



## Indonesian Sastra Liar: Political Strategies of Social Movements in Indonesia

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### Info Artikel

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### Abstrak

Tulisan ini menyajikan strategi sastra liar awal abad ke-20 di Indonesia. Teks-teks sastra itu dibuat oleh organisasi-organisasi Marxisme. Ini bertujuan untuk menjadi propaganda anti-pemerintah, antikolonialisme, antiimperialisme, dan antikapitalisme. Metode sejarah yang digunakan dalam makalah ini dibagi menjadi beberapa fase: heuristik, kritik sumber, interpretasi, dan historiografi. Hasil penelitian ini menemukan, karya sastra merupakan media yang efektif sebagai propaganda politik dan wawasan kepada rakyat kromo. Langkah ini dilakukan supaya tanah air Hindia segera merdeka, bebas dari campur tangan Kerajaan Belanda.

### Abstract

*This paper presents a sastra liar strategy in the beginning of 20th century in Indonesia. Those literature texts were created by the Marxism organizations. It aimed to be anti-government, anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, and anti-capitalism propaganda. The historical methods used in this paper are divided into some phases: heuristic, source critics, interpretation, and historiography. As the result, this paper finds some propaganda strategies and politics used by the Left movement organizations in Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) to oppose the Dutch government and give education to the kromo or poor people. They did it in order to make Dutch East Indies an independence country, free from The Kingdom of Netherlands' intervention, as soon as possible.*

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## INTRODUCTION

In the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were many Marxism organizations in Dutch East Indies or Indonesia (Shiraishi, 1990). These organizations were created as the power source of the Left organizations to oppose government policies and capitalism. They concerned about social condition, economics, politics, and culture. One of their purposes was making Dutch East Indies an independence country -free from The Kingdom of Netherlands' colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism- as soon as possible.

The struggle of the Left was done in some ways such as strike, demonstration, and through media propaganda. However, their struggle was not easy because the people who opposed or protested the government would be punished by *strafwekboek*, being jailed. That punishment was created to make them feel wary and to intimidate other groups who dare to do the same. Instead of decreasing their spirit of struggle, it only made them become more radical (Tickell, 2008).

To increase organizations' strength and spread anti-government ideas, the movement people used media like novels, poetry, songs, manual books, newspapers and magazines. D. A. Rinkes, the director of *Balai Pustaka*, said texts produced by the movement people were called *sastra liar*. Textually, *sastra liar* books tended to be propaganda and anti-Dutch government (van de Wal, 1967; Indrayanti, dkk. 2019).

Books produced by *sastra liar* used *Melayu pasar* as its language. *Melayu pasar* is a branch of Melayu language which is a language used by the people who have low education. One of its characters is there are many Javanese jargon and Dutch terms. Its grammatical rules do not follow government standard of spelling system, *Van Ophuijsen*. Actually, it has been used since literary texts produced by Chinese descent authors. Then, it is redeveloped by indigenous people as a politics motive and a tool to educate those low education people.

Razif (2005: 39) said *Melayu pasar* as a political strategy had been used by Tirta previously. Then, it was reused by the movement leaders, like Mas Marco Kartodikromo and Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo. Both of them were journalist pioneers and persistent to hold the movement principles. Even though, they had different ways of looking into the movement. Mas Marco tended to be more frontal to react to the movement. It was shown by the diction that he used in *Doenia Bergerak*. While Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo was a little bit more polite in writing articles in the newspapers. It might be caused by their different educational backgrounds.

The term *bacaan liar* by D.A. Rinkes was not only used in literary texts, but also used in another texts which also opposed the government. Some of it could be found in articles, manual books, poetry (poems), novels, and serials. However, this paper focuses on literary texts that is called *bacaan liar*. To make it easier, researcher uses the term *sastra liar*. *Sastra liar* are literary texts that was created by movement organizations' people and has different purpose from the Dutch colonial government. It contains propaganda, resistance, agitation, and critics toward rulers, capitalists, or the Dutch government. Razif (2005: 39) argued

that those texts were spirit booster for indigenous people to open their eyes and public criticism which was restricted by colonialists in order to keep their authority status.

