

## **COLLATERAL DAMAGE: The Predicament of History and Memory in the Traumatic Event**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This article is an attempt to revisit the problem of history and memory in the construction of Indonesian violent past, notably the 1965 putsch and its aftermath. The engagement is based on the understanding that history, as a product of scientific discipline, is mainly seeing the past prospectively, while the memory of people, particularly those who are affected by the traumatic event, is seeing it retrospectively. In these two tendencies, generally the standard account champions the historian version, by sacrificing the ordinary people's account. Contrary to this, by taking Bakhtinian dialogical reading of history, the article gives an ample space to the many-voicedness of historical account, to the complexity of historical

struggle, and to seeing the dynamic of the past beyond the stereotypes of “victim” vs. “perpetrator”.

### Key Words:

*Abitoric Tendency* • *Restoration of Individual Subjectivity* • *Dialogical Reading*  
• *Historiography* • *Historical Memory* • *Victors* • *Victims* • *Primary Memory*  
• *Secondary Memory*.

### Experiencing history, experiencing trauma

*History is what hurts ...* (Jameson 1981, 102)

In the introduction of a volume he edited, Ben Anderson gives an interesting picture regarding what a seventy-year old Indonesian woman or man would possibly go through during her/his life (Anderson 2001, 9-10). He pointed that s/he would observe: as a teenager, (1) authoritarianism of Dutch colonial rule and its collapse by Japanese armies on March 1942. Immediately s/he would undergo (2) the Japanese military regime (1942-1945) which regularly practiced torture in private and executions in public, with the days of mass starvation, with its forced labor policy, and other miseries. This would then be followed with the four years of (3) popular struggle for national liberation against the attempt of Dutch reimposition. By early adulthood s/he would experience (4) the difficult time of the fragile Liberal Democracy (1950-1957) marked with the eruption of armed rebellions throughout the country. As a young mother or father, s/he would witness (5) the spreading social violence of President Sukarno's Guided Democracy that culminated in the cataclysm of 1965-1966. In her/his middle ages during the New Order regime, s/he would

know about (6) the annexation of East Timor and the police-state posture of the regime. And in the old age, s/he has to perceive (7) armed resistance in Aceh and Papua, May 1998 riots, the outbreak of inter-confessional warfare in Moluccas, and other social unrest.

The pattern of this experience surely does not belong exclusively to the senior citizen of Indonesia. As a forty-year old male, I personally experienced at least two violence events, besides apprehending numerous much publicized unrest throughout the country. In the end of 1980s, when I was a junior high school student in Pekanbaru, Riau province, there was violent unrest toward Chinese that was triggered by a small incident, where a Chinese “psychotic” unfortunately killed a Minang. The incident soon afterward became a full-fledged attack toward any Chinese interests in the area. The security authority forced to declare the city in the high alert. I remember that all of my Chinese friends in the school – a well-known Catholic school – should be evacuated by police and ushered to their homes. Second event was the May 1998 tragedy. I was a commuter of Yogyakarta-Jakarta to visit Mimi, my wife who at the time works in Jakarta. During the event, people gathered in Jalan Sudirman (Sudirman boulevard), one of the boulevards in Jakarta, and since Mimi's dormitory resides in a block next to Jalan Sudirman, we attracted to join the crowd, mainly to be spectators of the tense air at the time. In the afternoon, suddenly we heard a blast that shocked all of us. Immediately the crowd was distracted and dispersed to every direction. The following day, University of Trisakti students were killed by security force, which later known as “Trisakti Tragedy.” It was followed with wide scale unrest throughout Jakarta that claimed thousand souls and left hundreds of Chinese women raped.

The above account may give us the impression of how Indonesian history looks like. At least in the perspective of ordinary people; that is a 'gory' history. Indeed, there are not many nations in the world that are free

