I began with the tetralogy *Bumi manusia* [This Human Earth], particularly working on the currents that ebbed and flowed during the period of Indonesia’s National Awakening. And so there came to be a new reality, a literary reality, a downstream reality whose origin was an upstream reality, that is, a historical reality. A literary reality that contains within it a reorientation and evaluation of civilization and culture, precisely what is not contained in the historical reality. So it is that the literary work is a sort of thesis, an infant that on its own begins to grow in the superstructure of the reader’s society. (Toer, “Ma’af, Atas Nama Pengalaman”)

I would like to say that Freud’s concept of *afterwardsness* [*Nachträglichkeit*] contains both great richness and a certain ambiguity, combining a retrogressive and a progressive direction. I want to account for this problem of the different directions, to and fro, by arguing that, right at the start, there is something that goes in the direction of the past to the future, from the other to the individual in question, that is in the direction of the adult to the baby, which I call the implantation of the enigmatic message. This message is then retranslated, following a temporal direction which is, in an alternating fashion, by turns retrogressive and progressive (according to my general model of translation-detranslation-retranslation). (Laplanche, *Essays on Otherness*)

The late Indonesian writer Pramoedya Ananta Toer makes a distinction between a “downstream” literary reality and an “upstream” historical reality. Pramoedya suggests that literature has an effect on the upstream flow
of history, that it can change history. *Situated Testimonies* follows and illu-
minates this process through considering a selection of Dutch Indies and
Indonesian writers whose works span the breadth of the twentieth cen-
tury and beyond. The book suggests that literary works can bring inef-
fable experiences of trauma into narrative form. Pramoedya’s books on
the turn-of-the-twentieth-century writer Tirto Adhi Soerjo, one of the
writers discussed in Chapter 2, have changed the history of Tirto himself
and the history of what Pramoedya calls Indonesia’s National Awakening.
Soewarsih Djojopoespito, the only “Native” Indies individual to have writ-
ten a novel in Dutch, was asked to translate her own Dutch novel into
Indonesian thirty-five years after it was written, changing and, in effect,
doubling the original.¹ Holland’s prolific twentieth-century writer Louis
Couperus’ time in the Indies in 1899 changed his novels about Holland.

Dread and enchantment haunt twentieth-century Dutch Indies and
Indonesian literary archives. Literary works, seen as *situated testimonies*,
offer a method of reading the traces that elude archival constructions—
emotional traces that historians may fail to record or witness.² My use of
Haraway’s notion of “situatedness” reiterates the idea that all of us speak
from somewhere.³ Testimony, especially eyewitness testimony, is a gold
standard in historical methodology. The authors of literary works are eye-
witnesses of their time, but literary works are first of all written as lit-
erature. Literary or formal aspects cannot be ignored in the attempt to
unravel the secrets and mysteries that literary works contain. In addition to
formal analyses of “literature,” some literary works can then become situ-
ated testimonies to be placed in historical archives. In a figurative sense, as
this book illustrates, an archive is a site of exclusion, haunting, and lack.
In a literal sense, archives point to collections of documents and written
testimonies that exist in institutional forms and spaces. How political fac-
tors influence processes of shaping and preserving archival materials has
become the focus of scholarly work that looks at archival constructions
under colonial conditions or in the face of postcolonial state repression.⁴
As Pramoedya explained, colonial and postcolonial literary works influence
the way the past has been narrated in particular Indonesian archives.
This way of reading follows the logic of French psychoanalyst and philo-
osopher Jean Laplanche’s notion of “afterwardsness,” as explained in the
second epigraph opening this introduction. Afterwardsness is Laplanche’s
preferred translation of Sigmund Freud’s idea of *Nachträglichkeit*, usually
rendered as “deferred action.”
Jean Laplanche is best known in the United States for the loved and occasionally hated dictionary of Freudian concepts and terms that he cowrote with Jean-Bertrand Pontalis in 1967. Beyond the field of psychoanalysis, Laplanche’s newer work from the 1980s and 1990s has much to offer to literary analysis and history writing. This later work deals with questions of time, translation, and the Other, and it is this work that has inspired my thinking about historical archives, literature, the Dutch Indies, and Indonesia. Jean Laplanche’s idea of “afterwardsness” makes the chapters of this book difficult to place in historical time. For example, Chapter 5, on the work of Pramoedya Ananta Toer, retells parts of the story discussed in Chapter 2, on Tirto Adhi Soerjo, and Chapter 6, on the haunting work of Ayu Utami, returns to themes raised in Chapter 1, on the haunted work of Maria Dermoût. Though Dermoût published her work in the 1950s, later than Couperus’ or even Soewarsih’s major work, Dermoût’s work seems the oldest, lost forever in tempo doeloe, or time past. Indonesia’s national hero and first president, Soekarno, appears in several chapters with different resonances in each location.