In the usage of the language, *sastra liar* uses a language that is simple and easy to be understood. Also, it does not follow *Melayu tinggi*'s standard like *Balai Pustaka*. Based on the information from Central Bureau voor Genealogie team (2008), the government publisher such as *Balai Pustaka* usually used the standard of *Melayu tinggi*. They formed a collaborative team with linguists from *Kantoor voor Inlandsche Zaken* (office of indigenous people affairs) to set *Melayu tinggi* and map another local languages standard. They are J.L.A. Brandes and J.C.C. Jonkes (1899-1905), G.A.J. Hazeu (1905-1907), D.A. Rinkes (1911-1913), Hoesein Djajadiningrat (1914-1918), B.J.O. Schrieke (1918-1920), Th. G. Pigeaud (1925-1926), J.G. Rypei (1926), and G.W.J. Drewes (1926-1928).

Based on the authors' background, literary texts produced in the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century can be classified into three groups:

1. Literary texts produced by *Balai Pustaka*, an official publisher from colonial government;
2. Literary texts produced by Chinese descent authors;
3. Literary texts produced by the movement people.

The movement people are those who were involved in the movement of labor organization or a Marxism party. Those organizations aim to demand labor prosperity, protest to the government, and fight for Indonesia's independence. Dewi Yuliati (2000: 1) said the purpose of those labor organizations was to unify the people in order to achieve an independence nation. At that time, Dutch East Indies was one of Dutch colonials. The existence of any organizations or parties would be dangerous for the government and threaten their authority.

Thus, events occurred in literature works contain dominant tools. Literally, a language is not an ordinary media to convey its messages. According to Pierre Bourdieu, a language is an interaction communication symbols in the form of utterance and interest symbols which were produced by human. Humans exploit languages as a supporter of their survival activities to achieve their symbol of expectations (Jekins, 2016). Moreover, a language is also the most important part to create domination or a legitimate instrument and at the same time determining society's basic requirements at social, economy, politic, etc. So that, a better social construction can be achieved by authority as well as their social status.

In the history of Indonesian literature at the beginning of the 20th century, the writers feared by the Dutch East Indies (Indonesian) government were Mas Marco Kartodikromo, Semaoen, and Soemantri. The three authors were accused by the government as writers who had made a lot of noise, agitation, propaganda, spread hatred for the government. In fact, the allegations made by the Dutch East Indies government to all three were inseparable from the unilateral policies of the government itself which were not in accordance with the wishes of the people. As a result, people experienced misery and suffering. The three authors sought to improve the conditions of the chrome people by taking non-cooperative paths: educating the people through literary texts, building awareness of organizing,

forming discussion groups, and mobilizing rebellions.

However, until now there have not been enough researchers who have paid attention to the field of *sastra liar* at the beginning of the 20th century. Paul Tickell (2002) once wrote an article entitled Love in a Time of Colonialism: Race and Romance in an early Indonesian novel. Paul's article used the novel Matahariah as an object seen from the side of race as a determinant of identity. Tickell's finding showed that the Mas Marco Kartodikromo's *Matahariah* tried to make equal rights, regardless of the Dutch, Arabic, Chinese, and local people of the Dutch East Indies.

In the context of the Dutch East Indies, indeed the first ethnic group was European, the second group was *vreemde oosterlingen* (Chinese or Arabic), and the third group was Bumiputera or inlander (Setiono, 2008). The system is based on birth and descent (Soekanto 2003). Each of these groups is divided into social status, for example, Europeans with high income and rank, have a status that is more respectable than low-income Europeans.

Haryanti (2009) said that the events of racial conflict built by Mas Marco Kartodikromo, Semaoen, and Soemantri were deliberately presented to the readers to give understanding, inspire and encourage readers to carry out social movements against racism. On another occasion, Haryanti (2011) saw the modernity at that time was marked by women who could be educated at MULO, dared to voice opinions, dressed modernly without racial discrimination, provided broad opportunities to appear in public, earned equal wages, and fought against forced marriage.

In fighting for Indonesian independence, producing the insurgency texts was an alternative taken by Mas Marco Kartodikromo, Semaoen, and Soemantri. This is part of the negotiations and ideological transactions that took place in the community at that time. The ideology they are fighting for is communist ideology (Harjito 2014; Shiraishi 1990). They always presented the discourses of rebellion so that people were aware and willing to fight government power (Sulton, 2015).

In his research, Razif (2005) found that their literary works were sold at very cheap prices so that the people and the workers could afford it. In addition, the language used is *bahasa pasar* or low Malay (daily communication). According to Wasono (2007), this effort was carried out to fight texts published by *Balai Pustaka*, which had poisoned the people of the Dutch East Indies.

