Seeing the Communist past through the lens of a CIA consultant:

Guy J. Pauker on the Indonesian Communist Party before and after the ‘1965 Affair’

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ABSTRACT:

This paper explores Guy J. Pauker’s works on Indonesia in 1960s, particularly the ones concerning with the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) before and after the killing of six top Army officers on 30 September 1965 (or is shortly called the ‘1965 affair’). Of Western scholars working on Indonesia in 1960s, Pauker was indeed infamous. Being a consultant for CIA-sponsored RAND Corporation has made his academic integrity doubtful. In addition, his active roles in several historical events in Indonesia in 1960s has disrepute his scholarship. Consequently, it is his name, rather than his works, which has been often mentioned and associated to what happened in Indonesia in 1960s. However, this paper argues that precisely because of such a position his pre-‘1965 affair’ works were to give a cool report and analysis of the current history, through which one can understand the PKI before it was exterminated due to being accused as the mastermind of the killing of the six top Army officers better. Through these works the narrative of the Communist past can ironically be freed from the demonizing image constructed by the New Order regime. Yet, his post-‘1965 affair’ works were not only in parallel with, but also a part – if not the core – of the demonization as such. Through his ways of seeing the PKI in 1960s, one can see the shift from Baconian knowledge/power to Foucaultian power/knowledge relations.

Keywords: Pauker, PKI, Sukarno, CIA, Suharto’s New Order

Introduction

To students of post-independence Indonesian political history, Guy J. Pauker is not as popular as scholars such as Herbert Feith, Benedict Anderson, Daniel Lev, Ruth McVey, Clifford Geertz, George McTurnan Kahin, Harold Crouch, etc. His works are not as discursive as the ones of his contemporary fellow Indonesianists. Unlike these scholars,
he has not published any book on Indonesian politics which has turned to be “classical”, in the sense of being authoritative on the subject matter it concerns. His name, however, is often mentioned in the literatures on the Indonesian political history in 1960s. Yet, it is mentioned in association with his roles in at least three historical moments; first, building the US-oriented Indonesian military elite through the foundation of the Army Staff and Command School (SESKOAD) by the end of 1950s (Ransom 1975); second, designing the anti-Communist propaganda after the killing of six top Army officers on 30 September 1965 (Budiardjo 1991); and third, justifying the extermination of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) through the massacre of the (alleged) Communists in 1965-66 (Chomsky 1993).

He played these roles as a consultant for CIA-sponsored RAND Corporation. It is such a position that has then disrepute his scholarship, which in turn has made scholars not so interested in his works. However, as this paper argues, precisely because of such a position his pre-‘1965 affair’ works were supposed to present a cool report and analysis of the current history, upon which the US policy makers were to design appropriate strategies to contain the growth of the PKI. A close reading of his works, as I will present below, can help to achieve a better understanding of the Indonesian political history in 1960s, particularly the growth of the PKI in the first half of the decade.

Putting the ‘1965 affair’ and its aftermath as the watershed of post-independence Indonesian political history, Pauker’s works can be differentiated between before and after the affair. Before the affair, his works tend to give a cool report and analysis of the current development of the Indonesian politics, particularly the growth of the PKI. While after the affair, his works tend to give direction on what the US government should do for
the New Order regime. In short, his works can be described as from “reporting” to “directing”; and on such a changing nature of knowledge construction, the Baconian knowledge/power relation has found its materialization. However, as it was then the developmentalist discourse of the New Order regime which dominantly set for the regime of truth, the Foucaltian power/knowledge relation has met its realization as well.

It is on the knowledge/power relation, the US as the super power emerging after the World War II had enormously invested in the foundation of area studies in various universities in the country. As Samuel Huntington writes that since the US had become more deeply involved in the lives of many other countries, American policies toward the countries should be informed by prior contact and association with the country and by the reasonably extensive knowledge of the country produced by generations of travelers, scholars, missionaries, students and businessmen (Huntington, 1967: 503). Departing from such an interest waves of American scholars came and conducted researches on and in Indonesia after the War. They did not only gather data and process them into “body of knowledge”, but also invested various values. These academic enterprises worked under the guise of “scholarly concern” so that the knowledge/interest relation was not so visible. However, in the case of Pauker this relation was more blunt, since his mission was directly linked to the US politics of containment in Southeast Asia. Due to this mission, Pauker’s works had no intension to build somewhat theoretical arguments; yet, when his recommendations had been transformed into policies, their impacts became the concern of other scholars. This obviously happened to the implementation of the Green Revolution policies after the New Order regime consolidated itself by the end of 1960s.
To elaborate such points of discussion, this paper is organized as follows. Firstly, it will briefly feature the knowledge construction on Indonesia in the US and the making of Indonesian allies after the World War II. Pauker’s career was not apart from the US interest in Southeast Asia in general, and Indonesia in particular. Secondly, it will explore Pauker’s works on Indonesia in the first half of 1960s. A close reading of his works in this epoch will show how knowledge is constructed for the sake of controlling the society it concerns. Thirdly, it will discuss Pauker’s works on Indonesia in the second half of 1960s, showing how knowledge construction is representing not only in the sense of just featuring but also shaping the reality “out there”. Through his works one can revisit how the course of Indonesian political history in the early New Order regime was directed and engineered. Finally, this paper will present a closing remark confirming that the discourse of “economic development” is in fact a form of epistemological violence, upon which the US has built its hegemony in the Third World countries like Indonesia.