What is “afterwardsness” and how does it help tell the story I want to tell? The German word Nachträglichkeit has been translated as deferred action for most of the twentieth century by James Strachey, Freud’s official translator and editor of the Standard Edition of Freud’s works. The concept was first used by Freud in the late nineteenth century and appears in many of his major essays. For Freud the idea was closely related to trauma, age, sex, seduction, and time. It is an idea many scholars have sought to clarify, argue with, or reject. Freud used deferred action to explain how, though an adult might see an event in the past as sexual even years after that event has occurred, that same event would not be understood by a child as sexual until after adolescence. Once an individual is sexually aware, Freud indicates, that individual’s early experiences might be triggered by a later event and perceived as traumatic, even though the experience would not have been viewed as traumatic at the time of its occurrence. This, in a drastic simplification, is Freud’s concept and the logic of Strachey’s translation. For Freud the key concept was and always was sex. In Laplanche’s reworking of the idea, however, messages given in early childhood by caregivers/motherers/punishers leave traces or, to use Laplanche’s Lacanian borrowing, enigmatic signifiers. The enigmatic signifiers implant ideas, and these ideas—called by Laplanche intrusive intimacies—must be retranslated in different ways to work through traumatic memories.
linking of enigmatic signifiers and intrusive intimacies serves as one of my guides to the literatures of Dutch colonial and Indonesian postcolonial times because the ideas point to the places where secrets hide and gaps in memory are found.

**Trauma, Memory, and Archives**

What are the problems that attend historical and fictional writing in the face of trauma and its vicissitudes? Freud was known for popularizing the ideas of male as well as female hysteria and, after World War I, for equating shell shock with the traumatic neuroses, even though he and Breuer and other researchers had already developed the discourse and study of trauma in the late nineteenth century. Scholars of European history have written about the inabilities of trauma victims to narrate the past, and there is an extensive body of work available on the problems of witnessing faced by Holocaust survivors. Dori Laub, a Holocaust survivor, has summarized the different sense of time, memory, and narrative of those who have survived excruciating suffering as follows: “Trauma survivors live not with memories of the past, but with an event that could not and did not proceed through to its completion, has no ending, attained no closure, and therefore, as far as its survivors are concerned, continues into the present and is current in every respect.” Laub suggests that trauma survivors experience time differently from others and that this has implications for both witnessing and testimony. Laub raises again the issue of narrative memory versus traumatic memory, discussed here and in Chapters 2 and 6, and the Afterword, a debate that goes back to the research of Charcot in the late nineteenth century. Walter Benjamin, commenting on ideas from Proust and Freud, phrased this as a difference between voluntary and involuntary memory. For Benjamin, Proust’s famous *madeleine* scene from *A la recherche du temps perdu* was the classic example of involuntary memory. This debate over forms of memory continues today, although it is framed in different ways. One such distinction that has remained popular in neuro-psychoanalytic theory is between declarative memory and procedural memory: the former includes memories of events and experiences that can be recalled in narrative form, and the latter refers to forms of habitual life like walking, talking, or driving that cannot be recalled into narrative memory. Trauma is connected to time in the work of these writers and has been most interestingly explored in Jean Laplanche’s retranslation of
Nachträglichkeit as “afterwardsness,” discussed in the various chapters of this book. Intellectual historian Dominick LaCapra raises the notion of a break in time for trauma survivors: “Trauma indicates a shattering break or cesura in experience which has belated effects.” This delay is relevant for those Indonesians who survived the anticommunist massacres of 1965–1966 in that their stories have been suppressed for decades, and the inability to narrate those stories has an impact on the ways in which the past has been remembered. The authors discussed in the following chapters write about these issues of trauma, memory, and survival.

