

INDONESIAN LITERATURE DURING THE JAPANESE COLONIAL PERIOD

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Introduction

The song "Indonesia Raya" was forbidden to sing, the red and white flag could not fly in the sky, associations were stopped, mass media (newspapers, magazines, etc.) were limited with censorship. This has been the case in Indonesia since Japan took control of the country. Meanwhile, many of the Indonesians themselves were initially fascinated by the victory of their fellow Asians over the West because they succeeded in expelling Western colonialists in Asian countries. Indonesians were hopeful of Japan's sweet promises to liberate the colonized nations of the East, including Indonesia. These promises had been announced by the Japanese earlier through Tokyo radio, but promises remained promises, only to be met with more repression.

The pride in the strength of the Dai Nippon army and the belief in the grandiose words of the Japanese, not only spread among the general public, but also among artists and writers. Many of the artists and writers were fooled into echoing Japan's promise of a Greater East Asia victory and supporting Japan's cause in their works, before eventually realizing the falseness of the nation bearing the rising sun.

The independence that was buzzed about to be given was just an empty message, the lives of the people were even more miserable due to cruel suppression so that their fate was even worse and full of bitterness. This was also felt among artists and writers because they could not voice their thoughts, feelings and ideas freely. In the cultural field, Japan established *Keimin Bunka Shidoso*, the Japanese Cultural Center. Through this institution, Japan banned works that did not support the goals and ideals of Dai Nippon so they could not be published. Works that could be published were those containing propaganda and praise for Japan. In fact, such works were deliberately ordered against these artists.

Freedom may be banned. Magazines and newspapers can be silenced and abolished, but the voice of conscience and the cry of the times cannot be stopped, so the literature of this time is still present with various struggles.

A Glance at the Condition of Indonesian Literature Before the Japanese Occupation

Before going into the struggles of writers and their works during the Japanese colonial period, I will first give an overview of the literary conditions before the Japanese colonial period so that when talking about literature during the Japanese colonial period, the context is understood.

Indonesia, a nation of diversity, consists of 17504 islands with 1340 ethnic groups and 540 languages. With such existence, Indonesia has cultural diversity. In each region and ethnic group, Indonesia has its own literary traditions, commonly referred to as regional or traditional literature. Then, because the Indonesian language comes from the Malay language, traditional Malay literature is part of the periodization of Indonesian literature called Old Literature, or some literary experts call it Classical Literature.

The arrival of the Westerners (Dutch) who later colonized Indonesia for 350 years made literature in the archipelago get Western influence which later gave birth to Modern Indonesian Literature. Modern Indonesian Literature itself, in the view of various Indonesian literary experts, emerged around the 1920s with the birth of literary works that in form began to leave the Old Literature style (traditional Malay) and in content showed the nature of Indonesianness (in the sense of preliminary efforts to obtain its own language, history and culture for Indonesian national concepts and ideals). In the field of poetry, A. Teeuw¹ mentions Muhammad Yamin with his book entitled *Tanah Air* as a milestone / pioneer of modern Indonesian poetry. In the field of prose, the Dutch expert on Indonesian literature named Marah Rusli with his romance *Siti Nurbaya*² as a pioneer.

The works mentioned above are works that use formal Malay (or the colonial government calls it high Malay). These works in formal (high) Malay were published by the Dutch colonial government's institution, Balai Pustaka. In the beginning, Balai Pustaka was a People's Reading Commission (*commisie voor de volkslectuur*) that aimed to provide a variety of readings for the natives that were morally and politically clean and safe. Of course, clean and safe is meant here

from the perspective of the colonial government, that is, one that does not threaten and endanger their status quo. Modern Indonesian literature is often referred to the works published by Balai Pustaka, which was established in 1908 and published a lot of indigenous literature since the 1920s.

