

Contemporary Progressive Indonesian Poetry

Roestjita Ita Soebrata

5/6 - 1/64

CONTEMPORARY PROGRESSIVE INDONESIAN POETRY

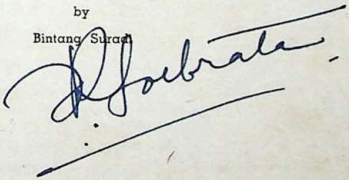
to my wife Suwarti and Sibi
who did most of the work.

Contemporary Progressive Indonesian Poetry

Translated and edited with an Introduction

by

Bintang Suradi



league of people's culture

— indonesia —

a few words of introduction

Modern Indonesian literature, that is, literature written in *Bahasa Indonesia* (the Indonesian Language) is of relative recent date. *Bahasa Indonesia* — the national language of the 97 million Indonesian people inhabiting 3,000 of the more than 10,000 bigger and smaller islands constituting the Republic of Indonesia — is closely related to the struggle for national independence waged by the Indonesian people for scores of years.

When, at the turn of the present century, this struggle for nationhood and for a national state began to take on modern forms with the emergence of the first national workers' organisation, the Trade Union of Railroad and Tram Personnel (1905) and the first nationalist organisation, the "Budi Utomo" (1908) and then political parties like the Sjarikat Islam (Islam Association) in 1912, the Indies Social Democratic Union (1914), forerunner of the Communist Party of Indonesia (1920), *Bahasa Indonesia*, too, began to take shape.

Originally a language spoken by the Melayu nationality in Sumatera and for hundreds of years used in a simplified form throughout the Indonesian archipelago as the *lingua franca*, the Melayu language, which bears close affinity to the language of the Malay Peninsula, was destined by history to play a decisive role in the formation of the Indonesian nation. From the language of a minority, this Melayu language, in the course of the struggle for national independence grew into a full-fledged national language recognised today as the official language of the Indonesian people.

In this book *Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution*, D.N. Aidit, dwelling on the yeoman service rendered by *Bahasa Indonesia* in forming the Indonesian nation, observed: "A most interesting thing is that *Bahasa Indonesia* does not originate from the language of the largest nationality (i.e. the Javanese nationality amounting to about 63 million — BS). This language has never throughout history been the language of colonisers; on the contrary, it is a language which unites more than one hundred nationalities.

Bahasa Indonesia is a language which has been forged in the struggle for national independence, it is the language of the liberator."

Modern Indonesian literature did not appear on the literary scene as a competitor of the centuries-old literatures of the Javanese, Sundanese, Melayu, Balinese, Bugis and other nationalities. The reverse is true. Modern Indonesian literature embodies the finest anti-feudal, anti-colonial and popular traditions of the local literatures. It enriched its vocabulary and form by drawing on the old literatures, and in its turn, made these literatures known and loved by all the nationalities inhabiting Indonesia.

Instrumental in developing the national language were the novels and articles of one of Indonesia's first novelists, pamphleteers and journalists, the working-class leader, *Marco Kartodikromo*. His novels "Amuck" (1914), "Freshman" (1919), "The Feeling of Freedom" (1920) and his "Verses of Spices" (1921) and especially his speech at the Congress of Indonesian Journalists in Solo, 1919, in which he exhorted his fellow journalists and writers "to write in good Indonesian", exerted a great influence on the developing *Bahasa Indonesia*. His novels "Freshman" and "The Feeling of Freedom", because of their revolutionary and anti-colonial spirit, were banned by the Dutch authorities, and Indonesians, especially the students, had to read these novels in secret up till the thirties. The Indonesian literary critic *Bakri Siregar* and the well-known contemporary novelist and essayist *Pramudya Ananta Tur* place Marco Kartodikromo, who died in exile in the late twenties in West Irian, at the very origin of modern Indonesian literature.

In 1928, on October 28, *Bahasa Indonesia* gained the official recognition of the national movement when the Indonesian youth, gathered in a congress, solemnly declared that they belong to one fatherland, Indonesian, to one nation, the Indonesian nation, and speak one common language, *Bahasa Indonesia*.

Following Marco Kartodikromo in writing novels in Indonesian were *Semaun* with "Hikajat Kadirun" (1920) and especially *Marah Rusli* and *Abdul Muis* secured themselves a lasting place in Indonesian literature with their novels "Siti Nurbaya" and "Salah Asuhan" (Wrong Upbringing) dealing with the resistance against feudal family relationships and forced marriage.

In the 1930's some intellectuals, the poet *Muhammed Yamin*, the essayist *Amir Sjarifuddin*, the poet *Amir Hamzah*, the novelist *Takdir*

Alishahbana and the *Pane* (Sanusi and Armijn) brothers founded the literary magazine *"Pudjangga Baru"* (New Bard). The novels, plays and poetry of that period vividly describe the efforts of Indonesian intellectuals to find their place in the struggle for national independence and the renovation of Indonesian cultural life. Two contradictory trends are characteristic of the "Pudjangga Baru" writers — those who looked for salvation for their cultural needs mainly from the West and who denied the existence of an *Indonesian* culture (Alishahbana) and those who orientated themselves to the national cultural heritage (Yamin and the Pane brothers). The social element reached its highest literary expression in Sanusi Pane's play "Manusia Baru" (New Man), depicting the struggle between workers and employers. Because of the Dutch censorship, the author had to set the action in Indian surroundings.

A subsequent period in Indonesian literature was the period of the Japanese military occupation of Indonesia during 1942-1945. In this period *Bahasa Indonesia* made great headway, becoming as it did an effective weapon for the Indonesian people in defending and upholding their national dignity against the master race theory of the Japanese fascists. Though officially Indonesian literature was only allowed to sing the praise of the Japanese invaders and serve their "Greater Asia" dreams, Indonesian writers managed to produce a number of patriotic short stories and poems. A case in point in Chairil Anwar's poem "Diponegoro". M.S. Ashar's "Awaiting the Dawn", however, could not escape the attention of the Japanese censorship and could only be printed after the Japanese had surrended.

The Proclamation of Independence on August 17, 1945, for which the Indonesian people had been preparing for decades, threw the gates for creative literary work wide open. *Bahasa Indonesia* sang for and about the Revolution, and, freed from Dutch suppression and Japanese tutelage, it flourished and acquired a real mass basis.

The revolutionary period (1945-1948) produced a number of poets, playwrights and essayists known as the *"Generation of 1945"*. Reared by the struggle for national independence and inspired by heroism of their people, these young people used the power of expression of *Bahasa Indonesia* to further increase the revolutionary ardour of the people. Poets *Chairil Anwar, Rivai Apin, Bandaharo, Buyung Saleh, Asrul Sani, Sitor Situmorang* and the woman-poet *Rukiah Kertapati*, novelist *Pramudya Ananta Tur*, short story writers

Usmar Ismael, Bachtiar Siagian, Bakri Siregar, to mention only a few, brought *Bahasa Indonesia* to new heights and firmly established it as the literary language of the Indonesian people. They successfully explored the possibilities hidden in *Bahasa Indonesia* and gave the lie to the numerous sceptics who asserted that the national language was "too simple, too underdeveloped and too primitive grammatically to be used to express the finest and deepest stirrings of the human soul". Chairil Anwar's "Between Krawang and Bekasi" and Ananta Tur's "Stories of Blora" are fine examples of the flexibility, melody and beauty of *Bahasa Indonesia.*

As a whole, the "Generation of 1945" remained faithful to the source from which *Bahasa Indonesia* originated and drew its strength — the revolutionary movement for national independence — and devoted their talents and energies and even their lives to helping the people consolidate their hard-won freedom and build a national culture. Apart from the cynicism, intellectualism, scepticism and individualism which characterises the works of some of the "Generation of 1945" like Idrus, Rosihan Anwar and Mochtar Lubis and the somewhat anarchistic tendencies in some of Chairil Anwar's poems, the bulk of the "Generation of 1945" rejected the theory of "art for art's sake".

The picture changed, however, when the 1945-1948 Revolution ended in political compromise with the Dutch in 1949, the year of the signing of the Round Table Conference Agreement. This agreement which restored Dutch political, economic and cultural influence in Indonesia, created confusion too, in the minds of cultural workers and a period of disillusionment, bewilderment and uncertainty set in in the field of creative thinking. In line with the de-nationalising activities of the Dutch Institute for Cultural Co-operation (Sticusa) and American organisations such as the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, a number of western-orientated Indonesians like Alishahbana, Rosihan Anwar, Sudjatmoko and Mochtar Lubis, utilising the confusion in which the majority of Indonesian cultural workers found themselves, tried to detach Indonesian art and literature from its life-giving source, the people and the revolution, by raising the slogans "pure art", "art without politics", etc.