But how can the experience of trauma, an experience that psychoanalysts argue cannot be held in memory or narrated in linear form from memory, be expressed in historical or literary works? If, as I and many others have suggested, traumatic narratives emerge only in conversation with another—what Laplanche calls “the fabric, the context of those memories and expectations”—then these are messages, Laplanche suggests, that we have never listened to enough or clearly understood. This is why an attitude of mourning attends all attempts to render trauma into narrative. The possibility of communicating traumatic experiences gives rise to ethical considerations when psychoanalysts, scholars, and/or fiction writers claim traumatic messages solicited by them are the stories of trauma survivors themselves. The debate between Holocaust survivor, professor, and psychoanalyst Dori Laub and literature professor Thomas Trezise poignantly captures many of these issues when Trezise questions Laub’s work on the taking of testimonies from survivors of holocausts for its sensitivity to the ineffable quality of such testimony and the bond between the survivor and the listener who elicits the testimony. As Laub explains in his response to Trezise:

Testimony is not a ready-made text. It emerges from a process that is set in motion in a place that provides safety through the presence of the listener (interviewer) for the witness (interviewee). . . . Once the survivors start the mental journey into their past, once they look inside themselves in the presence of an attuned listener, testimony assumes a life of its own. It is unpredictable which memories will come alive and what narrative gestalt will eventually emerge. Indeed, many survivors have voiced astonishment toward the end of their testimony because they did not expect to be able to say so much. They seem surprised by themselves and what came to their minds during their interviews. In
Laub is arguing several important points here: testimony does not exist as a narrative in memory before it is given, testimony needs a listener to summon and hear it, and testimony might/will be different every time it is given. For those scholars and fiction writers whose work strives to capture a trauma that exists in the past and bring it into the present, they can only attempt to bring questions of trauma and memory into narrative discourse. This is what Pramoedya does in his literary work and why literature often seems a more effective vehicle for traumatic narration than ethnography or history.

I am not arguing that the literary is only a question of form or history, and I do not separate the literary from the political, the historical, or the psychoanalytic in my discussion. Questions of form and discipline must make way for the knowledge that trauma reconfigures time and history. In this book, I focus on questions of trauma and its implications for historical and fictional writing more than I focus on events per se. Pramoedya is a critical writer, aware of psychoanalytic theory, questions of trauma, and the heavy political costs of the New Order’s bloody beginnings in genocide and ending in ethnic violence. The effect of Pramoedya’s—or Couperus’, Dermoût’s, or Ayu’s—efforts to bring trauma into fictional form is to allow questions of trauma and its attending affects to surface. The writers whose work I have chosen to discuss in this book are those whose work has touched me in a way that leads me to partake, for a moment, in the traumas of Indonesia’s past. But that does not mean that the literary or historical representation of trauma is ever adequate to the event of trauma. These questions of trauma and narrative lead necessarily into questions of archives as well.

The work of scholars who have studied the narratives of trauma survivors confounds older notions of how archives can be used and suggests a need to consider archives as more fluid and contingent than scholars have posited in the past. How political factors influence processes of shaping and preserving archival materials is the focus of recent studies that look at archival constructions under colonial conditions or in the face of postcolonial state repression. Achille Mbembe comments on the ghostly
qualities of archives in the face of state violence and censorship: “The destroyed archive haunts the state in the form of a spectre, an object that has no objective substance, but which, because it is touched by death, is transformed into a demon.”

Mbembe’s comments evoke Freud’s original conception of the traumatic neurosis, discussed below, as a delayed reaction to a fright that goes unremarked until it reappears in the forms of neuroses or hauntings. As argued in the following chapters, psychoanalytic terms and discourses entered Indies literatures in the first decades of the twentieth century and entered Indonesian literature and popular culture with the birth of the new nation, growing stronger over the past decades. Pramoedya Ananta Toer and Ayu Utami introduce traumatized protagonists in their novels, portray experiences of Nachträglichkeit and haunting, and offer stories with incomplete closure. The idea of destroyed archives haunting the nation is particularly relevant for work on New Order Indonesia, where the State controlled official narratives of the past, and this idea is one starting point for reconsidering Indonesian histories and their silences.