However, Balai Pustaka was not the only literary publisher in Indonesia. Outside of this, there was a proliferation of works circulated in newspapers, magazines and private publishers. These works, which were not published by Balai Pustaka, were written in Malay Pasar (low Malay, the language of everyday life) by natives, Indo-Europeans and peranakan Chinese. In fact, the works of the peranakan Chinese, according to Claudine Salmon, outnumber those published by Balai Pustaka. The total number of works by peranakan Chinese writers between 1870-1960 reached 3005 titles. This beats Balai Pustaka's publications, as noted by A. Teeuw, which only numbered 400 during 1917-1967.

These Peranakan Chinese literary works are romances and short stories in the form of martial arts stories, love stories and concubinage, such as "Nyai Sumirah" by Thio Tjin Boen (1917), "Nyai Aisah" by Tan Boen Kim (1915), and "Nyai Marsinah" (1922). After romance and concubinage, the next themes developed by peranakan Chinese authors were inter-ethnic marriages (Chinese men marrying natives), as seen in the romances Bunga Roos of Tjikembang (by Kwee Tak Hoay, 1927), Ular Cantik (by Soe Lie Piet, 1929), Itu Bidadari of Rawa Pening (by Tan Hoeng Boen, 1929), Bunga Roos Merah (by Chang Ming Tse, 1939). Another theme was the crimes that occurred in the society at that time.

Socio-political themes were also the target of authors of this descent. The story of the Indonesian Communist prisoners in Boven Digul after their rebellion failed, for example, was written in the romances Blood and Tears in Boven Digul by Oen Bo Tik (1931), Drama in Boven Digul by Oen Bo Tik (1931), and "Merah" by Liem King Hoo (1937). It was such literary works that made the colonial government "burn with envy" and the Director of Volkslectuur, D.A. Rinkes, labeled them as wild, inferior and immoral.

Besides the literary works of Chinese authors, the colonial period also saw the publication of popular literature written by Indo-Dutch and native journalists, in the form of translations, adaptations and original works. These works were initially published as serialized stories. Works written by Indo-Dutch journalists in Market Malay included the detective story Lawah-Lawah Merah by Pon Jest, which was adapted from the French by E.F Wiggers (1875). Later the same

year, Hikayat Robinson Crusoe by A.F Von De Wall was published. From then until 1900, many novels were translated and adapted from the West. The first novel that originally told the story of Indonesia was Hikajat Nyai Dasima by G. Francis.

On the part of native authors, along with the growth of the press, Mas Marco Kartodikromo's *Mata Gelap* (1914) and *Rasa Merdeka* (1924) appeared. There were also the romances *Hikajat Siti Mariah* (1912) by Haji Moekti, *Nyai Permana* (1912) by R.M. Tirta Adhi Soerjo, and *Hikayat Kadiroen* by Semaoen. As with the works of Chinese authors, the works of these non-Balai Pustaka indigenous authors were labeled as wild and morally corrupting.³

Furthermore, what cannot be separated from Indonesian literature during the Dutch colonial period is the birth of the *Pujangga Baru* magazine whose works and thoughts in it became a milestone of an important generation in Indonesian literature. Although before the birth of this magazine, there were other magazines such as *Seri Posestaka*, *Pandji Poestaka*, *Jong Sumatra*, *Timboel*, and many more, *Pujangga Baru* Magazine became a gathering place for Indonesian culturalists, artists, and intellectuals who were influential in determining the direction of Indonesian culture and national ideals.

Until the 1940s (before 1942), Indonesian literature was under the supervision of the Dutch East Indies government. Closer to the 1940s, that is, before the arrival of Japan and the end of the Dutch colonial period, there was a period called the transition period, which was around 1937-1942.

During this period, romances were published written by indigenous people of Islamic origin. These authors are often referred to as *surau* authors. This term was given to them because these authors were graduates of the Thawalib religious school in Padang Panjang. The nickname was given by a critic named A.S. Hamid in the article "Bandjir Roman", the nickname was actually derogatory because at that time there was competition and ideological battles with those who opposed Islam.