**The initiation of Indonesian studies in the US and the making of allies in Indonesia**

In the United States the initiation of Indonesian studies in particular, and Southeast Asian studies in general, was closely related to the American interests in the war of hegemony with the Soviet Union. In the so-called politics of containment, the US did not want any part of Southeast Asia to fall into the Communists, after People’s Republic of China was established in 1949, while a part of Korean peninsula had fallen into the Communists the year afterwards. It was just in 1950s the US put a serious concern in the region. This led to substantially increased government funding for Southeast Asian Studies, and this
allowed the establishment of important programs at such universities as Cornell, Michigan, Northern Illinois and Wisconsin-Madison (Halib and Huxley, 1996:2).

The fact that the initiation of Southeast Asian studies in general, and Indonesian studies in particular, was prompted by the US fear of the spread of Communism in the region has been well described by David Ransom (1975: 93) as follows:

In the early sixties, Indonesia was a dirty word in the world of capitalist development. Expropriations, confiscations and rampant nationalism led economists and businessmen alike to fear that the fabled riches in the Indies – oil, rubber and tin – were all but lost to the fiery Sukarno and twenty million followers of the Peking-oriented Indonesian Communist Party (PKI).

As Southwood and Flanagan (1983) assert, such a fear of “Communist aggression” in Indonesia had made the US put Indonesia on the central target for establishing its domination in the Asia-Pacific. To the US, as President Richard Nixon said, Indonesia was “the pearl of Southeast Asia’s crown” (Philpott, 2003:78).

What is noteworthy in the context of containing Indonesia from the “Communist aggression” was not only the US efforts of training Americans to combat Communism, which was claimed as “counter-insurgency” since subversive insurgency was primarily Communist inspired, supported, or exploited (Sanders, 1962), but also its initiative to make allies in Indonesia and increase their numbers significantly. Such an initiative, however, was understood as a way of modernizing Indonesia, which was believed to be the most strategic way of containing the “Communist threat”. It was the Ford Foundation (in a close cooperation with the Rockefeller Foundation) which played an important role in running the initiative. As Ransom notes, Ford launched its first effort to make Indonesia a “modernizing country” in 1954 with the field projects from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Cornell.¹ The scholars produced by these two projects – one in economics, the other in political development – had effectively dominated the
field of Indonesian studies in the US ever since. Compared to what they eventually produced in Indonesia, however, this was a fairly modest achievement. Working through the Center for International Studies (the CIA-sponsored brainchild of Max Millikan and Walt W. Rostow), Ford sent out a team from MIT to discover “the causes of economic stagnation in Indonesia”. An increasing example of the effort was Guy J. Pauker’s study of “political obstacles” to economic development such as armed insurgency (Ransom, 1975: 95).

In the course of his field work, Pauker got to know the high-ranking officers of the Indonesian Army rather well. He found them “much more impressive” than the politicians. “I was the first who got interested in the role of the military in economic development”, Pauker says. He also got to know most of the key civilians: “With the exception of a very small group,” they were “almost totally oblivious” of what Pauker called modern development. Not surprisingly, the “very small group” was composed of Indonesian Socialist Party (PSI) aristocrat intellectuals, particularly Sumitro and his students (Ransom, 1975: 95).

