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ISLAM AND IDENTITY
IN MOTINGGO BUSYE'S FICTION

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À MA MÈRE,

...le Dieu imprévoyant des pluies d'été et des premiers chagrins, le Dieu braconnier du temps qui passe. Un Dieu comme une mère un peu folle, une mère qui donnerait dans le même geste une caresse et une gifle.

Christian Bobin, *Le Très-Bas.*

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Masak sebiji di atas peti;
Hutang emas dapat dibayar,
Hutang budi dibawa mati.

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Needless to say, none of the above-mentioned people bear any responsibility for the content of the present work.

NOTE ON TRANSLATIONS, SPELLINGS, AND ABBREVIATIONS

Unless otherwise stated, translations of excerpts from works originally published in Indonesian or French are mine. Since English is my second language, I always tried to choose accuracy over elegance of style. The Indonesian (Ind.) and Javanese (Jav.) spellings used here are in accordance with contemporary rules, except for quotations from works published before 1973, where the original spelling has been maintained. The transcription for Arabic (Ar.) follows Wehr's dictionary, except that long vowels are indicated by the circumflex mark (i.e. *â*, *û*, *î*); dotted letters are underlined here (i.e. *ḥa'*, *ṣâd*, *ḍâd*, *ṭâ'*, *ẓâ'*); and *khâ'* is transcribed as *kh*. Most often, however, Arabic loan-words used in Indonesian languages are quoted in their Indonesian official form (e.g. *Islam*, *saleh* for *ṣâlih*, *ilmu* for *'ilm*, etc.). The only abbreviations systematically used in the thesis are limited to the footnotes and pertain to publishers and names of periodicals (e.g. University Press is abbreviated as UP). A complete list of abbreviations is given in the bibliography.

ABSTRACT

The present thesis is a study of one of Motinggo Busye's numerous popular novels, *Anna Soen Nio* (1984). The critical approach underlying much of the analyses undertaken in this thesis is that common to various 'schools' of ***sociocriticism***. The key analytical concepts selected here are ***social discourse***, ***interdiscursivity***, and ***intertextuality***. The main argument running throughout the thesis is that *Anna Soen Nio* is a narrative reworking of contemporaneous debates, pervasive in Indonesian society, on Indonesian identities: ***Muslimhood***, ***Indonesian-ness*** (especially ***Minangkabau-ness***), and ***Chineseness***.

The introduction contains an overview of the sociocritical approach as well as a preliminary discussion on Indonesian social discourse focusing on the position occupied by literary discourse in general and *Anna Soen Nio* in particular. Chapter 1 discusses the contemporary position of the Sino-Indonesians as a minority group with a complex status (socio-economic, urban, ethnic, religious) as well as a representative sample of authoritative, non-narrative discourse on the question of their assimilation into Indonesian society through conversion to Islam.

Chapter 2 presents an overview of Motinggo Busye's life and works as well as an analysis, based on Henri Mitterand's analysis, of ***paratextual elements*** (title, back cover text, foreword) related to *Anna Soen Nio*.

Chapter 3 is a narratological analysis of M. Busye's novel, based on A. J. Greimas' ***actantial model***, which aims at determining what the different stories in the novel are about (conversion, repentance, marriage) and the roles played by the different characters.

Chapters 4 and 5 are closely related: they both focus on the novel's *ideological discourse* on Indonesian identities. In chapter 4, this is done at the level of the novel's personal *onomastics* (characters' names). Chapter 5 uses another sociocritical tool, the *sociogram*, in order to decipher the "image of the Chinese" in *Anna Soen Nio* and stress its interdiscursive and intertextual character. It also discusses the questions of social assimilation, intermarriage, conversion and repentance as they are depicted in the novel. The application of Iurii Lotman's concept of *symbolic spaces*, in the last section of chapter 5, directly leads to the conclusion of the thesis.

In the conclusion, Lotman's concept of the *hero* is used to show that the novel's hero is not its eponymous character. The conclusion also reveals that the multiple identities mentioned above are closely linked, in Motinggo Busye's novel, to *sexual identity* and systematic differences in *family relations* between Sino-Indonesians on the one hand, and autochthonous Indonesians on the other. It will be concluded that, in the novel, the multiplicity of socio-cultural identities goes far beyond the question of religious identity and that conversion to Islam is not presented as the panacea to the problems of the relations between the Sino-Indonesian minority and the Indonesian Muslim majority.

RÉSUMÉ

Le présent mémoire porte sur l'une des nombreuses oeuvres du romancier populaire indonésien Motinggo Busye, le roman *Anna Soen Nio* (1984). L'approche critique qui sous-tend l'essentiel des analyses présentées dans notre étude est celle commune aux différents courants sociocritiques, dont les concepts clés sont le *discours social*, l'*interdiscursivité*, et l'*intertextualité*. L'argument principal de notre mémoire est que le roman *Anna Soen Nio* est une reconstruction narrative de débats contemporains, traversant la société indonésienne de part en part, et portant sur la question des identités indonésiennes: *islamité*, *indonésianité* (particulièrement l'*identité minangkabau*), et la *sinité*.

L'introduction présente brièvement l'approche sociocritique retenue, ainsi qu'un exposé préliminaire sur le discours social indonésien qui met l'accent sur la position qu'y occupe le discours littéraire en général et le roman *Anna Soen Nio* en particulier. Le chapitre premier résume le statut complexe de la minorité sino-indonésienne (minorité socio-économique, urbaine, ethnique, religieuse) et présente un échantillon représentatif du discours hégémonique et non narratif portant sur la question de son assimilation par la conversion à l'islam.

Le second chapitre présente un survol de la vie et de l'oeuvre de Motinggo Busye, ainsi qu'une analyse, fondée sur celle de Henri Mitterand, du *paratexte* (titre, texte de quatrième de couverture, préface) lié au roman *Anna Soen Nio*.

Le troisième chapitre est une analyse narratologique du roman, fondée sur le *modèle actantiel* de Greimas, dont le but est de définir les différentes histoires qui y sont racontées (conversion, repentir, mariage) et les rôles joués par les différents personnages.

Les quatrième et cinquième chapitres sont étroitement liés: leur objet principal est l'*idéologie du discours romanesque* sur les identités indonésiennes. Dans le quatrième chapitre, cet objet est abordé par l'*onomastique* des noms de personnages. Le cinquième chapitre met en oeuvre un autre des outils de la sociocritique, le *sociogramme*, afin de décrypter «l'image du Chinois» dans *Anna Soen Nio* et d'insister sur son caractère interdiscursif et intertextuel. Les questions de l'assimilation sociale, du mariage mixte, de la conversion et du repentir, telles qu'elles son dépeintes dans le roman, sont aussi abordées dans ce chapitre. L'application du concept d'*espaces symboliques*, tel que défini par Iurii Lotman, nous mènera directement de la dernière section du cinquième chapitre à la conclusion de notre étude.

Dans la conclusion, le concept de *héros* propre à Lotman servira à démontrer que le héros du roman n'est pas le personnage éponyme. La conclusion révélera aussi que les multiples identités mentionnées ci-dessus sont étroitement liées, dans le roman de Motinggo Busye, à l'*identité sexuelle* et à des différences systémiques relatives aux *relations familiales* chez les Sino-indonésiens d'une part, et chez les Indonésiens autochtones d'autre part. Nous en conclurons que la multiplicité des identités socio-culturelles déborde largement l'identité religieuse et que la conversion à l'islam n'est pas présentée, toujours dans le roman, comme la panacée aux problèmes des relations entre la minorité sino-indonésienne et la majorité indonésienne musulmane.

ISLAM AND IDENTITY

IN MOTINGGO BUSYE'S FICTION

INTRODUCTION

The present thesis is, first and foremost, a critical study of one specific Indonesian work of literary fiction, a "popular" novel by Motinggo Busye published in 1984 under the title of *Anna Soen Nio*.[1] Like all of Busye's fiction, it is written in Indonesian, the only truly national language of Indonesia.[2] In terms of volume of production, audience, prestige, and so on, Indonesian is, by far, the most important medium of literary expression in contemporary Indonesia. It is also the most important language in the mass media, at all levels of the school system, in public and private administration, etc. In short, Indonesian is the only language widely used in Indonesia that is thoroughly associated with its modern, urban institutions.

Indonesian literature exists as one such modern, urban institution. As late as 1977, one foremost writer and critic, Ajip Rosidi, described the social position of Indonesian literature as follows:

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[1] *Anna Soen Nio* (Jakarta, Kartini Group, 1984). The Indonesian word for novel is... *novel*. It is the word used by the publisher in the (industrial) colophon of the book. As for the adjective "popular," it is also used in Indonesian as *populer* (shortened form: *pop*). Another expression refers to the popular novel: *roman picisan*, which can be translated as 'dime novel.' This expression is now somewhat archaic. As for Motinggo Busye, he is widely recognized since the late 1960s as "the uncrowned master of the genre" (A. Teeuw, *Modern Indonesian Literature II*, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1979, p. 163). His life and works are briefly discussed in chapter 2 below.

[2] A few hundred languages are spoken in Indonesia and many of them are also still used in writing. Literatures in regional languages still exist but have lost most of their strength during the 20th century. The most important, and most studied, of these regional literatures is that written in Javanese. The major study of – and apology for – 20th-century Javanese literature is George Quinn's *The Novel in Javanese* (Leiden, KITLV Press, 1992). Benedict Anderson's views on the decline of Javanese literature in the 20th century should also be taken into account (see his '*Sembah-Sumpah*: The Politics of Javanese Language and Culture,' in *Language and Power*, Ithaca, Cornell UP, 1990, chapter 6).

> Indonesian literature ... besides having to develop itself, still has to develop its public. ... people interested in literature still constitute an exception in the life of this nation of 130 million people, so much [so] that literature is [felt as] a need by only a small number of city dwellers.[3]

Although Ajip Rosidi is mainly concerned here with 'highbrow' literature of the kind favoured by Pustaka Jaya, the publishing house of which he was then director, his conclusion also applies to popular fiction.[4] Print runs are of course much higher for popular novels and many best-sellers have been serialized in newspapers or magazines before appearing in book form. However, considering the sheer size of the Indonesian population, the absolute number of readers constituting the audience for popular fiction remains low.[5]

The position of the novel in Indonesian culture, therefore, cannot be compared to what it used to be, before the advent of

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[3] Ajip Rosidi, 'Pengantar,' in Ajip Rosidi, ed., *Laut Biru Langit Biru* (Jakarta, Pustaka Jaya, 1977), p. 6:

> *Sastra Indonesia ... di samping masih harus memperkembangkan dirinya, tetap harus juga memperkembangkan publiknya. ... peminat sastra masihlah merupakan kekecualian dalam kehidupan bangsa yang berjumlah 130 juta ini, dan dengan demikian sastra hanya menjadi kebutuhan sejumlah kecil manusia kota belaka.*

In an article covering the period 1965-75, Harry Aveling estimated this audience of "young and educated city dwellers" at no more than 4 000 persons on a population of more than 114 million people (H. Aveling, 'Développements récents: 1965-1975,' in H. Chambert-Loir, ed., *Sastra: Introduction à la littérature indonésienne contemporaine*, Paris, Association Archipel, 1980, p. 69).

[4] On Ajip Rosidi and Pustaka Jaya, see Teeuw, *Modern II*, p. 54-55.

[5] Pierre Labrousse estimated that the print run of a best-selling popular novel during the second half of the 1960s was about 20 000 copies (P. Labrousse, 'Motinggo Boesje et le roman populaire,' in Chambert-Loir, ed., *Sastra*, p. 115). During 1980 and 1981, Pramoedya Ananta Toer's novel *Bumi manusia* (Jakarta, Hasta Mitra, 1980) "was on the stands for ten months before being banned, and went into five 10,000 copy print-runs, a best-seller by Indonesian standards" ('The Trials of Pramoedya's publisher,' *Inside Indonesia*, October 1989, p. 31). Pramoedya's case is exceptional in many respects, but part of the success of *Bumi manusia*, according its author, was due to the fact that he "adopted the racy, spoken-language style of the popular commercial literature" (Keith Foulcher, *'Bumi Manusia* and *Anak Semua Bangsa*: Pramoedya Ananta Toer enters the 1980s,' *Indonesia* 32 (1981), p. 1.

cinema and television, in many Western European cultures. In these cultures, the novel has been a key element in shaping the social imagination.[6] The Indonesian social imagination has, historically, been formed by other art forms, most of which were orally produced for aural consumption.[7] The cultural impact of these traditional forms far exceeds that of the Indonesian novel whose development in the twentieth century was stimulated by the discovery of European literature. Since the present thesis is not meant as a contribution to the history of modern Indonesian literature, however, I have to restrict myself to a very schematic presentation of a few relevant elements.[8]

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[6] R. Robin, 'Pour une socio-poétique de l'imaginaire social' (*Discours Social/Social Discourse* 5, nos. 1-2, 1993), p. 7:

> [le roman] a été un élément-clé de l'imaginaire social (du moins avant la généralisation du cinéma et de la télévision) ... une sorte de réservoir d'images, de phrases, de mots, de situations, de modèles narratifs, un foyer culturel très puissant.

[7] See Amin Sweeney, *A Full Hearing: Orality and Literacy in the Malay World* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1987). Although Sweeney's study focuses on Malaysia, it contains much interesting information on Indonesia not available elsewhere. Moreover, his approach – or a similar one – has not been applied with the same scope in studies dealing with Indonesian material. However, several important studies on various Javanese theatre forms (*wayang kulit*, *kethoprak*, *ludruk*, etc.) have been done. Other parts of Indonesia have been less studied, but two specific works are worth mentioning here: John R. Bowen, *Sumatran Politics and Poetics* (New Haven, Yale UP, 1991); and N. G. Phillips, *Sijobang: Sung Narrative Poetry of West Sumatra* (Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1981). Some of these art forms are still very much alive and evolving. They have certainly benefited from the various technologies of sound and image reproduction now widely available worldwide.

[8] The origins of the modern Indonesian novel is, however, a fascinating topic on which there is no entirely satisfying study. The basic global survey remains Teeuw's two-volume study, *Modern Indonesian Literature I & II*. Teeuw's work is very useful because of its scope and erudition, but his apparent lack of critical method is increasingly becoming a problem. His definition of the novel as a genre, for example, is now completely obsolete: "Basically the novel is a long prose story – any attempt at a further and more strict definition has failed so far" (*Modern I*, p. 53). For a radical critique of Teeuw's work, see B. Anderson, 'Reading «Revenge» by Pramoedya Ananta Toer,' in A.L. Becker, ed., *Writing on the Tongue* (Ann Arbor, Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies,

I. CRITICAL APPROACH: SOCIOCRITICISM

While the novel has never played a major role in shaping the Indonesian social imagination, this social imagination has greatly shaped the Indonesian novel and continues to do so in no smaller measure.[9] At the methodological level, this assertion represents one of the fundamental tenets of the critical approach, increasingly known as "sociocriticism," which inspired the present thesis. The problem facing sociological approaches to literature has always been "how to correlate society and literature – or more precisely, society and literary texts – in a convincing fashion."[10] According to the theoreticians and practitioners of sociocriticism, such correlations are to be found within *social discourse*. Briefly

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University of Michigan, 1989), pp. 38-49. For a recent reappraisal of an important period of contacts between Dutch and Indonesian writers and intellectuals, see K. Foulcher, 'Literature, Cultural Politics, and the Indonesian Revolution,' in D. M. Roskies, ed. *Text/Politics in Island Southeast Asia* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Monographs in International Studies, 1993, pp. 221-56). For a remarkable example of what the study of the introduction and transformation of the novel in a non-Western culture may yield, see K. Karatani, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature* (Durham, Duke UP, 1993).

[9] This is even more obvious with the case of the popular novel. As P. Labrousse rightly observes about Motinggo Busye, "par sa production et par son succès, il a le plus collé à son époque, épousé ses mythes" (Labrousse, 'Motinggo Boesje,' p. 117).

[10] Jürgen Link and Ursula Link-Heer, 'Foreword,' in Edmond Cros, *Theory and Practice of Sociocriticism* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1988), p. x. I will not adopt Cros' sophisticated terminology and methodology. His global approach, however, is similar to that of other scholars whose works have not yet been translated into English. I have relied on J. Link and U. Link-Heer' 'Foreword' in order to postpone some translation problems which will be dealt with throughout the present thesis. It is the following works, all in French, that have shaped my understanding of sociocriticism: by M. Angenot, 'Les idéologies ne sont pas des systèmes' (*Cahiers Ferdinand de Saussure* 45, 1991, pp. 51-76) and *1889: Un état du discours social* (Montreal, Le Préambule, 1989); by R. Robin: 'Pour une socio-poétique de l'imaginaire social;' and by Robin and Angenot: *La Sociologie de la littérature: un historique* (Montreal, CIADEST, 1991).

defined, social discourse is "an *ensemble of discursive practices*" existing within a given "*synchronic social system*."[11] Every social system is characterized, at a given moment of its history, by a given division of the global field of its social discourse into discursive fields occupied by different social actors. These actors – politicians, journalists, novel writers, poets, philosophers, etc. – participate in a global 'division of the discursive labour.' In every discursive field, one finds

> topoi, collective symbols, and the categories, beliefs, etc. that are generally accepted (often with the aura of tradition) throughout the culture.[12]

The pervasiveness of the above elements in a given moment of social discourse is defined as *interdiscursivity*. Other elements, either less pervasive or limited to a given discursive field, can most often be viewed as *transformations* of (or variations on) existing topoi, collective symbols, etc. These transformations generally bear the marks of group-specific (often class) world-views. Texts are the result of the combination of pervasive elements and group-specific or field-specific elements.[13] The main objective of a sociocritical reading is

> to reconstruct these ordered/disordered fields as minutely as possible in order to interpret them (in effect by reversing the generative process "in the direction of the source") as "traces" of social antagonisms.[14]

The minute discursive details which allow the sociocritic to unravel the transformations of pervasive topoi realized in a given text are varied. In the present thesis, I will focus on details

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[11] Link, 'Foreword,' p. xi.

[12] Link, 'Foreword,' p. xiii.

[13] Link, 'Foreword,' p. xii.

[14] Link, 'Foreword,' p. xiii-xiv.

concerning the different connotations suggested by the selective use, by the work's narrator and characters, of specific key terms.

II. *ANNA SOEN NIO* AND CONTEMPORANEOUS INDONESIAN SOCIAL DISCOURSE

The official depoliticization of Islam since the establishment of the New Order regime – culminating in the enforcement by the government of the *azas tunggal* policy[15] – has been accompanied by its growing importance in other areas of social life.[16] Various streams of Islamic discourse have thus become more and more prominent in contemporary Indonesia by effectively displacing other kinds of discourse (e.g. "national-revolutionism," secular socialism, and communism) which were pervasive in the Old Order period. This trend has been accentuated during the 1980s by the upward social mobility of a new generation of committed Muslims, their emergence as an important part of the growing middle class,

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[15] The *azas tunggal* (sole foundation) policy, adopted in July 1985, provides that the national ideology, *Pancasila* (Five Moral Principles), be adopted by all mass organizations – including political parties – as their sole ideological foundation. See N. G. Schulte Nordholt, *State-Citizen Relations in Suharto's Indonesia* (Townsville, Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, James Cook University of North Queensland, 1987), pp. 1-6.

[16] The rest of this paragraph draws heavily on Robert W. Hefner, 'Islam, State, and Civil Society: ICMI and the Struggle for the Indonesian Middle Class,' (*Indonesia* 56, October 1993), pp. 1-35; Michael R.J. Vatikiotis, *Indonesian Politics under Suharto* (London, Routledge, 1993), chapter 5, 'Towards an Islamic Identity?' Other slightly older but important works include: R. McVey, 'Faith as the Outsider: Islam in Indonesian Politics,' in James P. Piscatori, ed., *Islam in the Political Process* (Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1983), pp. 199-225; and W. F. Wertheim, 'Indonesian Moslems under Sukarno and Suharto: Majority with a Minority Mentality,' in B.B. Hering, ed. *Studies on Indonesian Islam* (Townsville, Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, James Cook University of North Queensland, 1986), pp. 15-36.

and by the awareness of comparable developments throughout other parts of the Muslim world.

Fiction writing, like any other discursive practice, has not been left untouched by such developments. Islamic discourse about the definition and role of Islamic values and practices in Indonesian society seems to have gradually permeated certain literary circles. Few studies have been undertaken on the representation of Islam in modern Indonesian fiction.[17] Their general conclusions are to the effect that the "Islamic way of life is scantily reflected in pre-war as well as [in] post-war literature."[18] Writing in July 1966, Goenawan Muhamad, a prominent Indonesian writer and intellectual, maintains that "religious questions [have] not yet become a problem (*problematik*) in literary works" and that "religious life still only figures as a background."[19] According to Ajip Rosidi, this situation started to change shortly before the "*coup d'etat*" as religious discourse became increasingly used by writers in order "to distinguish themselves from the atheist writers of the *Lekra*."[20] From 1966

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[17] The most useful articles in this respect are: E. U. Kratz, 'Islamic Attitudes Toward Modern Indonesian Literature.' In C. D. Grijns and S. O. Robson, eds., *Cultural Contact and Textual Interpretation* (Leiden, Foris, 1986), pp. 60-93; and Bahrum Rangkuti, 'Islam and Modern Indonesian Literature,' in B. Spuler, ed., *Handbuch der Orientalistik 3, H. Kahler, ed., Indonesien, Malaysia und die Philippinen.., 3d. 3, Literaturen 1* (Leiden, Brill, 1976), pp. 246-71.

[18] Rangkuti, 'Islam and Modern,' p. 246.

[19] Quoted in Rosidi, 'Pengantar,' p. 12:
masalah agama itu belum menjadi problematik dalam karya sastra ... Kehidupan agama masih merupakan latar belakang belaka.

[20] Rosidi, 'Pengantar,' p. 12: *untuk membedakan diri dari para pengarang Lekra. Lekra* (*Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat*, People's Cultural Institute) was "the organisational structure for leftist artists" (D. T. Hill, 'Who's Left? Indonesian Literature in the early 1980s,' Clayton, Monash University Centre of

onwards, both Muslim and Christian writers increasingly "showed in their works the colour of the religion to which they adhered."[21]

So did Motinggo Busye after a quasi-interruption of his writing activity between 1970 and 1979.[22] In his works published before 1979, markers of Islamic identity are only sporadically present in the background and usually play no role in the development of the plots, whereas in the works published since, there is an obvious and increasing tendency towards greater 'problematization' of Islam as a total social fact.

This tendency reaches a very interesting point in *Anna Soen Nio*, which is essentially the story of a young Sino-Indonesian woman, Anna Soen Nio, who converts to Islam and marries a young Sino-Indonesian man.[23] The theme of conversion of Sino-Indonesians was pervasive in the Indonesian social discourse during the period roughly contemporaneous with the publication of *Anna Soen Nio*. It represented a very important vehicle for the expression of various

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Southeast Asian Studies, 1985, p. 3). Its was dissolved in wake of the coup. The most important English-language study on Lekra is K. Foulcher, *Social Commitment in Literature and the Arts* (Clayton, Monash University Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, 1986).

[21] Rosidi, 'Pengantar,' p. 13:
memperlihatkan warna agama yang dipeluknya dalam karya-karyanya.

[22] Chapter 2 provides more details on Busye's life and creative periods.

[23] Chapter 3 below consists in an analysis of the various stories and characters in *Anna Soen Nio*. The methodology used for this analysis is not, properly speaking, sociocritical. It is based on A. J. Greimas' "actantial model." As for the expression 'Sino-Indonesian' was coined by Jamie Mackie to replace the more common 'Indonesian Chinese.' Both expressions have come to mean 'Indonesian citizen of Chinese descent.' I will adopt Mackie's usage, which he justifies as follows:

> The term "Sino-Indonesian," rather than "Indonesian Chinese," is used here in the contemporary context by analogy with the generally accepted term "Sino-Thai" to stress nationality not ethnicity. (Jamie Mackie, 'Towkays and Tycoons,' *Indonesia*, Special Issue, 1991, p. 84)

interacting, and sometimes conflicting, notions of social identity: Indonesian, Muslim, and Chinese identities.

The popular novel is only one of the many "speech genres"[24] constituting specific discursive fields and social discourse as a whole. I will therefore give specific examples of how these themes are expressed in non-literary discourse enjoying varying degrees of social authority in order to explain how the Sino-Indonesian minority has come to be viewed, throughout the first 20 years of the New Order period, as a target-group from which to recruit new converts. Then I will show that *Anna Soen Nio* shows many similarities, at the ideological level, with works from non-literary fields.[25]

Through the analyses that will follow I hope to demonstrate that the specificity of fictional works may partly lie in the fact that they can create and suggest illusions (fictional truths) that are not subject to the kind of scrutiny based on the assumption of faithful representation or even objectivity to which a newspaper report dealing with the same social issues is. This is both an illustration of the division of discursive labour referred to above and one of the reasons why fictional works are worth studying in their own right, as products of a specific social activity.

The present thesis will thus examine a set of important contemporary social issues as they are presented in a popular novel reaching a relatively wide audience among the Indonesian reading public. The changing identity of both Indonesian Muslims and Sino-

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[24] On the notion of speech genres, see chapter 2 below.

[25] I will also show, to a lesser degree, that it also incorporates some more specifically literary topoi from earlier fiction works by prominent Indonesian authors (chapter 5). This is the essence of *intertextuality*, whereas interdiscursivity concerns the movement and transformation of topoi from one discursive field to another.

Indonesians and the position of the latter in a predominantly Muslim environment should be suitable topics for assessing the contribution of one of Indonesia's best known novelists to the ongoing social dialogue on these questions. It is hoped that the present thesis itself may be seen as a positive contribution, though an outsider's one, to this necessary dialogue. Questions of religious tolerance and social harmony arising from the difficult recognition of the reality and legitimacy of cultural difference are, despite local variations, universal questions. The conclusion of the present thesis will attempt to present a summary of the various responses to these questions as they could be reconstructed from *Anna Soen Nio* and other relevant samples of Indonesian social discourse.

CHAPTER 1

THE SINO-INDONESIANS AND ISLAM IN NEW ORDER INDONESIA: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

I. A COMPLEX MINORITY STATUS

The history of the heterogeneous groups forming what can now be referred to as the Sino-Indonesian minority has attracted much scholarly attention over the last hundred years. One early example is to be found in the work of a French advocate of European colonial ventures, Joseph Chailley-Bert.[1] In his study of Dutch colonialism in Java, Chailley-Bert devoted a chapter to economic competition and "its manifestation among the different races".[2] The bulk of this chapter is devoted to "the Chinese question" and the presence of Chinese communities in Java is indeed reduced to this economic aspect throughout the book.[3]

Subsequently, studies on Indonesian society have of course multiplied and dealt with nearly all aspects of human life throughout the whole span of the knowable historical past and present.[4] The contemporary representations of the different Chinese

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[1] J. Chailley-Bert, *Java et ses habitants* (Paris, Armand Colin, 1900).

[2] Chailley-Bert, *Java*, p. 97.

[3] Chailley-Bert, *Java*: Chapter III (pp. 97-143), sections II to IV (pp. 110-143).

[4] Historians and other scholars interested in long-term interactions between Chinese migrants (and their descendants) and autochthonous Indonesians have drawn a picture of these interactions which is filled with reciprocal influences, cultural borrowings, etc. They have stressed what they perceive as two-way processes of mutual adaptations. Among the most important works recently published, I would single out the following: D. Lombard, *Le carrefour javanais* (Paris, ÉHESS, 1990), especially Vol. II, Chapter IV: 'Le legs chinois'; A. Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce* (New Haven, Yale UP, 1988 & 1993); and C. Salmon, ed., *Literary Migrations* (Beijing, International Culture Publ. Corp., 1987), Part IV: 'Insular Southeast Asia' (*all* eight articles bearing on what is

– now Sino-Indonesian – groups (and individuals) are much more diversified and complete than Chailley-Bert's early work. However, the various interactions between Chinese and Indonesians have often been characterized as conflictual. This negative characterization seems quite appropriate indeed for most of the XXth century. One foremost student of the Sino-Indonesian minority has recently summarized this situation in the following words:

> The disintegration at this time [the 1890s] of the symbiotic relationship between wealthy Chinese businessmen and colonial officials ... was attributable not just to the collapse of the opium kings but also to the fact that the Chinese now found themselves more generally under pressure, even under attack by the Dutch authorities as exploiters of the native people, a popular theme of Ethical Policy reformers. The point can be carried even farther into the present century. The Chinese minority was regarded with hostility, or at least suspicion, by the various state authorities in Indonesia not only through the last half-century of colonial rule but also throughout the next thirty years of Japanese occupation, the revolution, and the early years of independence. Only since the 1970s has something like that earlier symbiotic relationship with the ruling elite been reestablished.[5]

This new symbiotic relationship between Indonesian politico-military elites on the one hand, and Sino-Indonesian business "tycoons" on the other, have not and in fact cannot solve all problems at all levels of society. Too many features of the Sino-

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now Indonesia...).

[5] Jamie Mackie, 'Towkays and Tycoons: The Chinese in Indonesian Economic Life in the 1920s and 1980s,' *Indonesia*, (Special Issue), 1991, p. 86. On the position of the Chinese in XXth-century Indonesia, two works are absolutely essential: J. A. C. Mackie, ed., *The Chinese in Indonesia: Five Essays* (Honolulu, The University of Hawaii Press, 1976); and C. Coppel, *Indonesian Chinese in Crisis* (Kuala Lumpur, Oxford UP, 1983). Many of the contributions published in the special issue of *Indonesia* referred to above are also quite important and representative of the variety of the most recent research in the field. One of the best account of the conflictual relationship is still Mackie's short introduction to his article in the collection he edited (Mackie, in Mackie, ed., *ibid.*, 'Anti-Chinese Outbreaks in Indonesia, 1959-68,' pp. 77-82). Works by other authors – too numerous to be all named here – such as William G. Skinner, Mary Somers-Heidhues, Leo Suryadinata, W. F. Wertheim, and Donald E. Willmott should also be consulted for more in-depth accounts.

Indonesian minority make it stand as a group distinct from the Indonesian majority. Inasmuch as the socio-economic aspect is concerned, Sino-Indonesians "now constitute a core element in the newly emerging Indonesian urban, educated middle class."[6] From this point of view alone, they are a double minority: this Indonesian middle class is itself a minority, because of its socio-economic status, and because it is urban-based in a country where the majority of the population still lives in rural areas.

Sino-Indonesians are generally regarded as a minority according to two more criteria.[7] The first one pertains to the fact that they form, by far, the largest group whose ethnic origin can be traced outside the Indonesian Archipelago.[8] From the time of the declaration of independence until 1980,[9] this question of origin could be expressed in terms of nationality because a great number of Chinese either had dual nationality (Chinese and Indonesian,

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[6] Mackie, 'Towkays,' p. 92.

[7] These two criteria, ethnicity (or "race") and religion, are the ones singled out by one of Indonesia's most prominent journalists, Rosihan Anwar, in an article published in 1969 ('«Minoritas Dobbel» & Kita,' *Komunikasi* 1,8; 25 October 1969). Coppel quotes a short excerpt of it in his *Indonesian*, p. 168.

[8] Statistics concerning the Sino-Indonesians in contemporary Indonesia are generally not very reliable but estimates of their total number in absolute terms are consistent. Junus Jahja, in his numerous newspaper articles and various essays published in the 1980s, generally places it at 5 million. Recently, Mary Somers Heidhues has given a comparable figure: 2,7% of 180 million, i.e. 4,9 million in 1990 (see Mary Somers Heidhues et al., *The Chinese of South-East Asia*, London: Minority Rights Group, 1992, p. 14).

[9] In 1980, the Indonesian government adopted, through a Presidential Decree, a series of measures aimed at facilitating access to Indonesian citizenship for foreign citizens residing in Indonesia (see Coppel, *Indonesian*, p. 157).

between 1958 and 1969) or were not Indonesian citizens.[10] Sino-Indonesians are no longer described as a "foreign" (*asing*) group, i.e. a group of foreign citizens, as they were during the colonial era — when they were classified by the Dutch authorities as "Foreign Orientals" (*Vreemde Oosterlingen*). As the question of nationality gradually became an issue belonging to the past, ethnicity became the privileged vehicle for the expression of foreign origin. It is true that ethnicity, as a category, has been present in Indonesian social discourse since long before the birth of the Indonesian Republic. The idea of ethnicity, as opposed to nationality or even to nationhood, is probably coterminous with the nationalist awakening (1910s-1930s) and was already present in the constitution of the new State:

> Because a number of non-indigenous Indonesians were also beginning to refer to themselves as "Indonesians," indigenous people gradually abandoned this term in favour of the more exclusive "Indonesia asli," or "native Indonesian." This term was introduced into the 1945 Constitution, which states that only an "Indonesian asli" is eligible to become President.[11]

While this description is factually accurate, many would suggest that the translation of the Indonesian word *asli* as "native" is not entirely satisfying. Its basic meanings are closer to 'original,

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[10] Estimates of the proportion of Sino-Indonesians who now hold Indonesian citizenship range between eighty percent (80%) and "well over 90 [ninety] percent" (Mackie, 'Towkays,' p. 92). Eighty percent (80%) is the figure given by Junus Jahja. I will return to this key figure below. As for the political and historical aspects of the question of nationality, they are so complex that they have been the subject of a few separate monographs. However, I have relied on Coppel's major work (*Indonesian*) for the sake of the present discussion. As we will see later, nationality is not an issue in the works of Motinggo Busye.

[11] Sharon Siddique and Leo Suryadinata, '*Bumiputra* and *Pribumi*: Economic Nationalism (Indiginism) in Malaysia and Indonesia,' *Pacific Affairs* 54, no. 4 (Winter 1981-82), p. 670.

authentic, genuine' than to 'native'.[12] This has led Coppel to make the following comment:

> Both the wording and the substance of the constitution and the citizenship law therefore gave colour to the view that the real Indonesians were indigenous and that members of other groups who obtained Indonesian citizenship did so by favour of the Indonesian nation.[13]

Although the text of the constitution has never changed, another word seems to have gradually replaced, after the fall of Sukarno, the adjective *asli* in expressions used to signify autochthonousness.[14] This word is *pribumi*. As noted by Siddique and Suryadinata, this label is not new; it was popularized during the colonial era and later *revived*.[15] It is now widely used and has generated a few

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[12] The entries found in the *Kamus Besar Bahasia Indonesia* (*KBBI*) confirm this suggestion: *1 tulen; murni; tak ada campurannya: emas –; 2 bukan peranakan: orang pribumi adalah penduduk –; 3 bukan salinan* ... (1 pure, genuine, authentic; pure; unmixed: – gold; 2 not of mixed descent: the autochthons are the – inhabitants; 3 not a copy ...). The meanings given in the *KBBI* are practically identical to those given in Wehr's *Arabic-English Dictionary* for the word *aṣlī*, from which the Indonesian word is derived. As for the translation problem, I shall show below that the best translation of 'native' is not *asli* but *pribumi*. However, I shall also avoid using the word 'native' because of its rather pejorative connotations and replace it by 'autochthon' and 'autochthonous.' I already did so in the second acceptation quoted above.

[13] Coppel, *Indonesian*, p. 3.

[14] Siddique and Suryadinata, *'Bumiputra,'* p. 674. The authors note that the first substitute for *asli* had been *nasional*. Since the use of *nasional* does not seem to have been maintained onto the New Order period, it is not of much interest to the present discussion.

[15] Siddique and Suryadinata (*'Bumiputra,'* pp. 675-77) also note that *pribumi* has become increasingly associated with the expression *golongan ekonomi lemah* (economically weak group) and that the government's Second and Third Five Year Plans (1974-79 and 1979-84) included separate economic programs for *pribumi* and *nonpribumi*. The target of these 'positive action' programs were the "economically weak group." This remark brings us back to the socio-economic aspect of the Sino-Indonesians' minority status. But according to my understanding of R. W. Hefner's analysis, one of the most important issues of the 1990s will not pertain to the position of the "economically weak group," but rather to the strategic location of the 'economically rising' group in the formation and consolidation of the middle class (see Hefner, 'Islam').

semantically-related derivations (shortened form: *pri*) and led to the formation of its antonym, *nonpribumi* (shortened form: *nonpri*). Other expressions most often used nowadays to refer to Sino-Indonesians in the press and in other publications are: *nonpri Cina, etnis Cina, WNI [Warga Negara Indonesia], WNI keturunan Cina, keturunan Cina,* and *Cina peranakan.*[16]

The use of the term *Cina* (instead of *Tionghoa*) in most of the expressions above is not especially remarkable in the context of mainstream Indonesian journalistic writings of the early 1990s.[17]

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[16] See for example: 'Etnis Cina Indonesia (Laporan Utama),' *Media Dakwah* 206 (August 1991): 41-49; 'Pribumi dan Nonpribumi (Laporan Utama),' *Tempo* XXI, 26 (24 August), 1991: 27-40; 'Di balik kesenjangan sosial (Laporan Utama),' *Suara Muhammadiyah* 76, no.19 (October 1991): 13-19. These expressions can be translated as follows: non-autochthonous Chinese, ethnic Chinese, Indonesian citizens [of Chinese descent], Indonesian citizens of Chinese descent, [people] of Chinese descent, and Chinese of mixed descent (also translatable as 'locally-born Chinese'). The expression *Warga Negara Indonesia* (Indonesian citizen) and its abbreviation (*WNI*) call for the following explanation:

> The term 'Indonesian citizen' (*Warga Negara Indonesia*—often abbreviated to WNI) had from the beginning an artificial, legalistic flavour to it; if in everyday speech someone was referred to as a WNI, it was commonly understood to mean that he was of foreign (especially Chinese) origin and not indigenous (asli). WNI was thus understood to be an abbreviation of *WNI keturunan asing* ('Indonesian citizen of foreign descent').
> (Coppel, *Indonesian*, p. 3)

The above quotation could very well be rewritten in the present tense, provided the term *pribumi* be substituted for *asli*.

[17] Both terms refer to the same objective reality. *Cina* can be used both as an adjective (Chinese) and a substantive (China), whereas *Tionghoa* is only an adjective (Chinese); its corresponding substantive is *Tiongkok* (China). The history of the use of the terms *Cina* and *Tionghoa* in XXth century Indonesian social discourse has been superbly described in C. Coppel and L. Suryadinata, 'The Use of the Terms «Tjina» and «Tionghoa» in Indonesia: A Historical Survey,' in Leo Suryadinata, *The Chinese Minority in Indonesia: Seven Papers* (Singapore, Chopmen Enterprises, 1978), pp. 113-28. This history is marked by two important processes: 1) the gradual devaluation of the traditional word *Cina* throughout the colonial era and its replacement by *Tionghoa* between 1900 and 1930; and 2) the sudden substitution of *Cina* for *Tionghoa* in September 1966, following a decision announced by a group of top-level Indonesian Army officials. Since 1966 the term *Cina* has been almost universally used. It is clear that the term was first abandoned and later readopted for the same reason: it is derogative and often felt to be offensive.

But we will see below that the use of the term *Tionghoa* has not entirely disappeared from Indonesian social discourse and that the contrast between *Tionghoa* and *Cina* has not lost its potential for arousing controversies.

The fourth and last criteria according to which Sino-Indonesians are generally regarded as a minority is of course the religious criterion. Whereas the vast majority of Indonesians are Muslims, only a very small proportion of Sino-Indonesians are.[18] Although a significant minority of them are Christians, the majority still profess the traditional Chinese religion known as Confucianism despite its highly syncretic character. This syncretic character used to be officially recognized by the Indonesian authorities when Chinese traditional religion was referred to as *Tridharma*, the "three teachings" of Lao-tzu, Confucius and the Buddha.[19] Because Confucianism is "now discouraged in Indonesia, as it is viewed as an 'ethnic' rather than 'world' religion,"[20] Sino-Indonesians who have not converted to Christianity or to Islam profess Buddhism. Moreover, different accounts point to the recent

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[18] Once again, statistics on this topic are not very accurate. Figures given by Junus Jahja range between 0,5% of 4 million (20 000) for Sino-Indonesians *stricto sensu* and 2% of 5 million (100 000) for Sino-Indonesians plus citizens of the People's Republic and people of Chinese descent who are stateless. Since Junus Jahja is one of the most prominent promoters of conversion to Islam among "Indonesians of Chinese descent," it is very unlikely that these figure are underestimations. And they are so low that they can hardly be regarded as overestimations either.

