



FLOWERS IN THE WALL
Truth and Reconciliation in Timor-Leste,
Indonesia, and Melanesia
by David Webster

ISBN 978-1-55238-955-3

THIS BOOK IS AN OPEN ACCESS E-BOOK. It is an electronic version of a book that can be purchased in physical form through any bookseller or on-line retailer, or from our distributors. Please support this open access publication by requesting that your university purchase a print copy of this book, or by purchasing a copy yourself. If you have any questions, please contact us at ucpress@ucalgary.ca

Cover Art: The artwork on the cover of this book is not open access and falls under traditional copyright provisions; it cannot be reproduced in any way without written permission of the artists and their agents. The cover can be displayed as a complete cover image for the purposes of publicizing this work, but the artwork cannot be extracted from the context of the cover of this specific work without breaching the artist's copyright.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE: This open-access work is published under a Creative Commons licence. This means that you are free to copy, distribute, display or perform the work as long as you clearly attribute the work to its authors and publisher, that you do not use this work for any commercial gain in any form, and that you in no way alter, transform, or build on the work outside of its use in normal academic scholarship without our express permission. If you want to reuse or distribute the work, you must inform its new audience of the licence terms of this work. For more information, see details of the Creative Commons licence at: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

UNDER THE CREATIVE COMMONS LICENCE YOU MAY:

- read and store this document free of charge;
- distribute it for personal use free of charge;
- print sections of the work for personal use;
- read or perform parts of the work in a context where no financial transactions take place.

UNDER THE CREATIVE COMMONS LICENCE YOU MAY NOT:

- gain financially from the work in any way;
- sell the work or seek monies in relation to the distribution of the work;
- use the work in any commercial activity of any kind;
- profit a third party indirectly via use or distribution of the work;
- distribute in or through a commercial body (with the exception of academic usage within educational institutions such as schools and universities);
- reproduce, distribute, or store the cover image outside of its function as a cover of this work;
- alter or build on the work outside of normal academic scholarship.



Acknowledgement: We acknowledge the wording around open access used by Australian publisher, **re.press**, and thank them for giving us permission to adapt their wording to our policy <http://www.re-press.org>

Writings of an Indonesian Political Prisoner

GATOT LESTARIO

The following excerpts come from the diary of Gatot Lestario, and from letters he wrote to supporters overseas. They are taken from unpublished material in London, courtesy of Carmel Budiardo, who also translated the diary excerpt. The text of letters remains in the English original, with grammar untouched. Accused of being an activist in the East Java branch of the Indonesian Communist Party, Gatot Lestario was arrested and charged. He conducted his own defence at his trial in Blitar in 1978. He was executed by firing squad in 1985.

On Prisoners

Dear Mark,

Prisoners are just like people everywhere. There are tall and short, good and bad. ...

I have received your letter and the First Certificate in English Practice with key and the First Certificate in English Course also with key. Thank you very much.

Also many thanks for your Oxford paperback dictionary and the magazine “National Geographic.” The handwriting of the address is the same as yours? Is it true?

I am happy with the study books, dictionary and magazine. I enjoy them and forget for a while that I am a lonely prisoner.

On Survival

Dear Mark,

It is hard to keep your mind alive in prison. . . . I know I am living in the midst of a totally abnormal society, where survival is the first duty and where too much tenderness or sentiment or resentment or rage would sap my strength and perhaps affect my judgement.

I have begun to understand there are certain costs you have to pay for survival and you had better accept them and not fight them.

No temptation is too strong and no temptation is irresistible. We know that life of sweetness is of pain and sorrow born.

On Our Experiences

Dear Patricia,

The account of a prisoner’s feeling in a “South African Prisoner’s Journey” has the similar aspects but there were some essential different experiences as ours.

Here, we were imprisoned after passing through the notorious massacre. . . . Anyone can kill us without any accusation and years long persecution.

The ironical side was that relating to the imprisonment, we got another oppressive feeling—the possibility after being imprisoned, we would be brought before the Court.

On Waiting

Dear Patricia,

I am still waiting for the further development of the rejection of my request for pardon to the President.

We are feeling fairly well, so don't worry about us.

The Lord gave us great assurance and boldness to witness for Him.

The Saviour will never leave us in the lurch, not in that respect either.

We are not afraid.

Dear Doreen,

Did I thank you for your nice calendar with Kipling's poem "If"?
It hangs over my pillow.

Your "Pilgrims Progress" has arrived already but it can't be delivered yet. It is still in the Security Office.

So Many Letters

Dear Eloise,

I've told Doreen that the correspondence becomes too much, too many letters to answer. I've written to some friends, mostly teachers. Well all my correspondence is helping to improve my English and my Dutch.

To my Dutch friends, I explain that writing letters is a form of therapy or self help, as when one writes about one's feelings, one's anger, one's frustrations, just writing helps one to feel better.

By Accident

Dear Eloise,

I've received safely the two paper clippings you sent me, for they were not in the knowing of the Security Officer.

Accidentally I've met the censor one day and I've known your letter on his box, but he hadn't censored it. So I've asked him to read it your letter without his knowing. I've put the paper clippings in my pocket, for I know it is not allowed to receive your paper clippings containing of political matters. I've returned the letter to him without the clippings. After censored and registered, I got your letter some days later.

The Crime

Dear Mark,

I was sentenced to death according to the Indonesian law and jurisdiction owing to the rejection of my cassation by the High Court on 25th November 1982.

I have made a request for mercy to the President as a last stage on the month of March 1983. If this chance is also rejected by the President, of course I must stand for the firing squad.

To be said, the main conclusion is, we both, my wife and I, are both imprisoned for only having differences of political views with the ruler.

At Pamekasan, November 1984

Dear Diane,

There are 22 prisoners here and about 480 criminals

5 - death sentence

6 - life long

2 - sentence to 20 years.

2 - sentenced to 19 years
2 - sentenced to 17 years
2 - sentenced to 15 years
2 - sentenced to 13 years
1 - sentenced to 10 years

All without deduction of their pre-trial detention which in general between 10 and 12 years long.

Next year we will remain 18 prisoners. The four will be released.

We stay now in a block separated from the criminals. Our condition are relative better.

Sad News

Dear Patricia,

Roderick wrote: "I do hope the lawyer who visited you, was able to do something effective to help your case."

But I am very sorry I have news that is very hard to write to you.

My friend, the lawyer, Pamoeja S. H. (55 years) who helped me to make my second appeal to the President, died on the 15th February 1985 because of cerebral haemorrhage and hyper-tension. It was a sudden death.

Dear Friend (Patricia)

5th August 1982

I am now 57 years old. I was born on 25th November 1925. My birthplace is Trenggalek, a small town surrounded by mountains in south-east Java.

My wife was born on the 8th August 1929 in Semarang, the capital of Central Java. We had been teachers in TAMAN DEWASA, a secondary school, an educational institution being established by the well-known

Indonesian pedagogue, HADJAR DEWANTORO like Rabindranath Tagore of India.

I taught history, my wife English and Indonesian.

Final Page of the Diary: The News from Pamekasan

At 11pm, 30th June '85 the meeting began, Gatot still smiled as usual. To his mother, he gave no messages.

1st July 1985, they were brought to the killing fields (SEKIP PAMAKESAN)

Three warriors were falling down with many bullets of Great Fascis inside their body.

In one hole they were buried (Gatot, Djoko and Rustomo).

Their remains were transferred to Pamekasan Prison Cemetery on 2nd July, 1985.

—The End of the Diary—