

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this thesis, the writer analyzes Taufiq Ismail's two selected poems using a qualitative method, i.e. descriptive analysis. In Peirce's Triadic Semiotics analysis, Peircean Semiotics allows the writer to analyze the figurative language of the selected poems. In addition to that, the writer employs a Historical-Biographical approach.

As a brief review, Peirce's Triadic theory has three elements within. There are Representament, Interpretant, and Object. In presenting the analysis, the writer prefers to discuss and explain the Object before going to Interpretant for every part of sign-cracking and interpretations in her analysis.

4.1. Pierce Semiotics Approach Applied in *Bagaimana Kalau*

This part provides a detailed introduction of *Bagaimana Kalau* poem and what Taufiq Ismail wrote down in his writings. This introduction is provided for those who have not read or seen any of Ismail's work before and to help them grasp an understanding on what certain issues Ismail is interested in and his style of writing poems. Analysis and discussions of this poem can be found starting from page 64.

Bagaimana Kalau is a poem written by Taufiq Ismail in 1971. This poem tells about different kinds of realities and it also brings up some real events, e.g. Vietnam War, constant protests or strikes towards the government done by Indonesian citizens, people demanding for their civil rights, better facility, and domestic affairs improvement. There are many parables that Ismail uses in this poem. There are twelve separate verses begin with "what if". *Bagaimana Kalau*

poem is not divided into stanzas. Instead, it is presented in a whole passage of twenty-six verses in one page.

All of these "what ifs" seem to function as commentary, criticism, opinion, satyr to Indonesia and lives in the country during the 1970s, or realistic depiction of those. More likely, Ismail was writing about the first half of the decade (1970 until 1975). Two examples that depict Indonesian environment are found in verse 12-13 and verse 21-22. What can be seen in verse 12-13 is National Debt. A good example to describe this situation Indonesia was experiencing are these two hyperbole sentences uttered by a woman to express her frustration on the financial crisis her family were in and have some payment to give to debt collectors her family owe, "I've got debts up to my ears to pay!" and "I have debts as much as the head of a state!" (Duckworth, 2007, pp. 12-13)¹⁷. These two exclamations that the woman made have a similar condition to Ismail's description of the national debt that Indonesia has as written in verses 12-13. Some under-develop and developing countries at risk of inflation must be indebted to the World Bank or prosperous-and-financially secured countries for loans and aids they are asking to boost the economy of their failing or crumbling countries for fear of their people suffering. The reason why the writer quote Duckworth's play adaptation of Marguerite Dura's' *The Lover* is simply to give an example of how a person or people would react and complain if they are given the burden and responsibility to pay millions of debt they owe to someone. In common sense, it will definitely frustrate people and drive them into madness. Besides they have to pay millions of

¹⁷ The Woman's Mother (one of the characters in L'Amant) was complaining about the financial crisis that her family is experiencing and the inability to pay off all of their debts. See Marguerite Duras' theatrical play adaptation of L'Amant directed by Collin Duckworth (with its title literally translated to English), *The Lover*. This play was performed in Stork Theatre, Melbourne on 18 July – 11 August 2007.

debts, some debt collectors would visit their place and demand for payments in a very intimidating way. Sometimes they will threaten the debtors to loot the house or hurt them very badly until they receive payment from the debtors. Now in the bigger context, it is a national debt that Indonesia is experiencing. The business and property tycoon, companies or resources-rich-and-fully developed countries that Indonesia is indebted to will put pressure on this country. It could be in a form of sanctions or ultimatum in a very intimidating way. The country is left with no other options but to pay its debt or else something worse will happen. Certainly, nobody ever wants that to happen.

Something seems to be so unbelievably inefficient is the option suggested by Ismail as written in his poem. He wrote in this poem that payment to cover up debts Indonesia has can be obtained by collecting profits from Performing Arts sector, in particular from W. S. Rendra's theatrical plays¹⁸ (see verses 13-14 of *Bagaimana Kalau* poem). By using W.S. Rendra's plays, Ismail hopes that billions and trillions of debts can be paid and Indonesia would be free from this demanding responsibility¹⁹. Certainly Indonesian government can make use of this potential in Performing Arts sectors but relying on this one sector alone will take over three generations to come until Indonesia could finally be free from its national debts. It will be even more effective if the country export Indonesian natural resources, goods, creative products, industrial products made and designed in factories and handicrafts that reflect Indonesian values and its diverse cultures

¹⁸ W. S. Rendra is an Indonesian playwright, writer, poet, and has a reputation known by the people across the country as a celebrated artist. He lived through the colonial period and was one of the members of *Angkatan 66*. His scripts and directed theatrical performances are so widely applauded and appreciated by many people.

¹⁹ Verses 13-14 of *Bagaimana Kalau* poem says something about the national debts and the methods that Indonesia can employ, but these verses Ismail wrote suggested a very weak and insufficient method in response to the national debt: "*Bagaimana kalau hutang-hutang Indonesia dibayar dengan / Pementasan Rendra.*"

to pay our debts. By including other potential sectors besides Performing Arts, we can alleviate the burden of paying debts that are outrageously high enough. Like what the woman in Duckworth's play said, the debts are not up to the ears any more, those mountains of debts are able to bury people deep beneath it, and the country certainly has to do something about those millions of debts. But we cannot simply rely on Performing Arts alone.

The next thing to be described is verses 23-24 of *Bagaimana Kalau* poem. Its content talks about a reversed order of decision making regarding what matters demanded by the citizens. Usually, it is the citizens who go on strikes and protests for the flawed infrastructure, public services, and corrupt government. It is very common to see citizens stormed out down to the streets, bringing some banners and slogans that contain major problems that cause the country to deteriorate economically for example, and mobs of disappointed citizens expecting for the betterment on the standard of living. Since this is a reversed situation, it would be quite strange to see dysfunction parliament members and government officials go on strike. What these officials will demand, the people have no clue and will never know. It is some kind of cynical statement that Ismail wrote over here. It takes up some time for the government to really process and include their people's voices and demand into nation-building action. The government has the authority to consider messages and wishes of the people that went on strike. They will hold meetings and invite some experts and scholars that might be helpful for them to provide some critical considerations and logical feedbacks before passing a new law or simply just to make decisions on what to do about certain matters that have become people's interest. It is very interesting to see what will happen if it is the

citizens who are given the authority to do all of that instead of the government and see what might come as a result from this reversed situation. It would be similar to handing the power and authority to the people. So all of those government officials and people's representatives have to bow down and listen to every word the people have to say. It is going to be a satire or a depiction of a caricature showing government being enslaved and had to carry a large plate piled up with large number people, each of them would demand for things such as improvement for better infrastructure and facility, their rights to have access for education, health care, pension money, what matters should the lawmakers concern about, the distribution of wealth, etc.

The writings of this poem also question about the logic, rationale, and common sense that people usually have and it already developed in our civilization and modern society. For examples, verses 1-3 are asking trivial *what ifs* like the possibility of the shape of Earth is square instead of round and imagination of the fruit that Adam ate in Eden was *Avocado* of Good and Evil. Ferdinand Magellan, great sailors, explorers, Galileo Galilee, astronomers, and great thinkers has already proven that Earth is round. Yet, Ismail wrote in his poetry and wondered what will happen if the Earth was square²⁰. If Earth really is square, the geographical sightings, earth plates, the way it rotates, and the force helps keep the Earth on its orbit will absolutely be different than the one people already knew and had learned before. Verse 1 is questioning the occurrence of the so-called accident that causes the first man created by God to be banished from paradise and started to live mountains of mortal struggles on Earth. Many people

²⁰ Verses 1-3 of *Bagaimana Kalau* says: “*Bagaimana kalau dulu bukan buah khuldi yang dimakan / Adam, tapi buah alpukat / Bagaimana kalau bumi bukan bulat, tapi segi empat*”

know it very well from different sources, e.g. Holy Koran, and Bible, that Adam, the first man created out of dust by God, ate the Fruit of Good and Evil. But people never know what this fruit actually was. Some prefer to call it an 'apple'. Other sources never explained and gave any further hints what is the name of this fruit, its color, its taste, what is the species or variety of this fruit, etc. We know it from the Holy Book or scriptures that this Fruit of Good and Evil is located on the center of Eden and Adam was instructed by God never to approach one particular tree that is forbidden and eat the fruit this tree or plant bore. Since one of the purposes of literature is to entertain, verse 1 somehow serves a purpose of a foolish joke. The writer personally thinks that by referring this Fruit of Good and Evil as an *avocado*, Ismail was only assuming and guessing, almost close to a very-weak-first-layered argument to support his statement. This statement could be seen as a joke or subject of little importance. Another what-if statement that questions our logic is in verses 14 and 15. It brings up an idea of challenging predestination, countering coincidences, and promoting self-reliance. Ismail's thoughts written in verses 14-15 carry a message that everything we wish to happen will eventually happen and things that already happen are because of our own action and decisions.

4.1.1. The Indonesian Anthem, verses 4-5

Starting from this point onwards, there are three discussions on *Bagaimana Kalau*, the writer presents signs interpretations based on the necessity of cracking up codes found within different subtopics of every stanza. Poet's messages, thoughts, and signs found hidden within verses are presented down

below in the format of Triadic System of Linguistic Signs: *Representament, Object, and Interpretant*.

Ismail starts this poem with an anapora that says “*bagaimana kalau*” or in English is translated as “what if”. Especially in verses 4-5, Ismail wants to inform readers that whenever the song of Indonesian national anthem is played or sung the citizens must show respect and proper attitude to respond to it. Generally speaking, when citizens sing *Indonesia Raya* on special occasions or events requiring formalities and ceremonial procedure we have to be very solemn. A national anthem is not something we, Indonesians, can joke about. It is certainly not a laughing matter because the purpose of singing the national anthem is very symbolic. This interpretation is possible because in using Peirce' triadic analysis, the Representament is the physical form of the poem itself, which carries the existing signs inside this poem. There are two signs found in this poem: *Indonesia Raya* and *Kus Plus*. As an Object, Ismail wants to show a comparison of the Indonesian people's respect and attitude towards national anthem and how they respond to the popularity of Kus Plus band that produce rock n' roll and pop music at that time. Whereas, as the Interpretant, Ismail is being satirical on the reality that Indonesians at that time tend to be more attracted to Western cultural products that were booming and seem to forget on their own origin. The following are the verses in his poetry:

Bagaimana kalau lagu “Indonesia Raya” kita rubah, dan

4

kepada Kus Plus kita beri mandate

5

In detail the analysis of the poem is discussed as follows:

1) Representament

The national anthem of Indonesia is *Indonesia Raya*. The national anthem, as people know it, is usually sung in a very solemn and respectful manner for our attitude is equal to giving a salute to the fallen Indonesian freedom fighter, soldiers, and our ancestors who fought against Dutch colonials and imperialists to obtain the independence for our country. The whole procedural things from having and attending flag ceremony to singing our national anthem are very rigid and strictly ceremonial. Everyone who takes part in it is supposed to follow the procedures step-by-step without any exceptions. By not showing this kind of attitude, attendants of flag ceremony are judged for being disrespectful and not very nationalistic. As the writer interprets this one particular sign, the whole procedural and ceremonial things related to national anthem are so rigid that some people might wonder if attendants of flag ceremony earnestly show their respect and have the pride of being Indonesians each time they sing the national anthem. Attitudes displayed by the attendants could be both deceitful and trust-worthy.

