

**AUSTRALIAN INDONESIAN  
ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA NEWS**  
March-April 2023, ISN 2206-1037



**Upcoming AIAV Event**

**PHOTO EXHIBITION OF  
BUNG KARNO**  
Australian Indonesian Association of  
Victoria  
and  
Indonesian Studies Program, Asia  
Institute, University of Melbourne

When: 1-14 June 2023  
Where: Sidney Myer Asia Centre,  
The University of Melbourne

Opening ceremony: Saturday, 3  
June 2023 at 2pm  
Yasuko Hiraoka Myer Room, Sidney  
Myer Asia Centre.



Seno Gumira, photo courtesy of Marie Saerang

**Conversation with Seno Gumira**

**Ajidarma:**

**"When journalism is silenced, literature must speak"**

By Justin Wejak

Famous writer from Indonesia, Seno Gumira Ajidarma, born in Boston, USA June 9, 1958, has written many short stories, novels, essays, and film scripts. Even though only a handful of Seno's works were published outside Indonesia, the Australian Indonesian Association of Victoria (AIAV) was fortunate to publish two of Seno's poems – Hamburger I and Hamburger 2 – in one of the earlier editions of this Newsletter. This prompted the interest of the current AIAV Newsletter editorial team– John McBride, Edan Runge, and Justin Wejak – to have a conversation with the writer Seno Gumira Ajidarma. Nani Pollard and Bea Awiati also joined the conversation.

The conversation or interview is on page 5



- **Conversation with Seno Gumira Ajidarma**
- **Salam kompak by AIAV President Nani Pollard**
- **Art by Kunci Sathya Viku**
- **Working together: AIAV and Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta**
- **Pojok Bahasa – Dewi Anggraeni**
- **Crossword**

**AIAVAustralian Indonesian Association of Victoria**

*“To foster and promote friendship, understanding and good relations between the peoples of Indonesia and Australia.”*

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<http://www.aiav.org.au/>

<https://www.facebook.com/aiavvic>

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**IndoAustay**

**IndoAustay, operated by volunteer members of the Australian Indonesian Association of Victoria, runs an annual Secondary School Student Exchange between Indonesia and Australia in cooperation with Yayasan Mitra Aziziyah Sejahtera (YMAS) of Bandung. IndoAustay also offers Immersion Programs for school students and for adults.**

For information see

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**Immersion:** [immersion@aiav.org.au](mailto:immersion@aiav.org.au)

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Statements made or opinions expressed in the AIAV News do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Indonesian Association of Victoria, its committee or sub-committees.

**The AIAV Newsletter invites contributions on all aspects of Indonesia-Australia relations.**

The Newsletter belongs to you, the AIAV members. We encourage all members to contribute articles in either English or in Bahasa Indonesia. We particularly encourage contributions from our language class students.

If you would like to contribute an article, or a “letter to the editors”, do not hesitate to contact members of the **Editorial Committee** [editor@aiav.org.au](mailto:editor@aiav.org.au)

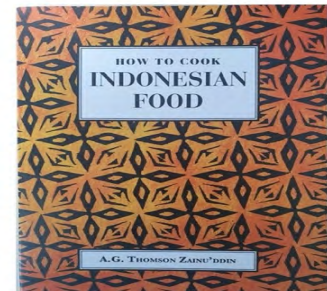
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*Try Out  
Some  
Indonesian  
Cooking*



AIAV is excited to offer a revised edition of our very popular Indonesian cookbook, written by Ailsa Zainu'ddin and first published in 1965! It contains more than 140 recipes including classics such as gado-gado, rendang and nasi goreng, plus lots more for those wanting to explore Indonesian cuisine.

\$26.50 per copy including postage for 1 to 3 copies

\$24.50 per copy including postage for 4 or more copies

Available through our online store at: [www.aiav.org.au/Shop](http://www.aiav.org.au/Shop)

**Selamat Bergabung**

To our newest members. Welcome to AIAV

*Judy Balcombe John Curtain Sam Fairweather*

*Alyssa Grant Rosemary Gayatt Lucas Haynes*

*Ruby Healey Michael Posega Michelle Prasad*

*Michaela Sukadana Viona Towers*

From the Committee

**Salam kompak**

by AIAV President Nani Pollard

*Pertama-tama perkenankanlah kami mengucapkan:*

*“Selamat Hari Raya Idul Fitri  
1 Syawal 1444 H  
Mohon maaf lahir bathin”*

Hari Raya Idul Fitri atau sering disebut Lebaran oleh penduduk Indonesia, dirayakan pada hari Sabtu, tanggal 22 April yang lalu. Makan lontong (ketupat) sayur dan opor ayam menjadi makanan khas Lebaran, di rumah Ibu Siti Tanddo untuk makan siang dan makan malam di rumah Ibu Bea Awiaty. Yummmm, semoga kolesterol dalam tubuh saya tidak naik.