Most of these authors' works were published by publishers often termed Medan publishers. In fact, according to Sumardjo (1999: 115), the publishing house was not only centered in Medan, but also in Bukittinggi and Padang.

The works of these authors, namely Tamar Djaya, Joesof Sou'yb, Matu Mona, and others, are often regarded as "picisan" romances, especially by Roolvink (1955). The nickname is actually tendentious in order to inhibit the dissemination of these romances because they endangered the Dutch colonial government. The romances are actually detective stories. However, the content, as can be seen from various research results (one of which is Erlis Nur Mujiningsih's research (Language Center, 2005)), infiltrates the ideology of nationalism and movements against the Dutch.

The Condition of Indonesian Literature during the Japanese Occupation

As illustrated above, before the Japanese came to power in Indonesia, Indonesian literature already had its own fertile and diverse life as a result of its struggle with the ongoing political, social, cultural, and other worlds in search of its Indonesian identity.

The Japanese occupation, which although only lasted for 3.5 years but was felt by Indonesians to be more repressive than the Dutch occupation which lasted 3.5 centuries, made literature and the lives of its writers and artists restricted because Japan carried out a kind of - in Ajip Rosidi's term⁴ - enslavement of the arts for the purpose of propaganda for victory in the Greater East Asia war. Japan established the Central Office of Culture called *Keimin Bunka Shidoso*. Through this institution, Japan demanded and mobilized writers and artists to create poems, novels, plays, songs, paintings, and the like that displayed Japan's advantages and aroused public sympathy and enthusiasm to fight in support of Japanese programs. The Japanese deployed them around the regions with art groups formed to socialize the propaganda.

Works outside of Japan's wishes were banned from publication. The Japanese Imperialist government carried out censorship mercilessly. At that time, magazines, newspapers, and publications from the Dutch colonial era were still alive. However, the Japanese immediately took them over or even banned and abolished their publication. Regional language publications were abolished and Malay-language ones were taken over⁵. The Balai Pustaka institution formed by the Dutch East Indies government was also taken over, while the *Pujangga Baru* magazine was banned from publication because it was considered westernized.

To more clearly map the literary works of this period, we should refer to a clear division in the years of events. Jakob Sumardjo⁶ included the Japanese occupation period in the Transitional Period (1940s). In the Transitional Period (1940s), there are two time spans with two

events, namely 1942-1945 (the Japanese occupation period) and 1945-1949 (the independence war period against the Dutch or often referred to as the independence revolution period). Literary works during the Japanese occupation period arguably receded due to strict censorship. The works published during this period were those that met the requirements of Japanese orders.

In contrast to the Dutch colonial period with the Balai Pustaka Publishers who published more romances, at this time, in the field of literature, poetry and short stories were written. The same goes for plays. According to Ajip Rosidi⁷, this happened because the war situation demanded people to be fast and brief. Poems and short stories containing support for Japan were written by writers who were initially enthusiastic about the arrival of Japan because they could not yet feel the intention behind the grandiose promise of the Dai Nippon army to liberate Asian nations from white colonialism when in fact they themselves wanted to become new colonizers. They were artists who were fooled by the sweet mouth of the nation that always called itself Old Brother. Not surprisingly, in the early days of the Japanese occupation, these writers and artists bought into the Japanese line and created works that supported the Japanese cause.

In addition, there were also writers whose writings consciously supported Japan and fulfilled Japanese orders to save their stomachs. These works of poetry and short stories were published in media that had been taken over by the Japanese. In the field of romance, only two romances were published during this period, the propaganda-filled romances written by Nur Sultan Iskandar titled *Cinta Tanah Air* and Karim Halim titled *Palawija*. Due to their focus on propaganda, many literary critics considered these romances to lack literary value.

