

Traumatic Memory and Family Dynamics of Political Prisoners in Leila S. Chudori's *Namaku Alam*

**Ahmad Abdul Karim^{1*}, Natanael Ricky Putra¹, Nurlina Amiruddin¹,
Agung Rizki Juwi Handoko¹, Maylia Vinda Ekklesia¹, Nissa Vidyanita²**

¹ Indonesian Language Education, State University of Malang, Indonesia
Semarang Street No. 5, Sumbersari, Lowokwaru, Malang City, East Java, 65145

² University College Dublin
Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland

*Corresponding Author: ahmad.abdul.2402118@students.um.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The violent aftermath of Indonesia's 1965 political upheaval created profound, lasting trauma for political prisoners (*tahanan politik*, or *tapol*) and their families. This trauma continues to live within family memories, trapped in narratives of violence, oppression, and alienation. Leila S. Chudori's novel, *Namaku Alam*, provides a compelling literary examination of this legacy, portraying how trauma transcends temporal boundaries and transmits actively across generations. Through textual analysis grounded in trauma theory (Cathy Caruth) and concepts of intergenerational memory (Marianne Hirsch, Maurice Halbwachs), this article examines the psychosocial processes represented in the novel. The analysis reveals a three-stage progression: 1) family dynamics function as an arena for trauma transmission through silence, fragmented narratives, and somatic memory; 2) this transmission creates a distinctive inherited identity in the second generation, characterized by social stigma and psychological fragmentation; and 3) the legacy culminates in fractured intergenerational relationships, where systemic violence manifests as domestic conflict and communication breakdown. This study reveals how *Namaku Alam* operates as a vital counter-narrative to official histories, serving as a bridge that illuminates the intimate, long-term consequences of state violence. By dissecting the familial mechanisms of trauma, the novel critiques the enduring impact of political repression on memory, identity, and relational life..

Keywords: family dynamics; Leila S. Chudori; *Namaku Alam*; political prisoner; traumatic memory

INTRODUCTION

The political upheaval of 1965 became the focal point of collective violence that left an indelible imprint on the nation's memory. This massive sociopolitical rupture profoundly affected individuals and families affiliated either directly or indirectly with the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) (Hanafi, 2025; Sendra, 2025; Winward, 2021). Many of them were stigmatized as political prisoners (*tapol*), a label that systematically

stripped them of their freedom and fundamental rights, forcing them to live under strict surveillance and in enforced isolation from the broader society. This condition extended beyond physical confinement to encompass comprehensive social and psychological exclusion (Conroe, 2012; Głab, 2024; Hearman & Cleveland-Peck, 2021; Hearman, 2016).

Scholars such as Ahmad (2018), Estrelita

(2024), Hearman (2016, 2022), and Rufaerah & Putra (2018) consistently argue that *tapol* have long been subjected to persistent social stigma and systemic discrimination. This multifaceted discrimination—legal, social, economic, and psychological—systematically eroded their quality of life. The discriminatory treatment not only affected those labeled as *tapol* but also extended to their families and descendants, a tragic pattern that has continued across generations and endured for decades (Amad, 2019; Leong, 2021; Lestariningsih & Sunarti, 2023).

The phenomenon of intergenerational discrimination has triggered and perpetuated a complex form of trauma that is transmitted from one generation to the next (Bowe, Thomas, & Mackey, 2025; Heberle, Obus, & Gray, 2020; Lehrner & Yehuda, 2018; O'Neill et al., 2025). Such trauma has fostered intricate dynamics within the families of political prisoners, manifesting in the form of inherited psychological wounds and multidimensional intergenerational struggles. Academically, this phenomenon is referred to as transgenerational trauma, a condition in which unresolved trauma from one generation is symbolically and emotionally transmitted to subsequent generations (Alfani, 2025; Kizilhan, Noll-Hussong, & Wenzel, 2021; Salberg & Grand, 2024; Schwab, 2010; Veronese, Mahamid, & Bdier, 2023).

This transmission often occurs through non-verbal mechanisms, such as dysfunctional communication patterns, meaningful silences, and internalized maladaptive behaviors. The implications of transgenerational trauma are profound: it greatly affects the development of individual self-identity and, at the familial level, gives rise to conflictual and disorganized interactional patterns. Studies on transgenerational trauma emphasize that wounds from the past are never entirely resolved but continue to resonate and shape the psychological realities of individuals in the present (Caruth, 2014; de Ávila, 2025; Lehrner & Yehuda, 2018; Lin, 2024; Mikulan & Zembylas, 2024; Schmukalla, 2024).

In *Namaku Alam*, Leila S. Chudori subtly yet powerfully portrays the lived experiences of families of political prisoners by narrating the lives of characters who are figuratively haunted by the past and burdened by social stigma. The novel is a crucial medium for exploring the marginalized human dimensions resulting from historical tragedy.

Alam, a child born into a *tapol* family, grapples with a profound identity fragmentation as he attempts to comprehend his family's repressed history. This fragmentation is not merely a personal crisis but also reflects the collective identity dislocation experienced by the descendants of political prisoners.

Alam undergoes an arduous introspective journey, marked by emotional and cognitive struggles, as he feels trapped between his family's traumatic past and his desire to live free from its lingering shadows. Through this narrative, Chudori effectively highlights the psychological and social consequences of traumatic memory and illustrates the intergenerational dynamics within families affected by transgenerational trauma. This psychological complexity positions the novel as more than mere fiction; it functions as a critical lens for understanding how macro-historical events shape micro-level lives, particularly in the context of inherited trauma.