This year, Hari Kartini, which falls on 21<sup>st</sup> April, was not celebrated in a big way, I guess because, it was just a day before Idul Fitri festivities.

Well before this, in January 2023, I received a letter from Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta (UMS), under the signature of its Dr Andy Bayu Bawono, MSc, of UMS’ Bureau of Collaboration and International Affairs. In the letter, UMS outlined its intentions to collaborate globally with institutions and organisations, such as AIAV which, as we all know, conducts social activities, language classes, student exchanges and language immersion programs. These activities align well with UMS programs. The letter requested meeting with AIAV in Melbourne in order to identify opportunities for collaboration between UMS and AIAV, specifically but not limited to

- Research
- Student and staff mobility
- Internship
- Community service: professional development
- Curriculum benchmarks and learning innovations

This culminated in our meeting with UMS delegation on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2023, at an Italian restaurant.



**Ibu Nani Pollard, President AIAV, and Pak Sofyan Anif, Rector UMS (Universitas Muhamadiyah). Photo Anton Amin**

Soon after, on 5<sup>th</sup> March, I left for Jakarta with the mission of meeting Bapak Guntur Soekarnoputra, the eldest son of the late President Soekarno, for the purpose of asking permission for AIAV to borrow and display Bung Karno’s photographs for our Soekarno Photographic exhibitions to take place from 1<sup>st</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2023. It will be held at the Asia Institute’s Sidney Myer Building of the University of Melbourne.

As Bapak Guntur was busy at that time, I had to bide my time until he was less occupied. Then unexpectedly we were invited to attend the 53<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of marriage of Bapak Guntur and Ibu Henny Guntur at Bapak Guntur’s residence, Saturday, the 11<sup>th</sup> of March. This anniversary party, apart from family attendance, involved a number of officials, as well as close friends of both Bapak Guntur and Ibu Henny. The highlight of the party was Mas Tok (nickname of Guntur) who loves music, plays guitar, sing and dance. And now thank to Mas Tok for sending us fifty photos of Bung Karno for AIAV’s Soekarno exhibition.

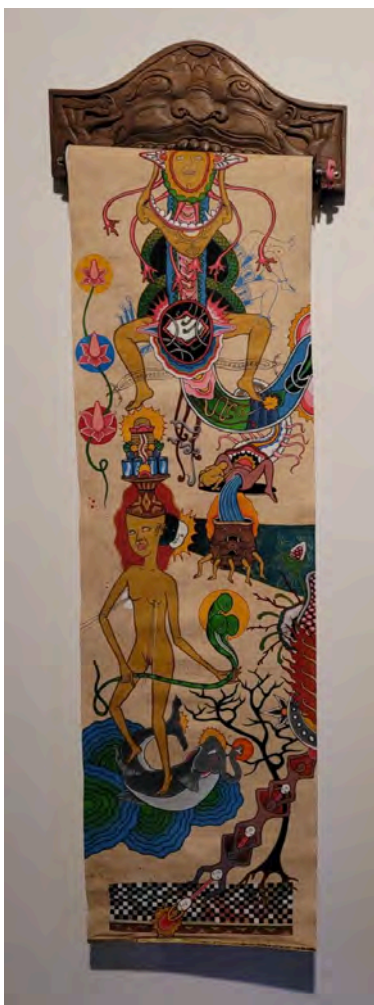


**From left: Nani Pollard, Guntur Soekarnoputra, Henny Guntur, Miranti Kusumo, Dwiwanti Sukarno SH.**

Since my return to Melbourne, I was able to take up an invitation to attend Resika Ticualo’s Project 11, “Sekala Niskala” (the Seen and the Unseen), organised with Footscray Community Arts. This exhibition dates from 18<sup>th</sup> April to 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2023, at The Footscray Community Art, Roslyn Smorgon Gallery.