An example of having national anthem played and sung followed by a proper attitude and respect could be seen in a flag ceremony that is held every Monday. During this flag-raising tradition, Indonesian national anthem is sung and played until the Indonesian flag reaches the top of the pole. While having the ceremony everyone who attends must salute, show their respect, and stand proudly in solemn. It is believed that people who show no correct attitude, i.e. do not look solemn, and even dare to make noises with giggles and chatters are being

disrespectful to the fallen national heroes and having no gratitude for years of struggle to get Indonesian independence.

However, it is completely a different story on Kus Plus songs. Many people admire their songs and will definitely sing along if Kus Plus songs are broadcasted through the radio. Some genres in music, such as rock n' roll and pop are able to be the music to people's ears. Kus Plus band produced music that tended to focus on pop and rock n' roll music. Due to colonial hybridity, European cultures that Dutch imperialist carried and practiced in Each Dutch Hindis (referring to Indonesia before independence) during colonialism are mixed with local and indigenous cultures. On this point, indigenous people were likely to adopt the way of life, i.e. to think, to act, and practice varied cultural forms that originate from Netherland, Europe, or Western countries in general and mix it with local cultures, wisdom, philosophy of life, arts, literature, food, traditional outfits, and such conditions also took effects on music. Either it is classics or contemporary, Indonesian music is also affected by cultural hybridity. It is said that to make "stray and uncivilized" indigenous Indonesian people to be accepted as proper European-like obedient colonies of the Kingdom of Netherland; Dutch imperialists are given tasks and obligations to turn their colonies to be more "Dutch and European". A kind of cultural "white-washing" happened and was imposed on locals to follow the norms and standards set up by Dutch. If they failed to turn into Europeans in a sense, the Dutch would likely have to penetrate the cultural barriers by infusing bits and parts of European or Dutch culture into indigenous cultures and mix it. If necessary, it had to be done by force. Therefore, their colonies would be more European or Dutch in some ways, i.e. the way

indigenous Indonesians dress, the language they acquire and speak, the food they eat, books they read, and ways they act (Sehat, 2018).

After Independence had been announced, somehow people still love to enjoy European or Western cultural products. Indonesians were still behaving like Dutch, copying European culture, and like anything Western. They tend to have more favor over European or Western songs than the local, indigenous, or traditional ones (Sehat, 2018). Therefore, group band, singers, musicians, and songwriters that produce music using Indonesian language but looking Western, i.e. dressing up as hippies, grow their hair longer than or around shoulder-length, and adopting Western music genre and the way they perform and entertain the audience, started to emerge and multiplied. One of them is Kus Plus, Indonesian male group band that produced rock n' roll songs in 1960s Indonesian (Sehat, 2018). Youngsters at that time would absolutely follow along with its music once it is played, i.e. dancing, singing the lyrics, whistling the rhythm, humming, etc.

2) Object

The reason why Taufiq Ismail wrote down cynically in his poem about "replacing the national anthem with Kus Plus song" was probably due to the fact that Kus Plus had ever been incarcerated by Sukarno with accusations that describe them as pro-Western Imperialism and Neo-colonialism (very much likely to be labeled as non-nationalistic). Ismail might want to point out how Indonesian music evolved before and after Suharto became president. When Sukarno was still governing Indonesia with his idealistic anti-neo-colonialism and Western imperialism (also known as *nekolim*, as Sukarno called it), no one was ever allowed to show any forms of self-expression that were copying the

Western popular culture. Sukarno hated seeing his people simply copy directly without filtering Western countries' popular cultural products and cultural practices without using their so-called Indonesian local genius and act like The Beatles or Elvis Presley, or worse, plagiarizing their music. He detests seeing Indonesian having haircuts that resembled Paul McCartney, John Lennon, and Elvis Presley's iconic hairstyle. He demanded Indonesians to be authentic, be proud of who they are and love Indonesian indigenous songs and cultures more than any other foreign cultures coming from abroad. Sukarno even claimed that rock n' roll music is the kind of "*perusak moral bangsa*" (transl. destruction on morals of Indonesians) and dismissed it as "*ngak-ngik-ngok*" music (transl. "quack-quack" music) (Sehat, 2018). At that time, as many people have known, the existence of The Beatles and the music they produce created a huge wave of delights on music throughout the world and countries, Indonesia experienced the same thing as well, there was certainly no exception. It was the unstoppable force and everyone followed the flow. The new trend then was listening to The Beatles and other rock n' roll songs. Unfortunately, this situation put Kus Plus on close monitoring from government and on edge of something bad. Kus Plus group members were arrested and put to jail on July 1, 1965. They were imprisoned in Glodok Prison for singing two songs of The Beatles, "Money" and "I Want to Hold Your Hand", during *hajatan* (transl. celebration) in one military officer's residence. Anything that had to deal with *nekolim* (although it could be extremely little in amount) is banned by the regime (Sehat, 2018).

After spending some years in prison and was constantly exposed with the revolutionary idea of socialism, Kus Plus members were set free. Their release

happened in 1969 when Suharto already took power and control over Sukarno's Old Order and brought out the infamous New Order regime to existence. During New Order, Kus Plus received a lot of supports and appreciations, something which they never had in previous years under the anti-neocolonialism-imperialism campaign. New Order gave so much opportunities and chances to Kus Plus to develop and gain their fame. Kus Plus' name and reputation would never probably be known and shine without the help of the New Order regime. In Suharto's presidency era, Indonesia became more open to Western society, foreign cultures, and the outside world. New Order was the era where Indonesians can experience a bit of freedom in their lifestyle and the highest form of it was to show their appreciation to music. Youngsters then were copying what had become the trends in the Western countries. Disco kids were considered as hipsters then. Therefore, bars, pubs, disco, massage parlors, foreign luxurious hotels and restaurant providing Western foods were established. These facilities were established according to Governor Ali Sadikin's plans. Just so it can provide the foreign investors some facilities, entertainment, and familiar Western sights to make them feel at home (Morris, Mo; Vit, Jonathan; Smith, Christopher; Maulana, Rizky; Sadiyah, 2018). It was a strategy to lure out foreign investors coming to Indonesia to help this country develop and advance. Jakarta is the set-up destination where investors would harbor in and create the flow of money. Jakarta is the capital city of Indonesia and it has to be the core of economic development in the country.

Western pop songs using English are allowed in Indonesia at the same time foreign investors are nesting in the country. English western music was

constantly played and heard in discos and bars²¹ (Morris, Mo; Vit, Jonathan; Smith, Christopher; Maulana, Rizky; Sadiyah, 2018). Local Indonesian music produced in the recording studios walked in separate was with the disco and nightclubs that were developing and existing in Indonesia. People will not find Indonesian music produced by local bands, singers, and musician played on the dance floor. But it did not mean local Indonesian solo singers, group bands, and musicians cease to exist. They were there to entertain the people, too, using their songs that were composed in both local languages, e.g. Malay, Bataknese, Sundanese, Ambonese, Javanese, etc., and the *Bahasa Indonesia* (Morris, Mo; Vit, Jonathan; Smith, Christopher; Maulana, Rizky; Sadiyah, 2018). But they did not have any place in disco and nightclubs, let alone to be provided with a stage for them to perform. Disco and nightclubs then were not the place for Indonesian music. It was only specially designed and reserved for Western music only. It was considered as the “territory” for foreign investors to come in.

The development of Indonesian music and industrialism were booming during New Order. As for Kus Plus, this group band receives advantages and privileges, e.g. one is to become Suharto’s chess pawn to lure foreign investors (Indonesian music also need investors for it to grow, develop, and prosper), Kus Plus songs, which also have some influence from Portuguese in their *keroncong*-themed songs²², could successfully become a tool to culturally win the hearts of people from East Timor for New Order political purpose. It was for the purpose of Indonesian invasion on East Timor in 1975 right after East Timor was declared

²¹ See VICE Indonesia report entitled *Indopop: Disko Tak Pernah Mati di Indonesia* dated on October 13, 2018. The video of this report is available and can be accessed on YouTube.

²² There was one occasion when Kus Plus produce an album full of songs solely dedicated for *keroncong*.

independent from Portuguese colonialism in 1974. This plan smoothed out one of New Order agenda at that time: making Timor Loro Sae (referring to Portuguese Timor then) become part of Indonesia for its similar background as a former colony to a particular European country. Kus Plus, this famous and well-loved Indonesian rock n' roll band, became the foundation of the development of Indonesian popular music and its industry (Sehat, 2018).

3) Interpretant

The writer sees that the word “*Ku Plus*” itself as a sign. Taufiq Ismail might want to refer on how rock n' roll and popular music was in its golden era in Indonesia. It was the time where people can enjoy the form of freedom of expression through music by getting inspired and references from Western and European music that was so good to hear that many Indonesians favors pop and rock n' roll music that was certainly not the authentic Indonesian local cultural products as many people know it.

Or perhaps this sign could have other meanings behind that. It is probably a figurative language that Ismail used when he wrote: “*kepada Kus Plus kami beri mandat*” (transl. giving a mandate to Kus Plus to re-arrange/re-write Indonesian national anthem). It probably means that people no longer favor and respect Indonesian national anthem, therefore we should change it with another song that people would really love to sing. But in reality, it is certainly not possible to change national anthem song that reflects the history of Indonesia as a country and the birth of this nation with rock n' roll music that is typically “Western” and do not sound Indonesian at all. That would be a form of an insult and disrespect. Although it is a fact that many citizens and residents of Indonesia at that time fell

madly in love with rock n' roll and pop music (that is certainly part of Western influence, a form of mild globalization, and cultural products), it doesn't mean that we should forget and feel less proud of who we are. The identity that people carry as Indonesians should always be there and lingers to part of our culture no matter what. Maybe it was truly the message that Taufiq Ismail wanted to convey: "never forget of our origin and true identity as Indonesians in the midst of cultural assimilation and the effects of globalization through Western music."

