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Abstract

Tendenzen in der Gegenwartsliteratur Indonesiens

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Significant aspects of modern Indonesian literature are mostly concerned with the idea of individualism, political orientation in the times of nation-building efforts, with consciousness of historical roots as well as consciousness of individual identity bound to regional culture, furthermore absurdity and grotesqueness as literary expression of Indonesian reality and literature as 'structural analysis' of national mischief. The specific Indonesian context of incisive historical processes, vast social change and the specific circumstances of multi-ethnicity set up a basis for socially engaged literary writings. The idea of a common ancestral home and thus a pan-Indonesian identity brought about by the Sumatran poet and politician MUHAMMAD YAMIN (1903-62) and followed by an individualistic attitude promoted by legendary CHAIRIL ANWAR (1922-49). Chairil belonged to the "Generation of '45" which took great part in the political discussions around the fifties and early sixties. PRAMOEDYA ANANTA TOER (*1926) has been the first important Javanese author on the national stage. He attempts to present the historical development of the archipelago under Eastern eyes to clear up today's Indonesia. Like SITOR SITUMORANG (*1924) he has been imprisoned for his revolutionary approach on a socialistic basis. Sitor's turn back to his regional Toba-Batak culture which is explicit in his recent writings reflects perhaps a main significant tendency in modern Indonesian literature: His generation failed practically to install a nationwide Indonesian identity which now seems to be overlapped by an urban westernized culture in a more and more Java-dominated cultural frame. However, the impact of Western literature on Indonesian avantgarde writers still is of an innovative effect. The works of IWAN SIMATUPANG (1928-70), DANARTO (*1940), BUDI DARMA (*1937) convincingly reveal the absurdity and grotesqueness of Indonesian reality - whereas RENDRA (*1935) resumes oral and visual traditions as part of a new provocative attitude to build up a critical structural analysis of Indonesian society today.