from large scale violence in last fifty years of history. Because of the magnitude of genocides and human rights abuses throughout the world, Alexander Laban Hinton, an anthropologist from Rutgers University even dubbed the twentieth century the “century of genocides” (in Taum 2005). Without stepping into the question of the actors behind violence acts, we can ask how a nation, which is represented by the state, would react to such historical events. A post Second World War modern state with the help of professional historians would probably construct a historical explanation or justification of such events. Myth-making processes will undertake to impose certain aspects of the events and overlook the others, or in the case of authoritarian and/or totalitarian states, they blot out undesirable aspects (cf. McGregor 2005). Official history is created, commemoration is organized, monuments erected, and heroes picked and extolled. National genius is renewed and certain identities taken. In the watershed of Indonesian history after the Independence Day, i.e. the 1965 tragedy, not long after the abortive coup, the winner, General Suharto established Pancasila Sakti Monument in 1967, right at the site where the Army's generals were killed, Lubang Buaya. This monument was Suharto's first power exercise over Indonesian history and commemoration of his victory over communist. The myth of origin was established by creating a sharp moral distinction between the hero (Suharto) and the evil agents (communist) (Schreiner 2005). It went even further by the politics of the domestication of women through the projection of the immorality on the communist women (*Gerakan Wanita Indonesia* – Gerwani/ Indonesian Women's Movement) and defining the proper place of women in the new Indonesian society (Wieringa 1995). The image of the communist afterward exerted an enormous influence on national memory during the New Order period.

On the other hand, how 'ordinary people' respond to such event(s)? We can expect that people who have undergone such difficult history may

suffer traumatic experience. We can also expect 'certain' identity to emerge from the ashes of violent burns; something that significantly differs from the earlier one. In this point, 'new' identity is constructed through complex loss and gain modulation. Nevertheless, there are not many resources for 'ordinary people', beyond the state initiative. In Cambodia, for example, Cambodian Muslims can only stare at an empty space, just to remember the presence of their ravaged mosque in the days of Khmer Rouge (Gade 2008). No sign, no monument. For victims particularly, lacking of documents, institutions, and recognition of their experience, and even in many cases of post-1965 the 'communists' ex-convicts do not have access to sources, simply to comprehend the reason behind their detention. They should resort to a different venue to construct their identity after the horrible event then. Mirrored to his context in 1950s – 1960s, the prominent Indonesian historian, Soedjatmoko maintained that agrarian culture of Indonesian is an ahistoric society. It thus holds a distinct understanding of the concept of time and the way people react and respond to the changing seasons. Time is cyclical and people tend not to change the course of fate and seek to comply with the preconceived position. This, according to Soedjatmoko makes people responded to the incomprehensible event, such as war, famine and other disasters, with *mèsem sajeroning wardoyo* (Javanese saying: “smiling in the heart”). Therefore, he concluded history determines Indonesian psyche rather than options for people to do (Soedjatmoko 1995, 364 & 434). I am not in position to problematize what he means by Indonesian ahistoric tendency in his time. Whatever it is, surely there was and still is, a way people deal with difficult events based on their socio-cultural setting. Furthermore, in the modern Indonesia, marked with its massive mobilization from traditional agricultural culture to more diverse society, media prominence, and communication advancement, the likely sources of identity formation are diverse. They come from life stories, individual perspectives, memoirs, religious appropriation, and so forth; that is

through the 'restoration of individual subjectivity' that is the history constructed through individual perspectives. Surely, this does not exclusively belong to the victims; in fact, every subject in this historical terrain, victims, perpetrators or bystanders, are in various degrees inflicted by the traumatic event in the complex and multilayered process.

### History, Memory and Trauma

*"History is perpetually suspicious of memory, and its true mission is to suppress and destroy it"* (Pierre Nora in Tierney 2000, 544).

This article deals with a simple problem, that is to highlight an individual subjectivity as an alternative/complementary reading of Indonesian history. Our further agenda is to construct a dialogical reading that recognizes other voices within a text or among texts. The scope of 'dialogical reading' is rather broad, beyond simply talking about various versions of historiography but also about contestation between the truth-claim of individual subjectivity and historiography in representing the past—historiography in this point is a systematic product of the discipline of history. Nevertheless, in no way this article would dichotomize the two positions. It should be seen as an intersection of individual subjectivity and historiography. If there is an impression of dichotomy—such as the above label of 'individual subjectivity' and 'history'—it is simply to bring to the foreground the prominence of individual subjectivity as the main subject of this discussion. In any way, the two markers should be seen as variations of subjectivity.

In the large part, this paper subscribes to the recent development in the study of history and memory.<sup>1</sup> A highly interdisciplinary venture, which involved history, anthropology, cultural studies, psychology, sociology and many other possible connections, in Indonesian historical studies, a genre

called 'historical memory' (Zurbuchen 2005, 7). This article will not so much speak about the historical event as usually presented by history, but rather attends to two currents of voices, both dealing with 1965 tragedy. The first current usually belongs to the 'victors/perpetrators' voice in the standard topos of history, while the second is the voice of 'victims' that are suppressed and stigmatized within official history.