Psychoanalysis, Dread, and Enchantment

This book interrogates psychoanalytic discourse as it moves through colonial and postcolonial time. I am not a Freudian, and I am not arguing that Freudian psychoanalysis influenced the Dutch Indies or Indonesia. Rather, I am interested in how Freudian psychoanalysis and its French interpreters were part of a transnational discourse that circulated through and became intertwined with imperial technologies, ways of remembering, and ways of forgetting. To explore these imperial and colonial discourses, I use literary and historiographical ways of reading to see how colonial and postcolonial novels of the Indies and Indonesia illuminate nationalist narratives and imperial histories.

The Dutch and Dutch Indies novels and novellas discussed in the first few chapters are linked in various ways. They all go back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, even though two of them, Maria Dermoût’s (1888–1962) novels Only Yesterday and The Ten Thousand Things, were not published until the mid-1950s. Louis Couperus (1863–1923), one of Holland’s most famous authors, wrote his most celebrated Haagsche romans (novels of colonial era Den Haag) in the early years of the twentieth century, and the Javanese author and first Native
newspaper publisher Tirto Adhi Soerjo (1880–1918) wrote his novellas in the first decade of the twentieth century as well. Dermoût, Couperus, and Tirto could all have been in the Indies, on Java, at the same moment at the turn of the last century. Maria Dermoût definitely read the work of Couperus. Did she read Tirto’s work? It seems doubtful, since Tirto was not looked upon favorably by the Dutch Indies government that employed Dermoût’s husband in increasingly important roles over the second and third decades of the twentieth century. These Dutch and Dutch Indies novels and novellas introduce phantoms, dread, haunting, and melancholia. They draw on circulating psychoanalytic discourses from the fin-de-siècle world. Although I group these concepts of phantoms, melancholia, and dread together, they are used differently in psychoanalytic and literary narratives.

Trauma is connected in this book to both phantoms and phantasies. For phantoms, I draw on the work of Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, especially Abraham’s idea that phantoms are “the gaps left within us by the secrets of others.” Phantasies, in my usage, can be related to phantoms, and they are part of the psychoanalytical discourse this book traces. Phantasies are generated by colonial and postcolonial desires and sexualities, and they appear as echoes and what Couperus called elmoes (magical powers, M/I ilmu) from the Indies that infect Dutch colonials who settle in or visit the Indies and Indies inhabitants themselves. There is a displacement of time and space in my ideas of colonial and postcolonial phantasies that resonates as well with Laplanche’s idea of afterwardsness explained above. Ayu Utami, whose work I discuss in Chapter 6, makes an important attempt to distinguish phantoms from phantasies in order to heal Indonesian archives and to begin the work of healing Indonesia’s New Order survivors.

Melancholia is another term that appears in the different chapters of this book in many forms. Like several other feminist scholars working on literature and psychoanalysis, I draw on the space opened up by Freud in his work on melancholia to support those who argue for a “critical melancholia” that can be used, in some instances, to further a feminist critique of nationalism. Fears of phantoms and states of melancholia can cause dread and anxiety in individual subjects. Angst is the Dutch word for dread, terror, and anxiety, as it is the German, Danish, and Norwegian word. Dutch Indies writers found angst in the Indies, a remainder and reminder of Holland, which haunted them and their literary works. But
The Afterwardsness of History

anxiety was not only a European condition; it accompanied the colonial modernities that were introduced in the late nineteenth century to those Southeast Asians who were trained in European language schools. The novellas of Tirto Adhi Soerjo are filled with the anxieties of modernity but with modernity’s enchantments as well.