The establishment of *Balai Pustaka* was initially due to the government's fear of the progress and insights of the people of the Dutch East Indies which could trigger a rebellion to the government. This prompted *Balai Pustaka* to continue to strengthen its mission to legitimize the government by presenting the publication of books that explained the majesty of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the heroism of the Dutch people, and the prowess of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. In fact, until now, literary works published by *Balai Pustaka*, such as *Azab dan Sengsara*, *Siti Nurbaya*, *Salah Asuhan* are still considered great works as learning in schools, while *sastra liar* lacks serious attention, both from historians and teachers at school.

Literary works, both published by *Balai Pustaka* and *sastra liar*, have different characteristics and goals. One supports the government, while others oppose the governme-

nt. Both of them contradict each other and have different arguments. However, this article will not go too far in discussing both contestations. This article is an academic effort to provide an understanding of the figure of Mas Marco Kartodikromo, Semaoen, and Soemantri. The three authors are unique figures when compared to other Indonesian struggle figures. In their struggle, they used literary media to convey implicit messages. Literary works -for them- are effective media for disseminating ideologies and protest media for those who are dominated by power. Literature is also able to make subtle media illustrations, encourage someone or social actors to act and react.

### The Author and *Sastra Liar*

Many literature texts were labeled as *bacaan liar* in Dutch East Indies. However, the *bacaan liar* mentioned here were texts written by activists of labor movement organization and party. They followed Marxist thoughts. So, it could not be separated from issues like poverty, oppression, government policies, capitalism, a series of misery, labour struggle, and the movement itself.

Some of those who used literature as propaganda were Mas Marco Kartodikromo, Semaoen, and Soemantri. Semaoen is a propagandist of *Vereeniging voor Spoor en Tramweg Personeel* (VSTP) and a leader of *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (Indonesian Communism Party) in 1920 (Soewarsono, 2000; Soe Hok Gie, 2005; Munasichin, 2005). In the book of defence council reports (*verslag landraad*) at March 12<sup>th</sup> 1919, Semaoen said that he was tried for 8 hours and 5 minutes. *Landraad* (dewan pertahanan) consisted of Mr. A.S. Block (*president*), Prawitohadinoto dan Koesno (*lidlid*), Penghulu Moektar (*adjunct*), Djojomimardjo (*hof-djaksa*), dan Soedirman (*grifflier*). He was still 21 years old at that time and lived in Petelan, Redjosari, Semarang, Central Java.

Then, he was jailed for publishing a translation of Sneevliet's thoughts as an article entitled *Kelaparan dan Pertoendjoekan Koeasa* in *Sinar Hindia* when he was the chief director. He received the original book at Drunkkerij Masman & Stroink on November 14<sup>th</sup> 1918. He was asked to translate and publish it by Sneevliet himself. Because of it, he was being jailed for four months.

In his daily life, Semaoen joined in to some labor organizations and parties. His propaganda actions were not be done through *vergadering*, but also by writing a lot of articles in various media, even writing literature texts. One of his works is *Hikayat Kadiroen*. It was written when he was still in the prison for four months. When he was released in 1919, the novel was published in *Sinar Hindia* as *feuilleton* (running story). A year later, it was republished by *Kantoor PKI Semarang* as a book and Ngadino as its editor. The first edition was sold for f.0,25,-.

His career in literature world did not last long. In 1923, after he led a labour movement and strike, he was exiled to Dutch. During his life, he only wrote a novel. Most of his writing were articles that were published in the newspapers. Besides him, indigenous author that wrote Marxism literature is Soemantri. One of his novel is *Rasa Merdika: Hikajat Soedjanmo*. The first publication was in July 1924 by Drunkkerij VSTP Semarang. Before it was printed as a



book, it was published as *feuilleton* in *Sinar Hindia* and *Api*. Soemantri's novels were written when he was still in Semarang Prison because he violated Article 161 from *strafwetboek*. When he was in prison, Soemantri wrote two novels at the same time: *Rasa Merdeka: Hikajat Soedjanmo* (sold at f.0,95,-) and *Rahasia Terboeka* published by Drunkkerij VSTP Semarang in 1925.