Some scholars viewed testimonies, or we can extend these to any personal account on 'historical' events, as "fragments of the official history that have been silenced and concealed in order to construct a 'monument', that is a totalizing and enclosed narrative of history" (Fabri 1995, 142). Based on this view, Antonella Fabri contended that the testimonies, recalled by the victims of violence constitute a disruption of the official history. Totalitarian regimes know very well that memory of the people is a serious threat to the nation's history and attempt to subdue it by rewriting history for its political end (cf. Heryanto 2006, 141-142; Sherbakova 1998, 235 and Todorov 2000, 11). Though, such attempt may not necessarily succeed (Heryanto 2006, 158). Here by presenting certain testimonies (or more correctly, the representation of testimonies), I seek to demonstrate that both voices are traumatized at different level of consciousness by the horrible past. By recognizing these voices, we can no more read Indonesian history as a simple flow of events but in every stage there are different voices, which disrupt the course of history. Furthermore, we can also recognize the politics of memory, which showed also that memory itself no less problematic. Central to my argument—based on the study of oral history—is that 'ordinary people' have always something to say on what is proposed to or even imposed on them, or at least that potentially every individual has an understanding and an interpretation of his/her history as well as of history proper produced by history as scientific discipline (Passerini 1992, 5-6).

Some issues should be clarified first before we proceed. Memory in this paper concerns more on the social and public aspect though it may be initiated by individual activities. This is usually called 'social memory' (Fentress and Wickham 1992). This point is important against the Durkheimian idea of 'memory' that is essentially a group memory. Within this construction, individual memory only exists so far it is a product of particular group (Halbwachs 1992). It tends then to 'flatten' individual memories and sum up it under the rubric of '*collective* memory'. While doing full justice of the collectivity aspect of every individual memory, however, in this case it is important to understand the movement of individual memory to social context - how a memory becomes social through a complex process.

Among many possibility discourses of memory, I choose two understandings that are relevant to my concern. In this paper, memory is recognized as an action, that is an enactment of the past for a certain purpose, but also a network of ideas or knowledge. Larger complications of the relationship between history and memory may not be addressed in this paper. It started from a simple understanding that people immediately sense, are afflicted, informed, touched, adjoined, and so forth, by the event s/he experienced and no matter how difficult it is, s/he immediately started to memorize it. It differs from historical inquiry that is always starts after the fact - in many cases even long after the fact. Along with the movement of life, memory sticks to the past and the agent will *tend* to refer it in retrospect, meanwhile history is *tends* to see the past prospectively.

One of the problems of dealing with traumatic experience is that either people are afflicted by excessive memory, as if they were haunted by the recollection of the humiliation, or, on the other hand, people suffer from lack of memory, as if they are attempting to escape from the past. In the former, the danger is, in the Freudian framework, the compulsion of repetition, not *remembering* the past per se. In the latter, people try to free

themselves from the anguish of compulsion (Ricoeur 2000, 32). Both are the conditions that we try to critically address in this article.

Speaking of trauma is speaking of loss, pain, illness, and in the case of human violence, and of betrayal. History proper - history discourse produced by scientific discipline of history - may not see this interesting subject, and in large part could not deal with it. There are many types of historical studies; to name the least, social history, city history, rural history, history of mentality, religious history, and so forth, and our study may incline to oral history (Kuntowijoyo 2003). Post-structural influences upon historical writing (historiography), in its extremity, push the meaning construction of the past to the impersonal state. Historiography is a reductive textual genre or a subsystem of linguistic signs. The 'past' is then constructed by the rules of the 'prisonhouse of language' (Toews 1987, 882). Meanwhile, I rather hesitate to say that people's experience, especially in the traumatic event is also reduced to merely a trope of language and only fully meaningful within the linguistic arrangement. I sensed that it is always an area beyond language and there is a tacit memorialization of the troubling past; an unshareable memory.