What about literary works that refused to be accomplices of the colonizers? These works were published in the later period, namely after Japan left during the independence revolution and after the revolution (1950s). In addition, the remaining works of the previous period (Dutch colonial period) that were not published at that time due to some obstacles (for example, works that were considered dangerous at that time), were published during the revolution and after the revolution. These "leftover" works from the Dutch colonial era that were published during the revolution and after the revolution make the literary themes of this period no different from those of the 1920s and 1930s. There were literary works, including novels, with historical themes, such as *Putera Budiman*, *Surapati*, *Mutiara*, *Tambera*, and *Di Pinggir Krueng* published by Medan publishers. There are also didactic novels with problems about customs such as *Merantau ke Deli*, *Andang*

Taruna, and *Nusa Penida*. Armijn Pane's novel *Belenggu*, which was not allowed to be published during the Dutch period, was only published during this transition⁸.

As Jakob Sumardjo notes, the literary works published during the Japanese occupation did not fully reflect that period because they could only be published later (during the revolution and early independence period). Two non-propaganda works born during the Japanese period and published in 1944 and 1945 are Achdiat Karta Mihardja's novel *Atheis* and Idrus's *Aki*, two phenomenal works.

From this description of literary publishing in the transitional period, which includes the Japanese colonial period and the independence revolution, it can be seen that the response of writers and artists to the cultural policies of the Japanese imperialist government included three types:

- 1) writers and artists who knowingly supported Japanese policies;
- 2) writers and artists who were initially fooled by Japan's grandiose promises; and later realized the error of their ways;
- 3) writers and artists who had originally rejected and dissented against Japanese policies.

How did these writers struggle with their literary works in the midst of the Japanese government's cultural policy. Here is the description.

The Struggle of Indonesian Literature and Writers and Their Strategies in the Cultural Policy of the Japanese Imperialist Government.

The Japanese imperialist government seems to be very aware of how important the role and function of literature and art is in life, especially in political affairs. Literature and art could be powerful tools in supporting political ideals. It is not surprising then that, with the Cultural Center it established, Japan recruited writers, dramatists, painters, musicians and other artists to produce pro-Japanese works in the form of propaganda works. These artists, especially the drama and music groups, were facilitated to perform in various regions. However, there was no arts organization without the supervision of the Japanese army. The kempeitai were always on standby to supervise.

How did the writers and artists react to the Japanese policy? Indonesian literature, throughout its history, has always been inextricably linked to the political movement - the struggle for nationalism. The *founding fathers of Indonesia* were also writers, and literature was one of the means they created to fight colonialism and revive a sense of nationalism. Muhammad Yamin, besides being a movement figure, was also a writer. Mohammad Hatta, who later became the first Vice President of Indonesia, wrote poems and short stories against the Dutch colonizers. Similarly, Soekarno, who later became the president of Indonesia, wrote plays and staged them in his exile. The country of Indonesia itself can be said to have been born from a poem, namely a poem by Muhammad Yamin entitled "Indonesia Tumpah Darahku". This poem (with all the background and vitality of its creation that cannot be separated from the process and activities of the nationalism movement) became the embryo for the formulation of the "Youth Pledge" which was then pledged by Indonesian youth from all regions and ethnic groups to build Indonesian unity (one blood, one nation, and one language, namely Indonesia). It was this determination and pledge that continued to drive the independence revolution until independence was achieved.

With this background, when dealing with Japan, writers and artists seemed to have understood that literature was used as a tool for political struggle. The only question is, what was it all for? The greatness of Japan as an Eastern nation that won the war over Western nations and its promises to liberate the conquered areas around the Pacific Sea, inevitably made the Indonesian people amazed and happy, then placed hopes on the shoulders of the "Old Brother".

And so it was. The artists and writers eagerly began to obey Japan's orders. They created works that supported the victory of Greater East Asia because they thought that it was for the sake of the Indonesian homeland as well.

An example to illustrate such feelings can be seen in the author famous for his novel *Belenggu*, namely Armijn Pane. As once described by Ajip Rosidi⁹ he was at that time so enthusiastic about supporting Japan by writing play scripts according to Japanese expectations and becoming the leader of a play group that toured performances in the regions.

