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# ***Pahlawan, Pengkhianat, Atau Penjahat (Hero, Traitor, or Villain): A Personal Journey Through Indonesian History***

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## **Abstract**

This article concerns Indonesian heroes, traitors, and villains from different regions and eras. The factors influencing the categorisation of individuals as heroes or villains are examined. Examples include regional leaders who opposed the Dutch East India Company or collaborated with it. Similar cases are examined from the period of the Netherlands Indies colonial state. Also discussed are nationalists who were members of the Indonesian Communist Party, and people now deemed heroes who collaborated with the Japanese during the Second World War. Next for consideration are individuals involved in Confrontation with Malaysia and the occupation of East Timor. The last cases come from the world of popular music and show how performers idolised by fans can be considered villains by others.

## **Keywords**

colonialism; East Timor; heroes; Indonesia; Malaysia; popular music; Singapore; traitors; villains

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## **1. Introduction**

History offers many examples of individuals who have been considered by one group to be heroes, only to be relegated to the ranks of traitors or villains at a later stage, or by a different group. Indonesia is no different to other places in this respect. However, Indonesia also has an official category of Pahlawan Nasional (National Hero), a title awarded to people deemed to have made outstanding contributions to the independence struggle or to have otherwise helped in the development and advancement of the nation. When checked in July 2021, the webpages of the Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs showed that the country had 191 official Pahlawan Nasional. A few more are added most years. Unfortunately, the webpages viewed in 2021 are no longer available online. References in the text to Pahlawan Nasional listings are based

on information downloaded in 2021. The official veneration of national heroes in Indonesia began in 1959 during the rule of President Soekarno. Various titles have been bestowed on those deemed to be heroes with many of the earliest recipients being named Pahlawan Kemerdekaan Nasional (National Independence Hero), which was appropriate, as most of the earliest official heroes were people who had been involved in the nationalist movement and independence struggle of the immediate past. During the rule of President Soeharto, the title Pahlawan Nasional became the standard term, but the timeframe was extended to include figures from far earlier periods whose activities were then declared to have been part of the national anti-colonial struggle. Some Indonesian commentators have argued that the resulting growing number of Pahlawan Nasional has devalued the title, especially when they perceive the award being granted to individuals connected to particular groups with their own vested interests (Schreiner, 1995, pp. 331–332, 1997, pp. 261–263, 266–267).

Several Pahlawan Nasional are discussed in the pages that follow, but also people who have been awarded “hero status” at a more regional level, ones who have been given other types of official awards, or just recognised unofficially for their contributions in various fields of endeavour. The cases discussed here are known to the author through his own teaching and research and are chosen mainly to demonstrate the concept that “one person’s hero is another person’s villain.” The diverse group to be considered here includes regional leaders who fought the European intruders during the time of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) and others who cooperated with them. Also examined are similar cases from the period when the Netherlands Indies colonial state was expanding its control throughout the archipelago. Next for consideration are nationalists from the first half of the 20th century who also happened to be members of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), and Second World War collaborators with the Japanese. Others discussed were involved in international ventures, including Indonesia’s Confrontation with Malaysia and the Indonesian occupation of East Timor. The last cases come from the world of popular music and show the way that some performers have been idolised by their fans but castigated by others, in one case even ending up in prison.

In addition to outlining the histories of these people, the article explores the factors that influence the categorisation of individuals as heroes or villains and the contradictions that often remain after such judgements are made. In a recent study of national heroes, the authors note that the “emergence of new political movements and the creation of new polities generate the creation of new heroes.” However, this “is not a straightforward process,” and even once recognised, “their heroic status remains contingent and contested” (Cothran et al., 2020, p. 1). Today’s hero may become tomorrow’s villain and vice versa, and it is possible for an individual to be a hero and a traitor simultaneously. Differences in time and place and changes in values can give rise to new heroes and villains or reappraisal of old ones. These observations are affirmed by several cases discussed in this article.