This study investigates the representation of traumatic memory and family dynamics among the descendants of political prisoners (*tapol*) as depicted in *Namaku Alam*. Its author, Leila S. Chudori, is one of Indonesia's most prominent contemporary writers, known for her politically grounded historical narratives. *Namaku Alam* offers a rare and poignant portrayal of the intergenerational consequences of the 1965 political violence. The narrative is anchored in Indonesia's historical realities, transcending the realm of fiction to function as a cultural document that captures the resonance of trauma.

As a sequel to *Pulang*, this novel expands Chudori's efforts to illuminate the silenced histories of former political prisoners and their families. By developing complex characters and plotlines, Chudori successfully gives voice to *tapol* families who have long been silenced, thereby challenging the monolithic narratives that dominate official historiography. Within the Indonesian literary canon, *Namaku Alam* courageously confronts collective amnesia and humanizes the lived experiences of those marginalized by dominant historical discourse. This underscores the capacity of literary texts to serve as subversive acts aimed at reclaiming narrative space and historical justice (Gheytasi, 2024; Griffin & James, 2018; Kayal, 2025; Mavengano, 2025; Milatovic, 2014).

Namaku Alam's significance lies not only in its literary contribution but also in its sociopolitical relevance. The novel portrays a society still grappling

with persistent trauma, historical repression, and contested collective memory. The narrative struggle over historical truth forms the core of the novel's thematic concern, reflecting the enduring tension between personal memory and state-sanctioned narratives.

This study explores how trauma and collective memory related to the political upheaval of 1965 are articulated through the novel's depiction of individuals and families living under the shadow of a painful national history. This approach enables a nuanced analysis of how trauma is not merely reproduced but also negotiated and internalized in everyday life. This study employs textual analysis grounded in Cathy Caruth's trauma theory and Maurice Halbwachs' theory of collective memory. Caruth (1995: 22, 2016: 23) conceptualizes trauma not merely as a past event but as a recurring and disruptive phenomenon that continues to affect individuals in the present, manifesting through symptoms such as avoidance, hyperarousal, negative cognition, and mood disturbances. Her definition of trauma as a delayed shock is particularly relevant in the context of sublimated memories that are persistently manifested in prolonged psychological forms.

Meanwhile, Halbwachs (1997: 3) argues that collective memory is a socially constructed phenomenon, shaped within specific cultural and institutional contexts, embodied in social symbols, and accessible to groups rather than individuals alone. He emphasizes that memory is never purely individual, but always interacts with social frameworks and dominant discourses. Within this dynamic, both society and state institutions play significant roles in constructing, preserving, and reshaping historical narratives across generations. This creates a complex memory landscape in which truth is often fragmented and contested.

How are traumatic memory and the family dynamics of political prisoners represented in *Namaku Alam* by Leila S. Chudori? This guiding question forms the central focus of the present study, which seeks to examine how trauma is experienced, remembered, and transmitted within the context of families of former political prisoners. The study aims to address a significant gap in the literature regarding the deeper internal mechanisms of trauma transmission within familial settings.

Through this analytical framework, the research

explores the psychological, emotional, and relational dimensions of trauma as portrayed in the novel, while also uncovering the broader socio-political dynamics embedded in the collective memory of *tapol* families. This approach enables an integration of micro-level psychological analysis with macro-level sociopolitical context, thereby offering a holistic understanding of the impact of trauma.

The primary source for this research is Leila S. Chudori's novel, *Namaku Alam*. The data analyzed consists of narrative excerpts, dialogues, and monologues that illustrate the characters' traumatic experiences and the mechanisms of intergenerational transmission within the family. Selected excerpts are carefully examined to identify patterns of language, symbolism, and emotional representation related to trauma.

Secondary references, including books, journal articles, and scholarly discussions on trauma theory, collective memory, and literary studies, support and contextualize the findings. Data collection was conducted through close reading and detailed note-taking, allowing for the identification of textual elements relevant to the research focus. This process ensures rigor and validity in data extraction, forming a solid foundation for interpretive analysis.

The data analysis follows the interactive qualitative analysis model proposed by Miles et al., (2018), which involves stages of data selection, in-depth interpretation, exploration of latent meanings, and conclusion drawing. This method allows for an iterative approach whereby understanding is continuously refined throughout the analytical process.

Further literature review enriches the analysis by incorporating insights from literary theory and trauma studies. This synthesis strengthens the theoretical framework and provides a comparative foundation for the research findings. The study aims to contribute to the understanding of traumatic memory within *tapol* families as represented in literary texts and to highlight the intergenerational transmission of trauma. Specifically, this research addresses a gap in the existing literature by integrating literary analysis with transgenerational trauma studies in the Indonesian context.

Previous research on traumatic memory in Indonesian literature has explored a range of themes and approaches. Alifian et al., (2024) examine the

traumatic culture of coastal communities in East Java through the lens of agrarian conflict, while Zamzuri (2020) focuses on personal trauma and migration in Jatisaba. Russida (2024) investigates the collective trauma of Chinese-Indonesians in Peranakan novels. These studies demonstrate the diversity of trauma representation in Indonesian literature, from personal to communal scales. Other studies by Arofah & Rokhman (2021), Hardianti (2022), Utami (2022), Andalas & Qur'an (2021) address trauma arising from war, massacres, and ethnic identity conflicts. These varied contexts underscore the universality of traumatic experience, even as its manifestations remain deeply contextual.