In this discussion, trauma should be seen as the combination of the state of personal devastation and the knowledge. In its latter condition, it can meditate, distribute, and transfer to other area of human engagement, and it may appear in the textual form of historical discipline that might be, by certain impetus be transformed into a nation's trauma. Trauma can act as a stabilizer of memory (Assman 1997, 25) through the elevation of certain memory into a national one, such the case of 'anti-communist' discourse throughout New Order era up to the recent time. This is one example of the difficulties of breaking with the past. Trauma in this sense is not merely a mental devastation but a production of meaning and in this paper I speak about it as *traumatic frame of reference* or *simply traumatic frame*.

In this complicated relationship, what is the task of historian then?

Holocaust historian, Dominick LaCapra states that the task of historian, against the memory of people is to elaborate an accurate, critically tested secondary memory based on the primary memory and other evidence (LaCapra 1998, 21). Primary memory is the first hand memory of the subject, meanwhile the secondary memory is knowledge or a frame based on the primary memory. Therefore, from this point we may expect a “collaboration” between proper historiography and memory studies.

### The Memorians

*A past existed and humanity is not always in the present* (Tierney 2000, 544).

#### Story 1:

In 1965 my informant, a 59-year old woman was living with her family in a village named Atapupu, Timor Island, not far from the then Portuguese Timor border (now a separate country of Timor Leste). Her father was a police officer from the intelligence section and was posted in the town in order to carry routine activity to 'supervise' the border. Prior to the 1965 tragedy, she recalled the difficulties her family and other villagers faced of the scarcity of foods and gasoline. The supply of primary necessities was very limited. That meant that made the traders in the market could not sell and people could not buy. However, she remembered that one of her good friends who was a daughter of the local Communist Party official seemed living comfortably without shortage of supplies. Apparently, rumor circulated that the party's official accumulated supplies and indicated that he “expected something big was going to happen.” October 1965, a month after the failure coup in Jakarta, the atmosphere of killing swept Timor Island and at last arrived at Atapupu. The old woman recalled that her beloved teacher was suddenly hanged in the market without head, though as long her memory allowed, he was not a communist (probably a

'sympathizer'). Indeed, he was not alone. Everywhere people found bodies, usually already beheaded; flowing in the river or laid in the fields. The woman friend's father also disappeared and his body was never been found since. However, the most important memory she recurringly tells, was the story of her father. As member of security force, it was told that he was included on the 'black list' made by the communists. The 'black list' was a list of anti-communist subjects that will be killed if the coup succeeds. Therefore, since the table has been turned against the communist, it was the turn for anti-communist proponents to hunt down them. My grandfather's superior gave him a list of the names of communists with a single order to kill them all. Having known the reality, his wife persuaded strongly to him not to carry out the order. “With eyes full of tears she wrapped her arms around his feet, mama begged earnestly like never before to papa, for Christ sake, do not carry the order lest God's curse fall upon us.” At last, her father put down the order and he never killed any communist.

#### Story 2:

Around several months later, a Chinese family man who own a small grocer in a small district town, in Banyumas area, Central Java was detained by the police, asserting that he was 'a communist'. He at the time was a passive member of a local Chinese communal organization. Nevertheless, it seems that the leaders of this organization somehow had a good relationship with local communist party. This connection been proved a fatal one, for large numbers of the community were suspected of 'involvement in communist activities'. That was the precedent for this man detention. He was interrogated, suffered some non-fatal torture, but after several months, he was released for lack of sufficient proof that he was involved in communism. He was lucky, because many other were suffered severely and went to jail without proper trial. Nevertheless, the ghost is difficult to dispel. Decades afterward in 1982 there was a directive from

KOPKAMTIB (Command for the Restoration of Security and Public Order) that people who serves in public interest should undergo political and security screening to be proven *'bersih diri'* (clean from communist ideology). Several years ago his son worked in an American oil company and successfully reached a position of considerable importance. Unfortunately, after 'internal' investigation, he was strongly persuaded to resign by some external power, based on the above directive. He was not *'bersih'* (clean) because he was the son of an alleged 'communist'. He never shared this incident to his two sons and gave another explanation for his sudden resignation.

Another son, who later turned out to be a Protestant pastor later married with the woman I mentioned above. Therefore, within their family two "versions" of narrative of post-1965 was overlapping; the narrative of "perpetrator" side and the "victim" one.

