, a director and a producer. He acted with Teguh Karya in a play called *Nyanyian Angsa (The Swan Song)* in 1964, long before Teater Populer was formed. He acted in *Wajah Seorang Laki-Laki* (1971), *Kawin Lari* (1975) and *Usia 18* (1980). When Teguh Karya did not cast him as one of the actors in his films, Henky Solaiman was often assigned as a film production manager. He still acts in some films and his latest film was *The Raid: Redemption* (2011).

Mieke Wijaya (1940-) is an actor who has acted in more than sixty films. Usmar Ismail's *Tiga Dara* (*Three Girls*, 1956) was the film that launched her acting career. Mieke won the Best Actress award in Indonesian Film Festival for her roles in *Gadis Kerudung Putih* (*A Girl with White Shawl*, 1967) and *Kembang Semusim* (*A Seasoned Flower*, 1985). For her role in *Ranjang Pengantin* (*The Marriage Bed*, 1974), she won the Best Supporting Actor award.

Sylvia Widiyanto is an actor. She graduated from School of Psychology, University of Indonesia. She acted in *Di Balik Kelambu* (1982), *Secangkir Kopi Pahit* (1984) and *Doea Tanda Mata* (1985). Sylvia Widiyanto also teaches acting at Teater Populer workshops.

