

THE INTERNATIONAL AND THE INDONESIAN NATIONALIST  
MOVEMENT

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## ABSTRACT

### THE INTERNATIONAL AND THE INDONESIAN NATIONALIST MOVEMENT

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This study is an attempt to understand the impact of “the international” on the emergence and development of Indonesian nationalism. It argues that both nationalism studies and IR discipline have remained insufficient in understanding the international. Going beyond the state-centric, structuralist and Euro-centric conception of the international, this thesis inquires into the ideational movements. In search for the question of how the international has influenced nationalism in the case of colonial Indonesia the main premise of this thesis is that four international ideational factors, namely Pan-Islamism, Modernist Islam, Marxism, and Pan-Asianism determined the course of Indonesian nationalism. It further argues that the reasons for these ideas to have become influential in colonial Indonesia are embedded within the intensified impact of the colonial structure at the turn of the twentieth century and anti-colonial reactions to it both from the colonial and semi-colonial world including Indonesian society.

**Keywords:** Indonesia, The International, Nationalism, Colonialism, Anti-Colonialism

## ÖZ

### ULUSLARARASI VE ENDONEZYA MİLLİYETÇİ HAREKETİ

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Bu çalışma, “uluslararası”nın Endonezya milliyetçiliğinin ortaya çıkışı ve gelişimi üzerindeki etkisini anlamaya yönelik bir girişimdir. Hem milliyetçilik çalışmalarının hem de Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplininin uluslararasıını anlamakta yetersiz kaldığını savunan bu tez devlet-merkezli, yapısalcı ve Avrupa-merkezli uluslararası anlayışının ötesine geçerek düşünsel hareketleri incelemeye alıyor. Sömürge Endonezya’sı örneğinde uluslararasıının milliyetçiliği nasıl etkilediği sorusunu araştıran bu tezin ana önermesi, Pan-İslamizm, Modernist İslam, Marksizm ve Pan-Asyacılık olmak üzere dört uluslararası düşünsel faktörün Endonezya’da milliyetçi hareketin gidişatını belirlediğidir. Buna ek olarak, bu çalışma, bahsedilen düşünsel faktörlerin sömürge Endonezya’sında etkili olmasının nedenlerinin, yirminci yüzyılın başında sömürgeciliğin etkisinin daha çok hissedilmesinde ve buna hem sömürge hem de yarı-sömürge dünyadan gelen sömürgecilik karşıtı tepkilerde yerleşmiş olduğunu savunmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Endonezya, Uluslararası, Milliyetçilik, Sömürgecilik, Sömürgecilik Karşıtlığı

*To loving memory of Zekiye Akışık*



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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This thesis is an attempt to understand the role of the international on the Indonesian Nationalist Movement<sup>1</sup> from 1908 to 1945. By critically engaging with the secondary resources on the history of Indonesia, this thesis aims to present a re-reading of the history of nationalism in colonial Indonesia (Netherlands East Indies, then) through focusing on its international constituents. The main argument of this thesis is that Pan-Islamism, Modernist Islam, Marxism, and Pan-Asianism as international ideational factors determined the course of Indonesian nationalism. This thesis further argues that these international ideas became influential in colonial Indonesia due to the intensified impact of the colonialism at the turn of the twentieth century and rising anti-colonial reactions to it from colonial and semi-colonial world including Indonesian society.

It is commonly held that the history of nationalism in Indonesia started with the foundation of *Budi Utomo* in 1908, a Javanese student club, which was formed with the aim of protecting and promoting Javanese culture. Looking from the year 1945, it is impossible to see *Budi Utomo* as an Indonesian nationalist organization; at its best, it was an organization of ethnic/regional nationalism centered on Java.<sup>2</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> Sartono Kartodirdjo states that there is no common denomination attributed to the era in which nationalism developed in the Netherlands East Indies. I prefer to use Indonesian Nationalist Movement among other usages in order to indicate both the genesis of Indonesian nationalism and the subsequent development that culminated in the national revolution. Sartono Kartodirdjo, "Some Problems on the Genesis of Nationalism in Indonesia," *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 3, no. 1 (1968): 68.

<sup>2</sup> Suryadinata indicates that *Budi Utomo* was a Javanese more than a nationalist organization, and it was reluctant to admit non-Javanese as members in its first years. Leo Suryadinata, "Indonesian Nationalism and the Pre-War Youth Movement: A Reexamination," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 9, no. 1 (1978): 101.

name of the organization means “great endeavor” in the Javanese Language, which was not spoken outside of Java. Moreover, in its early years, the organization had a principle to act only in the cultural area, which means that any political activity of the organization or members was undesirable. *Budi Utomo* presents a stark contrast to the Indonesian youth of 1945 who saw themselves as belonging to one fatherland, Indonesia; one people, Indonesian people; and upholding the unity of one language, *Bahasa Indonesia*<sup>3</sup> in their way towards the political goal of *Indonesia Merdeka*<sup>4</sup>. It is the years between 1908 and 1945 that this thesis tries to make sense. How an East Indies-wide nationalism came into being? How nationalist movement reached its goal and proclaimed the nation-state of Indonesia? And most significantly, how the international played its part in this process?

In order to answer these questions, this thesis examines three relevant literature: International Relations (IR), Nationalism Studies, and Area Studies. The first purpose of this examination is to understand the place of nationalism in IR. A closer look at the IR literature reveals two tendencies toward nationalism: 1) Reduction of *international* relations to interstate relations; 2) Reduction of nationalism to its extreme forms.<sup>5</sup> While the former explains why IR pays little attention to nationalism, the latter indicates the particular way through which IR studies nationalism. This chapter argues that these two tendencies are rooted in the three main assumptions of the mainstream IR: state-centrism, domestic-international as separate domains, and unchanging international system under anarchy. While the

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<sup>3</sup> In 1928, Youth Pledge (*Sumpah Pemuda*) was proclaimed at the Second Youth Congress, which would be the general motto of the nationalist movement until the foundation of the Republic. Even today, the day this oath was taken is celebrated as a national day in Indonesia. The pledge goes as follows; “We, the sons and daughters of Indonesia / declare that we belong to one nation Indonesia / We, the sons and daughters of Indonesia / declare that we belong to one people, the Indonesian people / We, the sons and daughters of Indonesia / Vow to uphold the nation’s language of unity, Indonesian.” Translation of Reksodiuro and Sunagio (1974): 69, as cited in Scott Pauww, “One Land, One Nation, One Language: An Analysis of Indonesia’s National Language Policy,” *University of Rochester Working Papers in the Language Sciences* 5, no.1 (2009): 3-4.

<sup>4</sup> It means “Free Indonesia” in Bahasa Indonesia.

<sup>5</sup> Umut Özkırımlı, *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*. (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 4.

state-centrism<sup>6</sup> of the discipline makes nation invisible, constant anarchy rhetoric assumes the nation-states as finished entities, which requires no explanation for how they come into being. In other words, “with few exceptions, International Relations is the study of what happens outside nation-states after they form.”<sup>7</sup> Yet the separation of the international and domestic realms constitutes the most significant obstacle for a serious study of nationalism in IR discipline, in that, in this separation, nations and nationalism are trapped within the domestic realm since the rise of the Waltzian systemic theory.<sup>8</sup> While these three assumptions attribute the international to the interstate, and thus, mostly cancel nationalism out of IR’s agenda, the existing IR studies on nationalism owe their existence to these assumptions again, but through confronting them. The literature concerning the relationship between nationalism and IR<sup>9</sup> points out that especially after the 1990s a set of IR studies displays a new interest in nationalism due to the turbulent era after the Cold War. The character of these nationalisms show that nationalism is taken into consideration when it is in the forms of ethnic conflict, minority/diaspora nationalism, or separatism. From the state-centric assumption’s point, these nationalisms create an uneasiness since they are not state but sub/non-state actors; their aspiration to become a nation-state threaten the finished form of units within the system, and most importantly, their being a threat to the international community takes these nationalisms out of the domestic domain and put them into the international realm. Overall, the main premises of the mainstream theories deny

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<sup>6</sup> The state-centrism is rooted within the discipline with Realist Theories’ – both classical and neorealist variants- so-called success in explaining world politics. Although state-centric assumptions of Realists did not go uncontested, the earliest critique, namely the Liberal International Theory, focused on the existence of non-state actors and their growing influence in world politics. Yet, these non-state actors were also the actors defined against the state.

<sup>7</sup> Martin Griffiths & Michael Sullivan, “Nationalism and International Relations Theory,” *The Australian Journal of Politics and History* 43, no. 1 (1997): 54.

<sup>8</sup> Kenneth Waltz. *Theory of International Politics*. (Addison-Wesley, 1979).

<sup>9</sup> Jan Jindy Pettman, “Nationalism and After,” *Review of International Studies* 24, The Eighty Years’ Crisis 1919-1999 (1998): 151. Griffiths and Sullivan, “Nationalism and International Relations Theory,” 53-55.

a substantial place for nationalism in IR. Consequentially, this thesis problematizes these assumptions in its search for ways to understand the interaction between the international and nationalism.

While mainstream theories denied a substantial place to nationalism as a research agenda, those critical theories that try to overcome the domestic-international distinction were also arid in terms of including nationalism as a domestic phenomenon. Most of the studies that denote a substantial place to “co-constitutive role” of domestic and international relations is Historical Sociology (HS)<sup>10</sup> and Historical Sociology of International Relations (HSIR).<sup>11</sup> There are several studies that try to elaborate social movements (domestic cases) within a country or region by employing HSIR as an approach.<sup>12</sup> However, HSIR does not have a specific agenda for the relation between the international and nationalism, and those studies which employed HSIR to make sense out of nationalism are few in number and usually treat the international as a purely European phenomenon.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Historical Sociology (HS) is generally considered to have flourished in the 1980s with the works of scholars such as Immanuel Wallerstein, Theda Skocpol, Charles Tilly, and Michael Mann, who have analyzed domestic and international forces in totality in contrast to the methodological nationalism of Sociology. Stephen Hobden & John Hobson, eds, *Historical Sociology of International Relations*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 56. As Lawson puts it, HS is “a story of the making of the modern world rooted in the co-constitutive role played by material and ideational factors, by economic, social, and political processes, and by international and domestic forces.” George Lawson, “The Promise of Historical Sociology in International Relations,” *International Studies Review* 8, no.3 (2006): 405.

<sup>11</sup> IR discipline started to converge with HS in order to “historicize” and “socialize” its subject matter and to break with “supra-sociological geopolitical structuralism” in other words, with realism. Benno Teschke, “IR Theory, Historical Materialism, and the False Promise of International Historical Sociology,” *Spectrum: Journal of Global Studies* 6, no. 1 (2014): 6-7.

<sup>12</sup> For example, for Iranian state-formation see, Kamran Matin, “Uneven and Combined Development in World History: The International Relations of State-Formation in Premodern Iran.” *European Journal of International Relations* 13, no. 3 (2007): 419-447; For Tanzimat Reform, Derya Göçer, “Interaction Between the International and the Domestic: The Case of the 1908 Constitutional Revolution in the Ottoman Empire” (PhD diss., London School of Economics and Political Science, 2009).

<sup>13</sup> For such studies which analyze nationalism with HS and HSIR approaches, see Frederick-Guillaume Dufour, “Social-Property Regimes and the Uneven and Combined Development of Nationalist Practices,” *European Journal of International Relations* 13, no.4 (2007): 583-604; Zelal

The second literature in which one can look for a linkage between the international and nationalism is Nationalism Studies. Different schools of thought within Nationalism Studies have been commonly classified as Primordialism, Modernism, and Ethno-symbolism. The difference of opinion that led to this classification among nationalism studies is one about timing, or the origins of nations. According to the primordialist perspective, the origin of nations can be traced to antiquity. Proponents of this perspective argue that nationality, like speech, sight, and smell, is a natural component of human life.<sup>14</sup> Modernist school, on the other hand, stands in stark contrast to this argument and sees nationalism as a distinctly modern phenomenon. Modernists, apart from nations' historical novelty, also argue that nations emerged in the modern era out of a sociological necessity.<sup>15</sup> Ethno-symbolists, on the other hand, criticize both primordialist and modernist explanations and highlights symbolic elements' importance in the formation of ethnic communities which, in time, have possibility to be a nation.

Modernist school among these variants is the one in which one can observe a visible incorporation of the international in the analysis of nationalism. It was not until the 1980s that Nationalism Studies took the international as a component of nationalism. Surprisingly, the 1980s witnessed the liveliest debates on nationalism since the seminal works of Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm, and many more, published within this decade<sup>16</sup> and led to the incorporation of the international to analysis of nationalism. In the formation of nationalism, Anderson's work highlights the importance of print-capitalism in general and the role of colonialism in particular to the colonial context.<sup>17</sup> Gellner, on the other hand, points

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Özdemir, "A Historical Sociology Approach to Iranian Nationalism (1921-1979): An IR Perspective" (PhD diss., ODTÜ, 2016).

<sup>14</sup> Özkırımlı, *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*, 49.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 72.

<sup>16</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ragner, eds, *The Invention of Tradition*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Ernst Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 1983).

to industrialization as a cause for the formation of nationalisms. According to Gellner, the need for homogeneity in the industrial era triggers the rise and domination of high cultures.<sup>18</sup> Another scholar of Modernist Theories, Tom Nairn, in *The Break-up of Britain* (1977), argues that it is the uneven development of capitalism that brought nations into existence.<sup>19</sup>

It became clear that modernity of nation is not the only common ground of these works, but they all regard an international phenomenon as the catalyzer of the formation of nationalisms in the modern era. However, it does not mean that this literature provides a perfect cohesion of the international and nationalism. Dufour, for instance, criticizes nationalism studies for not providing a theory of the international.<sup>20</sup> Another objection to this literature is regarding the nature of the international; as Özdemir argues, international processes in Modernist school are such processes as capitalism or industrialization, which are macro-international structures.<sup>21</sup> However, such a general view of the international misses the role of international ideas/movements, which are also constitutive of the emergence of nationalism. Together with these international structures, international ideas/movements affect the course of the nationalist movement in Indonesia. Lastly, this thesis adds, in addition to these criticisms, that the international in Modernist school is equated with the “Western”. Özkırımlı mentions that by seeing nations and nationalism as “products of specifically modern processes like capitalism, industrialization, urbanization, secularism, and the emergence of the modern

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<sup>17</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London and New York: Verso, 2006).

<sup>18</sup> Ernst Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 1983).

<sup>19</sup> Tom Nairn, *The Break-Up of Britain: Crisis and Neo-Nationalism*, (New Left Books, 1977).

<sup>20</sup> Dufour, “Social-property Regimes and the Uneven and Combined Development of Nationalist Practices,” 583.

<sup>21</sup> Özdemir, “A Historical Sociology Approach to Iranian Nationalism,” 2.

bureaucratic state”, these theories also make a structural claim.<sup>22</sup> However, what these processes -or what this thesis calls the international- have in common in Nationalism Studies is their Western identity. Capitalism, industrialization, or other processes which led to the formation of nationalisms are Western-originated phenomena<sup>23</sup> while a true “international” is not only Western but global. Therefore, this thesis searches for an integration of the non-Western international into the analysis of nationalism, in addition to these “Western” processes.

The third literature of this chapter is the Area Studies literature that deals with Indonesian nationalism. In criticizing the historiography on anti-colonial movements, Erez Manela complained about a sort of methodological nationalism<sup>24</sup> which prevents us from seeing anti-colonial movements’ international origins.<sup>25</sup> According to him:

Much of the history of anticolonial movements has been written as if it occurred solely within the boundaries of the emerging nation, or of the imperial enclosure from which it emerged. Thus, the history of the Indian nationalist movement is written as part of Indian history, or of British imperial history; the history of Chinese nationalism as part of the history of China, and so on.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Özkırımlı, *Theories of Nationalism*, 72.

<sup>23</sup> In fact, these modern processes’ Western identity is also debatable. However, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to make a further discussion about the so-called Western origins of modernity. Here, what this thesis considers is that wherever the origins of these processes are, in Nationalism Studies, like in most branches of social sciences, they are accepted as distinctively Western. From this point onwards, this thesis criticized them for their neglect of non-Western ideas and processes. For a discussion on capitalism’s non-Western origins, see Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System AD 1250-1350*, (Oxford University Press, 1989); for Eastern origins of Western modernity, see John M. Hobson, *The Eastern Origins of Western Civilisation*, (Cambridge University Press, 2004).

<sup>24</sup> Here, methodological nationalism refers to the tendency to analyze social phenomena within the borders of a given unit. In the words of Teschke, it is a methodological fallacy “in which polities were conceived as pre-constituted, discrete, and self-referential units of analysis”. Teschke, “IR Theory,” 8.

<sup>25</sup> Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism*, (Oxford University Press, 2007), xi preface.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, xi preface.

Although Manela's words are illuminating in search of ways to understand the international's impact on nationalism, borrowing this criticism all together to criticize Indonesian nationalism literature would be a little unfair. Most of the studies on Indonesian nationalism are rich in terms of number of works incorporating some elements of the international into the analysis of Indonesian nationalism. Moreover, these studies usually put an emphasis on how these international elements interacted with the domestic forces within the East Indies, therefore, take the domestic-international interaction into consideration. However, the problem lies elsewhere. These studies take the international as selective. It is commonplace that they focus on only one dimension of international components of Indonesian nationalism and provide a partial explanation. Another problem of these studies is that when they point out an international phenomenon as the potential root of nationalism or its impact, they do not make a conscious and systematic analysis of the impact of the international on nationalism but treat the international as a given phenomenon.

One of the most important works that examine the formation of nationalism in the Netherlands East Indies is the *Imagined Communities* of Benedict Anderson. Although the book is a general attempt to understand the development of nationalism all around the world and rich with comparative analysis of cases from Hungarian nationalism to Irish, from Turkish nationalism to Vietnamese, its chapter entitled *The Last Wave* provides a model for colonial nationalisms including Indonesia. Nationalism in the colonies, according to Anderson, is a selection process by Western-educated elites, from the modular forms of nationalism provided by "creole pioneers" in the Americas and European "official nationalisms".<sup>27</sup>

Anderson's account on the origin of nationalism in the colonies is one of the most cited yet, at the same time, most criticized works. Among all of them, Chatterjee's criticism became the most influential, thus worth quoting in length:

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<sup>27</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 113-140.

I have one central objection to Anderson's argument. If nationalisms in the rest of the world have to choose their imagined community from certain 'modular' forms already made available to them by Europe and Americas, what do they have left to imagine? History, it would seem, has decreed that we in the postcolonial world shall only be perpetual consumers of modernity. Europe and the Americas, the only true subjects of history, have thought out on our behalf not only the script of colonial enlightenment and exploitation, but also that of our anticolonial resistance and postcolonial misery. Even our imaginations must remain forever colonized.

...The most powerful as well as the most creative results of the nationalist imagination in Asia and Africa are posited not on an identity but rather on a *difference* with the 'modular' forms of the national society propagated by the modern West.<sup>28</sup>

Although this criticism points out the importance of local sources of nationalism, it is significant in terms of revealing the implicit Eurocentrism in the treatment of the international.

Another influential criticism to Anderson's account of nationalism in *Imagined Communities* comes from Michael Laffan and became one of the key texts of Indonesian nationalism literature. In his book *Umma Below the Winds* (2003), Laffan argues that "seeds of what would become Indonesian nationalism germinated in two of the Central Lands of Islam as much as in Leiden or Batavia" and formation of a common identity which was to evolve into Indonesian one was partially formed through *Jawi* ecumenism in the Middle East through actual pilgrimage and students of Islamic Reformism.<sup>29</sup>

The role of Japanese colonialism in the nationalism and nationalist movement is also a theme running through the literature on Indonesian nationalism.<sup>30</sup> One of the earliest texts in this theme is also from Benedict Anderson or whom we can call as early or young Anderson, which is *Java in a Time of Revolution* (1972). Based on his Ph.D. thesis from Cornell SEAS, Anderson traces the impact of the Japanese

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<sup>28</sup> Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), 5.

<sup>29</sup> Michael Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia: The Umma Below the Winds*, (Routledge: London, 2003), 2.