4.1.2. The Vietnam Conflict, verse 17-22

Ismail's verses 17-22 of *Bagaimana Kalau* poem talks about the horror of the Vietnam conflict. Taufiq Ismail used the imagery of sound in this part. He wrote in his poem that if the sound of bombs or constant bombardment in Vietnam Conflict could be as sweet and soothing as acoustics plays it will be equivalent to the kind of music people can enjoy. But the real sound of bombs during conflict is not relaxing at all. It horrifies people, both civilians, and soldiers who have had training during their service. The sound of acoustics is often associated with joy, entertainment, and heart-warming music but those qualities can never be found in bombs or conflict at all. Perhaps the purpose of Ismail's writing in this part of *Bagaimana Kalau* poem was to highlight and emphasize how devastating a conflict that ravages a country could be, in this case, that would be the Vietnam Conflict. The irony between sounds of acoustic music and the blazing sound of bombardment is very clear in this poem. This interpretation is possible because in using Peirce' triadic analysis, the Representament is the physical form of the poem itself, which carries the existing signs inside this poem. That sign found in verses 17-22 are "akustik" and "deru bom Vietnam." As for the

Object, Ismail wants to focus or pin-point each element that is included in the Vietnam Conflict, i.e. Vietnamese who became a refugee, the number of casualties, the amounts of bombs dropped on the conflicting country, the U.S. soldiers, Vietcong, and the decisions maker (in this case that would be Communist North Vietnam Commanding Generals or Government and President L. B. Johnson and his civil advisors). Whereas, as the Interpretant, the possible potential meaning could refer to the effects, damages, and what is left after the Vietnam War or the cause of it, the political reason behind U.S. involvement in assisting South Vietnam to battle their Communist brothers, and the possible domino effect of Post-Cold War that the U.S. so feared. The following is the poem for verses 17-22:

*Bagaimana kalau dunia **akustik** jadi demikian sempurna*

17

*sehingga di kamar tidur kau dengar **deru bom***

***Vietnam**, gemerisik sejuta kaki pengungsi,*

gemuruh banjir dan gempa bumi serta suara-suara

percintaan anak muda, juga bunyi industri

presisi dan margasatwa Afrika

22

In detail the analysis is discussed as follows:

1) Representament

At this point, Taufiq Ismail used a figurative speech to describe the sound of bombs or bombardment in Vietnam during the conflict in 1959 until April 30th, 1975. It is a perfect comparison between deafening, brushing, whispering, and

vibrating sounds with moving beautiful acoustics of different musical instrument. The word “acoustic” means the original sound that musical instruments make and it is not made any louder electronically by using devices or equipment (“Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English,” n.d.). Guitars, piano, and saxophone are some examples of musical instruments that are known to produce acoustics in performances and plays. Once acoustic is heard and performed in front of the audience, many will stay to listen until the very end for a good show. Acoustic is a music anyone of different background will find it soothing and enjoyable to listen. It is also undeniably very relaxing to hear songs or any rhythm performed acoustically. It is so relaxing that the voices and vibrations created from a different instrument played acoustically could even drove us into a good deep slumber. Many people are deeply affected and highly advantaged by this acoustics played during their sleep because it helps them to rest and sleep well. With the existence of Sleep Café found in France and Japan that provides comfortable beds with pillows, blanket, and an orchestra and music band playing acoustics at the back sound, it proves that one of the methods to sleep better is by listening to some acoustics.

Another sign found in this piece is “*deru bom Vietnam*” (transl. “series of bombs in Vietnam”). This one might refer to the first phase of the Vietnam War, which is the Air Raid. Some people and scholars believed that it should have been called “Vietnam Conflict” instead. This well-known historical event is also known as the Second Indo-China War, American War in Vietnam, and War Against America to Safe the (Vietnam) Nation (Pike, n.d.; Rosenberg, n.d.). There are two phases in the Vietnam War, the first one is Air Raid and the second one is

Pacification. Since Ismail highlighted on the 'sound' of the bombings, it is important to note that the Vietnam War was the event were the U.S. have dropped up to 860, 000 bombs during Air Raid to North Vietnam alone by 1967, resulted in estimated 35, 000 North Vietnamese died during the bombings (Spencer, n.d.).

Everyone could imagine how unbearable, deafening, and frightening the noises were making at that time. It was a very devastating moment for people living in parts of North Vietnam. Air Raid was basically the time when there was a heavy rain of bombs and heavy missiles dropped by the US with their aircraft. Another fact that is interesting to note is when high commanding officers of Joint Army of the U.S. soldiers, Navy and Air Force wished and favored for massive aggressive bombings on parts of North Vietnam all the way without any compromises to subdue the communist force and socialist government of North Vietnam, their soldiers and the infamous Vietcong from taking over the Southern part of Vietnam (which was not Red yet) under their rule.

The second phase of the Vietnam War is marked by Pacification. It was when the U.S. Army decided to cleanse South Vietnam from communists or soldiers of North Vietnam Army, to help "liberate" it from any threatening presence of Vietcong who were definitely targeting parts of South Vietnam. The U.S. feared that their presence adds more tension since the communism was alive and well in the country. The U.S. forces had given their words to assist the South Vietnam government to have more grasp and control over the Southern part of the country (which was more democratic than the North) by minimizing the presence of Vietcong and communist North Vietnam in the South (Spencer, n.d.). It was the goal for the US to help South Vietnam prevent the spread of communism from the

very first place and it was not about whether they win the war or lose it (Rosenberg, n.d.). There have been quite a lot of misunderstandings amongst many people that think of the U.S. joining the war in Vietnam in hope to eradicate communism in South East Asia. It was never a war at all that was happening in Vietnam, it is an internal conflict that was able to attract attention from foreign countries such as New Zealand, Australia, Laos, Cambodia, South Korea, and (most importantly) the U.S. because it involves with the idea of stigmatized communists (at least that was what American citizens had fed on, believing Communism are inherently evil, does not have any single fear of God). Many young Americans and the U.S. soldiers thought that Communists are the most dangerous threats in the world (Pike, n.d.).

On the other side of the coin, communist North Vietnam wanted to bring South Vietnam together with them in order to become one nation under Communism. It was a moment of unification where Vietnam no longer has to continue their fierce civil war that had cost the lives of many people, both combatants, and innocent civilians. While the U.S. scorns the idea of communism spreading in South East Asia or even the idea of Vietnam being united and become a communist nation. Therefore, they had to prevent Vietnam from becoming Red by providing ammunition, military power, strategists, heavy rains of bombs targeting communists to boost South Vietnam Government Security Force morale, warplanes, assistance, etc. to the South Vietnam government, and forces who were very dependent to it and very desperate of not wanting to be crushed by communists coming from the North. The U.S. was in fact, never had actually declared war on North Vietnam (Pike, n.d.).

Since Taufiq Ismail wrote down “*deru bomb Vietnam*” (transl. “series of bombs in Vietnam”), the writer personally believes that it is better to only focus on Air Raid part instead. As proven contradicted to what the Joint Chiefs of Staffs and the Army, Navy, and Air Commanders in Vietnam expected, the decisions higher up coming from the President L. B. Johnson and his civil advisers were more of careful approach and had to decide and select targets for Air Raid very carefully (Spencer, n.d.). The US was very aware of the risk to be dragged into a war with China if their "intervention" on Vietnam were too much to be seen and observed by China, which was one of the suppliers other than Russia to provide sophisticated weaponry, ammunition, and warplanes to communist North Vietnam as a backup. The U.S. government even carefully decided to plan on keeping twenty-five miles distance from Chinese border nearing North Vietnam (Spencer, n.d.). The U.S. was even threatened by China that if they even dared to "invade" North Vietnam, then China would certainly back up this communist former French-Indo China fellow, cover them up, and waging war with the U.S. on Vietnamese soil. Fearing that China would do the same thing as what they had done during the Korean War with their intervention, U.S. was left with no choice but to be extra cautious and careful in deciding which parts should become targets of their bombings in North Vietnam instead of trying to "liberate" South Vietnam from communism all the way that is rather very risky on the US part. It is proven highly risky because the radius of bombs dropped by the U.S. on North Vietnam could probably affect some parts of Chinese village or city that are situated close to the North Vietnam border.

2) Object

Since Taufiq Ismail made a comparison using figurative speech that put beautiful-enchanted-like melodies produced by acoustics and the deafening-intimidating explosions from series of bombings in Vietnam to insinuate the horror caused by armed conflicts driven by clashing ideologies or seize political power and its impact on civilians to be mobilized from their residence, becoming refugees in their own country, having to stay cautious and prepared for temporary settlements far away, being separated from their close relatives and loved ones, families and children who instantly became homeless and was deprived from any possessions and private property after their houses and villages burnt down, these villagers were assaulted and murdered for fear of Vietcong in disguise or spies coming from North Vietnam (Pike, n.d.). Not only civilians who suffer such loss were under pressure and constant threats of deaths but also the soldiers who fought during the war. The U.S. soldiers had to shifty adapt to such environments where they would often get wet, get infected by ringworms, had to figure out their enemies whereabouts in bushes, tropical rain forest, paddy fields, intricate underground tunnels and villages, these soldiers had to keep their heads clear from frustrations, to constantly patrol and clear some areas, assaulted by Vietcong, got involved in armed contacts, had to get away from booby traps and mines for it is extremely dangerous and caused 30% of the casualties for American soldiers, surviving the extreme tropical weather during the monsoon rain season was another thing, died from infection or ill health, etc. (McLaughlin, n.d.; Spencer, n.d.).

It was very obvious that Taufiq Ismail highlighted the sufferings of the people during this time of conflicts in Vietnam, their tormented soul and having to

witness all of their precious things gone, set ablaze in flames, and grieve for the loss of their loved ones²³(McLaughlin, n.d.). Politically it is very obvious that it was the effect of Post-Cold War. The U.S. would always try their hardest to suppress the growing communist presence from anywhere other than Russia, that means South East Asia was a possible host for communism to grow. They feared for the domino theory that works like this: if they fail to prevent Vietnam from becoming a communist nation, then the whole South East Asian constituent nations will fall under Communism and turn Red (McLaughlin, n.d.; Said, 2015, pp. 114–115). Unfortunately, the U.S. had to retreat and went back home after being overwhelmed by North Vietnam Army and the unbelievably invulnerable guerrilla attacks of Vietcong that never seemed to disintegrate despite of losses, supplies shortage, suffered from casualties, and being wounded by South Vietnamese Government Security Force supported by the Joint Army and Navy of the U.S. (Spencer, n.d.). South Vietnam officially surrendered to communist North Vietnam on April 30, 1975. ALAS, the US had to witness Vietnam be reunited as a communist nation, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, on June 2, 1976, from home (Rosenberg, n.d.). The U.S. had to finally admit that they had failed to prevent Vietnam from becoming a communist country in South East Asia. As stated by William Colby, the fighting at that time didn't stop yet when the soldiers were being sent back to the U.S. but South Vietnam countryside had been widely pacified from communists as the U.S. soldier was instructed to. It was a "lost victory" for the U.S. (Colby, 1989 as cited in Spencer, n.d.).

3) Interpretant

²³ The US marines burnt down 150 houses on the outskirts of a village of Cam Ne. Three women were wounded on the attack, a baby was killed, and four people were taken as prisoners. It was said that this was an order to level the area.

The possible potential meaning behind these two signs, "acoustics" and "series of bombs in Vietnam" if interpreted will be the highly unlikely pleasure, pleasant feelings, or enjoyment experienced that exist during the Vietnam War. Although the U.S. troops could enjoy the amenities and major installations in some of their grand great headquarters such as electricity, hot showers, air-conditioned clubs, athletic facilities, movies, and dining room that served plenty of beer, hot food, e.g. French fries, hamburgers, steaks, and plenty of cold beer, these U.S. soldiers experienced possible tragic and horrible deaths in armed contacts with North Vietnam army. Many people harvest sorrow, bitterness, and loss during every war. What is definitely created and left from this inferno are feelings of resentment, desperations, sufferings, and death toll. War is a very unpleasant thing that no one could ever enjoy to the least. People cannot simply sleep peacefully at night or pretend to be falling asleep in deep slumber if they had to listen to the sound of armed contacts, bombs explosions, weapons on fire, screams of agony, and pitiful cry as acoustics plays to help them sleep. That is impossible to be done in real life. There is only a little chance of brief and simple entertainment in it but often times to be weary from their service at war. Taufiq Ismail did not want to discuss the winning or losing in this Vietnam Conflict. He wanted to make people, his audience, and readers to realize and come to understanding from the fact that bombs and war are definitely not such entertainment where people will cheer up, get lightened up, be at ease, and in peaceful or cheerful state like those we often witness from acoustics music, performances, and plays. It is clearly two opposite poles and never become one to merge or fuse in together. The sound of bombardment or bombs falling from the

sky are enough to signal death and inferno that is about to come. The sound of it is never a lullaby for people who are about to sleep.