This situation prompted progressive writers and artists to rally together in an effort to contain the flood of anti-national, anti-revolutionary and imperialist culture. A bitter struggle ensued against the demoralising and undermining effects of imperialist infiltration

in the field of culture and in the course of this struggle the *League of People's Culture* (LEKRA) was born in 1950. LEKRA, which rallies some of the finest creative talents of the Indonesian nation, adheres to the principle that art and science should serve the people and that cultural workers should artistically express the aspirations of the people.

With the adoption in 1959 of the Political Manifesto of the Republic of Indonesia — a document enthusiastically acclaimed by virtually all Indonesian cultural workers — which states among other things that the aim of Indonesia's national and democratic revolution is the setting up of a unitarian and democratic republic, the building up of a just and prosperous society (Socialism) on Indonesian soil and the establishment of friendly ties with all nations of the world for a New World free from colonialism and imperialism, Indonesian cultural workers have obtained a powerful weapon in the still raging battle against the proponents of "art for art's sake", "art without politics", and "art for those who understand it".

*

The present volume deals exclusively with poetry since poetry is the most popular branch of literature in Indonesia. It is the author's intention to publish another volume dedicated to prose.

Love for poetry is one of the national charateristics of the Indonesian people and perhaps in no other country of the world is poetry practiced on such a mass-scale, especially among the younger generation, as in Indonesia.

Indicative of this is the fact that for any newspaper in Indonesia to be successful it must, at least once a week, put a cultural page at the disposal of its readers, and invariably the greater part is filled with poems. Another "must" for Indonesian papers is a "Youth Column", a forum for young people to publish their literary products, and here too, most of the space is devoted to poetry. The Radio Republik Indonesia runs a special program entitled "Blossoming Buds" devoted to analysing poems sent in by young people from all over the country, to help them improve their style and guide them in the choice of words and subjects.

This great interest in and preference for poetry rests on a firm popular basis. Indonesians do not look on poetry as something one practices occasionally, or something that should be left to the pro-

fessional poets. No, poetry is part and parcel of daily Indonesian life. Put some Indonesians together and before long they will start to improvise on the spot verses alluding to the cause of their gathering, making love, criticising and giving counsel in versified form. The vehicle used to express these impromptu feelings is the *pantun*, a verse of four lines, sometimes in *a.a.a.a.*, but generally in *a.b.a.b.* rhyme pattern. The first two lines of the *pantun* bear no visible relation, either in meaning or in text, to the last two lines, yet on closer examination it becomes clear that the first two lines are, as a rule, used to create a setting, a specific atmosphere for the idea introduced in the last two lines. The following "classic" *pantun* may serve as an example :

Terang bulan terang dikali
Buaja timbul disangka mati
Djangan perijaja mulut lelaki
Berani sumpah takut mati

The full moon shines on the river
A crocodile, seemingly dead, floats on the water
Do not trust the mouth of a man
He's brave in words but afraid to die.

The full moon evokes a sense of serenity, the crocodile, however, that of suspense and distrust. By means of this device, the women who sings or recites this *pantun* wishes to warn her sex not to trust men. Indonesian women, it seems, wholeheartedly agree to Shakespeare's Balthasar that :

Men were deceivers ever
One foot in sea, and one on shore
To one thing constant never.

However, the men thus exposed, may take up the challenge by using the Sundanese *pantun* —the Indonesian we give on the right—

Aja listrik dimasigit
Tjaangna kabina-bina
Aja istri ahli teknik
Rentjana pasti djadina

Ada listrik dimesdjit
Terangnja luarbiasa
Ada isteri ahli teknik
Rentjana pasti djadinja

In the mosque there's plenty of electric light
Setting everything in radiant shine
There's a technician's wife
Rest assured, she will realise her design.

Pantuns are not only used for purely "personal" motives but are also skillfully employed in social criticism as the following Melayu *pantun* shows :

Mentjampak sampai kehulu
kenalah udang diseberang
Apalah tjupak oleh penghulu
mempermainkan undang-undang ?

Throw something across the river
And you will hit a crab
What's the yardstick for a mosque scrivener
When he treats the law like so much scrap ?

or to express certain political ideas :

Mondar-mandir perahu ladju
Mondar-mandir ke Surabaja
Menang di Kuba karena bersatu
Amerika Latin dan Asia-Afrika.

The little boat sails there and back
And reaches Surabaya
In Cuba they repelled the attack
Latin America being united with Afro-Asia.

As a rule pantuns are not written down since they are created on the spot and on the spur of the moment. They are memorised and handed on from mouth to mouth. It is only of late that efforts have been made to collect and publish *pantuns*, notably by the daily "Harian Rakjat", from all parts of the country and from every nationality.

We have dealt at great length with the *pantun* to show that it is not fortuitous that the Indonesian people have a strong preference for poetry over the other branches of literature. Their love for poetry stems from the age-long tradition of the pantun.

Modern Indonesian poetry, that is, verse written in *Bahasa Indonesia* and not bound by the traditional *pantun* form style or other traditional styles such as the *sjair* and *gurindam*, began to appear during the early twenties of this century.

Muhammad Yamin, who published a collection of poems in *Bahasa Indonesia* in 1922, is not only the first Indonesian poet to have written his verses in *Bahasa Indonesia* but also the first to have discarded the *pantun* and other traditional forms for the sonnet form.

The second poet to write modern verse in Indonesian is *Roestam Effendi*, who was soon followed by the poet-playwright *Sanusi Pane*. Of this trio, often called the pre-Pudjangga Baru Poets, Pane is the most important for his style, richness of language and artistic expression. The pre-Pudjangga Baru poets, as is the case with the great majority of later poets, were active participants in the struggle for national independence. The conflict which arose among the Pudjangga Baru men of letters over orientation — should it be to Western or to Indonesia's own cultural traditions ? — is also reflected in the works of the Pudjangga Baru poets *Amir Hamzah*, *Alishahbana*, *M. R. Dajoh*, *Asmara Hadi* and *Intojo*. Amir Hamzah, the most productive of the period, is essentially a religious poet who shunned the reality of the political and social struggle and as a result rarely rises above the "God-man" relationship. M. R. Dajoh who, unlike the bulk of the Pudjangga Baru poets, did not hail from Sumatera but from Sulawesi (Celebes), distinguished himself by the subject matter of his poems which intercede for the poor, disinherited common people. His compassion for the exploited is best manifested in his poem "Child Labour". The poetry of Asmara Hadi (South Sumatera) and Intojo (of Javanese nationality) is pervaded with revolutionary ardour and militancy.

A virtual revolution in poetic style and form was effected by the "Generation of 1945". The poets of this group considered themselves no longer bound by the forms established by the Pudjangga Baru poets. The dominant form of poems — and this is still valid today — became the "free verse", free from end-rhyme, free in form, free from static measures and traditional methaphores yet abounding in melody and rhythm. Others, weary of the well-polished and smooth verses of the preceding generation, not always equally successful, produced verses which, though in form do not resemble poetry, are full of poetic beauty and power. Chairil Anwar's verse

"1943", a verse of 29 lines of which 21 lines consist of one single, forceful word, is illustrative of this trend.

Among the best known poets of the "Generation of 1945" are *Chairil Anwar, Asrul Sani, Rivai Apin, M. S. Ashar, Buyung Saleh* and *Rukiah Kertapati.*

*

Contemporary Progressive Indonesian Poetry aims at acquainting the English-reading public with the work of those Indonesian poets who adhere to the principle that art should serve the people and that Indonesian cultural workers should stand in the foremost ranks in implementing the goals set by the Political Manifesto. In selecting the material — taken from the cultural magazine "Zaman Baru", and the cultural pages of the dailies "Harian Rakjat" and "Bintang Timur" — the editor deliberately limited himself to the years 1955-1961, the period in which the Indonesian people, as President Sukarno puts it, "rediscovered their identity and their revolution".

Though not all poems selected are of equally high literary achievement, they show the subjects, the aspirations and the yearnings living among the Indonesian people that prompted the poets to write their verses. The poems selected are the works of poets — many of them under or just over thirty years of age — hailing from Indonesia's different nationalities and prove that, next to speaking their own respective local languages, these poets find in *Bahasa Indonesia* the instrument *par excellence* to express their innermost feelings.

This selection speaks of the heroic struggle of the people against Dutch-supported native feudalism before 1945 — "Malia Lehi", of sacrifice for the Revolution — "Fallen in Battle", moments of grief — "My Father", temporary dejection — "The Anchor Chain Is Broken", and of supreme conviction in the righteous struggle and unshakable loyalty to ideals — "No One Shall Return". The poems sing of the basic forces of the Indonesian Revolution, the real masters of the land, the workers and the peasants, about their hardships, their troubles, their joy in struggle and their ultimate victory — "The Downtrodden Shoulder Freedom", "Death of a Peasant". The women-poets Sugiarti Siswadi and Rukiah Kertapati take pride in the role Indonesian women have played and are playing in the struggle and passionately defend the rights of women to live as human beings — "Women", "Indictment". Love and the fight for ideals

gave birth to "Revolution" and "Young Man", whereas "Sampit" gives the reader a glimpse of the unlimited and untapped resources of Indonesia's natural wealth. It tells the foreign reader of the current struggle for democracy, "Challenge", "Democracy" and the fight against terrorist gangs to restore security in the countryside, "Native Village", and exposure of the counter-revolutionaries "Granite Wall". A number of poems in this selection express very well the deep feelings of solidarity, sympathy and one-ness with the struggle of other peoples, especially in Asia and Africa, for national independence, peace and a better world, "Scarlet Red", "Jamila".

