(E) DANARTO

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Korea and Japan with Japanese researchers and foundation personnel.

On January 29 the Toyota Foundation sponsored a study meeting on the theme "Korean Economic Development and the Current Situation of Corporate Foundations and Corporate Giving." Ten researchers and foundation personnel heard Professor Jung and his colleagues report on their research, after which the participants discussed the team's findings. The next day the Foundation Library Center of Japan held a discussion meeting on foundation activities in South Korea and Japan. Sixteen officers from member foundations attended. They explained their own foundations' activities and received a detailed report on South Korean foundation activities. A question-and-answer session ended the meeting.

Exchange in regard to private grant-making foundations and other aspects of private-sector philanthropy in Japan and South Korea will become increasingly important in the future, but as yet people in one country know almost nothing of such activities in the other. Japan and South Korea are similar in that both have systems for the incorporation of philanthropic enterprises, but corporate patterns and attitudes toward corporate philanthropy differ in the two countries. Further meetings like the two held in January can play an important part in furthering understanding and interchange between South Korean and Japanese foundations. (*Yoshinori Yamaoka, Program Director*)

An Interview with Danarto

Danarto, born in Sragen, Central Java, in 1940, is a writer of short fiction as well as a painter and a theater and motion-picture art director. His "Armageddon" is included in an anthology of Indonesian short stories scheduled to be published in Japanese translation this fiscal year with the help of a "Know Our Neighbors" translation-publication grant. At present Danarto is doing research at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, where he was interviewed recently about his own writing and about the Indonesian literary scene as a whole.

Q: What message are you trying to convey through your writings?

Danarto: I don't have any particular message, but religion is a central theme in my works. For example, religion features in most of the nine stories in my 1975 anthology *Godlob*, published in English as *Abracadabra*.

Q: Can you be a little more specific as to what you mean by "religion"?

Danarto: My stories touch on a variety of religions. In writing about Islam, my own religion, I focus on Islam as a religion of love with magnificent values. But because I express myself in a somewhat unorthodox manner, devout Muslims seem to have trouble with what I write.



The Indonesian writer Danarto

Q: Are religious elements common in Indonesian literature?

Danarto: Yes, they definitely constitute one distinctive feature of Indonesian literature. In Indonesia we talk about the "1945 generation" and the "1966 generation." In literary circles, the 1945 generation refers to writers who were active during the period spanning the independence struggle and the establishment of the republic. And the 1966 generation refers to writers who appeared on the scene after the 1965 coup attempt.

In 1970 the poet Abdul Hadi announced the birth of what he called "Sufi literature." This was the genesis of what he called the "1970 generation." Sutardji Calzoum Bachri, Sapardi Djoko Damono, and Kunwijoyo probably belong to this generation, too. This Sufi literature aims at a deeper understanding of the nature of religion.

Q: What led to the emergence of Sufi literature?

Danarto: Socialist realism was the dominant trend up to 1965, and I think Sufi literature arose to search

for Allah, God. The publication of *Godlob* had something to do with the birth of the 1970 generation, too, I think.

Q: Does "Armageddon," one of the stories in *Godlob*, reflect this literary trend, too?

Danarto: No, "Armageddon" is based on a *wayang* tale, the story of a woman who steals her mother's lover and is killed by her mother. I used this framework to express in a symbolic fashion the conflict between mother and daughter in contemporary society.

Q: What kind of conflict?

Danarto: The kind of conflict that arises from different values. For example, maybe the mother wants her daughter to conform to the ordinary ideal of happiness by getting married and becoming a homemaker, but the daughter wants to be a career woman and has no interest at all in marriage.

Q: Earlier you said that religious elements are one distinctive feature of Indonesian literature. Can you name some other typical characteristics?

Danarto: Indonesian literature has been criticized as immature because it doesn't adequately reflect the various debates over values and other issues that exercise the outside world, and this is said to be because almost no foreign literature is available in translation. But the root of the problem, I think, is the fact that most Indonesians simply don't have the money to buy books. Even so, writers like Goenawan Mohamad, Pramoedya Ananta Toer, Putu Wijaya, Sapardi Djoko Damono, Sutardji Calzoum Bachri, N. H. Dini, and Mochtar Lubis are turning out fine work.

Q: What direction do you see Indonesian literature taking in the future?

Danarto: I'm really not in a position to pronounce on this. I imagine the appropriate direction will emerge in the natural course of events. I'd just like to say one thing. We need to increase the number of readers of Indonesian literature, and to make this possible the price of books must come down. For example, this slim volume of Indonesian fiction I'm holding costs Rp4,500. A kilogram of rice costs around Rp500, so you could buy nine kilos of rice for the price of this one book.

Q: That *is* expensive.

Danarto: And another thing. We have to take the nature of literature into consideration. Ordinary people may find paintings or music more approachable than literature. When people come home tired after work, they don't feel like reading. Looking at pictures, on the other hand, perks you up. High government officials show an interest in painting and support art exhibitions, but few seem keen on literature. I know it would be a mixed blessing, but in a country like Indonesia, where the government plays a major role, it would be a big help if the government supported literature a little more actively by sponsoring book exhibitions and so forth. If there were more readers, this would be an incentive for writers, as well.

Translators' Comments on "Know Our Neighbors" Books

The Toyota Foundation's "Know Our Neighbors" Translation-Publication Programs, administered by the International Division, award grants to assist the translation and publication of Southeast and South Asian works in Japanese, of Japanese works in Southeast and South Asian languages, and of Southeast and South Asian works in other Southeast and South Asian languages. Below, the translators of three works recently published under the "Know Our Neighbors" Program in Japan comment on the works and their authors.

Canal de la Reina (The River Reina). Liwayway A. Arceo. Trans. Motoe Terami. Published in Japanese as *Reina-gawa no Ie* (The House on the River Reina). Tokyo: Dandansha Co., 1990. 285 pp. ISBN 4-7952-6507-0.

My first meeting with Liwayway Arceo took place more than ten years ago, when I interviewed her in connection with a paper I was writing on the Japanese military authorities' cultural policy in the



An old church on northern Luzon, the Philippines