## 2. Enemies and Allies of the VOC

The first examples to be examined highlight the risks involved in applying modern political concepts such as nationalism to evaluate activities in the 17th century, a time before the nation-state of Indonesia existed or had even been imagined. Regional and personal loyalties were then of supreme importance and cooperation with the VOC or other outside forces was just a way to gain an advantage over local competitors. However, when viewed through the prism of modern Indonesian nationalism (which can often elicit emotional responses),

participants in some long-ago conflicts can appear as either heroes or traitors. It seems that it is often enough for a historical figure to have defied the VOC at some point to be awarded the status of hero, regardless of their other actions. That they may have also defied established local authorities or oppressed other “Indonesians” is conveniently ignored.

The first case is from South Sulawesi, home to two major ethnic groups, the Makassarese and the Bugis. The Makassarese of Gowa became overlords of all South Sulawesi in the early 17th century. At this time, the VOC set up its first post in South Sulawesi, but this was abandoned after a few years as Gowa continued trading freely with other Europeans and Asians and refused to support a Dutch monopoly. In 1666, Arung Palakka from Bone was involved in an unsuccessful Bugis rebellion against Sultan Hasanuddin of Gowa. Arung Palakka and other renegade Bugis warriors then left Sulawesi for Batavia (Jakarta) and became soldiers for the VOC. Disputes between Gowa and the VOC continued to grow, culminating in a December 1666 attack on Gowa by the VOC and the Bugis rebels. Once in Sulawesi, many more Bugis rallied to Arung Palakka to destroy Gowa. Finally, Hasanuddin capitulated and signed the Treaty of Bungaya in November 1667. Hasanuddin rose again the following year but was defeated decisively in mid-1669. Arung Palakka then became the undisputed ruler of South Sulawesi. His rule only ended with his death in 1696. However, in post-independence Indonesia, Arung Palakka was considered by some to be a traitor for allying with the VOC against “fellow Indonesians” (Andaya, 1981, pp. 2, 297–298; Ricklefs, 1990, pp. 61–63). Nevertheless, for people from Bone, Arung Palakka can be considered a hero for freeing his people from domination by Gowa (Palallo, 2020; Rismawidiawati, 2014). Meanwhile, Hasanuddin was declared a Pahlawan Nasional on 6 November 1973. Hasanuddin’s listing asserts that he united the kingdoms of South Sulawesi against the VOC, ignoring the fact that his rule was not accepted in all those kingdoms and some of them were willing to be allied to the VOC in opposition to him.

The second case is from Central Java. In February 1686, Captain Francois Tack of the VOC arrived at the court of Amangkurat II. Tack was charged with persuading Amangkurat to pay off his considerable debt to the VOC, but most importantly he was to capture Surapati, a rebel VOC soldier sheltering at the court with his supporters. Surapati was a Balinese slave who escaped from Batavia and became the leader of a group of bandits. He surrendered in 1683 and was accepted into the VOC army. The following year, however, he attacked a VOC force, killing several European troops. Although Amangkurat II owed his position to VOC support, he had grown resentful of the Europeans and assisted Surapati in killing Captain Tack. Surapati and his men then fled Eastwards, and he began to carve out his own domain. Surapati caused great problems for the VOC, but this is unlikely to have pleased Amangkurat II, as the area controlled by Surapati was part of his kingdom; however, he had no say there. In 1690, he even sent an army against Surapati, but it was defeated. VOC, Madurese, and Javanese forces campaigned against Surapati until he was finally killed in 1706 (Kumar, 1976, pp. 18–39; Ricklefs, 1990, pp. 79–82). Surapati was declared a Pahlawan Nasional on 4 November 1975. In his listing, it is claimed that he joined the VOC solely to learn European military tactics, but there is no basis for this assertion. It is also telling that the listing notes Surapati’s alliance with Amangkurat II against the Dutch but makes no mention of their later enmity.

### 3. “Indonesian” Heroes of the Early Colonial State

The VOC ceased operations on 31 December 1799 and its land holdings were then taken over by the Netherlands Indies colonial state. The VOC had established its headquarters at Batavia on Java, and this remained the capital of the Netherlands Indies as well. The Dutch initially had little direct control elsewhere

on the island and relied on treaties with local rulers to achieve their aims. However, over a long period, Central Java had been weakened by internal divisions and the creation of competing royal courts, which in varying degrees relied on European support for their continued existence. Many local rulers had alienated themselves from their people by adopting aspects of European lifestyles, including drinking alcohol, wearing European-style clothing, and decorating their homes with European furniture. In the early 19th century, the Dutch began demanding greater concessions from the Javanese rulers, annexing rich areas, and taking over profitable tollgates and markets. This resulted in lost wealth for the Javanese elite, who sought new income by leasing land for plantations to European and Chinese entrepreneurs. This caused rising resentment towards the Europeans, the Chinese, and the Javanese rulers from the local people, as they were the ones pushed off the land and forced to pay the new taxes and fees (Carey, 1976, pp. 58–60).