In short, imperfect as this selection may be, it gives the reader a glimpse of the problems and ideals that stir progressive Indonesian poets of today. It is testimony of the fact that *Bahasa Indonesia* has become the inalienable property of Indonesians of all nationalities and minority groups (see Explanatory Notes), it substantiates the fact that progressive Indonesian poets are consciously-living citizens, striving for national and international solidarity and co-operation, dedicating their creative abilities and talents to build a happy life, not only for their own people, but for all peoples of the world, to build the better world which the best poets of the world have been singing of and dreaming about throughout the ages.

Djakarta, May 8, 1962.

Aidit, D.N.

coming of age

it was born
thirty-five years ago
from the pains
of the most progressive class
a child of an era
that will give birth to an era

braving tempests
lulled not by the breeze
it penetrated into the people's heart
deeper than the sea of Banda
adorning life
more beautiful than the chempaka blossom

it lives from life
withstanding terror and provocation
yesterday, today, tomorrow
it is Anteaeus, son of Poseidon
invincible as long as it stays faithful to the earth
child of an era that will give birth to an era
now it has come of age.

the only road

wornout boots stuck in the mud
on the path leading to the hut
water drips down from the roof
soiling my most cherished possessions
the lessons of germany, britain, france, russia, china
and many more
thoughts of the best sons of the world

my wife sleeps again after answering the door
the silence outside helps me
the further night proceeds the more I become absorbed
I remember the oath of fidelity to their teachings
the crowing of the cock doesn't startle me
the days and nights are all alike
the road they've shown is always bright

we shall surely reach the end of this road
no wornout boots are there
no sticky mud
no leaking huts
but only this, the only road.

granite wall

with bayonets
you raised the diehards
to sit with the people and me

you hope to retard
the sweep of history
not knowing tis you who are doomed

you hope to repeat the outdated tale
of Nero in forty-eight
of Magelang and Ngalian
but you forget Amir and Hadji Bakri
and the peasants dividing land
in Wonogiri and Bojolali

the march of history
will trample the diehards
and the bayonets will break
a granite wall is harder
than a skull of stones
the granite wall of a people united

Aidit, Sobron

sad memories of a tjiandjur peasant

I

bright are the Tjiandjur skies, the fertile soil binds the peasant
sadri, an old peasant, owns a plot of land
his life is harmonious, peaceful, beautiful
blossoming like the seasons

the banana ripens, the oranges, the papayas
littering the branches, flagrant overripe
ask sadri when he will pick them and he replies
when my son comes home from the battle

ah, the sweet fragrance of the fruit moistens the tongue
the orchards flourish on the rich Periangan soil
beloved land, united, defying the splitters
full of beauty, fertility, but what of the heart ?

II

sadri waits with pounding heart
his eyes glued to the southern skies
the flames leap up high
a brutal force is burning peace

lovely Periangan, burning, reddened by fire
the peasants trapped, scorched on their native earth
comrades, brothers, against this challenge the will is supreme
resistance, revenge in every heart

the crops, the oranges and the papayas
once overripe and weighing down the trees
lie destroyed, overrun by fire
and thousands of lives nipped in the bud.

life

life does not depend on some external force
it must be grasped by we who live
it bears fruit that grows from within
ripening slowly but never for a moment still

life is as vast as the raging seas
but it flows not on its own, it must be steered
advancing towards an objective
firmly and accurately aimed

life is a vast flood of water
green and blue, its depth can be gauged
not veiled in mystery but with fineries interwoven
and things that are important for you and me.

the society of my class

udin, seventeen times you have been kicked around
eight times you have dragged your bruised body away
forty-five times perhaps kicked from pillar to post
when you visit your home in no man's land
you'll be driven away on the morrow to tears and wails
but tears and abuse are of no avail
because there it is still : the bustle of life under the bridge

udin, endure the kicks and the knocks
do not say : where next shall I be thrown.
but contain your vengeance till it hardens as the river stones
till the time comes : victory or death

ah, my country, only part of it feels the touch of the sun's
golden breath
the other lives in darkness, touched by the wind of death
such are the extremes between the high and low
in a society split into classes since times of yore

the society of my class, long have I dreamed of the sunrays
of a future for udin and for the others
who yearn for friendly love binding equals to each other
ah, how black and soiled it is today
but wait, for the boil will burst, molten fire will burst forth
the time will come when the enemy meets death at the point
of the dagger
the battles for the people were not in vain
they have fertilised the sturdy seedling planted by lenin

udin, wait, for the boil will burst all of a sudden
the wheel of history will surely turn round
effacing the darkness and the wind of death
and for my class only the golden sunrays.

Apin, Rivai

the anchor chain is broken

everyone feels it
the links in the chain break one by one
and each time one breaks
anxiety grips the heart of the passengers

and finally all will break

the links in the chain break one by one
and breath too goes one by one
each minute, each second
who knows when all this will end

e l e g y

what we feel we need not state
what we think we need not say
do not grieve — let us proceed
we bring this truth to its star and its earth
we do know, since we have preserved one of your words
one vision of the parched lands drying up then suffocating our breast
oh, your memory will forever haunt us
terrifying like the shadows in a shaky hut when the oil-lamp is lit
yet full of love like the father's with hands outstretched
and you'll come back like of old when you and this soil
vibrate with life

we shall not forget you the time you were hunted and hunting
— because what we are hunting and running for
to that you dedicated your life
and we who view your merits
know well, as you too know. that there's no other deity
or god worth living for.

let the tempest blast this barren field
yet our steps are planted in the scorched land where you
lie deeply buried
keeping alive the flame and we that stand here are fire !
we preserve life in this night, the night that bears the noon
we are the children of one father
we are the children of one mother
and death for us is but a matter of time
yet we, preserve all one god

the younger will come, the elder has gone
we lift the parched land, these barren lands
the burden's weight, the aching of shoulders that carry the
bitterness of hearts defeated
will lead the love of the faith that we profess.

peking

I

do not say that the night is as hard as granite
since here in china not a stone is left unworked by the people
here nature is like marble
everything is carved and polished by the hands of working
people building culture

II

the cruel peking wind has no equal
the nights are heavy with dust, yet from bustling cracks
the rumble of mountain rocks being split booms forth
in the night the whirlwind gathers strength
and still people are at work tempering the steel
from the stones split in the night is born the morning twinkling
and the fountain of sparks forged by the blows of the smith
are the stars in the sky, the medals of the workers.

Anantaguna, Sabarsantoso

the downtrodden shoulder freedom

we the downtrodden shoulder freedom
without rank, nameless
we've kept our country from becoming a prison

we possess nothing
but ninety million burning hearts
do not try to keep us still
fear lies buried under barren hills

we possess nothing
but burning hearts that seek no reward
we guard the islands that kiss the beloved sea
we fight for wages and land of freedom

we possess nothing
but burning hearts roughened by suffering
that may turn into lava, fire and thunder
destroying foes, grinding them to dust

we the downtrodden shoulder freedom
without rank, nameless
we've kept our country from becoming a prison.

jamila

the world did once inflict a wound
but understanding rose from within

one touch of light in the soldier's breast
and willingly she accepted death
for she herself is the world and holds life in her hand
for she herself is the native land and the fruit of love

another touch came down at dawn
and she defended all her dreams

the world has inflicted a wound
but consciousness was conceived within its womb

one draw of breath in the soldier's breast
and she did profess herself
slowly but without complaint
for she herself is time and the blaze in the sahara
for she herself is liberty and freedom in imagination

another draw as night did fall
and away she flung the world full of wrath

the world has inflicted a wound
but she herself is the world and holds life in her hands.

to people's bandung

wherever they come from, the people are the people
wherever they are, times are with the people
and the wind touches every bossom :
the free heart of africa
the revolutionary heart of asia

those who have come
are lovers, fighters all
children of the sun
sparks of multi-coloured fireworks
and the colour grows at the waist of the mountain
and embraces the faith of bandung

those who are here
are all beloved, are fire all
children of the earth
who with flowers combat death
and the flower grows at the waist of the mountain
and embrace the solidarity of bandung

wherever they come from, the people are the people
wherever they are, times are with the people
and the wind touches the free heart :
the song of revolution
peace in all the world.

Arsjad, M. A.

native village

when evening falls the village lies deserted
and the villagers fence themselves in
engulfed by fear
for soon the fiend will encircle their dwellings

this land was once peaceful and safe
man grew up surrounded by love
but that's a cherished memory now
when death stalks the land
when rifle shots fired by terrorists
resound from house to house

this beloved land of mine
has today become my prison
the days pile up revenge
and common folk have become each other's slayer.