[19] P. Stange, 'Religious Change in Contemporary Southeast Asia,' in Nicholas Tarling, ed., *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia, Vol. 2* (Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1992), p. 575. *Dharma* can also be translated as 'duty, life's-work, virtue.'

[20] Stange, 'Religious,' p. 575.

onset of a movement of 'Buddhist revival' among Sino-Indonesians.[21] One illustration of the fact that Buddhism is, at least implicitly, largely associated with Sino-Indonesians is provided by a speech delivered by the Indonesian Minister of Religious Affairs, Munawir Sjadzali, and broadcast on the National Television and Radio on the eve of the most important Buddhist Holy Day (*Hari raya Waisak*), May 26, 1983. The first half of the speech consists in an appropriate theological exposé. The second half is about social responsibility and is clearly addressed to a segment of Indonesian society largely composed of Sino-Indonesians:

> In the private sector, which constitutes a partner of the government in carrying out the development of this nation, people who run businesses (*berusaha*) rightly and earn their livelihood rightly are also needed. ... Even nowadays we often see people who are not yet free from suffering, including economic suffering. You, brothers of the Buddhist community, have not only a social but also a religious responsibility to pay keener attention to [your] participation in the upgrading of the standard of living and prosperity of the Indonesian society and nation.[22]

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[21] Junus Jahja has briefly mentioned this trend among young Sino-Indonesians: "recently the young generation has been interested in the Nichiren Shosho" (*akhir-akhir ini generasi mudanya tertarik pada Nishiren Shosho*; Junus Jahja, 'Sudahkah kita berdakwah dikalangan Tionghoa?' *Pelita* 30 March 1985; reprinted in Junus Jahja, ed., *Muslim Tionghoa*, Jakarta, Yayasan Ukhuwah Islamiyah, 1985, p. 37). Paul Stange ('Religious,' p. 575) is slightly more explicit on this topic:

> More often local Chinese communities have effectively converted to new forms of Buddhism, some even to Japanese offshoots of Nichiren or to an Indonesian version of the Taiwanese-based Unity Sect.

Nowhere in his long article (56 pp.) does Stange refer to conversion to Islam among Sino-Indonesians. However, this does not discredit his otherwise excellent analyses.

[22] Munawir Sjadzali, 'Sambutan Menteri Agama R.I. Menyambut Hari Waisak Ke 2527 Disampaikan Melalui TVRI-RRI Tanggal 26 Mei 1983,' in Munawir Sjadzali, *Pembinaan Aparatur Pemerintah dan Masyarakat Beragama* (Jakarta, Departemen Agama RI, 1984), p. 102-03:

> *Juga di sektor swasta yang merupakan partner pemerintah dalam menjalankan pembangunan bangsa ini, diperlukan orang-orang yang berusaha dengan benar dan bermata pencaharian yang benar. ... Dewasa ini kita masih banyak melihat orang yang belum terbebas dari penderitaan termasuk penderitaan ekonomis. Saudara-saudara umat*

On a closer reading, the whole text from which the above excerpt was taken appeared to me as a quite eloquent example of how religious and economic issues can be mingled in contemporary Indonesian social discourse. Keeping in mind that this speech was delivered by the Minister of Religious Affairs on a 'strictly' religious occasion, one could indeed speak of religious ideas as vehicles for economic policies. More precisely, it is the authority of religion that is invoked in order to make these policies sound more authoritative (because it is based on a "religious responsibility"). The particular blending of Buddhism (i.e. Chineseness) and privately-run businesses brings us back to our point of departure: the importance of Sino-Indonesians in the composition of Indonesia's middle and upper middle class. However, this should not obscure the fact that Sino-Indonesians are also a *religious* minority living in the midst of a *religious* majority: the Indonesian Muslims. It is to this question that I will devote the remaining of this chapter.

Budha bukan saja mempunyai tanggung jawab sosial tetapi juga tanggung jawab agamis untuk lebih meningkatkan perhatian dalam ikut berpartisipasi meningkatkan taraf kesejahteraan hidup masyarakat dan bangsa Indonesia.

For the sake of grounding my analysis on a minimal comparative basis, I would mention that the speech delivered to the Hindu community – essentially composed of Balinese – on a similar occasion (about a month earlier) is entirely devoid of any reference to the private sector, puts a very strong emphasis on the 'social integration' (*pemasyarakatan*) of Pancasila, and warns against the dangers of superstition and speculative thinking (see 'Sambutan Menteri Agama R.I. pada Malam Dharmasanti Umat Hindu Pada Tanggal 14 April 1983 M. Di Jakarta,' in *ibid.*, p. 85-89).

II. *PEMBAURAN* (ASSIMILATION) AND CONVERSION TO ISLAM

The idea that Sino-Indonesians should assimilate into Indonesian society is not new. It was expressed differently at different moments of Indonesia's modern history, by different groups pursuing different interests. What is undeniable, however, is that it has gained strength throughout the New Order period. As Charles Coppel has noted:

> before the formation of Baperki [1954] there was already a school of thought in the peranakan Chinese community in Indonesia which favoured 'assimilated' politics, and ... a radical minority of this group wanted assimilation in the broader socio-cultural sense. They were, however, a collection of individuals rather than an organised movement.[23]

Baperki's policies were "integrationist" rather than "assimilationist"; it was also a left-wing mass movement whose aims were "the promotion of a proper understanding of Indonesian citizenship and the elimination of discrimination on the basis of descent, culture, customs or religion."[24] In agreement with these aims, its membership was open to any Indonesian citizen. Until its dissolution, however, the organization's membership and leadership remained overwhelmingly Sino-Indonesian. Within the Sino-Indonesian community, Baperki's left-wing program and integrationist policies were increasingly challenged from 1960 onwards.[25] Through a series of strategic actions, the assimilationists finally took the

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[23] C. Coppel, 'Patterns of Chinese Political Activity in Indonesia,' In Mackie, ed., *The Chinese*, p. 51. Baperki is the acronym for *Badan Permusjawaratan Kewarganegaraan Indonesia* (Consultative Body for Indonesian Citizenship). It was formed in March 1954 and dissolved in December 1965. This organization will be briefly discussed below.

[24] Coppel, *Indonesian*, p. 43.

[25] On Sino-Indonesian politics between 1950 and 1965, see Coppel, 'Patterns,' pp. 44-63 and Coppel, *Indonesian*, pp. 31-51.

leadership of the opposition to Baperki and established, in 1963, a rival organization, the LPKB (*Lembaga Pembinaan Kesatuan Bangsa*: Institute for the Promotion of National Unity). It was not until the fall of Sukarno and the dissolution and persecution of all-left wing organizations which followed that the LPKB became the most important link between the Indonesian authorities and the Sino-Indonesian community. However, LPKB's existence was short-lived and its role limited to the transitional period. Its dissolution was effected in November 1967. Less than a month later, a Presidential instruction expressing clear assimilationist views was issued. Here is Coppel's explanation of its content and political import:

> [The Presidential instruction] provided that 'without derogating from the guarantee of freedom to embrace a religion and to carry out its observances, those manners of Chinese religious observances which have aspects of cultural affinity which are oriented to their ancestral land should be practised privately amongst the family or individually'. Similarly, Chinese religious and customary festivities were not to be celebrated in such a way as to be publicly conspicuous, but rather within the family circle.
>
> These pronouncements ... were ... a striking confirmation of the LPKB claim that their policies had been adopted by the government ...[26]

In late 1977, another semi-governmental organization was formed, the Bakom-PKB (*Badan Komunikasi Penghayatan Kesatuan Bangsa*: Communication Body for the Appreciation of National Unity).[27] In many respects, this organization represents a revival of the short-lived LPKB. Its chairmanship has been assumed from the beginning by the former leader of the LPKB, K. Sindhunata. Bakom-PKB also actively promotes assimilationist views. Between 1978 and

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[26] Coppel, *Indonesian*, p. 144.

[27] On Bakom-PKB, see Coppel, *Indonesian*, pp. 169-171; and Lombard, *Carrefour*, vol. II, p. 308 and p. 414, note 1494.

1984, the Bakom-PKB published a journal entitled *Pembauran*.[28] This title is by itself a good indication of the platform of its publisher. The term *pembauran* seems in fact quite closely linked to the formation of the Bakom-PKB. Although the history of the term cannot be fully described here, it is worth noting that it replaced the term *asimilasi*, which was used throughout the Sukarno era.[29] One of its first occurrences in government official statements probably dates from the 1978 Broad Outlines of State Policy, one clause of which reads as follows:

> Endeavours for the assimilation of the nation (*pembauran bangsa*) must be heightened in every field within the framework of strengthening national unity and union.[30]

This terminological development is certainly not the most important difference between the LPKB and the Bakom-PKB. As both C. Coppel and D. Lombard have noted, the main difference lies in the rather strong emphasis that the Bakom-PKB puts on conversion to Islam among Sino-Indonesians as perhaps the best way to achieve assimilation into Indonesian society.[31] Considering the increasing

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[28] Lombard, *Carrefour*, vol. II, p. 386, note 1040.

[29] It is also worth noting that Echols and Shadily's English-Indonesian Dictionary, published in 1975, does not give *pembauran* as a translation of 'assimilation.'

[30] Quoted in Coppel, *Indonesian*, p. 169 (his translation). *Pembauran* can also be translated as 'fusion.' Similarly, the term *penghayatan* (the P of PKB) means much more than 'appreciation.' It is derived from the root-word *hayat* (Ar. *hayâh*, both meaning 'life') through the verbal form *menghayati*, meaning 'experience to the full, comprehend fully.' The affective connotations of these three words are very strong.

[31] Coppel notes that the Bakom-PKB's membership consists of "people of diverse religious and political affiliations" and that it is not "an Islamic front organization" (*Indonesian*, p. 169). Both statements are accurate but Lombard seems to give more weight to the Islamic aspect of the *pembauran* strategy of the Bakom-PKB, "dont les membres préconisent une conversion à l'islam" (*Carrefour*, p. 308). The focus of my analysis will be this Islamic strategy and I will not try to determine its relative weight in Bakom-PKB's overall action.

importance of Islam in Indonesian social life and discourse throughout the 1980s, this strategy is hardly surprising. But considering that it was propagated from as early as 1979, notably with the publication of the brochure entitled *Dakwah dan Asimilasi*, it becomes obvious that its promoters were embarking on a course of action which would benefit from favourable circumstances. It is most likely that they were also aware of various historical precedents that could be seen as justifying renewed efforts.[32]

Throughout the 1980s, the most prominent promoter of conversion to Islam among Sino-Indonesians was undoubtedly Junus Jahja (known as Lauw Chuan Tho until 1962). One of the thirty signatories of the Assimilation Charter (*Piagam Asimilasi*) of 1961 and founding member of both the LPKB (1963) and the Bakom-PKB (1977), Junus Jahja converted to Islam in 1979 and made the hajj in 1980. During this same year he was also appointed, together with H. Abdulkarim Oei, to the national Executive Board of the *Majelis Ulama Indonesia*. In 1981 he founded the *Yayasan Ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic Brotherhood Foundation).[33] As of 1991, he was also

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[32] Prior to the growth of the assimilationist movement of the early 1960s, a number of Sino-Indonesian Muslims were already promoting conversion to Islam in their communities. Two figures are regularly evoked by contemporary Sino-Indonesian propagators of Islam: first, Haji Abdulkarim Oei Tjeng Hien (1905-1988), a convert who bad been a friend of Hamka and Sukarno since the 1930s. Haji Abdulkarim founded in 1953 the *Perkumpulan Islam Tionghoa Indonesia* (Association of Indonesian Chinese Muslims), which later became the *Pembina Iman Tauhid Indonesia* (Indonesian Promoters of Faith and God's Unicity; see Lombard, *Carrefour*, p. 415, note 1494; and Hamka, 'Allah memberi petunjuk kepada siapa yang dikehendakinya,' in Junus Jahja, ed., *Muslim Tionghoa*, pp. 49-51). The second figure is Haji Yap A. Siong (1885-1984), a famous Chinese *muballigh* and a veteran fighter for Indonesia's independence (see his obituary reprinted in Junus Jahja, *ibid.*, p. 39).

[33] The above information on Junus Jahja is drawn from the following sources: Junus Jahja, ed., *Muslim Tionghoa*; and Moentadhim S. M. Martin, ed., *Drs. H. Usman Effendy: AMOI, Aku menjadi orang Indonesia* (Jakarta, Yayasan Ridho Permata Rejeki, 1988). See also Mély G. Tan, 'The Social and Cultural Dimensions of the Role of Ethnic Chinese in Indonesian Society,' *Indonesia* (Special Issue) 1991,

director of the *Lembaga Pengkajian Masalah Pembauran*.[34] During the 1980s Junus Jahja published numerous articles in a wide range of Indonesian newspapers and magazines.[35] The next few pages will be devoted to a summary analysis of the major themes developed in these writings. Because of his stature and authority, and also because of the frequent appeals to higher authorities – both secular and religious – which are scattered throughout his writings, Junus Jahja's positions can be taken as roughly corresponding with the official discourse on questions pertaining to assimilation and conversion to Islam in contemporary Indonesia.[36] Because of his persistent interest in these questions and the variety of his audiences, it is arguably in his writings that this official position is most explicitly stated.

II.1. Junus Jahja's message

Junus Jahja's views were expressed in a series of articles published between 1979 and 1985 and reprinted in the collection entitled *Muslim Tionghoa*. These articles were written in different circumstances and for different audiences but when they are read

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pp. 121-22.

[34] The official English translation of *Lembaga Pengkajian Masalah Pembauran* is "Institute for Studies on Ethnic Chinese Assimilation in Indonesia" (see Junus Jahja, ed. *WNI Beragama Islam*, Jakarta, Yayasan Abdulkarim Oei Tjenng Hien, 1991). A literal rendering would be closer to the following: 'Institute for the Study of Assimilation.'

[35] These articles have been collected and reprinted in several books dealing with *pembauran* and the conversion of Sino-Indonesians to Islam. The most complete selection available to me is Junus Jahja, ed., *Muslim Tioghoa*. Other books that should also be consulted include: Junus Jahja, ed., *WNI Beragama Islam*; *Asimilasi dan Islam* (Jakarta, Bakom-PKB, [1981]); and M. S. M. Martin, ed., *AMOI*.

[36] When the word 'contemporary' specifically refers to primary sources used in the present thesis, it should be understood that it does not refer to anything published later than 1984, the year of publication of *Anna Soen Nio*.

one after the other, repetition and regularities become clearly perceptible and easily lend themselves to an analysis of major themes and discursive strategies. Junus Jahja's central argument, almost systematically repeated in everyone of his articles, is of course the conviction that conversion to Islam is the best way to resolve the problem of assimilation. Here are three representative quotations to this effect:

> After converting to Islam, whether I am a non-autochthonous (*nonpri*), a Chinese (*Cina*), et cetera, is no longer a problem. For myself as well as for the Indonesian people (*masyarakat Indonesia*), who by and large adhere to Islam, the question is fundamentally "over with".[37]

> Indeed, the person of Chinese descent (*keturunan Tionghoa*) who is Muslim pleases the People's heart (*hati Rakyat*) so much that he/she is thoroughly fusioned (assimilated). This person is now left with ONLY ONE problem. That is, to carry out the Islamic shariah (*syariat Islam*) in the best possible way, to become a Muslim who does a lot for his religion. As for the rest, it will be settled by itself.[38]

> After converting to Islam, I personally felt an additional insight. That is, I became so close to the people (*rakyat*) that I was truly regarded as part of the SAME NATION AND THE SAME FATHERLAND! The young generation of people of Chinese descent (*keturunan Tionghoa*) long for such a thing.[39]

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[37] 'Saya adalah saya,' *Terbit*, 9 April 1981; reprinted in *Muslim Tionghoa*, p. 25: *Setelah masuk Islam, kini tidak menjadi masalah lagi apakah saya non-pri, Cina, dan sebagainya. Baik bagi saya sendiri maupun bagi masyarakat Indonesia yang umumnya memeluk agama Islam, soalnya pada dasarnya "selesai."*

[38] 'Setelah 2 Tahun Dalam Islam,' *Panji Masyarakat* 1 July 1981; reprinted in *Muslim Tionghoa*, p. 4: *Memang si keturunan Tionghoa yang Muslim berkenan di hati Rakyat. Hingga terbaur (berasimilasi) secara tuntas. Kini, persoalan baginya tinggal SATU SAJA. Yaitu menjalankan syariat Islam sebaik-baiknya, menjadi Muslim yang berbuat banyak untuk agama. Selebihnya: beres dengan sendirinya.*

[39] 'Makalah Konperensi Dakwah dikalangan Tionghoa,' Salatiga, 5-6 July 1985; reprinted in *Muslim Tionghoa*, p. 41: *Saya sendiri setelah masuk Islam merasakan bahwa ada hikmah tambahan. Yaitu saya kemudian begitu dekat dengan rakyat sehingga betul-betul dianggap SEBANGSA DAN SETANAH AIR! Generasi muda keturunan Tionghoa mendambakan hal*

In the excerpts quoted above, conversion appears to be the *initial* step towards total acceptance by the "Indonesian People" and assimilation into Indonesian society. In other passages, Junus Jahja also says that conversion is the result of assimilation, its natural outcome:

> Fundamentally, the natural process of the conversion to Islam of people of Chinese descent (Islamization as a consequence of Assimilation) cannot be curbed.[40]

Taken together the above quotes are evidence of the fact that the assimilation/Islamization process is both complex and two-fold: Islamization facilitates assimilation and vice versa. It is also a two-way process in the sense that it involves Sino-Indonesians (potential and new converts) and Indonesian Muslims. This explains why a certain rhetoric tension is sometimes perceptible in Junus Jahja's writings. In addressing both groups, he inevitably has to maintain a certain balance between the respective concerns of each of them. I will try to show below how this is achieved by appealing to different sources of authoritative discourse.

The development of Junus Jahja's argumentation relies heavily on the use of quotations from various official sources, including the President of the Republic and the late Hamka, with whom he seemed to have had warm personal ties. Apart from these, Junus Jahja also makes extensive use of one specific excerpt from the Koran and frequently expresses a schematic view of Indonesian history which supports his main argument about assimilation and Islamization.

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semacam ini.

[40] 'Zaman Harapan,' *Pelita* 23 July 1985; reprinted in *Muslim Tionghoa*, p. 21: *Proses alami masuk Islam keturunan Tionghoa (Islamisasi sebagai akibat Asimilasi) ini pada dasarnya tidak dapat dibendung.*

II.1.i. *The Koranic injunction*

> O mankind, We have created you male and female, and appointed you races [*bangsa*] and tribes [*suku*], that you may know one another (and be on good terms). Surely the noblest among you in the sight of God is the most godfearing of you. God is All-knowing, All-aware.[41]

This is the Koranic verse often quoted J. Jahja to support the view that Muslims should not discriminate against one another on the basis of ethnicity. It is interesting to note that the systematic addition of the word *berbaik-baik* (and be on good terms) to the official Indonesian translation represents J. Jahja's personal interpretation; it cannot easily be justified by philological arguments alone. As for its intention, however, it could not be clearer: among *bangsa* and *suku*, the process of knowing one another should always lead to positive results. It may be worth noting, finally, that this addition is only made possible by the fact that J. Jahja is quoting a translation of the Koran, as opposed to the Arabic original. This verse can certainly be addressed to non-Muslims in order to convince them that conversion would end any form of discrimination against them. But it can also be addressed to Muslims as a reminder of one of their religious duties. I shall discuss one of Junus Jahja's important interpretations of this Koranic quote in the last section below.

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[41] A. J. Arberry, *THE KORAN Interpreted* (Oxford, Oxford UP, World's Classics Paperbacks, 1983), p. 538. The words between square brackets are those used in the official Indonesian translation (*Al-Quräan dan Terjemahnya*, Jakarta, Departemen Agama Republik Indonesia, 1982). The reference to this Indonesian edition is 49:13 (*Al-Hujurât*, p. 847). Junus Jahja quotes this passage in several of his articles. He uses this translation but systematically adds a word, between brackets, at the end of the first sentence. This word, translated here as 'and be on good terms' and also bracketed, is *berbaik-baik*.

II.1.ii. *The Presidential injunction*

> Concerning the development of Islam in Indonesia, it was said by H. Alamsjah that President Soeharto was very glad and moved by the fact that many people of Chinese (*Tionghoa*) descent were now converting to Islam. This means that those concerned automatically assimilate into the mass of the people.[42]

This is of course first-class political imprimatur, despite the fact that President Soeharto himself may never have uttered these words. What matters is that they were attributed to him by another authoritative political figure and that, to my knowledge, no official denial was ever issued by the presidency. Doubtless, such a denial would have been a great embarrassment for H. Alamsjah Ratu Perwiranegara. Subsequent developments (Soeharto's blessing of the founding of ICMI, Soeharto's hajj, etc.) are quite consistent with the presidential pronouncement on Islamization and *pembauran*.

II.1.iii. *The lessons of history*

> ... history has proven that the people of Chinese descent who first came to Indonesia several centuries ago were pious Muslims, like Admiral Moh. Cheng Ho and his companions in the XVth century. It is only with the coming of Dutch colonialism that non-Muslim Chinese were brought in; assimilation, amalgamation and fusion processes were stopped altogether, with the fatal consequences still felt up to this day.
>
> If the above facts were systematically and quietly broadcast, then we would be overwhelmed, unable to accommodate the youth of

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[42] *Muslim Tionghoa*, on flyleaf: *Mengenai perkembangan Islam di Indonesia dikatakan oleh H. Alamsjah, bahwa Preside Soeharto gembira dan terharu sekali dengan mulai banyaknya keturunan Tionghoa di Indonesia masuk memeluk agama Islam. Hal itu berarti bahwa yang bersangkutan otomatis membaur dengan rakyat banyak.*
It is also quoted in a slightly different form in 'Setelah 3 Tahun Masuk Islam,' *Liberty* 10 July 1982; reprinted in *ibid.*, p. 8. The source of this declaration by H. Alamsjah Ratu Perwiranegara, former Minister of Religious Affairs and then Coordinating Minister for People's Welfare, is mentioned as *Berita Pers Ibukota*, 26 May 1985.

> Chinese descent who would wish to return to the religion of their ancestors, which was, essentially, Islam.[43]

There is a great deal of historical truth in the above quote but it is largely confined to the first paragraph.[44] Like many such appeals to the authority of the past, the conclusions drawn by the author seem to deny the importance of the consequences of the historical process. The major paradox in this passage can be expressed as follows: on the one hand, Chinese Muslims who settled in Indonesia – mostly on Java's north coast – in pre-colonial times went through a completely successful assimilation process. On the other hand, most Sino-Indonesians in contemporary Indonesia are not Muslims and a great deal of them are still identified or identify themselves as Sino-Indonesians. How could these pre-colonial settlers be the ancestors of people belonging to the contemporary group of Sino-Indonesians just described? Although it is widely acknowledged that the advent of Dutch colonialism did stop the assimilation process in many important respects, it certainly did not undo what had already been thoroughly achieved (according to the view expressed by J. Jahja). In other words, the ancestors of most living Sino-Indonesians came to Indonesia during the colonial

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[43] 'Setelah 3,' *Liberty* 10 July 1982; reprinted in *Muslim Tionghoa*, p. 9: *... sejarah membuktikan bahwa keturunan Tionghoa yang semula datang di Indonesia beberapa abad yang lalu adalah Muslim-Muslim yang saleh. Seperti Laksmana Moh. Cheng Ho dan kawan-kawannya di abad ke-XV. Bahwa baru dengan datangnya kolonialisme Belandalah didatangkan orang-orang Tionghoa yang non-muslim hingga proses asimilasi, peleburan dan pembauran mandeg sama sekali dengan akibatnya yang fatal hingga hari ini.*

Jika hal di atas disebar-luaskan secara sistematis, berencana dan tenang, maka ... kita akan kewalahan menampung idealis-idealis muda keturunan Tionghoa yang ingin kembali kepada agama leluhurnya yang pada hakekatnya Islam itulah.

[44] The best introduction to these questions is Ann L. Kumar, 'Islam, the Chinese, and Indonesian Historiography – A Review Article,' *JAS* 46, no.3 (1987): 603-16.

era and their fate cannot be dissociated from it.[45] But the convenient demonization of the colonial era as a whole requires that such a dissociation be done in the most forceful way. The colonial era has to be completely bypassed. It is this necessity that explains the reference to the Chinese admiral and his companions.

II.1.iv. *Hamka, Confucianism, Taoism and Chinese converts*

It is undeniable that Hamka shared Junus Jahja's views on the question of *pembauran*. Hamka also took an active part in the conversion movement inspired by the Bakom-PKB. Moreover, as chairman of the *Majelis Ulama*, he issued a statement after the anti-Chinese riots of 1980 in which he advocated conversion as the best means of assimilation. The last paragraph of this statement reads as follows:

> As for the attitude of the Muslim community towards assimilation, or *pembauran*, there is nothing new about it. Islam does not discriminate on the basis of someone's origins, race or ancestry. And daily life shows that Indonesians of Chinese (*Tionghoa*) descent who convert to Islam are so well received and accepted that they are spontaneously and thoroughly assimilated.[46]

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[45] The Chinese population of the Dutch East Indies increased dramatically through immigration between 1860 and 1930:

> By 1860 there was an estimated Chinese population of 222 000 in Indonesia, two-thirds of whom lived in Java. But the most rapid increase occurred in the following 70 years, when large-scale Chinese immigration accompanied the extension of Dutch power over the whole of the archipelago and the resultant intensified exploitation of its resources.
> (Coppel, *Indonesian*, p. 1)

[46] 'Pernyataan Majelis Ulama Indonesia,' 10 December 1980; reprinted in *Muslim Tionghoa*, p. 58: *Mengenai sikap umat Islam terhadap asimilasi atau pembauran, hal itu bukankah sesuatu yang baru. Islam tidak membeda-bedakan asal-usul, ras maupun keturunan seseorang. Dan kehidupan sehari-hari menunjukkan bahwa orang-orang Indonesia keturunan Tionghoa yuang memeluk agama Islam diterima oleh rakyat dengan baik sehingga terbaur dengan sendirinya secara tuntas.*

A second aspect of Hamka's interest in these questions is frequently mentioned by Junus Jahja in his articles. It concerns Hamka's views on Confucianism and Taoism on the one hand, and of their relation to Islam on the other. The fullest expression of Hamka's views is to be found in the following passage:

> Let it be known that [Hamka] mastered the philosophy and world-view of the people of Chinese descent living in Indonesia. He spoke about Confucius. ... There are many similarities between the teachings of Confucius and those of Islam, said [Hamka]. Among other things, the duty to love and respect our elders and parents! From Buya [Hamka] we also learned that Lao Tze explained that God "cannot be felt, has no form, but EXISTS". And [that] the TAO is identical with the straight path and is associated with... TAUHID![47]

This kind of basic comparative analysis is rather common in Indonesian social discourse. Sometimes its function is clearly irenic. In this specific instance, it rather serves to illustrate the view that conversion does not necessarily imply a total rejection of Sino-Indonesians' "philosophy and world-view." The specificity of this passage might lie in the use of a complex pun which sums up the overall analogy between Taoism and Islam. First, at the semantic level, Tao (meaning 'way') is equated with "the straight path," a clear allusion to the expression *ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*. Second, at the phonetic level, Tao sounds like the first syllable of *tauhid*. Such word-games are also rather common in Indonesian social discourse. They are a traditional form of folk etymology whose effectiveness depends on one's intellectual background.

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[47] 'Setelah 3,' *Liberty* 10 July 1982; reprinted in *Muslim Tionghoa*, p. 6: *Ketahuilah kita bahwa beliau menguasai falsafah dan pandangan hidup masyarakat keturunan Tionghoa di Indonesia. Keluar dari mulut beliau uraian mengenai Kong Hu Cu. ... Ada banyak persamaan antara ajaran Kong Hu Cu dan Islam itu, kata beliau. Antara lain kewajiban mencintai dan menjunjung tinggi orang tua dan Ibu-Bapak kita! Dari Buya kita kemudian mengetahui pula bahwa Lao Tze menjelaskan bahwa Tuhan itu adalah 'sesuatu yang tidak dapat diraba, tidak berbentuk, tetapi ia ADA'. Dan TAO adalah identik dengan jalan yang lurus dan diasosiakan dengan... TAUHID!*

The third and last theme of Hamka's discourse that is frequently quoted by Junus Jahja pertains to the socio-economic status of the new Sino-Indonesian converts. This theme, which can easily be traced back to writings by Hamka that are widely available, is summarized by J. Jahja in the following quote:

> Formerly (according to the late Buya Hamka) those who converted to Islam were financially strained but today a striking change can be observed. Nowadays those who convert to Islam are in rather good financial situations, many come from business circles as well as from the most educated strata. And an increasing number are young college and university students.[48]

This phenomenon is arguably what is generally perceived as the most important and most desirable change. In fact, people belonging to the social strata mentioned above are precisely those who are designated by Junus Jahja's *Yayasan Ukhuwah Islamiyah* as the principal target for promoting conversion among Sino-Indonesians.[49] Thus is expressed the conviction of Sino-Indonesian Muslims like

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[48] 'Sudahkah Kita Berdakwah Dikalangan Tionghoa,' *Pelita*, 30-3-1985; reprinted in *Muslim Tionghoa*, p. 37: *Kalau tadinya (menurut almarhum Buya Hamka) yang masuk Islam adalah mereka yang umumnya kepepet ekonominya, kini ada perubahan yang menonjol. Dewasa ini yang masuk Islam cukup baik keadaan ekonominya, banyak dari kalangan pengusaha dan juga kaum terpelajarnya. Dan makin banyak generasi mudanya seperti siswa dan mahasiswa.*

One can find very similar words in Hamka's 'Zaman Harapan Bagi Keturunan Tionghoa,' (1981); reprinted in *Muslim Tionghoa*, pp. 59-61. In this article, Hamka makes clear that the "financially strained" Chinese who converted to Islam in the past were called *mualaf*, a word with several negative connotations (*asosiasi pikiran*). The overall impression is that these Chinese *mualaf* had converted to Islam as a desperate attempt to obtain support from the Muslim community when all other sources of support had failed them (see Hamka, 'Zaman,' p. 59). Jahja himself never uses *mualaf* to refer to recent converts but prefers the expression *saudara baru* or *ikhwan baru*, both meaning "new brother."

[49] See back cover text of *Muslim Tionghoa*:
Yayasan Ukhuwah Islamiyah ... aktif menyebarluaskan agama Islam terutama di kalangan intelektual, wiraswasta dna remaja keturunan Tionghoa. (The Islamic Brotherhood foundation is active in spreading Islam, especially among intellectuals, private entrepreneurs and youth of Chinese descent.)

Junus Jahja that the emerging middle class of committed Muslims should also include part of the Sino-Indonesian elite.

II.2. A terminological polemic revived: *Cina* versus *Tionghoa*

In an article published as a "Comment" in the weekly magazine *Tempo* in mid 1985, Junus Jahja presents a subtle apology of the use of the term *Tionghoa*.[50] He directly makes reference to another of his articles, published in *Panji Masyarakat* in 1983, which provoked the publication of at least one negative comment in *Tempo*.[51]

In his article, Jahja repeats once again that the conversion of Sino-Indonesians "pleases the People's heart" (*hati Rakyat*). He also acknowledges that it makes some people "nervous" (*gelisah*). The negative reaction published in *Tempo* hinted at the possibility that "those involved [i.e. Sino-Indonesian converts] refuse to be called "*Cina*" and demand to be called *Tionghoa*."[52] People who manifest such a negative reaction, Jahja continues, do not understand the principles of Islam. The principles in question are given by the Koranic injunction already discussed above:

> O mankind, We have created you male and female, and appointed you races [*bangsa*] and tribes [*suku*], that you may know one another (and

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[50] 'Muslim Tionghoa: Sekadar Nama Kesayangan,' *Tempo* 22 June 1985; reprinted in *Muslim Tionghoa*, pp. 43-44.

[51] The chronology of this polemic is as follows:
Jahja, 'Muslim Tionghoa: Panggilan yang Akrab,' *Panji Masyarakat* (21 February 1983); unidentified negative comment in *Tempo* (25 May 1983 or 1985); and 'Muslim Tionghoa: Sekadar Nama Kesayangan,' *Tempo* (22 June 1985), reprinted in *Muslim Tionghoa*, pp. 43-44. Jahja also quotes from an article by Rosihan Anwar, 'Muslim Tionghoa,' *Pos Kota* (1 May 1984), also reprinted in *Muslim Tionghoa*, pp. 78-80. I will rely solely on Jahja's article published in *Tempo* because I am interested in *his* perception of both sides of the debate.

[52] J. Jahja, 'Muslim Tionghoa: Sekadar Nama Kesayangan,' p. 43: *yang bersangkutan menolak di "Cina"-kan, menuntut disebut Tionghoa.*

> be on good terms). Surely the noblest among you in the sight of God is the most godfearing of you. God is All-knowing, All-aware.[53]

Junus Jahja's punctual interpretation immediately follows:

> This Commandment clearly establishes that Islam is a universal religion that does not discriminate on the basis of origins, ancestry or skin colour. Because of this, for me whose origins are "over there" up north, the main problem is not whether I am called *Cina*, *Tionghoa* or *WNI keturunan asing*; whether I have to show my *K-1* or whether I am given a different National Identity Card (*KTP*) and so on. Because in God's eye we are all equal – these differences are not principal. As long as no one says, of course, that I am not a Muslim. And in accordance with the teachings of my religion, we Muslims are all brothers (**Islamic brotherhood**).[54]

When one recalls that the organization with which Junus Jahja is most closely linked is the *Yayasan Ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic Brotherhood Foundation), the last sentence takes additional overtones and the whole quote can indeed be understood as a justification of the need for such an organization. Although Jahja seems to say that there are more important issues (e.g. administrative discrimination), he concludes his article with a justification of the use of the expression *Muslim Tionghoa*. Once again, Jahja invokes sources of authoritative discourse: Rosihan

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[53] Arberry, *THE KORAN*, p. 538. See note 41 above for a full explanation of Jahja's use of this passage.

[54] 'Muslim Tionghoa: Sekadar Nama Kesayangan,' *Tempo* 22 June 1985; reprinted in *Muslim Tionghoa*, p. 43: *Berdasarkan firman itu, sudah jelas bahwa Islam adalah agama universal yang tidak membeda-bedakan asal usul keturunan dan warna kulit. Karena itu, bagi saya yang berasal dari utara "sana", tidak menjadi persoalan pokok apakah saya disebut Cina, Tionghoa, WNI keturunan asing, diharuskan menunjukkan K-1, diberi KTP yang berbeda, dan lain-lain. Sebab, di mata Tuhan kita semua sama – perbedaan-perbedaan itu tak prinsipiil. Asalkan saja, tentunya, jangan dikatakan saya bukan seorang Muslim. San sesuai dengan ajaran agama saya itu, kami sesama Muslim adalah bersaudara (**ukhuwah islamiyyah**).*
WNI keturunan asing means 'Indonesian citizen of foreign descent' (see note 16 above). As for *K-1*, I assume it is some type of official document. The reference to the National Identity Card probably alludes to the putative existence of a special code used to distinguish citizens of 'foreign' descent (see Mély G. Tan, 'The Social and Cultural Dimensions,' p. 123, including note 27).

Anwar, a prominent Indonesian journalist, and the head of the regional office of the Department of Religious Affairs in Central Java, Mr Halimi A.R. Both agree with Jahja that the expression *Muslim Tionghoa* should be used because it is "friendly" (*akrab*). Jahja adds that it is a question of tolerance and that Pancasila teaches tolerance. Mr Halimi A.R. is quoted as having declared that the "birth" of the expression *Muslim Tionghoa*

> was not meant to create compartments among fellow Muslims, but was only an expression of the shared pride and happiness that we are gaining new brothers in faith coming from a group who used to be remote from Islam. [The expression] *Muslim Tionghoa* is but a term of endearment used by the Indonesian Muslim community to [call] their new brothers in faith who happen to be of Chinese (*Tionghoa*) descent.[55]

This polemic is indicative of the fact that the conversion of Sino-Indonesians to Islam is perceived in certain circles as an attempt to restore the 'terminological dignity' of which they had been deprived by the substitution of the term *Cina* for *Tionghoa* from the second half of the 1960s onward. I will return to this sensitive issue in the conclusion of the present thesis.

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[55] Jahja in *Tempo*, reprinted in *Muslim Tioghoa*, pp. 43-44:
"bukan untuk mengadakan pengkotakan antara sesama Muslim. Tetapi semata-mata ungkapan turut bangga dan berbahagia bahwa kita mendapat saudara seiman dari golongan yang tadinya jauh dari Islam. ... "Muslim Tionghoa sebetulnya sekedar sebutan nama kesayangan dari umat Islam Indonesia kepada saudara-saudara barunya yang se-agama yang kebetulan dari keturunan Tionghoa."

CHAPTER 2

ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND AROUND THE NARRATIVE

I. ABOUT THE AUTHOR: OVERVIEW OF MOTINGGO BUSYE'S LIFE AND WORKS[1]

Aku tidak tahu kau memilih jalan ke mana
segala jalan melintas di telapak tanganmu

Tetapi dapatkah kau mengingkari
adanya yang kekal
Dapatkah kau mengingkari
adanya jalan ke dalam dirimu?[2]

Motinggo Busye[3] was born in 1937 in the province of Lampung in Southern Sumatra to parents of Minangkabau descent. His mother was a teacher of Koranic recitation and his father was a painter. They both died when he was thirteen years old and he was sent to the town of Bukittinggi, located in the heartland of the

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[1] Most of the following information about Motinggo Busye's life and works is taken from F. Soemargono, *Le «Groupe de Yogya» 1945-1960* (Paris, SECMI, 1979); from two articles by P. Labrousse, 'Motinggo Busye et le roman populaire,' in H. Chambert-Loir, ed., *Sastra: Introduction à la littérature indonésienne contemporaine* (Paris, Association Archipel, 1980), pp. 115-120; and 'Sociologie du roman populaire indonésien,' in P.B. Lafont and D. Lombard, eds., *Littératures contemporaines de l'Asie du Sud-Est* (Paris, L'Asiathèque, 1974), pp. 241-50; from A. Teeuw, *Modern Indonesian Literature II* (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1979); from Indra Syamsi, 'Kita harus siap menggelindingkan diri sendiri (Percakapan *Kiblat* dengan Motinggo Busye),' (*Kiblat* 51: 11 March 1991), pp. 10-17; and from Jakob Sumardjo, *Novel Populer Indonesia* (Yogyakarta, C.V. Nur Cahaya, 1982). The short biography printed on the back covers of Balai Pustaka re-editions of Busye's work also gives useful information. Another short bio-bibliography can be found in Linus Suryadi AG, ed., *Tonggak 2* (Jakarta, Gramedia, 1987), pp. 292-93.

[2] Kirdjomuljo, 'Di Tanganmu,' 3rd and 4th stanzas; in Suryadi, *Tonggak 2*, p.57. This poem is dated 1967. These two stanzas could be translated as follows: 'I do not know which path you'll choose to take/ the palm of your hand is a crossroad for every path// But can you deny the existence of the everlasting/ can you deny the existence of a path going into yourself?'

[3] Also spelled Boesje or Busje prior to the 1974 spelling reform.