### Story 3 (Suryawan 2005, 246-247):

Two old women in Bali are living a contrast lives. The first is a widow of Nationalist Party official and a witch-hunter and a killer of communists in post-1965. The second one is a widow of Communist Party official who was disappeared and she does not know where her husband is buried. The first widow lived comfortably as a respected senior citizen. In an interview with Suryawan, she was asked to recall the *Gestok* (*Gerakan Satu Oktober* – October First Movement) incident. She cautiously and secretly described the horrible event. At the time, people were so angry at the communists and effortlessly killed them. Nevertheless, the interviewer caught the difficult gesture in telling history that does not much differ from the official one. The history was supposed to be a proud one, where her late husband took part by leading the killing himself to clean their village from communists. He, afterward become a respected person. Nevertheless, she was aware of a new challenge of this history, coming from 'other' voices that portrays her

husband as a horrible person, that the history she believed being told was full of fabrication.

The other voice is represented by another widow from different part of Bali. The widow of a communist official lost her husband at the time. Her life was confounded afterward and she has to struggle hard to keep her head over the water. What was more devastating was the public stigmatization to her and her son. Being asked about the history of *Gestok* she said, *"Don't ask me, I am illiterate. Ask the government officials or scholars in Jakarta about that history. Just check in the library ... Everybody knows what the history of Gestok is. The only thing I don't know is who killed my husband and where his body [is buried]."*

By the three stories above, I attempt to demonstrate, that if we see history from the perspective of 'ordinary people' the complexity and nuances of the past events apparent. As a security officer, the father of the old woman was supposed to stand in the 'perpetrator' category who were responsible to the killing of thousands of alleged 'communists' in Nusa Tenggara region. However, here he cannot be classified so - though probably at best he might be a bystander. Furthermore, historical studies may help or even 'disrupt' of the memory recollections. The study of Steven Farram in the area revealed that the 'blacklist' by the communist and that the communist was prepared for 'the big event' (by piling supply) was most likely a military fabrication (Webb and Farram 2005, 105).

The family of Chinese man from Banyumas never shared their traumatic event openly whatsoever and seemingly attempt to bury it deeply. Most of them are trader and owning grocers and they pose as apolitical subjects. Later on, they even never joined the euphoria of reformation or try to share their struggle with other victims. In fact, they live happily without any trace of being victimized. Nevertheless, a traumatic frame afflicted his pastor son. He was critical to the New Order though never went beyond the pale, and he never displayed any anger. However, as a pastor he gave special

care and attention to the parishioners who hold 'dark' history of 1965. It seemed that he shared their feeling of being victimized by the system.

Contrast to his family, his wife is not burden so much by the past. It seems that the moment her father followed her mother's advice not to kill the communist was a moment of great relief. She also easily connects it with the Christian value of "loving your enemy." She even still maintains a good relationship with her friend, the daughter of the communist official.

However, the story from Bali regarding the two widows with contrast history is a common story of post-1965. That of the 'perpetrator' turns to be the victor and enjoys all the privileges of the 'normal' citizen. The other, suffered and was victimized almost in the rest of their life. Or should she have taken a different identity to escape from the unbearable stigmatization. The memory of the past for the first account entirely subscribe into the official history produced and reproduced by the New Order. Meanwhile, the second suffered repetitive memorialization of incomplete history, the memory of unretrievable loss. However, the second voice challenges the first voice, which in turn challenges the master narrative of New Order. The second widow searching for her husband's fate wills all the time to disturb the comfortable life of the perpetrator who killed the 'communist' for (probably) acceptable reason at the time. For the anti-communist at the time, the 'communist' was a clear and present danger, and its neutralization should be carried out with strongest blow.

Freudian approach to deal with trauma includes the phases of: denial, repression, acting-out, and working-through (LaCapra 2000, 71). Denial is the immediate reaction to the trauma which is a defense mechanism by pulling away emotionally from the lost subject. Usually, it follows with repressing the memory of the loss, which unfortunately would return in encrypted behavior in a covert form. This would be the most devastated condition of the afflicted subject. This is also the general condition of the victims under the New Order as convincingly demonstrated by I Ngurah

Suryawan (Suryawan 2005); the regular violence in Bali always refer to the unsettled memory of 1965. This traumatic frame of reference also infected the perpetrators with repeating violence acts. In certain cases, when the psychological burden becomes unbearable, the subjects may suffer psychotic symptoms (cf. Suryawan 2005, 250).

