Sexual slander revealed: the story of jamilah/jemilah and the act of killing / Saskia E. Wieringa

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Abstrak

Following the murder of six generals and one lieutenant in the night of October 1,1965 by the G30S group, a military-organised psy war followed to incite rightwing militias to help murder probably one million people. At a global scale this genocide is one of the least known massacres after the Second World War. Nationally, it is still surrounded by silence, fear and stigma. A core element in this campaign of hate propaganda was the sexual slander against young women allegedly belonging to Gerwani. Though to most people the details are lost in the abyss of history, the association of the death of the generals with castrating and sexually promiscuous women that the girls were falsely accused of lingers on. In this article, I discuss first the account of Jemilah who was mistaken for Jamilah; her forged testimony proved most inflammatory. Then I analyse a modern-day echo of this story in the sexual and murderous nightmares of Anwar, the protagonist in Joshua Oppenheimer's film The Act of Killing.