Research specifically examining post-1965 political trauma and the experiences of former political prisoners (*tapol*) is extensive. Assa (2019), Mulyadi & Putra (2020), and Putra et al (2024) analyze the intergenerational transmission of trauma among the descendants of *tapol*, primarily through historical, ideological, and documentary approaches. While these prior studies have focused on historical and ideological aspects, they obscure the more intimate psychological and relational dimensions. These studies concentrate on how the collective memory of political tragedy is constructed and transmitted through family narratives, historical records, and experiences of exile. Although such approaches are valuable, they often lack a deeper engagement with the affective and interactional impact of trauma within the familial context. This article expands current research by positioning trauma not merely as a historical or political memory but as an ongoing psychological experience that is fundamentally embedded within familial relationships. The study represents a shift in perspective from the macro to the micro, from the collective to the interpersonal. Rather than simply documenting the transmission of memory, it investigates how trauma operates within families by examining three interrelated processes.

First, the study offers an in-depth analysis of how family dynamics serve as the primary arena for the transmission of unresolved trauma from the first to the second generation. The focus is on interaction, communication, and behavior patterns that unconsciously convey emotional burdens. Second, the research carefully traces the formation of a specific inherited identity within the second generation, an identity shaped by fragmented

memory, social stigma, and psychological weight. This includes an exploration of how descendants of former political prisoners internalize stigma and how it informs their sense of self. Finally, the study explores how these dynamics culminate in strained intergenerational relationships characterized by conflict, silence, and covert resistance. Silence, in this context, is not the absence of voice but a meaningful form of communication, one that reflects the difficulty of processing and articulating trauma.

By unpacking these three processes, this article contributes to the discourse on political trauma in Indonesia through a transgenerational approach that centers on affective and relational experiences. This approach opens new dimensions in the understanding of trauma, moving beyond purely historical and political frameworks. The study not only paves the way for a deeper comprehension of the long-term psychosocial impact of the 1965 political tragedy but also addresses the crucial function of literature.

Literature, in this context, serves as a medium to articulate the unspoken, providing space for marginalized experiences. This research seeks to demonstrate how the literary work *Namaku Alam* plays a vital role in helping society comprehend these impacts by offering a bridge to the past and presenting a nuanced counter-narrative to dominant historical discourse. In doing so, the novel functions as a counter-hegemonic agent, challenging official narratives and fostering memory reconciliation. Ultimately, this article offers theoretical insights into contemporary Indonesian literary studies that engage with themes of trauma, memory, and familial identity. This contribution enriches the theoretical framework for literary analysis and encourages interdisciplinary dialogue among literary studies, psychology, and history.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

Leila S. Chudori's *Namaku Alam* illustrates that trauma is not a static remnant of the past but a persistent, living force that deeply informs the characters' lived realities. Anchored in the unresolved political violence of 1965, this trauma seeps into the fabric of family life, operating as a psychosocial mechanism that governs internal dynamics, shapes personal identities, and influences intergenerational relationships. Rather than receding with time, the trauma continues

to unfold within the family, reverberating across generations.

This section explores these dynamics through three interwoven thematic pillars, each revealing a different stage in the unfolding of intergenerational trauma. First, it examines how family interactions serve as the primary site for transmitting unresolved trauma. Second, it considers how this transmission gives rise to a specific form of inherited identity—one marked by stigma, fragmentation, and psychological burden. Finally, it analyzes how these inherited patterns culminate in fractured intergenerational bonds, exposing the emotional and relational costs of a legacy shaped by systemic violence.

Family Dynamics as an Arena for Trauma Transmission

In *Namaku Alam*, the family is depicted not as a sanctuary from the political turmoil of the outside world but as the primary, often unconscious, conduit through which historical trauma is passed down. Transmission operates through indirect and fragmented mechanisms—pervasive silences, fragmented narratives, and visceral somatic reactions that create a domestic atmosphere saturated with unresolved pain. This phenomenon is aptly framed by Hirsch's (1997: 22) concept of post-memory, which she defines as the experience of those "who grow up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are evacuated by the stories of a previous generation." For members of the second generation, memory often emerges not as a straightforward recollection but as a fragmented project of reconstruction, a patchwork of inherited emotions, silences, and partial narratives that are deeply felt but only vaguely comprehended (Baser & Toivanen, 2024; Féron, 2024; Fodor & Lugossy, 2025; Ndlovu & Tshuma, 2021; Sheets, 2024). Rather than a clear transmission of history, what is passed down is an affective residue—echoes of trauma, unspoken griefs, and lingering tensions—that shapes identity in indirect and often unconscious ways. The legacy of trauma becomes embedded not in facts but in atmospheres, gestures, and omissions.

A central mechanism in this intergenerational transmission is what scholars describe as secondary intrusion, a process by which the second generation vicariously absorbs the traumatic experiences of their

predecessors. This aligns closely with the theorization of trauma by Caruth (1995) as an event that is not fully experienced at the moment of its occurrence but re-emerges belatedly, insistently, and incompletely. In the second generation, trauma is not inherited as a narrative but as a haunting, a rupture in the temporal and emotional continuity of selfhood. This process of secondary intrusion is exemplified in Alam's reconstruction of his family's history.

"Saya hanya mencatat karena ini semua adalah pengalaman Yu Kenanga ketika saya masih sangat kecil. Saya tak mampu mengingatnya... Agak kompleks karena semula, Yu Kenanga hanya bisa menceritakan secara implisit, Bu. Dia hanya ingin memberikan poin bahwa ibu kami sudah sangat banyak berkorban untuk kami semua."

(Chudori, 2024: 170)

"I only wrote these down because they were Yu Kenanga's memories from when I was still very little. I couldn't possibly remember them... It's rather complicated, because initially, Yu Kenanga could only tell the story implicitly, ma'am. She just wanted to make the point that our mother had sacrificed so much for all of us."