Gaps, secrets, phantoms, and Laplanche’s intrusive intimacies fill the literary works of Maria Dermoût and Louis Couperus; both spent periods of their childhood in the Dutch Indies. The phantoms and phantasies of the Indies in Dermoût’s and Couperus’ literary works also enchant them and the characters they create. Although Dermoût and Couperus both present phantoms and phantasies in their literary works, they do not distinguish between the two. Educated in colonial schools in Holland or the Indies, Couperus and Dermoût were archivists of modernity’s impact on Indies peoples. Compared to the repressed, dreary, and dark world of Holland, the Indies is filled with light and shadows for these authors. In the shadows are echoes and phantoms of the past, echoes of colonial crimes and passions. Couperus was born twenty-five years before Dermoût, and he died almost forty years before she did. Dermoût did not start publishing her work until after the Dutch had been forced out of the Indies. Her colonial critique, although muted, is a powerful one compared to Couperus’. Dermoût identified herself with the Indies, while Couperus identified himself with Europe—France and Italy but not Holland. He could not live in Holland.

The enchantment that Couperus and Dermoût depict in their novels is connected to magic, coincidence, curses, and death, and has a darker side when compared to the enchantment of Tirto with the endless commodities and styles that accompanied modernity’s movements. For Soewarsih Djojopoespito, enchantment arises from the spirit worlds of Java and Sunda, and, as she suggests, it was Indonesia’s first president Soekarno’s ability to negotiate between that spirit world and the modern nation that kept him the key figure of Indies and Indonesian nationalism for four decades (1925–1965). The chapters of this book explore the ways that enchantments troubled Indies peoples and continue to trouble Indonesians today. I am not arguing for or against ideas of enchantment but seek to illustrate the affects and the effects of enchantment in Holland, the Dutch Indies, and postcolonial Indonesia. In this book, enchantment includes the ability of capital to generate commodities to fill the lack created by modernity’s loneliness as well as the magical elmoes and phantasies through which both
Dutch colonials and Indies Natives were kept enthralled and blocked from understanding the workings of power and ideology. It is in the post-colonial period that government manipulations of Indonesian enchantments come more clearly into view. Pramoedya and Ayu, in their work, attempt to unravel the workings of enchantment in Indonesian histories. This book suggests that, like history writing, dread and enchantment are processes through which time is stretched, diminished, or doubled.

**Historical and Literary Narratives**

Atom Egoyan’s powerful film *Ararat* illuminates the ideas developed in *Situated Testimonies*. Egoyan had the challenge of being the first film director to make what he calls a “widely released dramatic movie” about the “Armenian Issue.” As a pioneer, Egoyan felt compelled to tell a story that lays bare the events of the Armenian genocide and explores what happens to histories of trauma when they are denied over generations. He states: “*Ararat* is a story about the transmission of trauma. It is cross-cultural and inter-generational.” Egoyan notes that present-day Turkish students do not know the story of the massacres or have been taught that it was the Armenians who committed atrocities against the Turkish people. He points out that these younger generations are not denying the genocide since they actually have not been taught about it. The film and Egoyan’s commentary highlight the fraught relations between history and literature, event and representation, and trauma and memory, themes explored in the chapters of this book. As *Ararat* unfolds, there are continuing shots of life in an Armenian village of 1915. The viewer at first assumes these scenes to be shot in a style of documentary realism, drawing on historical characters. This narrative line is intertwined with two others: a dreamlike sequence that shows the famous Armenian artist and genocide survivor Arshile Gorky painting one of his most celebrated works in his apartment in New York in 1935 and the depiction of a director and a screenplay writer making the first feature film about the genocide in 2001. The narratives are linked by integrating Arshile Gorky into the film, with Gorky’s story drawn from the forthcoming book of a fictional art historian.

*Ararat* moves back and forth in these three time periods, illustrating the work of afterwardsness. The scenes of Gorky himself slowly become dreamlike as the viewer realizes it is impossible to know why Gorky erased the hands of the mother, supposedly his own mother, in his famous painting.
The Artist and His Mother. The timelines intersect more frequently as the filmic apparatus is displayed more clearly for viewers. One particularly vivid moment comes when the art historian angrily walks onto the set and interrupts the filming, breaking the frame and exposing the wounds that filmmakers attempt to hide by sewing viewers into the director’s point of view, a process called suturing. The two-hour film then draws to a close, and viewers realize they are at the premiere of the film and that what they thought was documentary realism is also the director’s creation. This film within the film relies on two “historical” sources: the actual memoir of the missionary and doctor Clarence Ussher, who witnessed parts of the massacre, and the “fictional” art history book about Gorky, the film’s main character. Egoyan blurs the lines between fiction and history again and again. Throughout the film and the film within it, the viewer also comes to realize that memories of the Armenian genocide have been passed down over four generations from survivors and, in their own way, from non-survivors to their descendents. Egoyan states: “The layers of transfer and reception are complex, but absolutely necessary as the story shifts from the eyewitness, to the epistolary, to the dramatized, and finally back to the eyewitness. . . . History is not only the responsibility of the person who speaks the truth. It needs someone to listen.”