Prince Diponegoro of Yogyakarta was a major critic of the social and economic situation in Central Java. He rebelled in 1825 and soon had a large following which attacked European and Chinese plantation leaseholders and Yogyakarta officials. Known as the Java War, the conflict lasted for five years before Diponegoro was captured and sent into exile. He died at Makassar in South Sulawesi in 1855 (Carey, 2014). Because of his resistance to foreign influence and exploitation, Diponegoro became a source of inspiration to many early Indonesian nationalists. He was declared a Pahlawan Nasional on 6 November 1973. Diponegoro's listing concentrates on his antipathy to the Dutch, but Diponegoro was rebelling against the Yogyakarta court as much as against the Netherlands Indies government. It is often noted that half of the local princes and senior courtiers of Central and East Java sided with Diponegoro. This also means, however, that half of them did not. The royal courts of Yogyakarta, Surakarta, and Mangkunegara all provided troops for the anti-rebel cause (Ricklefs, 1990, pp. 111–113). While Diponegoro was later claimed to be a "progenitor of Indonesian nationalism" (van der Kroef, 1949), there were no such thoughts at the time, as the idea of an Indonesian nation had not yet been conceived. Instead, Diponegoro and his supporters would have thought only in terms of the Javanese territories where the fighting they participated in took place.

Major thoroughfares named after Diponegoro can be found throughout Indonesia. Other Indonesian heroes are memorialised on a more localised level. For example, in Kupang in West Timor, a large monument depicts one of the most prominent local heroes, a figure virtually unknown outside the region: Sobe Sonbai III. When Europeans first established themselves in Timor, they noted that the numerous petty principalities in Central Timor were subject to a great overlord named Sonbai. Because of his perceived preeminence, the Dutch designated him *keizer* (emperor). By the 19th century, Sonbai's power had greatly diminished. Following the death of the then most recent *keizer* in 1885, several principalities asserted their independence and no less than 17 pretenders vied for the Sonbai crown. The ultimate winner was Sobe Sonbai III. In August 1905, Sonbai's forces attacked two villages near Kupang occupied by settlers from nearby Rote Island, killing 32 residents and kidnapping another 62. The Dutch sent a large force to capture Sonbai and scores of his supporters were seized or killed. Sonbai was finally apprehended in February 1906 and died in Kupang in 1922. West Timor histories invariably portray Sonbai as a hero and his Kupang statue carries the inscription *monumen pahlawan* (hero's monument). However, as noted, many principalities subordinate to Sonbai sought independence, and Sobe Sonbai III had many competitors for the position of *keizer*. Some of the failed contestants helped the Dutch in their campaign against Sonbai, as did other rulers who had never supported the Sonbai claim of supremacy. This was not a unified Timorese stand against the Dutch led by Sonbai. Furthermore, although modern histories place Sonbai in the pantheon of Indonesian anti-colonial heroes, Sonbai himself could have had no sense of an Indonesian consciousness. His struggle

for preeminence was not merely against the Dutch but also against fellow Timorese and Rotenese (Farram, 2009, pp. 34, 38, 64–71).