The five contributing contemporary artists based in Bali are Agus Saputra, Kuncir Sathya Viku, Ni Luh Pangestu, Satya Cipta and Septa Adi. Resika Ticualo kindly then sent me two photos of paintings by Kuncir Sathya Viku: “Enter the Scrolling Culture 1 and 2, 2023”

Salam Hangat,  
Nani Pollard  
president@aiaav.org.au



**KUNCIR SATHYA VIKU**

**Entering the scrolling culture 1 and 2, 2023.**

acrylic and ink on kamsan canvad on carved teak wood. 170 X 50 cm (each)

The *Bhoma* (a sacred relief found on top of an entrance) is considered a gate which can only be used in a sacred place like a temple.. Like *Sekala Niskala*, it is a border between space or time, a symbol of the inbetween. In Balinese folklore, *Bhoma* is a turtle-like creature that holds and protects the *bumi* (earth). The two Kamasan scrolls portray a portal of various beings including the *Gajah Mina*, a mythical creature with the head of an elephant and the body of a fish. Kuncir invites the audience to turn the handles to scroll the canvases inward and outward

**AIAV LANGUAGE CLASSES**

AIAV runs evening Indonesian language classes throughout the year during school terms. Classes ranging from beginners to advanced are taught by experienced and qualified teachers. Classes are always fun and engaging.

If interested in joining one of the classes, please contact the AIAV language coordinator Elizabeth Cameron, or the AIAV president Nani Pollard for more information. Or visit [www.aiaav.org.au](http://www.aiaav.org.au)

Contact details are on page 2

## Conversation with Seno Gumira Ajidarma

**Justin Wejak**

Indonesian Studies, Asia Institute,  
University of Melbourne

(continued from front page)

Famous writer from Indonesia, [Seno Gumira Ajidarma](#), born in Boston, USA June 9, 1958, has written many short stories, novels, essays, and film scripts. His interest in writing fiction has been ingrained since he was 16 years old. That interest propelled him to become a journalist at the age of 19. He has published more than 30 books since the 1980s. Since then, as asserted by [Andy Fuller \(2010\)](#), [Seno soon became an important figure in contemporary Indonesian literature](#). Back then he was particularly known as a short story writer for the newspaper literary genre. Aside from being a fiction writer, Seno is also known as a journalist, photographer and academic. In 1997, he won [the Southeast Asian Writers Award](#), among others within and outside of Indonesia.

The following are some of Seno's best works in Indonesian, and some have been translated into English: *Manusia Kamar / lit. Room Man* (1988), *Penembak Misterius / The Mysterious Shooter* (1993), *Saksi Mata / Eyewitness* (1994), *Dilarang Menyanyi di Kamar Mandi / Don't sing in the Bathroom* (1995), *Jazz, Perfumes and Incidents* (1996), *Sebuah Pertanyaan untuk Cinta / A Question for Love* (1996), *Iblis Tidak Pernah Mati / The Devil Never Dies* (1999), *Atas Nama Malam / On Behalf of Night* (1999), *Dunia Sukab / Sukab's World* (2001), *Sepotong Senja untuk Pacarku / A Piece of Twilight for My Partner* (2002), *Negeri Senja / The Land of Twilight* (2003), *Kitab Omong Kosong / The Book of Nonsense* (2004), *Tiada Ojek di Paris / No Ojek in Paris* (2015), *Transit* (2018).

Often, Seno tells stories about everyday life with social, cultural and political messages. Seno is a courageous writer who consistently advocates freedom of opinion, of writing, and freedom of publishing. For him, even the most politically sensitive topics must be allowed in public discussions as a way to promote literacy. His sensitive works revealing military violence in East Timor are: *Eyewitness* (1994), and *Jazz, Perfumes and Incidents* (1996). Indeed, Seno has never been afraid to write anything that he sees as important to encourage the social, cultural and political literacy of his audience. Seno's statement – [“When journalism is silenced, literature must speak”](#) – can be seen as an expression of his position that silence can never be a solution to problems in society.

