



## Representation of Social Criticism of Post-1965 Historical Reality in the Novel *My Name is Alam* by Leila S. Chudori

Sefia<sup>1\*</sup>, Resdianto Permata Raharjo<sup>2</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Jawa Timur, Indonesia

\*E-mail: [sefia.22111@mhs.unesa.ac.id](mailto:sefia.22111@mhs.unesa.ac.id)

### ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the representation of social criticism regarding the historical reality of the post-1965 era in Leila S. Chudori's novel *Namaku Alam*. This study employs a qualitative method based on Alan Swingewood's sociological approach to literature, which focuses on literature as a social document or a reflection of the times. The data source for this study is the novel *Namaku Alam* by Leila S. Chudori, published by Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia in 2023. The research data consists of dialogues, sentences, and paragraphs collected using documentation techniques and analyzed using hermeneutic techniques. The hermeneutic process involved the stages of identification, classification, codification, interpretation, and data presentation. The research findings indicate that the novel *Namaku Alam* represents a critique of the post-1965 historical reality through various repressive practices carried out by the state. First, state-sanctioned terror and persecution are represented through arbitrary arrests, forced disappearances, and intensive surveillance of individuals and families deemed to have ties to the PKI. Second, the manipulation of history is represented through the state's control of historical narratives, whether through the construction of official history, public spaces, or the education system. Third, restrictions on freedom of expression are represented through pressure on academics and journalists, a strict licensing system, and the banning of book distribution. These findings indicate that the novel *Namaku Alam* serves not only as a work of fiction but also as a medium for social criticism that reflects the historical reality of post-1965 Indonesia.

*Keywords: social criticism, post-1965, historical reality, novel*

## Representasi Kritik Sosial terhadap Realitas Sejarah Pasca-1965 dalam Novel *Namaku Alam* Karya Leila S. Chudori

### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan representasi kritik sosial terhadap realitas sejarah pasca-1965 dalam novel *Namaku Alam* karya Leila S. Chudori. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan tinjauan sosiologi sastra Alan Swingewood yang berfokus pada perspektif sastra sebagai dokumen sosial atau cerminan zaman. Sumber data penelitian ini adalah novel *Namaku Alam* karya Leila S. Chudori yang diterbitkan oleh Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia pada 2023. Data penelitian berupa dialog, kalimat, dan paragraf yang dikumpulkan menggunakan teknik dokumentasi dan dianalisis menggunakan teknik hermeneutika. Teknik hermeneutika dilakukan melalui tahapan identifikasi, klasifikasi, kodefikasi, interpretasi, dan penyajian data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa novel *Namaku Alam* merepresentasikan kritik realitas sejarah pasca-1965 melalui berbagai praktik represif yang dilakukan negara. Pertama, praktik teror dan perburuan aparat direpresentasikan melalui penangkapan tanpa proses hukum, penghilangan paksa, serta pengawasan yang intensif kepada individu maupun keluarga yang dianggap memiliki keterkaitan dengan PKI. Kedua, manipulasi sejarah direpresentasikan melalui pengendalian narasi sejarah oleh negara, baik melalui penyusunan sejarah resmi, ruang publik, maupun sistem pendidikan. Ketiga, pembatasan kebebasan berpendapat yang direpresentasikan melalui tekanan terhadap akademisi dan jurnalis, sistem perizinan yang ketat, serta pelarangan peredaran buku. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa novel *Namaku Alam* tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai karya fiksi, tetapi sebagai medium kritik sosial yang merefleksikan realitas sejarah pasca-1965 di Indonesia.

*Kata kunci: kritik sosial, realitas sejarah, pasca-1965, novel*

Submitted  
25/04/2026

Accepted  
01/05/2026

Published  
05/05/2026

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Citation | Sefia, S., & Raharjo, R. P. (2026). Representation of Social Criticism of Post-1965 Historical Reality in the Novel <i>My Name is Alam</i> by Leila S. Chudori. <i>Jurnal Pembelajaran Bahasa dan Sastra, Volume 5, Nomor 3, Mei 2026, 1967-1980</i> . DOI: <a href="https://doi.org/10.55909/jpbs.v4i3.1421">https://doi.org/10.55909/jpbs.v4i3.1421</a> |
|----------|---|

Publisher  
Raja Zulkarnain Education Foundation

## INTRODUCTION

The events of 1965 marked a crucial turning point in Indonesian history, leaving an indelible mark. This humanitarian tragedy befell the masses and supporters of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), as well as individuals associated with the PKI or communism. The events began with the kidnapping and murder of six high-ranking officers, followed by the massacre of tens of thousands of innocent Indonesians (Kardiman & Pandor, 2023:321). These actions were not considered human rights violations, but rather were seen as legitimate means to prevent a coup. Many victims were arrested, tortured, imprisoned, and even executed without due process. The impact was felt not only by the direct victims but also by their families, who were also imprisoned, spied on, and ostracized. This situation demonstrates the repressive state power relations that shaped the post-1965 social reality in Indonesia.