#### 4. Heroes or Villains? The Independence Struggle and the PKI

The defeat of Sobe Sonbai III coincided with the period known in Indonesia as the *Kebangkitan Nasional* (National Awakening), the time when people of the different islands first began to think of themselves as members of one nation. They then imagined overthrowing the Dutch and establishing an independent state. Indonesians involved in the independence struggle are usually categorised as heroes. The exceptions are those nationalists who were also members of the PKI. The PKI was an important force in the early nationalist movement but following the decimation of the party after the 1965 so-called communist coup attempt, its members and supporters were demonised by the anti-communist Soeharto regime until its demise in 1998. Despite this, Tan Malaka (an early PKI leader) and Alimin Prawirodirdjo (a member of various nationalist groups, including the PKI) both remained throughout Soeharto's rule on the list of *Pahlawan Nasional* where they had been placed by President Soekarno in 1963 and 1964, respectively. Tan Malaka split from the PKI in the late 1920s but was involved in various other leftist nationalist groups in the following years. During the independence revolution (1945–1949), he opposed those who sought freedom through diplomatic efforts and demanded direct action. This put him at odds with some in the independence movement who considered his stance treasonous, resulting in his execution on 19 February 1949. Tan Malaka's *Pahlawan Nasional* listing is silent on his cause of death. Soekarno recognised Tan Malaka's contribution to the achievement of independence, but otherwise, his association with the PKI and later split from the party left him "a figure castigated by both left and right." No serious Western-written history of Indonesia would omit Tan Malaka, but due to the decades of silence concerning him during the Soeharto years, he remains little known inside his own country. Alimin was a far less controversial figure and had played only a marginal role in the PKI by the time of his death in 1964 (Jarvis, 1987; Schreiner, 1997, pp. 267–269).

Harry Poeze affirms that the status of *Pahlawan Nasional* cannot be revoked (Rahadi, 2014). However, while Tan Malaka and Alimin remained on the list of official national heroes, they and other National Awakening era PKI figures were otherwise systematically removed from official histories during the Soeharto era. It is therefore surprising to discover that Christian Pandey, the first known member of the PKI from West Timor, is recognised in nearly all Indonesian histories of the Timor region for his contribution as a nationalist and at the same time acknowledged as a communist. There is even a cross erected in his memory at the official *Taman Makam Pahlawan* (Heroes' Cemetery) in Kupang (Farram, 2009, pp. 115–116). One researcher has categorised Pandey as "inimitable" (van Klinken, 2012, p. 176), and it is true that he must be one of the few acknowledged communists to have been so honoured in Indonesia (although it should be noted that Alimin is buried at the *Taman Makam Pahlawan* at Kalibata in Jakarta). In 1925, Pandey established an organisation called *Sarekat Rajat* (People's League) and attracted over 1,200 members. Pandey built up interest in the *Sarekat Rajat* by promising the abolition of taxes and an end to *corvee* labour. He also gained attention through his campaign against abuses practised by local *rajas* used by the Dutch in a system of indirect rule. After hundreds of *corvee* labourers refused to work, Pandey was arrested and sent to *gaol* in Batavia for three years. After his return to Kupang in 1928, Pandey steered clear of political movements, but in 1946 a certain Ch. Pandey was noted as vice-chairman in Kupang of a new workers' union. It seems likely this was the old PKI member Christian Pandey, but he was not heard of again after that. However, when the author was doing research in Kupang, a member of Pandey's family showed him a *surat tanda penghargaan* (certificate of appreciation) for services

to the nation that was issued in Christian Pandy's name by the regional government to commemorate Hari Pahlawan (Heroes' Day) on 10 November 1963 (Farram, 2009, pp. 116–117, 140, 224). It seems that 1963 was a good year for the recognition of old PKI nationalists.

## 5. Heroes, Traitors, and Villains in a Time of War

Any country that has been occupied by foreign forces will produce myriad heroes and traitors, the former generally being those involved in activities to undermine the rule of the occupying force, and the latter generally being those who collaborate with the occupiers. The occupation of Indonesia by Japanese forces during the Second World War did indeed produce many heroes, traitors, and villains. However, the situation was complicated by the fact that when the Japanese invaded Indonesia in 1942, the territory was a colony of the Netherlands and thus effectively already occupied by the Dutch. The Japanese presented themselves to the Indonesian people as fellow Asians and older brothers and made vague promises of independence to nationalist leaders, such as the future president, Soekarno, in return for their cooperation. When the Dutch re-occupied Indonesia following the Japanese defeat, they initially refused to have anything to do with Soekarno, whom they labelled a traitor and collaborator. However, although Japanese rule was often brutal and the people experienced many hardships, Soekarno was not perceived by most Indonesians as a traitor because that would have implied recognition of Dutch sovereignty. Instead, Soekarno was valued for his nationalist ideals and opposition to the Dutch. Support for Soekarno was by no means universal, but, in the eyes of many Indonesians, he was a hero (Legge, 1972).