Minangkabau area of the province of West Sumatra, to continue his secondary schooling. It was during his high-school years that he developed an interest in painting and writing and that his talent as a painter was recognized, as early as 1954, by the well-known writer A.A. Navis. Upon graduation, Motinggo Busye left for Yogyakarta where he enroled in the Faculty of Law of Gajah Mada University. But he soon dropped out of school and devoted himself to painting, acting and writing. From 1956 to 1960 he was active in Yogyakarta artistic circles and associated with artists such as Nasjah Djamin and Kirdjomuljo, who were his seniors and whom he considered his masters.[4] When he moved to Jakarta in 1960 he had already won a prize for his play entitled *Malam Jahanam* (Infernal Night, 1958) and decided to pursue a literary career.

By the late 1960s Motinggo Busye had already achieved fame as one of the most prolific Indonesian writers.[5] In a recent interview for the magazine *Kiblat*,[6] it is said that by the end of 1990 he had written (and presumably published) two hundred works! According to

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[4] Soemargono, *Le Groupe*, pp. 206-09.

[5] In his recent work, *A Bibliography of Indonesian literature in Journals: Drama, Prose, Poetry*, E.U. Kratz provides statistical information about the production of Indonesian writers "between 1922 and 1982" (*ibid.*, p. 3). In Appendix IV, Kratz gives a "frequency count of literary works (titles) ... for authors with five and more literary works" (*ibid.*, p.893). Motinggo Busye ranks 17th with 123 entries. According to my own calculations, based on Kratz's data, 82 of these entries are for prose titles. Among the authors with more than 82 entries *for both prose and poetry* only four have more entries for prose titles than Busye. They are, in decreasing order: Harijadi S. Hartowardojo (129), Rijono Pratikto 127), Oemar Mandank (114) and Kioe-An Pouw (91). This means that in a ranking for prose titles only, presumably mainly short stories, Motinggo Busye would rank 5th. Of course these data cannot be considered entirely accurate. In Kratz's own words they "relate to an in part accidental record of incomplete materials" (*ibid.*, p.11). But these data might turn out to be the best available for a long time to come. What still remains to be studied is the quantitative aspect of these five authors' production outside journals, i.e. mainly novels in book form.

[6] Syamsi, 'Kita harus siap.'

Pierre Labrousse, eighty of these were published in the 1960s alone.[7] Considering the amount of labour involved in the writing of all these books one might suspect the collaboration of ghost writers, but I have found no hint to that effect in the literature I have reviewed.

The bulk of Busye's works consists of novels which are often very short (novellas); he also published several collections of short stories (particularly in the early 1960s) and a small number of poems. His novels (and novellas) are almost universally considered to belong to the genre of 'popular fiction', however loosely defined this expression may be. But scholars of Indonesian literature who have devoted more than passing attention to his works have suggested that two or three creative periods be distinguished between the late 1950s and 1970.[8] They argue that his works published prior to 1965 are so different from the later ones that they can hardly be termed 'popular' in the same sense.

This question of genre definition, of what distinguishes popular fiction from literature (to use these two most common terms in their widest acceptations), raises considerable problems and I shall not attempt to present a full discussion of these problems here.[9] Rather, one of the major objectives I shall pursue

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[7] Labrousse, 'Sociologie,' p. 247.

[8] See Umar Junus, *Perkembangan novel-novel Indonesia* (Kuala Lumpur, Penerbit Universiti Malaya, 1974); Labrousse, 'Sociologie,' and Soemargono, *Le Groupe*.

[9] Labrousse has attempted to address this question in two short articles on the Indonesian popular novel in general and those of Motinggo Busye in particular. However, Labrousse is first and foremost a great lexicographer. His approach to literature seems to draw heavily on the works of other French scholars who practice a specific type of "sociologie du champ littéraire." This approach consists largely in "une sociologie empirique de l'institution littéraire, des producteurs de l'édition, des publics et de la lecture" (R. Robin

throughout this thesis is to situate Motinggo Busye's novel *Anna Soen Nio* within contemporaneous Indonesian social discourse. Before doing so, however, it would be useful to describe briefly Busye's production since the second half of the 1970s. Although a precise chronology is almost impossible to establish, I will try to show below that the period roughly beginning in 1977 and ending in 1990 can be viewed as Busye's third major creative period.

The numerous works written and published by Busye during his first creative period can be described as 'populist fiction.' For the sake of the present discussion, I will take the four books re-edited by Balai Pustaka between 1985 and 1988 as representative of this first creative period. The first editions of these four works appeared between 1962 and 1964.[10] The foreword (*Kata Pengantar*) to

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and M. Angenot, *La sociologie de la littérature*, Montreal, CIADEST, 1991, p. 31). Labrousse indeed takes into consideration questions of publishing, book distribution and readership. Of these three aspects, publishing is the easiest to study and the publication history of Motinggo Busye's works is particularly interesting because of the large number of different publishing houses involved. In the 1980s, some of his works first published in the 1950s and early 1960s were republished by the Indonesian national publishing house, Balai Pustaka. This is a very significant fact that would deserve further study. However, both my own preference for a sociocritical analysis of Busye's texts and space limitations do not allow me to undertake such a sociological study. Moreover, such studies are generally based on statistical data that are most often very difficult to obtain for the Indonesian 'literary field' ("champ littéraire").

[10] These four works are: *Dosa kita semua*, 1986 [1st ed., Aryaguna, 1963.]; *Keberanian manusia*, 1988 [1st ed., Nusantara, 1962.]; *Madu prahara*, 1985 [1st ed. as *Titisan darah di atasnja*, Nusantara, 1964.]; and *Matahari dalam kelam*, 1988 [1st ed., Nusantara, 1963.]. *Dosa kita semua* and *Madu prahara* are novellas while *Keberanian manusia* and *Matahari dalam kelam* are collections of short stories. Soemargono (*Le Groupe*, p. 212) writes that *Titisan darah di atasnja* (now *Madu prahara*) first appeared in 1959 in a weekly magazine (*Minggu Pagi*) published in Yogyakarta. See Kratz (*Bibliography*) for more details on publication dates. One should also note that having one's fiction works re-edited by Balai Pustaka is a privilege reserved to a limited number of writers (see for example Balai Pustaka's catalogue for 1991: *Daftar Buku 1991: Buku Bacaan Umum dan Ilmu Pengetahuan*).

one of them, *Keberanian manusia*, accurately describes Busye's favourite themes by stressing the social status of his major protagonists:

> The author, with his talent for "story-telling," writes with an intensity that proves his superiority in recounting stories about the common Indonesian people.[11]

This 'populist' period is generally regarded as having ended somewhere between 1960 and 1970 when Busye's writings became increasingly characterized as "popular fiction," a label which almost always carries pejorative connotations.[12] Jakob Sumardjo, who is unquestionably *the* most important specialist on the Indonesian popular novel, traces its beginnings to the mid 1960s and describes it in the following terms:

> a new type of novel appeared: the story with a pornographic tendency to deal with nightlife and marital infidelity. ... novels in the mid 1960s, of which Motinggo Busye was the leading writer, ... tended to be pornographic, or at least to emphasize sensuality.[13]

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[11] *Keberanian*, p. 5 (publisher's foreword):
Pengarang dengan bakat "story teller" ini dengan intensitas menulisnya membuktikan keunggulannya dalam menceritakan manusia-manusia kecil Indonesia.

[12] Both Soemargono and Balai Pustaka tend to favor the early hypothesis according to which Busye's "popular" turn coincides with his arrival in Jakarta (1960). But Soemargono gives *Bibi Marsiti* (1st ed. 1963) as Busye's first successful "trilogy." It recounts the "love story between a painter from Yogyakarta ... [and] his aunt, a madam from Surakarta" (Soemargono, *Le Groupe*, p. 219). This "popular" style is also often described, for obvious reasons, as (softly) "pornographic." For reasons that are equally obvious, Balai Pustaka clearly wishes to dissociate itself from Busye's popular-pornographic period:

> *Banyak yang telah mengenal Motinggo Busye sebagai penulis novel-novel populer. Sebenarnya ketika ia masih berada di Yogyakarta sebelum pindah ke Jakarta, ia telah banyak menghasilkan karya sastra yang bernilai.* (Many already know M. B. as a writer of pop. novels. As a matter of fact, when he was still in Yog., before he left for Jak., he produced literary works of quality. *Kata Pengantar* in *Dosa kita semua*.)

[13] J. Sumardjo, 'The Indonesian Popular Novel and its Audience,' *Indonesia Circle* 25 (June 1981), p. 6.

Between 1970 and 1977, Motinggo Busye devoted his talent to another artistic medium: cinema. I found practically no information on the films he directed, Indonesian cinema being much less the object of scholarly attention than Indonesian popular novels... From the very sketchy evidence widely available, one can draw two conclusions about his career in the movie industry. First, it was just as successful as his career as a popular novelist.[14] Second, it was also described as "exploiting [people's] low appetites."[15] However, this second career did not last very long. In an interview given to the magazine *Kiblat* in 1991, Motinggo Busye explained that his eldest son, who was becoming a pious Muslim, made him feel ashamed of himself. The journalist explains:

> When Busye reached the age of 40 (he is now 54 years old), he experienced a real change within himself. Having only been, until then, a follower of Islam like most people, in his 40th year he started being diligent in doing his ablutions, praying and fasting. "Now I am deepening my knowledge of the Koran, the Hadith and the Islamic sciences," he clearly said at that time, in 1979, when he was interviewed. At the same time, he declared that he was retiring from the film world. The journalist pressured him to explain his reasons. ... "I am ashamed in front of my son Itok," answered Busye. ... It turned out that his eldest son had secretly become fond of reading about Islam, and had been deepening his knowledge of the Koran and the Hadith. Endowed with this knowledge, his eldest son pressured Busye to stop directing films.[16]

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[14] Labrousse, 'Motinggo,' p. 120.

[15] Syamsi, 'Kita harus siap,' p. 11.

[16] Syamsi, 'Kita harus siap,' p. 13:
Sejak Busye menginjak usia 40 tahun (kini usianya 54 tahun) terjadi perubahan nyata dalam dirinya. Kalau dulu dia hanya merupakan penganut Islam seperti kebanyakkan [sic], dalam usai ke-40 dia sudah rajin mengambil wudhu, shalat dan puasa. "Saya sekarang sedang mendalami Al Qur'an, hadist dan ilmu Islam," jelas Motinggo waktu itu, tahun 1979, ketika diwawancarai wartawan. Saat itu dia menyatakan mengundurkan diri dari dunia film. Wartawan terus mendesak alasannya. ... "Saya malu pada anak saya, Itok," jawab Busye. ... Rupanya anak sulungnya itu secara diam-diam suka membaca agama Islam, mendalami Al Qur'an dan Hadist. Setelah memiliki pengetahuan itu, anak sulungnya mendesak Busye untuk berhenti menyutradarai film.

Motinggo Busye stopped directing films and returned to writing as his major creative activity.[17] According to *Kiblat*'s presentation, "elements of *dakwah* and a breath of godliness (*keilahian*) suddenly infiltrated his works."[18] This is already perceptible from as early as 1979, when his novel entitled *Perempuan-perempuan impian* appeared. In 1990, Busye published two works bearing the label "Islamic" (*Islami*) on their respective covers: a novel, *Fatimah Chen Chen: novel Islami*; and a collection of poems, *Aura Para Aulia: puisi-puisi Islami*.[19] Motinggo Busye was thus clearly positioning himself as an "Islamic" novelist and poet. To my knowledge this is a premiere in the world of Indonesian letters. It can be viewed as one more sign of the general Islamic revival taking place in Indonesia since the 1970s. *Anna Soen Nio* was published in 1984. Contrary to *Fatimah Chen Chen*, this novel is not presented as an "Islamic" novel. Both novels, however, present the story of a Chinese woman who converts to Islam. But there are some fundamental differences between the two 'heroines.' Anna Soen Nio is Sino-Indonesian whereas Fatimah Chen Chen is a Taiwanese Chinese who follows her Indonesian husband to Jakarta. Anna's task is, to a very large extent, to achieve a balance between the different requirements of her multiple identity as a Sino-Indonesian Muslim woman and to take upon herself much of her

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[17] Busye had not completely stopped writing and, according to Sumardjo ('The Indonesian,' p. 11), his "manner" had already changed before 1976:

> Motinggo Busye ... is currently writing in a softer and more refined manner, reducing the occurrence of sex scenes and emphasizing sentimental and emotional scenes.

Sumardjo's article was published in 1981 but his bibliography contains only one reference to a novel by Motinggo Busye: *Selangit mesra*, Jakarta, Mitra, 1976.

[18] Syamsi, 'Kita harus siap,' p. 11.

[19] *Fatimah Chen Chen: novel Islami* and *Aura Para Aulia: puisi-puisi Islami*, Jakarta, MSonata, 1990.

society's tensions in terms of social identity. Fatimah Chen Chen's task is not very different from that of millions of Muslim women throughout the world: to accept her own husband's polygyny and to accept to "dress as a *Muslima*," i.e. to adopt the traditional "Muslim" head-dress (*jilbab*). A cursory reading of both novels convinced me that the outcome of Anna's struggle was actually – and textually – much less predictable than that of Fatimah's. I thought that this a was good enough reason to reread *Anna Soen Nio* over and over again.[20]

II. AROUND THE NARRATIVE: TITLE, BACK COVER, FOREWORD

II.1. Methodology

A book is made up of several elements of different nature, each of which giving specific information to the reader in a specific mode. In this section I will focus on three of these elements: title, back cover text, and foreword. I will first present the general justification and methodology for the analysis of these elements, as provided by Henri Mitterand in *Le Discours du roman*.[21] I will then proceed with the analysis of these elements, taken separately and in conjunction, for the novel *Anna Soen Nio*.[22] The methodology outlined below is fully introduced here because it

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[20] There is a striking parallel between the respective contents of *Anna Soen Nio* (1984) and *Fatimah Chen Chen* (1990) and between the photographs reproduced on their respective back covers. Both photographs show the author and his wife, Lashmi. In 1983, Lashmi was wearing a traditional Indonesian dress. In 1990 she was wearing a black *jilbab*.

[21] Henri Mitterand, *Le Discours du roman* (Paris, PUF, 1980).

[22] Parts of this work were published serially in the magazine *Wahyu* (*ibid.*, p. 4).

is in the case of *Anna Soen Nio* that the conjunction of the three above-mentioned elements is, as I hope to show, the most directly relevant to the novelistic content proper, that is, to the narrative content -as opposed, for example, to the author's life and works.[23]

Mitterand devoted a whole chapter of his book to the analysis of the 'foreword' as a speech genre.[24] Titles and back cover texts, to which my own analysis below makes detailed reference, are only mentioned in passing as equally worth studying.[25] The first part of my analysis will be conducted in the following order (which will be justified below): title, back cover text, and foreword. Mitterand's methodology was specifically designed to apply to forewords; after a brief outline of its main points, I will apply it to the title and back cover text before turning to the foreword itself.

Mitterand's case for the study of forewords and novels as different speech genres is built on Émile Benveniste's paramount distinction between two fundamental types of utterance: discourse

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[23] Biographical and bibliographical information is predominant in the case of the four books re-edited by Balai Pustaka.

[24] 'La préface et ses lois: avant-propos romantiques,' in Mitterand, *Discours*, pp. 21-34. Mitterand's corpus of forewords is drawn from French XIXth-century novels. As for the expression "speech genre," it translates the original French "*genre de discours*" (p. 21). Although Mitterand nowhere refers to the works of Bakhtin, his definition bears very close resemblance to that elaborated by Bakhtin in his *Speech Genres & Other Late Essays* (Austin, University of Texas Press, 1986). On the expression "*genre de discours*" as coined by Bakhtin, see Michal Glowinski, 'Les genres littéraires,' in Angenot et al., eds., *Théorie littéraire* (Paris, PUF, 1989), p. 83.

[25] Mitterand, 'Avant-propos,' in *Discours*, p. 15.

(Fr. *discours*) and story (Fr. *histoire*).[26] For our present purpose a simple definition of discourse will serve to highlight its most important characteristics: any utterance belongs to the category of discourse when it is organized around explicit markers of addressivity, i.e. when a person is addressing another in a *present* speech situation.[27] Any other utterance will belong to the category of story. As Mitterand himself acknowledges, this distinction should not serve to establish discrete categories but

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[26] Mitterand, 'La préface,' p. 21. Mitterand's use of the terms "*discours*" and "*récit*" does not seem to conform to Benveniste's, but this is only a terminological problem. In order to avoid confusion I have chosen to substitute "*histoire*" (story) for "*récit*." Since Mitterand does not refer to any of Benveniste's specific works, one can only deal with this problem in a general way. In his *Le structuralisme littéraire en France* (Montreal, Les Editions Balzac, 1993) R. Dion devotes a whole chapter ('La linguistique discursive,' pp. 205-31) to the role played by Benveniste's work in the transition from literary structuralism to discourse analysis. Dion speaks of the "*dichotomie discours/histoire*" (*ibid.*, p. 215) formulated by Benveniste in his article 'Les relations de temps dans le verbe français,' republished in his *Problèmes de linguistique générale I* (Paris, Gallimard, 1966), pp. 237-50. Benveniste's terms are indeed "*discours*" and "*histoire*". English renditions of these key terms are drawn from the widely available work: *Narrative Discourse*. The following equivalences should settle the question: discourse for "*discours*"; story for "*histoire*"; and enunciating for "*énonciation*" (Genette, *ibid.*, p. 212-13, where reference is made to Benveniste's terminology).

[27] Mitterand characterizes the foreword as a type of "énoncé engageant la mise *en présence* de deux interlocuteurs, autour du présent" ('La préface,' p. 23). The Indonesian language knows no verbal markers of grammatical tenses, but it is not lacking in other markers of temporal difference. As Benveniste notes:

> une langue distingue toujours des «temps» ... la ligne de partage est une référence au «présent» ... ce «présent» ... n'a comme référence temporelle qu'une donnée linguistique: la coïncidence de l'événement décrit avec l'instance du discours qui le décrit ...
>
> (Benveniste, 'De la subjectivité dans le langage,' in *Problèmes*, p. 262)

For a sound discussion of related issues discussed in reference to the Malay language, see Amin Sweeney, *A Full Hearing: Orality and Literacy in the Malay World* (Berkeley, California UP, 1987), pp. 202-07, esp. p. 203, note 2. On the concept of addressivity, see Bakhtin, 'The Problem of Speech Genres,' in *Speech Genres*, pp. 95-99; and G.S. Morson and C. Emerson, *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Prosaics* (Stanford, Stanford UP, 1990), pp. 75-76 and 131. Bakhtin's concept of addressivity loosely corresponds to what Benveniste calls "intersubjectivity in discourse" (Benveniste, *ibid.*, pp. 260 and 266).

rather, opposite ends of a continuum. Discourse most often than not "contaminates" a story, if only in subtle ways.[28]

The following examples, taken from *Anna Soen Nio*, will illustrate the differences between utterances in the story mode on the one hand, and the discursive mode on the other hand.
The narrative of the novel begins with the following sentence, used here to illustrate the story mode:

(1) It had been eight days since Anna had passed through the campus gate.[29]

The next sentence, which opens the foreword,[30] illustrates the discursive mode:

(2) Again we are presenting a work by Motinggo Busye.[31]

Sentence (1) is non-performative, impersonal, and oriented towards a past event. If only through a heuristic reduction, it illustrates perfectly well Mitterand's ingenious definition of the novel: "*Personne ne raconte à personne que quelqu'un a fait «y»*."[32]

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[28] Mitterand, *Discours*, p. 14.

[29] *Anna*, p. 9: *Sudah delapan hari Anna tidak memasuki gerbang kampus*.

[30] All the forewords to Motinggo Busye's works mentioned in this thesis are publishers' forewords. Mitterand's analysis bears on forewords written by the novelists themselves and this authorial identity creates a problem which he addresses through a critique of György Lukács' methodology (Mitterand, *Discours*, pp. 30-34). This problem is not relevant to the material dealt with here.

[31] *Anna*, p. 5: *Kembali kami tampilkan karya Motinggo Busye*. 'We' translates *kami*, which is of course the exclusive 'we,' i.e. excluding the addressee.

[32] Mitterand, *Discours*, p. 31: 'Nobody is telling nobody that somebody did «y».' This "formula," to use Mitterand's term, applies to a certain type of novel, in which

> le sujet de l'énonciation et le destinataire du texte ne sont pas désignés, sauf dans les pages où le discours du romancier vient perturber le récit, comme souvent chez Balzac. (*Ibid.*, pp. 32-33)

Such "perturbations" are extremely rare, if not simply missing, in Busye's works. Obviously this does not mean that narrators are neutral towards their narratives. Indeed their presence is most clearly felt when characters are evaluated, as we shall see.

By contrast sentence (2) is structured around the performative verb "to present" (*tampilkan*), whose grammatical subject is the exclusive "we" (*kami*). This pronoun is identified as the publisher (*Penerbit*) at the end of the foreword. The object of the verb is stated in the clearest terms: a work by Motinggo Busye (*karya Motinggo Busye*). Thus only the receiver of the object is left unstated: it is of course the reading public to whom *this* work by Motinggo Busye is *being* presented by the publisher.

The formal differences between sentences (1) and (2) have clear semantic implications because in different speech situations, different speech genres actually say different things. If one accepts Mitterand's suggestion that every novel offers its reader a discourse about the world, then one may define the foreword as a discourse on this discourse (about the world), that is, a metadiscourse.[33] Since a novel is meant to be read, it comes as no surprise that a foreword should be a discourse on reading:

> *Toute préface vise à dégager à la fois un modèle de production du genre dont elle parle, et également un modèle de sa lecture.*[34]

The general outline of this reading model is provided by the foreword, which is usually longer than other elements such as the title and the back cover text. But these three elements concur in programming a reading attitude.[35] Mitterand convincingly argues

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[33] Mitterand, *Discours*, pp. 5 and 33.

[34] Mitterand, *Discours*, p. 26. Mitterand's allusion to genre production is highly relevant to the context of heated politico-literary polemics in 19th-century France, involving both writers and critics. The forewords to Busye's works, and, more specifically, that to *Anna Soen Nio* provide no information whatsoever on genre production. Therefore I cannot reconstruct any model of genre production based on foreword contents alone and I will limit myself to discussing the reading model suggested by the foreword to *Anna Soen Nio*.

[35] Mitterand, *Discours*, p.15.

that this programming is always something of a trap set for the reader to fall into, because of its essentially reductive function. My own analysis will try to show precisely to what ideological core Busye's novel, *Anna Soen Nio*, is reduced by its publisher's foreword, its title, and its own author's 'instructions' appearing on the back cover of the book.[36] I believe that this analysis will provide me with the point of departure of an 'Indonesian' reading, that is with a model that I will now follow and then use to illustrate how my own 'foreign' reading differs from it.

The idea that forewords can be useful means of approaching the issue of cross-cultural reading is absent from Mitterand's work; Mitterand is a French scholar working on French literature. Anthropologists and scholars interested in comparative literature involving very different cultural traditions, however, constantly face this issue. In a collection of essays already mentioned above, Bakhtin pleads for "creative understanding" between cultures.[37] Within the limits of the present discussion, I would locate one aspect of the possibility of this "creative understanding" in the tension between the reading suggested by the extra-narrative

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[36] Mitterand, *Discours*, p. 32:

> En prétendant dégager le sens d'une oeuvre, le récapituler tout en l'anticipant, la préface littéraire est un mensonge ou une illusion sur l'oeuvre, dont le propre est précisément la polysémie et la polyphonie ... Derrida en conclut à la non-pertinence de toute préface par rapport au texte auquel elle introduit. Hégel, avant lui, et cité par lui, avait disqualifié le genre, comme "discours extérieur à la chose même".

The reference to Derrida is to the chapter entitled 'Hors-livre,' in *La Dissémination* (Paris, Seuil, 1972). It seems to me that in intercultural studies forewords might be useful as reading guides to foreign genres. I will further develop this idea below.

[37] Bakhtin, 'Response to a Question from the *Novy Mir* Editorial Staff,' in *Speech Genres*, pp. 1-9.

elements (title, back cover text, foreword) and my own foreign analytical reading.[38]

As announced at the beginning of this section I will now read *Anna Soen Nio* as title, before analyzing the back cover text and, finally, the foreword proper. These three elements are likely to be experienced by most readers in this very order.

II.2. *Anna Soen Nio* as title or "what's in a name"

The three words forming the title *Anna Soen Nio* immediately provide the reader with a rather large amount of information. This information will most likely be based on a combination of the following assumptions:[39] 1) that Anna Soen Nio is the proper noun

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[38] In Bakhtin's words, "creative understanding" implies a certain kind of dialogue:

> a certain entry as a living being into a foreign culture, the possibility of seeing the world through its eyes, is a necessary part of the process of understanding it; but if this were the only aspect of this understanding, it would merely be duplication and would not entail anything new or enriching. ... It is only in the eyes of *another* culture that foreign culture reveals itself fully and profoundly ... We raise new questions for a foreign culture, ones that it did not raise itself ...
> (Bakhtin, 'Response,' p. 7)

One may be content, more modestly, with suggesting new answers to old questions. It may also be important to note that Bakthtin sees dialogue between individuals belonging to the same culture in very similar terms:

> I experience [another's suffering] precisely as *his* suffering, in the category of the *other*, and my reaction to him is not a cry of pain but a word of consolation and a gesture of assistance
> (Bakhtin, 'Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity,' pp. 25-26, trans. by and quoted in Morson and Emerson, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, p. 185; an English translation of this essay is now available in Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability*, Austin, University of Texas Press, 1990).

[39] I made very similar assumptions myself before ordering *Anna Soen Nio* from the Library of Congress. Before deciding to order this book I had had access to another of Motinggo Busye's work, *Fatimah Chen Chen: novel Islami*, whose very title triggers different but related assumptions.

of one of the major characters in the novel; 2) that this character is female, Anna being a female name; 3) that she belongs to the Indonesian Chinese group, for Nio is a common Chinese surname, Anna Soen Nio follows the ternary pattern of Chinese personal nouns, and Soen is spelled according to the old Indonesian spelling derived from Dutch spelling rules;[40] 4) that she is not Muslim, or that, if she is, she does not display her name as a marker of Islamic identity; and 5) that, assuming she is an Indonesian Chinese, she belongs to those of them who never substituted 'Indonesian' names for their Chinese names. If the fifth assumption comes last it is, nevertheless, the fact to which it refers that has logical precedence: it is because an Indonesian name was not substituted for a Chinese one that the third and fourth assumptions can be made.

To sum up in a more elegant phrasing, one can say that the title presents the novel as the story of a non-Muslim Indonesian Chinese woman whose name identifies her as such. The question of the intended readership of the novel may arise for some readers, considering that its subject-matter is most directly relevant to only a minority of Indonesians (i.e. Indonesian Chinese) and remembering the identity and reputation of the author. For other readers this question may very well not arise at all. What is most interesting here is that, however that may be, the back cover text provides us with an answer to this question.

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[40] I owe this conclusion on spelling to Dr Eric Schwimmer, who drew my attention to this spelling as an unmistakable sign of Indonesian-ness for such a Chinese name. I will return later to the question of spelling rules for other proper names and to the implications of using spelling rules that are now rather archaic and, literally, 'foreign' to contemporary usage.

II.3. Back cover text: 'Ask yourself whether this book is for you'

The back cover text is presented in handwritten form and followed by a signature which, although hardly legible, must be that of the author because of the phrase "I wrote" contained in the text, short enough to be quoted in its entirety. In English translation it reads as follows:

> I wrote "Anna Soen Nio" not for the Chinese Nation (*Bangsa Cina*) but for whoever feels him/herself to be [part] of the Indonesian Nation (*Bangsa Indonesia*).[41]

The word *Bangsa*, sometimes translated as 'People,' is probably more often translated as 'Nation' and most words derived from this root clearly imply the idea of nationhood.[42] A few interesting points arise here from what I see as a peculiar use of the term. First of all, there is the fact that the expression *Bangsa Cina* is seldom, if ever, used to refer to the Indonesian Chinese as a group. This expression would normally refer to the inhabitants of the Chinese nation-state (either the People's Republic or Taiwan, or both) and this is reinforced by the parallelism between *Bangsa Cina* and *Bangsa Indonesia*, which seems to imply a binary opposition of mutual exclusivity. At the same time it is obvious that Motinggo

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[41] *Anna*, back cover text:
"Anna Soen Nio" kutulis bukan untuk Bangsa Cina, tapi untuk siapapun yang merasa dirinya sebagai Bangsa Indonesia.

[42] For example: *berbangsa*, to have a nationality; *kebangsaan*, national, nationality; *berkebangsaan*, to be a national of; etc. Indeed the first definition of *bangsa* given in the *KBBI* is almost identical to that of the *Concise Oxford*. The second definition, however, is more general and corresponds to "people" when applied to human beings but to "species" when applied to plants or animals. In Indonesian as well as in English, *bangsa* and nation are associated with the ideas of a government and a state (*pemerintahan*, i. e. government, defined in reference to a *negara*, i.e. a State). In certain contexts *bangsa* can mean "ethnic group" but *suku* or *suku bangsa* are more common. I think it is wise to avoid using the word "race" because *bangsa* does not quite have the same biological connotation when applied to human beings. In fact the Indonesian *ras* was borrowed from the Dutch (*ras*) to express this nuance.

Busye's book, written in Indonesian and published in Jakarta, is intended for a local readership, so that it would be meaningless to seriously consider the possibility that the book was intended for any Chinese People living outside of Indonesia; therefore, there is no point in denying, as does the author in the back cover text, that it could have been. It would thus seem reasonable to assume that the expression *Bangsa Cina* does indeed refer to the Indonesian Chinese who either belong to the Indonesian nation (the vast majority of them being Indonesian citizens) or at least have been inhabiting the Indonesian State since its formation. For our present purpose, and keeping in mind the explanation of the term *bangsa* given above, it can be stated that the *Bangsa Cina* is included in the *Bangsa Indonesia*. A first interpretive rewriting of the text along the lines suggested above would read as follows:

> 'I wrote *Anna Soen Nio* not for the Indonesian Chinese but for whoever feels [like an] Indonesian.'

The above sentence – and this is clear even from the original text – answers the question of the intended readership of the novel: *Anna Soen Nio* will be of interest to all Indonesians, because all Indonesians *should* "feel [like]" Indonesian[s], i.e. "feel" some kind of patriotic attachment to their country. The main interpretive issues raised by the back cover text have to do with the fact that the (Indonesian) Chinese are singled out either as people who might not "feel [like] Indonesian[s]" – and therefore this book is not for them – or as a non-existent group, abolished as a group, by their "feeling [like] Indonesian[s]. Thus the whole complex issue of assimilation (*pembauran*) is brought up. One will see below that *Anna Soen Nio*, as many artistic works, is primarily concerned with the expression of feelings and that it constitutes, more specifically, one of the innumerable possible answers to a

question undoubtedly much more important than the ones explicitly raised by the title and back cover text. This question concerns Indonesian identity itself, i.e. the feeling of Indonesian-ness, and could be simply phrased: what does it feel like to be Indonesian? In real life one cannot legitimately answer this question for anyone else, but in fiction everything is possible and we are 'fortunate' enough to have an Indonesian novelist answering it for both Indonesian and Chinese characters. But we will first consider the publisher's point of view as expressed in the foreword referred to earlier.

II.4. Foreword: A chew of Betel for Anna Soen Nio?

There are several Indonesian words and expressions used to designate a foreword, each of which bearing specific connotations. While none of them are truly neutral, some are more marked than others.[43] The expression used by the publisher of *Anna Soen Nio* is *Sekapur sirih*, usually translated as 'a chew of betel.'[44] In the present context, this expression is used metaphorically and its powerful symbolism happens to be highly relevant to our discussion. Even if only 'accidental,' its presence contributes to the overall

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[43] The most common, and thus less marked, are *pengantar*, *kata pengantar* and *pendahuluan*. These three expressions are part of, or based on roots used in, colloquial language. *Prakata* has an academic or official ring because of the use of the "Sanskritish" prefix *pra-* in many administrative neologisms. As for *mukadimah* (official spelling), an Arabic loan-word (Ar. *muqaddima*), it strongly connotes an Islamic context, within which it is often spelled *muqaddimah*, a transliteration closer to the Arabic pronunciation.

[44] The expression is also used by the same publisher (Kartini Group) to designate the foreword to Motinggo Busye's novel *Perempuan-perempuan impian*, which suggests an editorial policy on this matter, at least for books by Motinggo Busye. In contrast, every foreword to the four books reedited by Balai Pustaka is designated by the more neutral *Kata pengantar*.

ideological mood that I am slowly trying to define in explicit, precise terms.

The symbolism associated with betel chewing is reactivated through the metaphor of a functional analogy with the 'foreword' as a speech genre: a foreword is to the relationship between a book and its readership what a chew of betel was to general social intercourse in bygone days.[45] Two characteristics of betel chewing need to be singled out here: its indigenousness and its ancientness.[46] The latter of course reinforces the former in the sense that the more ancient a practice, the more it tends to loose the memory of its foreign origin and thus be viewed as indigenous. In fact betel chewing is so ancient that it has now become obsolete or at least archaic in most parts of Indonesia, except in remote rural areas where it is mostly upheld by elderly people.[47] But it

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[45] On betel and betel chewing, see Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450-1680, Volume One: The Lands below the Winds* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1988), pp. 42-45. The following quote aptly summarizes the role of betel chewing in Southeast Asia throughout the "age of commerce":

> Everyday hospitality consisted in the sharing of betel, not food. ...the daily social lubricant throughout Southeast Asia was betel. ... The chewing of betel ... was an integral part of every ritual of birth, death, or healing. It was especially central to the rituals of courtship and marriage.
> (*Ibid.*, pp. 41, 42 & 44)

[46] Betel chewing "appears to have originated in Southeast Asia." (Reid, *Southeast Asia*, p. 42) Reid also reports the following:

> Chinese sources from as early as the T'ang period mention the role of betel in marriage and ritual, and the word used for it, *pin-lang*, appears to be a very early Chinese borrowing from Malay.
> (*Ibid.*)

The Malay word in question is *pinang*, meaning areca nut, one of the three essential elements of the chewing mix, together with *kapur* (lime) and *sirih* (betel vine). The areca nut is so closely associated with marriage rituals that the noun *pinang* derives a verbal form (*meminang*) meaning 'to propose, ask in marriage.'

[47] See Anthony Reid, 'From Betel-Chewing to Tobacco-Smoking in Indonesia,' *JAS* 44, iii, pp. 529-47.

has not lost its aura of indigenousness in passing from the domain of ritual practice to that of discourse alone. As defined above by Anthony Reid, this indigenousness concerns the whole of Southeast Asia; as defined in the Indonesian context it concerns the whole of Indonesia for it represents one of the most ancient practices that truly transcend regional boundaries.[48] It can be concluded that of all the expressions discussed above, it is *sekapur sirih* that most clearly signals Indonesian-ness. We will now turn to the content of the foreword and thus get closer to the novelistic content proper.

The foreword to *Anna Soen Nio* is presented as a short (one-page long) summary of the novel.[49] My analysis will focus on: 1) the ideological mood created by the use of a few key terms that are clear identity-markers; and 2) on the expectations raised by the foreword as to the content of the novel.

The opening lines of the foreword tell us that *Anna Soen Nio* is the life story of a Chinese girl (*gadis Tionghwa*) who tries to fight (*memerangi*) against the "old tradition (*adat kuno*) still firmly held by her family."[50] Such is her family situation despite the fact that

> her parents no longer belong to the *Cina totok* group, regard Indonesia, outwardly and inwardly, as their beloved homeland, and take a great interest in the questions of assimilation (*soal-soal*

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[48] Dr Eric Schwimmer mentioned to me that betel chewing is in fact practised all over South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Melanesia.

[49] The page on which the foreword appears is not numbered but one can deduce that it is page five (the narrative proper begins on page nine).

[50] In Indonesian: ...*adat kuno yang masih dipegang teguh oleh keluarganya*. It should be noted that *memerangi* (root: *perang*, i.e. war) is one of the strongest possible words in this context. It can imply the idea of elimination (*KBBI*: *membasmi*).

pembauran).[51]

The reference to the main character's struggle against an "old tradition" locates the present work within one of the oldest strands in modern Indonesian literature.[52] The content of this old tradition is left undefined; it will presumably emerge from the novel itself. But the tradition is already identified with the *totok* Chinese, who are expected to cling to it. The use of the terms *Tionghwa* and *Cina* as epithets characterizing opposite parties in the struggle seems to reinforce the expectation, created by the publisher's appeal to the readers' previous literary experience, that the tradition (*Cina*) is to be negatively valued whereas its opponent (*Tionghwa*) is to be positively valued.[53]

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[51] In Indonesian: *kedua orangtuanya tidak lagi termasuk dalam golongan Cina totok, dan lahir batin sudah menganggap Indonesia ini sebagai tanah airnya tercinta. Sangat tertarik dengan soal-soal pembauran.*
The translation of *lahir batin* as "outwardly and inwardly" will sound awkward too many readers. See note 54 below for a short explanation. As for the adjective *totok*, it is defined by M. Somers Heidhues (*The Chinese of Southeast Asia*, p. 6) as follows: "lit. pure, Malay-Indonesian word for culturally 'pure' Chinese-speaking persons." Its antonym is *peranakan*, "lit. local born, Malay-Indonesian word which also implies a person with local affiliations, speaking Malay-Indonesian or a local language in preference to Chinese" (*ibid.*). These two terms express concepts that are fundamental for understanding Sino-Indonesian history. The *totok* Chinese, however, are becoming less and less important in number and the term specifically used to designate them is declining.

[52] A. Teeuw mentions "the struggle between *adat* (tradition) and the personal wishes and desires of young individuals" as a "theme" that is "typical of a large part of pre-war Indonesian literature" (A. Teeuw, *Modern Indonesian Literature I*, Dordrecht, Foris Publications, 1986, p. 54). As another author has convincingly shown, each use of the term *adat* has to be explained with reference to the content of specific texts (see Ok-kyung Pak, 'Les rapports ethniques dans le roman Minangkabau d'avant-guerre,' *Anthropologie et sociétés* 3, no.3 (1979), especially pp. 143-46).

[53] In modern Indonesian discourse, including literature, *adat* has taken different meanings and been successively opposed in the name of Islamic reformism, communism, liberal Westernization, nationalism, socialism, developmentalism, etc., depending on how different parties defined the idea of progress.

The status of the main character's parents is somewhat ambiguous: on the one hand they cling to the tradition of a group (the *totok*) to which they do not fully belong and on the other, they 'feel [like]' Indonesian[s] (i.e. not *totok*) and are aware of their 'official' position within Indonesian society as people targeted for assimilation.[54]

In the first paragraph of the foreword the main character's parents are portrayed in wholly *aesthetic* terms. In the following paragraph an *ethical* element is added to the very favourable aesthetic portrait of their daughter: Anna Soen Nio "does not choose her friends from her ethnic group only."[55] This is how an important contrast in kind is introduced between the two generations regarding their relation to members of other groups within Indonesian society. A glimpse of what members of these other groups might be like is presented in the next paragraph of the foreword, where the reader is introduced to another character, "a university lecturer in economics who is a genuine child of the Minang valleys, who strongly adheres to his religion."[56] Since the

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[54] Here I assume a rough synonymy between "to feel" (used by the author in the back cover text) and "regard outwardly and inwardly." Although each term of the expression *lahir batin* – respectively 'outward (-ly)' and 'inward (-ly)' – functions as a separate unit in many different contexts, one may still wonder what could be the precise meaning of such a phrase as 'to regard outwardly.' Perhaps: 'to act as if holding a certain conviction, to pretend to.' I still think that it is the inward aspect that is stressed here.

[55] In Indonesian: *Dalam berteman dia tidak memilih orang-orang sesukunya saja.*

[56] In Indonesian: *...dosen ekonomi ... yang asli anak ranah Minang, yang agamanya begitu kuat ...* In this excerpt the word *ranah* (valley, flat land) is written in bold letters. At first I thought that this served to single the word out as a borrowing from the Minangkabau language, but I found no confirmation of this. However, I still think that the word is uncommon in standard Indonesian although it is used twice in the foreword. The use of a Minangkabau word would certainly strengthen the impression of indigenousness.

vast majority of Minangkabau people are Muslim, one can safely conclude that the unspecified religion is Islam.