In this repressive situation, Indonesian literature became an alternative space to voice the suffering of PKI victims from a humanitarian perspective (Jasril & Asmawati, 2025:133). This event had a broad impact on society, including the world of literature, which authors utilized to convey moral values, social facts, and social conflicts occurring in society to readers. Because literary works reflect social conditions, the emergence of social facts within them is inevitable. Through the characters, plot, and setting presented in literary works, authors are able to present reflective experiences and encourage readers to be sensitive to the conflicts presented.

Furthermore, literature also serves as a means of conveying social criticism of various phenomena considered deviant. Social criticism can be understood as a form of disapproval or resistance emerging from individuals or groups against social realities deemed less than ideal (Shofiani, 2022:35; Elmustian et al., 2024:208). In this context, literary works often serve as a medium for expressing dissatisfaction with social conditions, including the repressive practices of

state power in the post-1965 era. This aligns with the opinion of Aji & Arifin (2022:73), who state that social criticism is not merely an expression of dissatisfaction with social or political situations but also functions as a mirror of reality capable of raising readers' awareness.

One form of literary work that contains a lot of social criticism is the novel. In the world of writing, many novels contain elements of social criticism, although they come with different identities, goals, and approaches. Through novels, authors can express human values that are often used as a mirror for issues related to crime, infidelity, discrimination, sexual harassment, and other life problems (Elmustian & Nurhasni, 2026:35; Wantu, 2019:3). Dissatisfaction with social realities that are perceived as not meeting expectations encourages authors to voice their aspirations through social criticism as a form of resistance to these conditions. Thus, novels function not only as imaginative works, but also as a reflective medium for social reality.

Leila S. Chudori's novel "Namaku Alam" is an example of a novel rich with social criticism and is interesting to study. This novel represents the social reality of post-1965 Indonesia, particularly the socio-political conditions marked by the dominance of state power. The novel depicts various forms of social pressure, such as terror and persecution by the authorities, historical manipulation, and restrictions on freedom of expression. Through these depictions, the novel not only presents historical reality but also contains a social critique of the practices of power that foster fear and injustice in society. However, studies specifically examining the representation of social criticism of post-1965 historical reality in this novel are still limited, making this research important.

These phenomena indicate the presence of social criticism conveyed by the author through the plot and characters. To further examine the representation of social criticism of post-1965 historical reality in Leila S. Chudori's novel



"*Namaku Alam*" we use Alan Swingewood's sociological approach to literature. Sociology of literature is defined as the study that examines the relationship between literary works and social life (Salsabila & Alwi, 2025:1501). Through this perspective, literary works are understood as the result of social processes that reflect the values, norms, and social structures that developed during a particular period. The use of sociological theory of literature in this study is based on the fact that literary works cannot be separated from the society that gave birth to them. Within the paradigm of literary studies, specifically the sociology of literary works, it is considered an evolution of Plato's mimic approach, which interprets literary works in terms of the realities and social dimensions of society (Wiyatmi, 2013:8). This view is based on the fact that the presence of literary works cannot be separated from the social realities that occur in society.

In their book entitled "The Sociology of Literature," Swingewood & Laursen (1972:13) put forward three main perspectives on approaching literary works. First, literature as a social document or reflection of the times. This perspective views literary works as a reflection of social conditions at a particular time, emphasizing that literature functions as a record of the times, depicting socio-political conditions, class conflicts, and prevailing norms at that time. Second, literature as a reflection of the author's historical background. This perspective understands that literary works reflect the author's background, including the author's social, cultural, political, and economic environment, as well as his or her life experiences. Third, it relates to history and literary works. This perspective examines how a literary work is received by society during a particular period, including responses, interpretations, and its impact on social life.

The sociology of literature approach, applying Alan Swingewood's theory, is highly relevant to this research because it highlights the relationship between literary works and their social context. In

this case, the research will focus on the first perspective, namely literature as a social document or reflection of the times. This perspective views literary works not only as imaginative works but also as reflections of social reality, including power relations, conflicts, and prevailing social dynamics. Therefore, the sociology of literature approach, applying Alan Swingewood's theory, is highly relevant to examining the representation of social criticism in the novel *Namaku Alam*, particularly as it relates to post-1965 historical realities.

Based on the background outlined above, the research problem is formulated as to how social criticism of post-1965 historical reality is represented in Leila S. Chudori's novel "Namaku Alam." In line with this formulation, this research aims to describe the representation of social criticism of post-1965 historical reality in Leila S. Chudori's novel *Namaku Alam*.

Theoretically, this research is expected to contribute to the development of literary studies using a sociological approach to literature, particularly the theory proposed by Alan Swingewood. Practically, the results of this research can serve as a reference for other researchers, students, and educators in understanding the function of literary works as reflections of social reality and as teaching materials in literature learning.

Several studies related to this topic can be used as consideration. First, the study conducted by Azhariyah & Qomariyah (2025) examines the criticism of the education system contained in Leila S. Chudori's novel "Namaku Alam" and assesses its suitability as a recommended literary work in the "Literature Included in the Curriculum" section. This research shows that novels are used as a medium for social criticism in the educational realm. However, the focus of this study is still limited to the educational aspect and has not specifically addressed the post-1965 historical reality. Therefore, this study expands on that study by emphasizing the representation of social criticism within a broader historical context.