There were also writers who initially believed in Japan's promises, after witnessing the discrepancy between words and deeds carried out by the Nippon army, began to doubt and finally did not obey Japan's wishes. One example of this attitude can be seen in Usmar Ismail. Usmar Ismail, a writer from Minangkabau, was an important writer during the Japanese occupation. He

is better known as a playwright and poet, although he also wrote short stories. In the beginning, as read in his poem "Kita berjuang". He enthusiastically supported the Japanese struggle, the poem reads as follows:

We Fight

I woke up, jumped up

I cast a long look around

I see the day is bright, the phylactery is clear

It has been a long time since dawn broke.

Kuisap

Relax the chest

Step on the ground

No guyah.

I heard a whisper

My heart is vulnerable:

"We are at war,

We fight!"

As the heart sings

Awaken the desire of the forbidden damba

Want to invade the field of ridlah:

"With you in the fight"

From the poem we see the poet's partiality towards Japan, as in the last line: "*With you in the fight!*". The brother to whom the poem refers is none other than "Old Brother" (the Japanese).

However, at later times, Usmar expressed his suspicions and doubts about Japan's good intentions. One poem that is often cited as a representation of his feelings is the poem "Diserang Rasa". Finally, he firmly rejected Japan and stated that art must be characterized by devotion to Nusa and Bangsa.

Next, poets who were suspicious of Japan's grandiose words from the beginning, one of whom was Rosihan Anwar. This Padang-born writer, who later became famous as an important journalist in Indonesia, wrote a number of poems and short stories during the Japanese era.

One of his poems that reflected his distrust of the Japanese was entitled "Untuk Saudara", which questioned the veracity of Japanese promises. In this poem, he compares *Japan's* promises to melodies and *songs* that sound melodious, but he questions them with the lines: *Will you please check again / ... / Sungguhkan diri pencinta bangsa // ... / Bukan sahaja permainan kata / ... //*

Apart from Rosihan Anwar, other examples of poets who from the beginning did not want to submit to Japan are Chairil Anwar and Amal Hamzah. Chairil Anwar, a poet who was later dubbed the pioneer of the 1945 Generation, was even sued by Japan, due to his poem entitled "Siap Sedia". In this poem, Chairil stirred up the spirit of struggle for the Indonesian nation: *Comrades, Comrades / And we rise with awareness / ... / comrades, comrades, / we swing the sword to the World of Light! /*.

As reiterated by H.B Jassin¹⁰, *the Gunseibu* (the government coordinator in charge of restoring order and security) charged the poem as a rebellion against Japan because the institution signaled that the word *Bright World* was none other than Japan.

Chairil Anwar's firm rejection of Japan was also, as noted by Dami N. Toda¹¹, demonstrated by his courage to resist Japanese censorship by not giving his poems to the Japanese Cultural Center, but distributing them directly to his friends. Many of his poems were patriotic and were veiled encouragements against the Japanese.

In the midst of the restrictive and oppressive attitude of the imperialist rulers, including for written works, the writers of that time who opposed Japan, carried out various strategies against Japanese censorship so that their works could still be published and read by the public. These strategies are described below.

Japanese Counterculture Writers' Strategies for Passing Works from Censorship

In the midst of the colonial government's harsh censorship, a number of writers who opposed the Japanese did various ways to escape the censorship and their works still reached the public.

From the various descriptions of how the author processed his poetry for poems or prose with patriotic themes defending the Indonesian nation or criticizing the colonizers, several strategies can be drawn, namely:

- 1) choosing ambiguous diction;
- 2) depict reality with symbolic comparisons.

The first strategy is to choose ambiguous diction, for example we can see in the poem "Lukisan" which depicts the lyricist seeing a young soldier. The soldier in question is certainly an Indonesian soldier, but because the word soldier can be interpreted widely, the Japanese will assume that it is a Japanese soldier.

The second strategy, symbolic comparison, can be seen in the poems of a female poet named Maria Amin. For example, this poet criticizes Japanese oppression by symbolizing it through the world of plants or animals.