Rumanian by birth, Pauker had helped found a group called “Friends of the United States” in Bucharest just after the World War II. He then came to Harvard, where he got his degree. While many Indonesians had charged the professor with having CIA connection, Pauker denied he was intimate with the CIA until 1958, after he joined the RAND Corporation. Since then, it was no secret that he briefed and was briefed by the CIA, the Pentagon, and the State Department. Highly placed Washington sources said he was “directly involved in decision-making” (Ransom, 1975: 96).
Due to such a position, Pauker in many ways took a different stand from other scholars regarding the US concern in “helping to solve the problems of the Third World countries”. While scholars who completely put their feet in the academic institutions could be and were often critical to the US policies on the Third World countries, Pauker was indeed a part of the decision makers. Therefore, he did not only construct knowledge, but also made use of the knowledge into the processes of policy making. The link of knowledge/interest was thus bluntly visible. His concern on the rapid growth of the PKI and Sukarno’s sphere of influence both domestically and internationally, for instance, had led him to urge the Indonesian military to carry out the ouster of Sukarno, the seizures of power, and what was euphemistically called a “strike” to “sweep their house clean” (Scott, 1990: 298).

In order to come to such recommendations convincingly, Pauker conducted the researches observantly. His extensive knowledge on the growth of the PKI before it was destroyed in the 1965-66 massacres, as the following section will present, proves such an effort.

**Pauker’s works on Indonesia before the ‘1965 affair’**

In the first half of 1960s, the topics of Pauker’s works on Indonesia range from the role of the military, the Communist tactics, the eight-year over-all development plan, the doctrine of territorial warfare and territorial management, the “Crush Malaysia” policy, the Communist prospects, through the possibility of the establishment of “People’s Democracy” in Indonesia. I will focus on the last two works as they are directly concerned with the growth of the PKI in the years before its destruction in 1965-66.
In the “Communist Prospects in Indonesia” and “Indonesia in 1964: Toward a ‘People’s Democracy’?” (both were published in 1964 and 1965 respectively), Pauker examines the question whether Indonesia would turn to be a Communist state or not. He took an opposite conclusion to a number of experts who believed that the PKI had been “domesticated” under Sukarno. His argument is based on his observation that the very size of the PKI had become its best defense. Pauker notes that because of its size the PKI could no longer be suppressed, even if it were to lose the protection of President Sukarno. Even the PKI played an increasingly important role in Indonesian society and it already pervaded many aspects of Indonesian life. This process was substantially aided by President Sukarno, who applied his considerable though not absolute authority to denounce constantly the evils of “Communist-phobia” and to advocate a government of national union based on the cooperation of nationalist, religious, and Communist political forces (Pauker, 1964: vii-viii).

Another point which Pauker observes was the PKI’s skillful and successful effort to secure the good will of the Armed Forces while it continued to oppose an extension of the political and economic activities of the officer corps. The military were increasingly willing to listen to the exposition of Communist points of view. Moreover, no anti-Communist arguments were voiced openly in Indonesia. The increasing familiarity between the Armed Forces and the PKI was facilitated by the almost complete identity of outlook between the two groups with regard to the conflict with Malaysia and to Indonesia’s role in Southeast Asia (Pauker, 1964: viii).

The leadership of D.N. Aidit and his associates is also a point Pauker closely observes with regard the rapid growth of the PKI. In his observation, the PKI apparatus
was gradually developing into a businesslike, well-oiled machine. Factional conflicts at the top were kept from the public eye so as to maximize the image of reliable strength that the PKI was eager to project in Indonesian society. The party apparatus was constantly engaged in ideological and operational training of cadres in order to create an efficient instrument of government (Pauker, 1964: viii).

Pauker surely does not forget to mention the increasing intimacy between the PKI and President Sukarno. Such an intimacy was evidenced by Sukarno’s 1964 Independence Day address that endorsed Communist positions on all major domestic and international issues and revealed the considerable influence that the PKI already exercised on the policies of the Indonesian government. In Pauker’s observation, the interplay between President Sukarno and the PKI suggested the existence of a political understanding pledging PKI support to Sukarno during his lifetime in exchange for a special role for the PKI as vanguard of the Indonesian revolution. In short, Pauker concludes that the longer the Sukarno regime lasted, the better were the PKI’s chances of assuming power without a major struggle (Pauker, 1964: ix).

Pauker seems to neither undermine nor exaggerate the “facts” of the PKI. He attempts to be honest that the rapid growth of the PKI was due to various factors – an analysis which is missing in the official and popular discourse of anti-Communism produced by the New Order regime, which refers to the “dizziness” of the PKI leaders as the only factor of its rapid growth. What is noteworthy here is his analysis on the PKI’s appeal to the mass, through which one can learn the dynamics of the nature of the Indonesian Communist leadership in the last fifteen years before it was exterminated in the 1965-66 massacres.
As a strategy of achieving a better understanding of the PKI’s performances in 1950s and early 1960s, Pauker makes some comparison with the Italian Communist Party, where both accounted for about three-quarters of total non-Bloc membership in 1963. However, both parties showed opposite trends in the size of the membership. While the Italian Communist Party had declined in size since early 1950s, the PKI was in a phase of constant expansion. In 1964 the latter publicly claimed three million members although no exact figure was released (Pauker, 1964: 1-2).