Second, research conducted by Zuhud (2023). This study focuses on the values of character education in Leila S. Chudori's novel *Namaku Alam* and outlines its application theory for teaching literature in 12th-grade high school students from the perspective of the Lesson Implementation Plan (RPP). This study focuses more on the values of character education in the novel *Namaku Alam*. Therefore, this study was conducted to complement existing studies by focusing on the representation of social criticism of post-1965 historical reality in Leila S. Chudori's novel *Namaku Alam* using Alan Swingewood's sociological theory of literature.

Third, research conducted by (Mayangsari et al., 2024). This research focuses on depicting historical reality and social class in the novel *Namaku Alam* by Leila S. Chudori using a materialist approach and Karl Marx's social class theory. The findings of this research indicate a historical event that occurred in 1965 and a social conflict in the form of a conflict between the upper and lower classes. The similarity between the previous research and this research lies in the object of study analyzed, namely the novel *Namaku Alam* by Leila S. Chudori. The difference lies in the approach used. If previous research emphasized social class analysis, this research offers a new perspective through Alan Swingewood's sociology of literature approach to examine how social criticism of post-1965 historical reality is represented in the novel.

## METHOD

This research is a qualitative study to examine the social criticism represented in Leila S. Chudori's novel *Namaku Alam*. This approach was chosen because the data obtained and analyzed are qualitative, such as the dialogue, sentences, and paragraphs contained in the novel. Creswell (2009:22) states that qualitative research focuses on exploring and understanding the meanings individuals assign to a phenomenon. In this context, this study seeks to describe in detail the

social phenomena contained in the novel clearly in accordance with the existing problem formulation.

This research is examined using the sociology of literature approach developed by Alan Swingewood, specifically the perspective that views literature as a social document or reflection of the times. Through this perspective, literature as a social document or reflection of the times can be understood that every literary work is not born in a vacuum but rather records and responds to the social, political, and cultural situations of the time in which it was created.

The data source for this study comes from the novel *Namaku Alam* by Leila S. Chudori, published by Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia (KPG) in September 2023. The data in this study consist of dialogues, sentences, and paragraphs contained in the novel, which represent issues consistent with the problem formulation, namely the representation of social criticism of post-1965 historical reality.

The data collection technique in this study used documentation. The steps taken in the data collection process were as follows:

1. Read the novel "Namaku Alam" by Leila S. Chudori carefully from beginning to end to understand the overall storyline.
2. Identify dialogues, sentences, and paragraphs containing social criticism.
3. Record findings systematically and ensure that the data found is relevant and in line with the research focus.
4. Organize the collected data into a classification table for easier understanding.

The data analysis technique used in this study was hermeneutic analysis. The stages of data analysis are as follows.

### 1. Identification and Classification

At this stage, the researcher begins by reading and thoroughly understanding the novel's contents to identify concepts that align with the research problem. The collected data is then classified based on the research problem, while irrelevant data is removed so that only relevant data is used.



## 2. Tabulation and Coding

At this stage, the researcher tabulates data to organize and present it systematically. During the tabulation process, the researcher organizes and enters the raw data into tables. Meanwhile, coding serves to group the collected data. The data coding process involves assigning labels or codes to data relevant to the research focus.

## 3. Data Interpretation

At this stage, the tabulated and coded data are interpreted to find answers to the research problem. The interpretation process involves interpreting the meaning contained in each classified data item. Through this stage, the various forms of social criticism representation that appear in the novel can be understood and their relevance to the research focus explained.

## 4. Data Presentation

The final stage of this research is data presentation. Data presentation is done by reorganizing the reduced data into a structured and easily understood narrative. The data is presented systematically according to the focus of the research problem.

The data validity test in this study used triangulation techniques. Triangulation is a key concept in qualitative research to increase the accuracy, validity, and depth of data analysis (Arianto, 2024:92). Generally, triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods of data collection and analysis, thereby increasing the reliability of research results. In this regard, Sugiyono defines triangulation as the process of verifying data by utilizing different sources, methods, and time periods (Sugiyono, 2023:368). Furthermore, Sugiyono explains that triangulation in research includes source triangulation, data collection technique triangulation, and time triangulation. All three forms of triangulation will be used in this study. The following is an explanation of each form of triangulation.

### 1. Source Triangulation

Source triangulation is a method for testing data validity by comparing data obtained from different sources (Sugiyono, 2023:369). In this

study, source triangulation was conducted by comparing data found in Leila S. Chudori's novel "Namaku Alam" with references to Alan Swingewood's sociology of literature theory and relevant previous research to support the validity and accuracy of the text's interpretation.

### 2. Technical Triangulation

Technical triangulation is an approach used to test validity by examining data from the same source but using different techniques (Sugiyono, 2023:369). In this study, data was obtained from Leila S. Chudori's novel *Namaku Alam* through documentation techniques and then analyzed based on research categories and focus. This step was taken to ensure the credibility and accuracy of the analyzed data.