Ashar, M. S.

freedom and prison

its not because you do not need to search for freedom
for you are freedom itself
its not because the paltry judges do not need to threaten jail
for pettiness of soul is put in prison
this is not the reason why we speak
of freedom and imprisonment

dishonesty of hearts and turbidity of eyes
turn freedom into bondage
but freshness of hearts and the sparkle of eyes
turns bondage into freedom
and this is what turns talking into steel
and hoping into real strength

and then, when the names of paltry judges have all disappeared
forgotten, burnt or eaten by the rats
your name will still live on, — Son of the Masses
born of a powerful womb
your name will live forever, death it shall not know
for you are life itself ....

to uncle ho chi minh

we bid you welcome, uncle ho
although we always meet
are you not, uncle ho
a tale of the mighty jungle and of fragrant flowers
each bud that falls infusing a thousand energies
into those which bloom ?

and didn't the sun once refuse to set in your country
and dusk did not descend :
a new road for the new man ?

ah, we too have our tale of sun and jungle
kissing and hiding the bodies slain
mending the torn threads of history
with sweat and love together

and we who still stand erect
we too are just emerging from the mud
strength on the right, hope on the left
clearing a new road for the new

a friend will soon pass by
with a beating heart that stores memories
and blood that gushes forth
the same, the very same ideals

we bid you farewell, uncle ho
although we never part.

Dharta, A. S.

rukmanda

mention all dungeons
and you have mentioned me
mention all storms
the bitterness of exile
the longing for the ketjapi
the stillness of silent nights
the memories of Periangan
and the listlessness of waiting

I who counted
the chain of seconds
for tens of years
dedicating all I had
to the feast of struggle
all the time, each moment
my soul breathed the spirit of youth
and if this very instant I were asked
I would sing "arise ye starvelings from your slumber"

now I am no more
I am one with the soil of my beloved land
but my song I'll finish
togerher with the dimming stars
with the last song of my heart
which beholds the shimmering dawn
and the buds continuing life

mention all dungeons
and you have mentioned me
but mention also loyalty
enthusiasm and heroism
for this too is me.

tidings from the party

this night is a lonely night
wrought up with anxiety of birth
this night is a sacred night
bearing tidings from the party
bidding farewell to yesterday
hailing the day of tomorrow

I kiss this night
which arouses morning in my heart
I kiss you my party
dawn in this day

tidings from the party unfurl the banners
of battles against myself
confront me with this choice
of delight in life
abandoning personal passions
or fading away before death

tidings from the party have shown
the road which ends defeats.

Bandaharo Harahap

fallen in battle

nine hours after the battle

there he lies
rifle at his side
and his breast pierced with bullets

deadly silence all around
broken by his panting breath
he raises up his head
as if in doubt :
there it is
the rustling of wings
is it the angel of death ?

almost weary of waiting
suddenly from far away
he hears the shout of victory
carried by the wind
to the lonely fighter
freedom ! freedom !

his very being shouts for joy
this cry is his reward.
in the battle for which he staked his life
freedom means victory
and the free man lives in paradise

a new strength surges through him
covered as he is with blood
he musters all the will in his feeble body
pressing his hands on the soil he defended
he rises slowly
he shouts and clenches his fists
freedom ! freedom !

this was the last sound he uttered
joy in his heart
victory in battle
he stepped forward
and fell.

no one shall return

the masses march towards the day
the mass I represent
the sorrows and sufferings of my times
lie heavy on my shoulders

no one shall return
though death awaits ahead

this road leads on to the break of dawn
and stirring, peaceful chants
our aspirations give birth to love
directly drunk from life

no one shall return
though death awaits ahead.

after panmunjom

for Major Yoon Gil

after panmunjom
everything maimed
except ideology
the imperialists vented their malice
on things and innocent people
everywhere destruction
everything in ruins
corpses of partisans piled up
and no two stones standing
after panmunjom
nothing has been steeled more
than the people

ideology unmaimed
people steeled
that's a giant creator
korea stands gloriously erect
on the red soil.

Dodong Djiwapradja

the hero on the hill

from the top of the hill
the road stretches forth
casting ahead the images
of life and death

(a bridge in the distance the limit of all feelings)

loyal souls are always
fond of singing
songs of heroism

which is higher
the sky above the hill
or the clouds drifting overhead
which will disappear at any moment ?

behind the shirt button
something lies hidden in the breast
how red is young blood

then from the valley deep below an appeal echoes
and weapons whine and boom

the smell of gunpowder belches into the sky
because the angels spread
the most fragrant of scents

with firm strides
the hero advances.

death

death, hero of the prosecutor
laughts
on the back of the bent judge

death lurks in every corner
waiting patiently
for the ailing man

(sometimes, bearing a sack he appears on a mattress
to kidnap sleeping children)

sometimes, hiding
behind a lamp-post
he coaxes a passing car
as somebody goes by

death jingles
at the tip of everything sharp
and explodes
in the mouth of a gun

gloomy indeed is death
for the black king
is death.

challenge

if this world is to be scorched at the points of bayonets

must we then sit by

with trembling knees ?

poets !

sing a song :

of freedom !

Ferdy S.

malia lehi

malia lehi
in Kui you rose up together with your people
to fight injustice
and the rape of Kui

malia lehi
though heavy with child you shed your blood
drenching, enriching the heroic soil
where it glowed for forty-eight years

Kui
buildings, coconut trees
drums
the people rising, holding out

malia lehi
no one knows
where your tomb stands in Kui
but everyone knows your struggle

Kui fell
it could not be held
but in the year sixty-one, january
the anvil thundered
everyone returned
celebrated
Kui has become the tomb of the poisoner.

Hadi, Sosrodanukusumo

song

to W. R. Supratman

when hearts were full of surrender and loneliness
and when a ray of light pierced the gloom of suffering and ignorance
you stirred this scarlet blood, you tore away the veil of secrecy
and stagnation
which entombed the greatness of your people and gloirified
exploitation.

Out of the shed that housed your hunger, suffering and dissolution
amidst the shadows of everything decayed in the glitter
portending death
your song rose swiftly over valley and mountain, prison and privation
caressing each heart soiled and wrung dry by the sweat of labour

standing forth, straight and certain, finding a place in consciousness
of this eternal truth so long obscured :
Indonesia my native country, Indonesia my fatherland.

and your great energy compelled each heart to sing of and to love
the greatness and wealth of a fatherland submerged
making the blood throb with exultation flooding the
battle-field with joy
to settle accounts and bring to life what you made clear.

comrade, in the darkness that obscures the last moments before dawn
your song steeled us, the generation you left behind, in ideals
and work
to give birth to that which must be born and cultivate countless buds
at your behest and greatness, on the frontiers of past tears.

# of things to come

dawn sends a message on rays just breaking through
stealing into the sobs of children, whispering on trembling lips
resounding in the houses, over ricefields and amid roses
making hearts speak out that till now could only feel.

there's dew in the dawn of Vietnam, the dew of happiness of a
million mothers
making the stiff begin to flow, each body building life
in joyful work together, building upon the darkness of yesterday
there's no more news of misery destroying laughter.

a new sky cleanses, protecting the hopes of the Korean man,
beginning to build tomorrow's victory, man's victory over ruins
and dawn's message blossoms forth in the heart of every working man
carrying hope in brilliant array to those still full of pain.

and from the summit of perfection towards which man firmly climbs
the road of peace lights up, though covered still with weed confused
and one by one the nights vanish, submerged in early day
in the redness of the future, the love for labour and for struggle.

Hadi, S.

lonely night

the night is lonely
but my heart is lonelier still
the cold wind yearns for your cabin door
and all of you are lulled to sleep

I come ...
albeit the dew has merged as one
albeit the cold has penetrated my bones
for all of you are my devotion
I must come
though you know nothing

I set my longing to verse
though it has no meaning
but I do it for the sake of love and purity of heart

the night is lonely
but my heart is lonelier still
and tomorrow ...
the day will return on the surge of labour
the harbour will bustle
the workshops will ring again
and the radiant morning will dawn.

my father

my father was not among those who returned
my father fell on the field of battle

my heart's torn asunder with sorrow and grief
and the red-and-white flag flutters high in the sky

oh, people of today
do you hear ?
my father is dead, he was slaughtered by bullets
oh, why does such suffering still stalk the earth ?