<sup>30</sup> George McTurnan Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1952), 101-133.

state of mind on young Indonesians and, due to this effect, how a transformation took place in modes of thinking among *pemuda* (youth), which enabled resistance to Dutch colonialism and triggered the national revolution.<sup>31</sup> However, these studies treat Japanese colonialism as isolated from its ideational counterpart, which was Pan-Asianism. As we will see, in this thesis, Japanese occupation of Indonesia will be read against the background of Pan-Asianism.

Although these key texts of Indonesian nationalism usually focused only on one international dimension of nationalism and did not make a conscious claim about the role of the international on nationalism, three studies stand out as exceptions. The first one is George Kahin's outstanding *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (1952). This book is the pioneer study of Indonesian nationalism and was written as early as 1952, just three years after the revolution. Kahin's study was based on his field research in Indonesia during the revolution. As a scholar who had a chance to observe the culmination of nationalist feelings in the revolution first-hand, his work was rich with primary resources, first-person contact information, and apposite analysis. Most importantly, Kahin was also the first person who acknowledge the impact of the international with its several dimensions on Indonesian nationalism. In chapter II of the book entitled "Genesis of the Indonesian Nationalist Movement," he touched upon such themes as Dutch colonial structure, Modernist Islam, and Marxist-Leninist ideas<sup>32</sup> as triggers of Indonesian nationalism while he spared a full chapter to the Japanese occupation. However, Kahin does not focus on these international ideas and processes in full analysis but talks about them in passing. Compared to the rest of the book, which focuses on the internal politics of the revolution in detail, these two chapters remain modest and lack elaboration. As already noted, subsequent works on Indonesian nationalism did not take a holistic view towards the international but compartmentalized it. With the passing of time, these studies undoubtedly had more primary and secondary

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<sup>31</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution: Occupation and Resistance, 1944-1946*, (Cornell University Press, 1972).

<sup>32</sup> It must be noted that Kahin mentioned Marxist-Leninist ideas as an extension of Western education's impact. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution*, 50-51.

resources to rely on and were very much detailed about the issues they worked on. Thus, one can say that Indonesian nationalism literature started with an awareness towards the different components of the international with Kahin, yet before the work was complete, it over-specialized. It is the aim of this thesis to locate the international as its center of analysis, with its several dimensions – Pan-Islamism, Modernist Islam, Marxism and, Pan-Asianism- and reveal its impact on the Indonesian nationalist movement.

The second study, which is important in terms of its emphasis on the international's impact on Indonesian nationalism, was James Siegel's *Fetish, Recognition and Revolution* (1997). In an unusual fashion, Siegel's work takes the development of Bahasa Indonesia from its lingua franca status to a national language as its focus and analyses how this language helped to emergence of nationalism through carrying international ideas. Siegel's work was intended to complement those national histories which focused on the role of Western educated elite or local youth consciousness by showing another side of the nationalism that is the international. To Siegel, in Indonesia, "nationalism began not in the nation and not within the colonial forces but with the reception of messages from Europe and Asia, from nearly all over the world."<sup>33</sup>

The third and last study is John Sidel's recent *Republicanism, Communism and Islam: Cosmopolitan Origins of Revolution in Southeast Asia* (2021), which is an attempt to trace the "cosmopolitan origins" of the Filipino, Indonesian and Vietnamese revolutions.<sup>34</sup> In this study, Sidel was also critical of the Western educated elite's role in nationalization. But he also did not see the remedy in narrating subaltern stories of revolution by focusing on local society and its traditional culture. Thus, it was a criticism of both Anderson and Chatterjee. According to Sidel, this narrative of large-scale nationalization, which culminated in revolutions, did not explain the revolutionary mobilization. Therefore, at this

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<sup>33</sup> James T. Siegel, *Fetish, Recognition, Revolution*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 6.

<sup>34</sup> John T. Sidel, *Republicanism, Communism and Islam: Cosmopolitan Origins of Revolution in Southeast Asia*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2021).

point, Sidel proposed going “beyond nationalism” to understand “cosmopolitan origins of revolution.” Beyond national boundaries, this thesis also searches for the international’s impact on nationalism, while Sidel’s emphasis is on the revolution(s). Although his study looks at the revolutionary mobilization, and, thus necessarily deals with the nationalist movement, it would be plausible to locate his work within the literature that takes revolutions and their transnational networks at its center of analysis.<sup>35</sup> While Sidel’s account “denationalized” the Indonesian Revolution along with Filipino and Vietnamese revolutions,<sup>36</sup> this thesis searches for an internationalized account of Indonesian nationalism. Therefore, this study diverges from Sidel’s work with its emphasis on nationalism and how it emerged and developed until the revolution through its interaction with the international.

Apart from this literature, one last work which worth mentioning due to its relatedness to this thesis is Erez Manela’s *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (2007). As its name signifies, Manela’s work stresses the international roots of anti-colonial nationalism, which is directly relevant to this thesis’ search for the impact of the international on Indonesian nationalism. As already noted, after criticizing national historiography’s embeddedness in national and imperial boundaries, Manela proposes looking beyond these borders to understand anti-colonial nationalisms of colonial and semi-colonial world. Behind the logic of these nationalisms, Manela argues, there was an international phenomenon which he named “Wilsonian Moment.” To Manela, nationalism was internationalized both with US President Wilson’s self-determination discourse and appropriation of this discourse by nationalists in the colonial world.<sup>37</sup> Manela describes this situation with anti-

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<sup>35</sup> For some of these studies see, Benedict Anderson, *Under Three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination*, (London and New York: Verso, 2005); Tim Harper & Sunil Amrith eds, *Sites of Asian Interaction: Ideas, Networks and Mobility*, (Cambridge University Press, 2014); Tim Harper, *Underground Asia: Global Revolutionaries and the Assault on Empire*, (Harvard University Press, 2020); Nicole CuUnjieng Aboitiz, *Asian Place, Filipino Nation: A Global Intellectual History of the Philippine Revolution, 1887-1912* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020).

<sup>36</sup> Sidel, *Republicanism, Communism and Islam*, 17.

<sup>37</sup> Manela, *Wilsonian Moment*, 56-62.

colonial nationalist revolts that broke out in Egypt, India, China, and Korea in 1919. However, the problem with such an account of anti-colonial nationalism reveals itself when we analyze international makings of Indonesian nationalism as this thesis does. In the history of Indonesian nationalism, which was an anti-colonial nationalism, one can see a substantial impact of neither the year 1919 nor the President Wilson's ideas. On the contrary, it was Leninist self-determination rather than the Wilsonian one, which was effective on the 1910s and 1920s' Indonesia, where nationalism and Marxism went hand in hand. However, Manela's assertion's irrelevance to the Indonesian example neither invalidates his assumption nor locates Indonesian nationalism in an exceptional situation among anti-colonial nationalisms. The important conclusion we should derive from this point, as this thesis constantly argues, should be the multi-dimensional nature of the international and, most significantly, these dimensions' non-Western as well as Western roots and identities. Rather than a single Wilsonian moment, we can talk about Pan-Asian moments or Islamic origins of Indonesian nationalism as well as its Marxist-Leninist roots, which altogether constituted an anti-colonial nationalism.

### **1.1 Time, Place and the International**

This thesis locates its search for the impact of the international on Indonesian nationalism at the broader turn of the twentieth century. This time span witnessed great changes not only in colonial Indonesia but all over the world. Primarily, it was an "age in motion" enabled by speed.<sup>38</sup> Technologies in transportation and communication facilitated people, goods, and ideas to travel at an unprecedented speed; while increasing usage of steamship facilitated sea transportation, burgeoning railways realized the same work on land. Telegraph and radio made the world connect more than ever through instant communication. The opening of the Suez Canal shortened the distance between Europe and its Asian colonies.<sup>39</sup> On the

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<sup>38</sup> Takashi Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912-1926*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990).

<sup>39</sup> Bernard H.M. Vlekke, *Nusantara: A History of Indonesia*, (The Hague and Bandung: van Hoeve, 1959), 309-310.

world stage, the old order of international relations started to be challenged by revisionist powers like Japan. Pan- Islamic, Pan-Asian, Islamic Modernist, and Marxist ideas flourished and challenged the old forces of imperialism and colonialism.<sup>40</sup> Echoes of these ideas reached the East Indies by means of print, radio broadcast, migration, and pilgrimage, each facilitated by those technologies of transportation and communication. Starting from the 1870s, Netherlanders saw the East Indies more and more as a place of new opportunities and new life, thus increased the settlements of Europeans in the Dutch colony.<sup>41</sup> The increasing number of Europeans added to an increase in the number of Chinese and Arab immigrants around the same time who would be partners of Europeans in trade activities of the colony as Foreign Orientals. While colonial society pluralized, Indonesians more and more felt the presence of the European rule with centralization of bureaucracy and expanded public education facilities which were introduced as part of the 1901 Ethical Policy. Increasing number of pilgrims of the colony visited Mecca, while the number of Indonesian students in places like Cairo, Tokyo and Leiden rose considerably. Therefore, this thesis locates the emergence and development of Indonesian nationalism in this dynamic era. The place that this thesis is located, as it can be deducted from its name, is confined neither to the borders of the East Indies nor to the Netherlands. In addition to these places, this study searches roots of Indonesian nationalism in Mecca, Cairo, Istanbul, Tokyo, Singapore, and Moscow and the ideas transmitted from these cities. Now against this temporal and spatial background, it is time to make a definition of what this thesis calls the international.

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<sup>40</sup> Cemil Aydın argues that Pan-Asianism and Pan-Islamism became systematic challenges to European International Order starting from the 1880s although European expansionism was a valid process even before this time. The reason for these ideas to emerge at the turn of the century, according to Aydın, is the Ottoman and Japanese perception of a “non-transcendable racial and civilizational barrier” between the West and non-West, due to increasing rigidity of European orientalist discourse on race and civilization and competition in colonialism. Cemil Aydın, “Beyond Civilization: Pan-Islamism, Pan-Asianism and the Revolt against the West,” *Journal of Modern European History* 4, no.2 (2006): 206-207.

<sup>41</sup> Vlekke, *Nusantara*, 309-310.

In the definition of the international, this thesis draws the international's limits by considering what it does not, in order to overcome the problematic aspects of the aforementioned literature. The international is not defined as in the sense of the word in mainstream IR literature, which is relations between states. Although inter-state relations are included, the international in this thesis is defined more broadly to encapsulate the relations between state- non-state actors and non-state – non-state actors. Secondly, it does not only denote structural forces such as capitalism or colonialism -as in the Nationalism Studies literature- but it encompasses the ideas that had wide circulation at the turn of the twentieth century. Thirdly, the international is not defined as a mere Western phenomenon but acknowledged through its non-Western components.

## **1.2 Methodology**

This thesis mostly benefitted from the secondary resources in English, due to my limited reading ability in Bahasa Indonesia. However, this study also benefitted from limited number of primary resources, which are translated into English and published by Marxists Internet Archive (Marxist.org) and Cornell Modern Indonesia Project. These sources include the pamphlets and speeches written and given by nationalist leaders like Sukarno and Sutan Sjahrir, and writings of *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (Communist Party of Indonesia – PKI) leaders Tan Malaka, Semaun and Aidit including their reports to and speeches in the congresses of the Communist International.

Throughout the thesis, whenever an Indonesian word is used, I follow the 1972 spelling revision of Bahasa Indonesia except for the situations where I took direct quotations from the works which use pre-1972 spelling.

## **1.3 Outline of the Thesis**

This thesis is organized in six chapters. The second chapter of this thesis starts with analyzing colonialism as a structural force that changed the ordinary life of the local population in a rapid fashion and irreversible way. Through looking at Dutch colonialism in the East Indies, and especially the change in this colonialism's policies at the turn of the century, this chapter aims to show how anti-colonial actors

of the nationalist movement emerged and developed until the revolution. The following three chapters are the ones that analyze international components of Indonesian nationalism which were helpful in terms of providing a language of equality, breaking the impact of racial discourse on colonized Indonesians, decreasing the impact of regional identities, justifying Indonesian independence demands with their anti-colonial critique and offering alternative ways of modernization than the Western one. Therefore, the third chapter will focus on Modernist Islam and Pan-Islamism's role in the emergence and development of Indonesian nationalism while the fourth chapter will focus on Marxism. The last component of the international was Pan-Asianism, as analyzed through the fifth chapter. Different from the previous international components, Pan-Asianism was analyzed both as an ideational force and a material impact through the Japanese occupation of Indonesia.

## CHAPTER 2

### COLONIAL ROOTS AND ANTI-COLONIAL ACTORS OF THE NATIONALIST MOVEMENT

It is a common attitude to point the year 1908 as the starting year of the Indonesian Nationalist Movement. Although, what we call nationalism did not happen in one day, foundation of *Budi Utomo* on May 20, 1908 is considered as the first concrete manifestation of nationalism such that May 20 is celebrated as “National Awakening Day” in Indonesia still today. However, as Chatterjee reminds, nationalism in the colonies started long before it manifested itself as a political movement.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, it is safe to assume that the beginning of nationalism in the Indies was sometime before 1908 and it took place at the turn of the twentieth century, and the nationalist movement completed its mission with the proclamation of independence and subsequent outbreak of the Revolution in 1945. This chapter is an effort to narrate this history by locating it within the broader colonial structure. To this end, after narrating the pre-colonial outlook of Indonesia, this chapter will continue with the impact of Dutch colonialism on the archipelago and the emergence of anti-colonial and proto-nationalist sentiments, especially at the turn of the twentieth century. The following section will introduce political organizations and parties as anti-colonial actors of the nationalist movement.

#### 2.1 Pre-Colonial Era

Located between the Asian landmass and Australian continent, Indonesian archipelago, which is composed of 17,506 islands<sup>43</sup> has been home to several

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<sup>42</sup> Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments*, 5-6.

cultures, religions, and more than hundreds of local languages. Due to its geographical position, since the beginning of the Common Era, Indonesian archipelago was exposed to these different cultures through trade and settlement. The Dutch were far from being the first alien settlers of these lands. First Hindus and then the Chinese were attracted to the richness of this geography that had fertile Java, Spice Islands, and commercial hub of Straits of Malacca, which were among the chief attraction points.<sup>44</sup> Thus, when Majapahit state ruled in 14<sup>th</sup> cc Java, it ruled over a population whose culture was a mix of Hindu, Brahman, and Javanese,<sup>45</sup> in the so-called Hindu-Javanese period.<sup>46</sup> Majapahit, state together with Shrivijaya, which was founded in the 9<sup>th</sup> century on straits of Malacca, were the biggest political units in the history of the archipelago whose territories together more or less overlapped with today's Indonesia.<sup>47</sup> That's why nationalist leadership in Indonesia embraced these empires as part of Indonesian history, through tracing national identity back to pre-colonial times. The decline of Majapahit's power in the 15<sup>th</sup> century coincided with rise of the impact of Islam in the archipelago, which was a present force at least from the 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards.<sup>48</sup> However, Islamization of the archipelago did not lead to a full homogenization in cultural or religious areas; some parts of Indonesia, such as Bali, stayed unaffected by Islam, while in

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<sup>43</sup> Jean Gelman Taylor, *Indonesia: Peoples and Histories*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 1.

<sup>44</sup> According to Furnivall, the most important attraction for the Chinese was markets founded by the Hindus in Indonesia. J. S. Furnivall, *Netherlands India: A Study of Plural Economy*, (NY: Cambridge University Press, 1967, 2010), 1-8.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>46</sup> For more on Hindu-Javanese period see, Vlekke, *Nusantara*, 35-79.

<sup>47</sup> Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution*, 37-38.

<sup>48</sup> Furnivall, *Netherlands India*, 14-15.

Muslim populated areas ways of living Islam were differentiated greatly across the archipelago.<sup>49</sup>

At the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the archipelago was acquainted with European colonialism. Although the history of Indonesia has usually been associated with Dutch colonialism, the Portuguese was the first colonial power who realized the importance of Spice Islands and Strait of Malacca for Mediterranean trade, which encouraged them to seize Malacca in 1511 until the decline of their power by rising Muslim political entities.

## 2.2 VOC is on the Stage

Since 1595, several Dutch companies sailed to Indonesia and competed with each other for Indonesian spices until 1602 when they merged under the name of United East India Company (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* - VOC) with the aim of increasing their profits.<sup>50</sup> They created a permanent headquarters in the port city of then Jayakarta (today's Jakarta) which they renamed it as Batavia.<sup>51</sup> Although VOC was only a trade company- not a political entity- it soon started to change the political landscape of the Indies. Until the Dutch Government took over of colony from VOC in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was at the center of political and economic life and the primary reason for economic exploitation.

First under the VOC and then under the Dutch colonial government, different names were attributed to the archipelago. Netherlands East India, Dutch India and

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<sup>49</sup> Geertz, for instance, in his study on Java, mentions three main cultural types of Javanese as *abangan*, *priyayi* and *santri*. *Abangan* is defined as those whose religious practices were a mixture of animistic, Hindu, and Islamic elements, while *santri* refers to those who adhered to a purified Islam and fulfill all requirements of the religion. *Priyayi*, on the other hand, refers to those descendants of ancient Javanese aristocracy who eventually became a salaried worker of colonial administration whose lifestyle reflected Hindu elements of the early Javanese courts. Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java*, (University of Chicago Press, 1976), 4-6.

<sup>50</sup> M.C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1200*, (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 29.

<sup>51</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 33.

Dutch East Indies were the most used ones, treating Indonesia as a mere extension or continuation of the Indian peninsula. There were also more sophisticated terms that were coined by orientalist scholars. The name Indonesia was one of them. It was first coined by English scholar George Windsor Earl in 1850 in the form of “Indunesians” to describe peoples of the archipelago and used for the first time in the form of “Indonesia” by James Richardson Logan in the same year.<sup>52</sup> The word Indonesia which did not exist before 1850, would come to symbolize political and revolutionary ideas of the society in less than a century. Its cultural and geographical connotations would turn into political ones, especially through the 1920s.<sup>53</sup>

### 2.3 Colonial Borders

It is a widely acknowledged fact that before Dutch colonial policy had started, there was not a single political unit that covered today’s Indonesia. Thus, one can follow the logic of Cribb as he asserts that “Whereas Vietnam and China, like Japan and Korea, had long traditions of statehood and cultural identity which underpinned their respective patriotisms, Indonesia was a creation of Dutch colonial rule.”<sup>54</sup> With these words, primary emphasis on the formation of nationalism is put into the existence of a geographical unit. With a “single recognized overriding authority” within this geographical unit, social communication was facilitated and transformed into a national community.<sup>55</sup> Similarly, Anderson also pointed out this phenomenon as “the isomorphism between each [colonial] nationalism's territorial stretch and that of the previous imperial administrative unit.”<sup>56</sup> However, if colonial borders

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<sup>52</sup> Russel Jones, “Earl, Logan and Indonesia,” *Archipel* 6 (1973): 114.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, 114-115.

<sup>54</sup> Robert Cribb, “The Indonesian Marxist Tradition,” in *Marxism in Asia*, ed Colin Mackerras and Nick Knight (Australia: Croom Helm, 1985), 257.

<sup>55</sup> Mohd. A. Nawawi, “Punitive Colonialism: The Dutch and the Indonesian National Integration,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 2, no. 2 (1971): 159.

<sup>56</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 114.

were taken as given by every anti-colonial nationalist, today we could not speak of Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia, but there would exist one nation-state inherited borders of the French Indochina.<sup>57</sup> While colonial borders were not necessarily inherited by the nation-states born out of these territories, in the Dutch East Indies, a combination of domestic and international developments helped the nationalist elite to imagine their homeland as Indonesia, which covered the same territory as the former Dutch colony.

## 2.4 Colonialism and the Dutch Colonial Government

With the possession of Indonesia by the Dutch government, the political and economic structure of the archipelago changed once more. Here, colonialism should not be considered only as “settlement of an alien power to distant territories,”<sup>58</sup> but it was “the effective domination by a relatively strong state over a weaker people whom it does not control as it does its home population.”<sup>59</sup> This difference of attitude towards the colonial population was best captured by Furnival’s “plural society” term for the Netherlands Indies. According to Furnival, colonial society was a plural society due to the compartmentalization of society as Europeans, natives, and Foreign Orientals. In this society, “distinct social orders live side by side, but separately, within the same political unit.”<sup>60</sup>

One of the impacts of colonialism on ordinary life was the increase of suppression. As Van Niel argues, “colonialism was not solely responsible for the prevailing

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<sup>57</sup> This point is explained by Anderson in detail by pointing out exceptional status of French West Africa and French Indochina. Ibid, 123-131. For a comparison between anti-colonial nationalism in Indonesia and Indochina, which advances Anderson’s point, see David E. F. Henley, “Ethnogeographic Integration and Exclusion in Anticolonial Nationalism: Indonesia and Indochina,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 37, no.2 (1995): 286-324.