About Japanese Pro Authors and Works

In Indonesian literature during the Japanese period, there are works that are often mentioned when talking about literature that favored Japan. The works in question are Nur Sutan Iskandar's *Cinta Tanah Air* and Karim Halim's *Palawija*. During the Japanese occupation, these were the only two novels published by Balai Pustaka, which changed its name to *Gunseikanbu Kokumin Tokyoku* during the Japanese era.

Nur Sultan Iskandar is a very familiar name among the literati of the Dutch colonial and Japanese periods, he was the chief editor of Balai Pustaka until his retirement. As editor of Balai Pustaka, he edited, compiled, translated and adapted many manuscripts. He was also a prolific romance writer. He has produced more than 10 romances. His most successful romance is the historical romance *Hulubalang Raja*. As for his novel *Cinta Tanah Air*, it is often judged otherwise, as a novel that marks his failure as an author because it contains cheap propaganda that is considered to have no literary value. Nur Sultan Iskandar himself, in the introduction to one of the printed books, asked readers to place his novel in the context of his time.

The novel shows a very clear and one-sided favoritism towards Japan. Almost all of its contents describe things that are pro and do not show the actual reality. *Cinta Tanah Air* tells the story of

the idealism of a young man named Amirudin who is called upon to become a warrior (a member of the volunteer army) to help Japan realize *its Hakko Ichiu* ideals. Meanwhile, he is also faced with a choice related to his love for a girl. However, it turns out that he gets permission from the girl and her mother to realize what is his calling.

Next we look at the novel *Palawija* by Karim Halim. There is not much information about Karim Hakim. The novel *Palawija* tells the story of a teacher named Sumardi who is married to a girl of Chinese descent. Their meeting occurred when Sumardi managed to reconcile the chaos in the form of looting by the people of Rengasdengklok after learning that the Dutch were defeated by Japan. People supported Sumardi's marriage with the Chinese girl as a form of unity between the natives and the Chinese.

After his marriage, Sumardi was appointed to the Regional Council. In the course of his life he was also called to serve as a soldier in defense of the homeland. His wife also took part in the back line.

A Different Side of the Japanese Occupation

Indonesians often think that the 3.5 years of Japanese colonization was harder than the 3.5 centuries of Dutch colonization. Yes! Under the Japanese occupation, the Indonesian people were indeed forged with bitterness and misery, but this physical and mental suffering later made them strong and mature for the independence revolution until they could truly become independent.

What also matured during this colonial period was the Indonesian language. Indonesian, which during the Dutch colonial period was prevented from becoming a unified language, during the Japanese period was given full opportunity to be used on various occasions, even required to be used throughout the archipelago as the only language. Of course, this was part of Japan's strategy to win the hearts of the colonized population before it would eventually be replaced by the Japanese language itself. However, Japan had already suffered defeat, before achieving its intentions.

Regardless of Japan's intentions, with the opportunity to use Indonesian in full, the Indonesian language matured. This maturity is represented in the achievements of literary language seen in Chairil Anwar's poetry and Idrus' prose. In the hands of these two writers, the Indonesian language, which in earlier times often felt languid, became full of energy and vitality with dense

expressions, avoiding rhetoric and adages (as often appeared in earlier works) so that it felt more modern.

The Elimination of Former Japanese Imperialism in Post-Pacific War Indonesian Literature

There is a saying that history belongs to the victors. The history of imperialist behavior has been suppressed in Japan's own time and diverted in other directions. However, the truth, even if suppressed in various ways, will eventually shine through.

What happened during the 3.5 years of Japanese imperialism cannot be erased from history. Indonesian literature has recorded it. In fact, these works have become part of social documents. These works could not be published during the Japanese period and were published after the Japanese left, that is, after the revolution.

Works set during the Japanese colonial period and the revolutionary period are abundant, especially in the form of prose (novels and short stories), which are reimagined by authors with various angles and perspectives.