Kertapati, Rukiah

indictment

the morning breeze blows cool and soft
and the blossoms quiver at its gentle touch
it softly caresses the green foliage
but Mother I know !
the morning breeze, the flowers and foliage
do not bring you beauty

lyrical music sweeps the heart
blending with the thrill of a song at dusk
and with it, love, passion and joy burst forth
but Mother I know !
lyrical music and afternoon merriment
do not bring you happiness

the blaze of the lamps dazzles the eye
laughter, dancing and gaiety
and when evening falls, the laughter rings loud
but Mother I know !
laughter and lamps at evening tide
do not make you happy

you shiver with cold when you're out in the wind
you have no eye for foliage and flowers
your naked feet get stuck in the mud
for you there's just hunger, fatigue and rent
capitulation, whipping and flogging
is it true, Mother, that nature has beauty for you ?

you have to go out in the hostile rain
your labour is squeezed for a wage
recreation and music mean nothing to you
disease, taxation, repayment of debt
throttles your life and tears it to shreds
truely Mother is life happiness for you ?

Mother !
year after year you have waited
an endless longing in your heart
but your suffering has only augmented.
sweat and toil, blood and tears
terrorists, usurers and landlords
join one another to suck out your blood
is it true Mother
that all creatures on earth have your love ?

Mother !
words do not dare to make any promise
who knows, today, tomorrow or when
but you will find faith and conviction
if you join the ranks
your heart will be as hard as steel
your feet will be as strong as iron
your body withstand a mountain of rocks
Mother, do you belive
that I leave "the future"
only to you ?

Mother !
this is our dream
our thoughts
our struggle
our song
our life
"this future" is yours !

the child of a worker

my father's a worker
troubled every day
he toils
and sweats
to make a living
oh, how he suffers !

my mother sells greens
the day's rounds wear her out
she sells spinach and parsnips
beans, chillies and corn
to help keep the family
forgetting herself in her troubles and toil

when evening comes
my father lies down
my parents think of their meagre earnings
faint from fatigue
oh, how noble they are !

today my father suffers
and my mother lives in misery
yet, oh, my parents
wait for the day !
get ready for tomorrow !

brace yourself and the world
kindle a glowing fire
I shall rise and seize for you
victory with my hands

victorious tomorrow !
victorious tomorrow !

scarlet red

lumumba's blood is scarlet red
lumumba's blood is scarlet red
congo !
your hunger is our own
your hunger we have in common
hunger for the revolution

lumumba's blood is scarlet red
lumumba's blood is scarlet red
congo !
your revolution is our own
your revolution we have in oommon
world revolution

haiku variations

for yoko

I

flowers on the aerodrome
hearts beat in unison
two fighters embrace

II

fuji and kenji
nature is there to be harnessed
man to be won

III

the uji flows
senji's spirit marches on
relentlessly

IV

chimneys without smoke
the soil is hot
the spirit is hot

V

triumph of mankind
waves that roll o'er the roof
when will the people be master?

VI

shimonoseki
soldiers departed smiling
returning ghastly pale

VII

hiroshima
atrocities unbridled
turned to boundless struggles

VIII

on the right tidal waves
on the left the beaches
the train is heading for sendagaya

IX

thak you
domo arigato
half my heart I leave behind.

Oka, Putu

b a l i

in bali too the rice ripens for miles around
but in bali too thousands of peasants die of hunger

we come to bali and there are dancers
we come to bali and there are temples by the score
both are typical of bali

we come to bali and the peasants dies
not because the crop failed to ripen
this too is typical of bali
this too has a meaning

life

life should not be measured by luxury
though luxury is the aim pursued
but by whether poverty repeats its cycle
and spreads conspicuously across the earth

in the restaurant a gentleman dines lavishly
on the ground a beggar with a tin
is there a deal of life ?

life should not be measured by luxury
and we shall not be counted in
though part of its blood flows from us

let us put an end to such account
we too demand
we too work.

Risakotta, F. L.

the grave on a hillside

at your side the pines have yellowed
but not because of age
at your side sand conceals your face and mine
I'm a wanderer who knows not your countenance
I'm a man who knows not your struggle

lonesome is the night in your grave
deserted on the hillside
the feet of a man passing by are sandy
and he does not know your name
yet before you lay down to rest
you gave your heart to this earth of yours
and unfurled the beloved banner in your land
and I know your struggle now

a grave on the hillside
I'm a wanderer who knows not your countenance
with this paper and pencil
I pay my country's tribute to your struggle

I see you stand up erect again
on guard at your mother's side
the bullet so wasted in your rifle
like snow in winter time

the days pass by and the rain drips slowly down
moistening the sand
your heart is ever singing
the freedom song of your people
the heroic calls of your people
like the ever-shining sun

you open your eyes
and throw the door to your heart wide open
and I see you stand eternal
on guard at your mother's side
on your shoulder your rifle lies wasted

oh, eternal grave
the grave of one that never died
the grave of a hero unforgetable
with this verse I convey my country's greetings.

yesterday and today

for the Arab people

yesterday a peasant
a soldier without rank today
he lies prostrate in Beirut
the tale still shakes the earth

with trampling steps the colonialists swallow cities
everything withers and lies scorched

no time to gaze at sweetheart and parents
where will sorrow go
where ?
the enemy steps in front

yesterday a peasant
a common soldier today
he lies prostrate in Beirut
facing victory in his heart

over the dust of the roads
heavy steps resound
the Arab patriots enter town
their voices echo in the hearts
arise ye Arab patriots
the age of victory is right ahead

yesterday a peasant
a soldier true today
in Beirut he was slain
in Beirut he will live again.

anniversary poetry

this day has been ours
and therefore love will never die.

wherever we may recline
against a stone wall roofed with tiles
locked when the day has passed to night
but breathing the moment morning returns
bringing love closer to the light
to the struggle that will never surrender.

this day has been ours
therefore even bullets cannot part us.

wherever we turn our eyes
the view never changes
those who work race against time
for the one and only love
our place is clear and we see before us unmarred
the day when victory will be ours.

Sitor Situmorang

the steel mill

that which we know of steel
is that it's solid and strong
how many types and what its uses
how much, too, it will expand
the dreams of people who shape tomorrow

that which we know of the times is
that it's solid and strong, if in the hands
of the people, this is the revolution of mankind
far stronger than its happening
the process of tempering steel of the new age
from metal exploded from history
moulded by the aspiring hands
of its creators. In it the hardest metals
soften and become
spirited, become a hammer
and a mate of the liberated worker.

a cuban maid in peking

Zoila is a maiden from Cuba
in Peking. With pride
she hands me the banner
of her country, celebrating
the victory of her land
over American aggression.

Zoila is a maiden from Cuba.
in peking she studies languages
far from her native shores.
in tribute to her people
I gave a flower
when she spoke on the first of May :
this day my homeland was proclaimed
a socialist republic.
when I return
I'll become a pioneer !
in the evening
on the square of tien a men
when the whole of peking
was celebrating labour day,
how beautiful was this Cuban patriot's dream
sprung from a thousand sparks of fireworks
setting the entire sky in colour.

eating the bread of the commune

to Paul Eluard
A visit to a commune in an erstwhile poverty-stricken part of Peking.

there are those in want of bread
there are those in want of rice
but of all wants
the most insulting is
the lack of social life

there are those in want of lodging
there are those in want of clothes
but of all wants
the most paralysing is
the lack of solidarity

there are those in want of strength
there are those in want of skill
but of all wants
the most humiliating is
when hopes come to end

social life, solidarity and hopes are
rice, bread and bloom and fruit
filling the life of the worker
when free
from falsehoods, oppression and fraud
colonialism, feudalism and banditry

social life, solidarity and hope
I encountered and felt
in this commune. hence :
I want to drink from the warmth
of your hopes
I want to press your hands
so busily at work.
I want to eat this bread
the bread of the commune, as a token
of social life, solidarity and
human hopes regained.
forever together in love, in
ideals and the reality of the socialist world.

Sugiarti

women

no longer
are we guilded posies
engaging when compliant
exquisite when yielding
enchanting when submissive.
to hell tis our duty to go
to heaven permitted to follow.

and no longer
are we blossoms cast aside
downtrodden
selling our sweat for next to nothing
workers at half the price
no security
no equality
only duty

we have cried out
from behind the walls of segregation
from the clutches of the spiteful bed
from the nightly business in the gutters
from the revenge of unwilling wedlock
"we are human beings!"

freedom

freedom has changed the face of the world
it rules the mind, the heart and the person
it dispels the mist hanging over the mountains, the valleys
the shores, the fields, the factories and the cities
and the hearts of us, women.

now we are no longer
just giving birth to worker soldiers.
we too are worker soldiers.
no longer just wives of people's heroes,
we too are people's heroes

and when the fortresses of obsolete time are smashed
and workers' power stands proudly in our land
we shall no longer only tend the graves
read the prayers and weep for the dead
we shall be part of the foremost ranks.