Soemantri worked in *regeeringslichaam* (a government institution), under the authority of *gouvernement*. Although he worked as a government staff, secretly he joined the movement such as joining *vergadering* Serikat Islam Semarang and writing anti government articles in newspapers. While writing articles, he used an alias, Tjamboek, as mentioned below:

*Siapa itu Tjamboek? begitulah pembaca musti bertanya, Nah, di sinilah sekarang ada waktunya yang paling akhir buat Tjamboek membuka topengnya dengan menunjuk nama yang sejati, bukan karena sombong, tetapi karena merasa tidak perlu memakai topeng.*

*Tjamboek, artinya nama palsu, yang betul Soemantri.*

*Who is Tjamboek? The reader must be wondering who he is. So, this is the best moment for Tjamboek to open his mask using his real name. It is not because of his arrogance, but because he felt he did not need to wear a mask anymore.*

*Tjamboek, means a faked name, the real name is Soemantri.*

Soemantri got his courage to reveal his true identity to public after being fired from *regeeringslichaam* in early April 1923. He became more aggressive to critic the government. It made him appointed as *Vice Voorzitter* (vice president) of Serikat Islam Semarang. In 1927, Soemantri was exiled to Bovel Digoel -because of his involvement in 1926 revolt- until he died because of syphilis. He was contaminated by that disease because he mutually changed partners there.

The third author is Mas Marco Kartodikromo or Mas Marco. He was born in Cepu, Blora 1889. He was the founder of *Inlandsche Journalisten Bond* (IJB) in Surakarta in 1914, the first journalistic organization in Dutch East Indies. Besides, he was a member of *commissaris bestuur* in Serikat Islam (SI) Semarang. In 1924, he joined Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI) Solo, and become one of the leaders of PKI revolt in Solo 1926.

Mas Marco had been tried three times because of *delictpers*. His first case was happened in December 1914. He was sentenced for being *persdelict* or *delictpers*, violating Article 66 Points a and b as he wrote an article in *Doenia Bergerak*. Later, he was being jailed for seven months by *Officer van Justitie* Semarang (Shiraishi, 2005, 115; Sulton, 2020). After he had been released, he was appointed as an editor in *Pantjaran Warta*. Not long after that, he was

involved again with *delictpers* because of his poem "Sair Rempah-Rempah." That poem highlighted the Dutch East Indies government's policies that made poor people become poorer (Adam, 1997). On April 14<sup>th</sup> 1917 in Batavia, by *Ordenaris Raad van Justitie Binnen Het Kasteel Batavia* (the office of the judiciary), Mas Marco was sentenced to two years in prison.

In 1921, he was being involved for the third time with *Landraad* (pengadilan negeri). He was accused by Yogyakarta *Landraad* of violating Articles 240 a and e Paragraph (3) Number 6, 154, 155, 156, and 157 from *Wetboek van Strafrecht*. In October 25 1921, he had his first trial in *Landraad* Yogyakarta. This trial aimed to make sure the documents were really his own work. The second trial happened at the same place on Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup> 1921 no.989/1921. At the end of that day, he was sentenced to be jailed for one year and six months in *Vrijmetselaarsweng, Weltevreden*.

During his life, he had made some articles and literature works. His first literature works was *Mata Gelap* by *Insulinde* publisher Bandung in 1914. Then, his second literary works was *Matahariah* published as *feuilleton* in *Sinar Hindia* in August 7<sup>th</sup> 1918 January 11<sup>th</sup> 1919 and *Student Hidjo* (sold at f.1,60,-) published by N.V. Boekhandel en Drunkkerij Masman & Stroink Semarang in 1919. Before plotting the labor revolt with his fellows in 1926, he had an opportunity to publish his thought about Dutch East Indies history. The title is *Babad Tanah Jawa* published continually in a magazine, *Hidoep*, from July to November 1924.

He also made some poems. They are *Gemeenteraad* published in *Sinar Hindia*, August 24<sup>th</sup> 1918, *Sama Rasa* and *Sama Rata* published in *Sinar Djawa*, April 10<sup>th</sup> 1918; *Bajak Laut* published in *Sinar Hindia*, December 23<sup>rd</sup> 1918; *Penuntun 1* published in *Sinar Hindia*, June 26<sup>th</sup> 1918; *Penuntun 2* published in *Sinar Hindia*, June 27<sup>th</sup> 1918; and *Syair Indie Weerbaar* published in *Sinar Hindia*, September 2<sup>nd</sup> 1918.