4.1.3. Ismail Pursuing His Career, verses 23-24.

Verses 23 – 24 of *Bagaimana Kalau* poem also starts with the same phrase as the title suggests, “*bagaimana kalau*” (transl. “what if”). Ismail’s message in this part is rather more personal to his own life and career. Taufiq Ismail included different descriptions of two occupations that certainly have their own focus or industry to deal with, producing arts and herding cattle. This part has a lot to do with Ismail's career choices and problems he had to deal with on the way where he built his career. The life of a poet is full of struggle, endeavor, risks, and sacrifices to make, it doesn't only happen in Indonesia but it happens all over the world. This interpretation is possible because in using Peirce' triadic analysis, the Representant is the physical form of the poem itself, which carries the existing signs inside this poem. As an Object, signs found in this poem might refer to the consequence that Ismail had to take after signing *Manifestasi Kebudayaan* (transl. Cultural Manifesto) document and his previous plan to grow and own his farmhouse where he can take care of cattle since he has veterinarian education, skills, years of study, and experience to do so. Whereas, as the Interpretant, the sense that is made out of the signs the writer wishes to interpret is Taufiq Ismail’s strong will and determination to keep on producing poems and writing no matter what circumstances he is in or what danger that threats and awaits him from his activity. To become a poet is Ismail’s main goal and he shall have it.

*Bagaimana kalau **kesenian dihentikan saja** sampai di sini,*

In detail the analysis is discussed as follows:

1) Representament

There are two signs found in this part of the poem in which they are connected to one another: "*kesenian dihentikan saja*" (transl. "to stop Arts") and "*pelihara ternak sebagai pengganti*" (transl. "turn to herding cattle instead"). Although this part of the poem did not reflect the social situations, political upheaval, and Indonesian environment in the past very much, the writer thinks that it is deemed important to discuss Taufiq Ismail's past experience that occurred in the 1960s – 1970s Indonesia and his life as a poet. This particular part (verses 23-24 of *Bagaimana Kalau* poem) portrayed phases of his writing career, decisions he had to make, and struggle that he had before becoming a celebrated Indonesian poet today known both nationally and internationally.

The first sign, "*kesenian dihentikan saja*", has many possibilities and carries several interpretations in it. The word "*kesenian*" itself may refer to the activity of producing arts, the art as a noun and a thing, any forms or elements that is included in visual arts or performing arts (e.g. wooden mask of certain characters to perform traditional dance, costumes, colorful fabrics, canvas, painting brushes, palate, etc.), artists (or artisans), composers, authors, poets, directors, and still models for still-life or realistic paintings as subjects behind every form of arts. Additionally, this phrase could even represent the whole process of creating art. In Taufiq Ismail's case and his own experience in previous years of his life, the word "*kesenian*" (transl. Arts) refers to writing poems and

making music. It was no surprise for him as a *Penyair Tiga Zaman* (transl. Poet of Three Generations) to have different jobs from time to time or probably at the same time. Aside from being a poet, writer, translator (all those three since 1978 – present), lecturer in *Institut Pertanian Bogor* (since 1962-1965), Taufiq Ismail also produces some music (Baligh, n.d.; Jati, n.d.). He has made up to 75 songs. His activity in Music and writing songs could be made and achieved due to his partnership and cooperation with Indonesian musicians, especially Bimbo Brothers, Chrisye, Ian Antono, and Ucoq Harahap, since 1974 (Baligh, n.d.; Decazuha, n.d.). With everything explained above, then what is meant by “*kesenian dihentikan saja sampai disini*” is to bring an end to all of these activities related to art, equipment and materials supporting it, any forms that art could take (basically its objects), its subjects (e.g. painters, dancers, performers, composers, musicians, directors, singers, designers, etc.), and the whole process of creating it (in Ismail’s case that would be writing poems for most of his productive time and write some lyrics for his music). This might be the point where Taufiq Ismail thinks of giving up becoming a poet and stop writing all the way. There might be a possibility in it.

The second sign is “*peeliharaan ternak sebagai pengganti,*” this phrase refers to Taufiq Ismail's wish of owning a farmhouse. He thought that it was a good idea to start his career by opening and growing a farm of his own. From this type of investment, he thought it would be easier to secure some budget before allocating it to his dream and main goal, which is becoming a poet. Ismail's personal educational background clearly supports his plan of owning a farmhouse. He received his Bachelor's degree from the Faculty of Farming Management and

Veterinarian in *Institut Pertanian Bogor* and finished his study in University by 1963. Before graduating, he is recorded as an Assistant Lecturer in Faculty of Farming Management and Veterinarian in 1961 in two different places: *Universitas Indonesia* and *Institut Pertanian Bogor*. Aside from that, he even had a career as a teacher that specifically educate his (former) students on Introduction to Farming in *Pesantren Darul Fallah* (transl. Darul Fallah Islamic School) (Decazuha, n.d.). Although he had such wonderful achievements and more than enough experience in Farming Management and Veterinarian, Taufiq Ismail failed to run and grow his own farmhouse (Jati, n.d.). That plan didn't work out pretty well. After some years in the 1970s, it was very fortunate of him to be employed in Unilever Indonesia as *Manager Perhubungan* (transl. Transportation Manager) in 1978 (Decazuha, n.d.; Jati, n.d.).

2) Object

These two signs are in fact referring to Taufiq Ismail's personal life, early in the beginning of his writing career as an Indonesian poet after he finished his higher education in University. The focus of these two signs is not different from one another. In the end, it is revealed that verses 23-24 of *Bagaimana Kalau* rather discuss his dream and ambition of becoming a poet. Taufiq Ismail had always wanted to become a poet and writer ever since he was young during his High School years. Ismail's very first poem that he wrote in High School years is printed and published in *Mimbar Indonesia* and *Kisah* magazines (Baligh, n.d.; Decazuha, n.d.; Jati, n.d.).

After graduating from High School in Pekalongan, Taufiq Ismail decides to embark on his journey by continually improving his skills in poem-writing

activity. Being brought up in a family who favors and apply reading a daily habit and practice, growing up Ismail becomes familiar with books. He loves reading and would not hesitate to learn different subjects through his readings such as Religion, Social, Culture, Arts, and Politics (Baligh, n.d.; Decazuha, n.d.; Jati, n.d.). He is definitely grateful that through his habit of reading books, he finds it easy to start writing and jot down his ideas and thoughts in words. Those are the reasons why he is very keen and talented in arranging beautiful verses and dictions in forms of poems (Decazuha, n.d.). While studying in University, Taufiq Ismail kept practicing his writing skills and had himself drilled with intensive self-study on poem writing. It was not a surprise since his own heart desires for this and poem was his passion from the very beginning (Jati, n.d.).

Ismail's plan of having and growing his own farmhouse is simply because he wants to find a proper source of financial support to fuel his writing career as a poet. It was his plan to work in different occupation aside from being an author and poet so he can make sure that his work could bring enough money to keep his nuclear family members' bellies full. Learning from American author and poet Edgar Alan Poe²⁴, who solely dedicated himself and work as a writer, producing short stories and poem anthology, it would be risky if he had no other job as the source of income to support his family. As experienced by Edgar Alan Poe in his own life full of hardship, Ismail might risk having his financial state to not go well

²⁴ Being granted to have American Field Service International Scholarship experience as an exchanged High School student from Indonesia in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Taufiq Ismail spent his years in USA reading English books written by famous authors such as Robert Frost, Edgar Allan Poe, Walt Whitman, and Ernest Hemingway. It was Hemingway's *The Old Man and The Sea* that Ismail likes the most. Having read all of these famous authors' works, it would have been normal for Taufiq Ismail to also find out about their life and their career history through some readings. The writer assumed that Ismail must have known what happened to Edgar Alan Poe and his tragic life as an author and a person despite his mysterious dark and gothic writings being celebrated throughout the U.S. and across the other continents, adapted into moving pictures, earn appreciations from his reader, and admired by many (Decazuha, n.d.; Jati, n.d.).

and might have to live in poverty (that is in the worst case scenario). He might have set his farmhouse as a backup to support his nuclear family other than having an occupation as a poet and author. Ismail might have thought that herding and selling cattle was a good plan and thought cattle were good commodities in the market. But that dream of owning a farmhouse didn't come to reality. It was originally his plan from the very beginning that growing a farmhouse could actually fuel his activity to produce poems and becoming a real Indonesian poet as he wishes it to be. It was lucky for Taufiq Ismail that he was employed by Unilever Indonesia in 1978 after failing his farmhouse. During his employment in Unilever Indonesia, he managed to get proper budgeting that he can allocate to his writing career since becoming a poet was his dream job.

3) Interpretant

To describe our celebrated Indonesian Poet of Three Generations' works and point out his achievements, the writer dares to say that Taufiq Ismail is known both nationally and internationally for his reputation as an Indonesian author and poet. It is not a surprise for Taufiq Ismail to have his name recognized by international readers and audience because his works and poems are translated into Arabic, English, Japanese, German, French, Chinese; as well as local Indonesian languages such as Javanese, Sundanese, and Balinese (Decazuha, n.d.). Other than that, Ismail has ever represented Indonesia to the international society and audience by reading aloud his poems in foreign countries as well as in Indonesia (Baligh, n.d.).

Although in real life there have been no records managed to be found by the writer on any accounts or sightings that shows Taufiq Ismail feeling down

mentally, lost his hopes, and has no desire left on turning his ambitions into reality, these two signs, of “*kesenian dihentikan saja sampai disini*” and “*peliharaan ternak sebagai pengganti*”, might make some senses that Ismail experienced hardship in paving his future to achieve the sole main goal. If we want to take these two signs way too literally, the possible potential meaning might lie in the events that happened during Old Order, especially the so-called *Manikebu*. During the 1960s, Indonesia was still under the control of President Sukarno's authority. In Old Order, government intervention was quite apparent in Culture and Arts. Therefore, a *Manifestasi Kebudayaan* (transl. Cultural Manifesto) document was made as a sign of protests and disapproval from the community of Indonesian artists, writers, performers, cultural enthusiast, and cultural observers that wish for no dictation and "iron grip" controls from the government. This community wished for autonomy. In a detailed explanation, Cultural Manifesto document was made as a sign of protest, resistance, and a representation of opposing party towards pressure and intimidations that communists, socialists, and (perhaps also) *Sukarnoists* were imposing on them.