Even though only a handful of Seno's works were published outside Indonesia, the Australian Indonesian Association of Victoria (AIAV) was fortunate to publish two of Seno's poems – [Hamburger 1](#) and [Hamburger 2](#) – in one of the earlier editions of the Newsletter. The two poems were published in two languages: the original version in Indonesian and the English translation by Andy Fuller. It is clear in the two poems that Seno uses allegory to allow his audiences to reflect on their double meanings. The publication of Seno's two poems prompted the interest of the current AIAV Newsletter editorial team– John McBride, Edan Runge, and Justin Wejak – to have a conversation with the writer Seno Gumira Ajidarma. Nani Pollard and Bea Awiati also joined the conversation.



Screenshot of the online conversation between AIAV and Pak Seno (bottom right)

The following is an excerpt from the conversation with Seno.

*You are a very prolific writer. You have produced dozens of novels and short stories. Can you explain a little about the differences between novels and short stories in terms of writing materials?*

**Writing novels or short stories certainly depends on the material we have. If the material is expansive enough for a novel, then what is written is of course a novel. But if the material is only enough for a short story, then what is written must be short stories, or poetry. It's just a matter of idiom; it's not a matter of length of writing, long or short. Of course there are certain idioms that are more appropriate for short stories, and there are also idioms that inevitably have to be for novels. Take for example,**

recently I finished writing a novel, the title might be a bit controversial – *The Whores In The Boat*. It can only be a novel, it has to be long. It's a boat trip, a long journey indeed. Boat trips from place to place, from one part of the world to another. It can't be a short story. If I write a light story, something short like the interaction between the head of the office and the cleaner, then it's enough to write it in short story form. Recently I was asked by Kontras (Commission for Missing Persons and Victims of Violence), a commission founded by [Munir Said Thalib](#) in 1998, to participate in writing a collection of short stories. I was given all their materials about Papua. I was told to take one short episode to write a short story. Maybe there are also other episodes that can only be for poetry. So really it's a matter of idiom.

*In your opinion, what is actually the most important thing in literary works?*

For me, only one most important thing in literary works, is irony. So whatever it is, whether the language is good or bad, as long as there is irony, it can be considered a solid literary piece. Style of writing is not essential. Personally I'm not concerned about style at all. When I found my poems – *Hamburger I* and *Hamburger 2* – the paper containing the poems was already worn out. But I was and am still surprised that those two poems were published, over five years ago. Because of the publication of these poems, I think, I was then considered by some people as a poet. But, I don't think those poems reflect my real talent. In fact, I have no ambition to be a poet.

*Your story – Don't sing in the Bathroom – has been filmed. Are you satisfied with the film?*

There are actually two film versions based on the novel. One for television, and one for cinema. I was quite disappointed by the one for TV because, I think, as a film, it's not what I imagined it would be. For example, the core of the novel is about a woman:

her voice is central to her character and the story. In the TV film, this doesn't match the female character in the novel. But the cinematic version, it's good. The entire film accommodates almost all the madness as told in the novel. However, the TV version had high ratings. Meanwhile, the cinema version had very low numbers, only a hundred thousand people, or maybe less. The one in the cinema is okay, it's just that the market failed. But if there are too many restrictions on (what can be shown on) TV then what do you expect? There is another film title based on my short story about a prostitute. In the film that title is replaced with a slightly more sinister sounding title, *My Mother is a Whore*. The recent publication as a serial in *Kompas*, *Marti & Sandra*, is also a novelization from the screenplay, it was then republished as a book.



*Outside Indonesia, you are known as a writer who dared to fight against censorship. Your resistance was demonstrated through your work as a journalist for Jakarta Jakarta Magazine. There was then a video, although not made by you, but the content of the video was reported by the magazine where you worked, and soon the news about the video was spread throughout the world with the title, The Dili Massacre, even though that was not the title of the video. You produced trilogy of books including Eyewitness (1994) and Jazz, Perfume, and Incidents (1996) that showed your concern about East Timor. For readers who may not know the background and context, could you talk a little about that period, and its impact on your work and the works of other novelists and poets?*

I think, the trilogy dates back to *Eyewitnesses*, which emphasizes the involvement of literature in politics. For me, that's normal. However, in Indonesia, since Suharto's New Order (1966-1998), anything to do with politics is risky, dangerous. There is also an ideology called aestheticism, implying the idea that art must be pure art, and that literature only deals with language and beauty. But then with the East Timor incident, I saw that a writer must first feel a sense of universal humanity. And as a human being, an author should care about others who are helpless. When our neighbors are kidnapped or oppressed, for example, do we just keep quiet? We share a moral call to speak out, and not to remain silent.