The last paragraphs contain a brief summary of the novel in which no other characters are introduced: the lecturer comes back from the United States of America; Anna becomes interested in Islam and obtains religious books from him; the lecturer is engaged to a girl from his native village; Anna converts to Islam and becomes pious; Anna is betrayed by her husband (all that is known about him is that he is not the lecturer). Two questions are addressed to the reader: Does Anna convert to Islam because she is broken-hearted? How will she react to her husband's betrayal? The last sentence somehow answers these two questions in the form of a general appreciation of Anna's behaviour: "An exemplary model (good) for every wife."[57]

I will conclude my discussion of the foreword by mentioning two of its most interesting aspects. The first one is the symbolic spaces it creates.[58] Only two places are mentioned in the foreword and none of them appears to be the main location in the novel, e.g. the place where the two characters live; but these two places are clearly differentiated on a plane other than geographical. The first one is the United States of America; it is described as the place where the lecturer "has once erred."[59] The second one is the Minangkabau land, which is not only the lecturer's place of origin

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[57] In Indonesian: *Suri teladan yang baik untuk setiap istri.*

[58] On the notion of symbolic spaces see Yuri M. Lotman, *Universe of the Mind: A Semiotic Theory of Culture* (Bloomington, University of Indiana Press, 1990), chapter 12. See also below, chapter 5 (section IV.3).

[59] In Indonesian: *... di Amerika sana dia pernah tidak benar.*
The whole phrase is placed between brackets and contrasts with the affirmation of the lecturer's piousness which it immediately follows.

(as well as his fiancée's) but also a place where *adat* (tradition) is maintained.[60] In this case, however, there is no suggestion that *adat* is either old (*kuno*) or something against which people fight, as in the case of the "old tradition" (*adat kuno*) of Anna's family. In fact it is arguable that the way the reference to *adat* is framed gives it a certain air of inevitability.[61] We are thus introduced to two different kinds of *adat*, commanding opposite attitudes and being located in different symbolic spaces.

The second and last aspect I want to discuss is more anecdotal but its importance comes from its being directly related to Islam. It concerns the spelling of Arabic loan-words (not always perceived as such by all readers). What is interesting is that the two words concerned are spelled not in the official Indonesian spelling but in transliterations closer to the Arabic pronunciation. These two words are *muallaf* and *soleh* (official spelling: *mualaf* and *saleh*).[62] While *soleh/saleh* is rather common and would probably

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[60] Here's the original passage:
Tetapi apa hendak dikata, pemuda ranah Minang ini dijodohkan dengan gadis sekampungnya. Begitulah adat di sana.
(But whatever might be said, this Minang youth is engaged to a girl from his home village. Such is the tradition there.)
The publisher identifies Jakarta as the place where the foreword was written. It is thus possible to speak of the threefold symbolic space of the foreword, consisting of Jakarta (the 'here' of the enunciating), the Minangkabau land ('there') and the United States ('yonder'). This recalls the threefold horizontal division found in the Indonesian language itself (*sini*, *situ*, *sana*) – although *sana* is used to qualify both the United States and the Minangkabau land – as well as the three grammatical persons.

[61] The framing phrases are couched in the subjunctive and the emphatic/imperative moods respectively: ... *hendak* ... ('whatever might be said') and *begitulah* ('such is').

[62] *Muallaf* is an obvious case of irregular spelling because the Indonesian language has no geminate consonants. In the foreword *muallaf* is written in bold letters, just like *ranah*. As for *soleh* it is derived from the Arabic *ṣâliḥ*. The definition of *mualaf* (official spelling) given in the *KBBI* is *orang yg baru masuk Islam* ("a person who recently converted to Islam"). On the different negative

pass unnoticed, *muallaf* is not and would probably not. In a different context *muallaf* would need explanation and I found two examples of this in Balai Pustaka re-editions of Motinggo Busye's early works, *Madu Prahara* and *Matahari dalam kelam*.[62] Here the difference between the publishers most likely relates to the kind of knowledge they expect their average reader to possess. The way the publisher of *Anna Soen Nio* uses the word *muallaf* is an indication of the kind of reader expected to be interested by the content of the novel as presented in the foreword: the story of a Chinese Indonesian girl who converts to Islam through the agency of a pious Minangkabau youth. Such a pious youth would know the word and such a girl would acquire knowledge of and identify herself with it as her story unfolds.

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connotations associated with this word, see chapter 1, note 50.

[62] *Madu prahara*, Jakarta, Balai Pustaka, 1985, p. 27, note 1.
The relevant excerpt reads as follows:

> *"Hanya cina-cina [sic] miskin yang dijadikan mualap 1) saat itu. Tapi akulah seorang mualap yang bukan Cina," kata Bapak.*
> ("Only poor Chinamen became *mualap* at that time. I was the only *mualap* who was not a Chinaman," said father.)

Here's the note: *1) mualap = mualaf, masuk Islam* (*m.* = *m.*, to become a Muslim).
In *Matahari dalam kelam*, the relevant passage is to be found in the short story entitled 'Jalan ke utara,' p. 85-86:

> *Dulu Pak Kasan ini, ketika aku masih kecil, kupanggil ia Babah. Ya, ia memang seorang Tionghoa, dan ketika ia kawin dengan Jenab ... iapun jadi mualap*).*
> (When I was still a child, I used to call Pak Kasan 'Babah.' He is indeed Chinese; when he married with Jenab ... he became a *mualap*.)

The asterisk refers to the following note:
**) Seorang yang baru di-Islamkan.* (Someone who was recently 'Islamized.')
It is worth noting that in both passages the new converts are Indonesian Chinese. The first passage is a very good illustration of the negative connotations generally associated with the term *mualaf*.

CHAPTER 3

STORIES AND ACTANTS

I. METHODOLOGY

In this section I will attempt to give a clear and comprehensive summary of *Anna Soen Nio*. If one defines a story as "what brings about a transformation in a subject over time" then any character who will undergo a transformation can be viewed as the subject of a story.[1] The novel can thus be viewed as a combination of as many stories as there are such character-subjects contained in it.[2] Characters can be individual (persons) or collective entities (e.g. the nation, the Muslim community). Just as some characters are more important than others, so are stories: some stories either take up more narrative time, or involve transformations affecting the characters' social status (e. g. religious conversion or marriage) or their spatial location (e. g. travel or change of residence). The major boundaries between stories can thus be mainly defined in terms of temporal and/or spatial breaks. One of the major analytical challenges is to describe how these different stories relate to one another: this is

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[1] Susan Rubin Suleiman, *Authoritarian Fictions: The Ideological Novel as a Literary Genre* (Princeton, Princeton UP, 1993), p. 262, note 12. Suleiman draws this definition from Arthur Danto's *Analytical Philosophy of History* (Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1968), p. 236. For a similar definition of "the basic elements of any narrative," see J. Hillis Miller, 'Narrative,' in F. Lentricchia and T. McLaughlin, eds., *Critical Terms for Literary Study* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1990), p. 75.

[2] Suleiman, *Authoritarian*. Suleiman writes that "every character can be considered the subject of his or her own story" but it seems to me that a character has to undergo a "transformation over time" in order to be the subject of a story. Characters who do not fulfil this condition have no story and are not subjects in the sense here defined. This might be an interesting way of distinguishing major characters (subjects) from minor ones (non-subjects).

mainly done by examining the roles played by the different characters in other characters' stories.

A few important concepts and analytical tools are implicit in the above introductory paragraph. The first of these concepts is the dichotomy between *story* and *discourse* developed within the framework of French structuralist narratology.[3] Story designates the narrative content of the text, and discourse, "the way in which a story is presented ... the text as it appears"; any narrative text is thus the "putting into discourse of a story."[4] This definition obviously emphasizes the fact that any story can be told in a practically infinite number of ways but also that it is always told in a given way: if discourse does not exist without story, the reverse is also true.[5] Discourse is determined by "three basic classes of determination"[6] that Suleiman presents as the three determinants of (the process of putting into) discourse and defines as follows:

> 1) *narration* or narrative instance (who is telling the story, to whom, under what circumstances?); 2) *focalization* (from whose perspective(s) is the story "seen" or experienced?); and 3) *temporal organization* (the order, frequency, and duration of events as they are recounted in the discourse versus the order, frequency, and

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[3] One of the most important works on narratology is Gérard Genette's *Narrative Discourse* (Ithaca, Cornell UP, 1980). I will often refer to this work. However, I will largely adopt Suleiman's reformulation of Genette's and Algirdas Julien Greimas' terminologies for the analysis of discourse and story respectively; Suleiman also provides a very clear synthetic schema of the "principal constituents of the narrative text" that combines both scholars' methods (Suleiman, *Authoritarian*, pp. 156-158; schema on p. 157). I will return to Greimas later.

[4] Suleiman, *Authoritarian*, p. 156.

[5] Suleiman, *Authoritarian*, p. 276, note 14.

[6] Genette, *Narrative*, p. 31.

duration of events as they occurred in the story).[7]
Summarizing a novel can remain entirely at the level of story but it seems to me that an analysis of the bundle of relations forming the temporal organization of the narrative text can be very useful in extracting a long and/or complex story from its discursive garb.

At the level of story proper, we find three classes of constituents: 1) *characters*, who have indefinite numbers of *qualities* but who fulfil only four types of *functions*; 2) *events* (sequences of actions), which are closely linked to two of the characters' functions; and 3) *context* (for characters and events). The *two functions* of characters just mentioned are: 1) the *syntagmatic* function, which serves to advance the stories; and 2) the *actantial* function, which determines the general roles of characters in the stories.[8] One of the most powerful tools used to analyze this function is the actantial model elaborated by Greimas.[9]

This actantial model is apt to account for the practically infinite number of actantial configurations found in an infinite

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[7] Suleiman, *Authoritarian*, pp. 156 and 158.

[8] Suleiman, *Authoritarian*, p. 157.

[9] For a clear, brief presentation of Greimas' actantial model, see Suleiman, *Authoritarian*, pp. 79-83 and p. 266 note 6. This model, which Suleiman applies throughout her analysis of the *roman à thèse*, was first exposed in Greimas' *Sémantique structurale* (Paris, Larousse, 1966). It is partly derived from the long tradition of Soviet formalist folkloristics inaugurated by Vladimir Propp (*Morphology of the Folk Tale*); see T. Todorov's article ('Personnage') in Ducrot and Todorov, *Dictionnaire encyclopédique des sciences du langage* (Paris, Seuil, 1972), pp. 286-92. More recently another Russian scholar, E. Meletinsky, has proposed an actantial model similar to Greimas'. Meletinsky's model has been applied to the analysis of the pre-war Indonesian novel *Salah Pilih* in Ok-kyung Pak, 'Les rapports ethniques dans le roman Minangkabau d'avant-guerre,' *Anthropologie et Sociétés* 3, no.3 (1979): 141-57.

number of stories; its main advantage lies in its reductive power, or its economy:

> the number of *actants*, or syntactic categories, in any story ... is limited: the number of *actors*, however, can be very large, since every actantial category may be occupied by more than one actor. The latter is defined as any agent, animate or inanimate, who fulfills a particular actantial function; actors may range from living persons (what we usually call "characters") to abstract entities like "Truth." Conversely, a single actor may participate in more than one actantial category. ... there are six actants who define the principal spheres of action of any story ... the subject or protagonist; the object, or what is ... sought by the subject; the receiver ... who is to benefit from the object; the donor ... who facilitates the communication of ... the object to the receiver; the helper ... who helps the subject in his action for obtaining the object; and the opponent ... who hinders or tries to hinder the subject's action.[16]

This quotation sums up the most important of the characters' functions connected to story, the actantial function. To be fully intelligible, however, the summary of a story must include not only a minimum of references to the syntagmatic functions performed by the characters, but also to some of the characters' qualities such as name, gender, and various group or social affiliations (including religious ones), to mention only what I view, in *Anna Soen Nio*, as the most important qualities. *Context*, the third constituent at the level of story is also important, especially inasmuch as space, or geography, is concerned.

As for the two remaining character's functions, referred to by Suleiman as the *qualifying* and the *interpretive* functions, they will be treated in the next chapters, in the context of an analysis of ideological discourse in the narrative text. One of the most important of the narrator's functions is also termed *interpretive* and I intend to elaborate on the connections between these parallel functions (of the narrator and characters), which form bundles of

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[16] Suleiman, *Authoritarian*, p. 266, note 6.

ideological commentaries on everything located at the level of story (characters, context, and events).[11] On the formal level, the ideological commentaries in *Anna Soen Nio* are mainly found in what Genette views as a subtype of one of the four basic forms of narrative movement. These four movements are the *descriptive pause*, the *scene*, the *summary*, and the *ellipsis*.[12] The subtype involved is the *typical or illustrative scene*, "where action ... is almost completely obliterated in favor of psychological and social characterization."[13]

II. SUMMARY OF *ANNA SOEN NIO*

Although the formal divisions of a work into parts and chapters — with or without titles — do not necessarily coincide with its discursive articulations, the relations between the two sets are "what mainly determine the rhythm of a narrative."[14] I will therefore take these relations as the starting point of my summary, partly because, in *Anna Soen Nio*, they are relatively simple; in other words, the major divisions largely coincide with the discursive articulations.

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[11] In Genette's *Narrative Discourse*, this interpretive function is termed *ideological*, whereas in Philippe Hamon's *Texte et idéologie* (Paris, PUF, 1984), the longest chapter ('Personnage et évaluation') is largely devoted to an analysis of the characters' interpretive, or ideological, function. Suleiman's use of the term "interpretive" is probably due the preference of the American academic community. According to Wayne C. Booth, "for most American readers the word «ideology» still carries too many connotations of the narrowly doctrinaire" (Booth, *The Company We Keep*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1988, p. 12).

[12] Genette, *Narrative*, pp. 93-95.

[13] Genette, *Narrative*, p. 111.

[14] Genette, *Narrative*, p. 88, note 4.

Anna Soen Nio is divided into three numbered episodes (Ind. *episode*) that are, in turn, subdivided into numbered chapters.[15] In each of the three episodes, the eponymous character, Anna (Soen Nic), goes through a major transformation. She is the only character who does, just as she is the only character who appears in the first narrative in every single chapter.[16] In this sense she is the major subject of the three related stories that form the whole work. The story narrated in the first episode is more complete in itself than the related stories of the second and third episodes and the motivation that links the second episode to the third is stronger. It is arguable that the second and third episodes, taken together, form a single uninterrupted story. I will therefore treat the first episode as the first complete unit and the second and third episodes as the second and last unit of my analysis.

The major stories are narrated in the order in which they happen, that is: without major anachronies taking a large share of any episode. The first narrative begins with the first line of the first episode and ends with the last line of the last episode. The *speed* of the narrative varies considerably from beginning to end: the first episode occupies roughly one half of the whole work for

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[15] The first episode covers chapters 1 to 4; the second episode, chapters 5 to 9; and the third episode, chapters 10 to 14.

[16] The first narrative is "the temporal level of narrative with respect to which anachrony is defined as such" (Genette, *Narrative*, p. 49). In *Anna Soen Nio*, anachronies are few and the most important type is the "external analipsis." This is Genette's term for what is, roughly, a flashback, that is "any evocation after the fact of an event that took place earlier than the point in the story where we are at any given moment," but a flashback "whose entire extent remains external to the extent of the first narrative" (Genette, *ibid.*, pp. 40 and 49). The only function of external analepses is "to fill out the first narrative by enlightening the reader on one or another «antecedent»" (*ibid.*, p.50). Besides external analepses, a few "advance notices" are also found in *Anna Soen Nio*.

a story lasting a few weeks; the narratives of the second and third episodes are roughly equal in length (one fourth each) but their stories take about a year and three years respectively. This acceleration is mainly due to the fact that the first and second episodes have longer illustrative scenes and to the presence of longer temporal ellipses in the second and third episodes.[17]

II.1. First episode

The story of Anna's conversion to Islam (change of social status), which also directly causes her to depart from her parental home (spatial break), is the major transformation affecting her in the first episode. She is thus the *subject* of this story and Islam (along with a new home, by implication) is the *object* of which she is the *receiver*. Other characters, acting individually or collectively, fulfil the remaining three actantial functions. The most important of these characters is Karna Wijaya, who functions as the *donor* in Anna's story. Besides Anna herself, he is the only character who goes through a transformation in the first episode; he is thus the subject of a second story of his own. Anna's father functions as the *opponent*, and the family of Nurhayati, one of Anna's classmates, functions as the *helper*.

The above analysis is, however, very schematic in as much as it is conducted after the fact and thus ignores the gradual

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[17] As Genette explains in his sequel to *Narrative Discourse*, speed (Fr. *vitesse*) is a fundamental aspect of the temporal organization of a narrative:

> Le trait pertinent est donc la vitesse du récit ... La comparaison *interne* consiste à mesurer, de façon plus ou moins détaillée, les variations de tempo d'un texte narratif.
> (Gérard Genette, *Nouveau discours du récit*, Paris, Seuil, 1983, pp. 23-24)

In *Narrative Discourse*, the term "duration" is used instead of "speed." Suleiman keeps the former (the first edition of her book also dates from 1983).

development of this actantial configuration through what can be described as the characters' ignorance, including Anna's apparent ignorance of what the *object* of her 'quest' will ultimately be (i.e. Islam). As long as this ignorance persists, characters can fulfil actantial functions different from the ones they will have 'end up' fulfilling once a subject has acquired that which therefore becomes his/her object.[14] I will explain below how Anna's father first functions as both donor and helper; how Karna Wijaya functions as object; and how Islam can be seen as what would have helped Anna in obtaining the first coveted object (Karna Wijaya) before becoming Anna's ultimate object in the first episode.

II.1.i. *Anna's mission*

Anna is a Chinese Indonesian college student who is temporarily prevented from attending her classes because of her father's illness: she has to keep the family store while her father is in hospital. A classmate of hers, Ricky, visits her at the store and tells her they have a new lecturer.[15] The lecturer's name, Karna Wijaya, reminds Anna of a recent conversation she had had

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[14] Using more than one actantial configuration to describe a single narrative might not be entirely consistent with Greimas' theory. However, I see no other solution to the problem of dealing with many stories within a single narrative. Selecting only one story as 'the most important' would be done, at least in the case of *Anna Soen Nio*, on an arbitrary basis. Suleiman also faced a similar problem in her own study. To describe a "donor [who] plays ... the role of an opponent," i. e. a donor who will eventually become an opponent as the story advances, she coined the term "pseudo-donor" (Suleiman, *Authoritarian*, p. 81). I think that this indicates a problem with Greimas' theory. Greimas' most relevant work in this respect is *Sémantique structurale: Recherche de méthode*, Paris, PUF, 1986 [1st ed. 1966]; English translation: *Structural Semantics: An Attempt at a Method*, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1983.

[15] Ricky is a minor character who plays strictly syntagmatic functions throughout the work. Three times he conveys to other characters correct information that prompts them to act, once as an indirect result and twice as a direct result of this new information.

with her father about a newspaper article on "racial assimilation" in Indonesia.[20] The name of the author of the article was also Karna Wijaya. When Anna visits her father in hospital in the late afternoon, she mentions this 'coincidence' to him:

> "Do you remember the name Karna Wijaya, dad? Perhaps he is a lecturer at my university...?" ... "Judging from his name, he must be of *Chinese descent*."
> "...If he is of *Chinese descent*, [then] you have to meet him."
> "Then I have to attend classes," said Anna.
> "Let your mother keep the store. If need be you should even meet him tomorrow," said the father.
> "Thank you, daddy," said Anna.[21]

I quoted this passage to show the importance of identity (name and group affiliation) as a motor of action (syntagmatic function). For the moment I will leave aside the father's motivations because, despite their importance, they are not expressed to Anna and thus play no role in advancing the story. What is most significant from the syntagmatic point of view is that the story is set in motion by Anna and her father's ignorance of Karna Wijaya's identity, about which they make a major assumption that will eventually turn out to be false. This initial case of mistaken identity is what largely determines the outcome of the first episode.[22]

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[20] *Anna*, p. 12. The expression used is *pembauran ras*.

[21] *Anna*, p. 12-13:
"Papa ingat nama Karna Wijaya? Apa ia dosen di universitas saya barangkali?" ... "Melihat namanya, pastilah dia ***turunan.***
"... Kamu musti ketemu orang itu, jika dia ***turunan.***
"Kalau begitu saya perlu kuliah," kata Anna.
"Biar mamah yang jaga toko. Kalau perlu besok langsung ketemu dengan dia," kata sang ayah.
"Terimakasih, pa," kata Anna.

[22] The French term *quiproquo* precisely designates such a dramatic device (mistaken identity). This is how René Girard speaks of the importance of *quiproquo* in the novel:
certaines intuitions communes à tous les grands romanciers ...

The next day Anna goes to school and sets out for the "mission proposed by her father to find out about ... Karna Wijaya's background ... if indeed it is he who wrote the article."[23] Anna meets the lecturer after class, talks to him, and finds out that he is indeed the author of the article in question. Karna Wijaya then takes her to his house, where she stays for a while: they chat, share a meal, and discuss the article that Anna reads over while he is cooking (pp. 20-30). This illustrative scene, picturing Anna and Karna Wijaya is the longest of the whole work. At one point she asks him whether he is an "authentic autochthon" (*aseli pribumi*); he answers evasively and turns the issue into a joke (p. 23). Anna finally leaves, walks to the closest bus stop, and takes the bus to go back to her father's store.

Two days later Anna and the lecturer meet for the third time.[24] Once again he takes her to his house. They are about to start cooking and he tells her that if she turns out to be a good cook, he will propose to her (p. 59). Then he shows her an issue of a magazine whose main feature is a report on "Muslims of Chinese (*Cina*) descent" and asks her to read it (p. 60: *bacalah*). After the meal Anna leaves to go back, once again, to the store. The meal and its outcome are not depicted in the scene taking place at the lecturer's house and narration resumes; the narrator does not

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s'incarnent dans des situations romanesques dont l'essence ramène toujours au *quiproquo*.
(R. Girard, *Mensonge romantique et vérité romanesque*, Paris, Hachette, 1992, p. 261)

[23] *Anna*, p. 17: *missi yang dianjurkan oleh ayahnya untuk mengetahui latar-belakang ... Karna Wijaya. Ini jika betul-betul dialah yang menulis artikel ...*

[24] I am skipping the entire second chapter and about the first half of the third chapter because the story does not really advance in these parts. I will return later to some of the very important illustrative scenes they contain.

mention it either. Anna has mixed feelings towards the lecturer: she thinks he might be a hypocrite and she is very wary of his "erotic" appeal. Before leaving Anna also notices a bookshelf full of books on religion, some of which written in Arabic script. She decides not to go back to the lecturer's house the following Sunday (pp. 60-61).

II.1.ii. *Karna Wijaya's repentance*

Shortly after Anna leaves his house, Karna Wijaya receives a telegram from Bukittinggi announcing his mother's death. The same day he flies from Jakarta to Padang and finally arrives in Bukittinggi where he is welcome by his younger sister, Harti, and his step-father, Malin Sati Maradjo. Upon his step-father's suggestion, Karna Wijaya performs his evening prayer alone in a room.

The following Sunday, Anna decides to visit the lecturer because she has not seen him on campus for a few days. At his house she finds a message addressed to her saying that he went to West Sumatra for a number of days. She wonders about the reason of his departure but takes the mention of his destination as a sign of his *not* being of Chinese descent. The mystery of his group affiliation is thus lifted:

> If she first thought Karna was of Chinese descent, this was due to his attractive personal secrecy.[25]

From then on, Anna will pass by the lecturer's house every Sunday until he returns.

Meanwhile Karna Wijaya is spending time with his sister Harti in Bukittinggi; three weeks have passed since their mother's

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[25] *Anna*, p. 64: *Kalau pada mulanya dia mengira Karna adalah keturunan Cina, hal itu karena kerahasiaan pribadi menarik ini.*

burial. Helped by his sister, Karna reflects over his past and repents for having neglected his religious duties. Speaking with the authority of their deceased mother, Harti strikes the final blow to her brother, who has been shaken by the recent unfortunate event and its aftermath:

> "Mom guessed that after you reached the top in Jakarta, you would certainly forget about your religious observances. You fast and pray in Jakarta, don't you?" asked Harti. Karna shook his head. He felt a heavy burden was pressuring him to make this confession.
> "Repent before you die. Pray before people pray for you, dear brother," said Harti.[26]

Harti is also convinced that her brother will not be able to act out his repentance without the help of a pious wife. She tries to convince him that their step-father's niece, Ningsih, is the ideal candidate for him (p. 67).[27] The end of the third chapter coincides with a narrative movement away from Bukittinggi – where the narrative will not go back – to Jakarta, where Anna's story will be continued.

II.1.iii. *Anna's conversion*

While keeping her father's store, Anna reads a book she saw on Karna's shelves when peeping through the windows, presumably on one of her Sunday trips. This book is entitled *The Position of Women in*

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[26] *Anna*, p. 67:
"Mama menduga, sejak abang jadi top di Jakarta, tentulah lupa beribadah. Abang puasa dan sembahyang nggak di Jakarta?" tanya Harti. Karna menggelengkan kepalanya. Perasaan berat membebani diri untuk membuat pengakuan itu.
"Taubatlah sebelum mati. Bersembahyanglah sebelum disembahyangkan orang, bang Kar," kata Harti.

[27] On p. 66, Harti tells Karna that Ningsih is currently boarding in a *pesantren* for girls at Padangpanjang. Padang Panjang is a town located in West Sumatra, near Bukittinggi.

Islam[28] and she thinks this reading will give her something to talk about with Karna Wijaya, whose return she is anxiously awaiting. But it so happens that Anna is very impressed by the contents of the book. She decides to convert to Islam. Once again her friend Ricky drops by the store; she tells him about her intention. When Anna goes back home she is confronted by her father, who has been informed of her plan by Ricky. Anna's father asks her to choose between Islam and her family: if she chooses Islam, she will be banned from her parental home forever. Anna chooses Islam and is ordered to leave at once. She needs a place to stay and decides to contact her friend Nurhayati to see if she can obtain some assistance from her family.

Anna is warmly welcomed by Nurhayati's family. Nurhayati knew of Anna's intention to convert and, upon Anna's insistence, her friend's family accepts to arrange for the conversion to take place as soon as possible. The very same day, the conversion ritual is performed at the nearby mosque.

Two days later, Nurhayati takes Anna to Karna Wijaya's house. They find out that the lecturer is back, but also, to Anna's dismay, that he is now married. Nurhayati extends congratulations to the newly-weds, declines Karna's offer to come in, and the two girls leave before Anna says a word. As soon as they get back into the car, Anna bursts into tears. Nurhayati tries to console her friend before they go back home. With Nurhayati's family's help and her new faith, Anna tries to overcome her disappointment. The first episode ends with what appears as an advance notice of what her new work life is going to be. Thanks to Nurhayati's father (Oom Sukiman) and to Imam Ahmad Rasul, the imam who received her first

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[28] *Anna*, p. 68: the title of the book is *Kedudukan Wanita dalam Islam*.

confession of faith, Anna will be able to find work at the Islamic Hospital. This will fill her life with meaning and joy.

II.1.iv. *Anna's mission and conversion: actantial configurations compared*

As I have argued above, it is possible to consider the first episode as the narrative of Anna's first complete story. The ultimate actantial configuration was also briefly exposed above. As for the initial configuration and the transformation required for passing from the one to the other, a brief explanation would be useful at this stage. Anna retains her function as subject but her object is not yet Islam: it is Karna Wijaya, who then functions as the object in relation to which she functions as receiver.[25] Anna's father functions as donor because he is responsible for Anna's impulse to meet Karna Wijaya: he allows her to leave the store and return to school for this precise end. But he does not function as helper since he plays no role in the development of the relationship between Anna and Karna: in fact, nowhere in the narrative is the father even informed of this relationship. What fills the actantial category of helper is in fact Islam: Anna's first interest in Islam simply springs from the need to have a

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[25] Strictly speaking Anna's first object is Karna Wijaya's identity. She first obtains confirmation that he is the author of the article for which her father showed an interest and then, much later, concludes from Karna's trip to West Sumatra that he is not of Chinese descent. At this point, Anna's emotional link to Karna is already formed. In a certain sense, this link contradicts her father's instructions: one will recall that he told her she should meet the author of the article only *if* he were of Chinese descent. But by the time she discovers his identity, it is already 'too late.' There are three factors that explain how it is possible for Anna to acquire all this information in such a piecemeal fashion. The first explanation lies in the position of the lecturer's name in the work's onomastic system; the second, in the work's repeated statement that it is often, if not always, impossible to distinguish native Indonesians from Indonesian Chinese by physiognomy alone; and the third, in Karna Wijaya's ambiguous behaviour itself. I will elaborate on these points in the next chapter.

conversation topic with Karna Wijaya.[30] But the fact that Karna Wijaya is Muslim is not revealed to the reader until he is in Bukittinggi and Anna only guesses that he is.[31] In addition to a number of indications to that effect, which she grasps in the course of the story – essentially the presence in the lecturer's house of books written in Arabic script and the scene in which he gives her a magazine to read – her final conclusion is based on a different set of (explicit and implicit) deductions: Karna went to West Sumatra, therefore he belongs to the Minangkabau group, not to the Indonesian Chinese (explicit); the vast majority (if not the totality) of Minangkabau people are Muslims, therefore Karna is Muslim (implicit); other less probable assumptions are not considered.[32]

In any event, what remains valid, from the syntagmatic point of view, is that nothing allows the reader to conclude that Anna would have converted to Islam before knowing that Karna had gotten married in Bukittinggi if Ricky had not 'denounced' her to her father. When Anna's father learns about her intention – that is,

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[30] However, when Anna informs Ricky of her intention to convert, he thinks, as many readers likely will, that this is a means to secure 'access' to the lecturer. But Anna rejects this interpretation (*Anna*, p. 69).

[31] This information is actually made available to readers in the foreword to the work. But this is a complex problem that has nothing to do with the story or with the connections between the levels of story and discourse. It is relevant to one aspect of narrative discourse, i.e. the relationship between narrator and narratee, if only through a third party, the author of the foreword (the publisher). I will briefly address this issue in the next chapter.

[32] Karna Wijaya could be a Muslim of Chinese descent originating from West Sumatra or having relatives or friends to visit there. Strictly speaking, this is not an impossibility. I will also show in the next chapter that one cannot deny that Karna himself hints at the possibility of his being of 'remote' Chinese descent in a crucial dialogue with Anna. What is more important is that Karna also denies the relevance of 'Chinese descent' as a general category.

her ultimate object – he immediately becomes her opponent and inadvertently pushes her to move on.[33]

As for Karna Wijaya's change of function in Anna's story, it shows an interesting pattern. By switching from object to donor, Karna transforms the loss he represents for Anna into a precious gift, a gift that in fact transcends his own self: the gift of Islam. And because Karna Wijaya in no way imposed Islam as a prerequisite for an hypothetical marriage with Anna – in other words the object did not impose the helper – how could she blame him for her conversion (presuming Ricky's interpretation is not entirely false)? In fact, how could Anna not be grateful to him? It is this very gift which will enable her to overcome the loss of her initial object. In both her conversion and the task of overcoming this loss, Anna will be helped by Nurhayati's family, whose members collectively function as helper, providing her the warm support from the Muslim community that her conversion entitles her to.

At this stage it could be useful to present in a small table a visual summary of the two actantial configurations (initial and ultimate) described above.

(See table on next page)

[33] In fact this is the function her father is bound to play, no matter what Anna's object is. We will see in chapter 5 that Anna repeatedly states that her family would oppose her marrying a native Indonesian. If her father knew about her feelings for Karna, who turned out not to be of Chinese descent, he would certainly oppose them. At the beginning of the second episode, when Anna announces that she has severed all relationships with her family to Dr Kamal, a long-time acquaintance of her family's, he thinks that the cause of this break is her relationship with Karna Wijaya (*Anna*, p. 83).

FIRST EPISODE: ANNA'S STORY

Actants (Categories of function)	Actantial Configurations (Actors: characters, animate or not) Initial	Ultimate
SUBJECT	Anna	Anna
RECEIVER	Anna	Anna
OBJECT	Karna Wijaya	Islam
DONOR	Anna's father	Karna Wijaya
HELPER	Islam	Nurhayati's family
OPPONENT	Bukittinggi (Harti)	Anna's father

Before turning to the second episode, we have to consider Karna Wijaya's own story, which is the story of the transformation brought about by his unforeseen stay in Bukittinggi. It is worth analyzing not only for its own sake but also because it functions as Anna's opponent in her initial quest. To be more precise, it could be argued that it is Karna's sister, Harti, who succeeds in acting as opponent by redefining their mother's death (which clearly has a syntagmatic function) as a catalyst for her brother's moral transformation. In Harti's mind, this transformation can only be accomplished through the agency of a pious woman.[34] But like many other characters, Harti is not cognizant of the entire story:

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[34] This theme forms the core of the longest of Motinggo Busye's work I have had access to, *Perempuan-perempuan impian* (Jakarta, Kartini Group, 1979). In this work, however, the class affiliation of the different characters plays a decisive role: the pious woman is from a humble family and her husband, whom she brings back to observance of religious practice, is from a *nouveau riche* milieu.

she is unaware of Anna's existence in her brother's life. This prevents her from having any bad intention.[35] She is only interested in her brother's observance of a religious practice she values deeply.

II.1.v. *Karna's repentance: actantial configuration*

The first episode provides no confirmation of Karna's actual moral transformation; only his marriage to Ningsih, his step-father's niece, is confirmed. But the brief reappearance of Karna and his wife in the second episode will serve the sole purpose of bringing about this confirmation through Anna's interpretation of Karna's change in behaviour. This change is what is termed repentance (*taubat*) in the narrative and it is also the term I have been using so far.[36] But in order to show the parallelism between the stories of Anna and Karna, I will use the expression 'internal conversion' to refer to Karna's transformation (active repentance).[37] In the third episode, this parallelism will also involve another character, who will, however, fail to repent; the expression will then also be useful. What is important for my present purpose is the fact that Karna's transformation is indeed confirmed: this allows me to construct the actantial configuration

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[35] Harti even takes precautions before urging her brother to marry in Bukittinggi: she asks him if he has a "serious girlfriend" in Jakarta. Karna does not answer this question because he is in a state of shock (*Anna*, p. 67).

[36] The Indonesian term *taubat* is derived from the Arabic *tauba*; its verbal form *bertaubat* corresponds to the Arabic *tâba*.

[37] Clifford Geertz has used this expression to describe the Weberian type of religious rationalization he observed in Bali (see C. Geertz,'«Internal Conversion» in Contemporary Bali,' in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, New York, Basic Books, 1973, pp. 170-89). My use of the same expression here is much broader: it simply designates a return to religious attitudes and practices that had been set aside. The term 'reconversion' could do but, strictly speaking, someone born a Muslim never converts to Islam.

for Karna's story (whose conclusion comes only in the second episode). I will first introduce the complete configuration in the table form used above and then give the relevant justifications and explanations.

FIRST EPISODE: KARNA'S STORY

Actants (Categories of function)	Actantial Configuration (Actors: characters, animate or not)
SUBJECT	Karna Wijaya
RECEIVER	Karna Wijaya
OBJECT	Islam
DONOR	Harti (Karna's sister) (Bukittinggi)
HELPER	Ningsih (Karna's wife) (Bukittinggi)
OPPONENT	Jakarta

One should always keep in mind that neither the actantial model nor the configurations resulting from its application have absolute value. One of the most difficult problems is to assign a precise function to a given character, event, complex of events, spatial location, abstract entities, etc. In Karna's story the status of Jakarta as opponent seems obvious (at least in Karna's and Harti's view). Because of the importance of Bukittinggi as the space where the functions of donor and helper are located, it is very tempting to establish the whole series of events taking place there as what actually fulfils the two functions just mentioned. This would leave us with a contextual binary opposition between two actantial, or active, locations: Bukittinggi as donor and helper on

the one hand, and Jakarta as opponent on the other. This is what I suggested by putting Bukittinggi in brackets in the second table (Karna Wijaya's story). The same relative indeterminacy is present in the first table (Anna's story), where it is the complex of characters and events located in Bukittinggi that collectively function as opponent in Anna's story. Here again we are left with a contextual binary opposition; in two different but related stories, the same location fulfils opposite functions: Bukittinggi as opponent in Anna's initial story and as helper (and donor) in Karna Wijaya's story. To achieve a full understanding of the significance of these active locations as symbolic spaces, the analysis of the story is not sufficient. Only the interpretive function performed by the narrator and the characters will explain why locations are so significant. I will discuss these symbolic spaces in chapter 5.

II.2. Second and third episodes

II.2.i *Anna and Han Soon*

In the second and third episodes, the most important events are linked to Anna's quest for a husband. Because she reconciles with her father, he is able to play a determinant role by introducing her to the son of one of his acquaintances, Oey Han Soon (Hassan Hussein). She eventually marries Han Soon but has to struggle against her husband's infidelity to keep their marriage together. In this sense, Anna's quest for a husband and a family of her own continues after marriage through this struggle: first, she has to obtain a partner and second, she has to keep him. The latter will be much more difficult to achieve than the former because it

is only after two years of married life that her husband's infidelity will surface.

Another character will personify this opposition to Anna's success: her husband's mistress, Ratna. Only a providential car accident will help Anna in finally securing her position as wife; this accident will kill Ratna and leave her husband sexually impotent, thereby suppressing not only the immediate embodiment of Han Soon's infidelity (his relationship with Ratna) but also its very possibility.

In terms of the actantial model used for analyzing the first episode (first half of the narrative), the general configuration of the second and third episodes (second half) is the following: Anna retains her functions as both *subject* (by definition since we are dealing with *her* story) and *receiver*; Han Soon functions as *object*; Anna's father functions as *donor*, thus resuming his role in Anna's initial quest during the first episode; the car accident functions as *helper*; and Han Soon's infidelity as *opponent*.

Besides Anna, other characters can be viewed as subjects of their own stories as well but none of them approaches the importance that Karna Wijaya had in the first episode, where he played an active role in Anna's story (donor) and was also the subject of his own transformation. In the second and third episodes, however, one finds a clear parallel with Karna's story of repentance: the story of Han Soon's failure to repent. From the moment of his first appearance, Han Soon presents himself to Anna rather unashamedly as a negligent Muslim.[38] This does not prevent

[38] *Anna*, p. 121. In their first conversation Anna tells Han Soon that she is serious about her new faith and asks him about his own attitude. He answers her that he sometimes prays but that during the last Ramadan he was able to avoid

her from marrying him, but she will not entirely succeed in performing the task assigned to the pious wife of a sinful husband: to help him repent. It is the car accident that will, so to speak. Han Soon's failure is also Anna's: whereas Karna's wife succeeds and thus functions as helper to her husband, Anna fails and will be left to fulfil a function assigned to Karna's sister in Karna's story, that of donor.[39] Anna repeatedly urges her husband to repent after she discovers his infidelity, just as Karna's sister did once Karna was present in Bukittinggi. But Karna's sister literally finds help in the person of Ningsih, who becomes Karna's wife. Being already Han Soon's wife, Anna is in a different situation and cannot find the same kind of help.[40] For the sake of making easier the comparison of the two stories of repentance, I give below the configuration of Han Soon's story together with that of Karna's as a reminder (between brackets).

(See table on next page)

(*bolos*: escape) fasting for eighteen days. He excuses himself by saying that he is only a "new comer" (***new comer***).

[39] It might be interesting to note that even when one considers Karna's marriage as a substory of the story of his repentance, his sister remains donor and can be viewed as helper as well (replacing Ningsih, who now functions as object).