Issues of trauma that “need someone to listen” intrude into the story from every direction. From Egoyan’s brilliant film one can take questions rather than answers. But the film reaffirmed for me the nonexistent line between historical and fictional narratives. Both are creations of their authors, written in different narrative modes with different stylistic conventions. Many historians and even more nonhistorians have commented on this by now banal observation. Yet most of the scholarly work in this area has been questioning historical, rather than literary, constructions. Although historians and anthropologists have long used fiction to give “texture” to their work, few have offered methodologies for reading works of literature as both history and literature. By this I mean that one must use both the older style of close readings of literary texts as well as newer methods of ideological and postcolonial critique. Arguing for the opening up of the study of comparative literatures to literatures from outside Euro-America, Gayatri Spivak insists that all literary texts deserve to be read with attention to detail: “I cannot help but think that to deny the privilege of close reading to the texts of the global South is to give in to comparable impulses within the discipline.” To pay serious attention to formalist as well as
ideological features of Dutch Indies and Indonesian texts is a worthy challenge for scholars. To read literature well requires not only language skills, but also the literary critic’s theoretical knowledge, and the anthropologist’s and historian’s various knowledges of the local.

Egoyan asks who has the moral authority to tell a story of genocide. He takes worn-out questions of authenticity, interpretation, and poetic license and breathes new meaning into them. He shows how storytelling can empower the teller if she or he is heard by an active listener. This is the same conclusion drawn by Jean Laplanche, the French psychoanalyst whose work influences this book. Egoyan also shows the destructive work of denial: denial continues the hatreds that lead to genocide. For me, one of the most poignant moments in Ararat is when the genocide survivor/film director acknowledges his desire to know why the Turkish people so hated the Armenians, hated them enough to allow them to be tortured and killed, despite having lived side by side with them for centuries. In the director’s voice-over narrative available on the DVD, Egoyan explains how each person has to come to terms with hatred through individual moral choices, that the Oedipal desire to know can never be satisfied. Egoyan’s film shows how survivor stories can become more extreme, more black and white, as they are told to new generations. It is this process, where more nuanced narratives are folded into dominant narratives, that Egoyan’s film explores.30 Each character in Ararat has his or her own stories, histories, and memories of trauma to tell, but the film made by the survivor/director in Egoyan’s film is stripped bare of subtleties. And by having the director in the film show the images that Egoyan felt needed to be shown, Egoyan frees himself to make a film of great nuance and subtlety.

Overview

The exposure of the filmic apparatus intentionally disrupts Egoyan’s process of subtly convincing viewers to accept the director’s point of view, or suturing the viewers into the director’s ideological position. This disruption leaves the viewer free to decide whose narrative to accept. The anchoring point that is supposed to hold the ideological field in place has been set loose, and meaning slides among the characters and their views of events. For some of the characters, nothing changes; for others, their narrative constructions or accounts of themselves are always being revised. The only thing that Egoyan offers to anchor his film is a button, a button
that was missing from Gorky’s shirt when he was a child having his picture taken with his mother. It is the one remainder of his mother that Gorky has in Egoyan’s film and the film within it. The button is in the first shot the viewer sees when the film begins, and its movement is highlighted in the last shot of the film as Gorky’s mother is shown sewing the button back on the coat. The audience now knows the button’s journey, which has become a phantom of Gorky’s traumatic life that ended in suicide. Its movement is the story of afterwardsness.