These implicit narratives prove crucial. The gaps, hesitations, and moral injunctions transmit more than just information; they convey the affective weight of the trauma itself—the fear, the shame, and the imperative of silence. This forces Alam into the role of a historical detective, piecing together a past that haunts his present yet remains tantalizingly out of reach. This emotional inheritance, rather than direct experience, becomes the foundation of his traumatic symptoms. In this context, memory functions not as a stable archive but as a contested and negotiated space. Alam becomes both a recipient and a curator of intergenerational trauma, tasked with piecing together a history that resists total understanding. His search for clarity is less about recovering facts than about making sense of emotional inheritances that have no clear origin or resolution. In doing so, the narrative reflects the broader experience of second-generation individuals who must navigate the liminal zone between lived absence and emotional presence, memory and myth, silence and speech.

This trauma becomes physically embedded,

manifesting as somatic memory and avoidance, particularly in the female characters. This aligns with the work of trauma theorists like Van der Kolk (2022) and Ogden et al (2006), who argue that the body keeps a score of traumatic experiences, often on a pre-verbal, sensory level. The novel powerfully illustrates this:

"Namun, yang terjadi adalah Yu Kenanga menjelaskan mengapa setiap kali Ibu atau Yu Kenanga melalui sebuah jalan di Jakarta Pusat, langsung saja mereka akan bergetar dan sebuah trauma yang nyaris tak tersembuhkan muncul kembali."

(Chudori, 2024: 156)

"But what happened was that Yu Kenanga explained why every time Ibu or Yu Kenanga passed a street in Central Jakarta, they would begin to tremble, and a nearly incurable trauma would return."

The involuntary trembling serves as a visceral manifestation of a memory that remains unspoken and unprocessed. In this instance, the street in Central Jakarta functions as a spatial catalyst, triggering the resurgence of a suppressed past that the conscious mind seeks to evade but the body continues to register and retain (Marschall, 2015; Miller-Graff, 2022; Pearce, 2012). This phenomenon exemplifies a form of gendered trauma in which the female body becomes an embodied archive—bearing the traces of psychological, symbolic, and institutional violence inflicted by state actors (Putra & Dermawan, 2023). The physical and emotional aversion to revisiting such spaces operates as a protective psychological mechanism, a form of spatial avoidance developed to shield oneself from retraumatization (Bower & Sivers, 1998; Burbank et al., 2024; Foa et al., 1989; Ogden et al., 2006).

However, this strategy of avoidance—though adaptive in the short term—ultimately forestalls the cognitive and emotional processing necessary for healing. As a result, the trauma remains latent but unresolved, persisting beneath the surface of family life. Its silence becomes structurally embedded within the household's affective rhythms, passing on to the next generation not through explicit narrative, but through emotional atmospheres, behavioral patterns, and embodied responses. Thus, the trauma is

reproduced as an inherited legacy—one characterized not by direct experience, but by the haunting presence of what could not be spoken, named, or confronted.

The Formation of an Inherited Identity: Negotiating Stigma and Fragmented Memory

The persistent transmission of trauma within the family directly shapes a specific and burdensome identity for the second generation (Berger & Berger, 2001; Sabawi, 2020; Stern, 2022; Tize, 2025; Young, 2024). This constitutes an externally imposed identity rather than one developed through personal agency, fundamentally defined by the political status of their parents and the pervasive social stigma attached to it. Such an imposed identity can cause individuals to experience cognitive dissonance, shaping a self-image based on labels given due to the political background of their parents or previous generations. This cognitive dissonance is compounded by the complex role of memory itself. More than just a historical record, memory is a dynamic force that influences the formation of personal identity and gives meaning to everyday experiences (Pangestu, 2021). The lives of characters experiencing traumatic memories are marked by profound bitterness, a direct consequence of past incidents that resulted in layered trauma (Arofah & Rokhman, 2021). The novel captures the devastating impact of this process through acts of social labeling, where the state's condemnation is deployed in daily interactions, imposing a political identity upon a child.

"Mana? Mana anak lelaki Pak Hananto?" Lelaki itu tampak murka... "Mana anak pengkhianat negara itu?"

(Chudori, 2024: 20)

"Where? Where is the son of Pak Hananto?" The man looked furious... "Where is the son of that traitor to the country?"

This public accusation—"the son of a traitor"—is more than an insult; it is a performative act of interpellation that violently thrusts Alam into a stigmatized social role. As argued by Zolkos (2024), such legacies shape the subjectivity of descendants. The external label becomes a core component of his internal identity, forcing him into a state of constant,

exhausting negotiation between the person he seeks to become and the political shadow he cannot escape. This engenders what can be characterized as a fragmented identity—an unstable composite assembled from others' memories (Hirsch, 1997), debilitating social labels, and profound confusion. The lack of a coherent, self-authored narrative prevents the formation of a stable, autonomous self, leaving him psychologically adrift.

This inherited identity is further characterized by negative cognitive and mood alterations, a core symptom cluster in trauma survivors (Caruth, 2016). The character Bimo provides a potent illustration of this, exhibiting deep-seated cynicism and emotional numbing as a defense mechanism against the compounded trauma of a broken home and an absent father figure. His hostile dismissal of his mother—"Ibumu?" "Taiklah." ("Your mother?" "Oh shit.") (Chudori, 2024: 79)—is not mere adolescent rebellion but a symptom of profound psychological rupture and an inability to regulate affect. This response can be understood as a desperate attempt to sever an emotional connection that has become a source of unbearable pain, a manifestation of emotional numbing that serves to shield him from overwhelming feelings (Georgescu, Bodislav, Coșocariu, & Andrei, 2025; Ginot, 2015). His cognitive distortions, marked by pessimism, anger, and a wholesale rejection of his maternal bond, demonstrate how trauma reshapes an individual's entire cognitive framework, fostering internal narratives of hopelessness and alienation (Fulford & Holt, 2023).