<sup>58</sup> Robert Van Niel, “Colonialism Revisited: Recent Historiography,” *Journal of World History* 1, no. 1 (1990): 109.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 109; Tony Smith, *The Patterns of Imperialism: The United States, Great Britain, and the Late-Industrializing World since 1815*, (Cambridge University Press, 1981), 6.

<sup>60</sup> Furnivall, *Netherlands India*, preface.

patterns of inequality, corruption and arbitrariness, but it intensified and abused them for its own ends, quite contrary to its moral rhetoric.”<sup>61</sup> One example of this intensification was the introduction of the Cultivation System (*Cultuurstelsel*) in 1830, which was a taxation system that required farmers to pay some part of their cash crop production to the government as a tax<sup>62</sup> and if the farmer was landless, then he should work for the government 66 days a year without payment.<sup>63</sup> The reason behind the introduction of this system was increasing the revenue coming from the colony to the Dutch treasury, which was emptied due to wars it fought against Belgium in Europe and Surakarta and Yogyakarta in Java.<sup>64</sup> Under this system that continued until the late 1870s, the Dutch treasury recovered itself, however at the expense of Indonesians. While they have suffered from severe famine and diseases, on the political side, this system led local lords to be more authoritarian towards villagers, who were surpassed now by both their local regents and the colonial administration.<sup>65</sup> Although the revenue derived from this system was important for the Dutch parliament, starting from the 1850s, it received reaction from the liberals who saw this government-led system of forced labor and trade monopoly as incompatible with liberal principles.<sup>66</sup> Although the primary concern was still the revenue acquired from the colony, liberals believed that economy should be set free in Indonesia in order to enhance increase in production and profits.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Robert Van Niel, “Colonialism Revisited,” 123.

<sup>62</sup> Peasants had to spare one-fifth of their rice fields to plant a cash-crop that was designated by the government and gave its harvest as a tax. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution*, 12.

<sup>63</sup> Vlekke, *Nusantara*.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 287.

<sup>65</sup> Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution*, 3.

<sup>66</sup> Vlekke, *Nusantara*, 303.

### 2.4.1 Ethical Policy and Education

In 1899, Conrad van Deventer, a member of the Dutch parliament, wrote an article under the name “A Debt of Honor” in which he asserted that the Netherlands owed a debt to Indonesians who earned millions to the Netherlands treasury under the Cultivation System.<sup>68</sup> To him, now, it is time for the Netherlands to pay this debt by spending the same amount of money on public education and other public services in the colony.<sup>69</sup> Two years later, in 1901, under the influence of like-minded Dutch liberals, Queen Wilhelmina introduced the Ethical Policy. It was a set of reforms in areas of education, administration, and economy to increase the general wellbeing of Indonesians. Opening schools for popular education was the chief motive of the policy. In fact, necessity of providing Indonesian students European education was a topic of discussion advocated by orientalist scholars like Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje.<sup>70</sup> Especially, his association theory/ideal emphasized that if native people were provided with Western style education and socialized into European circles, they would eventually progress in Western modernity.<sup>71</sup> As schools flourished around the colony in which Indonesian students took education with their European peers from European teachers under the European curriculum, they became familiar with the Western political ideas and history. The richest ones even went to the Netherlands for their higher education and joined the cosmopolitan intellectual circles there, while the rest stayed within the colony, employed by the

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 308.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 330-331.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 331.

<sup>70</sup> Hurgronje was a professor of Islamic studies at Leiden University before he went to Mecca, and then, the Netherlands East Indies to give policy advises to colonial government in their war against Aceh.

<sup>71</sup> For Hurgronje’s association policy, see Kees van Dijk, “The Elitist Premises of Snouck Hurgronje’s Association Fantasy,” *Studia Islamika* 17, no.3 (2010): 407-440.

colonial government or engaged in publishing activities.<sup>72</sup> For those who continued their higher education in the Netherlands, in addition to their educational migration, they went through a different experience. Being far away from their land enabled them to see the East Indies from a different perspective.<sup>73</sup> Even if this experience did not erase the difference between the ethnic/regional differences, it somehow made them not an obstacle to the development of Indonesian identity.<sup>74</sup>

When Hurgronje or liberals advocated an education policy, they did not expect that “native awakening” would go beyond the Dutch government’s wishes. However, education not only made Indonesian students appreciate Western values such as progress, rationality etc. but they also started to question their situation vis-à-vis these values. Although opening up colony-wide education to natives stimulated some kind of upward mobility, there nevertheless was a limit which was the top strata of one’s own racial group, thus they became well-educated yet still natives.<sup>75</sup> Thus, Western education coupled with colonial hierarchy created what Kahin called “dissatisfied, cramped and frustrated elite”<sup>76</sup> or in the words of Von der Mehden, a “dissident class which found itself educated beyond the village yet unable to attain the status and prestige it desired.”<sup>77</sup> This dissatisfaction with realities of the colonial world steered these dissidents’ direction towards international ideologies of the turn

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<sup>72</sup> This difference in routes would eventually lead to an intellectual slot within the leadership circle of the independence movement, as represented by Mohammad Hatta and Sutan Sjahrir on the one side and Sukarno on the other side. If not in their goal, these leaders separated from each other in their course towards independence.

<sup>73</sup> R. E. Elson, “Constructing the nation: Ethnicity, Race, Modernity and Citizenship in Early Indonesian Thought,” *Asian Ethnicity* 6, no.3 (2005): 150-151.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 150-151.

<sup>75</sup> Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion*, 30.

<sup>76</sup> Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution*, 52.

<sup>77</sup> Von der Mehden, “Marxism and Early Indonesian Islamic Nationalism,” 337.

of the twentieth century, which were themselves dissident ideas and critique of a hierarchy on global level, as well.

In tandem with the internationalization of their search for justice and solution to the problems of colonial society, these elites started to identify themselves with Indonesian identity at the expense of their former identities. Their shared experiences under colonial rule became the first constituents of nationalist feelings. Shiraishi calls it “nation-in-embryo,” which came into being in the minds of the Western-educated youth who realized their shared nativeness, regardless of their Javanese, Sundanese, or Minangkabau identities, to form a new solidarity.<sup>78</sup> Well before they became Indonesians, they were natives who did not know each other personally yet knew about each other’s existence all over the Indies.<sup>79</sup> Anderson’s account of these Western-educated youth draws a clearer picture through his conceptualization of “educational pilgrimage.” To Anderson, these youth, who experienced a standardized education in the classroom, who read the same books, and who had come to the educational apex of the colony, Batavia, knew for certain that others had gone through the same experiences.<sup>80</sup> The result was the creation of a bilingual intelligentsia who had access to models of nation, nation-ness, and nationalism to form their imagined community.<sup>81</sup>

#### **2.4.2 Press**

One of the mediums that the turn of the twentieth century ideas reached, localized and reflected back to wider population was the press. This press was developed in colonial society through colonial initiative as well as native and Chinese population’s own efforts. Several newspapers and periodicals in the Dutch, Chinese

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<sup>78</sup> Shiraishi, *Age in Motion*, 31-32.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid*, 31-32.

<sup>80</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 121-122.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid*, 116.

and Malay languages started to be published and circulated throughout the colony. In 1890, number of periodicals in Malay and other vernacular languages was eight, while in 1910 it rose to thirty-six.<sup>82</sup> As Ahmat Adam indicates for Indonesian press, these newspapers and periodicals were used as a propaganda medium more than conveying news of the colony.<sup>83</sup> Dissident elite who are forming “the nation-in-embryo” expressed their frustration towards the colonial government through their writings.

If not the first, one of the most striking political manifestations of “the nation-in-embryo” was published in 1913, in *De Expres* newspaper under the title of “*Als ik eens Nederlander was*” (If I were a Dutchman). Written by Suwardi Suryaningrat or later to be known as Ki Hadjar Dewantara, this satire of the colonial government was published upon the celebration preparations that took place all over the colony at the centenary of the Dutch liberation from French rule. In this satire, Suwardi imagined himself as a Dutch and emphasized the irony of the situation with these words:

Does it not occur to us that these poor fellows are also longing for such a moment as this, when they like us will be able to celebrate their independence? Or do we perhaps feel that because of our soul-destroying policy we regard all human souls as dead? If I were a Dutchman, I would not organize an independence celebration in a country where the independence of the people has been stolen.<sup>84</sup>

This article is not only important for being a mere critique, but the particular way through which it criticized the colonial government was new and shocking for the colonizer. For Indonesians, who were treated as inferior people by the Dutch through racial and civilizational superiority claims, it was not even appropriate to dress like a European man. While the Dutch settlers distinguished themselves from the rest of the society even in such matters as outlook, one Indonesian dared to put

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<sup>82</sup> Shiraishi, *Age in Motion*, 32.

<sup>83</sup> Ahmat Adam, “Radical Journalism and Press Persecution in Java: 1914 – 1918,” *Jebat* 20, (1992): 102-103.

<sup>84</sup> Savitri Scherer’s translation quoted in Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 117.

himself in their place and advised them about a political issue. As Anderson points out, with this article, Suwardi not only used Dutch history against them but also undermined the Dutch colonial ideology with his temporary transformation into a Dutchman.<sup>85</sup> After publication of this groundbreaking words both in Dutch and Malay language, Suryaningrat and two other nationalist leaders -Douwes Dekker and Cipto Mangunkusumo- were sent to exile in the Netherlands only to live through “days of misery and want<sup>86</sup>” while colonial government decided to watch indigenous press activity closely and enacted laws that regulated punishment of insult on the Netherlands government and the colonial government.<sup>87</sup> Against this background, a union for native journalists (*Inlandsche Journalisten Bond* – Native Journalist’s Union) was founded in 1914 to counter colonial government’s efforts to curb freedom of expression in press with the initiative of journalist Mas Marco Kartodikromo.<sup>88</sup> Union also published a weekly journal, *Dunia Bergerak* (World in Motion), whose name reflected the zeitgeist.<sup>89</sup>

It was not only the colonial domination, but traditional aristocracy was also devalued in these periodicals. Abdul Rivai of Sumatra who wrote for Amsterdam-based *Bintang Hindia* (Indies Star) made a popular distinction between *kaum muda* (younger generation) and *kaum kuno* (older generation) through which he assigned those who follow science and reason as the leader of the people while he denounced the aristocracy as the representation of older generation.<sup>90</sup> Rivai’s distinction was a rebellion against the right of rule that comes from birth. As Indonesians were

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<sup>85</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 117-118.

<sup>86</sup> Cipto Mangunkusumo as cited in Kees van Dijk, *The Netherlands and the Great War*, 71.

<sup>87</sup> Ahmat Adam, 94-95.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, 95-96.

<sup>89</sup> Harper, *Underground Asia*, Chapter 6.

<sup>90</sup> Ahmat Adam, 91.

exposed to new ideas, not only colonial injustice but also traditional forms of inequality started to be reprobated.

### 2.4.3 Just King

It was an age of prophecy<sup>91</sup> as much as an age in motion. The turn of the century was also marked by a sense of uneasiness within society. Destruction of ordinary life by agricultural impositions of colonial government and break from the communal village life changed the rural life. It was something embedded within the Javanese culture that time was apprehended as a cyclical process with good times and bad times following each other<sup>92</sup>, which manifested itself in prophecies of *Djababaja* that promised an end to alien domination with the coming of *Ratu Adil* (Just King).<sup>93</sup> Even if not simultaneous at all, it was clear from the Javanese court poems that talk about “time of darkness”<sup>94</sup> or village rebellions that took place to establish “kingdoms” as in the prophecies,<sup>95</sup> a general sense of bad times were felt. There is also another dimension of life cycle philosophy; by its cyclical nature, good times have to follow bad times. In other words, along with this feeling of disturbances there is also a certain belief in the approaching relief. If only this belief would concretize in an earthly form, the masses would be willing to follow it. Bernard Dahm, in his excellent biography of Sukarno, provided a detailed account of messiah-like figures which ended up with the cult of Sukarno. However, until

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<sup>91</sup> Harper, *Underground Asia*, Chapter 6.

<sup>92</sup> Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World*, (London and New York: Verso, 1998): 77-79.

<sup>93</sup> Bernhard Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence*, Trans. Marry F. Somers Heidhues. (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1969), 3-5.

<sup>94</sup> In 1873, Javanese court poet Ronggawarsita wrote a poem named *Serat Kala Tidha* which means “Poem of a Time of Darkness”. The poem was full of pessimism and gloom, reflected that the traditional way of living was disrupted in an irreversible way. Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons*, 77-78.

<sup>95</sup> Dahm, *Sukarno*, 1-3.

Sukarno proved himself to be the true *Ratu Adil*, society attributed this earthly symbol of salvation to several persons, organizations and even ideologies.<sup>96</sup> *Sarekat Islam* and the Japanese military were considered as earthly form of *Ratu Adil*; however, the most interesting one was the association of *Ratu Adil* with socialism.<sup>97</sup>

This feeling of uneasiness of the society was apprehended by urban elites in a different way. Characterized by their adherence to rationality and scientific thinking, it would be logical to think that instead of a cyclical view of time, these elites' perception of time was a progressive one, in accordance with modernity. They felt an uneasiness in the general course of life, yet they were enough educated to rename it as a social, political, and economic crisis caused by regressive forces within and without: feudalism and colonialism.<sup>98</sup> In European schools, they were taught that societies would develop further and further, and history is progressive. However, they also needed to take action for their societies' progress. Hence, similar with the masses, they felt an uneasiness, however, this time accompanied with an eagerness for action. Instead of waiting for *Ratu Adil*, they became one.<sup>99</sup>

At this point, international ideas of the turn of the century played a very great role. In fact, it was not only the Indonesian society but the whole world was going through an enormous change and transformation. The colonized and semi-colonized world they were shared, more or less, the same concerns and experiences.

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid, 1-20.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid, 1-20.

<sup>98</sup> Those who went through an Islamic education were also not happy with the state of affairs in their society. Under the influence of Pan-Islamic and Islamic Modernism, they attributed this uneasiness to the deterioration in the practice of Islam which was very much related to the rule by "unfaithful", thus colonialism.

<sup>99</sup> For example, in the work where he drew the action plan of PKI, Tan Malaka states that "The PKI understands that the downfall of Dutch imperialism and the revolutionary power of the Indonesian people does not simply rest on the Djojobero myth or other peddlers of *djamu* (nostrums), but, rather, its beliefs are grounded upon a firm social economic analysis of Indonesian society." Tan Malaka, *Naar de Republiek Indonesia*, (1925), available at Marxists Internet Archive <https://www.marxists.org/archive/malaka/1925-NaarDeRepubliek.htm> (Last accessed: September 19, 2021).

Thus an intellectual sphere, which was transnational in its nature and anti-colonial in its spirit, became a pool of ideas that transformed, impacted and fortified each other. We must understand the intellectual elites, who were the nation-makers of Indonesia with this anti-colonial public sphere that they belonged to. International ideas that spread within this sphere provided them with solutions. The society they belonged to was in a crisis; they were in need of action, and these international ideas provided them vocabulary, road map, justification, and solidarity with other resistance movements all around the world.

## 2.5 Actors of the Indonesian Nationalist Movement

As already noted, the first signs of the emergence of nationalism started with the foundation of *Budi Utomo* in 1908. *Budi Utomo* was a student organization centered on Java, and its aim was preserving the Javanese culture. The founders of the organization were young medical students who belonged to the privileged small group of Indonesians who had access to Western education after primary school.<sup>100</sup> Foundation of *Budi Utomo* was soon followed by the foundation of *Jong Java* (Young Java) in 1915, another Java-centered student organization. Organization of these groups across ethnic lines promoted other regional organizations' existence along ethnic lines, such as *Jong Sumatren Bond* (Young Sumatran Association) in 1917.<sup>101</sup> What is important about these youth organizations is that they provided platforms where the young and educated part of the society would discuss the future of their "land and people". Boundaries of this "land and people" were not along nationalist lines but ethnic ones as their names suggested; *Jong Java* and *Jong Sumatren Bond* were the regionally defined organizations.<sup>102</sup> Another important

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<sup>100</sup> In 1900, around 1500 Indonesians went to European schools, while by 1928, approximately 75.000 Indonesians completed primary school and 6.500 completed secondary school. Vickers, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 40.

<sup>101</sup> Suryadinata, "Indonesian Nationalism and Pre-War Youth Movement," 102.

<sup>102</sup> That is why in his periodization of the Indonesian nationalist movement, Suryadinata denominates the period between 1908 and 1924 as the "Rise and Decline of Ethnic Identity". Ibid, 100. There were many regional organizations such as *Sarekat Ambon*, *Rukun Minahasa*, *Pasoendan* and *Sarekat Sumatra* as mentioned by Sartono. Kartodirdjo, "Some Problems on the Genesis of Nationalism in Indonesia," 77.

point is that these organizations' medium of communication was the Dutch language. When we look at these organizations, their names were also mostly in Dutch. Later, as ethnic identities were being replaced by national identity which crystalized in what we know today as Indonesian identity, Malay language was accepted as the national language, and youth organizations' names changed to Malay as well. Before the acceptance of Malay, *Jong* (young in Dutch) was the common denominator in the names of youth organizations, which would be replaced later by *Muda* (young in Malay).

While youth organizations constituted one channel for the development of nationalist feelings, another channel was opened through a union of merchants. *Sarekat Islam* (Islamic Association) was founded in 1912 as a union to protect Muslim batik traders' economic interest in this Chinese dominated sector.<sup>103</sup> Soon, *Sarekat Islam* turned into a political organization with the widest membership in Indonesia, and its branches and meetings opened up an area to discuss political events of the colony. Although there were significant ideological divisions within its leadership with Islamic, Communist, and Nationalist fractions, it continued to be an umbrella organization until 1923 and became successful in bringing together different parts of the society.

The year 1912 also witnessed the foundation of *Indische Party* by Douwes Dekker, a Eurasian.<sup>104</sup> Although *Indische Party*'s ethnic character of membership was mainly Eurasian, it was one of the first political organizations that explicitly put Indonesian independence to its agenda. That is why, in his 1949 speech, Sukarno called Douwes Dekker "one of the fathers of political nationalism in Indonesia."<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Chinese minorities of Indonesia constituted the economic elite of colonial society, and their status was below the Dutch but above the Indonesians in the hierarchy created by the Dutch colonial system. This hierarchical difference created a resentment toward the Chinese among Indonesians.

<sup>104</sup> Eurasian refers to the people whose father is a European and mother was a native. In the colonial hierarchy, they were coming before natives, but behind the Europeans.

<sup>105</sup> Paul W. Van Der Veur, "E. F. E. Douwes Dekker: Evangelist for Indonesian Political Nationalism," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 17, no. 4 (1958): 556.

Almost contemporarily with *Budi Utomo* and *Sarekat Islam*, another organization that holds an important place in the nationalist movement, *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (Communist Party of Indonesia - PKI) was founded. Actually, PKI's forerunner was *Indische Sociaal-Democratische Vereening* (Indies Social Democratic Association, ISDV), a Dutch Marxist-Socialist organization founded by a Dutch socialist, H. Sneevliet, in 1914. In time, its heavily Dutch membership was replaced by Indonesian cadres, and the party name was changed to *Perserikatan Kommunist di India* (Communist Association in the Indies) in 1920, and then to its final name PKI, in 1924.<sup>106</sup> Excepting Tsarist Russia, PKI was Asia's first communist party.<sup>107</sup> PKI's successful unionization efforts widened its membership and contributed to the development and organization of the anti-colonial struggle through politicization of workers<sup>108</sup> which was valuable in terms of attracting non-elite parts of the society to political struggle. Another factor that led PKI to increase its members was its collaboration with the *Sarekat Islam* since the ISDV years on anti-colonial grounds.