[40] There is a possibility that Anna does not seriously consider: that of finding a second pious wife for her husband in order to improve the chance of his repenting. Anna is not opposed to polygyny in principle and she does tell Han Soon that it would be better to take his mistress as second wife than to hide a sin (*maksiat*). But this suggestion comes before Han Soon confesses his infidelity. After he confesses, he promises he will repent and Anna seems to believe he is on the right track (see pp. *Anna*, 140 and 148-49).

SECOND AND THIRD EPISODES: HAN SOON'S STORY

Actants (Categories of function)	Actantial Configuration (Actors: characters, animate or not)	
SUBJECT	Han Soon	(Karna)
RECEIVER	Han Soon	(Karna)
OBJECT	Islam	(Islam)
DONOR	Anna	(Karna's sister)
HELPER	Car accident	(Karna's wife)
OPPONENT	Han Soon's infidelity (Ratna)	(Jakarta)

If the similarities between the two repentance stories can be expected to be fairly obvious because of their thematic content, similarities between Anna's marriage story and Han Soon's repentance story appear more as a direct result of a comparison of their actantial configurations:

SECOND AND THIRD EPISODES

Actants (Categories of function)	Actantial Configuration (Actors: characters, animate or not)	
	Anna's story	Han Soon's story
SUBJECT	Anna	Han Soon
RECEIVER	Anna	Han Soon
OBJECT	Han Soon	Islam
DONOR	Anna's father	Anna
HELPER	Car accident	Car accident
OPPONENT	Han Soon's infidelity (Ratna)	Han Soon's infidelity (Ratna)

I will conclude this exercise by commenting on one important aspect of the connections between Anna's and Han Soon's configurations that is visible from the above table. What is evident is the fact that the car accident and Han Soon's infidelity both play a double function. Han Soon's infidelity is an obstacle to his relationship with his wife and to his repentance; by suppressing the possibility of infidelity – by leaving Han Soon impotent – the accident suppresses what threatens both the viability of Anna's marriage and the possibility of Han Soon's repentance. What might be less evident is the connection between the two objects (Han Soon or married life and Anna or religious life). They are so intimately linked that one can even wonder whether it is legitimate to separate them: Anna, a pious woman, needs a *pious* husband, even an impotent one; in this sense she needs her husband's object (Islam or repentance). Han Soon needs to be pious to *keep* his wife and he needs his wife in order to be pious. In this sense one can say that Han Soon's repentance (Islam) is not his real object but only a means, what helps him keep his wife (Anna would then be his real object). These comments, verging on casuistry, still leave us, however, with a rather intriguing question: that of Ratna's death (consequence of the accident); strictly speaking (i.e. from the syntagmatic and actantial point of view) she did not have to die. Only what she is or represents (i.e. her qualities) can explain this dramatic excess.

II.2.ii. *Other characters and events*

In the second episode, two other characters perform syntagmatic functions. When Anna expresses her desire to reconcile with her father and resume a close relationship with her family, she is supported by Nurhayati's father (Oom Sukiman), who appears

in the first episode as helper to Anna's conversion, and by Dr Kamal, who finds work and board for Anna at the Islamic Hospital and its residence. We shall see, however, that these two characters are more important for the interpretive function they perform than for this punctual syntagmatic intervention. Nurhayati's father (Oom Sukiman) and Dr Kamal will provide Anna with the largest share of her religious education. These two characters are not subjects of stories of their own since they do not undergo any transformation. They thoroughly function as helpers to Anna in the process of actualizing her conversion and their role ends precisely where the story of Anna's marriage takes over the narrative.

The only transformation affecting other characters than Anna, Han Soon and Ratna (Han Soon's mistress) is the conversion to Islam of Anna's entire family (father, mother and younger sister). This conversion is a direct result of their reconciliation with Anna and, to a certain extent, of Anna's acceptance, upon her father's suggestion, of Han Soon as her future husband.[41] But Han Soon does not play an active part in this event: he is away from Jakarta when the collective conversion ceremony is performed.[42] Chronologically speaking, the conversion of the family takes place in between Anna's first meeting with Han Soon and their marriage. But the importance of two illustrative scenes that take place just before Anna first meets with Han Soon is undeniable. It is through conversations with her parents that Anna brings them to an understanding of Islam that will speed up their conversion. But the only trace of their transformation is the father's speech at the

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[41] *Anna*, p. 131:...*dengan masuknya Han Soon dalam kehidupannya, Anna kini lebih sering bertemu dengan orangtuanya.* (...with Han Soon's coming into her life, Anna was now seeing her parents more often.)

[42] *Anna*, p. 132; Han Soon is away on a business trip in Manila.

wedding party, after which Anna's family entirely disappears from the narrative. In other words, Anna's family entirely disappears from her married life. This contrasts with the frequent presence of Han Soon's parents, who play a strictly interpretive function and therefore need not be discussed any further in this chapter.

CHAPTER 4

PROPER NAMES AND GROUP IDENTITY

The selection of proper names for characters is made by the narrator and comes under his ideological function.[1] The possibility that a proper name may serve as an emblem of its bearer's identity is always present in fictional narrative and can be exploited in many different ways. I will argue below that the set of proper names found in *Anna Soen Nio* forms an onomastic system whose major function is to provide the characters' most important external markers of group identity (cultural and religious) and thus asserts the existence of stable boundaries between groups. Proper names in *Anna Soen Nio* thus serve the purpose of lifting what a foremost student of Southeast Asian identities has aptly termed "the ambiguity of identity."[2]

The importance of proper names in *Anna Soen Nio* is obvious: the very title of the work is also the name of its most important character. Inside the narrative itself, the name of one of the major characters plays an important syntagmatic function from the very beginning. As we have seen earlier, the lecturer's name (Karna Wijaya) is what sets Anna's quest into motion; it also allows for different assumptions about his cultural identity and the fact that Anna and her father select the wrong ones is largely what enables the first episode of the narrative to function in the manner of a

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[1] Genette distinguishes five functions of the narrator: narrative, directive, communicative, testimonial, and ideological (Genette, *Narrative*, pp. 256-59). Suleiman defines the ideological function (which she renames "interpretive") as follows: "to analyze, interpret, formulate judgments about characters, events, or contexts" (Suleiman, *Authoritarian*, p. 157).

[2] See John R. Clammer, *The Ambiguity of Identity: Ethnicity Maintenance and Change Among The Straits Chinese Community of Malaysia and Singapore*, Singapore, The Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1979.

classical case of mistaken identity, leading to a reversal of the initial situation once the real identity is revealed. But another aspect of cultural identity is also crucial and repeatedly stressed in the narrative: physiognomy. The other reason why Anna is still uncertain as to whether the lecturer is of Chinese descent or not is that it is not always possible to rely on physiognomy to distinguish someone of Chinese descent from members of other Indonesian cultural groups.[3] One can thus say that the relationship between physical and cultural features is far from showing a one-to-one correspondence; this is the main reason why names play such an important function. Before exposing my reconstruction of the work's onomastic system, I will settle this question of physiognomy by providing examples of how its reliability as a marker of group identity is denied in the narrative.

I. DENIAL OF PHYSIOGNOMIC DIFFERENCES

The first such denial, in chronological order, is implicit. As I just mentioned, Anna's uncertainty about the lecturer's cultural identity will only be lifted when she finds the message that he

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[3] This is a common observation which is sometimes explicitly stated in writing, as in Leo Suryadinata, 'The long, slow march to integration of the Chinese in Indonesia.' *FEER* (22 March 1984), p. 40; and Sharon Siddique and Leo Suryadinata, '*Bumiputra* and *Pribumi*: Economic Nationalism (Indiginism) in Malaysia and Indonesia,' *Pacific Affairs* 54, no. 4 (Winter 1981-82), p. 679. Comments to this effect can also be found in earlier works (and in somewhat outdated formulations...) such as Victor Purcell's classic study:

> The Chinese of Indonesia, especially those of Java, have a much more noticeable admixture of native blood than have the Chinese of the other Southeast Asian countries.
>
> ... the writer was struck with the dark complexion so common among them which was in marked contrast with the lighter complexion of the Chinese of most of Malaya, except parts of Penang and Malacca.

(V. Purcell, *The Chinese of Southeast Asia*, London, Oxford UP, 1951, p. 8)

addressed to her before leaving for Bukittinggi. This scene, in the third chapter, comes after she has spent hours with the lecturer, mostly at his place. In fact, as we have seen, the lifting of Anna's uncertainty comes too late, for she is already emotionally attached to him. But this is another issue. What matters here is that it takes Anna a very long time before 'fixing' the lecturer's identity. Once this is done, Anna's reflection on the whole process centres on the idea of "secrecy":

> If she first thought Karna was of Chinese descent, this was due to his attractive personal secrecy.[4]

To Anna's 'defence,' it can be added that Karna Wijaya did his best to keep the secret of his identity, even when Anna asked him bluntly about it, during their first meeting, on their way to the lecturer's house:

> "Sir, are you an authentic autochthon (*aseli pribumi*) or...?"
> "Eh?"
> "You're an authentic one (*aseli*), Sir?
> "Humph! this issue of authentic versus non authentic is a bother. Whether my ancestors came from Bangladesh, Sri Langka, Vietnam or even China (*Cina*) is not clear to me.
> Everyone will feel a crack in his/her self if he/she keeps pondering the question of authenticity. What's clear is that I'm the so-and-so-manieth descendant of the Prophet Noah or the Prophet Adam, I guess."[5]

Anna laughs at the lecturer's joke and the atmosphere becomes

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[4] *Anna*, p. 64: *Kalau pada mulanya dia mengira Karna adalah keturunan Cina, hal itu karena kerahasiaan pribadi menarik ini.*

[5] *Anna*, p. 23:
"Bapak ini aseli pribumi atau...?"
"Ha?"
"Aseli ya pak?"
"Hah, soal aseli dan tidak aseli itu repot. Apa dulunya moyang saya ini asalnya dari Bangladesh, Sri Langka, Vietnam atau juga Cina, tiadalah jelas bagi saya. Tiap orang aka merasa berpribadi retak jika selalu memperhitungkan soal keaseliannya. Yang terang, kira-kira saya ini turunan cucu kesekian dari Nabi Nuh, atau Nabi Adam."

relaxed.[6] But the lecturer was obviously voicing his opinion on a very important topic, although he did not know how important it was for Anna herself. His answer is in fact a denial of the relevance of the distinction between indigenousness and non-indigenousness at *the level of origin*. It is also a rebuttal of Anna's way of thinking, who seems to link origin and identity a little too closely. But how close origin and identity are linked in Anna's mind and in the lecturer's, although a crucial question, is difficult to assess because of seemingly contradictory statements from both of them.

When she talks to the lecturer for the first time, *he* is the one who first asks about cultural identity, using an expression explicitly referring to origin. Anna's answer is even more difficult to interpret:

> "You are a citizen (*WNI*) of Chinese descent (*turunan Cina*)?"
> "Right, Sir. But in *my* case, Chineseness (*Cinanya*) has vanished," said Anna.[7]

In fact, Anna's answer means: 'I am Chinese but I am not'; and it is impossible to know, even from the entire narrative, what the significance of Chineseness is for Anna. I will show in the next chapter that there are certain objective features of Chineseness

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[6] *Anna*, p. 23: *Anna tertawa renyai mendengar 'lelucon' itu. Terasa suasana menjadi santai.*
It is difficult to explain exactly why the word *lelucon* (joke) is singled out by the use of simple quotation marks. This could suggest irony (the lecturer was *not* joking) and/or 'foreignness' (*lelucon* can be identified as the Javanese loan-word it is) and/or the use of a word belonging to the register of familiarity.

[7] *Anna*, p. 18:
"Kamu WNI turunan Cina?"
"Betul, pak. Tapi kalau saya sih, Cinanya sudah hilang," ujar Anna.
This is one of the few instances of Anna's use of the term *Cina*. One other such instance can in fact be interpreted as a quotation by Anna of Han Soon's speech. The present instance looks very much like a quotation as well; using *Tionghoa* would contradict Karna Wijaya's own use and could be interpreted negatively (by him) as lack of tact, insubordination, or anything in between.

that Anna shares with other characters explicitly identified as Chinese (e.g. Mandarin Chinese language) and that it is possible, to a limited extent, to proceed by exclusion, by elimination of what she cannot mean when she states that her "Chineseness has vanished."[8] There is a remote possibility that she could be referring to her own physiognomy, but the rapidity with which the lecturer made the right guess about Anna's identity (*WNI turunan Cina*) seems to indicate that she probably 'looks Chinese' to him, no matter what her own opinion is on this subject.[9] Examples of Anna's opinions on other characters and of the reverse are more telling in this respect. Anna's views on other characters are expressed twice, first on a passer-by and later on Han Soon, whom she will eventually marry. But there is also an interesting scene (second episode, chapter six) where a minor character, Siti Alissa, voices a comparison between Anna's physiognomy and Dr Kamal's. I will discuss these three examples in the following order: Anna's view on the passer-by, Siti Alissa's view on Anna and Dr Kamal, and, last but not least, Anna's view on Han Soon, the most complex example.

The first example is to be found in one of the most important illustrative scenes of the first episode: Anna is taken by the lecturer to a rather infamous beach resort where she is very much

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[8] For example, she cannot mean that she does not speak Mandarin Chinese, for she does with her mother in one instance (*Anna*, p. 111); she cannot mean either that she is Muslim, for she has not yet converted at the time of her first encounter with Karna Wijaya.

[9] Anna will later say that one of her grandmothers (*nenek perempuan*) is an "autochthonous Indonesian" (*pribumi Indonesia*; *Anna*, p. 22). The existence of this grandmother is only mentioned once by Anna. Nothing allows the reader to conclude whether she is still alive or not.

afraid of being seen, in his company, by relatives of her father's.[10] After a short while, she mistakes someone for an uncle of hers:

> Anna felt her heart was almost failing her because it was as if she had seen Uncle Liem, one of her father's relatives. But in fact it was only a Menadonese man with a Chinese-looking face.[11]

This is an important example of the denial of physiognomic differences between Indonesian Chinese (Uncle Liem, unmistakably Chinese by name) and members of other Indonesian groups (the Menadonese). However, the comparison between Indonesian Chinese and Menadonese has a number of pragmatic implications that limit its statistical validity, although it cannot be denied that the latter group is classified, in the fictional system as well as in the real world, as an "authentically autochthonous " (*aseli pribumi*) group.[12]

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[10] *Anna*, p. 48: *Anna mulai kawatir, kalau-kalau ada salah seorang famili ayahnya yang ada dalam salah satu mobil itu.*
(Anna began to worry that there could be some relative of her father's in one of those cars.) On p. 49: *Tetapi dengan hati-hati dia melihat ke kiri dan ke kanan, kalau-kalau ada famili ayahnya di mana saja.* (But she looked carefully to the left and right in case there was some relative of her father's somewhere.) And on p. 55, Anna expresses her fear to Karna: *"...saya gemetar sampai saat ini kalau nanti kepergok family ayah."* ("...Until this moment I have been trembling [at the thought] of being seen by some relative of my father's.")

[11] *Anna*, p. 49-50: *...hampir saja Anna merasa hatinya putus, karena ia seakan melihat Oom Liem, yang juga famili ayahnya. Ternyata bukan. Itu hanya lelaki Menado saja yang wajahnya mirip Cina.*

[12] By pragmatic, I mean that nothing in the fictional work explicitly points to these implications. Only an appeal to the reader's knowledge of the real world can activate them. Such knowledge of course varies from reader to reader, but in this specific case, only the most shallow is required to understand the point of the comparison. In one of *Tempo*'s important cover stories on the Indonesian Chinese, one can read the following:

> *Ada hal yang tampaknya menolong proses pembauran di Manado, dan Sulawesi Utara pada umumnya. Persamaan fisik antara keturunan Cina dan Manado asli ditandai dengan warna kulit yang sama, misalnya.*
> [One thing seems to help the assimilation process in Manado and in North Sulawesi generally[:] the physical similarity between people of Chinese descent and authentic Manadonese [which] is indicated by

The second example appears in another purely illustrative scene involving characters who do not play any syntagmatic function in the major stories I analyzed earlier. The comparative evaluation of Anna's and Kamal's physiognomy is given by Siti Alissa, the kitchen head at the Islamic Hospital and a colleague of Anna's there, in a dialogue with Dr Kamal. The third person who is the subject of the conversation is of course Anna:

> "Why wouldn't a doctor who's still single [like you] just go out with her?"
> "If we were in a dime novel, I guess it could be arranged that way," said Dr Kamal.
> "But it *does* feel right," said the kitchen head, "Don't you have a Chinese-looking face, Mr Kamal?"
> "Perhaps my ancestors were from a generation of Vietnamese refugees, not Chinese, or in any case, a generation of Cambodian or Laotian refugees. You've never seen a documentary film on the Cambodian refugees? The men wear sashes and sarongs. The women wear long tunics (*berbaju "kuruang"*) and head-dresses, just like Minang women [do]."
> "So your origins are Minang, Mr Kamal?" asked Mrs. Siti Alissa.
> "You didn't know?"
> "I didn't."[13]

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the same skin color, for example.]
('Banyak Wajah Membuka Isolasi,' in 'Pribumi dan Nonpribumi (Laporan Utama),' *Tempo* XXI, 26 (24 August), 1991, p. 32.)

I personally do not find this explanation very convincing but the important point here is the fact that a physical similarity between *keturunan Cina* and *Manado asli* is clearly stated.

[13] *Anna*, p. 88:
"Kenapa docter yang masih bujangan tidak pacaran sama dia saja, sih?
"Jika itu sebuah roman picisan, rasanya tepat untuk diatur begitu," said Dr Kamal.
"Rasanya tepat sih," ujar sang Kepala Dapur, "Bukankah wajah pak Kamal miri [sic; mirip] Cina?"
"Mungkin moyang saya generasi pengungsi Vietnam. Bukan generasi pengungsi Cina. Setidaknya generasi pengungsi Kamboja atau Laos. Belum pernah lihat film dokumenter pengungsi Kamboja. [?] Lelaki berselempang sarung. Wanita-wanita berbaju "kuruang" dan bertutup kepala, mirip wanita Minang."
"Jadi pak Kamal ini asalnya Minang?" tanya nyonya Siti Alissa.
"Baru tau?"
"Baru tau."

The use of *kuruang* (Minangkabau for long tunic) instead of its Indonesian

In this conversation, Kamal does not deny that both Anna and him may have faces that look Chinese to others. But he does reject the possibility of any Chinese ancestry for himself. How are his Chinese-like features to be explained then? In what is his longest line, Kamal hints at possible Southeast Asian ancestry other than Minangkabau; namely Vietnamese, Cambodian or Laotian. Should we conclude that the presence of someone from any of these Southeast Asian peoples in Kamal's genealogy can account for his physiognomic 'particularity'? Perhaps. What is clearer is that Kamal invokes *cultural* similarities between the Minangkabau and the other above-mentioned peoples. *Material* culture here comes to nature's help in the guise of a redeemer: 'I may look Chinese; in fact I look Vietnamese and/or Cambodian and/or Laotian; and anyhow, these people dress like we, Minangkabau, do. I saw it on television.' Of course Kamal did not see his ancestors (*moyang*) on television; he only saw contemporary images of an Indochinese tragedy reminiscent of an earlier period of Southeast Asian history whose memory has been kept (at least) in ancient Javanese and Malay court chronicles.[14]

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equivalent *kurung* is purely a sign of Minangkabau-ness.

[14] The allusion to Vietnamese refugees, for example, cannot literally refer to the boat people of the 1970s and 1980s, but more likely to a much earlier exodus, following the conquest of the Muslim kingdom of Champa by the Vietnamese in 1471:

> Cette "diaspora" *cam* ... est attestée non seulement par le *Hikayat Hasanuddin*, mais par le *Sejarah Melayu* ... qui mentionne ... la mort du roi *cam* Pau Kubah et la fuite de ses deux fils, Pau Liang qui se réfugie à Aceh, et Indra Berma qui se réfugie à Malaka ... Ce n'est nullement un hasard, si, écrasés par les Viêtnamiens, les Cams ont pensé à fuir dans les régions islamisées avec lesquelles ils avaient depuis longtemps des contacts commerciaux et culturels ...

(D. Lombard, *Le carrefour javanais, vol. II*, Paris, Éditions de l'ÉHÉSS, 1990, p. 327, note 222)

As for Siti Alissa's identity, it can only be deducted from a number of indications given in the passage immediately following her conversation with Kamal, which is partly a narration of her antecedents and partly the continuation of the conversation: 1) before working at the hospital kitchen, Siti Alissa was chef in a Padang-style restaurant; 2) the last name of two of her children is Chaniago; and 3) when she parts with Kamal, his reply to her greeting formula is "*wassalamu'alaikum*" (so she's probably Muslim too; we already know that she works at the Islamic hospital and that at least the first half of her name connotes Muslimhood).[15] It is thus safe to assume that she is Minangkabau; this attribute alone would indeed be sufficient to make the assumption that she is also Muslim.

The third and last example is a direct denial of physiognomic differences that is reminiscent of Anna's earlier denial of her own 'Chineseness.' When Anna announces to Nurhayati's family her coming wedding to Han Soon, this is how she describes him: "a Chinese Muslim man whose face seems to bear no trace whatsoever of Chineseness!"[16] But once again, statistical validity is limited. Later Han Soon's father will add that "Han Soon's face indeed bears no trace of Chineseness any more [*sic*] because his mother is an

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[15] *Anna*, pp. 88-91. The narrated passage is a typical example of what Genette calls an external analipsis. Padang is the largest town in West Sumatra. As for the proper name Chaniago, it is also a term that connotes the Minangkabau expression *Bodi-Caniago*, "one of the two *adat* systems" of the Minangkabau, "the one with a more democratic tradition" (J. S. Kahn, *Minangkabau Social Formations*, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1980, p. 222). The other *adat* system (or principle?) is called *Koto-Piliang* (Kahn, *ibid.*, p. 223). As for the vocative Siti, it is of course derived from the Arabic *sittî*: Mrs (or French *Madame*).

[16] *Anna*, p. 130: *"...lelaki Cina muslim yang wajahnya nggak kayak ada bekas Cinanya sedikit pun!"*

authentic Indonesian from over there in Banten."[17] Han Soon is thus not 'purely' Chinese: the Chinese 'half' of his physiognomy has been erased by the Indonesian 'half' of his 'blood.' Han Soon's father's perspective thus seems to imply that Chinese Indonesians with no (or less) Indonesian ancestry would 'bear [physical] traces of Chineseness.'

In a strictly external perspective, Han Soon's Chinese physiognomy is denied to him by other characters, more precisely by his father and by Anna. Anna's case is a little more complex: her Chinese identity, which is self-denied from her own personal perspective (external and/or internal), is left largely unexplained in the narrative. However, the fact that her face may look Chinese-like to others is asserted by one non-Chinese character (Siti Alissa) and implicitly acknowledged by another (Dr Kamal). This example seems to reinforce the assumption that Karna Wijaya's guess as to Anna's identity was partly based on her physiognomy. But all these comments on physiognomy notwithstanding, Han Soon and Anna are left with Chinese names. Although both of them do adopt Arabic-sounding names after their conversion to Islam, these new names will never be used by the narrator and, among the characters, only Anna will consistently use Han Soon's convert name, in a diminutive form, when talking or referring to him.[18] If it is arguable that

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[17] *Anna*, p. 138: *"...wajahnya memang nggak ada Cinanya lagi karena Ibunya asli Indonesia dari Banten sana."*
These words are uttered by Han Soon's father during his wedding speech, to which I will return in the next chapter. Han Soon's father's name is Oey Shuang Ceng, a Chinese name. As we will see, Han Soon's father bears other "traces" of Chineseness...

[18] Anna's convert name is Rohanna. It is mentioned only once by the narrator, shortly after her conversion (*Anna*, p. 75) and is never used by any character. Han Soon's full Chinese name is Oey Han Soon; his convert name is Hassan Hussein (*ibid.*, p. 122) but Anna will consistently shorten it to Has. Anna's father will use Hassan Hussein alongside Han Soon during his wedding speech (i.e. after his

both characters' names function as clear external markers of their (Chinese) identity, we shall see below, while constructing the complete onomastic system announced above, that another major name, the lecturer's, serves the opposite function: it makes identity ambiguous (again from a strictly external perspective).

II. AN ONOMASTIC SYSTEM

If the lecturer's name (Karna Wijaya) can be viewed as an ambiguous marker of identity, it is basically because it falls outside the pattern of regularities that I will outline below and which I will call a 'system' in the weak sense of the term. A 'weak system' is a system that tolerates a certain margin of indeterminacy, or, in simpler terms, exceptions. One of the best examples of a weak system is the grammar of a natural language where, as the saying goes, "it's the exception which proves the rule."

Pragmatic information will tell the average reader that Karna Wijaya is, on the one hand, a very exceptional name for a man belonging to the Minangkabau group. One would rather expect the bearer of this name to be of Javanese or Sundanese origin.[19] This

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own conversion); Han Soon's father, during his own wedding speech, will also use his son's convert name (twice) and explain what is means (*ibid.*, pp. 136 and 138).

[19] The lecturer's name is made up of two Sanskritic elements, which are generally much more present in the two above-mentioned cultures (Balinese names, though often partly composed of Sanskritic elements too, have some other distinctive features). Karna is the name of an Indian-derived, important mythological hero of the Javanese and Sundanese repertoire of the shadow play (see B. R. O'G. Anderson, *Mythology and the Tolerance of the Javanese*, Ithaca, Cornell MIP, 1965, esp. pp. 15-17; and Y. Bonnefoy, ed., *Asian Mythologies*, Chicago, Chicago UP, 1991, pp. 55-59 for the Indian sources). Wijaya is a

pragmatic information is confirmed by the fictional onomastic system, which itself conforms to what is observable in the real world. In other words, none of the names of the other characters clearly identified as Minangkabau in the novel bear any resemblance to the lecturer's name. These other names are Malin Sati Maradjo (Karna's step-father), Harti (Karna's sister), and Dr Kamal. Other characters most likely belonging to the Minangkabau group are Siti Alissa and her children, two of which are named in the text: Charles and Rainier Chaniago.[20] As for Ningsih (Karna's wife), she is the daughter of a Javanese man and a Minangkabau woman but her name is unmistakably Javanese.[21]

On the other hand, the lecturer's very name perfectly follows a pattern adopted by Chinese Indonesians who substitute their Chinese names for Indonesian-sounding ones, especially if they live in a Javanese milieu.[22] This is one of the two reasons that allow

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literary word for victory, victorious. The Sundanese spelling would be the same, but it is common for Javanese to use a different spelling, closer to the Javanese pronunciation: Karno (as in Sukarno) Wijoyo or Widjojo. One may note in passing that the word 'Minangkabau' is often glossed as "Victorious Buffalo" (Ind. *Menang Kerbau*). Could 'Karna Wijaya' be glossed by a shrewd exegete as 'Victorious Karna,' that is, 'Karna (the) Minang' (common short form of Minangkabau)? The lecturer's name could then be literally viewed as the riddle it is for Anna.

[20] The reason why Siti Alissa's sons were given these two first names is explained in a conversation between Siti Alissa and Dr Kamal: Charles Chaniago was born around Prince Charles' birth date, and Rainier Chaniago was born around the date of Prince Rainier's wedding with Grace Kelly (*Anna*, pp. 89-90).

[21] *Anna*, p. 66: *"Ayah Ningsih orang Purwokerto, yang kawin dengan adik bungsu Pak Malin."* ("Ningsih's father is from Purwokerto; he married Pak Malin's youngest sister.")

[22] Dede Oetomo explains as follows how this pattern is worked out:
> ...some Chinese Indonesianised the Javanese name they chose by changing the /o/ vowel(s) in the name into /a/(s). For example, instead of choosing a name like /subroto/, which sounds Javanese, they Indonesianised it to become /subrata/.
> (Oetomo, *The Chinese of Pasuruan: Their Language and Identity*, Canberra: Linguistic Circle of Canberra, 1987, p. 118)

Anna and her father to think that the lecturer is of Chinese origin or, as they say "descent" (*turunan*), the other reason being, of course that the name appeared as the signature of an article on "racial assimilation" (*pembauran ras*).[23]

What is most interesting is that this pragmatic information, pertaining to Indonesian-sounding names adopted by the Indonesian Chinese, and on which both the characters (Anna and her father) and the readers must rely, is contradicted by the information given by the fictional onomastic system. In this system, all the characters clearly identified as Chinese have unmistakable Chinese names except the youngest of them all, Anna's sister (Sri Sundari Sunjaya).[24] Most of these characters are relatives of Anna's or Han Soon's, whose own full names are Anna Soen Nio and Oey Han Soon. Anna's family is collectively identified as the Soen Nio family (p. 132), and Anna's father as *Koh* Soen and *tuan* Soen.[25] As for Han

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It is safe to say that many (not only "some") Chinese follow this name-changing pattern, though not Dede Oetomo himself (as opposed, for example, to another Indonesian Chinese author cited in the present thesis, Leo Suryadinata).

[23] *Anna*, p. 12-13.

[24] Sri Sundari Sunjaya is the name that, in fact, bears the closest resemblance to the lecturer's name, Karna Wijaya, the last element (*jaya*) being common to both names. Sri Sundari is reminiscent of the name of another mythological hero of the repertoire of Javanese and Sundanese performing arts: Sitisundari (Anderson, *Mythology*, p. 62). One should also note that Anna's sister's name contains a part of what is said to be the family name (Soen; see note 24 below) that is repeated twice (indicated here in capital letters) in her new name: Sri SUNdari SUNjaya. The spelling, however, has been changed according to post-colonial rules ('u' replacing 'oe').

[25] *Koh* is a diminutive of *engkoh*, an Indonesian Chinese term of address defined in the *KBBI* as a colloquial equivalent of grand-father. In the narrative, this term is used only once, when Anna's father himself reports words uttered to him by an Indonesian neighbour of his (*Anna*, p. 118): *"Koh Soen, ini hadiah buat Ngkoh."* ("Old Soen, this is a gift for you."). As for *tuan* Soen (Mr Soen), it is used by Han Soon's father in his wedding speech (*ibid.*, p. 138). This practice seems rather at odds with real Chinese onomastic rules, which would prescribe, in this case, that the family surname (patronymic) be Nio, and not Soen or Soen

Soon's father, his full name is Oey Shuang Ceng; he is referred to as *meneer* Oey by Anna's father when he talks to Anna (pp. 115 and 119), as *tuan* Oey in his wedding speech, and as Mr. Oey by the narrator.[26] Han Soon's mother's identity is treated much as Anna's mother's is, except that she is called Phin by her husband (p. 136).[27] The other named characters who are identified as Chinese are Uncle Liem and Rossy, a common friend of Anna and Ricky's who is the subject of a short conversation between them in the first chapter.[28]

We have seen above that another Indonesian group was mentioned with respect to physiognomic identity: the Menadonese. In fact, only one other mention of a group other than the Chinese, the Minangkabau, and the Menadonese is made in the whole narrative

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Nio. In the narration, Anna's father is most often referred to as "the father, Anna's father, Anna's dad, the old man," etc.; her mother is never named and always referred to as "the mother, Anna's mother," etc.

[26] *Meneer* is of course the Dutch word for mister or sir. Could *Mr.* be the abbreviation for *meneer* (just as it is for mister)? In any event, Messrs Oey and Soen are the characters who make the most important use of English (*Anna*, pp. 139 and 111 respectively) and the narrator could very well mean to use an English vocative to refer to Mr Oey in order to underline the latter's foreignness (Chinese and English and/or Dutch versus Indonesian).

[27] We will recall that Han Soon's mother is said to be an "authentic Indonesian" from Banten (*Anna*, p. 138). But she is not specifically identified with a particular cultural group.

[28] Strictly speaking, there are three other named characters who are identified as Chinese. These characters appear in jokes told by Anna to her family (*Anna*, pp. 132-35). They are fictive characters and, in Genette's terminology, metadiegetic: they are located at a narrative level other than the first narrative. One of these is a *totok* Indonesian Chinese (Ngkoh Lim, *ibid.*, p. 132) and the other two (Imam Fu, and Ming; p. 133) are Chinese appearing in a joke whose story is set in mainland China. Besides the characters appearing in the first narrative and the three above-mentioned metadiegetic characters, the narrative makes a few scattered references to historical or mythological Chinese 'heroes.' These are Mao Tze Tung and Chou En Lai (*ibid.*, pp. 25-26); Kho Ping Hoo, a cloak and dagger story hero (p. 129); and Kong Hu Cu, i.e. Confucius (pp. 135-36 and 138).

text. The group concerned is the Javanese and the mention is made by Han Soon's father, once again during his wedding speech. This mention comes within the context of a matrimonial advice given by Han Soon's father to the bride and groom. The language used by the groom's father includes some key Javanese terms which strengthen the Javanese character of what is said.[29]

In the entire text, only one character is explicitly identified as Javanese: it is Ningsih's father.[30] If one disregards the very minor appearing of the unnamed Menadonese man in the passage discussed above in relation to physiognomy, one can say that the only protagonists who are explicitly identified as members of specific groups are either Chinese or Minangkabau. If most major characters are clearly so identified, the majority of minor characters are not. Sometimes their names alone can give the reader a good idea of their cultural identity. In all such cases the names are very much Javanese-like. The most important example of this is undoubtedly Nurhayati's father; his name is Sukiman. Two other characters have similar names: Suheiry, a young man whose name is mentioned in a conversation between Anna and Ricky; and Nilla

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[29] Here is the relevant passage as uttered by Han Soon's father (*Anna*, p. 138; emphasis in the original):

> *"Jadi, hiduplah kalian berdua dengen damai dalam suasana saling tenggang rasa yang orang Jawa bilang tepa selira."*
> ("So you two should live peacefully, in the mood of mutual consideration the Javanese call *tepa selira*.")

The only one-word equivalent of *tepa selira* given in the *KBBI* is *toleransi* (tolerance), but another frequent Indonesian equivalent is *tenggang rasa*. I will discuss this passage in the conclusion, together with another less explicit reference to Javanese culture made by Karna Wijaya (*ibid.*, p. 20).

[30] Ningsih's father's existence is simply mentioned. He plays no function whatsoever in the narrative and can be viewed as a purely emblematic character. His symbolic importance will be discussed in the next chapter.

Susanti, one of Anna's classmates.[31]

Religious identity is the other aspect of group affiliation that can be revealed by proper names. There is sometimes a strong correlation between cultural and religious identities but names alone generally do not suffice to indicate this correlation. All the characters explicitly identified as Minangkabau, for example, are also explicitly identified as Muslims because their names are quite varied: only Dr Kamal and Siti Alissa have explicitly Muslim names. As for the Indonesian Chinese, even the Muslim ones keep their Chinese, non-Muslim names. The contrast between Minangkabau and Chinese can thus be expressed as follows: all Minangkabau are Muslims but only some have Muslim names, whereas all Chinese have Chinese names but only some are Muslims. This conclusion would seem firm enough to allow us to assume that any character who does not have a Chinese name is most likely not Chinese.

The characters whose names suggest a Javanese cultural identity cannot be so easily classified. Oom Sukiman and his family are explicitly identified as Muslims but only the daughter, Nurhayati, has a Muslim name — the son's name is Oskar and the mother is left unnamed. As for Suheiry and Nilla Susanti, their religious affiliation is indeterminate. In the case of the latter, one could argue that it is in fact deliberately concealed by the narrator since Nilla, though a minor character by any standard, appears continuously in the second chapter (pp. 32-46), the third longest of the whole work.

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[31] Neither Suheiry nor Nilla Susanti play any syntagmatic or actantial functions in the narrative. They are rather 'emblematic' characters, i.e. they exist solely because of what they represent, not because of what they do. The common Javanese-like element in the three names under discussion is obviously 'Su,' as in Sukiman, Suheiry, Susanti, on the one hand (fiction), and, for instance, Soekarno, Soeharto, Sudirman, Sudharmono, Sumarlin, etc., on the other (reality).

The characters whose cultural identity is not explicitly stated can be classified in two onomastic categories. First, there are those with Muslim names and second, those with non-Muslim names. Some of the characters belonging to the first category are also explicitly identified as Muslims, in which case one of the two identity markers is redundant. This is the case with Nurhayati, Imam Ahmad Rasul and with other minor characters such as Haji Misbah (and his son Luki), a neighbour of Anna's parents', and Nyonya Djaffar, a patient at the Islamic Hospital. Other characters with Muslim names are some of Anna's classmates (Anwar Karim, Firdaus), other people associated with the Islamic Hospital or its residence (Dr Zainal, 'Aisyah), and one of Anna's neighbours, Yuk Khadijah.

Among the characters belonging to the second category, only two are identified as Muslims and they are both associated with the residence of the Islamic Hospital. They are Bu Diro (residence head) and Ani (one of Anna's fellow residents). The other characters associated with the Islamic Hospital and its residence whose names are not easily recognizable as Muslim are Wati and Erika (fellow residents), and Dr Oni. It seems safe to assume that they are Muslims as well. This leaves us with a rather small number of minor characters with non-Muslim names for whom conclusions about religious affiliation are much more difficult to draw. These are Ricky and Felix (two of Anna's classmates) on the one hand, and Ratna, Lessy and Oom Danabaya on the other.[32] Of these five characters, three have Western names that probably indicate that

[32] One will recall that Ratna is Han Soon's mistress. Lessy is a 'colleague' of hers. Both are somewhat described as women who are half kept and half 'professionals.' Oom Danabaya is another of Ratna's 'clients' or 'sugar-daddies.'

they are not Muslims or, at least, that do not display their religious affiliation: Ricky, Felix, and Lessy.[33]

Felix is probably the one whose identity is suggested in the most interesting, though ambiguous, way. His name seems to indicate that he is not Muslim.[34] He plays no syntagmatic or actantial role and his presence is limited to the first chapter, where he appears in a sequence of scenes where different characters perform evaluations of other characters. Here is what the narrator says about Anna's feelings towards Felix:

> Anna had been rather annoyed with Felix for a long time already. ... Anna was regarded by all their buddies as "Felix's buddy." In fact Felix had a rough (*kasar*) temperament compared to his/her (*-nya*) autochthonous (*pribumi*) friends. Perhaps he was too conscious of being the child of a wealthy man.[35]

This passage is somewhat difficult to interpret but one can argue that, by establishing a contrast between Felix and autochthonous

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[33] Here I am treading a rather shakier ground because I am assuming that the fictional onomastic system is more coherent than what can be found in real life. The question of Indonesian onomastics is immensely complex and it always seems possible to find exceptions to rules. One example of such an exception that strikes me as particularly telling concerns one of the former leaders of the Indonesian political party *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* (a coalition of Muslim parties) whose name is John Naro. In accounts of the history of the party leadership, his name clearly stands out as the only non-Muslim one (see for example N. Tamara, 'Islam under the New Order: A Political History,' *Prisma* 49, pp. 13-18).

[34] Western names are not always markers of a Christian identity, especially among Indonesian Chinese. One could argue that Anna is a Western (given) name; Anna Soen Nio and her family are certainly not Christians before their conversion to Islam, but most likely Confucianists. The day Anna takes refuge with Nurhayati's family and announces her decision to convert to Islam, she says to Oom Sukiman, while crying (*Anna*, p. 72): "Islam is my choice" ... "Consider me a person who had no religion before." (*"Islam pilihan saya," ... "Anggaplah saya sebelum ini belum punya agama."*) Anna here seems to adopt an Islamic view of what can and cannot be regarded as a religion.