Each chapter of this book is more like Egoyan’s button than Lacan’s “upholstery button.”31 There is an imaginary thread that might link the chapters together to anchor the ideological field and hide the gaps or wounds as Lacan’s point de capiton is supposed to do, but it is up to the reader to decide whose story to accept or what each story’s “button” signifies. To help readers answer these questions, my literary archive is filled with novels and short stories, but also with letters, memoirs, essays, and interview material. In some cases, I have met the authors whose stories I retell. I never met Maria Dermoût, of course, but I once sat in the same chair in which she sat at the apartment of Rob Nieuwenhuys, the late Dutch scholar and writer, in Amsterdam. Chapter 1 engages the work of Maria Dermoût because her stories, set in a phantasized fin-de-siècle period, are filled with colonial nostalgia and loss. Some of what she has lost is easy to see: the Indies have been lost to the Dutch. But Dermoût’s sense of loss and lack is complex; it forces lost time—tempo doeloe—into the present and pushes the present into the future. Her loss—of origins, her native land, her son, her true love—is too painful to bear, and thus loss is scattered everywhere in her work, like fragments of the dreamer in a dream. Dermoût’s stories of family entanglements are full of gaps and phantoms; commodities substitute for her characters’ unending lack. Dermoût, who was born in Java, lived from 1888 until 1962 and spent more than thirty of those years in the Indies. Although she was writing for most of her life, she only began to publish her work consistently in the 1950s, almost all of it after the death of her high-ranking colonial bureaucrat husband. Dermoût calls her writing and her use of oral and written sources a form and method of memory: it is through memory that she can keep the past alive, connect with what has been lost, and bring time past into the now. Narrative becomes her mnemonic device, and her literary research is a way to remember.

Chapter 2 compares Dutch metropolitan culture as portrayed in Louis Couperus’ fin-de-siècle novels of Den Haag with Dutch Indies colonial
culture as depicted in the novellas and short fiction of Tirto Adhi Soerjo, elite Javanese journalist, editor, and fiction writer of the early twentieth century. Both Couperus and Tirto turned away from careers in the civil service of the colonial Indies that their families wanted them to pursue, and both became prolific writers of fiction and nonfiction. Tirto is perhaps best known through his portrayal as Minke in Pramoedya Ananta Toer’s *Buru Quartet*. Themes of colonial modernity and sexual degeneracy permeate the works of both authors, producing dread and melancholia in the work of Couperus; and, despite his enchantment with capital, desire, and fashion, anxiety haunts Tirto’s fiction as well. The colonial bureaucrats and cosmopolitan characters, educated and mobile inhabitants of Batavia and Den Haag who appeared in Tirto’s and Couperus’ works, suggest a cross-fertilization of languages and ideas, as Couperus’ novels are peppered with Indies words and phrases and Tirto’s use of popular, or lingua franca, Malay absorbs Dutch as well as French and English words and phrases and Arabic words common in turn-of-the-century Batavian Malay.

Tirto’s and Couperus’ literary descriptions of Batavia at the turn of the last century capture the ways in which Dutch and Indies upper-class writers endowed the colonial government with authority and glamour, ironically in Tirto’s case and nostalgically in Couperus’. In both views, what goes on in the government palaces is hidden from the people, and, in Couperus’ novels, the “people” are hidden from the “semiroyal” activities of the Dutch rulers. Couperus and Tirto Adhi Soerjo were writing their essays, novels, and novellas at the same time that discourses of trauma and neurosis were coming into focus in the emerging European “science” of psychoanalysis. Family secrets escaped and blossomed in these fin-de-siècle literary works into colonial phantasies. These phantasies included ideas of Dutch racial degeneration in the Indies, the early sexual maturatition believed to be prevalent in the Indies, and the connections between phantasies and melancholia. Chapter 2 traces the transnational movement of bodies, fashions, phantasies, and memories between colony and metropole by analyzing the novels and novellas of Tirto and Couperus as “situated testimonies” in fin-de-siècle Dutch and Dutch Indies literary archives. I also look at Tirto’s and Couperus’ essays and journalism to see how these works complement or contradict the ideological attachments of their fiction.