Although it was not a political organization, *Taman Siswa* (Garden of Pupils) schools of Suwardi Suryaningrat, writer of "If I were a Dutchman" and to be minister of education of the post-independence Indonesia, is worth mentioning due to the significant role these schools had played in raising the future generations of nationalists. Suryaningrat, with the aim of creating an education system that was not Dutch or Islamic oriented, set up the first *Taman Siswa* school in 1922 since he believed that reaching national solidarity cannot be realized only by a political movement against the Dutch but with a system of national education.<sup>109</sup> *Taman*

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<sup>106</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 206, 209.

<sup>107</sup> Cribb, "The Indonesian Marxist Tradition," 251.

<sup>108</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 209.

<sup>109</sup> Kenji Tsuchiya, "The Taman Siswa Movement: Its Early Eight Years and Javanese Background," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 6, no. 2 (1975): 168.

*Siswa* turned out to be a persistent educational movement such that by 1932, the number of schools reached 166, and that of students, 11.000.<sup>110</sup>

Two important Muslim educational organizations, which survived as powerful NGOs until today in Indonesia, must be mentioned in relation to the role of education in Indonesian nationalist movement: *Muhammadiyah* and *Nahdlatul Ulama*. Muhammadiyah was founded in 1912 as an educational organization with the aim of studying original Islam and its compatibility with the modern world;<sup>111</sup> thus it was an Indonesian manifestation of modernist Islam. Although its area of activity was confined to the social issues, its agenda of Muslim progress developed a political consciousness among its members.<sup>112</sup> As a reaction to what they perceived as the modernist threat of *Muhammadiyah*, some groups among Muslim scholars founded *Nahdlatul Ulama* in 1926 in order to preserve the traditional way of Javanese Islam.<sup>113</sup>

One of the most important political organizations that were going to influence a remarkable part of Indonesian political life both in the pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary era was *Partai Nasional Indonesia* (Nationalist Party of Indonesia - PNI). PNI was founded in 1927 by the future president of Indonesia, Sukarno. Sukarno was a man of great oratorical skills, which enabled him to attract many organizations and popular masses into the party. The main principle that the party was founded upon was complete independence for Indonesia which should be achieved through non-cooperation with the Dutch colonial government.<sup>114</sup> Far from

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<sup>110</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 211.

<sup>111</sup> Vickers, *A History of Indonesia*, 56.

<sup>112</sup> Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution*, 87-88.

<sup>113</sup> Vickers, *A History of Indonesia*, 56-57.

<sup>114</sup> It is possible to divide nationalist actors into two: cooperators and non-cooperators. While the former advocated a moderate struggle for national independence under the guidance of the Dutch colonial government with the hope that the Dutch would grant independence to Indonesians when

Marxist or Islamic connotations, Sukarno's party tried to reach a common ground to include all Indonesians in the national struggle. In almost two and half years, it succeeded in reaching 10.000 members.<sup>115</sup>

## 2.6 Youth Congress

The period between the turn of the twentieth century to the mid-1920s can be considered as the first phase of the Indonesian national movement. In this timespan, Indonesians awakened more and more to the inequalities of life and exploitation under the Dutch colonial government. The organizations that were founded in this period were scattered in their orientation, means, and goals. However, at a more general level, these organizations served as an arena of struggle with modern life, a modernity that was experienced under colonial rule. The last years of the 1920s had witnessed the approximation of these goals, although the competition between them in some cases had persisted. By 1928, it became clear that the struggle was going to be a national one. If the nation-state that they desired was going to be an Islamic-leaning state as in the wish of some *Sarekat Islam* leaders or a Marxist-revolutionary state as PKI would desire or a secular republic as most of Javanese would opt for, it would be under the political boundaries of what was then the Netherlands East Indies, and its name would be Indonesia. The second youth congress that was held in Jakarta in 1928 symbolized the unification of goals along national lines.<sup>116</sup> *Sumpah Pemuda* (Youth Pledge) was proclaimed at this congress, and it overtly stated that now all these *pemuda* (youth) groups from different parts of the colony identified themselves as Indonesians, accepted the Malay language as

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they were ready, the latter argued for the necessity of self-sustaining struggle for national independence without the involvement of the Dutch colonial government.

<sup>115</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 219.

<sup>116</sup> Youth Congress was representative of the general population of Indonesians for two reasons: 1) By 1928, apart from ethnically organized pemuda groups, mass organizations had their pemuda sections. 2) Although youth organizations started as student clubs, soon they were dominated by older Indonesians. As Vickers underlines, the word "Youth" in the name of nationalist organizations symbolizes a new mood, referring not to actual age but to youngness of spirit. Vickers, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 75-76.

Bahasa Indonesia, and renamed the Netherlands East Indies as Indonesia. Now the goal was *Indonesia Merdeka*.

## **2.7 Post-1928 Period**

In 1929, Sukarno was imprisoned by the Dutch colonial government, and in 1931 PNI dissolved into two main branches. One branch was *Partai Indonesia* (Indonesian Party, *Partindo*), the other one was the *Pendidikan Nasional Indonesia* (Indonesian Nationalist Education) or New PNI. The second branch was led by Sutan Sjahrir and Mohammed Hatta, who were nationalist leaders educated in Leiden, and who were going to be eventually the prime ministers of future Indonesia. Although both parties were successors of PNI, they followed different paths. The former continued its efforts to attract mass numbers of population to the national struggle, while the latter distinguished itself from the former by abandoning mass-action and focusing on cadre-formation.<sup>117</sup> After its release from jail, Sukarno joined the *Partindo* to continue his struggle for national independence; however, it did not last long. In 1933, the nationalist struggle came to a standstill due to the imprisonment of Sukarno for the second time. Exile of Sjahrir and Hatta from Java followed it in 1934. All three leaders were going to stay away from the political center of the archipelago for years until 1942.

## **2.8 Japanese Occupation**

In 1942, Japanese forces landed in Indonesia and occupied the archipelago. In order to erase the Dutch influence, they supported Indonesian independence claims at least in rhetoric. Japanese plan was to integrate Indonesia to Japan-led Greater Coprosperity Sphere with other SEA colonies they had now occupied. For Japan, this sphere would be useful in war preparations by supplying raw material and men power they much needed. They tried to cooperate with leaders of the national movement and Sukarno returned to Java thanks to the Japanese. Japanese occupation put an end to the era of plurality of organizations and political parties

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<sup>117</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 225.

since Japan forbade all political activity on the archipelago. Although they were welcomed as liberators of Indonesia by many Indonesians, after a while, it became clear that the Japanese were no different than the Dutch in terms of exploitation. During the three-years long Japanese occupation, political and youth organizations were founded by the Japanese only to use them in the Japanese war efforts; and the independence that they had promised to Indonesians was delayed continuously. Therefore, two days after Japan's surrender to Allied powers, on 17 August 1945, Sukarno proclaimed Indonesian independence with the force of youth organizations which were mobilized and politicized by Japanese training.<sup>118</sup> Now, the task for national movement was to carry out a revolution against the allied forces that still claimed Indonesian territories as a Dutch colony.

## **2.9 Aftermath of the Proclamation of the Republic of Indonesia**

Although this thesis mainly covers the emergence and development of nationalism until the proclamation of the republic, it would be insightful to mention some developments which took place during and after the revolution. While the nationalist movement of a diverse range of actors, influenced also by a diverse set of international ideas, rallied around the flag of anti-colonialism in one way or another, the immediate aftermath of the revolution was a history of rupture, or even, a kind of civil war. These developments show that the pre-revolutionary era can be considered as a self-contained time span in terms of understanding the relation between the international and nationalism since some actors of the revolution and the international ideas that influenced them came to be the enemies of the newly proclaimed republic in the revolutionary and post-revolutionary period. Once the republic was proclaimed, all those different factions within the nationalist movement started to fight for different imaginations of Indonesia. It was especially at this moment when Indonesia was close to independence more than ever that international ideas strived for their internationalist agendas.

Two factions within the once unified movement should be particularly noted. The first one was the Pan-Islamist group led by Kartosuwiryo and the second one was

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid, 246-247.

the scattered Marxist groups. Kartosuwiryo was a local leader of *Sarekat Islam* and a prominent figure in the nationalist movement. For Kartosuwiryo, Indonesians were part of a wider Muslim world, the *ummah*, and he believed that for the political unification of all Muslims, the first step must be the formation of an Indonesian Islamic state. Thus, at the same time Republic of Indonesia was proclaimed by Sukarno and Hatta, Kartosuwiryo proclaimed his own Islamic state in West Java.<sup>119</sup> Named as the *Darul Islam* (House of Islam) movement, Kartosuwiryo's efforts to make Indonesia an Islamic state continued until his execution by the state in 1962.<sup>120</sup> For Marxist groups within the movement, Indonesians should be the part of the world proletariat. Following the outbreak of the revolution, different Marxist groups declared their own revolution in Marxist lines. In north Java, in the regencies which were known as the Three Regions, a communist government was founded.<sup>121</sup> While in other parts of the island many of the youth militias gathered around the old secretary-general of PKI, Tan Malaka as an alternative leadership to the Sukarno and Hatta.<sup>122</sup> New Republic took no time to crush its opponents. Three Regions Revolt was suppressed by the Republican army while Tan Malaka was jailed by the government for allegedly attempting a coup.<sup>123</sup> However, Madiun Affair of 1948 was the foremost important event in terms of understanding the rupture of relations between different actors of the movement. After PKI and other communist forces took over of the city of Madiun, the long-held disagreements within the nationalist movement came to a blasting point. Through a radio broadcast, Sukarno declared the events as a coup and demanded Madiun population

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<sup>119</sup> Vickers, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 119.

<sup>120</sup> For a detailed study on Kartosuwiryo and *Darul Islam*, see Chiara Formichi, *Islam and the Making of the Nation: Kartosuwiryo and Political Islam in Twentieth-Century Indonesia*, (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2012).

<sup>121</sup> Vickers, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 102-103.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid*, 106.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid*, 103,106.

to make a choice between his government and communists.<sup>124</sup> In return, communists blamed Sukarno and Hatta as traitors who sell Indonesia to imperialists thus wanted from the people to overthrow their government.<sup>125</sup> Sukarno government declared martial law immediately in the whole country and after a two months long bitter struggle between the communist and republican armed forces, on December 7, 1948, Sukarno government became successful in suppressing the Communist rebellion.<sup>126</sup> These events show that, contrary to unification within the movement before the proclamation of the Republic, in the revolutionary and post-revolutionary era, dissensus among nationalist actors became evident more than ever.

## 2.10 Conclusion

Mary Matossian argues that, for industrially backward countries, the impact of modern industrial West created a challenge by disrupting traditional societies in an irreversible process.<sup>127</sup> Although her analysis focused on (lack of) industrialization, it fit the colonial situation as well. To Matossian, after the encounter with the West, in these societies “contemporary scene is littered with fallen idols” and “desecrated by unsanctioned violence”.<sup>128</sup> The encounter thus created an “uncomfortable place in which to live.”<sup>129</sup> This is what this chapter aimed to show. Dutch colonialism, which lasted more than three centuries, changed the lives of Indonesian people in

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<sup>124</sup> Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution*, 292.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid, 293-294.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid, 295-300.

<sup>127</sup> Mary Matossian, “Ideologies of Delayed Industrialization: Some Tensions and Ambiguities,” in *Political Change in Underdeveloped Countries: Nationalism and Communism*, ed. John H. Kautsky (Wiley, 1962), 254.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid, 254.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid, 254.

an irreversible way. Increasing impact of the Dutch colonialism felt intense and overwhelming, at the turn of the twentieth century, due to increasing number of Europeans in the colony, centralized bureaucratization, and agricultural policies. In this uncomfortable place, with the impact of European education and development of Indonesian press, colonialism, and feudalism, two modes of relations that regulated ordinary life, started to be questioned while in countryside several rebellions broke out with the hope of ending alien rule. Political organizations such as *Sarekat Islam* or ISDV, political parties of PKI and *Indische Party* or educational movements like *Taman Siswa* were born out of these times, which had an anti-colonial outlook to be culminated in a national movement especially in the post-1928 period.

It is against the background of colonialism and the anti-colonial ideational framework that this study proposes to investigate the role and the impact of the four influential international ideas: Pan-Islamism, Modernist Islam, Marxism, and Pan-Asianism. The purpose is to understand how these ideas, each having a strong anti-colonial background, intertwined with, and localized in Indonesia and impacted Indonesian nationalism. Looking from the present day, these ideologies together with nationalism, may seem to be contradicting, if not in complete opposition to each other. At this point, it would be insightful to quote Matossian again:

...all ideologies of delayed industrialization are essentially revolutionary – in Mannheim’s usage, utopian. They direct activity toward changing a social order which is already changing. Even the superficially conservative ideologies turn out to be pseudo-conservative in the sense that they advocate a change in the status quo. Pseudo-conservative or radical, these ideologies advocate the manipulation of the disagreeable Present.<sup>130</sup>

To change their “disagreeable colonial present”, Indonesian elites found an anti-colonial haven in the international ideas of the turn of the twentieth century, each offering justifications for their liberation cause and solidarity in action.

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid, 254.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **MODERNIST ISLAM AND PAN-ISLAMISM**

The turn of the twentieth century witnessed two influential international ideas originated from the Middle East: Modernist Islam and Pan-Islamism. Although these two were almost contemporary, and there were influential Islamists who adhered to both, there needs to be an analytical separation of these two ideological movements: Both ideas were born out of the political context of the nineteenth century where Islam as a faith and the Islamic world as an imagined community were perceived to be in decline in the Western international order. While Modernist Islam is a much more scholarly movement that saw the origin of the crisis embedded in the wrong interpretations of Islam thus called for a return to Islam's original sources, which were considered to be compatible with modernity in its nature, Pan-Islamism as a political ideology proposed an Islamic political unity as a way to resist European domination and restore Islamic civilizations' old glory. Since both ideas carried a critique of the Western international order, and naturally, colonialism, but as modern ideologies, they found an audience in colonial Indonesia where Muslims constituted the largest share of the population. This chapter is an attempt to understand how these two international ideas impacted Indonesian nationalism. To this end, Modernist Islam and Pan-Islamism will be analyzed separately, although most of the scholarly works within the field focused on Modernist Islam's impact on Indonesian nationalism more than Pan-Islamism.

#### **3.1 Modernist Islam**

Modernist movement of Islam sought for a reconciliation between Islam and modern values such as “constitutionalism, cultural revival, nationalism, freedom in religious interpretation, scientific inquiry, modern education and women rights”

since Modernists<sup>131</sup> regarded the tension between these modern values and Islam not as an inherent feature of the religion but merely a historical accident.<sup>132</sup> Modernist Islam was characterized by the self-conscious adaptation of modern values and usage of an Islamic discourse in a way that its promoters were not only “modern” but “modernist”, not merely Muslims, but advocates of preservation and improvisation of Islam in the modern world.<sup>133</sup> Although there were many advocates of Modernist Islam, Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani, Rashid Rida and Muhammad ‘Abduh along with Sayyid Ahmad Khan of India were among the most influential names of Modernist movement. With their pioneering ideas, Modernist Islam became the intellectual paradigm of Islamic intellectuals at the turn of the century. Although there were rival and even hostile Islamic groups to its agenda, Modernist Islam became one of the most influential ideological movements in the Islamic world, especially through its intellectual production that flourished in Cairo.

At the turn of the century, Cairo was a cosmopolitan intellectual hub as much as Shanghai, Istanbul, Tokyo, and Singapore. Nationalist, constitutionalist, Islamic Modernist, and anti-colonial movements created an intellectual sphere where ideas were exchanged and carried beyond the borders of Egypt to Southeast Asia through journals. One crucial institution for Islamic intellectuals was the al-Azhar university. The press was also at the heart of these intellectual exchanges in that Muhammed Farid Ma’ruf, who was a Javanese in Cairo, who would become a leading figure of Muhammadiyah, deplored about the lack of freedom of press in Indonesia compared to the one in Egypt.<sup>134</sup> Afghani and ‘Abduh’s journal *al-Urwa*

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<sup>131</sup> For the rest of this chapter, the word “Modernist” will be used to refer to the adherents of Modernist Islam.

<sup>132</sup> Charles Kurzman, *Modernist Islam, 1840-1940: A Sourcebook*, (USA: Oxford University Press, 2002), 4.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>134</sup> William R. Roff, “Indonesian and Malay Students in Cairo in the 1920’s,” *Indonesia*, no. 9 (1970): 81-82.

*al-Wuthqa* and ‘Abduh’s disciple Rashid Rida’s journal *al-Manar* (The Lighthouse), which was published from 1898 to 1935 in Cairo, were among the chief intellectual productions of Modernist Islam and circulated in wider Muslim world, including Malay-Indonesian one.<sup>135</sup>

In its specific search for ways of adopting Islam to modern conditions, Modernist Islam inevitably intersected with nationalisms of colonial and semi-colonial world since both currents had an agenda for modernization and anti-colonialism. To Masud, developments at the turn of the century created a paradox within the discourse of Islamic modernism. While they were not advocate territorial nationalism, at the same time the concept of *watan* (homeland) gained appeal among modernist Muslim thinkers in this era. On the one hand, opposition to the West was intense, on the other hand, western concepts of liberty, republicanism, democracy, and constitutionalism, which allegedly existed in Islamic tradition, were admired.<sup>136</sup> Especially, the theme of industrialization/modernization without Westernization, a rhetoric employed by nationalist elites of non-Western countries frequently, finds one of its early expressions in Afghani’s writings who made a distinction between Western science vis-à-vis Western culture and thinking.<sup>137</sup> Moreover, not only nationalism’s being a constant feature of modern life in that era, but the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, of which Egypt and Arabia were also parts, contributed to nationalism’s relevance to Modernist Islam’s discussions.

### **3.1.1 Modernist Islam in SEA and Indonesia**

According to Masud, Southeast Asia did not raise its great Modernists as Sayyid Ahmad Khan and ‘Abduh,<sup>138</sup> however, in this region, where a considerable number

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<sup>135</sup> Azyumardi Azra, “The Transmission of al-Manar’s Reformism to the Malay-Indonesian World: The Cases of al-Imam and al-Munir,” *Studia Islamika* 6, no.3 (1999): 79-80.

<sup>136</sup> Muhammad Kahlid Masud, “Islamic Modernism,” in *Islam and Modernity: Key Issues and Debates*, 246.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid, 246.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid, 250.

of Muslim populations existed, Muslim intellectuals were also exposed to Islamic Modernism and contributed to its debates through various channels such as pilgrimage to Mecca, immigration of Arab communities to SEA and Southeast Asian students who were educated in the Middle East, the latter arguably being the most effective one.<sup>139</sup> Intertwined with the local conditions in SEA, major considerations of Modernist Islam in these lands were about the pre-Islamic belief's impact on Islamic practices, colonial system's negative consequences on Islam, relatedly an alternative anti-colonial thinking which was subsidiary to nationalist anti-colonialism, and stressing the importance of Modern Islamic institutions, notably in educational area.<sup>140</sup>

### **3.1.2 National Identity Abroad**

Although Modernist Islam's influence in changing the outlook of Islam in Indonesia was great, in this chapter, I will specifically deal with its influence on Indonesian nationalism. The search for the interaction between Modernist Islam and nationalism in Indonesia was necessitated due to Modernist Islam's positive contribution to the formation of Indonesian national identity. It is important to remember that what we call the international is not just a Western phenomenon, but non-Western transnational ideas and solidarities were also part of the international which was effective on nationalism. Moreover, what we call elites or intellectuals of Indonesian society were not only educated within Western schools, but a considerable number went through an Islamic education first in local religious schools and then in Middle East and spoke and wrote in Arabic along with Indonesian. Anderson's account of bilingual intelligentsia who were nation-makers did not only speak Dutch and Indonesian, but there was also Arabic as a language of intellectual activity, beyond being a sacred script.<sup>141</sup> Thus, looking at Modernist

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<sup>139</sup> Howard Federspiel, "Modernist Islam in Southeast Asia: A New Examination," *The Muslim World* 92, (2002): 375.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid, 374.