According to the webpages of the Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs, that status was made official on 23 October 1986 when he was declared a Pahlawan Nasional. The greatest of his achievements recorded in his listing was the proclamation, along with Mohammad Hatta, of the independence of the Republic of Indonesia on 17 August 1945. Hatta was declared a Pahlawan Nasional on the same day as Soekarno. Fatmawati, the wife of Soekarno, was declared a Pahlawan Nasional on 4 November 2000. Her listing highlights her own involvement in the independence declaration for sewing the Indonesia flag raised on the occasion. The heritage flag retains great symbolic importance. It should be noted here that in 1986, Soekarno and Hatta had actually both been given the unique title of Pahlawan Proklamator (Proclamation Hero). At the time of their listing, the two were honoured solely for their role in the independence proclamation. According to Schreiner (1997, pp. 271–272), this was part of a deliberate plan by Soeharto whereby he could acknowledge Soekarno as his predecessor but ignore his other contributions to the nationalist movement. Hatta was seen as a less controversial figure for the Soeharto regime but linking him and Soekarno with the same title served to limit the focus on the charismatic former president. Soekarno and Hatta were only recognised with the official title of Pahlawan Nasional in 2012, following a decision made by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (“Presiden SBY anugerahkan gelar Pahlawan Nasional,” 2012). In 2022, President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) took the highly unusual action of reconfirming Soekarno's Pahlawan Nasional status, stating that he had “fulfilled all the requirements of loyalty and had not betrayed the nation and state.” Jokowi's words were interpreted to mean that there was no basis for the accusations that Soekarno had been involved in any way in the 1965 so-called communist coup attempt. Instead, he should be acknowledged as “a true patriot” (“Tegaskan gelar Pahlawan Nasional Bung Karno,” 2022). Jokowi's statement can be seen as not only support for Soekarno but also for the sanctity of the award itself. The existence of the various Pahlawan Nasional has become an important part of official Indonesian national identity.

Meanwhile, in the islands of Eastern Indonesia, there were no promises of Indonesian independence until the very last days of the Second World War, but the Japanese still found many willing collaborators. Rufus Takoe (aka Rufus Taku Sanu), a spy during the war for the Kenpeitai (Japanese Military Police), was portrayed in a trial held in Kupang in October 1946 as the worst criminal and traitor that Timor had produced in living memory. He was found guilty of accepting cash rewards for information that led to the deaths of many of his compatriots, including those who had aided fugitive Allied servicemen. The announcement that Takoe was to be executed for his crimes was said to have been well-received by the people of Kupang (Farram, 2009, pp. 160–161, 201). However, according to the logic of some post-war Indonesian nationalist historians, Allied servicemen were friends of the Dutch colonialists and patriotic Indonesians in Timor should have prevented them from receiving support and surrendered them to the Japanese (Farram, 2009, p. 20; KoEhuan, 1995, p. 7). If one accepts this view, Takoe can be hailed as a hero, which indeed is what happened. Takoe is not listed as a Pahlawan Nasional on the webpages of the Ministry of Social Affairs, but it was reported in the local press that Rufus Taku Sanu had been declared a Pahlawan Perintis Kemerdekaan (Pioneer Hero of Independence) on 17 August 2005. It was claimed that all his actions were made in the interests of the Indonesian people, and he was only executed because of his opposition to the Dutch (Farram, 2009, p. 201; Gabriel, 2016, p. 1). Meanwhile, Raja Pius Rasi Wangge of Flores was sentenced to death on the same day as Rufus Takoe. He had been found guilty of “instigating opposition and collaboration in May 1942.” The people of Flores were said to have been satisfied and reassured by the verdict (Farram, 2009, p. 201). However, according to more recent local history, Wangge was a diligent raja who did what he could to advance and protect his people. He earned the enmity of some Dutch officials because of his opposition to their corrupt practices. Accused of murder (it is not discussed whether the charge was valid or not), he was imprisoned in Timor but was later released by the Japanese and sent back to rule his kingdom, where he remained until re-arrested in 1946. He was executed in 1947 and buried in Kupang. Following Indonesian independence, his remains were transferred to Flores where they were received with full military honours and the blessings of the church (Sunaryo et al., 2006, pp. 105–113). The picture painted in this account is that of a hero, not a traitor or a villain.