### 3. Temporal Triangulation

Temporal triangulation is an effort to test the validity of data by collecting or examining the same data at different times (Razak, 2027:271; Sugiyono, 2023:369). In this study, temporal triangulation was conducted by cross-checking data in the form of quotations from Leila S. Chudori's novel *Namaku Alam* at different times. The researcher reread the data sources and rechecked the recording, data collection, and analysis results to ensure the interpretation aligns with the research focus.

## RESULTS

### 1. Terror and the Hunt by Officials

The results of the study indicate that the novel "Namaku Alam" represents a social critique of the post-1965 historical reality, as seen through the practice of terror and the hunt for individuals deemed to have links to the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) or communism. This finding is based on data 1, data 2, and data 3. Data 1 depicts the unclear fate of individuals arrested after the 1965 incident. In the novel excerpt, the character Ibu explains that many people were arrested without clear reason, imprisoned, disappeared, and even executed. This indicates repressive actions lacking legal certainty. In data 2, terror and the hunt are depicted through the experiences of Alam and his

family. Alam's father had to live on the run for three years, while the family he left behind experienced pressure from constant visits by authorities. Their home was searched and accompanied by various threats, indicating intensive surveillance of suspected individuals. Furthermore, in data 3, it was found that the hunt was not only aimed at PKI members but also extended to family, friends, and groups deemed to have links to left-wing groups. Furthermore, professions such as artists and journalists were also targeted. This indicates that the practice of terror was widespread and targeted various levels of society.

## 2. Historical Manipulation

In addition to the practice of terror, the research also shows that the novel "Namaku Alam" exhibits representations of historical manipulation as a form of social criticism of post-1965 historical realities. This finding is based on data 4, 5, and 6. Data 4 reveals the view that history was not constructed entirely objectively. Characters in the novel convey that those in power have the authority to select, erase, or exaggerate historical facts. This demonstrates that history can be constructed to suit specific interests. In data 5, historical manipulation is evident in the public narrative presented at the Heroes of the Revolution Monument. On this occasion, the 1965 Incident is presented in a simplistic manner, positioning one party as the rebels and the other as the saviors of the nation. This presentation demonstrates a single narrative being conveyed to the public. Meanwhile, in data 6, limited public access, particularly for students, to a comprehensive understanding of history is found. The character Alam reveals that many important events, including the 1965 Tragedy, are not fully taught in education. This indicates a limitation in the historical information received by the public.

## 3. Restrictions on Freedom of Expression

The research also shows that social criticism of post-1965 historical realities in the novel "My Name is Alam" is represented through restrictions

on freedom of expression. This finding is based on data 7, 8, and 9. Data 7 reveals that academics and journalists are under pressure from those in power. Historians and journalists are depicted as not being free to express their opinions due to the risk of reprimand, even arrest and banning. This indicates limitations in the production of knowledge. In data 8, restrictions on freedom of expression are evident through the state's system of control over various community activities. Various activities, such as media publications, demonstrations, and the production of works of art, must go through a strict licensing process. This condition indicates control over public space. Furthermore, in data 9, the government found a ban on the distribution of books. The state has the authority to determine which books are or are not accessible to the public. Furthermore, there is the threat of punishment for individuals who distribute or read banned books. This indicates control over access to information and knowledge.

## DISCUSSION

### Terror and the Hunt by Officials

One form of social criticism of the post-1965 historical reality is clearly visible in the practice of terror and the hunt for individuals deemed to have links to the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). This is evident in the following data.

Data 1

"Honestly, I don't know, son. There are many things I don't understand about what happened to you and to all of us. This time, I'm not lying or covering things up. Many of your friends were arrested, and the reasons for their arrests are unclear. Some went through the courts, many were imprisoned, disappeared without a trace. Some were even executed..." (Chudori, 2023:43).

The data above demonstrates the unclear fate of the victims of post-1965 arrests, as conveyed by Ibu to Alam. Statements about arrests without clear reasons, disappearances, and executions without legal certainty demonstrate that individuals lacked access to a transparent legal process. This



experience is not merely a personal experience of the figure, but a reflection of broader social conditions.

This depiction depicts state power as an unlimited repressive force, particularly through officials with the authority to arrest, detain, and even disappear individuals without clear legal procedures. This situation also demonstrates that social fear in society does not arise naturally, but is constructed through the practice of arrests, disappearances, and executions that occur without certainty. The lack of information and uncertainty about the future create deep anxiety, so that society lives in fear. In this case, fear becomes a social mechanism that reinforces state domination, as individuals lack the courage to question or challenge existing power.

This situation reflects the post-1965 social reality in Indonesia, where repressive actions such as arrests, detentions, and even murders of individuals deemed to be associated with the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) occurred widely and without legal clarity. Through this depiction, the novel *Namaku Alam* presents a social critique of post-1965 historical realities, particularly the abuse of state power that gave rise to collective terror and fear. This demonstrates that literary works function as social documents that both record and reflect the conditions of society at the time. As Alan Swingewood points out, literature cannot be separated from the social context in which it emerged, so the representation in this novel becomes a reflection or a true socio-historical reality.