### Sastra Liar Characteristics

*Sastra Liar* produced by the movement people were sold quite cheap comparing to Dutch publisher or Balai Pustaka's books. Even it published into some volumes. A volume contains of approximately 40 pages, I.e., *Mata Gelap* by Mas Marco Kartodikromo. Each of it had been sold for f.0,15,-. It was published by *Drunkkerij Insulinde* Bandung into 3 volumes (series).

Publishing a book into some volumes has some advantages comparing to a single publishing. Razif (2005: 31) stated that first, its price become more affordable. So, more people could afford it. Second, there would be a connection between the readers with textual correlation among its events. It's difficult to imagine if the readers only read the second or the third volume only. It would not touch the readers' feelings. With this technique, the readers would be reconstructed in a circle, a reader circle.

So, *sastra liar* were created intentionally by the authors as if we were being hypnotized by dramatic events, like in Soemantri's *Rasa Merdeka* and Semaoen's *Hikayat Kadiroen*. Their main characters were portrayed as the children of a nobleman which have high education. But they willed

to sacrifice their profession to stand up for villagers who had been monopolized by rulers. The villagers were portrayed as poor, having low education, obeying the ruler, and preserving culture tradition like a character named Soeket in *Hikayat Kadiroen*.

In *Rasa Merdika*, the main character is Soedjanmo, a son of an wedono assistant who did not want to follow his father's path as a civil servant. However, he gave it up to join in a Marxism labour movement organization to empower the people in his village. One of his reasons was the poverty he found everyday. Kromotjiloko was portrayed as a poor person whose land was forcefully rented by the chief of sugar company with the help of the village leader. That head of the village were supposed to protect his people, instead of being a tyrant.

The textual events in *sastra liar* tend to focus on poverty, government injustice, rights gap, and government portrait as a greedy colonizer. It was different from literary works produced by *Balai Pustaka* as a government official publisher. *Balai Pustaka's* products portrayed its characters as a person who is righteous, obey the government and the employers, and also pay the taxes. That kind of characters were considered as acceptable behaviors by the government. While the villain was those who opposed or never obeyed the government, and also not pay the taxes like Datuk Maringgih in Siti Nurbaya. He was portrayed as a villain because he opposed government authorities and tax system.

In order to create extra figures or events, we have to be careful, not to offend or oppose the Dutch East Indies government. Indirectly, the texts produced by *Balai Pustaka* aimed to construct the reader's thoughts. So that they have a good understanding and impression of the government. According to Ajib Rosidi (2013: 19), the *Balai Pustaka* romances were very popular among public servants and students.

For those who are not pro-government, *Balai Pustaka's* texts were seen as a political legitimacy of Dutch colonial status and even inhibit the independence of Indonesia. We need to understand that the establishment of *Balai Pustaka* had various objectives, including (a) competing with Chinese descendants' publishers while preventing their adaptations, translations, and literary works; (b) filtering texts produced by communist Bumiputera people.

The government was worried that their texts read by the people would threaten and oppose the position of the government; (c) instilling Dutch nationalism (colonialism) into the people of Bumiputera (Java), namely love and obedience to the government. In this case, they instilled positive stigmatized stories with the Dutch government in Indonesia and negative roles were carried out by the people of Bumiputera.

### **Sastra Liar Circulation Purposes**

Every text that were produced could not be separated from any interests and goals that wanted to be achieved by the labour movement organizations and political parties in Dutch East Indies. In order to produce their literary works, they called their works as *literatuur socialism*. This term was used by people who had different preferences with

the government to oppose texts produced by government publisher, *Balai Pustaka*. They only published Karl Marx's books and his thoughts.

The Idea of making *literatuur socialism* appeared in 1920. It was caused by two factors: the success-fulness of Russia revolution in 1917 and the strike of sugar company labor movement sporadically in some residences in Java started from 1919 until 1920. That strike was done by Indonesian labour union in sugar company which was known as *Personel Fabriek Bond* (PFB). It was under *Central Sarekat Islam* (CSI) protection (Sulistyo, 1995: 1-2). Text books were quite important as reference, knowledge, and stimulation to readers. Enriching socialism reading at that time indirectly boosted readers understanding in order to make labour movement organizations grew stronger and not easily got affected by government's productions.