Like the Italian Communist Party, Pauker writes, the PKI was a creative party confident in its ability to fit Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of its country. The Italian Communist Party had been directing its appeal to the population of a politically advanced Western country. It favored the “peaceful road to socialism”. In matters of doctrine, it sided with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the latter’s dispute with the Communist Party of China, but at the same time it asserted its organizational independence. The PKI, however, increasingly expressed agreement with the Chinese and hostility toward the Russians, although it was striving in fact to formulate its own methods for the seizure of power. In both instances primary reliance was neither on parliamentary struggle nor on armed combat but on constant efforts to become accepted as parties of government. What the two parties had in common was the intellectual vigor and political shrewdness of their leaders who had motivated and inspired dedicated cadres able, in turn, to recruit substantial followings and thus to build up impressive mass parties (Pauker, 1964: 2-3).

As a mass party with dedicated cadres, Pauker observes, the PKI was building up a mass movement, not combat units. A claim on the size of membership in this context
had created a “bandwagon effect”, showing that the PKI would be the only “last hope” or the “savior” of the nation in a time of crisis, filling a political vacuum. Therefore, “patience” and “gradual phases” were the keywords quite often used by the PKI’s chairman D.N. Aidit in his speech addresses. These keywords were important to stress partly due to the fact that “Communist-phobia” was still there. It was President Sukarno himself who waged a persistent campaign to overcome this phobia and to have PKI members accepted in all sectors of national life (Pauker, 1964: 23-24).

It is interesting to see how Pauker gives his comments on Sukarno’s effort of overcoming “Communist-phobia” in the context of realizing his idea on the unity of “Nationalism, Religion, and Communism” (Nasakom). Unlike the post-factum analysis – analysis made after the 1965-66 massacres – which sees the impossibility of the unity of the three ideologies, particularly “Communism” and “Religion”, which are popularly believed like mixing water and oil, Pauker sees such an effort was not only possible but also factual. He believes that Sukarno’s efforts would probably succeed as they were compatible with Indonesian national character, where “the national culture seems to favor tolerance and the acceptance of logically conflicting views”. Consequently, Pauker suggests, “the Communists are not, as in the West, an isolated sect living by their own lights and segregated from the rest of the population. On the contrary, they pervade Indonesian society” (Pauker, 1964: 24).

To illustrate such an opinion, Pauker points out some examples. For several years prior to the writing of his paper, “Communist and anti-Communist members of parliament could be seen drinking coffee together; Communist and anti-Communist newspaper editors were personal friends and even room mates. Ideological divisions are
bridged by family ties as well as by social relations. For instance, Politburo member Sakirman and the Chief of Indonesian Army Intelligence, Major General S. Parman, are brothers. There are, therefore, no sharp cultural or social barriers opposing the penetration of the PKI into the total fabric of Indonesian society, except for the resistance of the Western-thinking Islamic modernists and Socialists, whose political parties, the Masyumi and the PSI, were banned in 1960”. Unlike the politically and culturally isolated Communist parties of Italy and France, Pauker compares, “the PKI is increasingly accepted and active in Indonesian society at large” (Pauker, 1964: 24-25).

Pauker then reports the increasing influence of the PKI in various sectors of life through its various subsidiary organizations, be they on cultural workers (LEKRA, institute of people’s culture), peasant (BTI, the Indonesian Peasant Front), women (GERWANI, the Indonesian Women Movement), youth (Pemuda Rakyat, People’s Youth), labour (SOBSI, the All-Indonesian Labour Union), intellectuals (HSI, the federation of Indonesian scholars), etc. (Pauker, 1964: 27).

Pauker also notes how the PKI was handling its relations with the military.

The PKI is obviously trying to prepare the ground for circumstances under which the Army might give up its opposition to the Communists and accept a genuine partnership, rather than the shotgun wedding which President Sukarno has failed so far to bring about. On the one hand, the PKI voices firm opposition to the idea of military dictatorship and attacks those members of the officer corps who, since 1958, have played an important role in the economic enterprises taken over from the Dutch. On the other hand PKI leaders never fail to stress the principle of Unity of Armed Forces and People (Pauker, 1964: 27).

Seeking military support, Pauker adds, should be one of the PKI’s major targets.