## 6. Indonesian Heroes, Singaporean Villains

In the cases examined so far, the action all took place on Indonesian soil, but Indonesian heroes have also been created through activities undertaken elsewhere. Indonesia's Confrontation with Malaysia was an undeclared war that lasted from 1963 to 1966. President Soekarno justified the campaign by declaring that the formation of Malaysia was a British neo-colonialist plot that threatened Indonesian sovereignty (Mackie, 1974). Indonesian military attacks mainly took place in North Borneo, but Singapore was subject to a wave of bombing incidents. The most serious of these occurred on 10 March 1965 when a large bomb exploded in MacDonald House, a commercial building housing a bank and other enterprises. The explosion killed three people and injured 33 others. Two Indonesian marine commandoes, Harun bin Said and Usman bin Haji Mohamed Ali, were arrested over the bombing. As they had carried out their attack disguised as civilians and carried no identification to indicate their military status, they were charged with murder. They were sentenced to death on 20 October 1965 and executed about one year later. In Jakarta, the Singapore Embassy was ransacked in retaliation. Bilateral relations started to improve after Singapore's prime minister, Lee Kuan Yew, placed flowers on the graves of the two men at the Taman Makam Pahlawan Kalibata (Kalibata Heroes' Cemetery) during a visit to Jakarta in 1971. Usman and Harun had been declared Pahlawan Nasional on 17 October 1968 (Hamid & Saparudin, 2014). Taman Makam Pahlawan, in the meantime, can be found in each provincial capital in Indonesia and also other places. Official Pahlawan Nasional as well as



so-called Perintis Kemerdekaan (Independence Pioneers) are buried in these places, but as the Kalibata location has been designated as the national heroes' cemetery, it has assumed the top spot in the hierarchy of "holy sites" for hero veneration (Schreiner, 1995, pp. 331–332).

In early 2014, the case of Harun and Usman was revived in political circles and the media in Singapore when Indonesia announced plans to name a new navy frigate the Usman Harun in honour of the executed commandoes. Following an unsuccessful protest, Singapore responded by banning the vessel from entering Singaporean harbours and participating in exercises with the Singaporean armed forces. After a muted apology from Indonesia, the controversy subsided, but the ban on the Usman Harun remained (Hamid & Saparudin, 2014). That two members of the Indonesian military who carried out a deadly mission posing as civilians and were subsequently executed should be declared heroes is not too surprising. Regardless of the rights and wrongs of the case, the two men were obeying orders. What is striking in the Usman–Harun case is that the MacDonald House bombing took place only a few months before Singapore ceased to be part of Malaysia. Singapore was a sovereign nation at the time of Usman and Harun's executions, and even if it had still been part of Malaysia, the Confrontation campaign that Usman and Harun were part of had been officially abandoned two months prior to that. These circumstances make the civilian deaths at MacDonald House and the two executions seem particularly futile. The decision to give Usman and Harun hero burials in Jakarta and decades later the honour of having a warship named after them were political actions and are not necessarily proof of public feeling about the matter. The dedication of a memorial to Singaporean victims of Confrontation opposite MacDonald House in 2015 is possibly a more genuine reflection of public sentiment (Lim, 2015).

## 7. Indonesian Hero, East Timorese Traitor

Indonesia invaded East Timor in December 1975. From July 1976 until October 1999, it was claimed as an Indonesian province, although this was not recognised by most members of the international community. Heroes, traitors, and villains abound in the case of the Indonesian occupation of East Timor, but only one example will be examined here. On 17 April 1999, up to 5,000 people, including armed militia fighters from each of East Timor's 13 districts, gathered to hear fiery pro-Indonesian speeches outside the governor's office in Dili. Among the speakers was Eurico Guterres, leader of the Dili-based Aitarak (Thorn) militia who urged the crowd to "capture and kill" pro-independence supporters. Following the meeting, the militias paraded through the town, ransacking the offices of the *Suara Timor Timur* (Voice of East Timor) newspaper on the way. They then attacked the house of Manuel Carrascalao where over 140 victims of prior militia attacks were taking refuge; 12 people were killed, but no action was taken against Guterres or other militia members. The militias, which received arms, training, and money from the Indonesian army, had been formed to silence independence activists and to intimidate East Timorese to vote for continued integration with Indonesia at a plebiscite set to be held on 30 August 1999. In the end, the majority voted for independence leading to more killings, mass destruction of housing and infrastructure, and the forced evacuation of thousands of East Timorese to West Timor, where they languished in makeshift camps run by the militia (Hasibuan et al., 2002, p. 40).