Intergenerational Relationships as a Legacy of Systemic Violence

The devastating consequence of these traumatic dynamics and inherited identities is the corrosion and fracturing of intergenerational relationships (Aarons, 2019; Lewis, 2025; Markowitz, 2021; McKinney, 2007; Mills & Turnbull, 2004). Generational memory functions as a mechanism for transmitting collective experiences from one generation to the next, ensuring these memories remain vital and present (Darojat et al., 2024). Traumatic memories emerging from previous generations can shape collective perspectives and identities, as these historical experiences can be reactivated, allowing subsequent generations to connect with the traumatic roots of the past. The novel

meticulously demonstrates how systemic, structural violence—militarism, political repression—infiltates the private sphere, manifesting as domestic abuse, emotional volatility, and a complete breakdown of communication. The relationship between Bimo and his stepfather, Pak Prakosa, is a stark microcosm of how militaristic ideology can infiltrate and poison the home.

"Musuh Bimo adalah ayah tirinya sendiri... Pak Prakosa menyundutnya setiap kali dia tak puas dengan jawaban Bimo atas pertanyaannya..."

(Chudori, 2024: 105)

"Bimo's enemy was his own stepfather... Pak Prakosa would burn him with a cigarette every time he was dissatisfied with Bimo's answers."

Pak Prakosa's pattern of abuse should not be seen as a series of isolated personal outbursts. Rather, it reflects a more disturbing manifestation of a broader militarized ideology—one that normalizes coercion, physical discipline, and authoritarian control as legitimate tools of governance and socialization (Chenoy, 2004; Parashar, 2018). His actions are emblematic of a system in which power is asserted through fear and obedience, reflecting a larger sociopolitical logic that collapses the boundaries between public authoritarianism and private life. Within this framework, the household ceases to function as a sanctuary. Instead, it becomes a microcosm of systemic violence—a space where the dynamics of domination are enacted and perpetuated under the guise of familial order.

This dynamic gives rise to what psychologists define as complex trauma, which occurs through sustained exposure to abusive behaviors within a caregiving relationship, particularly in environments where the victim is chronically powerless and dependent (Alexander, 2014; Dayton, 2023). For Bimo, the trauma is not confined to the bruises and physical suffering he endures, but becomes internalized as a distorted psychological blueprint. His experiences profoundly shape his evolving sense of self, authority, and emotional intimacy as he learns to associate care with harm, and discipline with violence. Over time, this psychological conditioning fosters maladaptive beliefs about what it means to love, to obey, and to survive within familial structures. The result is a fractured inner world where trust is compromised,

and where relationships become entangled with fear, submission, and emotional numbing—a pattern that may reverberate across generations if left unaddressed. This psychological fragmentation is evident in Bimo's conflicted relationship with his absent father.

"Aku memang pingin Bapak pulang, Bu. Kan, bukan salahku kalau bapak enggak bisa datang..." ucapan Bimo... Air mata Bimo deras.

(Chudori, 2024: 84–86)

"I really want Bapak to come home, Bu. It's not my fault he can't come..." said Bimo... His tears flowed heavily.

This intense emotional response exemplifies hyperarousal (Pugliese et al., 2024), where the nervous system is overwhelmed by traumatic triggers, leading to intense and uncontrollable emotional responses (Punamäki et al., 2017; Schore, 2002). His tears signify more than sadness; they represent a nervous system that can no longer regulate itself in the face of relentless psychological stress. The strained communication, explosive emotional reactions, and deliberate acts of violence depicted in the novel are not isolated incidents but patterned, predictable outcomes of a legacy of unresolved trauma. They form the underlying structure of a family shaped by historical injustice, where political forces have systematically damaged the fundamental human needs for safety, love, and communication.

CONCLUSION

Leila S. Chudori's *Namaku Alam* compellingly demonstrates that trauma constitutes not merely a psychological state but a lived reality that continuously shapes familial life. Through the analytical lens of Cathy Caruth, the novel reveals how unresolved political violence resurfaces in the intimate spaces of the family, structuring its dynamics, forging inherited identities, and corroding intergenerational relationships. Beyond individual experience, the novel reveals trauma as systemically embedded within the socio-political system, evident in the marginalization of political prisoners' families, the internalization of militaristic values, and gender-based repression. These layers confirm that personal suffering is inextricably linked to a collective memory suppressed

by dominant power relations.

The novel's significance lies in its socio-political function as a literary space for critique and affective understanding. In a society still grappling with historical amnesia, the novel functions as a powerful counter-narrative, giving voice and humanity to those systematically silenced by the state's official history. It operates as a bridge, allowing readers who did not live through the events to connect with the emotional and psychological weight of the 1965 tragedy and its long-term consequences. By translating political history into the visceral, lived experience of a family, the novel fosters a deeper, more empathetic comprehension of how the legacy of authoritarianism and social stigma continues to operate. It underscores the importance of understanding trauma as both a personal and political narrative that must be acknowledged, articulated, and held historically accountable.

STATEMENT OF COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors hereby declare that this article is entirely free from any conflict of interest related to the processes of data collection, analysis, editorial handling, and publication with *Poetika: Jurnal Ilmu Sastra*. None of the authors were involved at any stage in the editorial review or decision-making process concerning this manuscript.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors express sincere appreciation to the peer reviewers for their critical reviews and constructive suggestions. The feedback provided has significantly enhanced the manuscript both substantively and methodologically and has contributed to deepening the authors' understanding of the theoretical and empirical dimensions relevant to this study.

REFERENCES

Aarons, V. (2019). *Holocaust graphic narratives: generation, trauma, and memory*. Rutgers University Press.