It would be naïve to assume that a group of men as shrewd and patient as Aidit and his associates could hope to proceed far on the road to power without securing if not the cooperation at least neutrality of the Armed Forces. In this respect trends seem to be in the PKI’s favor. The most militantly anti-Communist officers were eliminated from the armed services before and during the 1958-1960 rebellion. Many of the senior officers, loyal to the Sukarno regime but known for their anti-Communist views, have been gradually deprived of command positions since 1960. It can be expected that by the time the PKI is ready to assume power, the Armed Forces will have lost the will and ability to resist such an assumption (Pauker, 1964: 32).
Regarding with the PKI’s attitude toward religion, Pauker notes that as a part of the PKI’s strategy to make Communism acceptable to Indonesian society, the PKI made a proposal at its First National Conference in July 1964 to study the development of religion in Indonesia. It was said, Pauker cites, “as a basis for better NASAKOM cooperation”. The PKI had already prepared the ground for a flexible attitude toward religion by amending at its Seventh (Extraordinary) National Congress held in April 1962 the Preamble to the PKI Constitution of 1959, in which the PKI accepted Pancasila, the five basic principles of the State, as a whole. The Pancasila makes “Belief in One God” one of the Five Basic Principles. By proclaiming its allegiance to the Pancasila, the PKI made the first step towards overcoming the hostility of religious groups. Even on September 27, 1964, addressing the mass rally concluding the Fourth National Congress of SOBSI (the PKI’s organ for the labour), the PKI’s chairman D.N. Aidit warned Communists not to be anti-religious. He asked his audience to report immediately to party officials any Communist conducting anti-religious campaigns and promised that the offender would be promptly expelled from the party (Pauker, 1964: 33).

In the rest of his paper, Pauker presents how the PKI apparatuses worked to increase the party’s influences both domestically and internationally. To the PKI leaders, this was not only related to the pursuit of correct strategy and tactics, but also with the formation of able and militant cadres capable of formulating and implementing meaningful policies at all levels. Regarding with this concern, Pauker observes, the PKI had understood the intense thirst for education of the Indonesian people and thus offered education not only at the level of People’s Universities (Universitas Rakjat) teaching Marxism and Economics in major cities such as Jakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta,
Semarang, Surabaya, and Medan, but also in party organized schools at senior and junior high school levels, and even down to courses at elementary-school in the villages. In addition, the PKI was organizing regional training centers for all cadres. These offered theoretical discussions on matters of ideology and practical research on the economic and social problems of the region (Pauker, 1964: 34 – 35).

For the purpose of extending its influence throughout the Indonesian archipelago, Pauker observes, the PKI had developed its own organizational structure. Its principal bodies were the Greater Regional Committees identified as CDB (Comite Daerah Besar), CPB (Comite Pulau Besar), and CDR (Comite Djakarta Raya). At the second level were the CS or Section Committees responsible for regencies (Kabupaten) and larger towns, and the CSS responsible for districts (Kecamatan) and smaller towns. Each of these bodies had an executive committee and a conference. Below the CSS were the RC or Resort Committees, based territorially (villages, urban sectors) or institutionally (factories, mines, offices, schools), which had less than 100 party members and were the basic organizations of the PKI to which the cells were responsible (Pauker, 1964: 37).

Pauker enlists names of figures in the Central Committee of the PKI, which could be considered as the elites of the party. Seeing their names and places of birth it can be said that the PKI had successfully expanded its influences to the non-Javanese and non-nominal Muslims. Figures such as Peris Pardede and Karel Supit are obviously non-Javanese, while the party leaders having Muslim names such as Anwar Sanusi, M. Zaelani, Anwar Kadir, Ruslan Kamaluddin and Nursuhud are apparently from families with strong Muslim tradition. However, Javanese (many were nominal Muslims) were still dominant among the elites of the party, as seen in figures such as Nyono, Nyoto,
Rewang, Sudisman, Djokosuyono, Siswoyo, Tjugito, while the party’s chairman himself, D.N. Aidit, is a Sumatran (Pauker, 1964: 40).

Such data are only a part of evidence that the growth of the PKI had covered various elements of the Indonesian society, by which the party leaders were confident that the PKI was the most vigorous, though not the only, contenders for Sukarno’s succession. They may find themselves challenged by various radical nationalists politicians and military leaders. But if, Pauker remarks,

the Communists also succeed in appearing as Sukarno’s true political heirs, their chances will naturally be improved. Sukarno has not stated publicly that he views the PKI leaders as his heirs, but this image is gradually being built up through a subtle interplay between the President and the Communists (Pauker, 1964: 42).