#### Data 2

That was also the first time Mother told me about how Father had disappeared, hunted by the authorities for three years, and had been unable to visit us as a family. Occasionally, one or two people would leave letters or messages for Mother or Yu Kenanga. And for the first time, Yu Kenanga seemed to confirm my memory of how people came to our house in Salemba almost daily, sometimes in uniform, sometimes in civilian clothes, asking about

Father and rummaging through his documents and books. They usually left with a series of threats to return the following week (Chudori, 2023:45).

The data above clearly demonstrates the terror and persecution experienced by Alam and his family after the 1965 Incident. The statement, "Father disappeared, hunted by the authorities for three years," indicates that the persecution lasted for a long time, forcing Alam's father to live on the run and separated from his family. Furthermore, the almost daily visits of officers to their home, both in uniform and plainclothes, reflect the tight surveillance of the family. This situation illustrates the terror inflicted on Alam's family, who were forced to live in constant fear, uncertainty, and pressure.

The data above depicts state power as a pervasive force through intensive surveillance mechanisms and apparatus. The repeated searches, threats, and presence of officers demonstrate that the state not only controlled individuals deemed involved in the 1965 Incident but also extended surveillance to the family environment. This situation also demonstrates that social fear was constructed through persistent terror practices. The presence of officers, accompanied by repeated threats, created a persistent sense of fear for Alam's family, leaving them without a safe space in their daily lives.

This situation reflects the post-1965 social reality in Indonesia, where the practice of hunting down and monitoring individuals deemed to have links to the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) created psychological pressure for them and their families. Through this depiction, the novel *Namaku Alam* presents a social critique of the post-1965 historical reality, particularly through the practices of terror and the hunt by the authorities that created collective fear in society. This depiction demonstrates that literary works function as social documents, both recording and reflecting the social conditions of society at the time. As Alan Swingewood argues, literature cannot be separated from the social context in which it originated, so

the depictions in this novel represent the social realities experienced by society at that time.

#### Data 03

The bloody events of September 30th were then avenged with blood. Not only were PKI leaders and members hunted and arrested, but the 30th of September would later become a pretext for the massacre of entire parties, families, friends, and left-wing sympathizers. You were among those hunted because left-wing artists and journalists were considered part of everything wrong, evil, and that had caused disaster in this country (Chudori, 2023:153-154).

The data above demonstrates the widespread practice of terror and persecution after the September 30, 1965, incident, as expressed by Bunga Kenanga. The phrase "a bloody event then repaid with blood" not only describes violence but also justifies the retaliatory actions taken. The persecution was not limited to PKI members but also extended to family, friends, and anyone perceived to have ties to left-wing groups. The quote also highlights that artists and journalists with leftist leanings were also targeted, as they were considered evil professions and classified as enemies of the state.

Through this depiction, the data above demonstrates state power operating not only through repressive measures but also through the production of narratives to determine who is considered guilty. By positioning left-wing groups as wrong and evil, the state indirectly legitimized acts of violence against them. This narrative ultimately created a social stigma widely accepted by society, so that acts of terror, manhunts, and even murder were considered normal and justified.

This phenomenon reflects the post-1965 social reality in Indonesia, where the official state narrative played a significant role in shaping public perceptions of groups deemed associated with the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). Through this depiction, the novel *Namaku Alam* presents a social critique of post-1965 historical reality, par-

ticularly through the practice of terror and manhunts against those deemed involved with the PKI. This depiction also reflects the social conditions of society at the time, in line with Alan Swingewood's view that literary works are social documents that reflect social reality.

#### Manipulation of History

In addition to the practice of terror and manhunts, social critique of post-1965 historical reality is also represented through the manipulation of history by those in power. This can be proven by the following data.

#### Data 04

"History... a collection of facts and events compiled for future study. The problem," the intelligent Trimulya sighed and glanced at me, "is that whoever is in power at the time will select and sort through the facts and events, and often times, some will omit or exaggerate facts or a person's role in an event." (Chudori, 2023:11-12).

The data above demonstrates Trimulya's view of the historical process, which is not entirely objective. Although history is understood as a collection of facts and events, Trimulya emphasizes that those in power have the authority to select, sort, and even erase or exaggerate certain facts. This statement demonstrates that history is not a neutral truth, but rather a construction influenced by the interests of those in power.

In the post-1965 context in Indonesia, the process of historical construction is inseparable from the state's dominance, which seeks to shape the official narrative regarding the 1965 events. Through its authority, the state, or the New Order government in power at the time, can determine the version of history considered true, while other facts that do not align with the interests of those in power can be omitted. This aims to shape collective memory and direct people's thinking to align with the interests of those in power.

This phenomenon reflects the post-1965 social reality in Indonesia, particularly during the





New Order era, when the writing of history was under state control and used as a tool to strengthen the legitimacy of power. Through this depiction, the novel *Namaku Alam* represents social criticism to the post-1965 historical reality, particularly the practice of historical manipulation that serves as an ideological instrument of the state. This demonstrates that literary works function as social documents, both recording and reflecting the conditions of society at the time. As Alan Swingewood argues, the representation in this novel thus serves as a reflection of the practices of power in the construction of history.