Soekindar (1921), complained about socialism books availability which was still too little. Thus, it had to be increased through translation or composing text as quoted below:

*...tetapi di Hindia sini yang masih di kecewaan, ialah masih amat kurang sekali adanya socialistische litteratuur (kitab-kitab socialisme), yang sesungguhnya berguna sekali bagi pergerakan kita. Pada hemat kami, maka wetenschapplijke literatuur itu adalah kami umpamakan sebagai hati dan otak pergerakan. Maka tiada dengan itu, susahlah dapatnya tersebar ilmu pergerakan ke dalam hati rakyat. Dan jikalau keyakinan rakyat belum tebal, maka pergerakan belum bisa tebal, maka pergerakan belum bisa kuat betul, karena segala kata rakyat masih bisa bergoyang haluannya.*

*Kepada saudara kawan bergerak, kami bersedu, sukalah kiranya bekerja sekeras-kerasnya untuk menjalin kitab-kitab socialisme dalam bahasa Melayu atau membikin origineel sendiri. Terutama pula kami berseru pada Hoofdbestuur P.K.I. sukalah mengumpulkan adanya kitab-kitab dalam bahasa Belanda yang sudah ada dan supaya mengikhtiarkan dapatnya kitab-kitab dalam bahasa Melaju atau bikinan origineel.*

*...however, it was a disappointment that we were still lacking of socialistische litteratuur (socialism books), which were very useful to our movement. In our opinion, that wetenschapplijke literatuur is like the heart and brain of our movement. Without it, it's difficult for the ideas of movement to be spread into people's hearts. And if people belief had not been firm, then the movement would not be strong enough because it could get swayed.*

To my movement fellows, we exclaimed, we have to work harder to translate socialism books into Melayu or make our own *origineel*. Particularly to *Hoofdbestuur P.K.I.*,

we have to collect more Dutch book, get more Melayu books or make *origineel*.

Among those fiction books, *literatuur socialism*, there were some books that had been published: Sneevliet's *Zegepraal* (1917), Sneevliet's *Kelaparan dan Pertoendjoekan Koeasa* (1918), Semaoen's *Penoentoen Kaoem Boeroeh dari Hal Serekat Sekerdja* (1920), *Regent Bergerak, Maanblad Soero-Tamtomo* (1920), Tan Malaka's *Parlement atau Soviet* (1921), *Manifesto Komunis* translated by Partondo in 1923 from Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels' *Das Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei* and so on.

Based on the data by Soekindar (1921), we found that *literatuur socialism* had been developing every year significantly. In 1917, there were 8 books. It increased in to 15 books in 1918, 26 books in 1919, and 32 books in 1920. Its distribution were done by the organizations itself like *Tjahaja Soematra, Kaoem Moeda, Sarotomo, Sinar Djawa, Taman Pewarta*, and *Warta Perniagaan*. In 1924, there was a bookstore, *Boekhandel & Bibliothiek Mardika*, in Lawean, Solo, Central Java. It was managed by Mas Marco Kartodikromo himself and only provided books or magazines produced by *literatuur socialism*.

*Literatuur socialism* books could also be found at *vergadering*. It was placed at the corner of the entrance door neatly. The caretaker was chosen from one of the meeting agenda committees. By doing this, it has a benefit. It could be cheaper to buy books from that event than at the book store.

*Literatuur socialism* books amount were fewer than *Balai Pustaka's*. It triggered Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI) to establish *Kommissi Batjaan Hoofdbestuur PKI* (Razif, 2005; Cahyono, 2005). It aimed to publish books contained the idea of struggle, translate socialism books from abroad, and make more books against government books. This commission was established when PKI held their congress at 7-10<sup>th</sup> of June 1924. In this congress, five new policies have been created:

- Making a rule to create some smaller groups, since in the village, company, and district to strengthen communism effort. One if its strategy was delivered through text production;
- Moving PKI headquarter from Semarang to Batavia;
- Changing the name of Partai Komunis Indie (PKI) into Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI);
- Establishing new branches at Padang and Makassar;
- Making a new management where Boedisoetjito as the secretary, Marsoem as the commissary, and Munasiyah as wpmen organization.