Sulang, Kusni

s a m p i t

three centres of life has Sampit city
factory — harbour — river
all three are bustling with life
the scratching of saws on timber
the hissing of the rubber mill
the boom of trucks, motors and carts
the roaring of ships' engines

but one rises above all the rest
resounding throughout the city
the voice of the workers
who release from their heavy hearts
the bitterness of life

the Mentaya river cares for
its oily water in turbulent whirling pools
wanting to see life as it's really lived
a never-drying source

that is the Mentaya, Mentaya
the girl that has not yet been wooed.

the fishermen of katingan

when the waters are low in the river and its tributary
which twists round the island like rattan round a tree
when the flood waters have receded from the edge of the village
the fishermen search for a place of solitude.

here among the cold, the mosquitos, the bears and the forest birds
I feel the great significance of man
— much tortured in war and the fierceness of life —
when the sun pushed away by the wind goes down
and the evening approaches from the east
I feel very close to my father.

when the moon sinks to the feet of the dawn
I awaken remembering the tender tale
how my father's blanket covered my body.
— oh, he's a rough yet tender man
he's the home of our family
a simple fisherman
a man who always thinks of others.

among the rustle of the leaves and the river water
I call out to him :
father !

and I see his feelings under the hazy moon
from the smile he throws at me.

— I want to be like father
simple and kind of heart
a man loved by women
by my wife and child

— no, my son shall be a general
a poor man's life is not a pleasure
there's too much want in the village.

— today, many generals are as feeble as cork
I want to be like you, father
a worker with an ardent heart
and as hard as ironwood.

here among the sprawling fish
our laughter makes the forest tremble.

birds and water flies leave their nest
and the fishermen go homeward.

— when there are many buyers in the village
and people live far from town
the fish will sell, father!

— your mother, brothers and your sisters
and we too
will always need this fish
therefore after having shared them
salt and store the rest.

— father are you not disappointed ?

a fleeting smile greets my glance and my words
I know the taste : bitter !

— son, fantasy
is not the answer to privation.

— oh, I want to be like father, like father
an ardent, simple worker kind of heart.

like the river waters
fleeted our smiles.

Sudisman

radiant baku

baku, the oil town of the strong winds
barren, yet gorgeous green gardens
stretch forth as far as the eye can see
surrounded by ranges of hills
footed by shores that are tempered by waves
a forest of towering glittering drills
the oil rainbow rippling on the water.

in the darkness of yesterday
a ray burst forth
brilliant red
the oil buried
twenty-six
valiant officers
glowing, glowing
red, red, red
the victory of today and tomorrow.

baku bathes radiant and fresh
dancing on captivating smiles
nimble movements call for motion
stirring songs of oriental tone
alternating dainty dances
sweeping down, rising to the sky
holding tight the sacred white dove
hearts glow red like pomegranates
illuming the endless universe.

the struggle of erevan

erevan the heart of armenia
has barren mountains rising high.
the snowy cap of mount ararat white as foam
melts and flows to the soviet-turkish border.
for centuries lake sewan abounded in trout
and silently she saw oppression.
lovely armenia lay stiff and cold
her bones covered with dried-up skin
crawling up in resistance
the struggle of erevan, of ajastan.

on november twenty-ninth in the twenties,
erevan's struggle found its throne,
red silk fluttered
changing humiliation into shining faces.
the barren hills bear iron ore.
densely rise the electric poles
and ararat's wines refresh the thirsty.
lcke sewan bends its clear water down
for coal.
the glittering gold sends beams
electric lights the child of times
the fruit of love of erevan's struggle.

erevan has become young again
the twitter of the swallows resound
accompanied by native tones.
come, clap your hands and dance and sing
erevan's struggle glows fiery red
triumphant now and tomorrow.
human hands are harnishing nature
gone forever lamentations, laughter was born
gone forver privations, nirwana was born
erevan's struggle rejoices in happiness.

Suprijadi, Piek Ardijanto

young man

when the mountain wind blows in the late afternoon, Idjah
part of my breast snaps on the village fence
a pair of grey-blue ricebirds sing
flying in circles afraid of the drizzling rain
how desolate is my yearning heart

when the mountain wind blows in the late afternoon, Idjah
a lump of my heart is tied to the village fence
the rice field stretches far, proliferating rice
my eyes are glued to your tomb, my love
how pulverised is my ravaged heart.

the hungry

if we eat only once a day
its not because we're fasting
but because we haven't anything

the city wealthy pile up riches
we look on hungry and sweating
oh, how hot is this life

our strength almost exhausted
but still we have no rice
and our pockets remain empty

we hungry people carry a conviction
pounding in our breasts
that a new world will dawn

we hungry people carry a conviction
that nothing can prevent
the sun from reaching our hearts.

partnership

to Mario d'Andrade

I too am called upon — Angola
urges all our sympathy.
I can't sit down with folded hands

when people are deprived of freedom.
what then is left, oh people of today ?
I dare not look at the faces
of those still young.

Angola.
because your ranks are not alone
I raise this partnership :
solidarity for you !

the ballad of upit

Upit !

among the tea shrubs on the slope of the hill
your fingers dance from twig to twig
the leaves are gently swaying
kissed by the mountain breeze.

eight hours you have sweated
on the verdant shady hills
why is it that your heart
fails to find repose ?

Upit !

when the crimson setting sun
bathes the bushes in a reddish glow
your heart is full of woe.

and when the keijapi strings
play the song of labour
it resounds in every heart
the struggle of women will never cease
till victory is won.

Wispi. Agam

revolution

I entice you into the woods, my love
and you follow me like a shadow
the shore vanishes, the sea remains
and corpses pile up in the disputed city

red ribbon and sun
love bleeds on until death.

the death of a peasant

to Darman L. Tambunan

I

there, before the office of my lord the regent
lies a peasant
because of land
because of land.

there, in the office of the peasant union
the hungry fume
because of blood.

land and blood
turn the wheels of history
from here the flame springs
from here peace everlasting.

II

he fell
prostrate
a bullet in his head.
his mind went back in torture
yet torture was only for his body.
he remembered the days of his youth
his son turned soldier

— ah, who will give them food ? —

my wife weeds the ricefield.
let the rice rage at the stalk
pity them
pity them
they are our comrades

give me water, I am thirsty
my body weak with hunger,
I came to them
then back to you,
and as the dry land lay white on the skin
we had food together.

and then, all went gloomy,
gloomy
extinguished
and black
as night.

III

they say
that those in power
who murder the people
should quit.

—

IV

the pregnant paddy withstands
the wind.
the sound of the flute in the dismal hut
impregnates life.

the pregnant paddy dances
on the wind.

just see, the women boldly going naked
their hoes and paddy smashed to smithereens
the prison is their home
and even the baby at their breast knows torture.

they say
that those in power
who rob the people
should quit
before being forced to do so.

if the tractor comes
to destroy our dwellings
we'll bang at every door.

democracy

generals, it's we that adorned
your chest with medals
wrested from landlords' and usurers' torturous hands
we now demand of your medals : where's our land ?

generals, it's we that adorned
your chest with medals
out of the sweat of a seven-hour that became a ten-hour work-day,
we now demand of yours medals : where's our pay ?

generals, one after another we fell
arms in hand against the Dutch
we now demand of your medals : where's our Irian ?

generals, certainly it's not you
who will give land, wages and Irian
what we want is : let us build one mighty front
and above all, give us freedom to speak.

explanatory notes

AIDIT, Dipa Nusantara.

From the Melayu nationality which inhabits the whole eastern coast of Sumatera. Born on July 30, 1923 in Sumatera. Chairman of the Communist Party of Indonesia, Vice-Chairman of the Provisional People's Consultative Assembly of the Republic of Indonesia and since March 1962, Minister in the Sukarno Cabinet. Co-founder of the League of People's (LEKRA).

The poem *"The only road"*, written on January 27, 1955, describes how Communist leaders, living under difficult conditions at that time — in leaking huts standing along muddy paths and without electric light — dilligently and painstakingly studied the works of Marx, Engels, Leinin, Stalin, Mao Tse Tung, Maurice Thorez, Palmiro Togliati, and "many more thoughts of the best sons of the world". This was an important beginning in the building up of the CPI as a genuine Marxist-Leninist and mass Party.

The poem *"Coming of Age"* was written on the occasion of the 35th anniversary of the Communist Party of Indonesia on May 23, 1955.

"Granite Wall" was written in September 1957 when counter-revolutionary 'councils' threatening to overthrow the government, forced the then Djuanda government to sit down together with representatives of the 'councils' at the conference table. In February 1958, however, the 'councils' in West Sumatera and North Sulawesi staged the notorius "PRRI-Permesta" counter-revolutionary rebellion. The "outdated story of forty-eight" in *"Granite Wall"* refers to the 1948 Madiun Affair when thousands of progressive people were murdered or thrown into prison on the orders of the then Vice-President of the Republic, Hatta. Eleven top leaders of the CPI, amongst them the first Communist Prime Minister of Indonesia, Amir Sjarifuddin, were executed without trial at Ngalian where

they lie buried. Magelang is a town near Ngalian, and Wonogiri and Bojolali, also in Central Java, are districts where in the early days of the Revolution a democratic land reform was carried through. Hadji Bakri (a hadji is person who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca) was a well-known Communist leader.