*You are often quoted for the title of the third book of the Trilogy of books, Jazz, Perfume, and Incidents of Incidents*

(1996): *"When Journalism Is Silenced, Literature Must Speak". Is that principle still the theme that motivates you in your current works?*

I think so. Nowadays journalism is muted, but the situation is not the same. In the past, it was clear that it was the regime that silenced speech in every way. But not now. It is precisely now that freedom of speech is uncontrolled, uncontrollable, and is even being used to cover up facts, the truth. It's the same as silencing traditional-conventional journalism. And, even more difficult, now to voice it is complicated because the situation is so frenzied. So it may be present, but it may not necessarily be heard over all the resounding voices. We can no longer hear each other. But the challenges are the same. Because of how is one supposed to talk when you can't be heard, even though there is no one to silence you. So you stay silent. It is difficult now for us to recognize real voices, which reflect true journalism. Even journalism itself is changing direction. Because it's already difficult, but it has a tool called IT, Artificial Intelligence. So now there is data journalism. Journalism has changed. It has lost its art of the "old school" journalism.

*Your statement – When journalism is silenced, literature must speak – clearly shows your courage to fight against attempts to silence you at that time. You had the courage to write about many things that were politically taboo back then, for example the East Timor issue in the novel, Eyewitnesses. Tell us a little about your experience regarding the attempts to silence you, or to ban you from sharing your stories.*

I have always believed that an aesthetic form must be born out of real conditions, a wrestle with life. So it isn't like a change of style, like we choose a shirt to wear; it isn't like that. I have found that I can only use one way of writing that suits my style in expressing my feelings, thoughts and experiences. It is an art of expression

and knowing, an art of knowing it is about [East Timor](#) although there is no mention of the place in the story. When journalism is silenced, literature must speak. It is through literature the outspoken place of East Timor is made somewhat clear. The stories about my situation are there in the stories. I don't have to repeat the stories again. So that's what I said earlier, I don't feel like I am writing fiction; I feel I am fighting with real situations about myself, my life. I don't feel like I am fighting with the authorities, but I am fighting with my own friends who make me feel like a fool. I thought I had succeeded in making sure that the Jakarta Jakarta magazine was not banned in the 1980s. But still they moved me on, they let me go. So I keep repeating the same topic in my stories to open their eyes to see the injustices. Sadly their eyes remain closed, but other people's eyes are open. So, it's really personal. What is political becomes personal, and what is personal becomes political. That's why I don't feel like I'm doing anything heroic. It's just a fight between neighbours. I recall, my short stories about East Timor weren't published, but they were accepted for publication in small magazines such as the Catholic magazine, HIDUP. My stories were seen as religious stories, and as religious stories they weren't censored or banned. The name 'East Timor' was like a politically incorrect word, so any writing that was assumed to have something to do with the place was rejected. They always said: "Sorry, we can't publish it, because there is East Timor."



Seno Gumira and his grandchild. Photo courtesy Nani Pollard

*How do you think your short stories are able to make readers aware of the phenomenon of kidnapping and oppression?*

For some readers, maybe my short stories seem like they accompany those who feel oppressed. There are also those who feel that my short stories open their eyes to see certain

phenomena. There were several activists who later met me after reading my stories. They said we just found out. Indeed, they only just found out because there was no news in the printed newspapers. Understandably the newspapers at that time were full of censors. [Censorship](#) was very tight back then. So even though my stories are fictional in style, and I don't mention the names of places such as East Timor, the story about violence in East Timor is real. I'm responding to people's unfair treatment in my typical way, through stories.

*Implicit in your previous statement, you are a little uncomfortable using the word 'purity'. Why?*

Purity has been a syndrome in Indonesia since [1965](#). So when the [LEKRA](#) people became victims, with all of them taken to Buru Island, it created a stigma. There was a deep-seated fear and propaganda during that time. After 1965, [came 1998 when anti-Chinese violence occurred](#). President Suharto resigned in May 1998, and the reform era began. Who is looking for new innovations, new languages, and new experimentations in this new era? Commercialism is more capitalized nowadays, and more billboards can be seen being displayed in public spaces everywhere; they are a form of advertising art. These are all artistic works, but back then, as in the case of LEKRA, they were seen as sinful. All artists who were associated with LEKRA were labelled as sinners and eliminated; they became political detainees or prisoners such as [Pramoedya Ananta Toer](#). The form of art that was once cursed back in the 1960s, now is not. Purity is a toxic term politically and ideologically. I don't like using it because the concept of purity was once used as a tool to destroy the art works and the artists themselves as in the case of LEKRA.