[35] *Anna*, p. 16: *Anna sudah lama kurang suka pada Felix. ... Dan oleh para temen, Anna dianggap "temen Felix". Sebenarnya watak Felix termasuk kasar dibandingkan dengan teman-temannya yang pribumi. Mungkin dia terlalu sadar bahwa dia anak orang kaya.*

Indonesians, it suggests that Felix is not an autochthon (*pribumi*) but rather, most likely, an Indonesian Chinese. The plausibility of this interpretation is reinforced by the specific content of the contrast involved, which is based on one of the most value-laden words of the entire Indonesian language: *kasar* – rough, coarse, uncouth. *Kasar* defines one of the most important negative poles of the Indonesian (-Malay) semantic field of behavioural evaluation. Its antonym, *halus* – refined, cultured, sensitive – defines, of course, the positive pole of this field. In his now classic study of the Javanese symbolic systems, Clifford Geertz speaks of *alus* and *kasar* – their almost exact Javanese equivalents – as "a pair of concepts central to the *prijaji* [*priyayi*] world-view."[36] As the present discussion will show, the concepts expressed by the Indonesian cognates of these two Javanese words are also important in the world-view of other Indonesian groups. This convergence is either due to a common Malayo-Polynesian ethos, to Javanese influence or to a combination of both. In any event, the characterization of some Indonesian groups as *halus* and others as *kasar* is a widely observed phenomenon.[37]

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[36] C. Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1976 [1st ed. 1960]), p. 232. When Geertz wrote his book, the term *priyayi* could still be taken to refer, roughly, to the Javanese "white-collar elite" (*ibid.*, p. 6). Over the last thirty-odd years, however, this white-collar elite has substantially widened its recruitment base to include people (e. g. Javanese *santri*) who would not have been labelled *priyayi* then. This question, although a very important one, cannot and need not be treated here. On the changing Indonesian middle class, see Robert W. Hefner, 'Islam, State, and Civil Society: ICMI and the Struggle for the Indonesian Middle Class,' *Indonesia* 56 (October 1993): 1-35.

[37] Here is what another American anthropologist has written on this subject:
> An elaborate set of stereotypes or labels define the characteristics of the various Indonesian ethnic groups *vis-à-vis* each other. The Javanese and Sundanese for example are known to be very polite and refined and to control their emotions while the Batak are considered as more expressive and volatile and also as less refined. ... Ethnic

The negative characterization of Felix as *kasar* compared to autochthonous Indonesians would not be as telling if the narrative did not provide an explicit instance of the opposite, positive characterization. It indeed does so in a conversation between Karna Wijaya and his sister Harti which takes place during the former's stay in Bukittinggi:

> "During the past three weeks you've spent in Bukittinggi, many girls have shown an interest in you, Kar[na]."
> "Really?"
> "They're friends of mine [Ati]. They'd like to meet you."
> "Tell them I *appreciate*."
> "Is this a subtle (*halus*) refusal?"
> "Yeah. Your tongue is already a real Minang[kabau] tongue," said Karna.[38]

This second evaluation does not only pertain to a single individual – in this case Harti – but to a whole group of 'autochthonous' people, the Minangkabau. Harti's understanding and expression are praised for being refined (*halus*) and, therefore, worthy of a real Minangkabau person. Now the Minangkabau are one of the two most important ethnic groups in the narrative, the other one being the Indonesian Chinese. This is the reason why it is quite tempting to

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> labels deal with vital areas – emotions, aggression, sex, food.
> (E. M. Bruner, 'The Expression of Ethnicity in Indonesia,' in Abner Cohen, ed., *Urban Ethnicity*, London, Tavistock, 1974, p. 253)

While no Indonesian terms are given in this short passage, very few people will contest the validity of assuming that the stereotypical contrast involved precisely consists in the opposition between *halus* and *kasar*. This passage would nevertheless be more informative if the holders of these views were specifically identified. The Javanese and Sundanese may be viewed as "refined" by the Batak, for example, but this does not mean that all attach the same importance to this feature nor that they define it in the same terms.

[38] *Anna*, p. 65:
"Di Bukittinggi ini, selama tiga minggu abang Kar di sini, sudah banyak gadis yang berminat sama abang Kar!"
"Betul?"
"Mereka teman Ati. Mereka ingin berkenalan."
"Katakan pada mereka, terimakasih!"
"Kalau begitu penolakan secara halus?"
"Hmmm. Lidahmu sudah benar-benar lidah Minang," kata Karna.

suggest that the opposition *kasar/halus* corresponds to the opposition between non-autochthonous (implicitly, Indonesian Chinese) and autochthonous (explicitly, Minangkabau). But one should also remember that the two passages discussed above are quite distant (about fifty pages) from each other in the text. To bring them together may be a rather risky venture. But unlike scholarly essays or legal texts, for example, fiction narratives often rely on such textual distances to convey their 'arguments.'[39] Another argument 'by association' pleads in favour of the identification of Felix as an Indonesian Chinese: he is the son of a wealthy man and wealth is consistently and explicitly associated with the Indonesian Chinese throughout the narrative.[40] The fact that it is possible to attribute Felix' rough manners to wealth somehow limits the interpretation that *all* Chinese have such manners: only wealthy ones – or their sons – do.

While wealth is always associated with the Indonesian Chinese, the reverse is not true. Ricky, a friend and classmate of Anna's, is a case in point.[41] The sign of his putative Chinese identity

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[39] These two types of texts roughly fit the two basic discursive categories used by Marc Angenot in his most important work: "*l'opinable*" (that which can be argued) and "*le narrable*" (that which can be narrated). See Angenot's definition of social discourse in *1989: Un état du discours social*, Montreal, Le Préambule, 1989, p. 13, and p. 83: *narrer et argumenter sont les deux grands modes de mise en discours*.

[40] This is an important issue that will be addressed in the next chapter.

[41] The narrator says (*Anna*, p. 11) that Anna admires (*kagum*) Ricky for his "brotherly attitude which does not discriminate against anyone" (*sikap persaudaraan yang tidak pandang bulu*) and that she attributes this attitude to Ricky's being from a "poor family" (*keluarga miskin*). A "brotherly attitude" is of course a sign of being sensitive (*halus*). We therefore have the following equations: 1. {Felix = wealthy → *kasar*}; and 2. {Ricky = poor → *halus*}. If one assumes that both are Indonesian Chinese, although none is explicitly identified as such, it is arguable that their respective socio-economic status is more important than their ethnic affiliation as a determinant of their character. What one should keep in mind is that wealth is systematically associated with

lies not so much in his name as in his privileged access to Anna's father and in his reaction towards Anna's intention to convert. Ricky appears in the opening scene of the narrative after having paid a visit to Anna's father at the hospital (p. 9). He appears again in the fourth chapter and somewhat betrays Anna's trust by reporting to her father, just after having received her confidence, his daughter's intention to convert (p. 69). As for his view of Islam, more specifically of the Sumatran (or perhaps Minangkabau) version of it, it is highly prejudiced:

> "Let's hope [the lecturer] won't get married there," said Ricky.
> "There are many fanatics among those people, you know."
> "Fanatics?"
> "[Yes,] fanatics!"
> "If you define piety as fanaticism, then I think things are the way they should be. They're right," said Anna Soen Nio.[42]

This dialogue may be a better illustration of the fact that Ricky is not Muslim than evidence that he is Indonesian Chinese. But two other clues are given in the narrative concerning his ethnic identity: first, he and Anna have a common Chinese friend named Rossy. They discuss her fate in the very first scene of the novel (pp. 10-11), a scene which contributes greatly to the overall impression that both of them are immersed in a Chinese milieu. The second clue pertains to names: Rossy, the above-mentioned friend, is a young woman explicitly identified as Chinese. If Rossy is an

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Indonesian Chinese.

[42] *Anna*, p. 69:
"Orang sana banyak yang fanatik, lho."
"Fanatik?"
"Fanatik!"
"Jika fanatik itu diterjemahkan dengan taqwa, saya kira itu memang seharunya [sic]. Mereka benar," kata Anna Soen Nio.
Once again the official spelling of an Arabic loan-word (*takwa*) has been modified to be closer to the Arabic pronunciation and Indonesian scholarly transliteration (*taqwa*, from Ar. *taqwâ*: piety).

'Indonesian Chinese' given name, Ricky may just as well be. The similarity is indeed striking.

One will recall that out of the five names currently under examination, a third one, Lessy, still remains to be explained. Rossy, Ricky and Lessy: these three given names are most likely to form a subgroup of 'Chinese Indonesian' names popular among the younger generation, probably because of increasing American cultural influence.

We are thus left with two more names (Ratna and Oom Danabaya) to explain. It should be clear by now that one should look for onomastic regularities within clusters of names that seem to be related to one another in some way. The following conclusions are somewhat less firm than those already reached above but they nevertheless seem difficult to refute. The name "Ratna," whose bearer is Han Soon's unfortunate mistress, is a typical Malay name. But we are told that the young woman is from Palembang. Now this town, located in South Sumatra, is one of the very few locations in the whole Indonesian archipelago whose history cannot be dissociated from the existence of a Chinese community.[43] It seems difficult to think of another location as more evocative of a heavy Chinese presence – except perhaps Pontianak in West Kalimantan. As for Oom Danabaya, it is a name that follows the pattern described

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[43] Recent data on this question are not easy to find but Purcell's study provides ample evidence of the past and long-lasting importance of the Chinese community in Palembang:

> Palembang ... fell into Chinese hands on the decay of Sri Vijaya and remained under them for about two hundred years. ... This town, then, was one of the earliest places in Southeast Asia where the Chinese settled in any numbers.
> (Purcell, *The Chinese*, p. 21)

Later Chinese workers were recruited and employed as miners – in the nearby islands of Bangka and Belitung – by the Malay rulers of Palembang, the British and the Dutch. Still later they were employed "among the oil wells of Palembang" (*ibid.*, pp. 495 and 9).

earlier as characteristic of 'Indonesian sounding' names adopted by Indonesian Chinese.[44] If one recalls that Han Soon is Chinese, that Lessy's name points to her also being Chinese, that Ratna is said to be from Palembang, and that Oom Danabaya's name follows the specific pattern already discussed above, then one does indeed have a series of indications to the effect that the fact that these people are all linked together might be due to something other than mere chance, and perhaps to a common ethnicity.

It should be obvious from the analysis presented above that names alone cannot serve as sufficient markers of group identities. Names are much too unstable: they can be modified in various ways and changed entirely according to different practices. These practices sometimes escape all regularities. If it is sometimes possible to grant some assumptions more weight, it is largely because other elements in the narrative provide a background context within which these assumptions make more sense, a background context that actually leads to these assumptions. More specifically, one can say that it is possible to imagine that characters such as Lessy, Ratna and Oom Danabaya are Indonesian Chinese simply because their names and the few other information available about them do not contradict other aspects of their identity (including their behaviour) which conform to a certain

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[44] See note 22 above. *Oom* (also spelled *om*) is a common Dutch loan-word which originally means 'uncle.' It also serves as a term of address for men old enough to be one's uncle and figures in the expression meaning 'sugar-daddy,' i. e. *oom senang*. Danabaya can be glossed in Javanese as *dana* (fund) and *baya* (dangerous). In Indonesian the form of the equivalent expression would be very similar: *dana bahaya* (or even *baya* in colloquial speech). This expression as a whole obviously means 'dangerous fund.' Another possible meaning of *baya* (Ind. *buaya*) is 'crocodile'; the whole expression could thus be glossed as 'crocodile('s) fund.' In Indonesian culture the crocodile is a rather negative animal. According to the *KBBI*, the expression *buaya darat* (land crocodile), for example, means both 'a villain (thief, pickpocket)' and 'woman chaser.'

model of Chineseness proposed in the text in which they appear. It is to this model that I will turn my attention in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

CHINESENESS AND INDONESIAN-NESS EXAMINED

I. THE "SOCIOGRAM": CONCEPTUAL PRESENTATION AND INDONESIAN EXAMPLES

The model of Chineseness suggested in *Anna Soen Nio* owes most of its essential traits to relevant elements of Indonesian social discourse which define the global figure of the Indonesian Chinese as representative of a type. Any discursive formation is replete with such general figures, which usually take the form of stereotypes, sayings, clichés, emblematic characters, etc. A certain French school of literary sociocriticism has coined the generic term "sociogram" to gather all these different figures under the same heading.[1] The concept of "sociogram" seems particularly useful in that it 1) recognizes the instability – or lability – of these figures; and 2) allows the analyst to delineate the aesthetic specificity of the text without explaining away its social determinants.

The instability of the sociogram is especially obvious in the transition between its social existence at the discursive level and its textualization in fiction works. By being located in a new register, the sociogram thus acquires a new dimension:

> *seul le niveau «valeur» permet le passage du discursif au textuel. La valeur est à entendre ici au sens saussurien du terme, la place que tel élément narratif ou sémiotique occupe dans la fiction, et la différence spécifique qu'elle institue. C'est ce registre qui*

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[1] Since Montreal is the seat of much important sociocritical activity (e.g. *Discours Social/Social Discourse*, CIADEST), my use of the expression "French school" refers more to a linguistic than to a national tradition. The concept of "sociogram" used here is taken from Régine Robin, 'Pour une socio-poétique de l'imaginaire social,' (*Discours Social/Social Discourse* 5, nos. 1-2 (1993): 7-32). This concept will be further discussed below.

organise l'oeuvre en tant qu'oeuvre esthétique.[2]

Before analyzing the novelistic sociogram of the Chinese found in *Anna Soen Nio*, it is essential to have an overview of the wider discursive sociogram from which it so heavily draws. Unfortunately, no extensive study of the "images" of the Chinese in Indonesian discourse is available.[3] It is therefore necessary to examine a number of sources, including some secondary sources whose main objective was different from my present purpose. My point of departure will be Coppel's major study, the bulk of which deals with the position of the Indonesian Chinese during the early years of the New Order period.[4] Drawing from unspecified published sources, Coppel has put together "a composite stereotype of the Chinese."[5] Here is a summary of this passage:

> The Chinese are clannish ... They cling persistently to the culture of their ancestral homeland. Their loyalty to Indonesia is dubious at best; at worst they are downright hostile to Indonesia. Chinese who apparently identify with Indonesia are not genuine; they are only pretending to do so for opportunistic reasons ... This opportunism is characteristic of a people concerned with money, trade and business. They are not, like Indonesians, dedicated to

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[2] Robin, 'Socio-poétique,' pp. 17-18:
only the level of "value" permits the passage from the discursive to the textual. Value is to be understood here in the Saussurean sense: the place a given narrative or semiotic element occupies in fiction, and the specific difference it institutes. It is in this register that a work is organized as an aesthetic work.

[3] There is to my knowledge no study comparable in scope to C. M. S. Hellwig's dissertation on the images of women in Indonesian novels. See her *Kudrat Wanita: Vrouwbeelden in Indonesische Romans* (Leiden, published dissertation, University of Leiden, 1990).

[4] Charles A. Coppel, *Indonesian Chinese in Crisis* (Kuala Lumpur, Oxford University Press, 1983).

[5] Coppel, *Indonesian*, p. 5. This "composite stereotype" appears in the first chapter, entitled 'The Legacy of the Past.' Its most important deficiency, from my specific viewpoint, is that it is not precisely located in time. However, it seems reasonable to assume that it was drawn from sources published roughly between 1900 and 1965.

> ideals. Having been given a favoured position by the Dutch, the Chinese dominate the Indonesian economy ...[6]

When such an argumentation becomes part of a fictional narrative, all kinds of figures of speech become vehicles for vivid images of Chineseness. This is particularly true in times of great sociopolitical tensions and Coppel provides a very telling illustration of this phenomenon. The following passage contains excerpts of fictional dialogues published in May 1966 by an Indonesian weekly (*Udjana*):

> A regular feature of *Udjana* was a comic strip called 'Ali and Baba' which was in the form of a dialogue between an Indonesian (Ali) and a Chinese (Baba). The punch-line every week was Ali telling Baba (and all Chinese in Indonesia) to go home to China before he is kicked out. ... The variation in the strip from week to week lay in the reasons given by Ali for his ultimatum. Sometimes Baba's crimes were economic (hoarding goods to force up prices, taking over Indonesia), sometimes cultural or political (speaking Chinese or eating Chinese food at home, having a portrait of Mao Tse Tung). In his defence Baba brings forward his Indonesian citizenship, says he has changed his Chinese name, and pleads that he will not commit the offence again. Ali steadfastly resists Baba's blandishments[:]
>
> > 'In Indonesia there are no such things as citizens of foreign descent, only people from ethnic groups (*suku*). For example, the Menadonese have their island in Sulawesi, Padang people theirs in Sumatra. Now, where is Baba from? Is there a Peking island in Indonesia?'
>
> It should be noted that Baba, a WNI Chinese, is portrayed wearing a Chinese-style jacket, and speaks with a marked Chinese accent (for example, 'saya kan walganegala tulunan asing', in which the letter 'r' has consistently been mispronounced 'l').[7]

Some aspects of the above depiction are clearly outdated today. The reference to "a portrait of Mao Tse Tung," for example, belongs to a historical period so different from the contemporary situation that it is now completely obsolete. Indonesia, the People's

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[6] Coppel, *Indonesian*, p. 5.

[7] Coppel, *Indonesian*, p. 71 and p. 194, note 79: "The extracts quoted from 'Ali & Baba' are from the issue of the fourth week of May 1966." I have slightly altered the presentation of this passage in order to highlight the extract directly quoted by Coppel.

Republic of China, and the relations between these two countries have changed in too many fundamental respects since 1966 for such a reference to retain its force, no matter which figure is substituted for that of Mao. The same observation applies to the allusion to the expulsion of the Chinese: it is practically never found in contemporary sources.[8] This obsoleteness is a good illustration of the sociohistorical "essence" of the sociogram: it is subject to change through time as societies change. Most often social changes are gradual and we shall see below that several elements of the sociogram prevalent in the late 1960s were still recognizable in the 1980s.

II. THE SOCIOGRAM OF THE CHINESE IN *ANNA SOEN NIO*: MERCANTILISM, WEALTH, GAMBLING AND PROSTITUTION

The narrative opens with a scene that introduces Anna in her father's music store.[9] For the past eight days she has been prevented from going to campus because her father has been seriously ill and hospitalized; she has to keep his store. Contrary to her father, she likes music, because she grew up in the store. Anna does not feel inferior (*merasa rendah diri*) because of her new work but she does not know how to make herself feel at ease

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[8] One actually sometimes encounters the expression of the opposite feeling, i.e. fear that the Indonesian Chinese could eventually leave the country, taking with them large amounts of much-needed capital:

> It was even said [in 1984] that some Chinese businessmen had settled their families abroad so as to make it easier to leave themselves should that become necessary.
> (J. Bresnan, *Managing Indonesia*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1993, p. 255)

[9] *Anna*, p. 9.

(*membuat dirinya betah*) there. There are lots of music stores around and this sharp "competition" creates a "cacophony" of "*dangdut*, rock, pop and *keroncong* music".[10]

This description of Anna's initial situation sets the tone for what is arguably a negative characterization of Chineseness focusing on a mercantile ethos and its consequences: Anna is *prevented* from attending classes and mercantile competition generates cacophony. The reader is told that she does not feel inferior but one may wonder: why should she? No answer is explicitly given but the context suggests that *selling* music is not a very honourable occupation (for her), especially if one (like her father) does it only for profit (for *he* does not like music).[11] Sometime later in the narrative, after learning that the lecturer got married in West Sumatra, Anna will reflect on her fate by comparing her situation to what had been her family situation in a time of crisis. Part of this passage takes the form of a narrated flashback. It compares the unhappy episode of the father's commercial bankruptcy with Anna's own trial:

> Dad spoke of his commercial bankruptcy in front of all his children, including Anna; in front of his wife as well. But as if without emotions. ... Now what confronted Anna was not a commercial disaster but a truly spiritual disaster.[12]

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[10] *Anna*, p. 9: *...saingan ...berlomba-lomba membuat kebisingan, sehingga bercampurbaurlah musik dangdut dengan rock dan pop serta keroncong.*

[11] This description also introduces a certain measure of ambiguity by alluding to a behavioral difference between Anna and her father. This foreshadows a generation gap that will be stressed later in the narrative, just as stated in the publisher's foreword (*Sekapur sirih*).

[12] *Anna*, p. 81: *Papah menyatakan kebangkrutan usaha dagang di depan semua anak-anak termasuk Anna, juga di depan isterinya. Tapi seakan-akan tanpa emosi. ... Kini, yang dihadapi Anna, bukannya musibah dagang, tetapi benar-benar musibah rohani.*

Anna will find that faithful Muslim families, just like her own family, can face the vicissitudes of life "without snivelling" (*tanpa cengeng*).[13] But the impression remains that there is a contrast between the materialist outlook of the non-Muslim Indonesian Chinese and the spiritualist outlook of the Muslims. Moreover, shortly before converting, Anna herself makes a kind of confession to the members of Nurhayati's family which probably confirms a widespread opinion among certain pious circles (be they Muslim or Christian). Anna says to them: "Islam is my choice. Regard me as not having had a religion before."[14]

Some of the elements presented and discussed above are clearly reminiscent of Coppel's "composite stereotype," but they bear a closer resemblance to some accounts that are roughly contemporary with the publication of *Anna Soen Nio*. Here is a sample taken from an article published in the daily newspaper of the Indonesian armed forces, *Angkatan Bersenjata*, in July 1984:

> those who are categorized as "people of Chinese (*Cina*) descent" are always regarded as an exclusive group that is not much in tune with the aspirations of the people (*rakyat*) of Indonesia in general; this is related to the fact that most of them rely on a philosophy of profit (*untung*); all they want is profit, their souls are devoid of faith (*iman*).[15]

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[13] *Anna*, pp. 81-82.

[14] *Anna*, p. 72:
"Islam pilihan saya. Anggaplah saya sebelum ini belum punya agama."
This statement does not formally exclude the possibility that she and her family adhered to certain syncretic traditional practices blending elements of Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism or to a purer Confucianism. Of these three "religions," only Buddhism is recognized by the Indonesian authorities.

[15] Hasan Widjaya, *Panggilan Islam*, 1989, p. 3: *mereka yang dikategorikan "keturunan Cina", selalu dianggap sebagai kelompok eksklusif yang kurang selaras dengan aspirasi rakyat Indonesia pada umumnya, berhubung kebanyakan dari mereka mengandalkan falsafah untung, maunya untung terus, jiwanya kekosongan iman.*

The above quote is more explicit about Chineseness than the initial scene of the narrative, where nothing but the main character's name (Anna, i.e. Anna Soen Nio) connotes Chineseness.[16] It will not take long, however, before the reader comes across a more explicit passage. Ricky, a classmate of Anna's, drops by the store. While the narration is in formal Indonesian, the dialogue between Anna and Ricky is informal, witty, and marked by the use of typical elements of Jakartan speech.[17] Ricky tells Anna that Rossy, a friend of theirs, deliberately let the man she loves, Suheiry, make her pregnant in order to escape a marriage forced upon her by her father. Rossy also hopes that her parents will let her marry Suheiry. Anna disapproves of such a trick but she empathizes with Rossy's fate. At this point the narrator seems to take over but three voices are present: the voices of the narrator, of Anna, and of Rossy as Anna recalls what Rossy once told her. The three voices are merged and thus basically agree on what is an unambiguous description of Rossy's father:

> Rossy's dad is rather old-fashioned (*kolot*) and thinks Indonesia is just like Tangshan city, over there in China (*Tiongkok*), his place

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[16] Much later in the narrative, however, Anna's father will himself confirms Hasan Widjaya's opinion about the Chinese "philosophy of profit" in even more explicit terms... Here it is Anna who is remembering her father's words:

> "Don't be arrogant, imitate the social ways of our Indonesian neighbours, who do not always calculate their profit and loss ..." (*Anna*, p. 111-12: *"Jangan sombong, tirulah cara bergaul tetangga-tetangga kita orang Indonesia, yang tidak selalu memperhitungkan laba rugi saja ..."*)

[17] *Anna*, pp. 9-11. This Jakartan speech is known in Indonesian as *logat Betawi*. It is sometimes impossible for a non-native speaker to understand but as one of the speech forms of the capital, it has a strong influence throughout the country. What is typical of Jakartan speech in the dialogues is elements of pronunciation (*sempet* instead of *sempat*), vocabulary (*gue* instead of *aku* or *saya*), and morphology (*-in* instead of *-i* or *-kan*, as in *dibuntingin*).

of origin.[18]

As for the man Rossy's father wants her to marry, he has but one accidental quality: he happens to be wealthy. But this wealth is associated with pool and gambling: he is a pool room manager (*manager bilyard*), a pool financier (*cukong bilyard*), a pool boss (*boss bilyard*) who is fond of gambling. Rossy said to Anna that with him "she would surely feel lonely all her life"[19] because he would spend no time with her:

> Her husband would leave her in the morning to work in his pool room until night and then pursue his personal pleasure in *nightclub*[s] or in Petak Sembilan, a nest of gambling.[20]

The descriptions of Rossy's father and of the man he chooses as a son-in-law both confirm and expand upon the sociogram of the Chinese in Indonesian discourse in general and in *Anna Soen Nio* in particular. Both men are Chinese: the father is said to behave as if he (or his ancestors) had never left China and his would-be son-in-law is a wealthy *cukong*.[21] But this wealth does not look quite

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[18] *Anna*, p. 11: *...papa Rossy itu cukup kolot, yang mengira Indonesia ini masih saja kota Tangshan di Tiongkok sana, tempat asalnya.*
The term *kolot* is almost always pejorative, in contrast to *kuno*, for example.

[19] *Anna*, p. 11: *...Pasti dia akan kesepian selama hidup.*

[20] *Anna*, p. 11: *Siang ditinggal tugas ke bilyard sampai malam, lalu suaminya itu pasti akan melanjutkan kesenangan pribadinya ke nightclub atau ke Petak Sembilan, sarang perjudian.*
Nest and *sarang* have the same pejorative connotations when used figuratively.

[21] Here is what Coppel says about the word *cukong*:
> The word *cukong* apparently comes from the Hokkien for 'grandfather' or 'boss'. In Indonesian usage it has acquired the meaning (usually with rather sinister overtones) of the Chinese businessman who has a special relationship with an Indonesian official (usually military). Indonesians tend to believe that the cukong are powerful and capable of manipulating their Indonesian partners, however eminent they might be.
> (Coppel, *Indonesian*, p. 212-13, note 17)

In his glossary of Chinese words and loan-words, D. Lombard (*Le carrefour*

clean because of its connection with 'dens of iniquity' (pool rooms almost necessarily imply some kind of illicit sexual trade, some form of *zina*) and with gambling (which is clearly *harâm*). Sometime later the narrator will express Anna's views on this theme. Reflecting on what she perceives as her resistance against immoral behaviour, Anna contrasts her attitude to that of other girls "of Chinese descent":

> after she got home, Anna felt her attitude was right. For a girl, an attitude of purity is an inherited tradition (*tradisi*) transmitted through the generations. Anna would not dare to venture out of this Chinese (*Cina*) tradition, like many friends of her age, former playmates who now dared to deceive their parents by telling them they worked for private companies, while actually working as waitresses in saunas, hostesses in nightclubs and call-girls for all the *cukong*, also of Chinese (*Cina*) descent.[22]

The figure of the Chinese *cukong* reaches its full proportions here: pool rooms become saunas full of waitresses and nightclubs full of hostesses. Call-girls and *cukong*, both "of Chinese descent,"

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javanais, *vol. II*, pp. 283-84) links *cukong* to *kongsi* (company), using the same character for *kong* (公). The first element (*cu*) is given as (主). The resulting word *cukong* (*zhugong* in the official Pinyin transcription) does not appear in the only Mandarin Chinese dictionary I consulted (listed in the Bibliography). The use of the expression *cukong bilyard* could very well imply an element of (humorous) derision...

[22] *Anna*, p. 57:
setelah tiba di rumah, Anna merasa, sikapnya benar. Sikap suci atas diri seorang gadis menjadi warisan tradisi turun temurun. Dan Anna tidak berani bertualang dalam tradisi Cina ini, seperti banyak teman lain seumur dan sepermainan dulu yang sudah berani menipu orangtua dengan mengaku bekerja di perusahaan swasta, padahal sebagai waitress di steambath, sebagai hostess di nightclub dan sebagai gadis panggilan para cukong, yang juga turunan Cina.
One particular phrase of this passage was rather difficult to translate, either because it is poorly written or because of a deliberate intention of making it ambiguous. The phrase in question is: *Anna tidak berani bertualang dalam tradisi Cina ini*. A literal translation would be: 'Anna did not dare to venture *in* this Chinese tradition.' Considering what precedes, this 'interpretation' does not make sense, unless one assumes that the passage is really about *two* traditions: the first one being pure and the second one ("this tradition") impure. I will try to do without this assumption and simply assume that there is only one tradition and different behaviours deviating from it.

probably "venture" together into hotel rooms and luxurious villas. Anna appears to be rather alone on the side of purity, on the side of the "inherited tradition."

Such images of clear immorality (gambling, prostitution) appear neither in Ki Hasan Widjaya's newspaper articles and public speeches nor in Coppel's "composite stereotype," which is probably derived from comparable sources. In fiction works, however, they seem to be much more common.[23] Writers as different as Hamka and Pramoedya Ananta Toer, for example, have used such images in the 1930s and 1950s respectively. Before returning to *Anna Soen Nio*, I would like to comment on these two writers' use of such sociogrammatic images.[24]

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[23] This difference could be due to (self-) censorship being applied differentially to different speech genres or different forms of expression. At least one important Indonesian author suggests that, in Indonesia, public censorship is more severe towards films than books, and even more so towards television broadcastings. See Y. B. Mangunwijaya's remarkable book *Sastra dan Religiositas* (Jakarta, Sinar Harapan, 1982), p. 134. At a deeper level, it is arguable that specific speech genres are, for a number of reasons that cannot be treated here, better vehicles for such kinds of images which are, to a great extent, actually shaped differently by different speech genres. See Morson and Emerson, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, pp. 275-77.

[24] Hamka and Pramoedya Ananta Toer, despite everything that sets them apart, are both writers and intellectuals of immense stature. Their respective interest in the relations between Indonesian Chinese and other Indonesians goes far beyond the limited examples I will use below. Hamka's life as a prominent public figure undoubtedly outweighs his career as a novelist. A summary analysis of only one of his fiction works cannot be taken as representative of his views on questions broader than those that are most directly relevant to my present limited concern. As for Pramoedya Ananta Toer, he has written an important and controversial book on the Chinese in Indonesia (*Hoa Kiau di Indonesia*, Jakarta, Bintang Press, 1960). This book has been described as "an apology for this group and their role in the history of Indonesia" (Teeuw, *Modern, vol. I*, p. 166). The book was banned shortly after its publication and has never been available to me. Between 1980 and 1988, Pramoedya published a tetralogy that most critics view as his masterwork. In contemporary Indonesia, Pramoedya's numerous works are all banned (except an anthology of 'colonial' literature that he compiled and edited). I have had access to only the first two volumes of the tetralogy (*Bumi Manusia* and *Anak Semua Bangsa*, both published in 1980). These two volumes portray in highly

In his novel *Merantau ke Deli*, Hamka depicts the tragic destiny of female migrant workers in the world of the colonial plantations of Deli, on the north-east coast of Sumatra.[25] For these women, physical beauty represents a danger. In order to escape the heavy plantation work, many beautiful women become concubines of plantation foremen, thereby treading a path that will ultimately lead them to prostitution:

> And when [their beauty] starts fading, they will be forced to enter hotels owned by Chinese or Japanese. There they will earn their food by selling themselves ... Should they fall sick, they will be thrown out by the hotel owner (*tauke*).[26]

As we have seen, gambling (*judi*) is another facet of the 'dark side' of the sociogram of the Chinese in *Anna Soen Nio*. It is also present in one of Pramoedya Ananta Toer's most praised novellas, *Bukan Pasar Malam*. In one of the final scenes of this largely

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complex terms the 'ethnic' relations in the Dutch East Indies arcund the turn of the XXth century. They deserve a full study of vast scope. My discussion of a short passage from a single work published in the 1950s is not meant to be a significant contribution to the study of Pramoedya's monumental literary production. It will merely serve as an illustration of the relevance of my use of the concept of sociogram.

[25] Hamka, *Merantau ke Deli* (Jakarta, Djajabakti, 1960, 3rd ed.), pp. 20-22.

[26] Hamka, *Merantau*, p. 21: *Dan kalau sudah agak luntur, terpaksalah masuk kedalam hotel² kepunjaan orang Tionghoa atau orang Djepang. Disanalah dia mesti mentjari makan dengan mendjual diri ... Kalau djatuh sakit, dibuangkan oleh tauke hotel itu keluar.*
Tauke is a Chinese loan-word meaning owner, boss. This theme is common in Indonesian literature. Rendra, one of Indonesia's most renowned authors, has treated it in one of his longest poems (about 8 pages). Here is the first strophe of *Nyanyian Angsa* (1976):

> *Majikan rumpah pelacuran berkata kepadanya:/ "Sudah dua minggu kamu berbaring./ Sakitmu makin menjadi./ Kamu tak lagi hasilkan uang./ Malahan padaku kamu berhutang./ Ini biaya melulu./ Aku tak kuat lagi./ Hari ini kamu mesti pergi".*
> (in Linus Suryadi AG, ed., *Tonggak 2*. Jakarta, Gramedia, 1987, p. 176)

Ethnicity is mentioned nowhere in the poem and the hapless prostitute, who is Catholic, is also rejected by a physician and a priest. Only Jesus will finally welcome her. Both Hamka and Rendra, despite their differences, clearly see these women as victims of a social evil.

autobiographical story, the narrator describes the wake following his father's death. Some of the visitors are talking about gambling (*perjudian*):

> "Alah, alah," said a Chinese visitor, "our best friend has gone ahead of us." ...
> The man stopped talking and looked at his other friends.
> "No one else could gamble as hard as he did," said another.
> "Now we must look for another friend to complete the party," added yet another.
> "Yes," said the Chinese man, sighing. ... "And no one could tell such beautiful stories about the history of Java while we were playing." ...
> "Why do we have to die all alone? And come to this world all alone? And why do we have to live in a world with lots of human beings? When we love a person, and this person loves us too... [...] like our deceased friend, for example... Why does death have to disperse us afterwards?"[27]

This passage is remarkable in at least three respects. First it does not present gambling as the exclusive concern of the Chinese. The narrator's father, a Javanese from the region of Blora, was also fond of gambling. Secondly, gambling parties are presented as opportunities for social interaction between Javanese and Chinese people where cultural and historical knowledge is shared across cultural groups; one cannot help thinking that the strong

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[27] Pramoedya Ananta Toer, *Bukan Pasarmalam* (Jakarta, Balai Pustaka, 1951), pp. 96-99:

> *"Alah, Alah," seorang pelawat Tionghoa berkata, "kawan kita jang paling baik telah mendahului kita." ...*
> *Orang itu berdiam diri dan memandangi kawan-kawannja jang lain.*
> *"Tak ada orang jang begitu kuat berjudi selain dia," jang lain menjela.*
> *"Sekarang kita harus mentjari kawan baru untuk melengkapkan permainan," jang lain lagi menjusulkan.*
> *"Ja," orang Tionghoa itu mengeluh. ... "Dan tak ada orang jang bisa bertjerita tentang babat tanah Djawa begitu bagus dalam kita bermain." ...*
> *"Mengapa kita ini harus mati seorang diri ? Lahir seorang diri pula ? Dan mengapa kita ini harus hidup disatu dunia jang banjak manusianja ? Dan kalau kita sudah bisa mentjintai seorang manusia, dan orang itupun mentjintai kita [...] seperti mendiang kawan kita itu misalnja – mengapa kemudian kita harus bertjerai-belai dalam maut.*

friendship evoked by the Chinese friend's moving testimony was partly fostered and strengthened by hours and hours spent at the gambling table. And thirdly, the Chinese friend's speech is completely devoid of dialectical elements often associated with Indonesian Chinese speech. This is in sharp contrast with both the 'Ali and Baba' cartoon strip and, as we shall see, with the speech of the older Chinese characters found in *Anna Soen Nio*.

Before closing this discussion on the sociogram of the Chinese, I would like to conclude this subsection by a brief analysis of the relation between wealth, class and ethnicity in *Anna Soen Nio*. Chinese wealth is certainly not always suspect of being either amassed or spent in reprehensible ways. We have seen in chapter 4 that the major characters can be divided into two ethnic groups: the Chinese, represented mainly by Anna and her husband's families; and the Minangkabau, represented mainly by the lecturer (Karna Wijaya) and his family and by Dr Kamal. As far as socio-economic status is concerned, the most important difference between the two groups does not lie in the amount of wealth they possess but in the type of economic activities they pursue. Anna's father is not pictured as a man particularly wealthy, contrary to Anna's father-in-law.[28] The link between them is that they are both businessmen. As for Han Soon, Anna's husband, all we know is that

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[28] Anna's father-in-law, Oey Shuang Ceng, is described by the narrator as a "rich merchant" (*saudagar kaya*; *Anna*, p. 136). Anna's paternal grandfather, however, is said to have been "one of the wealthy people in colonial times" (*ibid.*, p. 109: *seorang yang termasuk kaya di zaman kolonial*). Anna's father's bankruptcy is explicitly attributed to the manoeuvres of a Chinese person who had access to "big capital from an autochthonous person" (*ibid.*, p. 81: *modal besar dari seorang pribumi*). This is the only allusion to economic competition between Sino-Indonesians and autochthonous Indonesians in the whole narrative. However, this competition does not directly involve an autochthonous agent, but only his (or her) capital. One can even imagine that the autochthonous capitalist did not actually know how his money was being used... just as Harti did not know that Karna's marriage with Ningsih would break Anna's heart.

he is a graduate from a faculty of economics and works in an office.[29] The link between the Minangkabau characters, Karna Wijaya and Dr Kamal, is that they are both members of the non-commercial segment of the upper middle class forming a large part of the white-collar elite.[30] Since both of them are also committed Muslims, they are perfect examples of people engaged in what Robert W. Hefner has recently described as "the struggle to capture and direct the moral allegiances of the urban middle class."[31] Although *Anna Soen Nio* was published about six years *before* the formation of ICMI – which can now be viewed as an important player in this struggle – it is interesting to note that the man who became ICMI's chairman, Dr. B. J. Habibie, is the *only* Indonesian politician mentioned in *Anna Soen Nio*. He is in fact highly praised by Karna Wijaya in one of his conversations with Anna. The lecturer explains that, generally speaking, people like himself who have studied abroad for long periods of time, become mercenaries (*manusia sewaan*) or mercenary technocrats (*tehnokrat sewaan*) when they come back to Indonesia. They participate in a kind of "brain drain" by selling their brains to foreign states. Exceptions to this rule are

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[29] *Anna*, pp. 115 and 159.

[30] Both hold degrees from foreign universities. Karna Wijaya has studied in the United States of America (*Anna*, p. 40) and Dr Kamal, in Germany (p. 87). Karna Wijaya drives a BMW (p. 20) and Dr Kamal, a Volkswagen (p. 100). Wealth is never explicitly associated with either of them but one gets the impression that Karna Wijaya's family, in Bukittinggi, is well-off. As for Kamal, he is described by the narrator as a *sosiawan* (p. 89), i.e. someone who works in the interest of society (*KBBI*). Kamal is more unidimensional than Karna in his behaviour: he is nearly perfect from a generally moral and specifically Islamic point of view. In connection with ethnicity and class, one may also note that some minor Minangkabau characters – Siti Alissa's sons – are respectively engineer, physician and graduate in economics (p. 89).

[31] Hefner, 'Islam, State, and Civil Society: ICMI and the struggle for the Indonesian Middle Class,' p. 2.

people like Doctor Habibie, a true patriot.[32] The question of patriotism, however, takes us far beyond questions examined in this subsection. As I have tried to show earlier in presenting actantial configurations for the major stories contained in *Anna Soen Nio*, the main focus of the narrative lies elsewhere, namely in questions of religious and ethnic membership and morality. In the next subsection, I will therefore try to explore the rhetoric of the complex interrelations between Chineseness, Indonesian-ness and Muslimhood.