AIDIT, Sobron

Younger brother of D. N. Aidit, born in 1934 on the tin island of Belitung. Began to write poetry when still at elementary school. His first collection of poems *"Home from the Front"* was published in 1959. Is also writer of short stories, one of which, *"Story"*, obtained top literary reward of the "Kisah" literary magazine. Another story, *"Basimah"* was awarded the annual prize by the daily *"Harian Rakjat"* for the best short story of 1961.

The numbers seventeen, eight, and forty-five in the poem *"Society of my Class"* refer to August 17, 1945, the days on which the independent Republic of Indonesia was proclaimed. *Udin* is a common name for men in West Java. *Tjiandjur* and *Periangan* are mountainous districts in West Java where fierce battles took place between Indonesian forces and Dutch colonial troops during the Indonesian war of liberation.

ANANTAGUNA, Sabarsantoso

Anantaguna is Javanese. He was born in 1932 in Jokjakarta, Central Java. Represented Indonesian students at the IUS Secretariat in 1958 and is at present secretariat member of the League for People's Culture.

At the beginning of 1962, he published a volume of 35 poems about the struggle of the Indonesian peasants entitled *"With Father-land But Without Land"* and wrote a number of poems devoted to the heroism of the peoples of Asia and Africa in the struggle to rid their continents of colonialism. His *"Jamila"* was written when reports shocked the world about the, atrocities perpetrated by the French occupation forces against the Algerian girl inde-pendence fighter, Jamila Bourheid.

"To People's Bandung" was written to welcome the Fourth Session of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Council in Bandung in April 1961.

"The Downtrodden Shoulder Freedom" was written in early 1962.

APIN, Rivai

From West Sumatera, of the Minangkabau nationality. He was born in Padang Pandjang on August 30, 1927. Played an important role in developing Indonesian literature after the Revolution through his editorship of various literary and cultural magazines. Published together with Chairil Anwar and Asrul Sani a collection of poems *"Tiga Menguak Takdir"*. The title is a pun which can mean either "Three Low at Fate", or "Three Brush Away Takdir". With the latter title, this collection of poems is a polemic against the "nestor" of the Pudjangga Baru writers, Takdir Alishahbana.

His poems *"The anchor line is broken"* and *"Elegy"* were written during the early years of independence.

His *"Peking"* is the outcome of a visit to China after he had attended the Bureau Meeting of Afro-Asian Writers in Tokyo in 1961. He was a member of the Indonesian writers delegation to the First and Second Conferences of Afro-Asian Writers held in Tashkent and Cairo in 1959 and 1962 respectively.

Today Rivai Apin is a member of the LEKRA secretariat and editor of the organisation's cultural magazine *"Zaman Baru"* (New Era).

ARSJAD, M. S.

Lives in South Sulawesi. *"Native Village"* deals with one of the most burning problems faced by the people of his region, the cowardly attacks on villages by the counter-revolutionary Darul Islam gangs. The Darul Islam (Islamic State) is an anti-popular movement which, by utilising the religious sentiments of the people and by terrorising the peasants, aims at setting-up a theocratic Moslem State. Especially during the late fifties, the Darul Islam terrorists were active in North Sumatera, West Java and South Sulawesi. The now outlawed Masjumi party was the backbone of this movement. In 1958 the Darul Islam gangs joined hands with the counter-revolutionaries in West Sumatera and North Sulawesi. Both anti-republican movements have now in the main been smashed.

ASHAR, Munir Samsul

M. S. Ashar was born in 1921 in Kotaradja, the extreme northern tip of Sumatera, and is of the Melayu nationality. Began to publish poetry during the Japanese occupation. One of his poems *"Awaiting Dawn"* was banned by the Japanese censorship. Prominent member of the "Generation of 1945".

Visited the German Democratic Republic, the Soviet Union and China in 1951 and paid a second visit to the Soviet Union in 1961 as leader of a LEKRA delegation. In 1959 he was elected member of the Lekra secretariat.

His poem *"Freedom and Prison"* was written in 1955 during the trial of D. N. Aidit tried on a charge by Hatta of having 'slandered' his name in connection with the Madium Affair (see Explanatory Notes on D. N. Aidit). During the trial the accused turned accuser proving Hatta to be responsible for the massacre of Madiun in 1948.

"To Uncle Ho Chi Minh" was written on the occasion of the visit of the President of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh, to Indonesia in 1960.

BANDAHARO, Harahap

Born in May 1917 in Tapanuli, Sumatera. From the Batak nationality which inhabit, the region round Lake Toba. Established himself as an outstanding poet with his collection of poems *"Sarinah and I"* which was published just before the Second World War.

Was alternately editor of the daily "Rakjat", the weeklies "Kerakjatan" and "Djalan Baru" and the daily "Pendorong", all in Medan.

In 1956 he published his collection of poems *"From the Region of Love and Hunger"*. One of his most popular poems, printed in this present volume, *"No One Shall Return"* was set to music by the young composer Subronto K. Atmodjo.

"Fallen in Battle" tells the story of Jahja Kalek, member of a people's fighting unit, who was killed in battle during the first days of the Revolution in North Sumatera.

"After Panmunjon" was written in tribute to the Korean people when the writer visited the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 1959.

DHARTA, A. S.

Also known under his pen-name *Klara Akustia*. Was born in 1924 in West Java. Was very active in the trade union movement as Head of the Information Department of the Central Bureau of the All Indonesian Trade Union Federation (SOBSI). One of the co-founders of LEKRA whose General Secretary he was till 1958. Published a collection of poems *"Rangsang Detik"* — Stirring of the Moments — and won fame through his poems dealing with the workers' struggle.

"Rukmanda" narrates the struggle of one of the popular leaders of the 1926 anti-colonial uprising, Rukmanda. This poem, too, was set to music by Subronto K. Atmodjo. The *ketjapi* referred to in this poem is an extremely popular cither-like instrument typical for West Java.

The poem *"Tidings from the Party"* was written immediately after some hand grenades had been thrown at the office of the Communist Party where the Central Committee was in session in July 1957.

DJIWAPRADJA, Dodong

Djiwapradja was born in West Java in September 1928 and is of Sunda nationality. Began to publish poetry at the age of twenty. Attended the First Congress of Afro-Asian Writers in Tashkent and was a member of the Indonesian writers delegation to the 1961 Tokyo meeting of the Bureau of Afro-Asian writers.

Djiwapradja is at present Information Officer of the Indonesian Air Force.

His poem *"Challenge"* which appeared in 1960 is a forceful protest of the writer against the arbritary use of martial law which has been in force in Indonesia since the outbreak of the counter-revolution in 1958.

FERDY, Samuel

Promising young poet from the island of Timor in East Indonesia where he was born in 1936. By profession a teacher at a junior high school and began his career as a writer with the publication of some poems in the local news-sheet in Kupang, the main city of the Indonesian part of the island of Timor.

Malia Lehi was one of the leaders of the anti-feudal and anti-Dutch revolt which broke out in 1913 against the ruler of the Kui

principality on Alor island, a small island off Timor. The prince of Kui, unable to cope with the revolt, called in the assistance of Dutch colonial troops stationed at Kupang. The revolt was crushed, the women Malia Lehi was killed and all possessions of the inhabitants of three villages, their cocount gardens, their dwellings and even their revered traditional drums, were confiscated by the Dutch and made the property of the prince of Kui.

In January 1961, the judge of the Kupang State Court, after long legal procedures started on the insistence of the local Communist Party branch against the present ruler of Kui, annulled the confiscation carried out by the Dutch. Three days prior to the announcement of the Court decision, the ruler of Kui committed suicide by taking poison.

HADI, S.

Young poet from the Daya nationality inhabiting the centre of Kalimantan. The red-and-white flag referred to in his poem *"My Father"* is the Indonesian national flag.

HADI SOSRODANUKUSUMO

From the Madura nationality inhabiting the island of Madura and some parts of East Java. Published his first collection of poems *"Growth and Decay"* in 1955, a collection of short stories *"At the Cross Roads"* together with M. A. Adinda and a selection of prose and poetry together with Sitepu in 1956. Two of his poems contained in that selection which is entitled *"Rice and Jasmin"* (1956), are reproduced in the present volume.

Visited the Soviet Union and China in 1951 after having attended the 1951 Berlin Festival of Youth and Students.

At present prominent LEKRA leader in East Java.

W. R. Supratman to whom the poem *"Song"* is dedicated, is the creator of Indonesia's National Anthem. The anthem was composed in 1928 and begins with the lines "Indonesia my native country, Indonesia my fatherland".

KERTAPATI, Rukiah

Was born in Purwakarta, West Java on April 25, 1927. She won fame with her collection of short stories and poems *"Tandus"* —

Barren — which was awarded the National Prize for Literature in 1952. Is also the author of the novelettes *"Fall and Heart"* and *"Soldier's Wife"*. Apart from her short stories and poems she is also well-known as a writer of children's books. At present she is editor of the children's magazine "Kutilang" and member of the editorial board of the progresive woman's magazine "Api Kartini".