*In the past, Suharto's ORBA regime was responsible for silencing journalism. Now there is freedom, but that freedom may have failed journalism to carry out*

*its mission to report facts. Do you think there are other forces in play that have contributed to the failure?*

New Media, namely online media, is here. It is present everywhere not only in Indonesia, but throughout the globe. We have no choice; we just have to embrace it. All of a sudden, anyone who produces basically any writing labels themselves a writer, a journalist. These "journalists" and journalism are not silenced. But the new journalism presents a very different situation. Is there a force that influences the shift? Of course, there is. All stakeholders take advantage of this situation for their own interests, which can be seen as a part of identity politics. The new generation does not know the exotic old world. For them, there is no need. Because it seems like a very long time ago, and the old world might be too slow, and so on. However, there is still patriarchy believed to be the guardian of the purity of art; there is still journalism, science and intellectualism. They exist, but without much function. Let me give an example, now there are young leaders and philosophers, for instance, and they don't exist through conventional media, but express themselves through social media. The new style of media makes people like me look a bit too old fashioned.

*How do you see mass media in the latest era which is dominated by new media, online media?*

As a writer, I try to write in all media. But media always changes. For example, I used to write a column for the Tempo newspaper regularly. Unfortunately, this newspaper is now no longer in print. There is only online Tempo newspaper, as well as Kompas. Kompas used to have a very limited space for writing. Many writers had to queue to a mainstream media. Now, even without me asking, if I send a piece of writing to Kompas, it can be quickly published online. Online media is not an option, it is a reality that must be accepted as the new normal. Especially with COVID-19, hardly any printed newspapers or magazines remain. The funny thing is, people still buy print copies of my books. But I myself only buy ebooks. My house is already full of books, there is no place to store books anymore.

*There are many problems related to media around the world. In the Indonesian context, which party, in your opinion, causes the most problems? Is it the oligarchy that owns the conventional media, or the online media which is very free and uncontrollable?*

The mass media has fallen in popularity. Previously, one of the biggest, Daily Kompas had a circulation of 1 million, has now decreased to 500 thousand, even as low as 50-100. It is no longer a dominant media outlet. It's a new field. The mass media is no longer influential. Nobody reads, nobody subscribes. Only its mythology remains. News



magazines like Tempo still survive. All online media are competing: Detik, for example, is competing with all that wild, uncontrollable social media. That's the situation now. It's no longer about Kompas and Tempo; mass media has fallen. The development of online media has caused the fall of the conventional media. Second, with COVID, the traditional-conventional media were suffocated almost to death. An English language newspaper Jakarta Post used to be rich. Now it has fired 25 to 40 employees. So these printed-newspapers are increasingly disappearing. And people no longer feel the need for them. I don't use social media, but I know what in it because everybody always talks about the social media content. This is an opportunity for me to get into reading or writing more serious books. \*\*\*

## AIAV Activity

### KERJASAMA AIAV & UNIVERSITAS MUHAMADIYAH SURAKARTA

**Anton Alimin**

Youtube: Good Morning Indonesia with Poetry

*“We all do better when we work together. Our differences do matter, but our common humanity matters more.”*  
— Bill Clinton

AIAV kedatangan sembilan tamu akademisi dari Universitas Muhamadiyah Surakarta dan akan mengadakan kerjasama dalam bidang pendidikan. Pada tanggal 27 Februari 2023, AIAV sengaja mengundang tamu dari UMS makan malam di Restoran Italia Sofia yang terletak di 857 Burke Road, Camberwell.

Merupakan suatu kebiasaan kalau kita kedatangan tamu dari Indonesia, biasa kita mengundang mereka ke restoran Indonesia. Yang seharusnya terjadi adalah mengundang mereka ke restoran yang bukan restoran Indonesia. Pernah terjadi puluhan tahun lalu seorang tamu dari Indonesia berkomentar: “Kok dibawa ke restoran Indonesia? Justru kita mau coba makanan orang Australia?”