Taufiq Ismail is one of those Indonesian artists, poets, and scholars who signed in Cultural Manifesto document²⁵ on August 17, 1963. Consequently, Ismail was never sent to the United States to continue his study in University of Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and was put in redundancy from his job as a lecturer (Baligh, 2017; Woodrich, 2013; Said, 2015, p. 50). It was a very sad and tragic

²⁵ This document is widely known as *Manikebu* during Old Order as a form of cultural resistance and literary rebellion towards the government. It points out and highlights five major problems under Soekarno's Regime: *UUD 1945* as an absolute constitution of the country, socialism practice in Indonesia, *demokrasi terpimpin* (transl. fully controlled democracy), *ekonomi terpimpin* (transl. centralized economy), and Indonesian characteristics that define us as a nation (Elizabeth, 2015).

experience for Taufiq Ismail. He had his flight booked, already prepared his ticket, visa, and passport ready for flying to the US in order to continue his study. But the reality says the otherwise; he was never sent to the US and was put in redundancy from his job as a lecturer in *Institut Pertanian Bogor* (Said, 2015). At this point he might have thought that trying to grow his own farmhouse was a good idea and less risky because he would have a little chance of clashing arguments and beliefs (or perhaps Ideology) with the government and a certain political party. The signing of Cultural Manifesto document is seen and described by PKI as “*kontra revolusioner*” (transl. non-revolutionary) since this Communist party tends to always uphold the idea of creating a progressive and revolutionary environment for Indonesia to improve for a better state. Moreover, this Cultural Manifesto document was clearly banned by President Sukarno, by signing it Taufiq Ismail was probably seen as quite an anti-government poet and a civilian who committed civil disobedience and indirectly announced himself as a poet of *Angkatan 66* (transl. Generation 66 poets).

Poets of *Angkatan 66* (who most of them probably signed the Cultural Manifesto document) had an ultimate goal at that time which was to defend the constitution (Pancasila) and ideology (UUD 1945). Poets of *Angkatan 66* had to struggle against what is described as “a failed government”. These poets used their literary works as a sign of protest. Those people who signed up the Cultural Manifesto document probably detest and disagree with the infusion of Communism that they believed to be destroying the fundamental ideas of Pancasila (Lande, T; Batubara, S; Syafitri R., Arpan, 2017, pp. 6–7). Since this was seen as civil disobedience in the eyes of President Sukarno who introduced

and constantly promote his idealistic *NASAKOM*, those people of *Manikebu* (including Taufiq Ismail) was deprived of their rights in cultural-social-political engagements in the country at that time. Many Indonesian poets who signed up the Cultural Manifesto document experience much less freedom, i.e. no more freedom of expression, deprived rights of speech, banned from participating in Arts, those who worked as civil servant was suspended from their job, they couldn't publicly voice out their opinion let alone to protest, they cannot join in political campaign like what people usually do before election, they are far from being allowed to join political movements, etc. Based on this fact alone, it would have been much safer for Taufiq Ismail if he only focus on growing his farm. He would still have his civil and political rights as a farmer herding cattle if he had not signed the Cultural Manifesto.

Agriculture and Farm was probably the safe place everyone wished to belong in because it wasn't seen as a threat by President Sukarno and might have the slightest bit of chance to be part of civil disobedience. Therefore, making this sector alone as less suspicious in comparison to those poets, academicians, artists, and cultural observer or enthusiasts who explicitly stated their opposing beliefs and ideas to what the government and its allies had at that time. As an owner of a farmhouse, Taufiq Ismail would probably gain assistance from the government in any possible form. It could be a financial incentive or investors that could help him grow his farm. As the owner of a farmhouse, he could purchase more land that has enough grass surrounded by a green and healthy environment for his cattle; he could even get more cattle to care for, multiply, and sell to make some profits. But it didn't happen in his real life in the past and it had been explained

that he totally failed in having a farmhouse of his own, which is quite an unfortunate event although he had the knowledge for that. Therefore, it was a path of becoming an Indonesian author and poet that he chose in his life for his career and passion.

If this part of the poem (verses 23-24 of *Bagaimana Kalau*) is interpreted by applying Peircean Semiotics, i.e. deep analysis on signs found in the poem, the outcome is totally different than the aforementioned descriptions on the previous stanza. The fact that our beloved poet had lost his prestigious job as an academician and civil worker entirely after the signing of Cultural Manifesto document didn't put him down for eternity. *Manikebu* couldn't stop Ismail from expressing himself. He kept on writing and producing poems. No matter how much pressure he had or how many enemies he had made for signing the *Manikebu*, he kept following his passion. It is very clear that his passion was to write down his feelings, thoughts, arguments, ideas, opinion, beliefs, and faith in a form of poetically arranged verses. It is all about the irony that Ismail was using in his poem. The purpose of using irony in forms of writing is for amusement because the real intentions and meaning is totally the opposite of what is being said or stated (Sudaryat, N.; Natasasminta, H., 1983, p. 138).

Aside from its purpose for amusement, the real intentions hidden behind the known utterance could be deadly serious (“Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English,” n.d.). These two verses, “*kesenian dihentikan saja*” and “*pelihara ternak sebagai pengganti*”, show us that Ismail has such a strong will. That means he would never ever stop writing and keep participating as an Indonesian poet and being a part of the Indonesian Contemporary Literature

community. He will always use written poems to connect his soul with receiving audience or surrounding environments and certain topics he is really into. Writing poems really suits him as a form of expression. He will never change that although that means he will have to make the government as his enemy. With all of his outstanding achievements and high level of education, he could have an occupation as a merchant, an imam, a politician, a teacher, or even as a journalist. But he ditched away all of that and stick to what his heart desires, becoming a poet (Decazuha, n.d.).

4.2.Semiotics Approach Applied in *Aku Ingin Menulis Puisi, Yang*

This part provides a detailed introduction of *Aku Ingin Menulis Puisi, Yang* poem and what Taufiq Ismail wrote down in his writings. This introduction is provided for those who have not read or seen any of Ismail's work before to help them grasp an understanding on what issues that become Ismail's focus and his style of writing poems. Analysis and discussions of this poem can be found starting from page 97.

Aku Ingin Menulis Puisi is the second poem that the writer is going to analyze. It is published in 1971 and this poem includes topics widely-varied in terms of its content. Each verse brings up different subjects although in some stanzas Ismail wrote different things and subtopic within the same area or scope. The way the poet present this poetry is almost the same as a storyline. There is an Introduction, Rising Action, and then followed by Conflicts, after we have next steps such as Climax, Anti Climax or Falling of Conflicts, and then the last one is Ending or Resolution. All can be seen as a pattern in this poem. Although the way this poem is presented is not as detailed as some narrative writings where there are

characters, the nature of character, settings, and imageries, this poem is structured to have some, to begin with, that is equivalent to Introduction, then it is developed into more complex discussions until the very end where readers will be able to find parts of Indonesian history written down in the last parts. Clearly, Taufiq Ismail inserted some deep meaning in signs he wrote here in this poem, worthy of interpreting. Before the writer points out and explains stages of the plot or pattern of presenting this poem, the writer wants to discuss the contemporariness in this poem.

On verses 11-17, elements of religiousness are found. Within these six verses, Taufiq Ismail invites the reader to be able to see and admit that life is beautiful, that humans should be grateful for what is given by God. People of different jobs may be fully occupied and definitely have their own fixation on their work. They try their best to perform well and perhaps make some changes in their lives while working. It is very true and widely regarded as good working etiquettes if we work hard and finish our job in time and be happy in our work although our wages and the money we earn after daily labor are not very rewarding. Time is money. Everyone knows that people are constantly reminded by this idea whenever they go to work or trying to finish piles of tasks on time, move to another task, and continue their day. But it will never be wrong to take some time for a while, to think, breathe slowly, count their blessings and realizing on how people can still continue living and working, taking shifts, finishing a project and move on. Another evidence of religiousness elements is found in verses 37-42. It is an invitation to always remember God in hard times, the

statuses people are currently in (well off or in need of financial aid), and whatever circumstances they might be.

These two pieces of evidence clearly prove Taufiq Ismail's tendency as a preaching poet. He already establishes reputations of both God-fearing Muslim and a well-known poet. As explained in Chapter 1, Ismail writes religious-themed poem separately from other poems written in different theme and purpose. His readers and observers also know that Ismail also writes poems about culture, politics, education, and environments in Indonesia. The writer did not know that Taufiq Ismail will still include religious elements, no matter how little its content is, to poems he wrote as a medium of *berdakwah* (transl. preaching). Now let the writer draws the focus to the contemporariness in this poem. One of the aforementioned characteristics of "contemporary Indonesian poems" in previous chapters tends to refer to spiritual longing or religious aspects of human being. In this selected poem, the writer managed to find some traits such as (1) to be grateful for what is given and provided by God, (2) never to lose any hope because better times will eventually come, and (3) to always remember God or be devoted to God. These three certainly meet the characteristics of contemporary Indonesian poems.

The next thing to discuss is a stages-of-plot-like type of writing that is found in this poem. In *Aku Ingin Menulis Puisi, Yang*, Ismail begins with the weather, a very common and familiar topic to be brought up when people start a conversation. The first two verses have five different elements in it: weather, colors, lights, sounds, and clouds (the word "*mega*" is a Javanese for "clouds"). It feels so much like the very beginning of introduction part of a story.

The first encounter with Conflicts lie ahead presented in the poem is found in verses 19-26. These verses remind us of never to lose hope. Examples of life problems, hurdles, and challenges as part of stages of life in this stanza are as follows: serious lifetime illnesses` (asthma and diabetes), unemployed bachelors, job seekers, pensioned ex-elementary school teachers, and frequent customers of pawnshops. All stages of life mentioned above contribute as some sources of anxiety, stress, and frustrations. This kind of problem often let us down and blocks our mind to think positively and be optimistic about life. Not to mention that hordes of negative energy clouds hovering over us change the atmosphere surrounding our environment rapidly. It also materializes despair among people. By writing *Aku Ingin Menulis Puisi, Yang*, Ismail wishes and attempts to form catharsis as remedies to these life problems.

The Rising Conflict stage in this poem is found in verses 32-36. The idea of "justice will serve you right" or "justice is a never-ending battle" is deeply reflected over here. Persecution, incarceration, political rivals of an opposing party being imprisoned, discriminated, and experiencing red tape are the major trigger that will increase strong emotional reactions and responses on these dreadful and pitiful conditions.

The Climax stage of this poem can be seen in verses 68-73. We can spot and name elements of destructions (civil war, conflicting countries, ceasefire), terribly unhappy states people were in (psychiatric patients, weary refugees), and nation-building attempts (to fix bureaucracy and elections). Somehow, Ismail wants to use his belief, words, and thoughts to suppress all of these for he sees there are chaos in Indonesia at that time. Some parts still belonging to Climax are

located at the nearing end of this poem. Verses 83-104 provide so many links, references to Indonesian history, and Allusions. The writer will present her findings, especially for this part in chronological order. The first one is a disastrous event that brings Soekarno's regime to an end. There are two references found in separate verses: "Dja'far Nur Aidit" (verse 89) and "*pemberontakan komunis*" (transl. communist coup, in verse 104). The other references to Indonesian history are found in verses 85 – 99. There are words closely related to *pre*-Malari riots. It is about foreign investors' existence in Indonesia that is believed to be the one that is frustrating local businessmen and Indonesian people at large.