The intimacy of Sukarno and the PKI was seen, Pauker writes, in the ways the PKI leaders treated the President’s formulations with quasi-theological reverence and making him the object of their “cult of personality”. This not only satisfied the President’s boundless vanity but also helped convince the masses that the Communists were his true disciples and, therefore, also his most deserving political heirs (Pauker, 1964: 46-47).

To this trend Pauker seems to be wary. In his reading, the probability that Indonesia would become a Communist state had been increased by the political events of 1964. President Sukarno’s government was then a mere form of transition toward a Communist state: “internationally it abandoned non-alignment in favor of a new Peking-Djakarta axis, while domestically the myth of national solidarity gave way to open repression of even those enemies of the PKI who expressed devotion to President Sukarno personally” (Pauker, 1965: 88). However, he remarks, “the PKI leaders are not likely to turn Indonesia into a Soviet or Chinese satellite or to create a carbon copy of
other Communist regimes” (Pauker, 1964: 51). Indonesia, he observes, was “in quest for economic autarky”, which President Sukarno and his closest advisers might have regarded “not simply as the unavoidable price of continued ‘confrontation’ against Malaysia, but as a means to protect her in the future against the kinds of economic pressures experienced by Mao’s China and Castro’s Cuba” (Pauker, 1965: 96). However, in his prediction:

….Indonesia may well experience again in 1965 the centrifugal pressures which exploded in 1958, if regional economic crisis and social interests again lose faith in Djakarta politics. This could then become an interesting test of the Sukarno regime’s fundamental premise that nation-builders should appeal to people’s political emotions rather than to their economic interests. If this thesis proves wrong, Indonesia may not celebrate the twentieth anniversary of its August 17, 1945, Proclamation of Independence (Pauker, 1965: 96).

As a political observer, Pauker has presented the current trends he has observed. Since his works were prepared for the US Air Force Project RAND, what he has presented was a sort of input to the sponsoring institution, rather than a representation of somewhat scholarly interest. As it was presented above, what Pauker has written gives not a few insightful information which are missing in the post-fact analyses, in the sense of analyses developed after the ‘1965 affair’, where the PKI was accused (by the military) as the mastermind of the killing of the six top Army officers, due to which the massacres of the (alleged) Communists for about nine months afterwards were regarded justifiable.

However, as is seen in the last citation above, Pauker also presents some predictions, upon which the policy makers of the sponsoring institution could set up some scenarios. This confirms the knowledge/interest relation, in which knowledge on “the reality out there” is the capital for changing or manipulating “the reality out there”.

Henceforth, the portrayal of Pauker by such scholars as Noam Chomsky, David Ransom,
Peter Dale Scott and Carmel Budiardjo as “one of the men possibly behind the scenario for the 1965-66 massacre” is likely logical. It is only the one who knows the fact who can manipulate the fact. Pauker knows what the PKI was precisely like, so that he must have known how to engineer events and produce stories being in contradiction to what he exactly knows. The following section will discuss how he sees Sukarno and the PKI after the ‘1965 affair’, where the PKI was outlawed forever and hundred thousands of its (allegedly) members and sympathizers were killed, while another more than a million of either its (allegedly) members or sympathizers were imprisoned for years without trial.⁶

**Pauker’s works on Indonesia after the ‘1965 affair’**

Unlike his works in the first half of 1960s, Pauker’s works after the ‘1965 affair’ not only report but also justify ‘what happened out there’, and even direct to ‘what should happen out there’. Despite no clear evidence on his roles in designing the scenario for and after the killing of six top Army officers on 30 September 1965, it is apparent that to him the destruction of the PKI and the ‘slow but sure’ overthrow of Sukarno is justifiable. Further, when Suharto’s New Order regime began to consolidate its power, Pauker’s position as a CIA consultant is more obvious, where he sees himself as the one who knows the best what the US government should do for the Indonesian government to keep it within the American sphere of influence, and/or what the new Indonesian government should do to suppress any potential of Communist threat.

Pauker’s justification of the mass killings of the (alleged) Communists is firstly found in his “Indonesia: the Year of Transition”, published several months after the massacre turned down. He writes:
In reviewing some of the salient political events that took place in Indonesia in 1966, I am impressed by the striking contrast between the unexpected ruthlessness with which the PKI was destroyed in the three months following the assassination of Army Commander General Ahmad Yani and five of his closest associates, and the equally surprising delicacy shown by the new Army leader, General Suharto, in liquidating the Sukarno regime. In the aftermath of the September 30 affair, the Army liquidated without hesitation all cadres of the PKI which it was able to capture. No legalistic constraints interfered with their summary execution or with the extermination of countless Communists families throughout the Indonesian archipelago (Pauker, 1967a: 141).

