

people and their culture is broken by a growing number of ethnic Chinese Indonesian film-makers who mediate Chineseness from their own perspective. On the other hand, Chineseness remains a problematic issue in cinema, as in most films it is predominantly exoticised and fetishised, as well as submerged and absorbed by a narrative on Islamic moralism. It would have been interesting to concretely compare this discussion on Indonesian cinema with representations of the Turkish or Greek communities in German films, as there has also been a shift towards growing self-representation – the work of Fatih Akin being a case in point. Due to the persisting centrality of the issue of ethnic identity and discrimination in Indonesia, in this section a treatment of the contemporary media representation of the Papuan ethnicity and its alleged blackness would have been interesting, as well as the issue of whiteness as an ideal of beauty and how it is mediated through advertising.

In sum, the volume stands out through its brave explorative nature, its intercultural collaborative approach and its descriptive thickness. It succeeds in presenting an alternative way of comparing societies and carves out surprising similarities and structural differences – insights that contribute to intercultural understanding between Indonesia and Germany and that provide manifold starting points for future comparative projects.

*Amanda tho Seeth*

SOE TJEN MARCHING, *The End of Silence. Accounts of the 1965 Genocide in Indonesia*. With original photography by Angus Nicholls. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017. 220 pages, €99.00. ISBN 978-9-4629-8390-8

Coping with the past is a sensitive topic in many countries, and Indonesia is one of them. While some countries have been quite pro-active in breaking the walls of silence and bringing to light atrocities, massacres and torture committed either on their own soil or in other lands, others are reluctant to openly admit crimes against humanity. In Asia, Japan is well known for circumventing an admission of the forced prostitution of women – “comfort women” as they used to be called – during World War II. Cambodia, too, is still grappling with the cruel period of Khmer Rouge rule. The suffering that resulted from the partition in South Asia (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh) might also be a case in point.

Among the worst massacres in the second half of the twentieth century, however, is the genocide in Indonesia, which peaked between 1965 and 1966. Conservative estimates count about 500,000 killed; in unofficial accounts, the

number rises to three million individuals slaughtered by Indonesian military forces during that brief period. The victims' alleged "crime" was to be close to or a member of the Indonesian Communist Party, the PKI. The PKI was the third largest Communist Party on the globe in the 1960s, and then-President Sukarno actively supported communist values with his trifold NASAKOM policy, i.e. a combination of nationalism, religion and communism. In the wake of the prominent Bandung conference of 1955 and the founding of the Non-Aligned Movement in 1961, the Cold War gradually heated up in South-east Asia. While the event most often associated with the proxy war between capitalist and socialist/communist powers on Asian soil is the Vietnam War, the genocide in Indonesia is hardly recognised internationally as yet another symptom of this antagonism. It is only in recent years that de-classified documents have proven unmistakably the involvement of the CIA, Germany and other Western governments in the butchery of 1965. Until today, an open, untainted public discourse on "1965" is next to impossible in Indonesia. Many attempts to rehabilitate survivors and correct the distorted image of communist ideas have been utterly discouraged by the powers that be. It is against this backdrop that Soe Tjen Marching's *Accounts of the 1965 Genocide in Indonesia* surfaces as a very brave and relevant, yet shocking documentation.

Soe Tjen Marching's compiled accounts are individual ones, structured in her book by generation, kinship relations and gender. The first part presents accounts of victims who survived torture and persecution, followed by a second part that is particularly committed to women of that generation who survived the horror. Part three introduces the stories of siblings from victim families. Parts four and five give voice to the children and grandchildren of victims and survivors. The latter's accounts are all the more enthralling as they break what is effectively a conspiracy of silence that remains in force even generations after the events occurred. In fact Marching herself experienced an inner conflict when she decided to commence her book project. Torn "between my duty to be a good daughter to my mother (who has suffered), and my duty to the 1965 victims", she eventually opted to carry on with her book project (p. 183).

Her mother's reaction towards Marching's plans to collect the stories of 1965 victims and their families was fierce. The project met with the utmost disapproval. But it was a "normal reaction" given many parents' perception that keeping silent is better than speaking out, and that the silencing of children arises only out of love and concern for their wellbeing. "We don't want you to say anything in relation to what happened in 1965–1966, because we love you, because we are concerned about you" (p. 35). It is this "mutation of fear", as Marching describes it, that works as a psychological barrier and prevents people from reflecting on their fate from a critical distance, from uncovering the mechanisms behind censorship and false narratives – narratives that became

firmly engraved in post-1965 Indonesians' minds and that legitimised all atrocities committed against innocent people.

Soe Tjen Marching conceptualises the instilling of fear as a key strategy in post-1965 Indonesian politics. Many former victims of 1965 later came to preserve the very anti-communist ideology that had persecuted them for decades. It is this (vicious) circle of paradoxical behaviour that Soe Tjen Marching has tried to break. And she has succeeded in doing so. Bringing together three generations of 1965-affected persons who all voluntarily agreed to share their stories – although for some it took quite a while – is in itself an impressive document of success. Nonetheless, their hesitation to speak out shows the longevity of psychological terror and tyranny.

A few works on Indonesia's traumatic 1965 experience have previously been published in Western languages. Annett Keller collected reflections from Indonesian public intellectuals and accounts of survivors of the genocide and translated them into German (Annett Keller [ed.], *Indonesien 1965ff. Die Gegenwart eines Massenmordes [Indonesia 1965ff. The Presence of a Mass Murder]*, Berlin: regiospectra, 2015). Saskia Wieringa embedded personal stories of female victims in a novel called *The Crocodile Hole* (Jakarta: YJP Press, 2015) – the title of the book hinting at the name of the pit where the tragedy began, a place where the dead bodies of a number of army generals were discovered. The murder of these generals triggered the anti-communist purge and led to the eternal stigma of its survivors: their personal documents label them as *tapol*, political prisoners, for their entire lives. Joshua Oppenheimer's two films *The Act of Killing* (2012) and *The Look of Silence* (2014) have further raised international awareness of the incredible ignorance of these crimes against humanity in 1960s Indonesia.

Soe Tjen Marching's compilation of personal accounts stands out against comparable publications of its kind in that she carefully deconstructs the hegemonic narrative that pervaded the New Order period under President Suharto from 1966 to 1998. The concept of fear and the analytical tracing of the mutation of fear succinctly reveal how survivors came to perceive of themselves as offenders rather than victims. The book is a most recommendable piece for readers who are not yet familiar with the massacre of 1965 as well as for those who have already studied the tragedy. The personal accounts render the traumatic incidents an intimate sharing of emotions, but above this personal level, Marching's distinct analytical approach is a masterful study that indeed symbolises an *End of Silence*.

*Claudia Derichs*