

Recent Books from East Timor – Feb 2022

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Literature

The Accompanist: A Story About Hadomi, Lutu, Koremetan and Music / Joy Siapno (et al.)

East Timor: Joy Siapno, 2016

288p.

9781532747533

\$ 35.00 / PB

386gm.

This is a story about love (hadomi), the work of mourning (lutu, kore metan), and music in East Timor (Timor Leste). It is a journey on the work of grieving alone and mourning collectively, being a soloist and an accompanist (both in music, in politics, and in life). How does one reconcile the needs of the autonomous, individual self to that of the relational, social self? What happens when mourning is de-territorialized? How do we create space/s for truth? What happens when we have no memory and refuse to learn from history? How do Timorese engage with 'outsiders'; and what are the implications for gender and citizenship, especially for hybrid children? Why is there so much self-censorship, the continuing use of clandestine names, and pseudonyms in East Timor? How do people heal from colonial wars and mental disorders? What is the gendered relationship between predominantly male national leaders in Dili and people in villages? What does 'ukun rasik aan' truly mean, in relation to 'care of the self as a practice of freedom' in nation-building processes? Has the role of psychoanalysis been underestimated in understanding the character of the state, its actors, and their policy decisions and activities? Why are national heroes and war veterans unwilling to talk about the long-term consequences of hidden, insivible wounds? Can music help in healing, harmony, inclusiveness, and freedom? Based on twenty-three

years of comparative experiential, ethnographic, and language-based research in East and other parts of Southeast Asia (especially Indonesia, the Philippines, Korea, Japan, Sri Lanka, and Nepal) the editor and authors asks questions about the shapes of violence, control over resources, power struggles, corruption, creating autonomous spaces, and why people join and then leave social movements and political parties. The authors explore the importance of creating independent spaces for critical dissent, outside and beyond inter-party and intra-party rivalry, through pen, arts, and music: 'the ultimate weapon is no weapon', in the midst of a post-war militarized-masculinities' environment where scholars, educators, musicians, and critical women are increasingly marginalized, impoverished, and made expendable. The book is primarily written in English, but includes poems and letters in Tetun, Baikeno, Bahasa Indonesia, and folk songs in Pangasinan, and Tagalog. This book is a work of historical fiction, and is a tribute to Fernando La Sama de Araujo, on his one-year death anniversary (kore metan) on June 2nd, 2016. May his journey, legacy, and example continue to enrich and inspire generations of children and youth. May this tribute contribute towards illuminating our present predicament, the shapes of violence in post-war societies, the possibilities for public sector reform and anti-corruption, and enlighten us on the challenges we face in creating a better future for our children.

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