Foreign investors seemed to be the one who could enjoy and harvest the goods and rich sources in Indonesia instead of Indonesian people themselves. Words such as "*pedagang-pedagang Jepang*" (transl. Japanese merchants or business people), "foreign investors", "*menyuapi penguasa*" (transl. bribing officials), and "*sogokan uang*" (transl. bribery) are representations of Suharto's New Order coated with corruption, collusion, and nepotism. Last but not least, is the Malari riot itself.

The last stanza consisting of three verses (verses 105-107) is very obvious to be both the Anti-Climax and Ending part of the poem. In other words, Ismail finishes the poem by writing his yearn for changes and his poem to make some impacts on everything mentioned in this poem. He knows it already that massive subtle change that will eradicate everything that causes suffering, hunger, loneliness, despair, bitterness, and disappointment is not likely possible in a swift

way. By stating that he very much want to write poems that change everything conclude all of his wishes for Indonesia.

4.2.1. Taufiq Ismail's "Civil War and Un-Civil War", verses 68 – 73

In these discussions on *Aku Ingin Menulis Puisi, Yang*, the writer is going to present three different interpretations based on the necessity of cracking up codes found within different subtopics of every stanza. Poet's messages, thoughts, and signs found hidden in verse are presented down below.

In *Aku Ingin Menulis Puisi, Yang* Taufiq Ismail discussed more on the social, political, and historical background of Indonesia then. As we can see on verses 68 – 73 there is a group of a particular noun that can refer to what was happening before and during the 1970s both in Indonesia and neighboring country. That group of words are "*perang saudara dan perang-tidak-saudara*" (transl. "civil war and uncivil war"). Ismail wished to write a poem so ambitious that it is able to stop those wars from happening. Those two could possibly refer to the Vietnam War or the Indonesian internal conflict and political turmoil that almost trigger a real Indonesian Civil War to happen in the country. The Indonesian Civil War, if that really happens, is going to be a clash of political power between Sukarnoists, *NASAKOM* supporters, and Indonesian communists (lead by Sukarno backed up by his loyal men, e.g. Omar Dani and Indonesian Air force) in opposition with *ABRI* (acronym that stands for Indonesian Military) and its force, Pancasila defenders, Islamists, and anti-communists (lead by Suharto and his armed men). This interpretation is possible because in using Peirce' triadic analysis, the Representament is the physical form of the poem itself, which carries

the existing signs inside this poem. That existing signs the writer found in this poem is “civil war and uncivil war”.

As an Object, signs found in this poem if analyzed and observed from the perspective of Indonesian politics and history stand for Sukarno’s attempts to prevent Civil War from happening in Indonesia. Whereas, as the Interpretant, the sense that is made out of the signs the writer wishes to interpret is the misuse of *Supersemar* (a short for *Surat Perintah Sebelas Maret*, in English it is translated “President’s Decree in March 11”) and Suharto’s misconduct that turned Sukarno’s order the opposite way and resulting in "liberating" Indonesia from any form of Communism. In other words, it was the downfall of *NASAKOM* ideology that Sukarno nurtured and the end of Indonesian Communist Party as well.

Aku ingin menulis sajak ambisius yang bisa menghentikan

68

perang-saudara dan perang-tidak-saudara, puisi kota

genjatan senjata, puisi yang bisa membatalkan

pemilihan umum, menambal birokrasi,

menghibur para pengungsi dan menyembuhkan

pasien-pasien psikiatri

73

In detail the analysis is discussed as follows:

1) Representament

It is very clear that Taufiq Ismail's intentions on writing this part of the poem are to communicate his wish that is to stop destruction and chaos from happening. The writer guesses that Ismail's writings in verses 68 – 73 have a lot of

things to do with occurrences before the 1970s. It could either be national or international since Ismail written the words "civil war and uncivil war" in verses 68 until 73.

Talking about civil war, this discussion could be both interpreted nationally or internationally. On the international level, "civil war" could possibly refer to the Vietnam Conflict. The word "civil war" on the national level will have to bring us on the transition phase from Sukarno to Suharto's government. The writer is personally reminded by this. It is something to do with Indonesian people having to be fractioned into two big clashing parties at that time, the Sukarnoists, *NASAKOM* supporters, PKI and their Indonesian commies in opposition with Suharto, *ABRI*, and Anti-Communists, people who call themselves as Pancasila defenders, and basically the majority of the people then. But the fact that the writer is able to comprehend and find out the true meaning behind those signs as Ismail wished to communicate and deliver his message to his readers may not be accurate. The writer sees that signs as Sukarno's prevention to stop Indonesian Civil War from happening as written in verse 68. As for the "uncivil war", the writer personally thinks that this sign refers to the actual war that might already happen or will happen at the beginning of the 1970s. It probably refers to the real war that is happening on the other side of the world, in other countries far away, and in a different continent, which are broadcasted and talked about throughout the world and exposed by mass media. But this particular signs, the "uncivil war", is not discussed any further and the writer only wishes to focus on another sign, which is "civil war", because it has more tendencies to do with Indonesian

political upheaval, the history, and the clashing two parties that the society once had. Additionally, it contains messages and hidden meanings to break down.

2) Object

The event of bloody October 1, 1965 (also known as "communist coup" and it is recognized as *G30SPKI* and *Gestapu* as Sukarno called it). Sukarno at that time already knew that there are fractions inside of *Angkatan Darat* (transl. Indonesian Army) that divides it into parties, i.e. Nasution's side, Yani's side, Suharto's side, etc. As it appears that Indonesian Army then had its own "unofficial divisions" that divides its body into groups according to who is following who. It is proven difficult for Sukarno, as the President and *Pangti* (short for *Panglima Tinggi*) to control and direct *ABRI* according to his orders, and plans since the conditions then had his subordinates already in disintegration and *ABRI* was consist of gangs of different characters. With the assassination of high commanding generals, Sukarno (who was still a president then) assigned Suharto by issuing the *Supersemar*, a direct order from *Pangti* (President), to bring peace, stability, and correct order to the Indonesian people who were harboring resentment and very suspicious towards Indonesian Communist Party. Indonesia was definitely in a state of huge political chaos after the October 1 tragedy. The Indonesian citizens even thought that it is better to slaughter Indonesian communists and members of Communists Youth first before the civilians are brutally murdered and butchered by those violent commies. Unfortunately, Suharto being an opportunist, additionally growing jealousy and was cold toward Ahmad Yani and his gang in Indonesian Military for Yani's military status and position, took an advantage of this *Supersemar* and tried to

achieve higher military prestige and much more power that will bestow him much more authority than before (Said, 2015, pp. 139, 141).

It was higher position and higher authority that Suharto was after and yearned for. With that *Supersemar* in his hand, Suharto made it possible for all eyes to turn against *PKI* (Indonesian Communist Party) with his propaganda. *PKI* was accused of being the mastermind and the culprit behind all the blood bath that occurred on October 1, 1965 tragedy and afterward. With the idea of the President trying to protect *PKI* by using *NASAKOM* ideology and cover it from any confrontations with the Indonesian Army, or even worse with anti-communist rallies, it has weakened Sukarno's standing. In the end, it brought Sukarno to his downfall, in which the chapter of Old Order government ends.

3) Interpretant

With a *Supersemar* in his hand Suharto, appointed and trusted by Soekarno to bring peace and stability in the country after the communist coup tragedy, abused this order and used it to gain more power than ever before. Suharto declared that *PKI* was the enemy of the state; they are anti-Islam, groups of atheists plotting to kill their Imams, and posing a threat to our state ideology *Pancasila*. Therefore, many people came up to a conclusion that *PKI* had to be hunt down and butchered, otherwise the whole country would be in peril and a lot of blood bath will occur in many places if people do not act. Since Communism was one part of *NASAKOM* ideology that was highly advertised, introduced, and socialized by Sukarno, the president himself was the target of Suharto as well. It was his plan to get rid of Sukarno from the presidency and his position as

Panglima Tinggi (transl. Supreme Commander). Just so he can finally rule and have everything he desired in his grasps.

As a matter of fact, at that time Sukarno earned support from Lieutenant General Hartono from *Korps Komando* (also known as KKO) (Said, 2015, p. 109). When Sukarno's presidency was under so much pressure and cornered, Hartono bravely announced his supports for Sukarno. He declared: "*Hitam kata Sukarno, Hitam kata KKO!*" (transl. "Black says Sukarno, black says KKO") (Said, 2015, p.109). This *KKO* already warned Sukarno several times about the Suharto's misconduct, his evil minds, and his wicked motives. The head of *KKO* even suggested Sukarno seize, punish, and imprison Suharto to teach him some lessons. But Sukarno kept refusing to do such thing to Suharto, knowing that the majority of the people and civilians in Indonesia have sided Suharto and became anti-communists in an extreme way. To capture and murder Suharto would certainly be a fatal decision and could turn people back against Sukarno. If he ever did so, the people will see Sukarno as pro-communist (or Left Wing politician) and his decision will start a bloody Indonesian Civil War that Sukarno feared the most. It would split this nation into two: Pro-*NASAKOM* and Communists versus ABRI under Suharto's command and people who claim themselves as Pancasila Defender (additionally the Islamists also take part in slaughtering hundreds or thousands of Indonesian commies to avenge the death of their Imams, fellow Indonesian Muslims, and to protect the Holiness of their Koran).

Sukarno knew it very well that once Indonesia is conflicted by internal political chaos that may led to Indonesian Civil War that divides this country into two, thirsty western neo-colonialism and imperialist countries that are lured by the

richness and natural resources of Indonesia, e.g. fertile soil for agriculture, the availability of timber, gold, metal, silver, coal, various herbs naturally grown in Indonesian soil, cultural heritage, goods, and basically everything that is potential to enrich a country, will certainly invade this country and make Indonesia their colony. Once Indonesia has a Civil War and its defense weakened, foreign countries such as the infamous and hated Queen Wilhelmina's Netherlands, Great Britain, US, and other European or Western countries will invade this country and make a colony for them to prosper.

Sukarno knows very well that the presence of a foreign embassy in Indonesia is already a threat from the 'outside world' to invade his beloved country. Several reasons such as "to secure its embassy, to collect and secure foreign assets in Indonesia, take their (foreign) ambassadors residing in Indonesia back to their home countries" are just ways for *antek-antek Nekolim* (referring to Neo-colonialism and Imperialism allies) to possibly invade Indonesia again. Sukarno never wanted Indonesia to be seized of its independence that was centuries of long struggles and deaths to all people that fought for it. He clearly detests such an idea. To avoid having its sovereignty taken away from Indonesia, Sukarno allowed himself to be destroyed, humiliated, and "murdered" by Suharto slowly but surely. He died from being infected by his illness without any medication he can access during his exile, Sukarno was never allowed to have stationeries, books, or papers, he couldn't have access to the outside world since he was not allowed to read newspapers and listen to any radio program, and he was made as an outcast to his people, relatives, and family. Finally, in his last days, the Founding Father (referring to Sukarno) died in quarantine set up by

Suharto. That was Sukarno's very last attempt to keep Indonesia as one sovereign nation free from any foreign attacks, interference, and invasions since the (possibly almost close to) Indonesian Civil War was successfully prevented. Allowing him to be destroyed and experienced his ultimate downfall, Sukarno drew his last breath. After that Suharto ruled as a (real) fascist for over 30 years with his anti-NASAKOM, anti-communist and anti-Sukarnoist propaganda successfully spread all over Indonesia for generations to come. At least all of those mentioned above are what the writer could try to explain based on her interpretation on "*perang saudara*" (transl. "civil war") is interpreted on the context of Indonesian national political and historical viewpoints.