Ahmad, T. (2018). Produksi dan reproduksi memori: pengalaman keluarga eks tahanan politik PKI di Sulawesi Selatan. *Walasaji*, 9(2), 289–302.

Alexander, P. C. (2014). *Intergenerational cycles of trauma and violence: An attachment and family systems perspective*. WW Norton & Company.

Alfani, F. (2025). The Black Sun of a Transgenerational Trauma: Dissociative Processes, Affects and the Symbolic Function. In *The Complexity of Trauma* (pp. 184–203). Routledge.

Alifian, M. A., Saryono, D., Karkono, & Rahman, N. Ab. (2024). Traumatic Memory in Mahfud Ikhwan's Dawuk Dwilogy as a Cultural Manifestation of East Java's Northern Coastal Communities. *KEMBARA Journal of Scientific Language Literature and Teaching*, 10(1), 52–70. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.22219/kembara.v10i1.32644>

Amad, S. N. (2019). Identities in Exile: Re-membering Identities, Re-membering the Nation in Laksmi Pamuntjak's Amba. *Kritika Kultura*, 33(1), 65–87.

Andalas, E. F., & Qur'an, H. B. (2021). Remembering the 1998 Indonesian Sorcerers Massacre: Memory of Tragedy and Trauma in Intan Andaru's Perempuan Bersampur Merah (Woman in Red Scarf). *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 13(1), 1–13. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.21659/rupkatha.v13n1.23>

Arofah, A., & Rokhman, M. A. (2021). Memori, Trauma, dan Upaya Rekonsiliasi Perang Teluk II dalam Novel Sā'atu Bagdād Karya Syahad Al-Rāwiyy. *Adabiyyāt: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 4(2), 139–164. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajbs.2020.04201>

Assa, A. E. P. (2019). Postmemory dalam Novel Tapol Karya Ngarto Februana. *Poetika*, 7(1), 17–31. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.22146/poetika.v7i1.43130>

Baser, B., & Toivanen, M. (2024). Inherited traumas in diaspora: postmemory, past-presencing and mobilisation of second-generation Kurds in Europe. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 47(2), 297–320. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2023.2261288>

Berger, A. L., & Berger, N. (2001). *Second generation voices: Reflections by children of Holocaust survivors and perpetrators*. Syracuse University Press.

Bowe, C., Thomas, C., & Mackey, P. (2025). Perspective to Practice: Theoretical Frameworks Explaining Intergenerational Trauma, Violence, and Maltreatment and Implications for the Therapeutic Response. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 22(321), 1–31. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph22030321>

Bower, G. H., & Sivers, H. (1998). Cognitive impact of traumatic events. *Development and Psychopathology*, 10(4), 625–653. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579498001795>

Burback, L., Brémault-Phillips, S., Nijdam, M. J., McFarlane, A., & Vermetten, E. (2024). Treatment of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: A State-of-the-art Review. *Current Neuropharmacology*, 22(4), 557–635. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.2174/1570159X2166230428091433>

Caruth, C. (1995). *Trauma: Explorations In Memory*. JHU Press.

Caruth, C. (2016). *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*. JHU Press.

Caruth, C. (2014). Lost in Transmission: Studies of Trauma Across Generations. *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 95(2), 402–407. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-8315.12092>

Chenoy, A. M. (2004). Gender and International Politics: The Intersections of Patriarchy and Militarisation. *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, 11(1), 27–42. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/097152150401100103>

Chudori, L. S. (2024). *Namaku Alam*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama.

Conroe, A. M. (2012). *Generating History: Violence and the Risks of Remembering for Families of Former Political Prisoners in Post-New Order Indonesia* [PhD thesis, University of Michigan].

Darojat, W. I., Saryono, D., & Zahro, A. (2024). Memori Kolektif Masyarakat Batavia dalam Novel Al-Masih: Putra sang Perawan Karya Tasaro GK. *Jurnal Onoma: Pendidikan, Bahasa, Dan Sastra*, 10(1), 134–144. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.30605/onoma.v10i1.3136>

Dayton, T. (2023). *Heartwounds: The impact of unresolved trauma and grief on relationships*. Simon and Schuster.

de Ávila, N. (2025). The Extended Body: Vicarious Memories and Mimetic Capacities in Transgenerational Trauma. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 1–23. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/09672559.2024.2444971>

Estrelita, G. T. (2024). Beyond Leftist-Phobia: Political Prejudice and Stigma in Indonesia. In *The Palgrave Handbook of Political Norms in Southeast Asia* (pp. 247–258). Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-9655-1_15

Féron, É. (2024). Memories of violence in the Rwandan diaspora: intergenerational transmission and conflict transportation. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 47(2), 274–296. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2023.2261285>

Foa, E. B., Steketee, G., & Rothbaum, B. O. (1989).

Behavioral/cognitive conceptualizations of post-traumatic stress disorder. *Behavior Therapy*, 20(2), 155–176.

Fodor, M., & Lugossy, R. (2025). Constructing moral stance in intergenerational trauma memory narratives. *Narrative Inquiry*, 1–25. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1075/ni.24080.fod>

Fulford, D., & Holt, D. J. (2023). Social Withdrawal, Loneliness, and Health in Schizophrenia: Psychological and Neural Mechanisms. *Schizophrenia Bulletin*, 49(5), 1138–1149. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1093/schbul/sbad099>

Georgescu, R. I., Bodislav, D. A., Coșocariu, A. D., & Andrei, I. (2025). The lasting impact of COVID-19. How the pandemic reshaped human behaviour. *Theoretical & Applied Economics*, 32(1), 135–148.

Gheytasi, S. (2024). Unveiling the subversive potential: Challenging dominant ideological discourses in selected literary texts. *World Literature Studies*, 16(2), 3–19.