In presenting the colonization and revolution, the authors not only testify, but also give meaning to the struggles, sacrifices, and upheavals for human values in a broad sense, not just in a political sense. These works criticize the power-hungry attitude of human beings who have distorted human norms. However, the criticism is mostly aimed at the behavior of the nation's own people who have become cunning and cannot maintain their morality in the midst of various problems.

To cite some examples, let's look at Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Perburuan*, Mochtar Lubis' *Jalan Tak Ada Ujung*, and Idrus' short story Kota-Harmoni.

Let's start with the novel *Perburuan* by Pramoedya Ananta Toer. This author, who is usually called Pram, has received many international awards. He has produced more than 50 works that have been translated into more than 42 languages. Almost half of his life was spent in prison (as a colonial, Old Order, and New Order prisoner). During the New Order, his books were banned from circulation. The novel tells the story of an attempt by the Peta Army (the Japanese homeland defense army) to rebel against the Japanese but failed due to the betrayal of a *shodancho* (platoon commander) who leaked the attempt to the Japanese. The novel's protagonist, Hardo, has long

been a target of the Japanese due to his rebellion efforts. One day he comes out of hiding disguised as a kere and meets his future father-in-law. However, his father-in-law betrayed him by reporting Hardo's whereabouts to the Japanese.

Jalan Tak Ada Ujung was written by Mochtar Lubis, an author who was also a journalist and founder of Antara news agency. He was imprisoned during the Soekarno regime and his newspaper Indonesia Raya was banned. *Jalan Tak Ada Ujung* is more of a psychological novel because it tells the story of a kind and gentle teacher named Isa. He experiences severe traumatic feelings due to witnessing the violence and cruelty of the Japanese army too often. This severe traumatic feeling has an effect on his physical condition which gives him long suffering, including suffering in his household because Master Isa has impotence. The novel tells the story of how Guru Isa overcame his fears and in the midst of all that he also experienced betrayal by his best friend.

Next we look at Idrus's "Kota-Harmoni". Idrus is an author who was considered an innovator in the field of prose during the Japanese colonial period. He worked as the editor of Balai Pustaka. In his short story "Kota-Harmoni", Idrus tells the story of everyday life under Nippon rule in a cynical and ironic way. He satirizes the arrogance of the Dai Nippon army and the attitude of his own people who like to curry favor with the colonizers.

It is clear from the above that there was no physical erasure of the Japanese imperialist legacy. If there is to be any erasure, it is in the form of a view that the imperialist actions of one nation against another should never happen again on earth because they have created a long list of suffering and damaged human values, a view that is conveyed as criticism by the authors in their works.

This is a general description of the condition of Indonesian literature during the Japanese era. After the Pacific War, Indonesian literature continued to develop. In the 1950s, after the end of the Pacific War, Indonesian literature was characterized by an ideological battle between socialist realism and universal humanism. Until now, Indonesian literature and its authors have always been inseparable from socio-political struggles.

END NOTE

- 1) A. Teeuw, *New Indonesian Literature* (Yogyakarta: YIIS, R979), pp. 26-28.
- 2) Ibid, p. 31
- 3) Nenden Lilis A., *Around Popular Literature* (Bandung: Rumpit Merah, 2018), pp. 92-93.
- 4) Ajip Rosidi, *Overview of Indonesian Literary History* (Bandung: Pustaka Jaya, 2013), pp. 44-45.
- 5) Ajip Rosidi, *Literature and Culture in Regionalism and Indonesianness* (Bandung, Pustaka Jaya, 1995), pp. 16.
- 6) Jakob Sumardjo, *The Social Context of the Indonesian Novel 1920-1977* (Bandung: Alumni Publisher, 1999), pp. 27
- 7) Rosidi, op.cit, p. 89.
- 8) Sumardjo, op.cit, p. 120
- 9) Rosidi, op.cit, p. 88.
- 10) H. B. Jassin, *Indonesian Literature in the Japanese Period* (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1993), pp. 25.
- 11) Dami N. Toda, *Servants of Culture* (Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1984), p. 92.