As a poet, Taufiq Ismail may have his own intentions and messages he wanted to deliver in verses 68 – 73 of this *Aku Ingin Menulis Puisi, Yang* poem. His point of view and the writer's point of view might be very different on this part. However, one of the possible potential meanings of the "civil war" itself could be tracked down and be found in a part of Indonesian history on the "Transition" chapter from Old Order and New Order.

4.2.2. Foreign Investors, Bribery, and the After-effect, verses 94 – 100

As we can see on verses 94 - 100 of *Aku Ingin Menulis Puisi, Yang*, it starts with the same phrase as the title suggests. In English, the translation would be "I want to write a poem that..."). Ismail's message in this part is rather more focused on the existence of foreign merchant or investors in Indonesia. This part highlights how Japanese investors or businessman devour the goods of Indonesian natural resources and left local Indonesian businessmen or people with little to benefit them.

The natural resource that Japanese businessmen benefit from Indonesia is wood taken from Indonesian Borneo soil. It's not hard to predict that what they are looking for is timber and other materials that they can have from cutting down trees grown in Indonesia, e.g. softwood, hardwood, firewood, etc. Aside from Japanese "parasite", other foreign existences in this poem are oil refinery companies. Ismail didn't write, explain, or mention any further which countries those companies come from. All that is found from his writings are just the word "*penanam-penanam modal asing*" (transl. "foreign investors"). That one only can become a clue for further analysis and interpretations on this part. This interpretation is possible because in using Peirce' triadic analysis, the Representament is the physical form of the poem itself, which carries the existing signs inside this poem. Those existing signs found in this poem are Japanese businessmen/merchants, oil refinery companies, foreign investors, and bribery. As an Object, signs found in this poem focuses on foreign investors and businessmen who clearly become the one earning a lot of goods and gain many benefits than Indonesian people who are the ones who own those and deserve to have more of it. Whereas, as the Interpretant, the materialization of the translation of signs the writer intends to interpret is how local businessmen was never the target of investments while the one who often receive investments those who are close to Suharto, his family members, and military officers.

Aku ingin menulis puisi yang mencegah kemungkinan

94

pedagang-pedagang Jepang merampoki kayu-kayu

di rimba Kalimantan, melarang ***penggali-penggali***

minyak dan penanam modal mancanegara

*menyuapi penguasa-penguasa yang lemah-iman,
dan melarang **sogokan uang** pada pejabat
bea-cukai serta pengadilan.*

100

In detail the analysis is discussed as follows:

1) Representament

This part alone may refer to the presence of foreign countries in a form of industry, market, companies, and probably investors in the country. It can be seen from such words written in the poem that may belong in this sector in particular: oil, woods, the word Borneo, bribery, court, and corrupt government officials.

2) Object

The beginning of this part may have a reference to pre-Malari Riots that occurred in 1972. Before the massive demonstration occurred in Jakarta at the same time when Prime Minister of Japan paid the very first visit to Indonesia, the existence of foreign investors is a bother and hindrance to the development of domestic and local industries, business, firms, and the management of Indonesian natural resources.

One of the profitable commodities that are included in verses 94 – 100 is timber. The other natural resource that is "stolen" from us by foreign companies by using a lot of their dirty tricks, as written in this poem, is oil. Foreign oil refineries that managed to settle down in Indonesia for good and have been experiencing a smooth ride running their business by taking away Indonesian natural resources and make tons of profits of their crude, refined, and exported oil

production. The next thing highlighted by Ismail in this part is bribery. It is clearly seen and found that the toxic culture of using bribery and receiving it with open hands have become illegitimate habit taken for granted by many people. In this poem, Taufiq Ismail wrote that those government officials who received the bribery are rather "*lemah imannnya*" (transl. religiously frail; not so devout; weak in principle). In addition, there are also disappointments to our people's representatives, in other words, our own leader and government.

The writer personally do not know and never have any idea whether there is any prohibition in Islam as stated in Holy Koran verses about bribery as equal to committing a sin. But judging from the way on how Ismail put it by writing down "*lemah imannya*" as an adjective to describe government officials who (decided to) receive bribes, it may seem that it tends to be described as grievous violation of people's trust because they must have expected that people's representatives and legislative should act properly and just based on the code of conduct. What seem to be blatantly great sins that the officials have (both apparent and potential) are greed, treachery (because they are misguided and use their position as people's elected leader to abuse their power by allowing foreign company to prosper in our country but neglecting their people's priority and delay making legit actions as regulating foreign companies, industries, and business to have restricted rights on using and processing Indonesian oils, goods, rich natural resources, receiving bribes for their own benefits, etc.), and conspiracy with foreigners.

3) Interpretant

Taufiq Ismail seems to be irritated with the fact that this country is being exploited and utilized by foreign nations for their own benefits with bad business that left us, Indonesians, to benefit very little sounds very unfair. What is left to us Indonesians are resentment to the growing number of foreign companies and industries, e.g. oil refinery. This poetry is a medium for Taufiq Ismail to let his message be delivered to the people, especially his reader. This very part is rather more literal in meaning by having personal touches that Taufiq Ismail wrote in it. By reading this we can somehow understand that Ismail wished for the government officials to never take any bribes coming from foreign investors at the very first place just so the lungs of the rainforests in Indonesian Borneo is still at its prime condition and virgin enough with its richness. Additionally, Indonesians do not have to worry much on how much the market, economy, and money matters being controlled and monitored heavily by foreigners, e.g. Japan as the first growing economy in the world then and sadly Indonesia was relying on their investments during the 1970s.

4.2.3. Gestapu and Its Subjects, verses 83 – 93 and verses 101 – 104

Those two separated parts carry signs and literal meanings from depictions of occurrence that will always be remembered and haunt Indonesia as it is part of the dark chapter in our history. The focus of the writer's interpretation for this poem relies on Dja'far Nur Aidit and children whose parents and relatives became the victim of the communist coup. Although this part has a lot of nouns varied from people's name, a name of a street, places like harbor, but if we want to limit the discussion for this thesis to solely focus on political upheaval happened in Indonesia before and during the 1970s, then what the writer will do is to highlight

and pinpoint Dja'far Nur Aidit to refer to the bloody October 1st tragedy. This interpretation is possible because in using Peirce' triadic analysis, the Representament is the physical form of the poem itself, which carries the existing signs inside this poem. The sign over here is the name of this man, Dja'far Nur Aidit. As an Object, signs found in this poem might refer to the *Gestapu* and its aftermath, e.g. leaving children of the Great General assassinated on bloody October 1st as orphans who are grieved and have traumas for the rest of their lives. Whereas, as the Interpretant, the possible potential meaning is Aidit's possible involvement and fate after the communist coup and the loss that children of Indonesian National Revolution Heroes had for their loved ones (fathers and husbands) were butchered in that tragedy.

Aku ingin menulis puisi tentang merosotnya pendidikan

83

tentang Nabi Adam, keluarga berencana, sepur

Hikari, lembah Anai, Amirmachmud,

Piccadilly Circus, taman kanak-kanak, Opsus,

Raja Idrus, nasi gudeg, kota Samarkand,

Raymond Westerling, Laos, Emil Salim, Roxas

*Boulevard, **Dja'far Nur Aidit**, modal asing,*

Checkpoint Charlie, Zainal Zakse, utang \$3

milyard, pelabuhan Rotterdam, Champs Elysses

dan bayi ajaib, semuanya disusun kembali,

menurut urutan abjad

Aku ingin mengubah syair yang menghapuskan **dendam**

101

anak-anak yatim piatu yang orang-tua dan

paman bibinya terbunuh pada waktu

pemberontakan komunis yang telah silam

104

In detail the analysis is discussed as follows:

1) Representament

On this last part the writer will present interpretations on signs found in verse 89 and verses 101-104. Since the core of this thesis is Indonesian history, political situations, and the environment in the before and early 1970s, the writer will only focus on the events that took place before and after *Supersemar* and basically what happened during the early years of Suharto's power and regime. On verse 89 a sign is found. It carries a name of someone whose position was very crucial during late 1960s, especially on the second half of that decade until the beginning of 1970s. Technically speaking, the name of Dja'far Nur Aidit is immortalized in the dark chapter of Indonesian history. Some people still remember his name for a political party that he belonged to an ideology that he follows. Aidit was the Head of *PKI* at that time. As the Head of Indonesian Communist Party, Aidit was the type of a "bossy" person. He does not like having his subordinate to talk back to him and listen to their opinions very rarely. As a superior dictator-like boss, he directed *PKI* in a quite authoritarian way. Surprisingly, everyone in *PKI* just took everything for granted and allows him to continue doing so without any complaints or objections. A real example can be

point out when he gets into a mild argument. As everyone knows that he likes to “*menempeleng*” (transl. “smack someone in the face really hard”) party members whom he deemed as disobedient and a bit argumentative, Aidit will employ violent method when someone or something gets into his nerve. Since he was the old type of bossy person, he expects everyone to be a Yes-Man and follows every direction and orders that he gave without having to question about it.

2) Object

To a personal level, Asahan Alham Aidit, the younger brother in the family, described Dja’far Nur Aidit as someone who easily trust people who are close to him without even having any single suspicion, doubts, or fear for them (literally trust people too much). This kind of attitude is proven high at risk because one would never know if D. N. Aidit was being manipulated, betrayed, or used by his closest associates since he was way too transparent.

3) Interpretant

Something obvious in Aidit’s political career is the fact that Aidit was a close ally to Sukarno. The relationship between PKI and Indonesian Military was not very good. It had been predicted that a clash between PKI and Indonesian Military is inevitable. Political tensions between two parties already exist, i.e. political rivalry that involves murder, destruction of properties, and conflicts that broke out in other cities and some areas in the countryside (Said, 2015, pp. 36–38). People from *Kostrad* never liked Sukarno having close relationship with Aidit. General Yani even stated “...*kalau Bung Besar (Sukarno) mau punya kekasih banyak, biarkan saja. Tapi, kalau Bung Besar mau main mata dengan PKI, maka dia akan berurusan dengan Angkatan Darat.*,” In English what

General Yani has said is translated like this, “If Soekarno wants to have many lovers, leave him be. But if the President dares to ever set his eyes on *PKI*, he will have to face Indonesian Military for that.”) (Said, 2015, p. 119). The worst nightmare turned into reality after October 1, 1965 tragedy occurred. Days after *Gestapu* the Central Committee office of *PKI* was destroyed into rubles. It was believed that angry mobs could no longer contain their distress and resentment towards *PKI*²⁶. Everything happened so quick that it was very lucky of Aidit’s father, Abdullah Aidit, to be able to survive during that attack (Said, 2015, pp. 86–89).