In 1961 she attended the Congress of German Writers in the German Democratic Republic as a member of the LEKRA delegation together with Sugiarti Siswadi.

"Indictment" was written to mark International Women's Day, March 8, 1961, whereas her poem *"Child of a Worker"* is taken from a collection of poems for children.

NJOTO

Was born in Blitar, East Java in 1925. Njoto is Second Deputy Chairman of the Communist Party of Indonesia and Editor-in-Chief of the daily *"Harian Rakjat"*. Co-founder of the LEKRA.

Well-known as essayist, journalist and translator of foreign literature. His poem *"Scarlet Red"*, set to music by the Indonesian composer, Amir Pasaribu, was written in tribute to Patrice Lumumba.

The *"Haiku Variations"* was written after a visit to Japan in August 1961. In the first variation Njoto tells of his encounter with Kenji Myamoto, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Japan ; in subsequent variations, of his visit to the grave of Senji Hayamoto near the Uji river, who was murdered by fascist thugs in the 1930's, of the layed-off factories of Fukuoka, of the underwater tunnel connecting Kyushu and Honshu islands, of Shimonoseki, the military base from which Japanese soldiers departed to invade S. E. Asia during the Pacific War. Sendagaya in Variation VIII refers to the street where the office of the Communist Party of Japan is located, and the "domo arigato" in the last variation is the Japanese for "thank you".

The "Haiku Variations" are dedicated to Mrs Yoko Kitazawa, Japanese representative at the Secretariat of the Organisation of Afro-Asian People's Solidarity in Cairo.

OKA, Putu

Oka is a native of the island of Bali, at present studying of the Gadjah Mada University in Jokjakarta. This Balinese poet in his poem *"Bali"* shows the other side of his island which is alternately

referred to by wealthy foreign tourists as "Island of the Gods" or the "Paradise of the South Seas".

Like so many cultural workers in Bali, Putu Oka, too, is a member of the LEKRA.

RISAKOTTA, Ferdinand, Lodewijk

From the island of Ambon, one of the famous spice islands of the Moluccas in East Indonesia. Apart from his poems, Risakotta has won fame as a producer of radio plays and as reciter of poetry. Studied Chinese literature at the University of Indonesia and is a prominent students' leader. Has translated many foreign poems.

His *"Yesterday and Today"* is taken from a series of poems dedicated to the struggle of the Arab people. His *"Grave on a Hillside"* was written while on a visit to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The poem *"Anniversary Poetry"* was written on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the foundation of the Communist Party of Indonesia.

SITUMORANG, Sitor

Was born on October 2, 1924 in Harianboho in the Batak region of North Sumatera. He became known as an essayist and poet during the early days of the Revolution. Worked for a time as official at the Indonesian Embassy in Paris. Is one of the founders of the nationalist League for National Culture of which he is currently General Secretary. Published several collections of poetry the latest of which is *"New Era"* printed by the LEKRA in 1962.

Visited with Jubaar Ajub, LEKRA General Secretary, and Rivai Apin the Bureau meeting of Afro-Asian Writers in Tokyo and was Chairman of the Indonesian writers delegation to the Second Congress of Afro-Asian Writers in Cairo.

Situmorang is represented in this volume with three poems he wrote during a visit to China after having attended the Tokyo Bureau Meeting.

SULANG, Kusni

Became known through the poems he regularly contributes to the cultural page of the "Bintang Timur" daily. He hails from

Central Kalimantan. He is a member of the group of young writers in their early twenties who rally round the "Young Indonesia" group which published their work in the literary columns of the "Bintang Timur". "Sampit" sings the praise of his home town Sampit, and his second poem in this collection portrays the life of the fishermen of the Central Kalimantan Katingan river.

SUGIARTI SISWADI

She was born in Central Java and she established herself as a talented poet and short-story writer in 1950. She became especially well-known through her much-read short-story "Paradise on Earth", the story of an old grandmother.

Visited Rumania in 1955 and the German Democratic Republic, the Soviet Union and China in 1961 together with Rukiah Kertapati as head of the LEKRA delegation.

She is a leader of the Djakarta Branch of the LEKRA is active in the progressive women's organisation Gerwani and is co-editor of the journal for women "Api Kartini".

SUDISMAN

Prominent working class leader from Surabaya where he was born in 1920. He took active part in the battles against the invading British troops immediately after the Japanese surrender in Surabaya. Today Sudisman is a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Indonesia.

"Struggle of Erevan" dan *"Radiant Baku"*, are taken from a series of poems Sudisman wrote after an extensive visit to East European and Asian countries in 1957. His poems about Korea were published together with those of Risakotta and Rumambi in a collection entitled "Hill 1,211".

SUPRIJADI, Piek Ardianto

Poet from the East Java town of Madiun. Secondary school teacher. Regular contributor to various literary magazines, amongst others the LEKRA magazine *"Zaman Baru"*.

The name Idjah referred to in his poem *"Young Man"* is a common name for girls in Indonesia.

TJUNG, Benni

Was born in 1937 in Padang, West Sumatera. Of Chinese extraction. Benni Tjung is one of the leaders of the group of "Young Indonesia" writers and is permanent collaborator of the LEKRA magazine *"Zaman Baru"*. Wrote a number of essays on the work of young Indonesian writers.

His poem *"Partnership"* is dedicated to the youthful leader of the Angolan fighters for independence, Mario d'Andrade whom the writer met at the Council Meeting of Afro-Asian Solidarity in Bandung, April 1961

Upit, the title of his second poem in this volume, is a common name for women in West Java. Upit is a tea-picker at one of the many tea plantations in the mountains of West Java.

WISPI, Agam

Is of the Atjeh nationality and was born on December 31, 1930 in Pangkalansusu. He is the author of a number of plays of which "Railway Compartment" is generally considered his best. Agam Wispi spent a year in the German Democratic Republic in 1958 and wrote a number of poems about that country, later published in a collection called "Friend".

His poem *"Death of a Peasant"* deals with the land dispute in the North Sumateran village of Tandjung Morawa. In 1955 the then Minister of the Interior Mohammed Rum, of the now outlawed Masjumi party, ordered the peasants to leave their lands which, he said, the peasants had illegally occupied. The peasants refused to do so and the Minister sent the notorius "death tractors" to level the peasants' dwellings with the ground. The peasants defending their houses and land put up resistance and victims fell. The women played an especially important role in this struggle. Some of them threw them selves naked before the tractors in a desperate attempt to halt the machines in their destructive work.

Darman Tambunan, to whom the poem is dedicated, was a leader of the BTI peasant organisation which championed the cause of the evicted peasants.

The poem *"Democracy"* is by far Wispi's most popular poem and is often recited at popular manifestations. It was written in 1959 in protest against frequent violations of democratic rights.

contents

* *A Few Words of Introduction*

* *Aidit D. N.*
  — Coming of Age
  — The Only Road
  — Granite Wall

* *Aidit, Sobron*
  — Sad Memories of a Tjiandjur Peasant
  — Life
  — The Society of my Class

* *Apin, Rivai*
  — The Anchor Chain is Broken
  — Elegy
  — Peking

* *Anantaguna, Sabarsantoso*
  — The Downtrodden Shoulder Freedom
  — Jamila
  — To People's Bandung

* *Arsjad M. A.*
  — Native Village

* *Ashar M. S.*
  — Freedom and Prison
  — To Uncle Ho Chi Minh

* *Dharta A. S.*
  — Rukmanda
  — Tidings from the Party

* *Bandaharo Harahap*
  — Fallen in Battle
  — No One Shall Return
  — After Panmunjom

* *Dodong Djiwapradja*

— The Hero on the Hill
— Death
— Challenge

* *Ferdy, S.*

— Malia Lehi

* *Hadi, Sosrodanukusumo*

— Song
— Of Things to Come

* *Hadi S.*

— Lonely Night
— My Father

* *Kertapati, Rukiah*

— Indictment
— The Child of a Worker

* *Njoto*

— Scarlet Red
— Haiku Variations

* *Oka, Putu*

— Bali
— Life

* *Risakotta F. L.*

— The Grave on a Hillside
— Yesterday and Today
— Anniversary Poetry

* *Sitor Situmorang*

— The Steel Mill
— A Cuban Maid in Peking
— Eating the Bread of the Commune

* *Sugiarti Siswadi*

— Women
— Freedom

* *Sulang, Kusni*

— Sampit
— The Fisherman of Katingan

* *Sudisman*

— Radiant Baku
— The Struggle of Erevan

* *Suprijadi, Piek Ardijanto*

— Young Man
— The Hungry

* *Tjung, Benni*

— Partnership
— The Ballad of Upit

* *Wispi, Agam*

— Revolution
— The Death of a Peasant
— Democracy

* *Explanatory Notes*

Rs. 75.

P.I.B. 362/82 — 3000 ex