The reformation era gave a way for the victims (and supposedly the perpetrators as well) to enjoy the acting-out phase, where in this time there is greater room for the subjects to express their feelings, through art, writing, speech, and so forth (cf. Ricoeur 2000, 33). And furthermore, working through the trauma gives the victims a greater sense of control in dealing with the past; to put the past in its place. Here there is room for reconciliation and forgiveness is offered its fullest *opportunity*. Here also the promise that such gory history would not be happen again can be proclaimed.

### 'Cooking' the History<sup>2</sup>

*"... the real makers of history are the ordinary men and women ..."* (Nelson Mandela)

Cemeti Art House, Yogyakarta held an art exhibition entitled "Cooking and History," between June and July 2004, organized by Klinik Seni Taxu Bali. Many programs were offered such as cooking and watching movies. The most interesting program was cooking cassava and serving it to the audience. It tasted very delicious. After the meal, the audience was ushered to watch a movie regarding the place of mass killing which is above a field of cassava trees, which the audience had just enjoyed! The delicate taste of the cassava was because it was fertilized by the decomposing bodies of slaughtered people.



The individual memory of a traumatic event is like the fertilizer of larger history. It is invisible but actually formative. The delicacy of the larger history is the fruit of individual memory. When we recognized its existence we may be struck and suddenly the delicacy does not taste so good anymore. But we may learn afterward and try to live with it.

This article may fail to deal with larger concern, consequence and effect of the relationship between memory and history in Indonesia's traumatic past. It may not resolve the possible collision among thousands of memories, of historical making, and of myth construction that treat the 'past' as huge reservoir of individual politics, the politics of memory and the state politics. Nevertheless, it may improve our perspective toward our history. It may give us an awareness of ethical dimension of it. It may facilitate the 'healing' process of the trauma. We now have a chance to read history with a new understanding. We can also read it in a "dialogic" manner. Nevertheless, 'dialogue' in this sense is 'dialogism'. In the sense of dialogism (or polyphony) proposed by Bakhtin, a text composed by equally balanced voices rather than by a single omniscient author; as Bakhtin once stated that "[L]anguage lives only in the dialogic interaction of those who make use of it" (in Ahern 2001, 128). It gives a way to read in a multivocal and egalitarian manner rather than univocal and authoritarian. Furthermore, it refers to dual fashion in which each challenges the other, the contesting interplay of different voices. Therefore, within the representation of the past or history, the memory of people may provoke the standard history or offer an exchange that may test its assumptions, and open the possibility of a transformation (LaCapra 2000, 65).<sup>4</sup> Referring to the woman from Timor above, of her plea to her father through her religiously stimulated voice, may give us a different picture of the 'perpetrator' image. This micro-history, especially if driven by religious vigor, could give a degree of 'relief', of 'freedom' from the charm of larger history, in that through her mother's plea the father was given a chance to

never join the orgy of slaughtering communists. Even though, her account of the accuracy and historical detail is problematic. In this dialogical reading, the issue is no more focused on merely providing a counter-reading or deconstruction of the larger history but to fill the gap between the representation of the past by the discipline of history and the markers of experience that rest in the people's memory. Indeed, the main purpose of dialogical reading is to oppose the repression of human experience. Amen.

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#### End Notes:

- <sup>1</sup> In 1989, an academic journal published entitled *History and Memory*, edited by Saul Friedländer and Dan Diner. Its main aim is to bring together the two contrasting activities to produce a productive exchange. It deals with wide range cases and study which significantly discussing the traumatic events.
- <sup>2</sup> The title of a section in I Ngunah Suryawan's book, *Bali Narasi dalam Kuasa: Politik dan Kekerasan di Bali* (2005). The complete section's title is "Memasak Sejarah' Dengan Politik Ingatan" ('Cooking the History' by the Politics of Memory).
- <sup>3</sup> I am grateful to my friend, Sujud Dartanto, a lecturer of ISI (*Institut Seni Indonesia – Indonesia Art Institute*) who highlighted to me this performing art exhibition, though unfortunately at the time it held I was not aware of it.
- <sup>4</sup> The many modes of reading history are much discussed by Dominick LaCapra (2000, 21-72). He mentioned of five modes: the denial or repression of reading, synoptic reading, deconstructive reading, redemptive reading, and dialogic reading. Though he championed the last one, which I follow suit, he definitely does not see it as the best reading. It is merely the matter of desirable reading, especially to deal with memory and oral narrative of the people. The best reading, he contends, should be a combination between the dialogical and other modes for each modes emphasis certain aspect.

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