On verses 101-104, it may seem that Ismail wrote down this part to see things from different viewpoint by including other subject besides Aidit in previous writing and discussion, the children of Indonesian National Revolution Heroes, their mourning, suffering, loss, and pain. The way Ismail wrote *Aku Ingin Menulis Puisi, Yang* on verses 101-104 was very literal. There is barely any sign to interpret. This part was written overtly to let his reader grasp the idea and message he wants to deliver without having to “coat” or “wrap” it with beautifully arranged verses like most poems do. Verses 101-104 could either describe the moment where Communists Youth are slaughtered by Suharto’s men and his cronies or the pitiful and sorrowful state of slaughtered great generals’ families of

²⁶. *PKI* reputation as a notorious political party in Indonesia. This party will not hesitate to use force and violence to get rid of their political rivals. Indonesian Communist Youth were kind of militant and will rally to destroy homes, secret meeting places, and even worship places where people of different ideologies and political views gather around. Whatever seemed to be on the way to hinder and slow *PKI* down from achieving their goals and political agenda will be dealt with. There was a moment when Indonesian Communist Youth trampled Holy Koran while destroying a *pesantren* (transl. Islamic Boarding School), that moment alone could become a backfire for *PKI* itself. This party, later on, was targeted by Moslem Youth and Islamists who thought that *PKI* are a group of atheists who want to slaughter their Imams and seen as enemy of Islam. *PKI* was later accused for their plots to overthrow Soekarno from his presidency.

Indonesian National Revolution Heroes after the tragedy that took the lives of their husbands and fathers on early October 1, 1965.

The first possibility refers to Suharto's *Supersemar* misconduct. He interpreted Sukarno's order "to bring peace and stability to the society after *Gestapu* horror" as "to cleanse Indonesia from any existence of *PKI* or any form of Communism" in a twisted way. From this moment, every Indonesian military officer are instructed to equip citizens from Communists around the neighborhood and assist them to protect their villages by giving them short unofficial combat training to reduce threats from any commies that were feared and hated by anxious citizens. Armed men from Indonesian Military are focused and stationed on cities and different regions where Communists threats are more apparent. Unfortunately, the penalty of Indonesian Communists and their Communist Youths are death. Those who were lucky enough and managed to escape to foreign countries remained as exiles. Some innocent people who were accused as communists²⁷ and remained to stay Indonesia face a lot of unfair treatment and discrimination, e.g., not being able to obtain a better job regardless of their skills, abilities, and outstanding achievements in their previous decades of employment as productive working people, etc. The worst treatment they could ever get is persecution from other people, not having political rights to participate in the election or join any political party, having no and limited chances to work in proper employment, and not having the same rights to receive medical care

²⁷ People who were employed in *Lekra*, be it caricaturists, columnists, journalists, or photographers, are seen in general as communists. This idea and public opinions came up to surface since the word *Lekra* itself was deeply associated as communist media with bunch of poets and writers who tend to have ungodliness content in their writing and very Red in a sense. Poets and writers belonging to *Lekra* very often maneuvered their offensive aggressive attacks through printed media in forms of writings, prose, and poems towards their literary rivals who claim themselves as Pancasila defenders.

provided by the government. Those Indonesian communists who were so unfortunate were murdered. Some murdered by Indonesian Army and most of them were slaughtered by highly anxious, anti-communists and disapproving local citizens (Said, 2015, pp. 187–188).

The second possibility is referring to the great generals' assassination. Their children and wives had lost their beloved husbands and fathers. The great generals were murdered on the tragedy of October 1, 1965. It left the wives and children became orphans and widowers. These children are traumatized and were left with the gruesome memories to remember the last time they saw their fathers and husbands before the communists took their lives. The wives broke down in tears and cried for their deceased husbands whose death was certainly inhumane. Their cries and mourning were inconsolable. The generals' dead bodies were buried and hidden beneath piles of trash in dry and dead wells, and also pits dug for their assassinations. These holes became marks in dark chapter of Indonesian history known as *lubang buaya* (transl. Crocodiles Holes).

On October 4th, the Indonesian Army was supposed to celebrate its 20th anniversary that was planned to be extravagant with euphoria. Instead, they had to bury their late commanding officers and generals in a mass funeral ceremony (Said, 2015, pp. 86–89). These fallen generals who were murdered in communist coup known as *Gestapu*, later on, will be known and recognized as *Pahlawan Revolusi* (transl. Indonesian Revolution Heroes). During the funeral, General Nasution gave his speech with trembling voices in his cry. It was very hard for him to see his comrades in arms to be brutally murdered by communists. General Nasution himself was also one of the targets of *Gestapu*. Luckily he managed to

escape when communists attacked his residence. It was said that he climbed the fence of his residence and jumped over to the office building of Iranian Embassy in Indonesia that was exactly his neighbor (Said, 2015, pp. 86–89). Although he managed to escape, that attack killed Ade Nirma Nasution, his own daughter.

The communist coup had left scars and heartache in the hearts of fallen generals' family members. Many people who were already suspicious on *PKI* and detest Indonesian communists started to grow resentment and plotting revenge towards them. One of the methods to give response towards *G30SPKI* was property destruction. The unstoppable sea of human and angry mobs marched to burn down Central Committee office of *PKI* that was still in construction leaving it desolate and improper to be considered as a qualified office building. Not only that, the angry mobs continued to marched to *Wakil Ketua MPR's* (transl. "Vice Chairman of People's Consultative Assembly") residence and destroyed each room in the house. Every room in that house was in a wreck, everything turned upside down, and was scattered all over (Said, 2015, pp. 86–89). These destroyed buildings were only the little bits of consequences on *PKI*. Those two buildings marked the beginning of their downfall. The next method applied was a form of extreme vigilantism.

There was a concept that worked in Indonesian non-communist civilians' minds at that time: "to kill communists first or stay still and allow the communists butchered us". When Sarwo Edi was ordered by Suharto to liberate some cities in Indonesia from the presence of Communism, he had encountered some hindrances when he was in Purworejo with his men. Some group of people including local youths begged for his help to provide them some soldiers to secure their

environment. Some locals told him that they were frightened and extremely intimidated with the attitude depicted by their communist neighbors who were sharpening their sickles in front of their (communist neighbors') houses suspiciously (Said, 2015, p. 97). This action was both very symbolic in a way. Sickles are one of the tools depicted in Communist red flag alongside with a sledgehammer. By sharpening sickles, it had given the idea that these neighbors were communists who were ready to fight and charge the other neighbors in the residence or villages fully armed with sharpened sickles (or perhaps with sledgehammers as well). It shows them (the non-communists civilians) that the Indonesian communists in the rural areas, countries, or outback were still alive and ready to confront them with lethal weapons.

These locals assumed that if these commies are ignored and was left to continue whatever business they are having, it might lead to casualties. Sarwo Edi explained to them that most of military forces are about to be mobilized to large cities, e.g. in Semarang and Jakarta²⁸ where security and army are needed the most to deal with the commies and to liberate other cities from their presence. It would be difficult if his men are reduced and some soldiers had to stay in small villages just to take care of the existing commies in rural areas. Sarwo Edi, not being able to fulfill what the locals asked by providing some armed men to secure their environment, ordered his men from *RPKAD*²⁹ to train these youths coming

²⁸ Semarang and Jakarta was in a crucial state and needed to be "neutralized and liberated". In Semarang, *RPKAD* needed to neutralize *Kodam Diponegoro* since five out of its seven battalion located in Central Java were already occupied by Leftist officers (Said, 2015, p. 92). While in Jakarta, Suharto needed much reinforcements of armed men to "neutralize" battalions lead by Leftist officers that he had not managed to control (Said, 2015, p. 97).

²⁹ *RPKAD* is an acronym that stands for *Resimen Para Komando Angkatan Darat*, this was the only corps that did not join the confrontation with Malaysia in Northern Borneo to hinder and stop the establishment of "a puppet state", the Malaysia Federation. *RPKAD* was needed by Ahmad Yani to stay in Java just in case if *PKI* was planning for a coup. It was Yani's last hope for back-

from Purworejo and other cities or village some anti-Communist training (as Sarwo Edi called it) to battle the commies themselves (Said, 2015, pp. 97–98). It was equivalent to a small form of combat intelligence training, i.e. introducing the methods and strategies to proceed when encountering enemies and protecting citizens by suppressing the number of possible casualties. With combat intelligence experience in their hands, these Indonesian youths who have had their trainings became those who lead groups of locals to seize and murder the remaining Indonesian communists, both suspected and accused, living in villages and some cities (Said, 2015, pp. 97–98).

Going back the previous discussions on a sign found in verses 83-93. Apparently, D.N. Aidit was the mastermind of all of this chaos and political turmoil that happened in Indonesia. Although there are many theories that point out the four different possible guilty parties³⁰ in this tragedy, Aidit was the one who had one of his plans succeeded and had his ways to deal with Indonesian Military generals. Aidit was the one behind *Gestapu*. To assassinate Indonesian great generals or military elites was his plan after all. That was the plan he told Mao Zedong when he was in Beijing, attending a meeting alongside with delegations of Indonesian communists (Said, 2015, pp. 164–165).

up (Said, 2015, p. 63). Later on, after *Gestapu*, RPKAD was the special corps of Indonesian Army that became the executioners for PKI cadres, sympathizers, Communist Youth, PKI supporters, and commies across Indonesia to liberate it from any Communist presence and “cleanse the evil” (Said, 2015, pp. 93–98).

³⁰ Possible four different guilty parties: (1) foreign involvements through their intelligent that includes the U.S., Great Britain/British Empire/UK, China, and Russia; each of them has their own part according to different kinds of provocations they had done to trigger reactions from Sukarno or Indonesian Army, (2) General Suharto, (3) *PKI* under Aidit’s authoritarian rule, and surprisingly (4) Sukarno as the last possible guilty party. There were so many theories introduced because the thing about *Gestapu* is it had many missing links that prevent historian and citizens to put down pieces together into one clear picture.

It was not his only plans obviously but Gestapu was quite a success to spread terrors nation-wide and created the so-called images of communists in Indonesia: they are violent towards any political rivals, bloodthirsty, the enemy of Islam, depicting ungodliness, often use force, their plot to have military coup, and the enemy of state ideology, Pancasila. Before having all of his plans achieved Aidit's strong force, *PKI*, its body, member, military cadres, politicians, Communist Youth, representatives in rural areas, were slaughtered by General Suharto and his ABRI subordinates. By this, the rest of his plans were never achieved (Said, 2015, pp. 164–165). It was definitely a deadly race in Indonesian political arena that Aidit was in. As for Aidit himself, his name was immortalized in photographs, pamphlets, news article, documentaries, reports, biographies, autobiographies of people who were parts of *NASAKOM* supporters, accounts of *Gestapu*, i.e. both survivors of this tragedy and victims of communist coup, Indonesian history, and Suharto's propaganda against Communism that survives for generations. Dja'far Nur Aidit will be remembered as Left Wing politician from Indonesia and the mastermind behind bloody October 1st tragedy.