Along with such a justification, Pauker lessens Sukarno’s role in the so-called “nation-building”. Even he perceives what Sukarno did as “the harm to the nation”. He contends:

The central figure of that period of Indonesian history during which independence and a sense of nationhood were achieved was Sukarno, whose glamorous political career dominated the four decades from 1927 to 1967. Much of the harm he did to his country is now obvious and can be easily documented with facts and figures. Sukarno’s rhetorical antics, like those of Mussolini and Hitler, whose techniques had attracted his attention in the 1930s, appealed to the emotions of the Indonesian people but showed contempt for their rational faculties. Sukarno was not a national educator or lawgiver, as true national-builders are. Indonesian nationalism was not created by Sukarno but was generated by the entire climate of opinion prevailing in Asia since the early years of the 20th century, to which innumerable individuals and events contributed (Pauker, 1968a: 133–4).

Pauker sees the elimination of Sukarno’s power as a historical imperative, for it was the phase for Indonesia to enter “the age of reason”. He features:

Seen in broader perspective, the most significant lesson of Sukarno’s elimination from public life in 1967 is that the hold of ‘charismatic’ leaders in new nations is tenuous and volatile. An awe-inspiring figure, previously treated like a magic king, can easily be secularized and relegated to obscurity after failing pragmatic tests of performance. This suggests that there may hope for rational politics in the new nations after the passing of the generation of agitators directly associated with the achievement of independence.

In the year following its 21st birthday, the Republic of Indonesia seems indeed to have entered the age of reason (Pauker, 1968a: 135).

What he means by “age of reason” is the strong emphasis on pragmatism and practical actions for the sake of economic development program to overcome the hyperinflation and to calm down the political turmoil in mid-1960s. To enhance such an historical imperative, he suggests that the US should increase its economic aid substantially, while the Indonesian government should receive it. To the US, Indonesia’s strategic location is important toward stabilizing Southeast Asia, since she could oppose Chinese and Soviet
aggression and help smaller nations to combat guerrilla warfare based on subversion and insurgency (Pauker, 1968b).

In his appraisal to the emergence of a new political generation with an identity and mind of its own, Pauker contends that it was likely “to appear in retrospect as the most important event since 1945 in Indonesia’s political history”. He is convinced and is attempting to convince his readers that “despite years of intensive indoctrination in the ideology of the ‘Great Leader of Revolution’, the ‘Generation of 1966’ was able to shake itself loose from his charismatic appeal and to think for themselves. The result was a pragmatic outlook on life, an interest in deeds for the benefit of the people, and a commitment to an ethical ‘new order’” (Pauker, 1967a: 145).

The creation of the term “new order” (in contrast to Sukarno’s “old order”) represents the way Suharto’s regime saw itself vis-à-vis Sukarno’s. In this context, the “slow but sure” overthrow of President Sukarno by General Suharto was understood more than just the change of national leadership, but, more importantly, the change of how the state and nation is managed, and where the state and nation should go. In his “Toward a New Order in Indonesia”, Pauker appraises that the new regime had made considerable progress in adopting an excellent foreign investment law and in reestablishing relations with international monetary organizations. Further, he contends that if the attitudes of the new regime and of the ‘Generation of 1966’ remained as lucid and purposeful as they seemed to be at the moment, Indonesia should have a great future in the community of nations (Pauker, 1967b). In another article he also shows his optimism (and encouragement) on the future of Indonesian economy, as its new leaders
took “a pragmatic approach” such as accepting foreign aids and investments (Pauker, 1968a).

Pauker seems to have set up “a regime of truth”, in which economic development (with its various inevitable prerequisites and implications) shapes the ways of seeing and talking things. Economic development (by a capitalist mode of production, of course) is already set as a point from where and to where every talk should be directed. It is “a grammar of talk”. Pauker’s long essay on the political consequences of rural development programs in Indonesia, for instance, departs from his concern on the Indonesia’s economic collapse so that economic development program is a must to recover it, and goes to some conviction that economic prosperity will suppress any potential of Communist threat. Rural development as a form of the modernization of agrarian sector, or popularly called “Green Revolution”, is seen as the most strategic path to prospering the rural masses, due to which they would no longer be susceptible to the Communist propaganda (Pauker, 1968c).