Ginot, E. (2015). *The Neuropsychology of the Unconscious: Integrating Brain and Mind in Psychotherapy (Norton Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology)*. WW Norton & Company.

Głab, K. M. (2024). Sacred and Cursed Bodies: The Necropolitics in the Suharto Regime's Politics of Memory. *Cultural and Social History*, 21(4), 555–571. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/14780038.2024.2355677>

Griffin, A., & James, A. (2018). Humanities Curricula as White Property: Toward a Reclamation of Black Creative Thought in Social Studies & Literary Curricula. *Multicultural Education*, 25, 10–17.

Halbwachs, M. (1997). *La Memorie Collective Memory Collective*. Paris: Alban Michael, diterjemahkan oleh Lewis A. Closer. (1992) dalam bahasa Inggris On Collective Memory: London: The University of Chicago Press.

Hanafi, T. (2025). Admitting but not apologising: the Indonesian government's confrontation with the 1965–1966 genocide. *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 1–24. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2025.2517575>

Hardianti, S. (2022). Memori Trauma Perang Ambon Dalam Novel Kei: Kutemukan Cinta Di Tengah Perang Karya Erni Aladjai. *Adabiyāt: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 6(2), 259–277. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajbs.2022.06206>

Hearman, V., & Cleveland-Peck, P. (2021). Psychological Trauma and Suffering in Long Distance Friendships Involving Political Prisoners in Indonesia. In *Traumatic Pasts in Asia: History, Psychiatry, and Trauma from the 1930s to the Present* (pp. 164–183).

Hearman, V. (2016). Letter-writing and Transnational Activism on Behalf of Indonesian Political Prisoners: Gatot Lestario and his Legacy. *Critical Asian Studies*, 48(2), 145–167. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/14672715.2016.1157954>

Hearman, V. (2022). Psychological Trauma and Suffering in Long Distance Friendships Involving Political Prisoners in Indonesia. In *Traumatic Pasts in Asia* (pp. 164–185). Berghahn Books. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781800731844-009>

Heberle, A. E., Obus, E. A., & Gray, S. A. O. (2020). An intersectional perspective on the intergenerational transmission of trauma and state-perpetrated violence. *Journal of Social Issues*, 76(4), 814–834. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12404>

Hirsch, M. (1997). *Family frames: Photography, narrative, and postmemory*. Harvard University Press.

Kayal, S. (2025). Exploring Sexuality, Trauma, and Empowerment in Saadat Hasan Manto's Khol Do and Ismat Chughtai's Lihaaf: A Comparative Analysis. *International Journal of English and Studies (IJOES)*, 7(3), 174–187.

Kizilhan, J., Noll-Hussong, M., & Wenzel, T. (2021). Transgenerational Transmission of Trauma across Three Generations of Alevi Kurds. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(1), 81. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19010081>

Lehrner, A., & Yehuda, R. (2018). Trauma across generations and paths to adaptation and resilience. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 10(1), 22–29. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0000302>

Leong, K. Y. (2021). Speaking Across the Lines: 1965, the Family, and Reconciliation in Indonesia. *Kritika Kultura*, 1(37), 6–26.

Lestariningsih, A. D., & Sunarti, L. (2023). Dialita: Collective memories of former women political prisoners during the New Order era in Java, 2000–2011. *Memory Studies*, 16(5), 1189–1207. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750698022114075>

Lewis, A. J. (2025). *Interrupting the Cycle of Psychological Betrayal Trauma in Mother-Daughter Relationships*. Alliant International University.

Lin, Y. (2024). *Transcending Shadows: Transforming Generational Wounds Through Three Generations*. Taylor & Francis.

Markowitz, A. (2021). The Better to Break and Bleed

With: Research, Violence, and Trauma. *Geopolitics*, 26(1), 94–117. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2019.1612880>

Marschall, S. (2015). 'Travelling down memory lane': personal memory as a generator of tourism. *Tourism Geographies*, 17(1), 36–53. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2014.925963>

Mavengano, E. (2025). Cartographies of difference: Race, gender and dis-eased humanity in Mphuthumi Ntabeni's *The Wanderers*. *Literator-Journal of Literary Criticism, Comparative Linguistics and Literary Studies*, 46(1).

McKinney, K. (2007). 'Breaking the Conspiracy of Silence': Testimony, Traumatic Memory, and Psychotherapy with Survivors of Political Violence. *Ethos*, 35(3), 265–299. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1525/eth.2007.35.3.265>

Mikulan, P., & Zembylas, M. (2024). Witnessing transgenerational trauma in teacher education: decoloniality of time, rupture of developmentalism, and settler resistance. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 1–19. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2024.2384502>

Milatovic, M. (2014). Reclaimed genealogies: reconsidering the ancestor figure in African American women writers' neo-slave narratives.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2018). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*. California: SAGE Publications.

Miller-Graff, L. E. (2022). The Multidimensional Taxonomy of Individual Resilience. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 23(2), 660–675. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838020967329>

Mills, B., & Turnbull, G. (2004). Broken hearts and mending bodies: the impact of trauma on intimacy. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 19(3), 265–289. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681990410001715418>

Mulyadi, M. S., & Putra, C. R. W. (2020). Transmisi Memori Peristiwa 1965 dalam Novel Pulang dan Amba. *Jurnal Aksara*, 33(1), 71–82.