Since *Kommissi Batjaan* had been authorized, books production, translation and adaptation started to increase like *De Strijd Tusschen Twee Krachten* (1924), *Pemogokan Besar di Shanghai* (1924), *Kehilangan ketjintaan Kita: Rosa luzemburg dan Karl Liebnacht* (1924), *Komunisme I: Apakah Maoenja Kaoem Kommunist?* Karya Azan Zain (1925), *Komunisme II: P.K.I. dan kaoem boeroeh* (1925), *Pedoman Partai Komunis Indonesia* (1925), *Regent Nekat* (1925), *Manoesia Mesti Berani* (1925), *Saja dengan Setan* (1925), and *Semaoen Pengadjar Pergerakan Ra'jat* (1925).

There were some factors that made *bacaan liar* or *sastra liar* in Dutch East Indies grew fast. Some of them are:

- The rapid growth of publishing industries in Java. There

were six publishing companies that grow rapidly like N.V. Dagblad, firma Masman & Stroink, N.V. Hap Sing Kongsie, firma Benjamin & Co, firma Misset & Co, firma Bisschop & Co (Hazeu, 1921: 66). While in Bandung, there were R.M. Tirtoadhisoejo's N.V. Javaanche Boekhandel en Drunkkerij en Handel in Schrijfboeten and Haji Misbach's N.V. Drunkkerij Insulinde. In Surabaya, there was Hasan Ali Soerati's N.V. Setia Oesaha (Adam, 1995: 171);

- The huge numbers of publisher owned by indigenous, Dutch, Arabian, and Chinese. It made their competition became tighter. Most of the indigenous publishers offered cheaper cost to publish a book. However, as its consequence, the quality was not good enough.
- The organizers and the leaders of the movement realized that they are lacking of socialism texts. So, they encouraged all parties to produce more texts they needed.

In radicalism era in Dutch East Indies from 1914 until 1925, the spirit of anti-government was often being planned by the movement people. Texts produced by the government could misguide the readers. Since then, Mas Marco Kartodikromo ever gave a suggestion to Dutch East Indies people to be more careful when reading a newspaper. A good newspaper, according to him, is a newspaper that took side of the weak, not the capitalists, as mentioned below:

*...kita memberi ingat kepada saudara-saudara, janganlah suka membaca sembarang surat kabar, pilihlah surat kabar yang memihak kepada kamu orang, tetapi yang tidak memihak kepada kaum uang. Sebab kalau tidak begitu, sudah boleh ditentukan, akhirnya kita orang Hindia tentu akan terjerumus di dalam lubang kesengsaraan yang amat hina sekali.*

*...we want to warn you, don't like to read just any newspapers. Choose the news paper that take your side, not the capitalists. Because if we don't take our reading carefully, we will fall into the despicable pit of misery.*

In this contexts, Mas Marco indicated that there was a politics propaganda. The newspaper which took side of the weak was a newspaper produced by the movement people. Thus, the reader unconsciously were invited to take look at the movement leading persons and its background. He and the other organizers had a hope that they have the nerve to oppose the colonial's tyranny.

Not all of the newspapers, particularly founded by Dutch in Indonesia in 1925, always opposed the existence of the movement organizations or communism party. There were some newspapers that was neutral like *Preanger Post* (Bandung), *De Indische Telegraaf* (Bandung), *Indische Courant* (Batavia), and *De Locomotief* (Semarang). On the other hand, there were newspapers that always cynical toward the movement organizations like *Soerabaja Handelsblad* (Surabaya), *Nieuwe Soerabaja Courant* (Surabaya), *Het Nieuws* (Batavia), *Java Bode* (Batavia), dan *Algemeen Indische Dagblad* (Bandung).



It could be understood that newspapers, magazines, and literary works at that time not only concern about business thing or getting profit. Moreover, media was an educational element and politics instrument to the people consciousness. Tribuana Said (1988: 1) described the reporters at radicalism era had two roles at once: at the active worker of journalism who did report and enlighten national consciousness and as a politics doer who directly getting involved in the actions against colonialism. Those two roles has the same goal, actualizing the independence of Indonesia.

The roles that had been said by Said obviously had the opposite meaning with Dr. Rinkes' (view Bakri Siregar, 1964: 32), because it would be dangerous if teachers and their students read *bacaan-bacaan liar* written by the filthy sellers. Whereas, the intention of those texts was to disrupt the government. Therefore, the government provided text books which contained their intention to improve education thing. This attempt was implemented to keep away the text that could disturb the peace of Dutch East Indies.