III. *PEMBAURAN*: CHINESENESS, INDONESIAN-NESS, AND INTERMARRIAGE

As we have seen in chapter 3, the narrative *action* in *Anna Soen Nio* is set into motion by the possible relation between the lecturer's name (Karna Wijaya) and identity on the one hand, and a newspaper article about "the problem of racial assimilation" (*masalah pembauran ras*) between the "autochthonous Indonesian nation" (*bangsa Indonesia pribumi*) and the "Indonesians of Chinese descent" (*orang Indonesia turunan Tionghoa*) on the other. These

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[32] *Anna*, p. 21. Anna first asks the lecturer a rather trivial question:
"Lama di luar negeri, pak?"
*"Lama juga. Tapi kalau kelamaan, bisa karatan. Kalau sudah karatan, nanti kembalinya ke Indonesia, **sudah bukan orang Indonesia lagi!**"*
"Koq begitu, pak?"
*"Umumnya begitu. Kecuali orang semacam doctor Habibie. Orang macam kami ini, kalau mau **brain drain**, mudah saja. Tapi kita menjadi manusia sewaan, tehnocrat sewaan. Gaji gede. Comfort. Tapi cuma jual otak buat negara asing di sana. Mana lagi patriotisme?"*
Doctor Habibie, who holds a German Ph.D. in engineering, has been responsible for research and technological matters at least since the installation of the "Fourth Development Cabinet" in March 1983, during which he was Minister of State for Research and Technology.

words are those of the narrator.[33] The very words used by Anna's father are less explicit and his discourse is more paradoxical. All he says is that he is "interested in the problem of assimilation (*pembauran*)."[34] He then says to Anna: "If he is *of Chinese descent*, [then] you have to meet him."[35] He adds that Anna is now free to go back to school (obviously for the purpose of meeting this Karna Wijaya). Anna's father neither uses the adjective "racial" (*ras*) nor does he mention the existence of any group besides the people "of Chinese descent."

The paradox alluded to above is the following: if the father is really interested in the problem of assimilation between two distinct groups of people, why does he tell his daughter to meet the author of the article only *if* he belongs to one of the two groups? What are the father's motivations? Two different answers are suggested by the narrator. First there is the father's desire for a son-in-law who would be a university lecturer. But this is an embarrassing thought for the father. It is therefore rejected. The father's 'real' motivation is his interest in the "Chinese problem"

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[33] *Anna*, p. 12.

[34] *Anna*, p. 13: *"tertarik dengan masalah pembauran."*
I chose to systematically translate *masalah pembauran* by 'problem of assimilation' in conformity with its first acceptation in relevant dictionaries. It can also be translated as 'question of assimilation' but always with the meaning of 'something to solve.' In the foreword (*Sekapur sirih*) discussed earlier, the expression used to describe the 'same' topic is *soal-soal pembauran*, which I translated as 'questions of assimilation.' I think that the choice of the second expression over the first is more tactful, however common the first may be.

[35] *Anna*, p. 13: *"Kamu musti ketemu orang itu, jika dia turunan."*
At this point it is important to note that neither Anna nor her father speak with what is generally viewed as a "Chinese accent" and their speech is devoid of any 'Sino-Indonesian' sociolectal markers.

(*masalah Tionghoa*).[36] In this short paragraph, the father's desire is not negated as such, but only as the motivation for his action. Another point worth noting is the slight shift of emphasis in the words expressing the father's interest. The expression first used by the father himself is "problem of assimilation" (*masalah pembauran*). The expression used by the narrator in the passage about the father's motivation is "Chinese problem" (*masalah Tionghoa*). These two expressions basically refer to the same social reality – the presence in Indonesia of a Chinese minority – but the viewpoint is slightly different. *Stricto sensu*, a discussion of the "Chinese problem" does not involve "assimilation" or "fusion" – which is the literal meaning of *pembauran* – as a necessary solution.

In the Indonesian context, both expressions are very often used interchangeably. But *Anna Soen Nio* provides a much more specific textual context from which it is practically impossible to conclude that the father is really interested in *pembauran* in a personal way, and even less so in *pembauran ras*. This is why the narrator's first suggestion concerning the father's motivation must be retained as the real one: Anna's father wishes her to marry a university lecturer. Considering the father's instruction to his daughter, one can conclude that he wants this would-be son-in-law to be "of Chinese descent."

This will of course become explicit when the father will ask Anna if she is ready to meet Mr Oey Shuang Ceng's son, Han Soon,

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[36] *Anna*, p. 13: *sang ayah sempat mengingat kerinduannya sendiri untuk mempunyai seorang menantu dosen. Dia malu sendiri, seakan-akan menyuruh Anna menemui Karna Wijayahanya karena dorongan kerinduan itu. Tidak. Masalah Tionghoa di Indonesialah yang ... mendorongnya menganjurkan Anna menemui dosen itu.*

and to consider him as a potential marriage partner.[37] But Anna is well aware of her father's preference long before it is explicitly stated to her. The first long conversation between Karna Wijaya and Anna, taking place at the lecturer's house, is partly about the 'famous' newspaper article he wrote. The lecturer wants to know her opinion about the "*pembauran* theory for the Chinese (*Cina*) of Indonesia".[38] Anna replies that she cannot talk but he insists and she finally says that although the assimilation theory (*teori pembauran*) is widely debated among Indonesian citizens of Chinese descent (*WNI*) she is among those who find it hard to accept. She explains:

> "I am a girl of Chinese (*Tionghoa*) descent, Sir, you know. If I ever had an interest in an authentic autochthonous (*aseli pribumi*) Indonesian guy, you can be sure that my family would vehemently oppose it. This may look like an intuitive, not a rational symptom. But in fact it is rational."
> "Present your objection and justify it in detail," said the lecturer.
> "You know I can't do that, Sir! You're not serious, Sir. You know I'm still ignorant, don't you?" said Anna, smiling.[39]

Though certainly influenced by her reading of the lecturer's article, Anna's interpretation of the question of the assimilation of Indonesian Chinese into Indonesian society is, therefore, loosely equivalent to the question of intermarriage, to which her

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[37] *Anna*, pp. 115 and 118.

[38] *Anna*, p. 28: *"teori pembauran orang Cina di Indonesia ini."*

[39] *Anna*, p. 29:
"Saya seorang gadis turunan Tionghoa, ya pak. Jika sekiranya saya ada minat terhadap cowok Indonesia aseli pribumi, sudah pastilah fihak keluarga saya akan menentang dengan hebat. Gejala ini tampaknya intuitif, dan tidak rasional. Tetapi sungguhnya rasional juga."
"Kemukakan bantahan kamu dengan perincian alasannya," ujar sang dosen.
"Saya tidak bisa, dong pak. Yang bener saja deh, pak, saya 'kan masih bodo," Anna termesem-mesem.

family is "vehemently" opposed (at least when it directly concerns its own female members). As for Anna, she does not seem to be opposed to the principle of the kind of intermarriage involved in the framework of the "assimilation theory." Neither does Karna Wijaya. But Anna's opinion is not clear: is it only for practical reasons that she finds the theory "hard to accept"? How could she justify her family's opposition with "rational" arguments? Answers to these questions fall outside the reach of *Anna Soen Nio*. Anna will not seize her last opportunity to present justifications for her family's attitude. During her last conversation with Karna Wijaya, when he expresses his intention of proposing to her if she proves herself to be a good cook (but the reader will not be told whether she did or not before Karna leaves for Bukittinggi), she will reply in words similar to those she uttered earlier, stressing the fact that the problem is not new:

> "Ah, you will face difficulties," said Anna Soen Nio firmly, as firmly as when she answered questions from her *SMA* school mates who were autochthonous Indonesians.[40]

It might seem obvious from Karna Wijaya's attitude that he is a proponent of the "*pembauran* theory." Although a series of events will prevent him from presenting an unconditional marriage proposal to Anna, he seems to be quite well-disposed – to say the least – towards intermarriage in general and towards Anna in particular. However, we have seen in chapter 3 that Karna will be lead to get married in Bukittinggi with Ningsih. According to Karna's sister, Harti, Ningsih is the perfect pious wife that Karna needs in order to help him repent. The reader is not given much more information

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[40] *Anna*, p. 59:
"Ah, bapak akan dapat kesulitan," kata Anna Soen Nio pasti, sepasti kalau dia menjawab pertanyaan anak-anak pribumi Indonesia di SMA dulu.
SMA stands for *Sekolah Menengah Atas*, i.e. upper secondary school.

about Ningsih but, from the perspective of her marriage with Karna, this information is crucial. Ningsih's mother is Karna's stepfather's youngest sister and her father is a Javanese man from Purwokerto. She was born during the time of the PRRI rebellion.[41] Ningsih's identity, both in absolute terms and in relation to Karna, suggests the following observations.

First of all, Ningsih is the fruit of an intermarriage between Indonesians of two different "autochthonous" groups: her mother is Minangkabau and her father Javanese.[42] Because this union produced

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[41] *Anna*, p. 66:
"Ayah Ningsih orang Purwokerto, yang kawin dengan adik bungsu Pak Malin. Lahirnya waktu PRRI." ("Ningsih's father is from Purwokerto; he married Pak Malin's youngest sister. She was born in the time of the PRRI.")
PRRI stands for *Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia* (Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia). The PRRI rebellion (1958-61) started in West Sumatra, which remained its stronghold. Despite its name, it was more a 'counter-revolution' than a revolution properly speaking. According to T. Kato, the rebellion

> resulted from and in the heightened awareness of Minangkabau ethnic identity against other groups, primarily the Javanese. This rebellion against the central government is thought to have been anticommunist ... opposed to "guided democracy" of Sukarno, and to have been against Javacentrism in the allocation of financial resources.
> (T. Kato, *Matriliny and Migration*, Ithaca, Cornell UP, 1982, pp. 235-36)

As noted by D. Lombard, the economic factor behind the rebellion was also fundamental:

> le mouvement sécessionniste dit du P.R.R.I. ... était soutenu principalement par les milieux d'affaires, déçus par le socialisme incohérent de Soekarno et prêts à ouvrir les portes aux capitaux étrangers.
> (D. Lombard, *Carrefour, Vol. II*, p. 96)

[42] Intermarriage between Indonesians of different ethnic groups is a rather common theme in Indonesian literature. It is a major theme in Hamka's *Merantau ke Deli*. In Hamka's novel, it becomes very problematic because a Minangkabau man marries a Javanese woman who, precisely because she is Javanese, does not belong to a Minangkabau matrilineage. This means that her children will not be regarded as desirable marriage partners in the traditional Minangkabau matrimonial system. The same theme is also treated by Hamka in another of his novels, *Tenggelamnja Kapal van der Wijck* (1st ed. 1938), where the 'foreign' woman is Macassarese. Her son will not succeed in finding a Minangkabau wife (see Teeuw, *Modern, Vol. I*,

such a perfect fruit, it is clearly viewed positively.[43] Moreover, the reference to the PRRI rebellion is not trivial. It is arguable that it imposes a restriction on the desirability of a marriage between a Minangkabau woman and a Javanese man by providing a specific example of what an acceptable Javanese man could be. In this particular case, it is difficult to deny that the association of Ningsih's birth with the PRRI suggests that her father was somehow on the Minangkabau's side in the struggle against the central government of Soekarno.[44] Notwithstanding this restriction, this mixed union means that the traditional Minangkabau marriage system is either changing or flexible enough to 'assimilate' male partners who do not belong to a Minangkabau matrilineage.[45]

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pp. 70-71). The traditional Minangkabau matrimonial system is highly complex and cannot be fully discussed here. For a recent and superb discussion, see Ok-Kyung Pak, 'Royauté et parenté chez les Minangkabau de Sumatra.' *L'Homme: Revue Française d'Anthropologie* 125 (1993): 89-116. This article is based on the author's dissertation, 'Lowering the High, Raising the Low: Gender, Alliance and Property Relations in a Minangkabau Peasant Community of West Sumatra, Indonesia,' (unpublished Ph. D. diss., Laval University, Quebec City, 1986).

[43] Ningsih is not only morally perfect, as we have seen. She is also physically perfect, perhaps *because* of her particular ancestry. According to Harti,

> "... [Ningsih] is a beautiful girl. Javanese-Minang mixes are really beautiful ..." (*Anna*, p. 66: "... *anaknya cakep. Campuran Jawa-Minang memang cakep ...*")

[44] As Lombard suggests, the PRRI rebellion was not a strictly Minangkabau affair. The prime minister of the "Revolutionary Government" was the Sundanese Sjafruddin Prawiranegara and several leaders of Masjumi, the political party most closely associated with the PRRI, were Javanese (Lombard, *Carrefour, Vol. II*, pp. 105-06).

[45] Minangkabau lineages are differentiated according to a hierarchical ranking rooted in the ancient Minangkabau kingship system. Women who do not belong to the lowest-ranked matrimonial class must, in principle, marry men whose rank is either superior (ideally) or equal to theirs (see Pak, 'Royauté,' pp. 94-95). I doubt that any reader of *Anna Soen Nio* would conclude that the Minangkabau characters depicted therein could belong to that inferior class of largely landless and powerless peasants.

The second observation pertains to Karna and Ningsih's marriage as such. In the perspective of kinship relations, Karna and Ningsih are, although not blood-related, 'almost' cousins. Karna's stepfather, Malin Sati Maradjo, is Ningsih's maternal uncle (*mamak*). If he were also Karna's father, Karna and Ningsih would be cross-cousins. In anthropological terminology, their union would be called a cross-cousin marriage.[46] The importance of this kind of marriage throughout the world, including the Indonesian Archipelago, is widely attested. In numerous small-scale populations, it is the basis of the whole kinship system, which thus forms what Lévi-Strauss has called a "system of generalized exchange."[47] The importance of this form of marriage in Minangkabau

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[46] Karna and Ningsih might be regarded as "classificatory" cross-cousins by anthropologists, which means that the alliance relationship between Malin Sati Maradjo and Karna's mother would actually give them a status equivalent to blood-related cousins. Unfortunately, I have not found the information needed to solve this kinship equation. The following indications, found in the narrative, make me tend to think that the respective ties of Ningsih and Karna with Malin Sati Maradjo are rather strong: 1) M. S. Maradjo is Ningsih's *mamak* (maternal uncle) and her father, being Javanese, could not, as fathers nowadays often do, challenge his daughter's *mamak*'s position of authority; and 2) Karna's father is dead and, perhaps more importantly, no mention is made of the existence of his own *mamak* (on the importance of the *mamak* in Minangkabau society, see T. Kato, *Matriliny*, pp. 58-60).

[47] Strictly speaking, it is the matrilateral cross-cousin marriage (from the viewpoint of a male Ego) that is the basis of this type of system (see Pak, 'Royauté,' pp. 89-93 and 98-101, including note 16, p. 112). Lévi-Strauss' most important work in this respect is *Les structures élémentaires de la parenté* (Paris, PUF, 1949). Those who are interested in the Arabo-Berber kinship system should note that it is based on a different form of marriage, that of patrilateral parallel cousins (see G. Tillion, *Le harem et les cousins*, Paris, Seuil, 1966). As for Karna and Ningsih's marriage, it could be viewed as a patrilateral cross-cousin one (male Ego). According to Dr Pak, the Minangkabau system is not characterized by generalized exchange because its most important feature is the alliance between lineages of different social ranks (female hypergamy). However, patrilateral cross-cousin marriages are used to conclude alliances between lineages of equal rank (Pak, 'Royauté,' p. 99). One can therefore argue that Karna and Ningsih's marriage supports the ideological trend of presenting Minangkabau society as egalitarian (Pak, *ibid.*, p. 109; and Kato, *Matriliny*, p. 62). The *Bodi-Caniago* (cf. Charles Chaniago) principle expresses this trend.

society is differently assessed by different scholars. However, one can conclude from their accounts that, whether they regard its occurrence as statistically significant or not, the Minangkabau themselves tend to present it as the "ideal" marriage, .[48]

A few rather obvious conclusions can be drawn from the above discussion of Anna and Karna Wijaya's respective matrimonial fates. We have seen in chapter 3 that the major *opponent* to Anna's marriage with Karna was the series of events connected with his stay in Bukittinggi. It is now possible to qualify this opposition in more specific terms: it is the ideal rules of the Minangkabau marriage system that opposed Karna's marriage with a 'non-ideal' partner.[49] Karna was certainly not forced to observe these preferential rules, but he was placed in trying circumstances (mother's death, sister's insistence on repentance, return to his native town, etc.) which favoured observance of social rules over any manifestation of individualistic behaviour. As for opposition from Anna's side (her family, represented by her father), it now appears more obvious. If Anna's father could function as *donor* in the actantial configuration of Anna's initial story, it is only

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[48] Dr Pak concludes that cross-cousin marriages play a very important *structural* role, both in the marriage system and in social ideology (see Pak, 'Royauté,' p. 99, including note 18, p. 113). Other scholars have found its *statistical* occurrence significant (see Kato, *Matriliny*, p. 57, including note 41) and even regarded the system as characterized by generalized exchange (Pak, *ibid.*, 89-93).

[49] This opposition has thus nothing to do with Anna personally or with Indonesian Chinese in general, at least explicitly. In principle, it excludes everyone who is not a cross-cousin of Karna's. In fact, as we have seen, the marriage between Malin Sati Maradjo's sister and the Javanese man shows that the rules are not absolute; it also shows that special circumstances (e.g. the PRRI rebellion, a political crisis) may be required for the rules *not* to apply. But by 'choosing' a Javanese over a Chinese man, the narrator is perhaps saying that no circumstances could justify the choice of the second.

because he did not know that Karna Wijaya, as the author of the article on "racial assimilation," was not a man of "Chinese descent."[50] Neither did he have a chance, so to speak, to express overtly his opposition to Anna's feelings towards the lecturer; he was never informed of them. It is Anna's conversion to Islam that gave her father his first opportunity to express his opposition to his daughter's intention and, by the same token, shifted the narrative focus away from the question of ethnic identity to that of religious identity.

This narrative shift from ethnic to religious identity is in fact double. It involves two separate but roughly simultaneous events: Karna's religious experience in Bukittinggi; and Anna's decision to convert after her reading a book on Islam. These two events are independent from each other, but it looks as if the second was actually cancelled by the first (inasmuch as the possible marriage between Karna and Anna is concerned). Anna's conversion was meant to pave the way for a marriage with Karna. At the very moment when it was taking place, Karna (who did not know about Anna's conversion) was being convinced of his need for a pious wife. Nothing allows the reader to think that Anna or Karna could have foreseen the future. In the entire section of the narrative preceding Karna's departure for Bukittinggi, there is

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[50] The preference of Anna's father for a Chinese son-in-law should certainly be interpreted in the total context of what is said in the narrative about mixed marriage between Chinese and "autochthonous Indonesians." One will recall that one of Anna's grandmothers is or was an "autochthonous Indonesian" (*pribumi Indonesia*; *Anna*, p. 22) and that Han Soon's own mother is also an "autochthonous Indonesian, from Banten." In both cases, a Chinese *man* married an "autochthonous Indonesian" *woman*. The narrative does not hint at the possibility that this past 'tradition' could continue and provides no successful example of the reverse pattern, although Anna comes close to actualizing it twice (with Karna Wijaya and with Dr Kamal). This gender difference is probably crucial for both groups. I will discuss it in the conclusion.

only one clear reference to Islam: it pertains to a report published in the magazine *Tempo* on "Muslims of Chinese (*Cina*) descent."[51] This reference is also about ethnicity, but not about assimilation (*pembauran*). It is also about the Indonesian Chinese and their maintenance as a group. This reference, made during the last moments that Karna and Anna spent together before his departure for Bukittinggi, can perhaps be interpreted as an advance notice of things to come: Minangkabau marry Minangkabau and Chinese marry Chinese. In anthropological terminology, this is called ethnic endogamy, which means that Minangkabau remain Minangkabau and Chinese remain Chinese. The only easily perceptible difference between the two groups is that the matrimonial behaviour of the Minangkabau seems to be based on a set of (implicit) rules whereas that of the Chinese is not defined in comparable terms. Inasmuch as change is concerned, one can only say that Chinese become Muslims. As we will see, the meanings of this transformation appear much more difficult to discover than the meanings of changelessness.

IV. CONVERSION TO ISLAM

Strictly speaking, there are only four characters who convert to Islam within the temporal limits of the first narrative.[52] All of them are Sino-Indonesians and they all belong to Anna's family. They are Anna, her father, mother, and sister. We also saw that Han Soon and Karna Wijaya's stories of repentance can be likened to

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[51] *Anna*, p. 59-60.

[52] One will recall that the first narrative is "the temporal level of narrative with respect to which anachrony is defined as such" (Genette, *Narrative*, p. 49). For a more complete definition, see above: chapter 3, note 16.

conversion and labelled 'internal conversion.' Of these last two characters, only Han Soon converted to Islam in the strict sense. But his conversion took place *before* the beginning of the first narrative and is only mentioned in passing. These allusions, however, are highly significant and will be analyzed below. But I shall discuss first the most fully described of these conversions, that of Anna and her father.

IV.1. Anna's conversion

We have seen that the actantial function of Anna's conversion is to help her acquire the object of her initial quest (Karna Wijaya). This analysis pertains to the level of story. As we have also seen, this analysis is confirmed by the interpretation given by Ricky to Anna's conversion. At the level of narration, however, Anna's conversion is given a different justification. Without denying the importance of Anna's interest in Karna Wijaya, the narrator explains that Anna's conversion is imputable to the teachings of a book on the position of women in Islam. Here is the most relevant passage to this effect:

> In order to have something to chat about with the lecturer, after his return, Anna Soen Nio wished to read that book. But it so happened that Anna Soen Nio's heart was wide open to the knowledge contained in that book. How noble was the position of women in Islam! Anna Soen Nio had never heard about this before. She always thought Islam was so old-fashioned (*kuno*)![53]

Under the guidance of a few exemplary Indonesian Muslims

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[53] *Anna*, p. 68: *Untuk bahan omongan nanti jika sang dosen pulang, Anna Soen Nio ingin membaca buku itu. Tapi ternyata kemudian, hati Anna Soen Nio terbuka lebar menerima pengetahuan dari buku itu. Begitu agungnya wanita dalam agama Islam! Hal ini selama ini tidak pernah diketahui Anna Soen Nio. Selama ini dia kira Islam itu begitu kuno!*

After her conversion, Anna will meet Karna Wijaya at the Islamic Hospital, where his wife will deliver. She will tell him that her conversion was made possible "by God's guidance" (*Anna*, p. 107: *atas petunjuk Tuhan*).

(Nurhayati's family, Dr Kamal, Bu Diro), Anna will become a good Muslim and she will learn that Islam is not, indeed, an old-fashioned religion. Anna's affirmation of her modernity — as opposed to the 'old-fashionedness' of her traditional Chinese upbringing — is most obvious in her relation with Han Soon. I shall give below two examples of this.

The first example occurs shortly after Anna's acceptance of Han Soon's proposal. Anna wants to know if Han Soon will "allow" her to work at the hospital after their marriage. Here is Han Soon's answer:

> "You may and ought to. It is a social duty. [Our] religion commands us to be dedicated to our fellow human beings, why should I forbid you to [do so]? *After you become my wife*, you will still belong to this human society. I won't be a selfish husband, because God really hates selfish husbands."[54]

These words are not typical of Han Soon's speech. In fact, they contain the only reference he makes to religious requirements and to God's 'attitude.' His answer does sound as if it were carefully designed to please Anna, whose wish could be justified in these precise terms. Anna replies by simply smiling and nodding. In relation to the opposition between 'old-fashionedness' and modernity, Anna's expressed wish is more interesting than Han Soon's answer. Her desire to work somehow goes against her traditional Chinese upbringing. Here is what she once said to Karna Wijaya on this subject:

> "Don't you know, Sir? In families of Chinese descent, especially traditional ones like mine, a girl is prepared to become a *wife* and

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[54] *Anna*, pp. 129-30:
"Boleh dan harus. Itu tugas sosial. Agama menyuruh manusia berbakti kepada sesama manusia, mengapa aku mesti melarangnya? Setelah jadi istriku, kau tetap saja menjadi milik masyarakat manusia ini. Aku takkan jadi suami egois, karena suami egois sangat dibenci oleh Tuhan."

a *mother*."[55]

Although Anna was a college student before converting and being expelled from her parental home, many indications point to the fact that her studies were not really part of a career plan. It is both necessity and the influence of Dr Kamal, the social-minded (*sosiawan*) physician who helped her find her way towards autonomy (*berdikari*), which led her to be trained as a midwife, a profession usually viewed as a type of social work.[56]

The second example of Anna's affirmation of modernity occurs shortly after Anna is informed of her husband's infidelity. Here are the words she used to warn him against the consequences of his behaviour:

> "Remember, Has. I'm your wife. I'm not an old-fashioned Chinese (*Cina kuno*) woman who would just let her husband fool around!"[57]

How would Anna, as a modern Chinese woman, solve the problem of her husband's infidelity? By advising him to legalize his situation:

> "Excuse me, I'm interfering in your personal business. If you're going to marry this third person, please do. It's allowed by [our] religion, as long as you're fair towards your wives. But can you be fair, Has? Anyway... please do it instead of always lying to me, of hiding this sin in this sinless house of ours."[58]

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[55] *Anna*, p. 59:
"Bapak belum tahu, dalam keluarga turunan Tionghoa itu, terutama yang tradisional kayak keluarga saya, seorang gadis sudah dipersiapkan menjadi seorang isteri dan seorang ibu."

[56] The word *berdikari* is used by Dr Kamal to describe Anna's goal (*Anna*, p. 83). It is an abbreviation of the expression *berdiri di atas kaki sendiri*, meaning literally 'to stand on one's feet.'

[57] *Anna*, p. 140:
"Ingat. Has. Aku istrimu. Aku bukan perempuan Cina kuno, yang sudah tahu suami nyeleweng tapi membiarkan saja!"

[58] *Anna*, p. 140:
"Maaf, aku campuri urusan pribadimu. Jika kau akan kawin lagi dengan orang ketiga itu, silahkan. Agama memperbolehkan, asal kau adil pada istri-istrimu. Tapi apa kamu bisa adil, Has? Tapi silahkan, daripada

Polygyny is not inherently modern: it is at least as ancient as Islam. However, since conversion to Islam among Sino-Indonesians is – by modern standards – a recent phenomenon, it can indeed be viewed by Sino-Indonesian women who convert and become pious Muslims either as a modern solution to an old problem or as the lesser of two evils. Contrary to Anna's 'discovery' of the position of women in Islam, her attitude towards polygyny cannot be used to explain her conversion: this question was never raised before she converted. But the commonsensical idea that the position of women is partly determined by polygyny suggests that Anna could not entirely reject the latter while praising the former.

IV.2. Anna's father's conversion

Six months passed since Anna left her parental home. Both Oom Sukiman and Dr Kamal insist that her duties as a Muslim include reconciliation with her family, regardless of the fact that her parents are not Muslims.[59] She finally pays a visit to her parents. This first encounter is very brief but emotional. The second encounter between Anna and her parents takes place many weeks after the first. Anna wants to keep her parents informed of the quality of her school performance. Since she also brings a (small?) refrigerator as a gift, one can presume that she wants to show that her financial situation is not strained. In any event, the narrator tells us that she has become a self-conscious member of the Muslim community:

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kamu berdusta terus padaku, menyembunyikan maksiat itu di rumah kita yang suci dari dosa ini."

[59] *Anna*, pp. 92-93.

> Anna ... wished to prove to herself that, after becoming a Muslim, she has tried to upgrade her status and rank instead of letting both decline.[60]

Anna is welcome by her mother, who is alone at home, and it takes a short while before the two of them can regain their former intimacy. This mother-child intimacy is denoted by the linguistic behaviour of the mother, who resumes her habit of mixing "modern Chinese" with Indonesian.[61] Anna's father soon comes home and greets his daughter in English; Anna also replies in English.[62] The father then invites Anna to stay over for a meal and insists that no pork will be served. Upon Anna's hesitation, the father suggests that she cook "food for Muslims" (*makanan orang Islam*). The mother then says a few words in Chinese; this makes the father react negatively:

> "Don't speak Chinese (*Cina*) here. Are you Indonesian or Chinese (*Cina*)? Indonesian or Chinese (*Cina*)?"
> "Indonesian," replied the embarrassed mother.
> "Well, speak Indonesian then!"[63]

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[60] *Anna*, p. 110: *Anna ... ingin membuktikan pada diri sendiri, setelah menjadi orang Islam dia berusaha untuk menaikkan martabat dan derajat, bukan malahan menurun.*

[61] *Anna*, p. 111. One can wonder why the narrator specifies that Anna's mother speaks "modern" Chinese (*bahasa Cina moderen*) since it is hard to imagine contemporary Sino-Indonesians speaking anything but a *modern* language. Since a short sentence in Mandarin Chinese is provided by the narrator, one can assume that "modern Chinese" should be equated to Mandarin Chinese, as opposed to another Chinese dialect, for example. The sentence quoted is: *"K'eren jaotsuo tsae-k'eting-lime?"* (in Pinyin transliteration: *Keren yao zuo zai keting li ma?*). The translation provided by the narrator is correct.

[62] *Anna*, p. 111: *"How are you daughty? ...*
"Fine, Dad"

[63] *Anna*, p. 112:
"Di sini jangan omong Cina. Kamu Indonesia atau Cina? Indonesia atau Cina?"
"Indonesia," sahut sang istri tersipu.
"Na, bahasa Indonesia, dong!"

Anna takes her mother's defence by saying that the Chinese language is a gift of God and that Chinese are God's creatures (*ciptaan Tuhan*). Her parents do not reply but are moved by her statements. Anna then proceeds to clean the kitchenware thoroughly before cooking. The mother is impressed by Anna's new concern for cleanliness and compliments her. Anna replies that "cleanliness is a part of faith (*iman*)."[64] This leads to the first family discussion on religious topics. Anna's parents are totally ignorant of the teachings of Islam but, through Anna's presentation, the father soon realizes that many of them are also part of his Chinese heritage. When Anna gives a definition of the word *iman*, her father says that "there is a similar rule in China (*Tiongkok*)."[65] When she says that lying is a sin, her father replies that Chinese of old have said the same thing and that they were good people. Their conversation ends with the father's suggestion that she meet "*meneer Oey's* son," Han Soon, who also converted to Islam.

Two weeks later, the father visits Anna at the hospital residence. He is wearing the Malay fez (*pici*) and according to Anna's mate, who first receives him, he looks as though he is wearing it precisely because he is visiting the residence of the Islamic Hospital.[66] Although Anna is slightly amused by her father's look, she compliments him:

> "This *pici* suits you, daddy. You're like an Indonesian."
> "But I *am* an Indonesian, you know!"

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[64] *Anna*, p. 114: *"Kebersihan adalah sebagian dari iman."*

[65] *Anna*, p. 114: *"Di Tiongkok ada juga pelatulan [sic] begitu."* Anna's definition of *iman* is the following: *"Keyakinan akan adanya Tuhan Yang Maha Kuasa"* (the belief in the existence of God Almighty).

[66] *Anna*, p. 116-17. The *pici*, also called *songkok* and *kopiah* (Ar. *kūfīya*), is usually worn by Muslims only.

"Thank God! You are, on the outside and in the inside," said Anna."[67] The father then explains to his daughter that this *pici* was presented to him as a gift by a neighbour of his, Haji Misbah, on *Lebaran Day*, five years earlier."[68] Their conversation ends with Anna's agreeing to meet Oey Han Soon.

About a month and a half later, Anna will accept Han Soon's proposal. After being engaged to Han Soon, she will see her parents more often. Following his daughter's footsteps, her father will tell his wife that he has also received divine inspiration (*ilham*).[69] His wife and youngest daughter will also convert. As is the case with Anna, her family's conversion is not much explained. Neither the narrator nor the characters themselves discuss the reasons underlying their choice. The process leading to conversion does not seem to involve any significant measure of soul-searching either: Anna converts, reconciles with her parents, accepts her father's matrimonial choice, teaches her family members how to pray, and takes them to the mosque where they will pronounce their *ikrar* (Ar. *iqrâr*). Anna's wedding will be celebrated shortly after her family's conversion. After the wedding (pp. 136-39), Anna's family will completely disappear from her life. I will try to show below that it is in fact Anna's father's wedding speech, which also

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[67] *Anna*, pp. 117-18:
"Papah cocok pakai pici itu. Kayak orang Indonesia."
"Papah memang orang Indonesia, koq!"
"Syukur. Lahir. Dan batin," kata Anna.
Anna's last line certainly refers to her father's "being Indonesian" outwardly (*lahir*) and inwardly (*batin*), i.e. looking and feeling [like an] Indonesian.

[68] *Anna*, p. 118. Haji Misbah is said to be a merchant of construction material (*pedagang bahan bangunan*) and his son Luki, a physician. *Lebaran Day* (*Hari Lebaran*) is the *ʿid al-fiṭr*, the Feast of Breaking the Ramadan Fast.

[69] *Anna*, p. 132.

contains his last words in the whole narrative, that gives the key for the interpretation of his conversion.

Anna's father has two messages (*pesen*) to convey to his daughter. The first message concerns the family's genealogy; it is a reinterpretation of Chinese ancestry within the framework of Islamic and Judaeo-Christian religious traditions:

> "First matter, be that as it may, we are of Chinese (*Cina*) origins. We have ancestors and our ancestors are Chinese (*Cina*), but our ancestors also have ancestors. According to our religion, Islam, and to other religions as well, humankind shares the same ancestor, that is: the Prophet Adam."[76]

This first message is universalist in the broader sense of the term and non-controversial. It is especially worth noting because it implies that it is only through (conversion to) Islam or a Christian religion that someone "of Chinese origins" can legitimately claim to be a 'descendant of Adam.' This way of stating one's membership in the 'universal family of Adam' is reminiscent of Junus Jahja's assertion that Islam does not allow discrimination on the basis of ethnicity. The second message, however, acknowledges the importance of local circumstances by introducing a restriction on universalist thinking, which certainly cannot be equated with cosmopolitanism in the usual sense:

> "... second matter: although our ancestors were Chinese (*Cina*), we are now Indonesians. Yes... and our neighbours are also Indonesians.

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[76] *Anna*, p. 137:
"Pekara pertama, pigimanapun juga kita ini asalnya Cina. Kita punya nenek moyang, dan nenek moyang kita Cina tetapi nenek moyang kita punya lagi nenek moyang. Nenek moyang manusia menurut igama kita Islam yuga igama laennya yaitu satu, yaitu Nabi Adam.
This passage, just as the next one and the whole wedding speech, is full of phonetic elements often associated with the Sino-Indonesian substandard sociolect or merely suggesting a deficient pronunciation: *pekara* instead of *perkara*; *pigimana* instead of *bagaimana*; *igama* instead of *agama*; *yuga* instead of *juga*; and *laen* instead of *lain*. I have not tried to transpose these sociolectal elements in my English translation. I will discuss the question of the characters' speech in the conclusion.

> The two of you are marrying, you will have children, Indonesian children. The main thing is that we will all be Indonesians until death. So teach your children to be(come) Indonesians. Don't forget another important matter: Teach your children to be serious, diligent and humble in their adherence to religion.[71]

This passage can be read as an amplification of earlier statements made by Anna's father and as a prediction of the future development of Sino-indonesian identity. Before his conversion, Anna's father enjoined his wife to 'simply' *speak* Indonesian; he himself first needed to *look like* an Indonesian, by wearing a *pici*, before asserting his being Indonesian.[72] After his conversion, he enjoins his daughter to raise her future children as Indonesians, to teach them to be (or become) Indonesians. This is something Anna would not object to. In fact, one of the most important differences between Anna and her father lies in the fact that Anna, without denying her Chinese origins, always minimizes their importance (for her as well as for Han Soon).

As far as religious education is concerned, her father's advice must sound to her as a reminder of the fact that *she* did not

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[71] *Anna*, p. 137:
"... pekara kedua: tapi biarpun nenek moyang kita Cina, kita sekarang ini adalah Indunisia. Ya, tetangga kita juga Indunisia. Kamu bedua kawin, mau punya anak cucu, anak cucu Indonesia. Pokoknya sampe mati kita ini semuwah Indunisia. Jadi, didiklah anak-anak cucu kamu bedua jadi bangsa Indonesia. Jangan lupa juga pekara penting: Mendidik anak cucu memeluk igama dengen serius, dengen tekun, dengen khusyuk.

[72] The topos of the "Indonesian neighbours" runs through the father's discourse and carries his indebtedness towards one of them, Haji Misbah. Just as Karna Wijaya 'gave' Anna the book which contributed to her conversion, Haji Misbah gave her father the *pici* which made him look like an Indonesian (Muslim), picture himself as one, and finally become one. The *pici* is, of course an Islamic symbol and a sign of Malay-/Indonesian-ness. The fact that both Anna and her father stress this second aspect shows that it comes first.

receive a religious education in the strict sense of the term.[73] Her father is thus asking her to perform a task which he did not himself perform. This can be taken as a good example of what belonging to different generations entails.

IV.3. Repentance and semiotic spaces: Karna Wijaya and Han Soon

As we have seen in chapter 3, Karna Wijaya fully succeeded in repenting whereas Han Soon did not: only a 'providential' car accident will put an end to his sinful life. The question that needs to be answered in this subsection is quite simple: how to explain the difference between these two repentance stories? As the above title suggests, it is the concept of symbolic spaces which will give us a plausible explanation. But I shall first say a few words about Han Soon's conversion.

We have already seen that Han Soon is not very diligent in his adherence to the teachings of Islam and that he justifies this laxity by the fact that he is a "*new comer*."[74] The only other information about the effect of conversion on Han Soon that is available to the reader is given by Han Soon's father in his wedding speech. Here are Mr Oey's words:

> I know for real that since [Han Soon] converted to Islam, he has become a good child. Han Soon says that his new name, *Hassan*, means *Good*, with a capital "G".[75]

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[73] This is at least what she told Nurhayati's family (see note 14 above). But the narrator also states that Anna's parents "implanted in her good moral principles" (*Anna*, p. 95: *pernah menanamkan akhlak yang baik pada dirinya*).

[74] *Anna*, p. 121. See also chapter 3, note 38.

[75] *Anna*, p. 138:
"... saya tahu betul, semenjak dia jadi pemeluk agama Islam menjadi anak yang baik. Kata Han Soon, namanya sekarang Hassan yang artinya Baik dengan huruf "B" – besar.
What was said about Anna's father's speech applies equally well to Mr Oey's (see note 70 above).

In light of what the reader will learn about Han Soon's behaviour as a husband, this statement is difficult to accept. Provided that the first assumption about Han Soon's conduct before conversion is correct – that he was indeed a 'bad child' – the only conclusion that can be drawn is that he has remained a 'bad child' and that conversion did not achieve the moral transformation his father claims it has. Han Soon's conversion is thus the negative image of Anna's: she was good and remained so after conversion; he was bad and remained bad. Han Soon's failure to repent is simply the confirmation of his initial failure to achieve moral transformation through conversion.

This absence of moral transformation is, of course, in sharp contrast with Karna Wijaya's repentance story. Karna is a Minangkabau man who can return to his homeland. As we have seen in chapter 3, it is his trip to Bukittinggi which gives him the opportunity to repent from sins committed in Jakarta. Han Soon's sins are also committed in Jakarta but he has nowhere else to go because he is a Jakartan Chinese. In *Anna Soen Nio*, ideological discourse – either by the narrator or by characters – does not provide a clear description of Jakarta as a 'bad' place. It is rather at the level of story that Jakarta is established as a context for 'bad' actions: neglect of religious duties, adultery, etc. Bukittinggi functions as a counterpoise to Jakarta. This opposition between the two locations can be read as a classic case of opposition between the countryside and the city, between rural and urban life. As the following quote explains, the existence of such oppositions is a universal phenomenon:

> The semiotics of space has an exceptionally important, perhaps even overriding significance in a culture's world-picture. And this world-picture is linked to the specifics of actual space. For a culture to get to grips with life, it must create a fundamental

> image of the world, a spatial model of the universe. The spatial modelling reconstructs the spatial form of the actual world.[76]

The most simple process of the semioticization of space functions through the juxtaposition of two categorially distinct series of terms in order to create a more complex series. Locations become symbolic spaces when they are assigned qualities belonging to a category that has nothing to do with space as such. Bukittinggi becomes 'good' and Jakarta, 'bad.' As Lotman has shown, this kind of space semiotics was characteristic of the Western medieval thought:

> In the medieval thought-system earthly life itself was a value category in opposition to heavenly life. So the earth as a geographical concept was perceived also as the place of earthly life (i.e. was one member of the opposition 'earth/heaven') and consequently acquired a religious and moral significance which is unknown to modern geography. These ideas were applied to all geography: some lands were righteous and others were sinful. Movement in geographical space meant moving in the vertical scale of religious and moral values, the top of the scale being heaven, and the bottom hell. ... notions of moral value and of locality fuse together: places have a moral significance and morals have a localized significance. Geography becomes a kind of ethics.[77]

Earlier works by Motinggo Busye provide descriptions of Jakarta that gives it a clear moral significance very close to that given to earthly life in the thought-system described by Lotman. In *Perempuan-perempuan impian*, the impersonal narrator attributes to his 'heroine' (Latifa), a pious Muslim girl from a modest family, the following thoughts (Latifa is looking at the stars):

> ... if the population of Jakarta is six million people, how many of them have the opportunity to pay attention to the creatures of God inhabiting the universe? ... In Jakarta people have more love for all the World's dirt and lice, for all its dust and spiritual

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[76] Yuri M. Lotman, *Universe of the Mind: A Semiotic Theory of Culture* (Bloomington, University of Indiana Press, 1990), p. 150.