Such a conviction is made sensible by some statistical data on the ratio between the rate of population growth and of food production. Pauker writes:

In relating the killings [of the Communists] to the combined effect of overpopulation and lack of economic development capable of absorbing the agrarian excess population, I am not suggesting that the Javanese and Balinese were acting out what Robert Adrey, in his recent controversial book, has called the ‘territorial imperative’. I assume that we are dealing with a social phenomenon created by overpopulation and may be, therefore, witnessing the first manifestation of what may occur in many places if mankind loses the Malthusian race between reproduction and economic growth. To explain the events of 1965-1966 it is not necessary to assume that conflicts over land release man’s ‘fighting instincts’ (Pauker, 1968c: 9)

Pauker seems to rationalize the mass killings of the (alleged) Communists, and to prove that what the PKI did prior to the unilateral actions by the end of 1964 and early 1965 was completely wrong. He argues that even if “the PKI was really trying to use a scientific approach in seeking solutions to Java’s agrarian problems…the inquiry was not
seeking data for a rational rural development program but had agitational aims. The title itself of the West Java report, ‘The Peasants Crush the Village Devils’, is indicative” (Pauker, 1968c: 11). Pauker, in short, wants to contend that “landreform was clearly not the answer to the problems of overpopulated Java. The PKI was using the issue demagogically in 1964 to mobilize political activism in the countryside, even if it described accurately the plight of the impoverished Javanese peasantry” (Pauker, 1968c: 14).

Seeing the problems of rural Java in Malthusian perspective requires the mobilization of capital to solve the problems, upon which foreign assistance and investment cannot be rejected. Pauker is sure that “if the Indonesian efforts and foreign assistance succeed in winning temporarily the Malthusian race, which the new ‘miracle rice’ makes possible, there may still be time for rational economic and social planners to secure a prosperous future for Indonesia” (Pauker, 1968c: 29).

Pauker never fails to mention the other extreme of possibility if such an opportunity is wasted.

If the next few years are again wasted, like the two decades since independence were, then the political elites of Indonesia will be destroyed in a violent and nihilistic social explosion of unprecedented scope.

This means that what he sees as rational and pragmatic solution, which is none other than the capitalist mode of economic development, is the only way to all problems faced by the Indonesian nation. Otherwise, social, economic and political calamities like the ones under the demagogue Sukarno and the agitating PKI is likely to happen. This implies that economic development and Communism are mutually exclusive. Suharto’s New Order regime was fond of reproducing such a rhetoric, which was then and has been popularly believed to be true.
Conclusion

If economic Development and Communism are mutually exclusive, then its underlying logics is “either/or” choice. Development or Modernization is presented as a historical imperative, rather than a historical alternative. Development or Modernization, in this sense, is and should be the reality as such. Communism, on the other hand, is presented as anti-reality, as it is not rational.

Such a logics is obviously a form of epistemological violence, as there is no space left to negotiate. Pauker, however, is not alone in committing such violence. Advocates of Modernization have done the same thing, whether they are genuinely scholars or not, be they aware or not. So did the advocates of the (late?) Communism.

Indonesia in 1960s presents a good example of how such an epistemological violence demanded hundreds of thousands of human lives and the trauma left to the whole of the nation. Until now.

Notes:

1 Mark T. Berger observes, as cited by Philpott (2003: 77), progress and modernization were indeed two key words strongly introduced by the US to the Third World nations to solve the problems such as economic stagnation, political instability, mass illiteracy, short life expectancy, high infant mortality rate, etc. in the latter. In the Foucaultian archaeology of knowledge, these two words constituted the governing rules in the discursive formation of the Third World nations.

2 Such scholars were indeed critical to the motives and policies of the US in other countries. However, as Philpott (2003: 79) notes, they hardly ever explored the relation between the American global hegemony and the production of scholarly knowledge supporting the hegemony.

3 It was popularly called NASAKOM (Nasionalis, Agama dan Komunis). The idea of unifying these three ‘ideologies’ had in fact been Sukarno’s obsession since he wrote “Islam, Marxism, and Nationalism” in 1926.

4 On the nature of the anti-Communist discourse in Indonesia, see Budiawan (2004).

5 By the end of 1950s Indonesia witnessed armed rebellions in the islands of Sumatra and Sulawesi, protesting the centralization of power of Jakarta and the increasing influence of the PKI. On the rebellions in the two islands, see Leirissa (1991).
Regarding with the rough estimates of the number of victims in the 1965-66 massacre, ranging from less than a hundred thousand up to one million, see Cribb (1990: 12). On the problems of statistical figures in massacres, see Cribb (2001).

In this context, the 1965-66 massacre is none other than the foundation for the growth of capitalism in Indonesia, or ‘primitive accumulation’ of capital (Farid, 2005).

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