*Balai Pustaka's* production was much greater than *bacaan liar*. It happened because that *Balai Pustaka's* financial was more stable and had larger market range of readers, like at schools, civil servants or general public. While *sastra liar* was costed by the author's own money. So, its amount was limited. *Balai Pustaka's* authors in writing a literary texts had a hope to get big royalty and existence. While *bacaan liar* or *sastra liar's* author aimed to be propaganda, educate, raise their awareness, increase the number of organization members, and strengthen the movement organizations. The readers market that had been aimed was *kromo* or poor people. It was easier to understand and accept the language used by *bacaan liar* than *Balai Pustaka's* because most of them had low education. Its themes were taken from the daily life of *kromo* such as rural atmosphere, the causes of poverty, traditional customs, lifting their social status, penniless organizations, and so on.

Therefore, the strategy of *Balai Pustaka* and *Kommissi Batjaan Hoofdbestuur PKI* was different. The objective of the movement people was opposing the government and capitalism. So, they were refused *Balai Pustaka's* production. Moeso (1925) said that the movement people had to be strengthened to destroy capitalism productions like mentioned below:

*Saudara-saudara kommunist harus bekerja lebih keras pula, supaya surat-surat kabar kita bisa dibaca di mana-mana tempat. Begitu juga buku-buku kita harus dibaca di kampung-kampung dan desa-desa, supaya rakyat tidak terus-menerus disesatkan pikirannya.*

*Pengaruhnya pers kapital dan buku-bukunya kapital sungguhlah tidak kecil.*

*Apabila kita tidak bisa melepaskan pikiran rayat dari pengaruh kapital, kita pun tak akan bisa menghancurkan kapitalisme.*

*My fellow communist have to work harder too. Our news paper have be read everywhere. Our*

*books have to be read in every village. So, the people's thought can not be misguided continuously. The impact of capital's pers and books can not be underestimated. If we are not able to separate them from public opinions, we can not destroy capitalism too.*

From that quotation, It was clearly mentioned that the market *Kommissi Batjaan Hoofdbestuur PKI* expected was the rural people. So, they would not be misguided by capitalists' productions.

Moeso's strategy (1925), previously, was being discussed too by Aliarcham in his article "*Bagaimana Mengadjar Ra'jat*," in *Sinar Hindia*, March 28<sup>th</sup> 1923. He suggested that the people of the movement had to create a new culture, a group that aimed to oppose capitalism. That project had to be done by providing socialism books for children which had low education in order not to make them obey the government and be independent groups without Dutch government.

Basically, they were worried if The Dutch East Indies people read texts produced by the Dutch because it was about their greatness and kindness, people prosperity, and government performance. They were afraid that it would create *status quo* or externalize their authority in Dutch East Indies. Whereas their intention was driving Dutch away from Indies. So the independence could be achieved. Therefore, texts identity became very important to educate people like quoted below:

*...untuk mencepatkan datangnya kemerdekaan kita, haruslah sekalian saudara membaca buku-bukunya sendiri, yang ditulis oleh orang-orang dari klasnya sendiri.*

*...to reach our independence, we have to read our own books, written by our own class.*

That's why texts were not created merely to get benefit or existence, but also to reach an independent country, in terms of labor or statehood. The movement people suggested Dutch East Indies people to read texts produced by their own class, a text that took *kromo* side.

## CONCLUSION

Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI) revolt in 1925-1926 was considered as a fail to overthrow the government. It could be proven by government decision to exile those who involved in it to Boven Digoel, being imprisoned, and thousands of them being killed without any trial. The first group that was exiled to Boven Digul happened in 1927. The government accused the movement organizations as the mastermind of all riots, propaganda, hate and agitation. So, they created an intelligent institution to oversee whoever has the tendency to threaten governments authorities.

Whereas, the accusation done by the Dutch East Indies government to the movement people could not be separated from their new policies that were not suitable with public hopes. As the result, they experienced misery and suffering. The movement organization tried to fix the condition of *kromo* people by non-cooperative way: edu-

cating them through literary texts, newspapers, and magazines, raise their social status, and get involved in populist based organizations.

In pre-independence Leftist movements, Mas Marco Kartodikromo, Semaoen, dan Soemantri often made use of literary texts to deliver implicit messages. For those there figures, literary texts were effective media to spread ideologies and as a media protest for those who had been dominated by authorities. Literary texts could also be civilized media to encourage someone to act and react. Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI) was their vehicle to reach new nationalism way, love and preserve their homeland from Dutch attack. They wanted Dutch East Indies became an independent country as soon as possible.

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