[77] Lotman, *Universe*, p. 171-72.

> garbage. They think life is only chewing ... chewing on food, chewing on money, chewing on cement and stone, chewing on women and chewing on men. In short: chewing on anything that is a worldly thing that can be held in one's hand, touched with one's body."

In *Anna Soen Nio*, the "Chinese" are trapped in Jakarta, so to speak, unlike Karna Wijaya. They are perhaps the only "authentically autochthonous" (*asli pribumi*) inhabitants of the worldly (earthly, lowly) Indonesian city *par excellence*. But they cannot be called *pribumi*, however, because there is too little earth (*bumi*) left in Jakarta: it is covered by too much asphalt. As we have seen in chapter 1, Sino-Indonesians are also defined as an urban minority. To use another of the metaphors found in *Anna Soen Nio*, one can add that all this asphalt prevents the Sino-Indonesians from "putting down roots into the soil" (*mengakar ke tanah*).[78]

This metaphor would not be so important if it were not the by-product of another one, much more powerful, which is used by Karna Wijaya in his very first dialogue with Anna. Because it comes so early in the narrative (first chapter), it is important in providing background elements against which to read the whole work. Here is how the lecturer talks to Anna about patriotism:

> "You are of Chinese descent (*turunan Cina*), aren't you? If you were not a patriot you would go back to China (*Tiongkok*) after

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[78] *Perempuan-perempuan impian* (Jakarta, Kartini Group, 1979), p.35: *... kalau penduduk Jakarta ini enam juta jumlahnya, ada berapa orangkah didalam ini yang sempat memperhatikan ciptaan Tuhan dijagat raya itu? ... Di Jakarta orang lebih cinta pada Dunia dengan segala daki dan kutu-kutunya, dengan segala debu dan sampah-sampah rohaninya. Mereka menganggap hidup ini cuma mengunyah-ngunyah belaka, ... mengunyah makanan, mengunyah uang, mengunyah semen dan batu, mengunyah perempuan dan mengunyah lelaki, – pendeknya – mengunyah apa saja yang namanya benda dunia yang bisa dipegang dengan tangan, diraba dengan raga.*

[79] *Anna*, p. 22.

> graduating, wouldn't you? But if you feel [like an] Indonesian you will devote yourself to the development of Indonesia. What do you think? Is that right?"
> Because Anna kept smiling, the handsome lecturer asked once more: "Is that right?"
> "That's right, Sir."
> "If you want to be rational that's how it has to be," said Dr Karna Wijaya. "But if you feel you're living for free, this turns your attitude into that of a parasite (*parasit*)."[80]

The word "parasite," we are told by the narrator, is painful to hear for Anna. Once again the voices of the narrator and Anna merge and the reader is given a classic definition of parasitism which apparently provokes Anna's first reaction to the lecturer's speech. She discovers that one feature of parasites is that they "indeed do not have roots."[81] Anna denies her rootlessness and gets approval from the lecturer:

> "I have got roots, Sir," said Anna who had just found a defence for herself. "My grandmother was/is an indigenous Indonesian (*pribumi Indonesia*)."
> "Good," said the lecturer while pointing his thumb upward, "This means that from your grandfather onwards there was already a willingness to put down roots."[82]

One can have doubts as to the effectiveness of Anna's "defence."

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[80] *Anna*, p. 22:
"Kamu 'kan turunan Cina? Kalau tidak ada patriotismemu, nanti kalau sudah selesai kuliah 'kan kamu kembali ke Tiongkok. Tapi bila ada merasa dari [sic; diri] Indonesia, kamu abdikan dirimu bagi pembangunan Indonesia. Bagaimana? Betul, nggak?"
Karena Anna masih senyum, dosen ganteng itu ulang bertanya: "Betul, nggak?"
"Betul, pak?"
"Kalau mau rasionil, ya harus begitu," ujar Dr Karna Wijaya. "Tapi kalau merasa diri numpang hidup, memang menjadikanmu sikap berparasit."

[81] *Anna*, p. 22: *Parasit memang tak mempunyai akar.*

[82] *Anna*, p. 22:
"Saya punya akar, pak," kata Anna baru menemukan pembelaan diri, "Nenek perempuan saya orang pribumi Indonesia."
"Bagus," kata dosen itu mengacungkan jempolnya, "Kalau begitu dari kakek kamu sudah ada sikap bersedia mengakar."

She could have replied, for example, that she could not possibly go *back* to China for the obvious reason that she had (most likely) *never* been there, that she was born in and a citizen of Indonesia. A more experienced person, less intimidated by the superior status of her interlocutor, could have replied with such arguments. What cannot be doubted, however, is the plausibility of the lecturer's "charge." It is just too reminiscent of some of Ali's attacks against Baba in the cartoon featured in *Udjana*:

> In Indonesia there are no such things as citizens of foreign descent, only people from ethnic groups (*suku*). For example, the Menadonese have their island in Sulawesi, Padang people theirs in Sumatra. Now, where is Baba from? Is there a Peking island in Indonesia?[23]

Symbolic spaces in *Anna Soen Nio* are more complex than the geography of the above quote. Although the reference to China (e.g. Peking) has not completely disappeared from the lecturer's discourse, the narrative, at the level of story, is not about an hypothetical 'return to China.' The plot in *Anna Soen Nio* speaks a more complex language than any of its characters. It is arguable that, by looking at the "Chinese question" in the perspective of morality, especially Islamic morality, space become more thoroughly semioticized. It is also arguable that converting to Islam – after the first conversation between Anna and the lecturer – 'allows' Sino-Indonesians to be viewed as people who do have a place in Indonesia. But their place is that of an urban minority completely cut off from their original rural milieu: they do not have access to its potential rejuvenating, morally invigorating influence, the influence of an age anterior to the pervasiveness of money, cement,

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[23] Coppel, *Indonesian*, p. 71. See the first section of this chapter, especially note 7.

and other "worldly things" (*benda dunia*) and deeds. In this golden age, Minangkabau people (or other Indonesian *suku*) were not yet committing sins in Jakarta; they stayed in Bukittinggi (for example), where they prayed and fasted whenever they had to.

CONCLUSION

The first general conclusions to be presented here will be partly derived from the discussion on symbolic spaces which closed the last chapter of the present thesis. This concept of symbolic spaces will be complemented by Lotman's concept of the "hero" in "plot-texts" (texts with a plot, narrative texts). This will be done in order to show the relations between symbolic spaces and plot structures (the latter being roughly equivalent to "actantial configurations" as defined and applied in chapter 3). Lotman's definition of a hero incorporates the three classes of constituents of a story discussed and applied in chapter 3: characters, events, and context. Although couched in slightly different terms, the following quote clearly explains how these classes of constituents are integrated through the figure of the hero:

> A hero of the second type can *act*, that is, cross the boundaries of prohibitions in a way others cannot ... he is able to do what others cannot, namely to cross the structural boundaries of cultural space. Each such infringement is a deed, and the chain of deeds forms what we call a plot. ... characters can be divided into mobile ones who are free to move about the plot-space, capable of changing their position in the structure of the artistic world, and of crossing the frontier which is the basic topological feature of that space; and immobile ones who are functions of that space.[1]

Even the most cursory reading of the last section of chapter 5 would suffice to allow a preliminary classification of the major characters in *Anna Soen Nio* into heroes – Karna Wijaya – and non-heroes – Anna, Han Soon and their respective families; i.e. all Sino-Indonesians. Karna Wijaya is originally from Bukittinggi, moves to Jakarta, returns to Bukitinggi and then back to Jakarta. He is the only major character whose story involves such movements.

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[1] Lotman, *Universe of the Mind*, pp. 151 and 157.

This does not mean that Anna and Han Soon are not major characters in the sense defined in chapter 3. It simply means that the bulk of a narrative does not have to tell the story of its hero(es), this term being understood both in Lotman's sense and in the common sense of a character positively valued for his or her remarkable qualities and deeds. Before elaborating on this important point, however, I shall give a more precise description of symbolic spaces in *Anna Soen Nio* in order to show the total extent of Karna Wijaya's crossing of boundaries.

The analysis of the novel's symbolic spaces presented in chapter 5 (section IV.3) showed that Jakarta and Bukittinggi are the most important of these spaces. Inasmuch as actantial configurations and narrative time are concerned, this is unquestionable. However, this analysis can be further expanded to reflect a more subtle complexity at the purely symbolic level.

We have already seen (chapter 2, II.4) that the 'Foreword' to *Anna Soen Nio* presents two different symbolic spaces. The first one is the United States of America; it is described as the place where the lecturer (Karna Wijaya) "has once erred."[2] A close reading of the novel will reveal that the "Publisher" either misread the novel or decided to present a slightly distorted image of it, because "America" is not, in the novel, the place where the lecturer "has once erred."[3]

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[2] Foreword (*Sekapur sirih*): *... di Amerika sana dia pernah tidak benar.*

[3] This misreading or misrepresentation on the publisher's part is not easy to explain. Since I do not regard it as a fundamental element, I will not speculate on this curious fact. There is, however, another discrepancy between the 'Foreword' and the narrative: Jakarta is not mentioned *in* the 'Foreword.' The fact that it is overlooked in the 'Foreword' may be interpreted as resulting from a confusion, on the publisher's part, between the discursive mode (i.e. that of the 'Foreword') and the story mode (that of the novel): the 'Foreword' being written in Jakarta, it would go without saying that the main location in the

Three short passages in the novel are relevant to this question. The first passage describes Anna's reaction to the first lecture by Karna Wijaya that she attended:

> Anna was fascinated ... [He was] different from lecturers who spent no more than six-months attending seminars abroad and came back home with a *cadel* accent. This new lecturer did not have the slightest pedant americanized *cadel* accent when he spoke.[4]

The second passage, as we have seen in chapter 5 (section II), is about the danger of becoming a mercenary (*manusia sewaan*) or mercenary technocrat (*tehnokrat sewaan*), of participating in a kind of "brain drain." It is, above all, about being Indonesian. Karna Wijaya's statement is prompted by one of Anna's most trivial questions:

> "Were you abroad for a long time, Sir?"
> "Long enough, for if you stay too long, you can get rusted. If you get rusted, then you come back to Indonesia and *you are not Indonesian any more!*"[5]

The third passage briefly describes an important aspect of Karna Wijaya's life as a foreign student in "America." Here is the

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novel is also Jakarta. Considering the content of the novel as presented in the 'Foreword,' chances indeed are that it should go without saying.

[4] *Anna*, p. 15:
Anna terpukau ... Beda dengan dosen yang cuma seminar enam bulan di luarnegeri, yang bahasa Indonesianya langsung jadi cadel sepulangnya ke dalam negeri. Dosen baru ini tidak sedikit pun memperlihatkan sok-cadel-americanized [sic] jika bicara.
The expression *sok-cadel-americanized* is interesting in that it combines pedantry (*sok*) with two features of foreignness. *Cadel* designates a defect in the pronunciation of Indonesian where *'r'* becomes *'l.'* We have seen that this defect is often attributed to Indonesian Chinese (especially the *totok*). The other feature of foreignness is of course the American influence. Anna already knew that the new lecturer had studied in "America" (*Anna*, p. 10).

[5] *Anna*, p. 21:
"Lama di luar negeri, pak?"
*"Lama juga. Tapi kalau kelamaan, bisa karatan. Kalau sudah karatan, nanti kembalinya ke Indonesia, **sudah bukan orang Indonesia lagi!**"*
The second person pronoun (you) used in the English translation should not convey the idea that the lecturer could be addressing Anna personally. In Indonesian, as is often the case, there are simply no pronouns used.

portrait of a "complete" but rather lonely man:

> the lecturer ... is a complete man who has never had a close friend since he returned to his homeland. Even in America, his only close friend was his Mentor, who guided him through his studies. Later on, however, his Mentor became his enemy ... because [Karna Wijaya] learned that [his Mentor] was a homosexual man.[6]

Taken together, these three passages reveal that "America" cannot be described as the place where the lecturer "has once erred," but, more accurately, as the place where his identity was threatened in different ways. The first two dangers obviously pertain to his identity as an Indonesian (his Indonesian-ness): the way he speaks Indonesian and his loyalty to his country. The third element, concerning the sexual orientation of "his (presumably American) Mentor" and the ensuing antagonism that developed between the two men, cannot be as easily deciphered as the elements concerning Indonesian-ness. Taken at face value, it can be read as a simple association of "America" with male homosexuality, i.e. one "immoral" behaviour among many others. Before further discussing this question, I shall conclude on symbolic spaces.

There are three distinct symbolic spaces in *Anna Soen Nio*: "America," Jakarta, and Bukittinggi. The one and only character who moves across these three spaces is Karna Wijaya.[7] "America"

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[6] *Anna*, p. 40:
sang dosen ... seorang manusia seutuhnya, yang tidak pernah punya teman dekat selama kembali ke tanah air. Bahkan di Amerika, teman dekatnya cumalah Sang mentor, yang membimbingnya ketika ia study, yang malah kemudian menjadi musuhnya. ... karena kemudian diketahui bahwa beliau itu seorang lelaki homoseks.

[7] Dr Kamal, the social-minded physician who helps Anna become a mid-wife and a good Muslim, comes close to Karna Wijaya's freedom of movement. First, he is also Minangkabau, which means that he is likely to have access to his original land's morally invigorating influence; second, he lives and works in Jakarta; and

represents both a threat to the lecturer's Indonesian-ness and an opportunity for securing a prestigious academic career. The lecturer is able to preserve his Indonesian-ness and reap the reward of his victory once he is back in Jakarta: the social position provided by his American academic degree. However, Jakarta is not an entirely safe place either. It represents a threat to the lecturer's identity as a pious Muslim. The danger of leading a life in contradiction with the teachings of Islam is very real in the capital city. The benevolent influence of Bukittinggi will allow repentance, as a victory over Jakarta's danger, to be carried out. Repenting does not imply, however, that the lecturer has to stay away from Jakarta: it means taking a part of Bukittinggi (his wife Ningsih) along with him. It is not in his interest to stay in Bukittinggi for it is Jakarta which certainly has the most to offer, in terms of social success, to a man like Karna Wijaya.

The question of sexual identity raised by the antagonism between Karna Wijaya and "his Mentor" may be resolved by introducing two new elements which have been reluctantly overlooked earlier in this thesis.[8] I hope to show that 1) this question can be interpreted as a worry expressed by the narrator over Karna Wijaya's virility; and that 2) virility is so explicitly marked as a feature characterizing "autochthonous Indonesians" and missing in "Chinese" men that it has to be viewed as a major aspect of group identity. Considering that an earlier part of Motinggo Busye's career as a popular novelist and film director has been

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third, he studied in Germany, although Germany is only a neutral place name in the narrative. Dr Kamal did note have to go through any specific ordeal there.

[8] Except where Han Soon is concerned (i.e. his infidelity and his impotence caused by the car accident; see chapter 3).

characterized by the representation of sexuality ("soft pornography"), its eruption as a marker of identity in his later works of Islamic propaganda (*dakwah*) should not be entirely surprising.

The first element is an early allusion to sexuality and problematic gender identity which takes the form of a comment made to Anna by Felix, one of her classmates. Felix says that Karna Wijaya is "like a *wadam*", that is an effeminate man, a kind of hermaphrodite.[9] Anna, who has not yet met their new lecturer, has no opinion on Karna Wijaya. We are told by the narrator, commenting on the students' various opininons, that "Felix did not lie either".[10]

The second element is much more than a passing allusion. It forms about half of one of the longest illustrative scenes of the whole narrative: Anna is taken by the lecturer to a rather infamous beach resort (Binaria, Ancol) where he intends to take a swim.[11] We have seen earlier (chapter 4, section I) that this scene is permeated with Anna's fear of being seen, in the company of Karna,

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[9] *Anna*, p. 14: *"Orangnya kayak wadam."*
According to the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, *wadam* is a contraction of (*Siti*) *Hawa* (Eve) and *Adam* (Adam). According to both Labrousse's *Kamus Umum* and Echols and Shadily's *Dictionary*, wadam is derived from the expression *wanita Adam* (female Adam). It can also be used as a synonym of *banci*, i.e. transvestite, homosexual man, homosexual male prostitute. On Felix, a minor Sino-Indonesian character, see chapter 4 above (section II).

[10] *Anna*, p. 15: *Felix juga tidak bohong ...*
Both boys and girls agree that Karna Wijaya is very handsome, including Anwar Karim, the guy who falls in love with every woman (*ibid.*, pp. 14-15). This seems to indicate that Karna does, indeed, combine features of maleness and femaleness. This recalls the figure of Arjuna, the *wayang* hero (Anderson, *Mythology*, p. 13: "unequalled warrior on the battlefield, yet physically delicate and beautiful as a girl").

[11] The complete scene covers pp. 47-57.

by some relative of her father's. It is also permeated with Anna's ambivalence towards the lecturer's behaviour. We are told by the narrator that Anna "would not mind at all being taken to such a place if she is told so in advance" and that her only fear is that of being seen, denounced to her parents and punished.[12] Anna reluctantly gets off the lecturer's car but refuses to put on the swimming suit the lecturer brought for her. Karna puts his swimming suit on in a cabin and comes back to Anna with a specific intention in mind:

> There was something about the young lecturer which nobody knew: he was a real exhibitionist. ... Yes, he wanted to show his athletic body ... He had beautiful and thick chest hair ... his tight trunks were also a part of his exhibition ...
> "You shouldn't miss a swim," said the lecturer.
> "I'm not missing anything," said Anna ...
> ... Karna Wijaya came back ... It was as though these wet trunks wished to show off something more than [what] other men [have].[13]

How does Anna react to such an exhibition? She tries to ignore it – hypocritically, adds the narrator – but in vain. It makes her heart pound and gives her goose-pimples. But, above all, it reminds her of conversations she had had with other "*WNI* students" as well

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[12] *Anna*, p. 49:
Anna ... samasekali tidak keberatan dibawa ke tempat begini asal diberi tahu terlebih dahulu ...
Anna expresses these fears to Karna a few moments later (p. 52). Karna replies that her attitude is hypocritical.

[13] *Anna*, pp. 52-54: *Dosen usia muda ini memang punya satu hal yang tidak diketahui oleh siapapun. Ia sebenarnya punya sifat exibitionist. ... Ya, ia ingin memperlihatkan tubuhnya yang atletis ... Dia memiliki bulu dada yang bagus dan subur ... celana renangnya yang ketat itu merupakan bagian dari exibisinya juga ...*
"Rugi kamu tidak mau berenang," kata sang dosen.
"Ah, nggak rugi," ucap Anna ...
... Karna Wijaya kembali ... Celana renang itu dalam keadaan basah seakan ingin memamerkan sesuatu yang lebih dari pria lain.

as "confessions" by her own aunts:

> Anna often had idle chats with fellow college girls – though from *WNI* circles only – about the superiority of autochthonous (*pribumi*) men's sexual capacity. Often, too, she had heard several aunts (*encim*) or other young female relatives (*tacih*) slip confessions and complaints about their husbands' shortcomings despite their use of various tonics ...[14]

This passage should be interpreted within the context of the whole novel. If we consider the final outcome of Anna and Han Soon's story, the attribution of a sexual shortcoming to Chinese men clearly functions as an advance notice concerning Han Soon's state after his car accident. The fact that Han Soon's genitals were damaged in the accident is stated in three different ways in the last three pages of the narrative.[15] However, this advance notice and its logical conclusion at the level of plot, which form together a self-fulfilled 'prophecy,' do not constitute a proper *explanation* of the dichotomy between the sexual identity of Chinese and Indonesian men. The required explanation will be found in the

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[14] Anna, p. 54:
Anna memang sering juga ngobrol iseng-iseng dengan teman sesama mahasiswi tetapi terbatas di lingkungan WNI saja, tentang kelebihan kemampuan sexuil pria pribumi. Dan sering juga terlontar pengakuan yang ia dengar sendiri dari beberapa orang encim atau tacih yang mengeluh perihal kekurangan suami mereka, walupun dibantu jamu dan obat kuat ..."
Encim and *tacih* are both Chinese loan words. Both are originally kinship terms (*encim*: father's younger brother's wife; *tacih*: elder sister) but they are not used exclusively to address relatives. However, they are only used to address Chinese women.

[15] *Anna*, p. 164: *Han Soon diberitakan rusak alat kelaminnya dan diperkirakan jika pun hidup dia akan impoten selama-lamanya* (Han Soon was informed that his genitals were damaged and that, if he survived, he would be impotent for ever). *Ibid.*, p. 165: *Han Soon ... juga mencemaskan keadaan seksualnya yang kemungkinan impoten selamnya* (Han Soon was also worried that his sexual condition would forever be impotency); and *[Anna] yakin ... akan tetap menjadi isteri yang setia sekalipun sang suami mendapat cacad sexual* ([Anna] was convinced that ... she would remain a faithful wife although her husband now had a sexual handicap).

description of Anna and Han Soon's married life, which is essentially a description of their marital problems focusing on their sexual relationship and Han Soon's infidelity. Two years have passed since their wedding.

After a first quarrel about Han Soon's putative infidelity, Anna suggests that they pay a visit to Han Soon's parents. On their way to Han Soon's parental home Anna will learn the cause of her husband's problem. Han Soon complains about his father:

> "I've had enough of being constantly advised [by my father]. ...from kindergarten to university, I've been constantly advised ...If the ethics of father-child relations allowed my dad to give me sexual advice, he would have certainly done so on my wedding night ..."
> ... Anna suddenly understood why her husband always made love in a hurry eversince their wedding night, [and stopped] before she could experience orgasm herself.[16]

The father's behaviour during their visit will confirm Han Soon's fear. Mr Oey, observing that Anna does not look well, attributes this to his son: "When a wife is not happy, the husband has to be the one responsible."[17] Once Anna and Han Soon are back home, Han Soon will contradict Anna's view of his father: "He is a dictator! ... Sometimes I hate him. Because [of him] I have no personality."[18] Han Soon then complains about his lack of sexual

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[16] *Anna*, p. 143:
"Aku bosan diberi nasehat terus. ... sejak Taman Kanak-kanak sampai universitas dinasehati terus ... Jika saja etika pergaulan ayah-anak memperkenankan papaku memberikan nasehat seksual padaku, pasti dia beri nasehat padaku di malam pengantin ..."
... Anna tiba-tiba mengerti mengapa suaminya terlalu cepat bermain cinta sejak di malam pengantin sebelum Anna sendiri mengalami orgasmus.

[17] *Anna*, p. 144: *"Istri tak bahagia mustilah penyebabnya suami," kata Mr Oey.*

[18] *Anna*, pp. 144-45:
"Dia seorang diktator! ... Kadang aku benci padanya. Akibatnya aku ini tak punya pribadi."

vigour in vivid terms, but the point of this scene is elsewhere:

> It seems that the secret of Han Soon's weakness had always been right there. This was proven on that very night which Anna felt as a wedding night, extremely beautiful and satisfying ... Han Soon was so virile and fierce, as powerful as a wild horse set free from the corral that encaged his self in the dictatorial tyranny of the Father [emphasis mine].[19]

I will not give a psychoanalytical interpretation of the triangular relation between Anna, Han Soon and his father. Without denying the possibility of such an interpretation, I will remain within the folds of my global sociocritical approach in order to argue that Han Soon's father's image and its consequence on his son's sexuality are, in the narrative text itself, in sharp contrast with the experience of Karna Wijaya as a representative of Indonesian-ness. Examples taken from two other works by Motinggo Busye will also show that Karna's experience, though that of a Minangkabau man, is also shared by Busye's other autochthonous heroes. We shall also see that another Chinese character appearing in one of these two works also bears some obvious resemblance to Han Soon and Anna.

We have seen that Karna Wijaya has already lost his father before the beginning of the narrative. This is also the case with other male heroes appearing in Busye's works: Ikhwan Ciptadi (Sundanese) and Fajar Kallawa (from Flores, of Arab descent through his mother) in *Perempuan-perempuan impian* (1979); and Dira Alwin in *Fatimah Chen Chen* (1990). The absence of conflict between

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[19] *Anna*, p. 145:
Agaknya, rahasia kelemahan Han Soon selama ini justru di sinilah. Buktinya, malam itulah rasanya buat Anna sebagai malam pengantin, yang amat indah dan memuaskan ... Han Soon begitu jantan, beringas, penuh daya bagaikan kuda liar lepas dari kandang yang mengurung dirinya dalam tirani diktatorial sang Ayah.

autochthonous fathers and sons, therefore, is not based on the author's explicit acknowledgement that father-son relations are harmonious, but, rather, on a literary motif of avoidance: autochthonous fathers and sons do not meet. In *Fatimah Chen Chen*, this pattern even applies to Chinese characters, for the only Chinese character who is also a father has no son. *Perempuan-perempuan impian*, however, tells the story of a minor Chinese character who is expelled from his parental home by his father. The father takes this action either because his young son converted to Islam or because he is involved, as a future architect, in the building of a mosque.[20]

From the above analysis, one can define two specific patterns of father-son relations, the first one applying to autochthonous Indonesians and the second one applying to Indonesian Chinese. The first pattern is characterized by the fact that autochthonous fathers play no role in their sons' adult life because they are no longer alive. The second pattern shows that relations between Chinese fathers and sons are, for various reasons, conflictual. Before drawing final conclusions concerning Indonesian-ness and Chinese-ness, a few words about the image of the mother in the three above-mentioned works would be useful.

My analysis of *Anna Soen Nio* has shown that the only mother who can be viewed as playing a syntagmatic role in the narrative is Karna Wijaya's mother: Karna's repentance story is a direct consequence of her death (through his sister's utilization of it).

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[20] *Perempuan*, pp. 374-77. It is not entirely clear which reason should be viewed as the most important but they are clearly related. This minor character's experience recalls Han Soon's conflict with his father. It also recalls the fact that Anna was expulsed by her father. However, Anna's conflict with her father did not leave permanent traces; this should be taken as an indication that father-daughter conflicts are less serious.

In contrast to this, Anna's mother plays no syntagmatic role and appears as an appendix to Anna's father: she does not even have a name. Han Soon's mother has a name (Phin), but she merely functions as a symbol of autochthonous women (she is from Banten) who marry Chinese men. It is therefore easy to conclude that Karna's mother, even in her death, is more important than the other two mothers who are alive. In *Perempuan-perempuan impian*, the male hero's mother is a giant: she is the character who goes through the deepest moral and religious transformation. She outlives her son, matches her widowed daughter-in-law with the perfect man, and ends up living the happiest life with them. In *Fatimah Chen Chen*, the mother of the male hero, Dira Alwin, is a much less important character but she is present in many important scenes and lives with her son and his two wives.

Anna Soen Nio offers a clear model of the functional relations within Sino-Indonesian families. It is characterized by the following elements: 1) very significant fatherly presence; 2) insignificance of the mother's role; and 3) dramatic conflict between father and son. By contrast, the model of these relations within autochthonous Indonesian families suggested in *Anna Soen Nio* – and clearly presented *Perempuan-perempuan impian* and *Fatimah Chen Chen* – is a perfect negation of the Sino-Indonesian model: 1) absence of the father; 2) very significant motherly presence; and 3) total absence of conflict between father and son. Another important feature of the autochthonous model suggested in *Anna Soen Nio* is the importance of siblingship. As we have seen in chapter 3, Harti, Karna's younger sister, is invested with the authority of their deceased mother and plays a decisive role in Karna's repentance and marriage. By contrast, Anna appears rather lonely:

her only sister, also younger, is but a shadow. As for Han Soon, he seems to have no brother or sister.

These models are, of course, highly schematic. Nevertheless, they are clearly reminiscent of different ethnological models used to describe the *traditional* family systems of the two different groups concerned. The Chinese traditional system is universally described as patrilineal and patriarchal, whereas most traditional autochthonous Indonesian systems are described as combinations of patrilineal and matrilineal principles (bilaterality). I have already discussed (chapter 5, section 3) some important aspects of the Minangkabau family system, which is, even by Indonesian standards, an extreme example of a matrilineal society. Other major Indonesian societies such as the Javanese, for example, have been described as traditionally "matrifocal."[21] Another characteristic of these traditional systems pertains to the role played by the father. In the Minangkabau system, the father plays a less important role than the maternal uncle.[22] In the Javanese system, father-son relations are characterized by a "pattern of mutual avoidance."[23] As we have seen above, the 'data' provided in *Anna Soen Nio* and other works by Busye do not contradict these common ethnological descriptions as far as the *traditional* Indonesian systems are concerned. These systems are changing, of course, and

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[21] See Hildred Geertz, *The Javanese Family* (Glencoe, Free Press, 1961), pp. 44-46 and 78-81.

[22] T. Kato, *Matriliny and Migration*, pp. 58-59:
> In contrast to the relatively weak position of sumando [husband] vis-à-vis his children, the structurally most important relationship in the Minangkabau matrilineal system is the one between mamak [maternal uncle] and kemanakan [sororal nieces and nephews].

[23] W. Keeler, *Javanese Shadow Plays, Javanese Selves* (Princeton, Princeton UP), p. 80.

the fact that Karna Wijaya takes his wife to Jakarta points to the importance of migration and the increasing strength of the nuclear family compared to the traditional matriclan, for example.

By contrast, the Chinese family system is represented in much more static terms. Its traditional character is stressed by the family relationships I have analyzed earlier and by the repeated insistence that Anna's upbringing was a traditional one. We have seen earlier in the present thesis (chapters 2 and 5) that this Chinese tradition *tradisi* (tradition) is negatively valued, as opposed to the Minangkabau *adat* (tradition). Anna's conversion to Islam is prompted, at the ideological level, by her interest in the "position of women in Islam" and by her refusal of the role of the "old-fashioned Chinese woman" (chapter 5, section IV.1). The actantial configuration of her conversion story (chapter 3) has already shown that the initial object of Anna's quest was not Islam as such but a Muslim marriage partner, Karna Wijaya. I hope that the above analysis of traditional family systems has shown that the ideological rationale behind Anna's conversion might have more to do with "the position of women [as mother, daughter or sister in a bilateral or matrilateral kinship system]" in a traditional Indonesian society than in Islam as such.

We have just seen that, in the case of Anna as well as Han Soon, conversion to Islam does not fundamentally alter the 'balance of power' between the members of their respective families. Anna accepts the choice of a marriage partner made for her by her father and Han Soon cannot solve the problem resulting from the conflict with his father. In a certain sense, therefore, both are victims. Anna is victim of her inability to disobey her father and Han Soon is victim of his inability to escape his father's grip. But it is arguable that all this victimization is largely the result of the

author's choice of portraying the Chinese family system as a rigid, static system which is merely the negation of the Indonesian systems. This "traditional" Chinese system, however, probably no longer exists. Specific historical circumstances and the influence of various Indonesian societies, not to speak of more recent developments, have considerably modified it. Studying the question of "ethnic" identity in the Straits Chinese community of Malaysia and Singapore, "a parallel and very similar example" to that of the Javanese *peranakan* Sino-Indonesian community, John Clammer has spoken, for example, of "the high incidence of matrilocal marriage and female heads of household."[24] The model of the Chinese family system presented in *Anna Soen Nio* simply denies such a change and other comparable ones.

Considering that *Anna Soen Nio* seems to place so many barriers separating Sino-Indonesians from autochthonous Indonesians, one can wonder about the meaning of the "theory of racial assimilation" that the novel's hero, Karna Wijaya, seems to promote through his newspaper article. I have already mentioned the function of this article as an important motor of narrative action.[25] Its content, however, is not reproduced in *Anna Soen Nio* and it is only through Anna's fragmentary reading that Karna's "theory" becomes partly

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[24] John R. Clammer, *The Ambiguity of Identity*, pp. 2 and 3.

[25] I should add that the importance given to this article *in the narrative text itself* is a striking evidence of the relevance of two of the fundamental analytical concepts used in the present thesis: interdiscursivity and social discourse. The novelist's hero is also a writer, but he does not write novels. He knows better: no character is ever shown reading a novel.

accessible.[26] Anna does not feel up to the lecturer's capacity for intellectual discussion. Their exchange of views is thus rather short and Anna keeps the discussion on a personal level. In fact, she keeps to herself her reaction to the article. Once again, it is only through the filter of the narrator's voice that Anna's thoughts are expressed:

> This text on "racial assimilation" (*"pembauran ras"*) with the "autochthons" (*"pribumi"*) was indeed rather painful to hear [*sic*] for people of Chinese (*Tionghoa*) descent. But it was painful only if these people of Chinese (*Tionghoa*) descent still "felt like Chinese" (*"merasa dirinya Cina"*). If they already felt like "Indonesian citizens," (*"Warga Negara Indonesia"*) now Anna herself felt that this was a logical and positive thought.[27]

This passage, like so many others by Busye, is difficult to understand and, therefore, to translate.[28] It is very much reminiscent of the short back cover text analyzed in chapter 2 (section II.3) of the present thesis.[29] It is also much more complex in at least two different respects: it contains more than twice as many key terms and incorporates more than one voice. All

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[26] It is important to note that it could have been reproduced, at least in part. Another (short) piece of writing is indeed reproduced in full on page 120. It is the invitation (*Undangan*) to Anna's sister birthday party.

[27] *Anna*, p. 25:
Memang tulisan mengenai "pembauran ras" dengan "pribumi" itu, pedas juga bagi telinga orang keturunan Tionghoa. Tetapi itu menjadi pedas jika orang turunan Tionghoa itu masih "merasa dirinya Cina". Kalau sudah merasa dirinya "Warga Negara Indonesia", kini dirasa Anna sendiri sebagai fikiran yang logis dan positif.

[28] Labrousse ('Sociologie du roman populaire indonésien,' p. 247) wrote the following about Busye's style:

> son style témoigne d'une sorte de jouissance du Verbe, à la limite de l'incohérence, dont la littérature indonésienne n'offre que de rares exemples.

[29] Back cover text (signed "Motinggo Busye): *"Anna Soen Nio" kutulis bukan untuk Bangsa Cina, tapi untuk siapapun yang merasa dirinya sebagai Bangsa Indonesia.* (I wrote "Anna Soen Nio" not for the Chinese Nation (*Bangsa Cina*) but for whoever feels him/herself to be [part] of the Indonesian Nation (*Bangsa Indonesia.*)

the key terms are singled out by quotation marks to indicate, most likely, that they were used in the newspaper article written by Karna Wijaya. The narrator is thus quoting his hero.

The last sentence of this paragraph, reproduced here in its entirety, seems to give a fragment of Anna's opinion on the article. This time the narrator is not quoting his hero, the 'Victorious Karna,'[30] but a person "of Chinese (*keturunan Tionghoa*) descent" whose is probably wondering, painfully, whether she "still feels like a Chinese (*Cina*)" or "like an Indonesian citizen (*Warga Negara Indonesia*)." What does Anna say? Strictly speaking, she says nothing: "Anna herself felt that this was a logical and positive thought." What thought?

> If they already felt like "Indonesian citizens," now Anna herself felt that this was a logical and positive thought.

If *x*, then what? Then 'it would not be painful to hear'? One should try to picture Anna asking herself the following questions: «Do I feel like an Indonesian citizen? How does an Indonesian citizen feel? How does a *pribumi* man (Karna Wijaya) feel when he *writes Tionghoa* in a newspaper article? How does he feel when he *says* to me: "You are a *WNI turunan Cina*?" If I, Anna, answer: "Right, Sir,"[31] does it mean that "I feel like a Chink (*Cina*)"? Am I supposed to "feel like a Chink"?»

Different people will give different answers to these questions and the same people may give different answers in

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[30] See chapter 4, note 19.

[31] *Anna*, p. 18:
"Kamu WNI turunan Cina?"
"Betul, pak."

different circumstances. None of the Sino-Indonesian converts portrayed in *Anna Soen Nio* adopt an attitude similar to Junus Jahja's: claiming the right to be regarded as a (respectable) Chinese Muslim (*Muslim Tionghoa*). However, both authors, each in their respective way and discursive field, seem to agree on a fundamental point. It will be recalled that Junus Jahja stresses the idea that "the person of Chinese descent (*keturunan Tionghoa*) who is Muslim pleases the People's heart (*hati Rakyat*)."[32] By saying this, he wishes to minimize the importance of some of his "friends" (i.e. other members of the intellectual and political establishment) who "express doubts" as to the sincerity of his motives.[33] This populism, which was once one of Motinggo Busye's trademarks, is not entirely missing from *Anna Soen Nio*. Anna is seven-month pregnant when Han Soon leaves her to join his mistress for a few days of wild pleasure. Anna stays home with her anonymous maid (*bibik*). Anna is worrying and sleepless. She feels sorry for keeping her maid up:

> "Poor *bibik*, you have to stay up to keep me company."
> "I pity you, Madam," said the respectable maid. "I've never seen a Chinese Muslim as pious as you, Madam."
> "Are you sure that God loves those who diligently bow and kneel before Him?"
> "I'm sure, Madam."[34]

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[32] Junus Jahja, 'Setelah 2 Tahun Dalam Islam,' *Panji Masyarakat* 1 July 1981; reprinted in *Muslim Tionghoa*, p. 4: *Memang si keturunan Tionghoa yang Muslim berkenan di hati Rakyat.*

[33] Junus Jahja, 'Setelah 2 Tahun,' p. 4: *teman-teman meragukan langkah saya masuk Islam ...*

[34] *Anna*, p. 156:
"Kasihan bibik jadi nggak tidur gara-gara menemani saya."
"Saya kasihan sama Nyonyah," kata sang pembantu, "Baru ini saya liat orang Cina yang Islamnya begini taat macem Nyonyah."
"Bibik yakin Tuhan kasihsayang kepada orang yang rajin rukuk dan sujud kepadaNya?"
"Yakin, Nyonyah."

The fact that the identity of Anna's maid is unknown and cannot be deduced from her speech – which 'sounds' like ordinary Jakartan Malay – allows the reader to believe that this scene contains more hope for the future of social tolerance in Indonesia than any of the scenes picturing Anna Soen Nic and Karna Wijaya together. Some of the most constructive social exchanges, however, also take place between equals who both give and take in roughly equal measures. *Anna Soen Nio* is devoid of such exchanges involving Sino-Indonesians and autochthonous Indonesians.

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BKI	*Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*
CIADEST	Centre interuniversitaire d'analyse du discours et de sociocritique des textes, Montreal
FEER	*Far Eastern Economic Review*
JAS	*The Journal of Asian Studies*
KITLV	Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, Leiden
PUF	Presses Universitaires de France
RIMA	*Review of Indonesian and Malayan Affairs*
RSPS	Research School of Pacific Studies, Canberra
SEAP	Southeast Asia Program, Ithaca
SÉCMI	Société pour l'Étude et la Connaissance du Monde Insulindien, Paris
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies, London
VKI	*Verhandelingen van het Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*

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