#### Data 05

We gazed at the statue of the Heroes of the Revolution, which looked majestic, gazing into the distance. According to the guide, a group of rebels had tried to seize power. They kidnapped and killed the generals, and then President Suharto arrived to save the nation (Chudori, 2023:72).

The data above shows how the 1965 Incident is represented through the public narrative at the Heroes of the Revolution Monument. The guide's explanations present the events in a simplistic and one-sided manner, positioning a group of rebels as the guilty party, while President Suharto is positioned as the nation's savior. This presentation demonstrates that history is not presented as a space for understanding various perspectives, but rather as a fixed narrative designed to be accepted by the public without clear factual support.

Through this depiction, it is clear that state power operates not only through formal policies but also through controlling the meaning of historical events. By presenting a single version of the truth, the state shapes collective memory and directs society's perspective on past events according to its interests. When society is continually confronted with a single narrative legitimized by the state, a tendency arises to accept that narrative without questioning its truth.

This phenomenon reflects the social reality of the New Order era, when the state actively utilized public spaces, such as monuments and mu-

seums, to disseminate official narratives about the 1965 events. Through this depiction, the novel *Namaku Alam* presents a social critique of post-1965 historical realities, particularly the practice of historical manipulation used as an ideological tool to maintain power. This demonstrates that literary works function as social documents, both recording and reflecting the conditions of society during their time. As Alan Swingewood argues, literature is closely related to the social reality that gave birth to it, so the narrative in this novel serves as a reflection of the state's ideological practices.

#### Data 06

"I think..." I cleared my throat, trying to clear the lump of saliva that always lingered in my throat whenever I was forced to speak, "Indonesian students, not just Putra Nusa, have long been disadvantaged because they have never had full access to learn or understand Indonesian history in its entirety. We... we have been deprived by our history. So, this is a chronic problem that has existed since the birth of the New Order, when modern Indonesian history was completely controlled by the government." ... Slowly, I continued, "We have never been able to learn more deeply about what happened in the 1965 Tragedy; there has never been a record of the bloody events of 1965-1966 where hundreds of thousands, even reportedly millions, of people died or disappeared simply because they were considered to be involved or family members of the PKI. In my opinion, 1965 changed our identity as an Indonesian nation, and we have never discussed it in history at all. So, if we only get the government's version of the 1965 Incident, how do we know what happened with the Malari Incident? All of that should be recorded as part of modern Indonesian history." (Chudori, 2023:245-246).

The data above demonstrates Alam's critical awareness of the limited access of the public, particularly students, to a comprehensive understanding of Indonesian history. The phrase "We... we have been deprived by our history" suggests that

society seems to have lost access to its own history due to the government's control of the narrative. Alam also alludes to the 1965 Tragedy as a major event that resulted in numerous victims and whose broad socio-political impact was never openly discussed in history lessons in schools.

This situation illustrates the role of state power as an ideological force that operates through the control of knowledge in the educational sphere. The state has significant authority to determine what events may be taught and how those events are understood by the public. Controlling history through education demonstrates that state power also operates through the formation of students' ways of thinking. By controlling the subject matter in schools, the state can direct the understanding of the younger generation to align with the political interests of those in power.

This phenomenon reflects the social reality of the New Order era, where history teaching was under state control and used as an ideological tool to shape society's collective consciousness. Through the above depiction, the novel "Namaku Alam" represents a social critique of the post-1965 historical reality, particularly the manipulation of history legitimized through the education system. This demonstrates that literary works function as social documents that both record and reflect the conditions of society during their time. As Alan Swingewood argues, literature cannot be separated from the social context in which it emerged, so the representation in this novel reflects the practice of ideological control through education.

### Restrictions on Freedom of Expression

In addition to the practices of terror and historical manipulation, the social criticism of post-1965 historical realities in the novel *Namaku Alam* is also represented through restrictions on freedom of expression. This can be evidenced by the following quote.

Data 07

It must be understood that at that time, Indonesian historians were like snails, only daring to curl up inside their homes and not dar-

ing to go out and write history well, correctly, and with the critical wit expected of academics. During the New Order era, historians and journalists were two of the most miserable professions. The choice was: suck up to the New Order and live a safe and prosperous life, or be somewhat rebellious and risk arrest or banishment from the government. There may be one or two historians who are brave enough to write academic essays that are critical of the government's explanation, especially regarding the history of the 1965 Tragedy (which the government calls G30S/PKI), but usually historians of this kind must be prepared to live in hiding and experience academic "reprimands" (Chudori, 2023:14).

The data above illustrates the conditions of academics during the New Order era, who were under pressure from the authorities. The quote explains that much historical research was written by foreign historians, while Indonesian historians were portrayed as snails, only daring to curl up in their houses. This expression reflects the fear experienced by academics, making them reluctant to write freely and critically. Furthermore, historians and journalists were in a difficult position, having to choose between submitting to the government for safety or being critical at the risk of arrest, banning, or even forced disappearance.

This situation reflects the social reality of the post-1965 era, when the state wielded immense power to control information and knowledge production. The government exercised strict control over the media, the academic world, and various forms of intellectual expression. Freedom of expression was restricted through threats of arrest, banning, and reprimands from official institutions, so that society became accustomed to silence and discouraged from expressing opinions that differed from the government's.