<sup>141</sup> Cole also talks about the emergence of a regional subunit in the Mediterranean world within the global information ecumene, which challenged European domination through the appropriation of

Islam and its impact on nationalism amounts to taking nationalism and the international from the grasp of the myth of the Western-educated nationalist elite as the sole genitor of nationalism in colonial countries. As already noted, the most important work on the impact of Modernist Islam on Indonesia was Laffan's *Umma Below the Winds* (2003), where he argued that Indonesian nationalism had Middle Eastern roots as much as European and Indonesian, which also constitutes the basis of this chapter.<sup>142</sup>

In order to understand how people of the Netherlands East Indies started to identify themselves under the banner of Indonesian identity instead of regional identities such as Javanese or Sumatran, which were very powerful around those times, it is not enough looking only at the impact of Western education and the colonial borders, but an examination of Muslim intellectuals and their transnational movements is also necessary. In crystallization of national identity, Laffan points out those Islamic ulama and their students whose movements across Indian Ocean enabled Islamic reformism.<sup>143</sup> In explaining the process, he borrows Bayly's term *ecumene*<sup>144</sup> to describe Southeast Asian Muslims who constituted an Islamic ecumenism in which the roots of Indonesian nationhood were embedded. What made possible this nationhood to take roots was the experience of being abroad with members of the same ecumene which led to "an altered sense of self", maintenance of community and sense of difference. According to Laffan, while experience of pilgrimage to Hijaz and anti-colonial environment in Mecca laid the foundations

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new technologies in communication and transportation. J. R. Cole, "Printing and Urban Islam in the Mediterranean World, 1890-1920," in *Modernity and Culture* (Columbia University Press, 2002), 346.

<sup>142</sup> Laffan, *Umma below the Winds*, 2.

<sup>143</sup> Azyumardi Azra, "The Transmission of Islamic Reformism to Indonesia: Networks of Middle Eastern and Malay-Indonesian Ulama in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1992), quoted in *Ibid*, 3.

<sup>144</sup> Ecumene is described as complex and diverse web of societies as a single community of thought, exchange, and communication. Bayly as cited in Laffan, 2-3.

for a *Jawi*<sup>145</sup> community, this community gained much of its national character in Cairo through the influence of Modernist Islam. To Laffan, Cairene milieu, in which Modernist ideas flourished and nationalist ideas gained momentum, provided a fertile ground for the Indonesian nationalism. Moreover, those developments within Indonesia, such as modern ways of groupings in organizations and associations (like *Budi Utomo*) or development of publishing activities which have been traditionally attributed to European impact found their parallels in Modernist Muslim ulama's efforts such as the establishment of *Muhammadiyah* or development of a *Jawi* press.

One example of this *Jawi* ecumene who developed nationalist feelings abroad and imported them to Indonesia was the students from Malaysia and Indonesia who were educated in Cairo's al-Azhar, who were part of a student club named as "Association of "Jawa" Students" at the University of al-Azhar."<sup>146</sup> This association's journal *Seruan Azhar* (Call of Azhar) (1925-1928) contained one of the explicit manifestations of Indonesian identity although its context was different from the today's Indonesia. First of all, what they defined as homeland was encompassing Indonesia together with the Peninsula, in other words British Malaya, as expressed in the front cover of the journal: a world map with Southeast Asia in the center and colonial territories of the Dutch and British, which would become Indonesia and Malaysia, shaded in black with the caption "The united world of our beloved people."<sup>147</sup> Although the journal was short-lived and banned in Indonesia by colonial government, through its propaganda it especially contributed to the politicization of Sumatra.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> *Jawi* is the Arabic name attributed to those who came from Southeast Asia to Middle East.

<sup>146</sup> Roff, Indonesian students, 73.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid, 77.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid, 86-87.

### 3.1.3 Anti-Colonialism and Modernization at Indonesian-Malay World

Two of Southeast Asian students, who were disciples of ‘Abduh and Rashid Rida in Mecca and al-Azhar of Cairo, became influential in spreading their teachers’ modernist ideas in SEA. Following the example of *al-Manar*, Sayyid Shayk Ahmad al-Hadi published the journal *al-Imam* in 1906 in Singapore and Abdullah Ahmad started publishing *al-Munir* (Illuminative) in 1911 in Sumatra. Although these journals’ primary focus was on religious issues more than politics, nonetheless, they contributed to the social improvement of Indonesians and fed anti-colonial thinking in various ways. In *al-Imam*, for example, the decline of religious virtue was considered to lead to alien rule<sup>149</sup> an emphasis that problematizes colonial rule constantly. Even when it did not attack the colonial government openly, it pointed it out as an anomaly in life course of a Muslim. Moreover, *al-Imam* published articles that contained important critique of the West in matters of colonialism for making Eastern people slaves and, for their hypocrisy and for their disrespect to Eastern rulers.<sup>150</sup>

Compared to *al-Imam*’s explicit anti-colonial attitude, *al-Munir* was deliberate in expressing anti-Dutch feelings. There were writings in it which showed a pro-Dutch attitude and said that as long as Dutch rulers were respectful to their Muslim subjects, their rule should not be considered as infidel rule. However, in the first issue of *al-Munir*, it stated one of its principles as becoming a guiding light of Muslim ummah of East Indies who were oppressed by the Dutch. Moreover, it was an acknowledged fact that *al-Munir* was a journal shaped after *al-Imam* whose anti-colonial character was explicit. Although its latter attitude was an attitude of cooperation, it must be noted that Dutch colonial government started to be very sensitive about the politicization of Islam due to global and local conjecture at the turn of the century. At the global level, the emergence of Pan-Islamism in the 1880s, and at the local level, Dutch colonial governments’ war against Aceh, which was a

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<sup>149</sup> William Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1967), quoted in Azra, “The Transmission of Islamic Reformism to Indonesia,” 87.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid, 89-90.

strong Muslim polity at least from the 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards, a war that the Dutch could win only after forty years of bitter struggle disquieted the Dutch more about Islam and put Islamic activities under close monitoring. Although they regarded modernist Muslim ideas as part of “native awakening” that most of the liberals advocated, nonetheless they preferred Muslims to debate intra-Islamic issues other than an Islam vs West. Also, *al-Munir*’s place of publication probably made its activities more alarmed for the Dutch since Sumatra was the region of which Aceh was a part and known for its peoples’ devotion to Islam more than *priyayi* Javanese.

Whatever the individual organizations and journals’ attitude towards the colonial government, one thing was clear: that the emphasis of Modernist Islam on education led organizations like Muhammadiyah to concentrate in the education sphere and open up schools designed after European ones, where Indonesian students, especially those who could not afford a European education and those whose religious background prevent them to attain European schools, were introduced to new ideas. In these schools not only Islamic education but also modern secular knowledge was in curriculum as advocated by *al-Imam*.<sup>151</sup> Moreover, these religious schools were not designed only for the male population, but also for young girls.

### 3.2 Pan-Islamism

Although unity of Muslims all over the world was a theme running through the history of Islam, Pan-Islamism, as an ideology centered around this unity, was born in the 1870s and 1880s, as a reaction to declining Muslim power in the face of Western imperialism and colonialism all over the world.<sup>152</sup> In close interaction with the Modernist Islam whose foundations were laid in Cairo, Pan-Islamism was born in the capital of Ottoman state, Istanbul, and was grounded deeply into the politics

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<sup>151</sup> Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, quoted in Ibid, 91.

<sup>152</sup> For Pan-Islamism see; Jacob M. Landau, *The Politics of Pan-Islam: Ideology and Organization*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); Cemil Aydin, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of World Order in Pan-Islamic and Pan-Asian Thought*, (Columbia University Press, 2007).

of the Hamidian era. Although it centered around the unified power and personal cult of the then-Caliph and Sultan, Abdülhamid II, soon Pan-Islamism was adopted as a state ideology and foreign policy tool by Young Turks as well, who were political opponents of Abdülhamid II. From the Arab peninsula to South and Southeast Asia, Pan-Islamism was seen as a powerful international ideology and source of solidarity against the Western domination by Muslims of these territories.<sup>153</sup>

While explaining why Pan-Islamism can be considered as proto-nationalism, Keddie draws on a set of similarities between Pan-Islam and later nationalisms: hostility towards the West and its domination, identification of a golden age both in institutional and military power, superiority of the local culture vis-à-vis others and becoming an attraction point for common goals of the different parts of society. To Keddie, all of these traits which were founded in Pan-Islamism were inherited by subsequent Middle Eastern nationalisms. However, instead of a transmission from Pan-Islamism to nationalism, existence of these traits in both Pan-Islam and nationalisms was due to both ideas' emergence in the modern era and Western international order. However, although Keddie's analysis misinterprets a temporal coincidence, her emphasis on inheritance holds true for our case: Indonesian nationalism inherited from Pan-Islamism two related conceptions; Imagining one-self as part of a broader community than the traditional *kampung* or regional identities and imagining it as a political community in the modern sense of the word.

Although by its internationalist nature, Pan-Islamism was against territorial nationalisms, nevertheless, it contributed its adherents' linkage to an over-arching identity apart from the long-held identities such as regional identities of Southeast Asia and tribal identities of Middle East. In one sense, Pan-Islamism as much as Marxism and Pan-Asianism formed a practice of association with a broader identity

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<sup>153</sup> For instance, as, Minault indicates, in British India, Pan-Islamism was used in mobilization of Indian Muslims who were differentiated from each other by class, linguistic, regional and sectarian differences to form a unified Indian-Muslim identity against the British colonial domination and increasing Hindu nationalism. After their mobilization, Indian Muslims were recognized as a single community whose support for Gandhi's anti-colonial non-cooperation movement became crucial. Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India* (Oxford University Press, 1982), 1-11.

and possibility of defining political borders in accordance with them against the former, narrowly defined identities. In this sense, while narrower identities did not require a process of imagination in an Andersonian sense, identification with a broader community whose members would not meet each other and eagerness to consider it as a political unit was first practiced with Pan-Islamism and other internationalist ideologies. This imagination was inherited by nationalism, which made it much easier to form a political community in the age of nation-states.

### **3.2.1 Pan-Islamism in Indonesia**

In colonial Indonesia, Istanbul has always been a symbol of Muslim power to which sultans of several Muslim kingdoms in the colony declared alleged connections. However, the most tangible and reciprocal relation between colonial Indonesia and the Ottoman state was formed in the 15<sup>th</sup> century through the kingdom of Aceh, located in the most northern end of Sumatra, when Aceh was under attack of Portuguese colonialism. From that time onwards, sultans of Aceh declared loyalty to the Ottoman Sultans time to time and offered their country as a vassal to Ottoman state with the hope of diplomatic protection and material help.<sup>154</sup> Although Ottoman responses to Acehnese demands were not always helpful, partly caused by geographical distance and partly because of Ottomans' own foreign policy agenda towards European powers, nevertheless, Ottoman Sultan as the Caliph of Muslim world remained as an influential power to hold onto against "infidel rule" in Indonesia<sup>155</sup>, especially during the reign of Abdulhamid II. Abdülhamid's eagerness to act as a ruler of all Muslims and Ottoman state's being an independent

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<sup>154</sup> Aceh was one of the last places that Dutch colonial government was able to bring under its domination within the Indonesian archipelago. The Dutch managed to take control of Aceh as late as 1914. Therefore, Aceh sought diplomatic protection from Ottoman State for long years. See, Anthony Reid, "Pan-Islam in Indonesia and Malaysia," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 26, no.2 (1967): 267-283; Anthony Reid, "Sixteenth Century Turkish Influence in Western Indonesia," *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 10, no.3 (1999): 395-414.

<sup>155</sup> In a similar vein, Qureshi argues that Islam as its power exemplified by Ottoman state was a powerful symbol to hold on among Indian Muslims such that its defeat in WWI created a panic environment which led to Khilafat Movement. M.N. Qureshi, *Pan-Islam in British Indian Politics: A Study of the Khilafat Movement, 1918-1924*, (Brill, 1999), 1.

and powerful Muslim country in contrast to colonized Muslim world made Ottoman state and Pan-Islamic policy an attraction among Indonesians.

Around the same time, the Dutch colonial government started to perceive Islam, especially its Pan-Islamic variant, as a threat to their rule in the archipelago, as noted before. Here it must be mentioned that fear of the Dutch from Pan-Islamism stemmed not from any direct confrontation with Ottoman state but from Pan-Islamism's potential to appeal to Indonesians. According to Dutch officials, Pan-Islamic tendencies could easily turn into an anti-colonial rebellion. That is why Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, the man behind the Dutch Islamic policy, was appointed as an advisor between 1889 and 1906 by the Dutch colonial government, and Islam was put under close surveillance.<sup>156</sup> Dutch government's fear of Pan-Islamism as a trigger of anti-colonialism was not unfounded as the reaction of Indonesians to Ottoman politics showed. Even after Abdulhamid's dethronement by Young Turks in 1908, the Caliphate as an institution and the Ottoman state as a powerful Muslim state continued to represent the power of Islam such that after 1908, Young Turks started to be praised as defenders of Islam.<sup>157</sup> In a similar fashion, after Mustafa Kemal's efforts at Anatolia to fight against the foreign rule started, it was he, not the Caliph in Istanbul, who praised as *pahlawan Islam* (hero of Islam) several times in Indonesian newspapers from different political leanings and Indies All Islam Congresses sent greeting telegrams to Mustafa Kemal in support of his cause and even his appointment of a new Caliph.<sup>158</sup> So, one can say that Pan-Islam was very much associated with anti-colonial rule in Indonesia such

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<sup>156</sup> Harry Benda, "Indonesian Islam Under the Japanese Occupation, 1942-45," *Pacific Affairs* 28, no. 4 (1955): 352-353.

<sup>157</sup> Mohammad Redzuan Othman, "Pan-Islamic Appeal and Political Patronage: The Malay Perspective and the Ottoman Response", *Sejarah*, no. 4 (1996): 97-108, quoted in Azra, "The Transmission of *al-Manar*'s Reformism," 89.

<sup>158</sup> Chiara Formichi, "Mustafa Kemal's Abrogation of the Ottoman Caliphate and Its Impact on Indonesian Nationalist Movement," 98-99; Van Bruinessen, "Muslims of the Dutch East Indies and the Caliphate Question", *Studia Islamika* 2, no. 3 (1995). Mustafa Kemal enjoyed this general sympathy until 1924, when he abrogated the Caliphate. From that time onwards, Turkey remained as an anti-colonial rallying point only for secular nationalist segment represented by Sukarno.

that even the value of the institution was equated with the person who fought against the alien rule and Western imperialism.

Association of Pan-Islamism with anti-colonialism was a fact even acknowledged by Indonesian Marxists. At the Fourth Congress of the Communist International, which was held on 12 November 1922, Tan Malaka, former general secretary of PKI, uttered these words:

Today Pan-Islamism signifies the national liberation struggle because for the Muslims Islam is everything: not only religion, but also the state, the economy, food and everything else. And so Pan Islamism now means the brotherhood of all Muslim peoples, and the liberation struggle not only of the Arab but also of the Indian, the Javanese and all the oppressed Muslim peoples. This brotherhood means the practical liberation struggle not only against Dutch but also against English, French and Italian capitalism, therefore against world capitalism as a whole. That is what Pan-Islamism now means in Indonesia among the oppressed colonial peoples, according to their secret propaganda – the liberation struggle against the different imperialist powers of the world.

...Just as we want to support the national struggle, we also want to support the liberation struggle of the very combative, very active 250 million Muslims living under the imperialist powers. Therefore I ask once again: Should we support Pan-Islamism in this sense?<sup>159</sup>

These words came against the background of the decision of the Second Congress of the Comintern to fight against Pan-Islamism which was a tool of Ottoman imperialism in the eyes of the communists. This decision was, however, hard to realize for Indonesian Marxists who were in a close collaboration with Islamic organization *Sarekat Islam*, to form a united front against the Dutch colonial power. It is the irony of history that at the world's biggest internationalist organization, another internationalist idea that was perceived as enemy by the majority, was defended by a Marxist for the sake of national salvation. However, oddness of this ideological juxtaposition more or less defined the politics of liberation in the colonial world as anti-colonial discourse of international ideas of Pan-Islamism, Marxism and Pan-Asianism intertwined with nationalism as well as with each other.

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<sup>159</sup> Tan Malaka, "Communism and Pan-Islamism," (1922), available at Marxist Internet Archive <https://www.marxists.org/archive/malaka/1922-Panislamism.htm> (Last accessed: September 19, 2021).

### 3.3 Conclusion

Modernist Islam and Pan-Islamism, as influential international ideas of the turn of the twentieth century influenced Indonesian nationalism in various ways. Primarily, both currents had a strong anti-colonial discourse which constituted a rallying point for colonized Indonesians. Apart from their anti-colonial character, these two currents enabled Indonesians to form identities larger than their primary regional identities. While those *Jawi* ecumene abroad through experience of pilgrimage and study in a foreign country developed an Indonesian-Malay identity, those Muslims who committed themselves to an imagined Muslim world through Pan-Islam experienced imagining oneself as part of a wider political community. Moreover, Modernist Islamic ideas' emphasis on the importance of education as promoted in journals like *al-Imam* and *al-Munir* helped raising a new generation of Indonesians whose modern Islamic education politicized them as much as European schools in the country.

## CHAPTER 4

### MARXISM

How beautiful life is when one doesn't have to cringe before others.

Minke, *This Earth of Mankind*.<sup>160</sup>

My nash my novyj mir postroim,

Kto byl nikem tot stanet vsem!

*International Communist Anthem*<sup>161</sup>

Marxism was one of the most influential international ideologies of the turn of the twentieth century. Although there were several Marxist organizations and political parties in Europe and a socialist revolution was expected from these European countries, the first such revolution broke out in Russia, a relatively backward country in comparison to its Western European counterparts, semi-feudal and thus did not have a solid proletarian basis. After the Bolshevik Revolution, communists believed that other European countries would follow the example of Russia. Contrary to these expectations, it was Marxism's high appeal in Asia that was remarkable.

Almost in every Asian country, Marxist parties played crucial roles in the political life of these to-be-nations. Marxist groups of Asia fought civil wars, rose in rebellion, organized trade unions, and educated themselves and the masses they

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<sup>160</sup> Pramoedya Ananta Toer, *This Earth of Mankind*, trans. Max Lane (New York: Avon Books, 1993), 30.

<sup>161</sup> We will build our new World/Who was nobody will become everything.

could reach. After their independence, many countries in East and Southeast Asia became nation-states ruled by communist regimes up to the present day, like People's Republic of China (PRC), Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and Lao People's Democratic Republic, or for a relatively short period like Cambodia. Indonesia has never been ruled by a Marxist-Leninist government. Even now, there is not a political party that represents the far left in the Indonesian parliament. However, this absence does not mean that Marxism was not a strong force in Indonesian history. The first formal Marxist organization of Indonesia, *Indische Sociaal-Democratische Vereeniging* (Indies Social-Democratic Association, ISDV), was founded as early as 1914, three years before the Bolshevik Revolution.<sup>162</sup> Its successor, *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (Communist Party of Indonesia, PKI), was the first Marxist-Leninist party of Asia outside of Russia when it was founded in 1920.<sup>163</sup> Marxism became a powerful force in the Indonesian political life in that, although eradicated from the explicit political arena after unsuccessful communist risings of 1926-1927, PKI managed to exist as an underground party and returned to political life when independence was proclaimed. It played a major role in the first decades of independent Indonesia. In the period between 1959–1965, PKI was the biggest communist party in the non-communist world<sup>164</sup> until its members were brutally suppressed by the Suharto regime in 1966.

Juxtaposed to the expected course of the spread of Marxist ideas and then revolution to Europe, the strong appeal of Marxism in Asia created a puzzle. According to Marx and Engel's analysis, fully industrialized nations' proletariat would develop a class consciousness, and from their rebellion against the exploitation revolutions would be born. Russia would be the exception if successful communist revolutions in Asia would not follow it. The appeal of Marxism in backward nations, especially

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<sup>162</sup> Robert Cribb, "The Indonesian Marxist Tradition," in *Marxism in Asia*, ed Colin Mackerras and Nick Knight (Australia: Croom Helm, 1985), 251.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid, 251.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid, 259.

in colonies, was a surprise. As Mackerras and Knight mention, several dimensions of Marx's thinking created an important problem for the employment of Marxism in Asia such as the central role Marx attributed to the proletariat in revolution and disbelief in peasants as a revolutionary class.<sup>165</sup> Juxtaposed to Asia, where significant part of the population were peasants and little, if any, working class existed, Asian Marxists were confronted with applications of Marxism to their societies.<sup>166</sup> Moreover, the unilinear development path to the revolution, which requires full blossom of capitalist mode of production before revolution, was incompatible with the reality in Asia, where pre-capitalist modes of production existed, and therefore, it was "clear that any Asian Marxism must be an interpretation of Marxism."<sup>167</sup> In addition to these more structural conditions, some traits of Marxist thinking, such as possible elimination of family in post-revolutionary communist life and Marxism's being not only an international but also an internationalist ideology, thus its rejection of nationalism, were the challenges that Marxist thinkers of Asia had to deal with when it came to inviting masses to join class struggle.<sup>168</sup>

Against the backdrop of Marxism's theoretical incompatibility with structural conditions in Asia in general and this puzzling world-historical concurrence of an international ideology with the colonized world in particular, this chapter aims to understand how Marxism as an international ideational force impacted the course of nationalism in Indonesia through a set of questions: What did Marxism mean to the colonized? What were the peculiar conditions in which Marxism was appealed to Indonesians? How to explain Indonesian experience with Marxism's divergences and convergences with the general schema of Marxism-Third World relations? And

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<sup>165</sup> Mackerras and Knight, *Marxism in Asia*, 6-7.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>168</sup> Robert Cribb, "The Indonesian Marxist Tradition," 251.

how did the interaction of colonized Indonesians with Marxism inform Indonesian nationalism?