Ndlovu, M., & Tshuma, L. A. (2021). Bleeding from One Generation to the Next: The Media and the Constructions of Gukurahundi Postmemories by University Students in Zimbabwe. *African Studies*, 80(3–4), 376–396. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/00020184.2021.1987188>

Ogden, P., Pain, C., & Fisher, J. (2006). A Sensorimotor Approach to the Treatment of Trauma and Dissociation. *Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 29(1), 263–279. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psc.2005.10.012>

O'Neill, L., Fraser, T., Kitchenham, A., & McDonald, V. (2018). Hidden Burdens: a Review of Intergenerational, Historical and Complex Trauma, Implications for Indigenous Families. *Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma*, 11(2), 173–186. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40653-016-0117-9>

Pangestu, M. A. (2021). Memori Kolektif dalam Novel Secangkir Teh Melati. *JENTERA: Jurnal Kajian Sastra*, 10(2), 188–196. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.26499/jentera.v10i2.2010>

Parashar, S. (2018). Discursive (in)securities and postcolonial anxiety: Enabling excessive militarism in India. *Security Dialogue*, 49(1–2), 123–135. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010617746527>

Pearce, P. L. (2012). The experience of visiting home and familiar places. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2), 1024–1047. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2011.11.018>

Pugliese, E., Visco-Comandini, F., Papa, C., Ciringione, L., Cornacchia, L., Gino, F., ... Mancini, F. (2024). Understanding Trauma in IPV: Distinguishing Complex PTSD, PTSD, and BPD in Victims and Offenders. *Brain Sciences*, 14(9), 1–21. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3390/brainsci14090856>

Punamäki, R.-L., Qouta, S. R., & Peltonen, K. (2017). Family systems approach to attachment relations, war trauma, and mental health among Palestinian children and parents. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 8, 1–15. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/20008198.2018.1439649>

Putra, J. N. I., Rahmawati, D., & Jia, C. (2024). Exile Trauma and Gender Relevance in the Novel Pulang: Postmemory Studies Marianne Hirsch. *Poetika*, 12(1), 51–62. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.22146/poetika.v12i1.96336>

Putra, N. R., & Dermawan, T. (2023). Distopia dalam Novel Terjemahan The Long Walk Karya Stephen King (Kajian Psikologi Abnormal Davison). *ATAVISME*, 26(2), 102–116. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.24257/atavisme.v26i2.881.102-116>

Ritchey, G. A. (2025). *The Impact of Historical Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma on Black American Women Who Endured Adverse Childhood Experiences*. Liberty University.

Rufaedah, A., & Putra, I. E. (2018). Coping with Stigma and Social Exclusion of Terror-Convicts' Wives in Indonesia: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. *The Qualitative Report*, 23(6), 1334–1346.

Russida, C. A. (2024). Memori dan Trauma dalam Dua

Novel Sastra Indonesia-Tionghoa Kontemporer. *Widyaparwa*, 52(1), 154–164. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.26499/wdprw.v52i1.1666>

Sabawi, S. (2020). *Inheriting Exile: Transgenerational Trauma and Palestinian-Australian Identity*. Victoria University.

Salberg, J., & Grand, S. (2024). *Transgenerational Trauma*. London: Routledge. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003087762>

Schmukalla, M. (2024). Memory as a wound in words: on trans-generational trauma, ethical memory and artistic speech. *Feminist Theory*, 25(1), 23–41. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/14647001221119993>

Schore, A. N. (2002). Dysregulation of the Right Brain: A Fundamental Mechanism of Traumatic Attachment and the Psychopathogenesis of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 36(1), 9–30. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1440-1614.2002.00996.x>

Schwab, G. (2010). *Haunting legacies: Violent Histories and Transgenerational Trauma*. Columbia University Press.

Sendra, J. (2025). Violence and Resistance in Rural Java. *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 53(155), 36–62. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/01080/13639811.2025.2472555>

Sheets, K. (2024). Embroidered memories: postmemorial nostalgia in Palestinian tatreez. *Emotions and Society*, 6(3), 383–402. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1332/26316897Y2024D000000038>

Stern, J. D. (2022). Three generations later; Examining transnationalism, cultural preservation, and transgenerational trauma in United States Indo population. *Wacana, Journal of the Humanities of Indonesia*, 23(3), 654–691. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.17510/wacana.v23i3.1006>

Tize, C. (2025). Silenced: Palestinian Families in Berlin Navigating Increased Censorship and Surveillance. *Genealogy*, 9(2), 1–17. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3390/genealogy9020049>

Utami, S. F. (2022). Transmisi Memori Traumatis dalam Novel Ath-Thanturiyyah karya Radhwa 'Asyur. *Diwan: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab*, 14(2), 63–76. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.15548/diwan.v14i2.827>

van der Kolk, B. (2022). Posttraumatic stress disorder and the nature of trauma. *Dialogues in Clinical Neuroscience*, 2(1), 7–22. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.31887/DCNS.2000.2.1/bvdolk>

Veronese, G., Mahamid, F., & Bdier, D. (2023). Transgenerational trauma and collective resilience: A qualitative analysis of the experiences of settler-colonial violence among three generations of Palestinian refugees. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 69(7), 1814–1824. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/00207640231175787>

Winward, M. (2021). Intelligence Capacity and Mass Violence: Evidence From Indonesia. *Comparative Political Studies*, 54(3–4), 553–584. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414020938072>

Young, S. D. (2024). *Rising from the Ashes: A Daughter's Guide to Healing Generational Trauma and Thriving Beyond Dysfunction*. Selina Deborah Young.

Zamzuri, A. (2020). Membaca Jatisaba: Menelisik Memori, Trauma, dan Jalan Pulang. *Widyaparwa*, 48(2), 269–282. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.26499/wdprw.v48i2.629>

Zolkos, M. (2024). Transposition, generationality, and trauma: From psychoanalytic Holocaust studies to post-mnemonic cultures. *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society*, 29(1), 51–68. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41282-024-00432-w>