With strong backing from senior military figures, the militias were able to operate beyond the law. In 1999, Guterres was prominent in pro-Indonesian rallies throughout East Timor and publicly threatened independence supporters with death and destruction on several occasions. Guterres's high profile led to him becoming a symbol of the violent Indonesian occupation of East Timor, but within Indonesia, many

establishment figures treated him and other militia leaders like heroes for fighting to defend Indonesian unity. In 2000, Vice President Megawati Soekarnoputri appointed him head of her political party's youth security group. In the same year, a branch of the party also awarded Guterres the Red and White Award, named after the colours of the Indonesian flag. Even decades after East Timor achieved independence, Guterres continues to be regarded by some in Indonesia as a hero. In 2020, he was given a major honour when he received the Patriot Bela Negara (National Defence Patriot) award and medal from Defence Minister Prabowo Subianto, and in 2021 he was awarded the prestigious Bintang Jasa Utama (Superior Service Star) medal by President Joko Widodo. Within Indonesia, Guterres is acknowledged by some commentators as "controversial" (Rachmawati, 2021), but outsiders view him far more critically. As an East Timorese who had previously worked for the resistance and whose parents had been killed by the Indonesian army, he is seen as little less than a traitor and street thug who sold out his country and his people for Indonesian money (Barrett & Rompies, 2021; van Klinken & Bourchier, 2002, pp. 164–167).

## 8. Heroes and Anti-Heroes of the Indonesian Music Industry

The protagonists in the cases examined so far have been mainly overtly political or militaristic in nature. Of course, heroes and villains are not confined to these fields. Many of the best-loved heroes of many countries are sports stars, for example. Musicians and singers are also often perceived to be heroes. The following two cases concern performing artists held in high esteem by their fans, but who, in the eyes of their detractors, transgressed certain moral or political guidelines, making them worthy of censure, vilification, and punishment. The first example is the rock and pop band Koes Bersaudara (Koes Brothers), which formed in Jakarta in early 1960. The band was influenced by other musical siblings, such as the Everly Brothers. They later added The Beatles songs to their repertoire, which consisted mainly of Indonesian-language originals based on Western-style love songs. The band's music proved to be popular but not everybody was a fan (Farram, 2007, pp. 258–259).

Unfortunately, the band's rise in popularity coincided with increasingly vociferous demands by President Soekarno for Indonesians to embrace traditional Indonesian culture and reject what he saw as inferior Western substitutes. In particular, Soekarno was vehemently opposed to The Beatles. With support from the PKI and its affiliated arts group, Lekra, Soekarno waged a campaign against all forms of Western "imperialist" culture. One result was a ban on "Beatles hairstyles," "Beatles boots," and "Beatles-style music," all of which were condemned as "destructive," "counter-revolutionary," and offensive to Indonesian values and ideals (Farram, 2007, pp. 258–260). The music of Koes Bersaudara was banned from the radio, condemned as "unpatriotic," and the group found it difficult to find venues to play (Farram, 2007, p. 260). In June 1965, the band performed at a party, but after singing only a few verses of The Beatles' song "I Saw Her Standing There," rocks were heard landing on the roof accompanied by angry shouting, which transpired to have come from a group of youths who demanded the band apologise for playing forbidden songs. The next day, the group found itself under arrest, and after a period of questioning, placed in gaol. The brothers were not sentenced in any court and were allowed no legal representation. After three months in gaol, the band was released on 29 September 1965. The following day, Jakarta and all of Indonesia were thrown into turmoil with the announcement of a so-called communist coup attempt. Within a short period, the PKI was destroyed by the army and Soekarno was replaced by General Soeharto who reversed the previous regime's anti-Western policies (Farram, 2007, pp. 261–263). Koes Bersaudara continued to record and perform after release from gaol, but in 1969, the band changed its name to Koes Plus when drummer

Nomo was replaced by Murry. This iteration of the band proved to be long-lasting and one of the most popular groups that Indonesia has ever produced.