#### **4.1 What did Marxism Mean to the Colonized?**

At first sight, one can find a lot of reasons for colonial Asia to reject Marxism, but a closer look at the events of the turn of the century reveals that instead of being arid, colonial Asia was a fertile ground for Marxist ideas to grow. In the first decades of the century, both structural conditions and actions of individuals like Lenin, Roy, Malaka, and many other Marxist thinkers helped to convey Marxism to the masses as a viable way of political action in colonial Asia. In any case, despite the supposedly unfavorable conditions for Marxism's flourishing in the Third World, there were a set of areas of engagement that would pave the way for Marxism's flourishing in Asia. An identification of these areas better contextualizes Marxism's impact on the trajectory of nationalism in Indonesia. According to fault lines in the literature, it would be plausible to categorize Marxism's alignment with colonial Asia in three: Theoretical, practical, and normative areas.

##### **4.1.1 Theoretical Area: Lenin's Theoretical Contribution**

As already noted, in theoretical area, Marxism seems to offer little for colonial Asia where pre-capitalist modes of production and a peasant-dominated population existed. However, the Leninist variant of Marxism, which extended the Marxist theory to the non-European world, became one of the anchors of Asian Marxists who found a theoretical base to build upon their own interpretations. Lenin's contribution may be best captured in the speech of PKI Chairman Aidit, which was given to commemorate Lenin's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday:

Lenin succeeded in changing a ruinous feudal and capitalist society into a Socialist society. By so doing, Lenin succeeded at the same time in proving that it was possible to change a capitalist society into a Socialist society. This strengthened the belief in the possibility of changing the Eastern world, where the people still live in mediaeval conditions, into an East that is free of a cruel and vicious Europe that is marching towards a new, happy life.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> D. N. Aidit, "Lenin and Indonesia," *Problems of the Indonesia Revolution* (DEMOS, 1960), available at Marxists Internet Archive <https://www.marxists.org/history/indonesia/1960-AiditLeninandIndonesia.htm> (Last accessed: September 19, 2021).

It was Lenin and his ideas that he advocated in the Second International and then formulated in *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* in 1917, that pulled out colonialism from the periphery of Marxist thought and brought it to the center.<sup>170</sup> For Southeast Asia, where slogans against imperialism and colonialism were popular even before the encounter with Marxism, Leninism provided Western-educated elites of Asia with additional justifications to resist alien political rule.<sup>171</sup> Thus, as Knight argues, Lenin's contribution to Marxism can partially answer the question of how Marxism created a greater impact in Asia than Europe.<sup>172</sup>

In fact, *Imperialism* was a theoretical work that explained why the proletarian revolution which Marx foresaw still did not happen in Western Europe.<sup>173</sup> However, Lenin explained the phenomena by making significant references to colonialism in his explanation. According to Lenin, starting from the turn of the century, capitalism had moved into its highest stage, imperialism. This era was marked by the creation of monopolies in Europe which grew to the degree that they were in need of places to invest their surplus capital and to find new resources and markets to maintain their profits.<sup>174</sup> Thus, their need for "export of capital" resulted in "the formation of international monopolist capitalist associations which share the world among themselves" through the intensified acquisition of colonies at the

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<sup>170</sup> Ruth McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism*, p.4.

<sup>171</sup> Frank N. Trager, *Marxism in Southeast Asia: A Study of Four Countries*, (California: Stanford University Press, 1959), 11.

<sup>172</sup> Knight, "Leninism," in *Marxism in Asia*, ed Colin Mackerras and Nick Knight (Australia: Croom Helm, 1985), 25.

<sup>173</sup> McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism*, 4.

<sup>174</sup> Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, "Imperialism: The Highest stage of Capitalism," *Lenin's Selected Works*, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1963), 667-766, available at Marxists Internet Archive <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1916/imp-hsc/#f1> (Last accessed: September 19, 2021).

beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>175</sup> Based on this analysis, Lenin showed the danger of colonial activity for any prospect of revolution in Europe. He wrote that exploitation of the rest of the world by rich European countries makes it possible for these states to bribe their “upper strata of the proletariat.” Thus “parasitic” imperialism led to the creation of a privileged group among the working class and detached this group from the proletarian masses.<sup>176</sup>

Lenin also did not reject nationalist-bourgeois revolutions in Asia contrary to many Bolsheviks who thought that Comintern should fight against the Asian bourgeoisie.<sup>177</sup> According to him, bourgeoisie and nationalism could be considered as progressive forces in pre-capitalist Asia.<sup>178</sup> He indicated that nationalist revolutions in colonies were a part of the world revolutions since they disrupted the course of imperialism. Nevertheless, he attributed a central role to revolution in advanced countries.<sup>179</sup> He remarked that nationalisms of Asia “is only water for our mill” through the destruction of imperialism in metropolises.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Ibid, as Lenin indicates, at the beginning of the century, due to the acquisition of colonies in an intensified fashion, there was not any territory left in the world which was not acclaimed by a state. Therefore, he argues that, after this point, there would be no distribution of land, but only a redistribution would take place.

<sup>176</sup> Lenin’s analyses on colonialism inspired Marxist thinkers to analyze the relationship between their lands and metropolises. For example, after analyzing the production and export numbers, Semaun wrote that it is certain that Dutch capitalism bribed the upper strata of its workers with profit derived from Indonesia. The words he uses apart from the analysis is reflecting Lenin’s ideas in *Imperialism*. Semaun, “International Imperialism and the Communist Party of Indonesia,” *Communist International* no.17 (1925): 75-82, available at Marxists Internet Archive <https://www.marxists.org/history/indonesia/1925-Imperialism.htm> (Last accessed: September 19, 2021).

<sup>177</sup> McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism*, 56.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid, 56.

<sup>179</sup> Knight, “Leninism, Stalinism and the Comintern,” in *Marxism in Asia*, ed Colin Mackerras and Nick Knight (Australia: Croom Helm, 1985), 33.

<sup>180</sup> E. H. Carr, *Bolshevik Revolution*, III, 235-236, quoted in McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism*, 56.

In *Imperialism*, Lenin incorporated the phenomena of colonialism into Marxist theory and demonstrated its negative effect on the European proletariat's revolutionary potential. These ideas were carried into the First Congress of the Comintern (1919), as well. Countries attending the congress were mostly from European countries and the theme was mostly the approaching revolution in Europe. The expectations from the European proletariat and their revolutionary potential were so high that even the fate of colonized people was bounded to them as it can be deduced from these lines of the manifesto of the congress:

... The emancipation of the colonies is conceivable only in conjunction with the emancipation of the working class in the metropolises. ... If capitalist Europe has violently dragged the most backward sections of the world into the whirlpool of capitalist relations, then socialist Europe will come to the aid of liberated colonies with her technology, her organization and her ideological influence in order to facilitate their transition to a planned and organized socialist economy.

Colonial slaves of Africa and Asia! The hour of proletarian dictatorship in Europe will strike for you as the hour of your own emancipation!<sup>181</sup>

However, instead of waiting for the hour of the European revolution to strike Asians, the spectre of communism already started to haunt the colonized and semi-colonized parts of Asia. In Indonesia, for instance, Marxist thinker Tan Malaka stated that Indonesians should not pin their hopes on the collapse of the capitalist countries, but they had to take action immediately.<sup>182</sup>

Contrary to the First Congress, the Second Congress of Comintern (1920) hosted many Asian communist parties, including PKI. This time, Comintern put great emphasis on the revolutions in the East. Therefore, to outline a Communist program for the East, Commission on National and Colonial Question was formed whose chairman was Lenin and secretary was Sneevliet, the founder of the ISDV.<sup>183</sup> This

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<sup>181</sup> Leon Trotsky, *The First Five Years of the Communist International I*, (London: New Park, 1973), available at Marxists Internet Archive <https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1924/ffyci-1/ch01.htm#n1>.

<sup>182</sup> Tan Malaka, *Naar de Republiek*.

<sup>183</sup> McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism*, 57.

congress was important for Asian Marxism since Lenin's "Theses on National and Colonial Question" was providing a bridge to discorded parts of Marxism and Asia. Major idea of the thesis, as expressed by Lenin, was "the distinction between oppressed and oppressor nations." By this distinction, Lenin attributed a justification to potential revolutions of Asia, even if they were not Marxist but nationalist-bourgeois revolutions.<sup>184</sup> Lenin also formulated the aforementioned discord of heavy peasant domination and pre-capitalist mode of production in Asia and Marxist theory. He stated that an organization in Soviet lines was applicable to oppressed people too, who were exploited within feudal and semi-feudal relations.<sup>185</sup> In this congress, Comintern also decided that non-industrialized countries would pass to socialist stage without going through the capitalist one,<sup>186</sup> thus Marx's philosophy of history was stretched out to encompass Asian realities.

#### **4.1.2 Practical Area: Industrialization without Capitalism**

Contrary to theoretical discord before Lenin, in practical area, Marxism offered many virtues for Asia. One part of the studies that explain the relation between Marxism and Asia focus on the practical needs of the colonized world and what Marxism could offer for the realization of these needs.

One of the themes these studies deal with is development, which is equated with industrialization, reflecting the mindset of the nationalist elite in colonies. For instance, according to Silverman, the nationalist elite of the colonies carried both anti-colonial feelings and a desire for industrialization, which is the mark of the West, since industrialization meant an equitable place with westerners for their nation in the making. Silverman, therefore, explains the Marxist appeal to colonies

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<sup>184</sup> It must be noted that there was a rival thesis that was drafted by Indian Marxist Roy, who opposes Lenin. That's why it was Lenin's, not Comintern's contribution.

<sup>185</sup> V.I. Lenin, "Thesis on National and Colonial Question, The Second Congress of the Communist International" *Lenin's Collected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishers 1965), 213-263, available at Marxists Internet Archive <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1920/jul/x03.htm#fw3> (Last accessed: September 19, 2021).

<sup>186</sup> McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism*, 60.

by referring to its offering of an alternative industrialization, an alternative to the West.<sup>187</sup>

Another theme that is included in the literature is the colonized world's need for social change. According to scholars, the desire of the elites to get rid of the colonial rule and backwardness of the society at once attracted them to Marxism since Marxism offered a map for social change. One of the scholars who touch open this issue is Knight: in addition to Lenin's theoretical contribution, Knight also argues that his writings served as a road map for political organization and party building in Asia and were favored by Asian revolutionaries who were eager for societal and political change.<sup>188</sup>

#### **4.1.3 Normative Area**

Several studies, when touching upon the issue of Marxism and Asia addressed the issue that some essential premises of Marxism had a similarity with the spiritual hinges of the society or, in one way or another, aligned with psychological needs of the society which I prefer to call the normative area in their totality. Theoretical coherence of an ideology with objective conditions was an issue that concerned the elite strata of the society as well as the need for large-scale transformation both in economic and social life. Thus, the first two alignment points of Marxism with Asia became influential only on a small part of the society, which belonged to the elite class. It is not to say that elite's perception was unimportant. At the end of the day, it was the elite class who was the carrier, localizer and transformer of these ideas and conveyed them to the masses. However, it was the alignment of some dimensions of Marxism that created its most important impact on the Asian societies and, from time to time, through highlighting this alignment points, Marxist thinkers of Asia enabled their parties to grow in number. The most important reason behind Marxism's attractiveness in Asia was rooted in its appeal to the moral needs

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<sup>187</sup> Jerry Mark Silverman, "*Indonesianizing Marxism-Leninism: The Development and Consequences of Communist Polycentrism (1919-1966)*," (Doctoral Dissertation, The Claremont Graduate University, 1967), 25.

<sup>188</sup> Knight, "Leninism," 31.

of the different parts of the colonial society. Also, it was the conciliation between this normative dimension and Marxist offerings which made Marxist experience in Asia, not just a branch of international application of Marxism but an ideology that impacted and intertwined with nationalism. Since this normative area is defined broadly, it would be plausible to break it down into three components: Islam, race, and equality.

#### **4.1.3.1 Marxism and Islam in Indonesia**

One of the most peculiar ways Marxism appealed to Indonesians was through Islam. As already noted, Islam was the religion of most of the Indonesians, although devotion to and practices of it had been in varying degrees across the archipelago. However, especially in rural life, its impact was considerable due to local *hadjis* or *kyais* who recruited pupils to their *pesantren*.<sup>189</sup>

In the first years that Marxism established itself in Indonesia, the first Marxist organizations of ISDV and PKI adopted a tactical strategy that permitted them to spread Marxist ideas in a heavily Muslim-populated society. What was termed as “bloc within strategy” actually referred to the infiltration of a small political party to a bigger party to derive membership for itself. In the Indonesian case, first ISDV and then PKI infiltrated into the mass organization of *Sarekat Islam*, and Islam and Marxism coexisted within a formal political organization until *Sarekat Islam*’s 1923 decision to expel PKI members from the organization.<sup>190</sup> However, the relation between Islam and Marxism was not that simple as to reduce it to a tactical alignment on the side of the Marxist parties. There were different actors whose adherence to Marxism and Islam was in varying degrees. Von der Mehden categorizes those Indonesian nationalists who engaged with Marxist ideas in four:

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<sup>189</sup> *Pesantren* is a Javanese religious educational institution which was run by religious man who had knowledge of Koran. Young boys from villages became their students - in Javanese *santri* - to learn Islamic faith. It is commonplace for a *santri* to travel from *pesantren* to *pesantren* to learn from different teachers since each *pesantren* teacher had its own knowledge and techniques to convey this knowledge. For more on *pesantren* see; Jean Gelman Taylor, 176-177.

<sup>190</sup> It must be noted that after its success in Indonesia, this strategy served as an example to the Chinese Communist Party.

The first group was local *hadjis* and merchants whose vested interests refrained them to be true socialists but utilized Marxist rhetoric in a selective way in their struggle against Dutch and Chinese merchants; The second group was religious Communists who were sincere in their belief to both Islam and Marxism, such as Hadji Misbach, Hadji Datoek Batoeh, Natar Zainoeddin, who found Marxism and teachings of the Koran in correspondence with each other; The third group was those communists who saw Islam as a means or neutral to religion such as Tan Malaka, Darsono and Semaun and did not base their Marxism on Islamic grounds; The final group was the leaders of *Sarekat Islam* such as Tjokroaminoto who accepted Marxist road map for Indonesia but interpreted it to make it suitable to the local context.<sup>191</sup> In a similar vein, Hongxuan points out that Islam and Communism were put in force by the highest levels of anti-colonial movement leadership through “conciliatory discourses” yet this conciliation was theorized on a wide spectrum ranging from “deeply religious to openly atheist” by different actors of the movement.<sup>192</sup>

Through the efforts of these actors, Marxism was conveyed to the masses through the most important spiritual hinge of the Indonesian society, which was Islam. Independent of their adherence to Islam or Marxist thinking, these actors were in a process of localization of Marxist ideas into the Indonesian context. One of the recurring themes of their works was the compatibilities of Islam and Marxism in their essence since both search for a just world. It was common for them to refer to Prophet Mohammed as the first true socialist, citing certain Koran verses or hadiths to show Islam’s similarity with Marxist doctrine or pointing out Islamic practices of *zakat* as a vehicle for social redistribution or concepts of usury as *haram* which was a feature of capitalist economy.

For instance, Sukarno, who did not define himself as Marxist, but a nationalist, after the dissolution of unity within the independence movement, wrote his famous

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<sup>191</sup> Fred R. von der Mehden, “Marxism and Early Indonesian Islamic Nationalism,” *Political Science Quarterly*, 73 no. 3 (1958): 338-342.

<sup>192</sup> Lin Hongxuan, “Sickle as Crescent: Islam and Communism in the Netherlands East Indies, 1915-1927,” *Studia Islamika* 25 no. 2 (2018): 312, 313.

article *Nationalisme, Islamisme, Marxisme*, in an attempt to unite hostile elements of the movement again. According to him, "...people's movement in Indonesia, [is] a movement with a single common goal, yet with three aspects – Nationalist, Islamic and Marxist."<sup>193</sup> In this article, he continuously stressed that "true Islam is socialist" in its nature and he pointed out capitalism as the enemy of both Marxism and Islam. In that point, he equates the Marxist concept of surplus value, which was the essence of capitalism, with the concept of usury in Islam which was sinful and prohibited by the religion.<sup>194</sup>

#### 4.1.3.2 Class and Race in Colonial Society

Cribb rightly asserts that Indonesia's geographic distance from the central countries of Marxist authority permitted Indonesian Marxists to localize Marxist-Leninist ideas to their own conditions.<sup>195</sup> One of the brilliant examples of this localization was applied to the Marxist concept of class. As mentioned before, one thing that Indonesian Marxists had to deal with was the nationalist question vis-à-vis the internationalism of Marxism.<sup>196</sup> In order to deal with this question, the nucleus of Marxist theory, the concept of class, was converted from its solely economic connotation to a racial-economic one. However, to understand this localization, it would be better to situate it within the Indonesian society and its own class

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<sup>193</sup> Soekarno, "Nationalism, Islam and Marxism" trans. Karel H. Warouw and Peter D. Weldon (Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1970).

<sup>194</sup> Ibid, 50-51.

<sup>195</sup> Cribb, "Indonesian Marxist Tradition," 251.

<sup>196</sup> Although they formed alliances with nationalist groups and defended the necessity of it in Comintern, it must be noted that Indonesian Marxists who were theoreticians of PKI were internationalists from the beginning. To clarify this ambiguous attitude, McVey makes a useful distinction between national vs nationalist movement: According to her, most of the parties who fought for independence were national through being Indonesian however, their organizations were founded on regional-cultural bases like *Budi Utomo* or international in their ideology like *Sarekat Islam* and PKI. They were conscious of Indonesian national identity, yet Indonesian nation-state was not their final goal. The nationalist parties were going to be formed later. McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism*, 63.

structure. This includes a necessary inclusion of the concept of race into Marxist analyses.

Although the European bourgeoisie class was not distinguished from the other economic classes with traits like race, one can identify how economic wealth was allocated in accordance with racial traits in East Indies. In colonial society, Marx's economic classes were blurred. At the top of the racial hierarchy, there were white Europeans who were civil servants of colonial government or wealthy capitalists who are making a fortune in Indonesia. The latter had a monopoly on the large-scale industries, estate management, mining industry, and overseas trade and finance, thus, they were the employers of the tiny proletariat in the country.<sup>197</sup> The middle class was wealthy Chinese merchants and middlemen who were engaging with trade over centuries across Southeast Asia. They were usually engaging with small-scale manufacturing and trade.<sup>198</sup> These two groups were the ones that owned means of production and accumulated wealth. There was also a tiny Indonesian bourgeoisie who deals with manufacturing and trade activities; however, due to their lower position in the racial hierarchy imposed by Dutch, they did not compete with the Chinese and other Foreign Orientals under the same conditions. Moreover, whatever the amount of wealth of an Indonesian, strict racial divisions prevented them from gaining social capital even if they had enough economic capital. The peasants, a class that constituted the biggest part of colonial society, were bounded to the soil that was acclaimed by regents who were also employees of colonial administration. Thus, the Marxist conception of class, which was purely defined in economic terms through ownership of means of production, was to a greater extent determined through the racial hierarchy in colonial society. In this hierarchy, chances of owning means of production were in descending order. The Dutch had every means at their disposal to own means of production only because they are at the top of the pyramid.