Chapter 3 moves the focus from literature on the Indies written by Dutch authors to a novel written in Dutch by Soewarsih Djopoepoesito.
Soewarsih’s is the only novel written by a colonial Indies Native in Dutch, and, more important, it is considered one of the best novels written by any “Indonesian” before World War II. It provides a unique picture of the lives of Dutch-educated activist intellectuals in the repressive 1930s in the Dutch Indies. Stylistically a novel of psychological realism, *Buiten het gareel* (Free from Restraints) provides an important corrective to the many studies of the 1930s Dutch Indies by its feminist politics of location. Soewarsih was an active participant in the politics of the day, and her novel expanded the realm of the political in the last years of colonial rule. Soewarsih’s novel has never received the attention it deserves since it was overtaken by World War II when it was first published in 1940 in Holland, was unavailable for many years to those who did not read Dutch, and only appeared in Indonesian in the 1970s of the neocolonial Suharto government, when political activism was brutally repressed. For these reasons, Chapter 3 gives a close reading of the narrative of *Buiten het gareel* and reflects on the ways in which Soewarsih’s translation of her own novel from Dutch to Indonesian, thirty years after it was written, changes the original. This close reading enables the following chapter to expand the novel’s world. Chapter 4 looks at Soewarsih’s political essays and compares them with Armijn Pané’s essays on culture and politics in the Indies. I compare the feminist politics of *Buiten het gareel* with Armijn Pané’s controversial novel *Belenggoe* (Shackles), written in Malay and published in Batavia, also in 1940. Soewarsih’s novel uses the figure of Soekarno as an anchoring point to quilt over the ideological gaps in the competing nationalisms of the time. In closing, Chapter 4 revisits several of Soekarno’s famous speeches describing the romance of the revolution, tying together colonial and postcolonial time.

Chapter 5 returns to the story of Tirto Adhi Soerjo as told in the novels of Pramoedya’s *Buru Quartet*, but with a focus on the final novel, *Rumah Kaca* (House of Glass). Rather than the dread of waiting for anticolonial violence or Soekarno’s enchantment with the violence of revolution, postcolonial writers Pramoedya Ananta Toer and Ayu Utami, discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, inscribe a violence that has already happened. Pramoedya and Ayu are driven by a need to record what has been left out of historical archives. Colonial dread has turned into national melancholia, a melancholia caused by the fear of failing to remember a loss that is too large to bear. Issues of loss, witnessing, and testimony are crucial for those who study the victims of trauma, including those who survived the 1965–1966
killings in Indonesia. New research by Indonesian scholar Hilmar Farid has shown that Pramoedya’s famous *Buru Quartet* about the life of Tirto Adhi Soerjo was produced through Pramoedya’s ability to re-create, during his ten-year detention in the Buru prison camp, his archives that had been destroyed, first by Soekarno’s government and then by Suharto’s.32

Chapter 6 turns to the work of feminist writer Ayu Utami. Ayu portrays phantoms and phantasies that echo and negate the enchanted Indies landscapes of Maria Dermoût. Ayu’s novel *Saman* (1998) and its sequel *Larung* (2001) present the twinned male activists Saman and Larung. Unlike Pramoedya’s dichotomy of nationalist and collaborator in *House of Glass*, Ayu’s heroes are wounded, psychotic, and morally confused. Both are activists in Suharto’s New Order, but one is a sympathetic character and one is not. Ayu’s work offers an elite feminist perspective on Frederic Jameson’s notion of “third world” texts as masculinist allegories of the nation. It is the shifting *subjectivity* of the novels’ heroines and the desubjectivation of their heroes that interrupts the novels as national allegories. The space of the novel, where women can inhabit a cosmopolitan subjectivity through their ability to travel, exists beyond the nation. Unlike those authors who see the possibility of redemption in the postcolonial nation as, in the words of Pheng Cheah, “the most apposite figure for freedom today,” Ayu’s novels suggest that the patriarchal vision of the nation may be doomed to failure.33 In her 2008 novel *Bilangan Fu* (The Fu Numeral) and its sequel *Manjali and Cakrabirawa* (2010), Ayu argues that “truth” (*kebenaran*) must be postponed. Only a critical path and a critical spirituality are possible today.

To see Indonesian literary archives haunted by phantoms and phantasies of the past is to see their limits and frames. It is, as James Siegel suggests in his study of the 1998 killings of witches in East Java, to hear the testimonies of those Dutch and Indonesian writers “traumatized . . . in the register of magic.”34 The authors whose work I explore in this book were or are enchanted with the Indies and the postcolonial Indonesian state. The one who remains shows an uncertain dread about its future.