At this point, I will acknowledge that few women have been mentioned in this study so far, although Indonesia does not have a shortage of female heroes or even villains. However, of the 191 official Pahlawan Nasional noted in 2021, only 15 are women. Some of the listed female heroes are well known, such as Raden Adjeng Kartini and Cut Nyak Dien, and some deserve to be better known, such as Malahayati of 16th-century Aceh, one of the world's first female admirals. Indonesia's second first lady, Tien Soeharto, was declared a Pahlawan Nasional shortly after her death in 1996. Her listing highlights her work in numerous social, benevolent, and other organisations and her role in establishing the National Library. The latter achievement is praiseworthy, but Tien Soeharto was otherwise a controversial figure in her lifetime due to the role she played in supporting the oppressive regime of her husband and allegations of rapacious corruption. Meanwhile, in a recent international study of female warriors who became national heroes (official or otherwise), the authors note that there are several works about this phenomenon, but they are overshadowed by the far more numerous studies about male heroes, most of which stress "the centrality of male virility in the development of national hero cults" (Cothran et al., 2020, p. 3). Female heroes are not lacking, but official recognition of their heroism is. This may be beginning to change. Nonetheless, one field in which women are recognised for their achievements is as performing artists.

It is not suggested here that singers or musicians admired by their fans should be considered equal in status to the various official Pahlawan Nasional already discussed, as they clearly belong to a different order. Nevertheless, they also play a role in the life of the nation, a fact underlined by the attempts, both official and unofficial, to silence and censor them, as occurred with Koes Bersaudara, and the other performing artist to be considered in this section, Inul Daratista. Inul, a popular dangdut singer from East Java, famous for her buttocks-wiggling *ngebong* (drilling) dance style was subject to intense criticism in 2003 from radical Islamic groups such as the Front Pembela Islam (Islam Defenders Front) and the Majelis Ulama Indonesia (Indonesian Council of Islamic Scholars), who tried to have her performances banned. Rhoma Irama, the "King of Dangdut," also called for a ban on Inul claiming her dancing was inappropriate and citing the case of a man who said he had raped a woman after watching a video of an Inul's performance. Such comments played a role in the framing of new legislation against pornography and "pornographic action." However, the authoritarian and patriarchal stance of Rhoma Irama and others did not garner much support outside fundamentalist Islamic circles and there were many people willing to speak out in Inul's defence, including the former president and former leader of Indonesia's largest Muslim political organisation (Nahdlatul Ulama), Abdurrahman Wahid, women's rights activists, intellectuals, and other performers. Inul's singing and dancing were erotic but unexceptional. Her high-profile television performances made her a target while more sexually provocative performers were ignored. Meanwhile, although it was argued that Inul's performances could "lead men astray," the case is that most of her fans are women, many of them lower class, who find inspiration in Inul's music and her rise from poor village singer to media celebrity. Some conservative Muslims depicted Inul Daratista as a villain, but others argued against her demonisation and the attempts to censor her performances. The controversy did not diminish her popularity and, for her fans, she has remained a hero (Farram, 2007, pp. 271–272; Weintraub, 2008, pp. 368, 381, 384–385).

## 9. Concluding Remarks

This article has considered various Indonesian heroes and villains. Indonesia's official Pahlawan Nasional are selected based on characteristics and contributions valued by the state. The state chooses who merits inclusion according to its own vision of an appropriate national history. The people examined here have been active in a range of endeavours with some recognised as Pahlawan Nasional, some given other national-level official awards, some celebrated officially only in their own regions, and others given unofficial recognition. Some have become Indonesian celebrities and some have achieved international notoriety. In each example, however, it has been demonstrated that there is never complete consensus on an individual's status. Political, moral, religious, and other judgements can lead to multiple understandings of any person's worth. One person's hero is another person's villain. A person can be considered a hero in one part of Indonesia and a traitor in a neighbouring district. People regarded as heroes in Indonesia could be villains or traitors elsewhere. It is also the case that such judgements are never final and those praised as heroes today could be vilified in a later era or simply forgotten. The opposite is also possible.

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