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<sup>197</sup> Rex Mortimer, "Class, Social Cleavage and Indonesian Communism." *Indonesia* no. 8 (1969), 4.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid*, 4.

In several writings of Indonesian Marxist thinkers, they were tended to equate the Dutch rule with capitalism and the whole Indonesian society as the downtrodden masses to a varying degree. In their pamphlets or speeches, they constantly highlighted the unique character of economic relations in Indonesia, not only vis-à-vis Europe but also vis-a-vis other colonial countries. It can be said that Indonesian Marxism was characterized by an Indonesian exceptionalism.

Semaun, who was the first chairman of PKI, described the situation in Indonesia in his 1921 report to the First Congress of Toilers of the East in a different class analysis. His report points out the rapid proletarianization of Indonesians under the yoke of colonialism. To him, colonialism oppressed all Indonesians in the same way; therefore, different classes within Indonesian society can be united in anti-colonial struggle.<sup>199</sup> This rapid proletarianization of society was a theme that recurred in his 1925 report: Semaun, by relying on his calculation of proletarians in Indonesia, asserts that the working class of Indonesia is more important than the one in Holland.<sup>200</sup>

While Semaun argued that all of the Indonesians were proletarianized, Tan Malaka recognized a bigger part of the society as non-proletarian, however, he still attributed them a revolutionary potential. He indicates that different from other colonized and semi-colonized countries, non-proletarian masses in Indonesia were in economic devastation. There was not any national capital in Indonesia since colonizer never intended to give a political compromise to colonized, to forge an economic one.<sup>201</sup> Thus, Marx and Engels' famous statement "The proletariat have nothing to lose but their chains" would be adapted to Indonesian situation as "You [Indonesians] have nothing to lose but your chains" since absence of national industry or trade in Indonesia left non-proletarian people in suffering as much as

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<sup>199</sup> Cribb, "Indonesian Marxist Tradition," 254-256.

<sup>200</sup> Semaun, "International Imperialism."

<sup>201</sup> Tan Malaka, *Naar de Republiek*.

industrial workers.<sup>202</sup> If Indonesians had to clash with the Dutch imperialism, they had nothing to lose, as well. He believed that if PKI became successful in educating these non-proletarian masses, they would be allies in the struggle.<sup>203</sup> Apart from these influential theoreticians of PKI, pious Muslim communists like Hadji Misbach, who is known as Red Hadji due to his adherence to Marxism, also did not articulate a class-based Marxist understanding but relied on shared suffering of Indonesian Muslims in his newspapers *Medan Muslimin* and *Islam Bergerak* through which he conveyed Marxist propaganda.<sup>204</sup> As the term proletariat was overstretched or attributed different qualities than in Marx's analysis,<sup>205</sup> the ruling capitalist class was also not only distinguished from the other classes by having means of production but through its racial qualities, through its being alien, being Dutch.

Other than PKI theoreticians and local leaders, those nationalists like Sukarno who did not abstain himself from making Marxist analysis localized the Marxist concept of class through putting Indonesia in a special place. According to Sukarno, since the capital in Indonesia is foreign capital, the Marxist movement will eventually arouse nationalist feelings in the hearts of Indonesian workers, which was characterized by him as the discontent of the people "at the bottom" towards the ones who were "at the top."<sup>206</sup> The reason behind the suffering of Indonesian people

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

<sup>203</sup> Cribb argues that Marxists of those societies who have a small base of the proletariat tried to identify possible allies who would run to call of proletariat in its power struggle. Cribb, "Indonesian Marxist Tradition," 253.

<sup>204</sup> Lin Hongxuan, "Sickle as Crescent," 324.

<sup>205</sup> When analyzing the structure of masses in Indonesian society back in the 1920s, Sukarno also points out this overstretched of the term proletariat as a misunderstanding. He says that through misuse of the term, proletariat denotes all of the poor section of the society, the common people, which were not belong to this class, in fact. Soekarno, "Marhaen and Proletarian; Speech before the Indonesian Nationalist Party at the Party's Thirtieth Anniversary at Bandung, July 3<sup>rd</sup> 1957" trans. Claire Holt, (Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1960), 6.

<sup>206</sup> Soekarno, Nationalism, Islam and Marxism, 59.

is the Dutch capitalism which is finance capitalism in its essence.<sup>207</sup> Like Tan Malaka, Sukarno too argues for the difference of Indonesia from other colonies. To him, while trade-capitalism of British imperialism brought some amount of money to Indians, Dutch finance capitalism was based on total exploitation and when money enters Indonesia it was only used for investment for further exploitation. These were the ideas that led Sukarno to abandon the term proletariat at all and replace it with *marhaen*.<sup>208</sup> In fact, *marhaen* was not an existed word in Indonesian languages, but the name of a paddy field owner Sukarno once met. He described him as someone who owns the means of production, who owns his own rice field, his own sickle, thus, not a proletarian yet someone who lived in poverty just like the other “destitute people of Indonesia.” Therefore, he used his name *Marhaen* to refer to oppressed Indonesian masses instead of using the term proletariat.

#### 4.1.3.3 Equality

Although Marxism was a theory of history, it promised a post-revolutionary society that was based on equality among people. This trait of Marxism was highlighted by Marxist thinkers of Asia excessively. Actually, in Marx and Engels’ writings, equality means a classless society in which means of production belonged to communes instead of a handful of capitalists. However, as already indicated, class in colonial society was very much embedded within the racial structure, and its boundaries were more or less drawn by the same fault lines that distinguished racial groups from one another. Specifically, at this point, localization of Marxist concepts to Indonesian context played an important role by adopting Marxist promise of egalitarian society to Indonesian conditions. Especially the redefinition of the proletariat in a way that encapsulates almost the whole Indonesian society works in a way to encourage masses to imagine themselves as one community and realize their own power. Before Marxist concepts, they were all belonged to an inferior yellow class which was constantly reminded by the Dutch in everyday practices.

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<sup>207</sup> Soekarno, “Marhaen and Proletarian,” 8-9.

<sup>208</sup> Sukarno used this word for the first time in his defense speech of 1932 trial, which was an attack on colonial government more than a defense, as its name, *Indonesia Menggugat* (Indonesia Accuses), indicates. Dahm, *Sukarno and The Struggle for Indonesian Independence*, 143.

However, with the redefinition of class with racial traits, the masses had turned into proletarians “who has nothing to lose but a world to win”, *marhaens* who produce the essential elements of ordinary life. Their equality with the white race, as well as their struggle against them, was justified through their oppression. While the colonial mindset’s explanation for their poverty was their so-called inherent backwardness, Indonesian Marxist interpretation enlightened them towards their conditions in an objective way. Pamphlets, rallies, meetings of worker organizations started their analysis by referring to the political-economic situation of the world and Indonesia’s place in it to explain the masses mechanisms behind their exploitation. Although the PKI Marxists final goal was internationalism since they advocated joining world proletariat, through their analyses, Indonesian masses first awaken to their common oppression, common experience within the colonial borders.

Moreover, the redefinition of Indonesians as one oppressed class under the yoke of imperialism led to Marxist ideas to worked as a glue to bring together different parts of the indigenous society and transformed their identities from Javanese, Batak, Sumatran, *santri*, or *priyayi* to the proletarianized oppressed under European colonialism. This unity, undeniably, served to what we called Indonesian nationalism. Here, it is timely to remember the definition of nationalism by Anderson. Nation is “an imagined political community” which was conceived by its members as a “horizontal comradeship.”<sup>209</sup> Marxist ideas were worked in a way to ensure the necessity of equality between the parts of society which was also a trait of nationalism. Vocabulary of “horizontal comradeship” was also provided by Marxism.

## 4.2 Conclusion

The international idea of Marxism, especially its Leninist interpretation, impacted the course of nationalism and revolutions within colonial Asia in several ways. Although in its core Marxism was a theory of history which was mostly derived from European experiences and expected proletarian revolutions in Europe was the

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<sup>209</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6-7.

primary center of its analysis, it became highly appealing to the colonial Asians through the theoretical contributions of Lenin, which makes Marxist theory compatible with structural conditions in Asia, through its offerings to practical problems of industrialization without capitalism and immediate social change and through its traits' alignment with the normative issues that confronted the colonial society. It was this normative area that led Marxism to contribute to Indonesian nationalism. Through Indonesian Marxist intellectuals' localization efforts, Marxism had proven to be compatible with Islam which was one of the unifying factors of colonial Indonesians before nationalist or Marxist identities' introduction. Not only on the issue of Islam but also in terms of apprehending the racial categories in a different way than the imposed by the Dutch, Marxist thought, and its Indonesian interpretation became helpful in crystallizing a shared identity in the oppressed class of proletariat which was corresponding to almost whole Indonesians oppressed under the colonialism. The promise of an egalitarian society in Marxist thinking was also appealing to Indonesian revolutionaries who were searching for ways to free their society from feudal and colonial hierarchies and to masses who were suppressed by relations of both feudalism and colonialism. The message of communism "who was nothing will become everything"<sup>210</sup> was very much in line with essential trait of nationalism which promised a "horizontal comradeship."

One example of how an internationalist ideology contributed to nationalism can be explained by the difference Ruth McVey made between national and nationalist movement and the necessity of arousing Marxist rebellion within the immediate reach of intellectual localizers. Although the theoreticians of PKI were internationalists from the start, the Marxist vocabulary of equality and the shared experience of oppression under colonialism were targeting a certain group of people which would eventually realize themselves as being Indonesians while being

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<sup>210</sup> Here, I want to draw attention to these Marxist line's similarity with one of the most important constitutive texts of the French Revolution and nationalism, Abbé Sieyès' "What is the Third Estate?" In this pamphlet, Abbé Sieyès says that the majority of the population who constituted the Third Estate was nothing, but in fact it is everything. Probably the writer of the anthem, Eugène Edine Pottier's being a French revolutionary explains the similarity, yet the usage of same egalitarian vocabulary in both of the important texts of nationalism and internationalism was striking.

proletarian. The Indonesian exceptionalism of Marxist thinking in Indonesia, which revealed itself in overstretching of the term proletariat to almost all Indonesians contributed to that national consciousness. Even though they were not nationalist, Marxist theoreticians like Tan Malaka fought for the independence of Indonesia. Maybe that is why even though he is a political opponent of Sukarno, even though he was arrested by the government, he was declared as *pahlawan nasional* (national hero) by Sukarno himself in 1963.<sup>211</sup>

One of the most important features of Marxism in Asia is that Marxism was not only influential on the truly Marxist foremen and the peasant and workers they unionized, but it also impacted the Islamists and nationalists who do not opt for a Communist state in the future. It was precisely because Marxism, Islam, and nationalism were all ideas that bring legitimacy to anti-colonial thinking. The best example would be Sukarno's "Nationalism, Islam and Marxism" speech. For a nationalist agitator like Sukarno, it was very logical to use Marxist phrases or quotations from famous Marxists as long as it justifies the struggle against the "old forces of the World" colonialism and imperialism. Marxism was provided the revolutionary vocabulary, it inspired the change by revolution, it provided the grounds where people realize their shared experiences and similarities through unions, rallies and rebels, which would eventually lead to a group consciousness among masses, even if evolved into a class consciousness it was at the same time help to form a national consciousness.

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<sup>211</sup> Oliver Crawford, "Political Thought of Tan Malaka" (PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 2018), 16.

## CHAPTER 5

### PAN-ASIANISM

One of the most important international ideologies of the turn of the twentieth century was Pan-Asianism. Originated in Japan, Pan-Asianism found many followers and admirers all around Asia until the Japanese defeat in the World War II (WWII). It was an ideology, a world view which was very much embedded in the nineteenth century racial thinking. Pan-Asianism in the period from 1905 to the World War I (WWI) constituted one of the most important non-Western pathways to modernity among East Asian societies, especially in China, and it had supporters from India and Turkey.<sup>212</sup> The interwar period, on the other hand, became the heyday of the influence of Pan-Asianist ideas on Southeast Asian colonies, that is, the “peripheral” countries of Pan-Asianism.<sup>213</sup>

This chapter intends to show how Pan-Asianism as an international idea affected the course of Indonesian nationalism and how its brainchild, the Japanese imperialism, as a real-world project, affected the nationalist movement in Indonesia. Therefore, what I call Pan-Asianism in this section connotes not just the idea of unity of Asian people but also the three-years-long Japanese invasion of Netherland East Indies since the Japanese landing on the East Indies in WWII was seen as a cooperation between Indonesia and Japan for *Asia Raya* (Great Asia) by Indonesians themselves and propagated by the Japanese as such. In other words, Pan-Asianism in this chapter will be contextualized within the interwar years and

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<sup>212</sup> Cemil Aydın, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism*.

<sup>213</sup> CuUnjieng Aboitiz, *Asian Place, Filipino Nation*, 38.

WWII and singularized within the Japanese and Indonesian experiences of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.<sup>214</sup>

## 5.1 Roots of Pan-Asianism

Pan-Asianism is a transnational movement which prevailed in the second half of the nineteenth century along with other pan-movements such as Pan-Islamism, Pan-Slavism and Pan-Turkism. Although the idea of a distinct Asian civilization existed due to a shared Confucian world view and common Chinese script and cultural influence, especially between East Asian states like China, Japan and Korea, Pan-Asianism as we know it emerged as a viable internationalist ideology in the second half of the nineteenth century among Japanese intellectuals.<sup>215</sup>

The global ideational background that Japanese Pan-Asianism was born into was a Eurocentric and racist one.<sup>216</sup> Social Darwinism and scientific racism were premised a racial hierarchy between peoples of the world which assigned innate qualities of backwardness to the non-Western world to varying degrees. In this racial scheme, Europeans and the European settlers of America constituted the white race, representing the peak point of human development while what was called as yellow races of Asians and black races of Africans were portrayed as backward races, lacking innate qualities to reach European progress and civilization. This racial thinking had very much constituted the legitimacy and

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<sup>214</sup> The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere was the outcome of Japan's imperial plans towards a new world order in Asia. It included Japan, China, Manchukuo, Korea in East Asia and former European colonies of Southeast Asia and Siam. Although Japan had an early intention for a new order in East Asia, these intentions stretched to the South since developments in WWII changed the political balance in Europe-dominated regions of Asia. In 1940, Japanese foreign minister officially declared the launching of this order and from then on, Japan started to invade former European colonies one by one in the name of an Asian solidarity and necessity for mutual existence due to alleged historical, cultural, and racial closeness between these countries. For more, see Jeremy A. Yellen, *The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere: When Total Empire Met Total War*. (Cornell University Press, 2019); Peter Duus, "Imperialism without Colonies: The Vision of a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere." *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 7 no.1 (1996): 54-72.

<sup>215</sup> Okura Tenshin, Okawa Shumei, Ishihara Kanj were among the most influential intellectuals of Pan-Asianism.

<sup>216</sup> This outline generally follows Aydın, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism*.

ideational base of European domination all around the world, justified unequal relations between the West and the non-West, which manifested itself in the political acts such as unequal treaties, colonialism and imperialism. This racist thinking had multiple dimensions: While the hierarchy between races was almost accepted as universal, the potential for development of races was a matter of debate. There was a group of European thinkers and scientists who argued that if the non-White races followed the past trajectories of Europe, they would reach to the civilizational level of Europeans. While this idea had become a coverage and justification for European colonialism in some places, for other parts of the world which were not colonized yet, like Japan, China and Ottoman Empire, it instilled a hope to the intellectuals of these states that, by following the European path, they could become respectable members of the international system.

This optimistic environment, in the Japanese case, coincided with the Meiji period (1868-1912), which was a period of state-led reforms characterized by rapid industrialization and modernization of bureaucracy and military along Western lines. Thanks to the Meiji reform, Japan's outlook as an isolated feudal country had transformed into a centralized modern state within less than 30 years, a relatively short span of time for such a large-scale transformation that led to an admiration for Japan in all parts of the intellectual world. The rising profile of Japan all around the world increased the expectations of both the state elite and intellectuals of Japan that they were not to be treated as backward or uncivilized countries of by their European counterparts.

However, continuing emphasis on Japan's inferior status in the European racial schema shattered the hopes of Japanese intellectuals.<sup>217</sup> Therefore, in the period from the 1880s to 1905, they had awoken to the fact that no matter their achievements, European powers would not consider them as their equals and that the European civilization lacked moral standards.<sup>218</sup> At the same period, against the

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<sup>217</sup> Aydın, *Politics of Anti-Westernism*.

<sup>218</sup> Aydın, *Politics of Anti-Westernism*, 69; Aydın, "Pan-Islamism, Pan-Asianism and the Revolt against the West," 207.

backdrop of these social and political transformations, Japan was searching for ways to integrate into modern world, Pan-Asianism emerged as a transnational ideology that stressed Japan's Asianness and solidarity with Asia through intellectual societies like *Kōa-kai* (Society for Raising Asia), *Ajia Kyōkai* (Asia Association) and the *Tōa Dōbunkai* (East Asian Common Culture Association), which were the earliest Pan-Asianist groups that were founded in the 1880s.<sup>219</sup> However, these societies and the Pan-Asianist ideas that they advocated stood in stark contrast to the basic tenets of the Japanese foreign policy of the Meiji era, which aimed at being a part of the great power club rather than an Asian group of states.<sup>220</sup> Nevertheless, Pan-Asianism as an international ideology continued to elevate Asian moral values, their compatibility with universal morality, Japanese success to reach a high level of civilization and its potential role to help other Asians countries to reach this level.

Significantly, at the ideational level, Pan-Asianism laid the ground for disillusionment with the discourse of white race's inherent superiority to other races. Japan, with its achievements in every area of modern world, was a living confirmation that a country of yellow race could reach to the civilizational level that was regarded as destined only for white race. The Russo-Japanese War of 1905 crowned this disillusionment since it was the first victory of an Asian power over a major European power, a success of yellow race over a white race. The Japanese victory's importance far-exceeded Japanese or Russian politics. It became "a rupture in racial hierarchy" created by Europe; refuted European justifications of colonialism and imperialism in the name of so-called supremacy of white races; and thus, inspired many non-Western intellectuals and nationalists to defy European racial discourses and legitimize their freedom from European powers.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> Saaler, Sven, and J. Victor Koschmann, eds. *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History: Colonialism, Regionalism and Borders*. (Routledge, 2007): 4.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid, 2,3.

<sup>221</sup> Aydın, *Politics of Anti-Westernism*; Cemil Aydın, "A Global Anti-Western Moment? The Russo-Japanese War, Decolonization, and Asian Modernity," in *Competing Visions of World Order* ed. Sebastian Conrad and Dominic Sachsenmaier (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

In this sense, 1905 victory of Japan over Russia constituted, in the words of Aydın, a “global anti-western moment.”<sup>222</sup>

With WWI, Japan became more assertive in its foreign policy and it was around the same time that Pan-Asianism became a source for Japanese foreign policy-making through a combination of criticism of colonialism and a realist policy of assertion of Japan’s leadership to other Asian nations.<sup>223</sup> The logic behind this leadership claim was that as a nation that belonged to Asia and mastered European civilization, only Japan was capable of conveying modernity to Asia.<sup>224</sup> The interwar years witnessed the rise of Pan-Asianism in the Southeast Asia as well and Indonesia was not an exception. Pan-Asianism in Southeast Asia and at a broader level in the colonized world, was a nationalist tool despite Pan-Asianism’s supranational character since Pan-Asianism and successful modernization of Japan stressed the distinctiveness of Asian culture and legitimized Asian nationalisms’ demands for independence.<sup>225</sup> It was within this concurrence of colonized world’s material and ideational struggle for sovereignty and Japan’s assertive Pan-Asianism that Indonesian nationalists came to be exposed to Pan-Asianist ideology more than ever. Indonesian nationalists were influenced by Pan-Asianism and even appropriated it in accordance with their struggle.

During the 1930s, on the eve of WWII, Japan was already planning a new order in East Asia that would comprise Japan, China and Manchukuo under the Japanese leadership. However, following the German victory over European powers, Southeast Asia colonies of these defeated powers were included into the scope of

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<sup>222</sup> Aydın, “Global Anti-Western Moment.”