Thus, through the depiction of the data above, the novel "Namaku Alam" represents a social critique of the post-1965 historical reality, particularly the restrictions on freedom of expression, including in the academic and journalistic spheres,



which were under the control of state power. Through this representation, the novel *Namaku Alam* not only presents a fictional story but also reflects the social conditions of society in the post-1965 era, when freedom of thought and expression was severely restricted. This aligns with Alan Swingewood's view that literary works are understood as social documents reflecting the conditions of society at the time. Therefore, the representations in this novel serve as a reflection of the restrictions on intellectual freedom.

#### Data 08

"I think in the Indonesian context, we are familiar with various institutions that impact our lives: from those that complicate things that are considered to disrupt or destabilize the status quo to those that allow for virtually no criticism. The House of Representatives (DPR) struggles to function, and the fourth pillar of government, the press, struggles to breathe without the threat of closure. Every activity we undertake requires a permit: a permit to establish a newspaper or news magazine, a permit for demonstrations, a permit for gatherings of more than five people; a permit for performances, a permit to produce a film, and so on. This is not about establishing a neat system of rules, but rather about a desire for unlimited control," said Mr. Darmawan, nodding at Kemal and me (Chudori, 2023:225).

The data above illustrates the socio-political conditions during the New Order, which were dominated by state power. Pak Darmawan's statements demonstrate that the government was in a difficult position to criticize, while institutions like the House of Representatives (DPR) failed to perform their functions optimally. Furthermore, various public activities were regulated through a strict licensing system, including permits for media publications, demonstrations, assembly permits, and even permits for the production of works of art. The licensing system was not merely intended to create order, but also served as a tool to control and restrict people's freedoms.

This situation reflects the social reality of the New Order era, in which state power was dominant and centralized, capable of controlling almost every aspect of society. This power operated not only through repressive measures but also through a bureaucratic system that restricted individual freedom of movement. This situation also fostered social fear, making people reluctant to express opinions or engage in activities that could potentially conflict with the government. As a result, public participation in democratic life became increasingly limited, while state control over society intensified.

Thus, through this depiction, the novel "*My Name is Alam*" represents a social critique of post-1965 historical realities, particularly the restrictions on freedom of expression through a comprehensive system of state control. The novel not only depicts social conditions but also critiques how state power is used to restrict individual freedoms and control public opinion. This demonstrates that literary works function as social documents, both recording and reflecting the conditions of society during their time. As Alan Swingewood argues, literature is closely linked to the social reality that gave rise to it, thus making the narrative in this novel a reflection of the dominance of power in social life.

#### Data 09

In early 1981, the government announced a number of books banned from circulation, each citing its own reasons. At the time, the Attorney General's Office had such broad authority that even banning the distribution of books fell under its purview. Each year, they would typically announce a list of books banned for "public unrest."

I remind you that since the ban was announced, anyone who distributed or purchased them could face imprisonment (Chudori, 2023:270).

The data above illustrates government policy during the New Order era, which banned the distribution of a number of books for specific rea-

sons. This quote explains that the Attorney General's Office had broad authority, including determining which books should not be distributed to the public. Every year, the government would announce a list of books banned for public unrest. Furthermore, anyone who dared to distribute or even purchase these books would face imprisonment. This demonstrates that the state not only monitored public activities but also attempted to control the public's reading material.

This situation reflects the social reality of the New Order era. By banning the circulation of books, the state can determine the limits of knowledge that the public can access. This policy demonstrates the state's authority to control public thought by restricting access to reading materials. The threat of imprisonment for distributors and readers also creates social fear, preventing people from seeking or reading information that differs from the government's official narrative.

Thus, through the depiction of the data above, the novel *Namaku Alam* represents a social critique of post-1965 historical realities, particularly the restrictions on freedom of expression imposed through state control of public reading materials. This novel not only depicts the practice of book banning but also critiques how state power creates social fear as a strategy to control public thought. This demonstrates that literary works function as social documents that both record and reflect the conditions of society during their time. As Alan Swingewood argues, literature is closely related to the social reality that gave birth to it, so the representations in this novel serve as a reflection of the practice of limiting knowledge.

The strength of this research lies in the use of Alan Swingewood's sociological approach to literature, which allows for the interpretation of literary works as social documents, thus revealing the relationship between the novel's text and the post-1965 historical reality contextually. Furthermore, this study presents an analysis focused on three main forms of social criticism of post-1965 historical reality: terror and the hunt for authorities, historical manipulation, and restrictions on

freedom of expression, resulting in systematic findings.