Untunglah, kali ini AIAV punya ide membawa tamu dari UMS ke restoran Italia. Tentu saja makanan Italia berbeda dibandingkan dengan makanan Indonesia. Namun dalam satu hal tidak begitu jauh berbeda yaitu dalam hal ‘pedas’ karena kalau mau sedikit pedas ada Tabasco. Dan yang lebih penting adalah restoran Sofia menyajikan makanan halal. Bisa dikatakan semua restoran Indonesia/Malaysia menyajikan makanan halal, tapi tidak banyak restoran Italia yang memiliki Seritifikat Halal, karena alasan itulah restoran Italia Sofia dipilih kali ini untuk menjamu tamu dari UMS.



Photo by Anton Alimin

Setelah makan siang percakapan dilanjutkan di ruang lain di mana masing-masing delegasi memperkenalkan diri. Dimulai dengan delegasi dari UMS dan kemudian delegasi tuan rumah AIAV. Yang menarik dari acara perkenalan tersebut adalah pada waktu Dr. Laili Etika Rachmawati menyebutkan bahwa Bahasa Indonesia akan menjadi bahasa yang semakin populer terutama di Asia Tenggara. Dan juga menarik siang itu Bapak Dr. Andi Dwi Bayu Bawono mendapatkan gelar doctor dari Universitas Macquarie. Saya pernah bekerja di Co-op Bookshop Universitas Macquarie di tahun 1980an, dan waktu itu Pak Andi masih di SD kelas satu.

Dr. Paul Thomas membuat kejutan dengan kata pembukaan ‘Selamat Petang’. Kata ‘petang’ sudah jarang sekali digunakan dalam percakapan sehari-hari kecuali kalau Anda berasal dari Sumatera karena memang kata ‘petang’ berasal dari kata Bahasa Melayu, bahasa asal Bahasa Indonesia. Beruntung penutur asli Bahasa Indonesia atau orang Indonesia secara keseluruhan mempunyai penutur kedua Bahasa Indonesia seperti Pak Paul Thomas yang justru ingin menjaga Bahasa Indonesia dari banyaknya pengaruh asing terutama dari Bahasa Inggris. Suatu ironi, kita orang Indonesia justru keranjingan menggunakan kosa kata asing

dalam dalam berbahasa Indonesia terutama dalam bahasa percakapan sehari-hari.

Juga menarik Bu Nur Amalia Rais ikut dalam rombongan UMS ke Melbourne sekaligus mengunjungi ibu angkatnya, Ibu Nani Pollard yang sekarang menjabat sebagai presiden AIAV. Kata pepatah Melayu: ‘Sambil menyelam minum air.’

Yang terakhir mendapatkan giliran memperkenalkan diri adalah Bapak Rektor Prof. Sofyan Anif dan diakhiri dengan pertukaran cinderamata antara AIAV yang diwakili oleh Presiden AIAV, Bu Nani Pollard dan Universitas Muhammadiyah yang diwakili oleh Bapak Rektor Sofyan Anif.

Tamu-tamu dari UMS yang hadir dalam acara makan malam itu: Prof. Dr. Sofyan Anif (Rektor); Prof. Anam Sutopo (Sekretaris Rektor); Dr. Andi Dwi Bayu Bawono (Head of Bureau of Collaborations & International Affairs); Denny Vitasari, Ph.D (Head of Academic Collaboration); Nur Amalia, M. Teaching (Head of Students Mobility & Hospitality); Mauliyah Halwat Hikmat, Ph.D (Vice Dean of Academic Affairs, Faculty of Education & Teacher Training); Dr. Murfiah Dewi Wulandari, M.Psi (Vice Dean II, Faculty of Education & Teacher Training); Dr. Laili Etika Rachmawati, M.Pd (Head of Curriculum Development & Learning Innovation); Koesoemo Ratih, Ph.D (Head of Innovation Learning Center).

Para hadirin dari AIAV termasuk Nani Pollard (Presiden AIAV), Lester Levinson (mantan Presiden AIAV), Francoise, Dr. Paul Thomas (Peneliti), Peter Dart (Sekretaris AIAV), Siska, Diski (Direktur AusStay), Ace Naim, dan Bea Awiati (Guru).

## POJOK BAHASA DEWI ANGGRAENI

### TUA, BERUMUR, SEPUH, LANSIA



In a living language, while the main vocabulary remains the same, carrying the same meaning, it is inevitable that many words evolve in their usage, some contract, and others broaden. This is often as the results of the culture of the said language intersecting with other cultures. When this happens the values of some words need to be renegotiated.