However, this study also has limitations. First, the data source for this study is limited to a single literary work, the novel *Namaku Alam*, so the results cannot be generalized to describe the overall representation of social criticism in Indonesian literary works that address similar themes. Second, the analysis focuses on the representational aspect of the text, thus not encompassing other perspectives, such as reader reception or the author's background in greater depth.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that Leila Chudori's novel *Namaku Alam* presents a social critique of post-1965 historical realities through three main aspects: the practice of terror and persecution by the authorities, historical manipulation, and restrictions on freedom of expression. First, the practice of terror and persecution by the authorities is depicted through unlawful arrests, enforced disappearances, and intensive surveillance of individuals and their families. This depiction demonstrates the repressive nature of state power and the ability to create collective fear in society. Second, historical manipulation is depicted through the process of selecting and simplifying historical facts by those in power, both through public narratives and the education system. This demonstrates that history is not presented objectively but rather constructed to support the interests of those in power. Third, restrictions on freedom of expression are depicted through pressure on academics and journalists, a strict licensing system, and the banning of several books deemed disturbing to the public, demonstrating state control over information and public spaces for expression.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to thank all parties who contributed to the preparation of this article, both directly and indirectly. In particular, the author expresses his appreciation to the supervisor for his



valuable direction, guidance, and input in the process of writing this article.

## REFERENCES

- Aji, M. S., & Arifin, Z. (2022). Kritik Sosial dalam Novel Orang-Orang Oetimu Karya Felix K. Nesi serta Relevansinya sebagai Bahan Ajar di SMA: Tinjauan Sosiologi Sastra. *Enggang: Jurnal Pendidikan, Bahasa, Sastra, Seni, dan Budaya*, 2(2), 72–82. <https://doi.org/10.37304/enggang.v2i2.3885>
- Arianto, B. (2024). *Triangulasi Metoda Penelitian Kualitatif*. Balikpapan: Borneo Novelty Publishing.
- Azhariyah, I. M., & Qomariyah, U. (2025). Kritik Sistem Pendidikan Indonesia dalam Novel Namaku Alam Karya Leila S. Chudori dan Kelayakannya sebagai Rekomendasi Buku Sastra dalam “Sastra Masuk Kurikulum”. *Anthology: Journal of Language, Literature, and Learning*, 1(1), 17–29. <https://journal.unnes.ac.id/journals/anthology/article/view/27272>
- Chudori, L. S. (2023). *Namaku Alam*. Jakarta: KGP (Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia).
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. California: SAGE Publication.
- Elmustian, Rasdana, O., & Alfalah, A. (2024). Tema Utama Cerpen Profetik menurut Respon Mahasiswa Baru. *Jurnal Pembelajaran Bahasa dan Sastra*, 3(2), 203–212. <https://doi.org/10.55909/jpbs.v3i2.576>
- Elmustian, E., & Nushasni, N. (2026). Development of Test Devices to Find Intrinsic Elements of Prophetic Short Story Texts as a Learning Technique for Grade X Senior High School. *DISCUSSANT: Journal of Language and Literature Learning*, 4(1), 25–42. <https://doi.org/10.55909/dj3l.v4i1.77>
- Jasril, J., & Asmawati, A. (2025). Representasi Tragedi Gerakan 30 September 1965 dalam Novel Kubah dan Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk Karya Ahmad Tohari. *Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia*, 9(1), 132–142. DOI:10.33087/aksara.v9i1.1011
- Kardiman, T., & Pandor, P. (2023). Dampak Pelanggaran HAM 1965 (Pengaruhnya terhadap Peluang Pendidikan Kaum Muda Indonesia). *Sovereignty: Jurnal Demokrasi dan Ketahanan Nasional*, 2(1), 318–330. <https://doi.org/10.17977/um020v17i12023p105-122>
- Mayangsari, N., Rachmawati, K., & Susanto, A. (2024). Realitas Sejarah dan Kelas Sosial dalam Novel Namaku Alam Karya Leila S. Chudori. *Jurnal Pembelajaran Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia*, 5(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.59562/indonesia.v5i1.55962>
- Permata, H. (2016). Gerakan 30 September 1965 dalam Perspektif Filsafat Sejarah Marxisme. *Jurnal Filsafat*, 25(2), 220–251. doi: <https://doi.org/10.22146/jf.12680>.
- Razak, A. (2017). *Metode Riset: Menggapai Mixed Methods Bidang Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia*. Pekanbaru: Ababil Press.
- Salsabila, N., & Alwi, Z. (2025). Representation of Social Class and Social Injustice in Mira Widjaja’s Novel di Balik Kabut Amnesia. *Jurnal Pembelajaran Bahasa dan Sastra*, 4(6), 1499–1508.
- Shofiani, A. K. A. (2022). *Kritik Sosial dalam Wayang Durang PO*. Cipedes Tasikmalaya: Perkumpulan Rumah Cemerlang Indonesia.
- Sugiyono, S. (2023). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Swingewood, A., & Laurensen, D. T. (1972). *The Sociology of Literature*. London: Paladin.



Wantu, S. A. (2019). Kritik Sosial dalam Novel Entrok Karya Okky Madasari. In *Skripsi. Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastrs Indoensia*, Universitas Negeri Gorontalo.

Wiyatmi, W. (2013). *Sosiologi Sastra: Teori dan Kajian terhadap Sastra Indonesia*. Yogyakarta: Kanwa Publisher.

Zuhud, I. S. (2023). Nilai-nilai Pendidikan Karakter pada Novel Namaku Alam Karya Leila S. Chudori dan Teori Implementasi untuk Pembelajaran Sastra di SMA. In *Skripsi. Universitas Widya Dharma*.