I would give several examples, but it is not practical considering I must remain within the length allowed for this column. So, for this time, let me pick one, the word ‘tua’ in Indonesian.

Until at least 50 or 60 years ago in Indonesia, using ‘tua’, - equivalent to ‘old’ in English, when describing a person, hardly had negative implications in terms of the object of this adjective. In fact, ‘tua’ almost commanded a fair amount of respect toward the object.

‘Parents’, for instance, is ‘orang tua’ in Indonesian, which can be literally translated as ‘the old people’. In English, ‘the old people’, if used with personal implications at all, means collectively ‘great grandparents’ or older, closer to ‘ancestors’ than ‘parents’, therefore more impersonal. More importantly, the objects of the word ‘tua’ are unable to hear it and express any objection to it.

In Indonesia, when our children or younger relatives are caught being disrespectful to a visibly older person, we usually reprimand them with something like, ‘*Jangan kurang ajar kepada orang tua!*’ (‘Don’t behave with such impudence to an old person!’). I imagine in a Western

society like Australia, if you say anything remotely resembling that utterance, you won't get any grateful looks from the older individual in question, the opposite is more likely.

In brief, 'old' as an adjective carries a negative connotation, when used in connection with another person, or describing an inanimate object. And this has been the case for as long as I can remember, in real life as well as in stories told to me, or those I read myself.

An old person means one who has no more use in society, just like an old piece of furniture no longer worth much. Among the few exceptions, are certain houses. An old house may carry a different value, literally, especially if accompanied by predicates such as 'full of character', 'sympathetically renovated', or 'quirky', particularly in real estate language. In general, it would be wise to avoid using 'old', in relation to someone, or their possessions.

I know people who ban 'old' in conversations with them when it describes either of us. Once in desperation I asked one of them, 'So what should I say, then?' to which I received an answer, 'Not young, past his or her best years, no longer a spring chicken even.'

You may not say, 'I am an old woman, these feats are no longer suitable for me.' You'd have to say instead, 'I am past my best years. These ...' etcetera. You'd certainly risk offending someone if you changed the subject from 'I' to 'you'. In Western society, even the above phrase is not a hundred percent safe. It would be best to avoid commenting altogether.

In Indonesia speaking with Indonesians, the phrase is normally regarded innocuous and would be received with no offence.

That having been said, in more cosmopolitan cities of Indonesia, that is increasingly changing. I would

speculate that apart from the influence of Western mores having infiltrated the urban life, the economic impost, which is shifting into a more individual way of living arrangements, where extended families are becoming less and less desirable, has a lot to do with this change.

So 'tua', in today's Indonesia, at least in cosmopolitan cities, has lost a great deal of its respectability. As 'old' in English, 'tua' is more frequently expressed with various euphemisms, such as 'sepuh' which refers to those of the nobility or some such class, other examples are, 'sudah berumur', 'senior' or 'lanjut usia', now the most favourable among urban middle-class societies.

'Lanjut usia', almost always abbreviated to 'lansia' has become the adjective of many senior villages, which have also gained favour for those whose families can afford them. The names are often sprinkled with English words seemingly to sound more prestigious. With slight modifications, here are some examples:

Lembut Senior Care, Teduh Senior Living, Bumi Damai Village, and many others, especially around Jakarta and its new satellite regions. And indeed, they are very beautifully designed and inviting if you come and have a look. These are available for those parents who prefer to live independently from their offspring, something unthinkable even as recently as 30 years ago. 'Tua' is increasingly losing its edge of respectability, and we don't know in what direction the word will further evolve.

*Dewi Anggraeni, April 2023.*

**Wanted : reviews for this Newsletter of Indonesian Movies and TV series**

Australian Netflix contains many movies and TV series in Indonesian. In the experience of the editors, these are useful for learning Bahasa Indonesia, as Netflix has various sub-title options: no subtitle, subtitle in Bahasa Indonesia, subtitle in English

**We invite readers to submit reviews of these Movies and TV series for publication in the Newsletter. The review should include some comment on the usefulness for improving Bahasa Indonesia ability.**

Note: copyright laws allow us to include screenshots or the poster of the movie for a review (not for a discussion)