<sup>223</sup> Aydın, *Politics of Anti-Westernism*, 111; Saaler & Koschmann, *Pan-Asianism*, 6.

<sup>224</sup> Prasenjit Duara, "The Discourse of Civilization and Pan-Asianism," *Journal of World History* 12, no.1 (Spring, 2001): 110.

<sup>225</sup> CuUnjieng Aboitiz, *Asian Place, Filipino Nation*, 37-38.

imperial Japan's new order plans.<sup>226</sup> The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity sphere was, thus, born with the following words of the Japanese Foreign minister:

The countries of East Asia and the regions of the South Seas are geographically, historically, racially and economically very closely related....The uniting of all these regions in a single sphere on a basis of common existence, insuring thereby the stability of that sphere, is a natural conclusion.<sup>227</sup>

The tone of these words was carrying the Pan-Asianist claims of racial and other similarities of Asian people, which were adopted as part of foreign policy by then. However, as Aydın reminds us, "the official Pan-Asianism of Japan after 1933 employed the internationalist legacy of Asianism but subverted it to legitimize Japanese imperialism."<sup>228</sup> Thus, the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere was a real-world reflection of Pan-Asianism through its usage of Pan-Asianist vocabulary while it set an imperial state of mind, which will impact several Southeast Asian nationalisms on material ground as well, apart from its ideational contribution to the rhetoric of anti-colonial nationalism.

## **5.2 Pan-Asianism and Indonesia**

At the turn of the century, developments in Japan, especially its successful modernization, were constituting a part of daily discussions of intellectuals of the archipelago. Pramoedya Ananta Toer, a prominent nationalist writer/novelist of Indonesia whose novels traces the Indonesian history through its characters, conveyed a glimpse of the daily routine of Minke, the main protagonist of his famous *Buru Quartet*, whose personality reflected the mindset of the Indonesian nationalist elites. It was a habit of Minke to check the newspapers every night, especially the news from Japan for which he described himself as a "Japan-watcher".<sup>229</sup> For the nationalist elites of the Indonesian society, like Minke, an

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<sup>226</sup> Aziz, *Japan's Colonialism*, 63.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid, 63.

<sup>228</sup> Aydın, *Politics of Anti-Westernism*, 191-204.

<sup>229</sup> Pramoedya Ananta Toer, *This Earth of Mankind*, 52.

ideational engagement with Japan was much earlier contrary to the rest of the Indonesians who would meet with Japan only when Japan wanted it, through its pre-war propaganda just before the occupation. The reason behind elites' reaching out information about Japan to consider it as a center of modernity along with other European cities like Hague, Leiden or Amsterdam was their literacy, a skill hardly found among Indonesian masses if they were not belong to class of *priyayi* or modernist Muslim intellectuals. Thus, it was through the medium of printed materials that those elites were able to read the news about Japan. Magazines like Singapore-based *al-Imam* Journal (1906-1908), which had a wide circulation among broader Malay peninsula or *Bintang Hindia* (Indies Star, 1902-1907) along with *Utusan Melayu* (Malay Messenger), despite their different political leanings, gave place to diplomatic news about Japan and portrayed it as a model for national progress and education.<sup>230</sup> In 1907, *al-Imam* even declared that physical characteristics of Malay people were "identical with that of the Chinese and the Japanese who had vanquished the six-foot tall giants,"<sup>231</sup> a reference to the racial sameness of the Japanese and Malays, which was going to be propagated by Japan before and during WWII. This line also implicitly attributed power to colonized peoples that they could beat their six-foot tall European masters as well. Channels of engagement and communication with Japan further multiplied through Indonesian students who went to Japan for education in increasing numbers, radio broadcasts and Japanese shopkeepers in the archipelago, especially through 1930s. However, as early as 1917, newspapers in the East Indies published news about Indonesian students in Japan, whose numbers must be higher than the ones in Cairo or Leiden around the same time, if the news reflected the true numbers.<sup>232</sup> Apart from students, there were also Indonesian exiles who found a safe intellectual haven in Japan, where they met with Indian, Vietnamese, Filipino students and exiles with

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<sup>230</sup> Michael Laffan, "Tokyo as a Shared Mecca of Modernity: War Echoes in the Colonial Malay World," in *The Impact of the Russo-Japanese War* ed. Rotem Kowner (Routledge, 2007).

<sup>231</sup> *al-Imam* quoted in Laffan, *Umma Below the Winds*, 164-165.

<sup>232</sup> Laffan, *Umma Below the Winds*, 163.

whom they exchanged ideas and promoted a solidarity based on Pan-Asianism.<sup>233</sup> In an Andersonian fashion, Szpilman and Saaler argue that it was this educational and/or forced pilgrimage to Japan from all over Asia by revolutionary Asians elites that enabled them to acquire a common Asian consciousness.<sup>234</sup>

Apart from shared Asian consciousness, one must note Japan's prewar appeal to Muslim intelligentsia in Indonesia. Although there is a difference of religion between Muslim populated Indonesia and Shinto Japan, it seems that Japan was not seen as an "infidel" and its liberation/occupation process was not regarded as the "rule of the infidel", at least for the period before 1944. In fact, from 1905 onwards, not only Indonesian Muslims but also other Muslim-majority countries like the Ottoman Empire and Iran started to praise the Japanese for their victory due to a shared sense of downtroddenness with Japan under the Western dominated world. Moreover, Muslim world's interest in Japan was further fed by Japanese intellectuals. Esenbel argues that the contacts between Japanese Asianists and their Muslim friends formed an informal 'Islam circle' in Meiji Japan, which would inform the Japanese government to adopt Islam-oriented policies before the WWII.<sup>235</sup> Pan-Asianist policy of Japan towards Indonesia was an example of this. Japan was interested in Muslims of Indonesia and more broadly of Southeast Asia, long before it launched its "liberation" plan. In 1938, Japan held a World Islamic Conference in Tokyo and sent Japanese students to the Middle East to study Islam, who later came to Indonesia as Muslim experts with the first troops of the invasion forces.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> Christopher WA Szpilman and Sven Saaler, "Pan-Asianism as an Ideal of Asian Identity and Solidarity, 1850–Present," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 9 no.1 (2011), 4.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>235</sup> Selçuk Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam: Transnational Nationalism and World Power, 1900-1945," *The American Historical Review* 109, no.4 (2004): 1142.

<sup>236</sup> Benda, "Beginnings," 554.

With the Japanese prewar propaganda and preparations on the one hand, and Indonesian intelligentsia's readiness to accept a non-Western transnational solidarity on the other hand, Japan's image was a positive one in general. As Japan's occupation came close, there even existed an anti-Dutch underground organization founded by Indonesians, which aimed to help Japan to land in Java, prevent Dutch scorched earth policies, maintain order among people, and stock food.<sup>237</sup> Moreover, people of Indonesia started to relate the Japanese to the liberators in one version of the *Djajabaja* prophecies, which foresaw the arrival of small yellow people from North to Java. Accordingly, Java would be freed from alien domination after these yellow men's stay for a short period.<sup>238</sup>

### 5.3 Japanese Occupation of Indonesia

In 1942, Japanese troops landed on Java and took control of the archipelago. The arrival of the Japanese army was welcomed with enthusiasm on the part of the Indonesians. The reason behind this enthusiasm was the Japanese propaganda, which increased its frequency as prospective occupation of Indonesia in Japanese war plans drew near. Starting from December 1941, Radio Tokyo started to broadcast Indonesian news commentary every night, and closed every broadcast with *Indonesia Raya*, national anthem of Indonesia.<sup>239</sup> It was a clear message that Japan supported nationalist movement in Indonesia, which contributed to the image of the Japanese as liberators rather than occupiers in the eyes of Indonesians. Although this broadcast's impact on Indonesians was considerable, one should remember that only a small number of Indonesians had a radio in their house around these years,<sup>240</sup> and that those who had a radio constituted the elite and educated part

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<sup>237</sup> Elly Touwen-Bouwsma, "The Indonesian Nationalists and the Japanese "Liberation" of Indonesia: Visions and Reactions," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 2, no. 1 (1996): 4.

<sup>238</sup> Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence*, 3-10, 217-218.

<sup>239</sup> Roeslan Abdulgani, *Propaganda Djepang*, Pendidikan Pegawai Staf Kempen, (Djakarta? Kementerian Penerangan, n.d.) 5-6, quoted in Benda, "The Beginnings," 545.

<sup>240</sup> Ethan Mark, *Japan's Occupation of Java in the Second World War: A Transnational History* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018), 26.

of the Indonesian society. The positive image of Japan on the urban masses owed its existence to their daily encounters with Japanese shopkeepers who managed *toko Jepang* (Japanese shop) whose numbers increased a great deal in the last years before the occupation.<sup>241</sup> As Sjahrir noted, it was “Japanese habits and general manner [that] have won the people’s hearts” in juxtaposition to Chinese and the white population’s “coarse” manner.<sup>242</sup> It would be plausible to predict that, some of those “friendly” Japanese shop keepers, if not all of them, were not really small businessmen but Japanese government agents.<sup>243</sup> As one Indonesian recalled, the owner of a *toko Jepang* in Malang had disappeared just before the invasion and returned with the Japanese troops as an officer.<sup>244</sup> Similarly, many other Indonesians saw the return of their Japanese friends, if not with the Japanese soldiers, in military uniform as a soldier.<sup>245</sup>

The arrival of Japanese troops strengthened the positive image of Japan as an Asian nation whose intention was to help other Asians to be free from European rule, when Indonesians saw that Japanese planes dropped posters, which contained both Japanese and Indonesian flags on one side, and the slogan “One color, one race” on the other.<sup>246</sup> It was in stark contrast with the Dutch attitude since both the national anthem *Indonesia Raya* and red and white Indonesian flag had been banned by the

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<sup>241</sup> Sutan Iskandar as cited in Mark, *Japan’s Occupation*, 29-30.

<sup>242</sup> Sjahrir as cited in Mark, *Japan’s Occupation*, 30.

<sup>243</sup> The young man leaving Japan for a new life was a common feature of life in Japan back in the beginning of twentieth century. Although the primary destination was the United States, after US Immigration Act of 1924, more and more Japanese chose Southeast Asia as a place to make a new life. Kenichi Gotō, “Life and Death of "Abdul Rachman" (1906-49): One Aspect of Japanese-Indonesian Relationships,” *Indonesia*, no 22. (1976): 59-60.

<sup>244</sup> Rudolf Mrázek, *A Certain Age: Colonial Jakarta through the Memories of its Intellectuals*, (Duke University Press, 2010), 44.

<sup>245</sup> Vickers, *A History*, 84.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid. By “one color”, Japanese referred to the similarities of Japanese and Indonesian flags since both flags were composed of the same colors, red and white.

Dutch colonial government.<sup>247</sup> In fact, Japanese support for Indonesian independence was only a rhetoric in that Japan did not use the words like Indonesia or Bahasa Indonesia in Japanese-language documents until 1945. The terms like Indonesian, Indonesia and Bahasa Indonesia, the sacred trinity of nationalism in Indonesia, were not translated into Japanese with national tones but Japan continued to use words like *gen-zyumin* (native, aborigine), *Marai-go* ("Malay language") and *To Indo* ("East Indies"),<sup>248</sup> which had colonial connotations. Considering the Japanese interest in Indonesia long before the occupation and their investment in the learning of Indonesian cultures, it was impossible for Japan to be unaware of the political significance of this sacred trinity to Indonesians. This recklessness towards Indonesian revolutionary vocabulary was unfolding Japan's imperial state of mind from the very beginning.

However, regardless of Japan's implicit plans, engagement of Japanese and Indonesian on ideational and material level had changed the course of nationalist movement in Indonesia through various ways. In order to understand this change, we must begin with the two interrelated phenomena of colonial world: self-confidence and race. To Kahin, the defeat of the Dutch forces to the Japanese weakened the former colonizer's prestige in the eyes of the colonized and gave them the idea that, if provided with arms, they could have fought against the Dutch, as Japanese did.<sup>249</sup> And, like Kahin, other Indonesia specialists like Benda, Anderson and many others mention the increase in self-confidence of Indonesians at both national and individual levels during the course of Japanese occupation. This chapter argues that this increase in self-confidence among and of Indonesians was primarily due to the change in comprehension of racial categories. As it was mentioned in previous chapters, one of the most important justification and means of exploitation and suppression of colonial regime was based on the idea of

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<sup>247</sup> Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution*, 102. Both of these nationalist symbols were banned by Japan too, later in the occupation period.

<sup>248</sup> Benda, "Beginnings," 553-554.

<sup>249</sup> Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution*, 102.

inequality of races. However, as the so-called racial inferiority of Indonesians to the Dutch “masters” was a discourse constructed by the Dutch, practices that were repeated in everyday life worked in a way to ensure the Indonesians that the Dutch power was derived from its whiteness. In the postcolonial literature, internalization of inferiority by the colonized is an issue touched upon by writers like Fanon and Memmi. International ideas in the Indonesian context worked in a way to break the colonial discourse of racial inferiority’s spell and provided the fuel for and legitimacy of national struggle.

However, it is necessary to underline a difference here in terms of peculiar ways through which these international ideas breaking the hold of colonial racial rhetoric. Although Marxism and Islam provided the language of racial equality before Pan-Asianism, they were also ideologies that rejected racial categories all together. Here, one can argue for explicit or implicit racism of several Marxist and Islamic thinkers and even Marx himself.<sup>250</sup> While Marxism promised the replacement of racial differences with class struggle, Islamic thinking on the other hand, rejected racism and emphasized the equal creation of human beings based on the Quran. However, different from both Marxism and Islam, Pan-Asianism was itself an ideology that justified itself on the grounds that an Asian race -or a yellow race- existed and was capable of everything as much as the white race. It accepted race as a category that divided human beings, and from this point onwards, constructed the uniqueness and glory of Asian race. Therefore, Japanese propaganda, which was based on the racial sameness of Indonesians and Japanese (and broadly, of all Asians) and Japan’s subsequent victory over the Dutch in Indonesia, was a stronger evidence of equality of yellow race to white race, which revealed itself for the first time in the “global anti-western moment”<sup>251</sup> of Japanese victory over Russia in the Russo-Japanese War of 1905.

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<sup>250</sup> Hobson in his detailed study shows that eurocentrism and racism are ideas that run towards the course of Western thinking through centuries up to our times. John M. Hobson, *The Eurocentric Conception of World Politics: Western International Theory, 1760-2010*. (Cambridge University Press, 2012).

Hence, Japanese actions in the minds of Indonesians who were trained to think in racial categories, was an achievement of yellow race on a broader level and a signal that they were capable of carrying such power as well. The rigid racial cast that was imposed during the Dutch colonial rule was premised upon the difference of white race. Every discrimination was justified at the end of the day by the Dutch as “we can do it because we are white, you can not because you belong to an inferior race”. After their landing on Indonesia, although Japan turned out to be a suppressive power and imposed another form of cast system in which the Japanese are superior to the Indonesians, at the propaganda level, they skillfully used the rhetoric of Asian race as a racial category. Therefore, while the Dutch power worked in a way to ensure the colonized that they can not have such power, the Japanese power and domination, even when directed to and exercised on the Indonesians, was paradoxically also a source of empowerment for them.

A manifestation of this phenomenon can be found in the words of a young Indonesian who describes what he felt when he saw a Japanese soldier for the first time at the arrival of Japanese troops:

I was impressed to see them. Because they, who were so small, had been able to defeat the Dutch, whose bodies were so big ... since I was small I'd been what you could call terrorized, as I was educated in Dutch schools with Dutch teachers. You must understand that already from a young age, children were made to fear [them], this was planted in our souls ... the fear that we were not capable. This one fact that flared up within my heart was huge: Little people can defeat [them].<sup>252</sup>

Another legacy of the Japanese occupation of the archipelago, which effected nationalist movement was the wider circulation that nationalist thought had gained. About the time that the Japanese had landed on Java, Benda writes that national sentiments had not spread among peasants who only possessed a crumb of anti-European sentiments based on Islamic defiance of infidel rule and Javanese

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<sup>251</sup> Aydın, “Global Anti-Western Moment?” Aydın sees 1905 victory as an important turning point in decolonization of Asia since this victory of an Asian state over a Western power stirred and empowered nationalist movements and alternative visions to the existing world order. p.78.

<sup>252</sup> Mark, *Japan's Occupation*, 83.

culture.<sup>253</sup> Although during the heyday of *Sarekat Islam*, thanks to its village level branches and communist propaganda, some sense of shared oppression existed among peasants, Islamic groups' retreat from the political to the educational area, Communist party's going underground and the loss of powerful leadership of nationalist struggle such as Sukarno must have brought the development of national consciousness to a halt among peasant masses, which could be considered a more severe rupture than the one in urban parts of the archipelago. Thus, the transformation of "peasants into Indonesians"<sup>254</sup> had to await until Japanese wide-range propaganda machine filled almost every hour of ordinary life at village level as well as in cities, during the occupation.

Within the relatively short period that Japan occupied the former Dutch colony, they made sure that their propaganda reached every Indonesian regardless of their socio-economic status. To do so, they started with controlling the one thing that filled every part of life: the time. Official dating system became the Japanese calendar, replacing the Christian, Muslim and Hindu calendars, and Japanese (Tokyo) time was imposed to bring the archipelago under the same time zone leading to the control of every single hour that Indonesian had by the Japanese.<sup>255</sup> Japan broadcasted not only through radio but through street loudspeakers. Even in villages, there were famous "singing towers" which transmitted daily instructions of the Nippon and propaganda.<sup>256</sup> What was significant with these daily broadcasts was that they not only included Japanese instructions or war propaganda, but it tried to mobilize people for Japan's war efforts through fueling nationalist feelings.

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<sup>253</sup> Benda, "Beginnings," 545.

<sup>254</sup> I use this expression with reference to influential work of Eugen Weber's "Peasants into Frenchmen". Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France 1870-1914*, (Stanford University Press, 1976).

<sup>255</sup> Jean Gelman Taylor, *Indonesia: Peoples and Histories*, (Yale University Press, 2003), 315.

<sup>256</sup> These "singing towers" or "singing trees" were a setting of radios with loudspeakers mounted on top of poles or trees, which were designed to increase reaching zone of the broadcasts. Aziz, *Japan's Colonialism*, 234; Mark, *Japan's Occupation*, 106.

Japan's success in the coming war related to Indonesian freedom in propaganda rhetoric. Thus, the speeches that nationalist leaders gave, especially the ones given by Sukarno, were frequently broadcasted. Therefore, an odd amalgamation of Japanese war propaganda, instructions and nationalist speeches became a daily part of village life.

Another important impact of Japanese occupation on the Indonesian nationalism was realized through Japan's language policy.<sup>257</sup> Contrary to the Philippines and Burma, which were also under the Japanese occupation, Japan's long-term plans did not include transferring sovereignty to Indonesia, and thus, the archipelago was designed as an eternal colony for Japan as "Empire's territories."<sup>258</sup> Therefore, Japan's overall policy in the island included the imposition of Japanese language as a medium of communication in administration and everyday life. However, general illiteracy rate was accrued with hardship of learning Japanese, much owed to its being written with characters rather than letters. However, for Japan, it was necessary to erase the Dutch influence on the island as quickly as possible. Thus, the Malay language which was accepted as Indonesian national language and termed as *Bahasa Indonesia* by nationalist groups in 1928, was chosen by Japan as the de-facto official language to be used for the transition period. The introduction of Bahasa Indonesia as the primary language was accompanied by the ban on the verbal and written use of Dutch language.<sup>259</sup>

From this point onwards, in every field of life Bahasa Indonesia replaced Dutch language; schoolteachers and government officials had to learn it since every correspondence between government organs, government and people and educational institutions employed Bahasa Indonesia.<sup>260</sup> Moreover, with the heavy

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<sup>257</sup> Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution*, 132.

<sup>258</sup> Eri Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War 1931–1945*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007): 212.

<sup>259</sup> Aziz, *Japan's Colonialism*, 141-182.

usage of Malay, not only the Dutch language but also local languages lost ground vis-à-vis the Malay.<sup>261</sup> It was a significant leap for the national language considering the fact that nationalist cadres had never been able to impose usage of Bahasa Indonesia since they had never had such a power. They did not have a centralized education system nor a venue to make it compulsory. Although nationalist *Taman Siswa* schools educated young Indonesians in Bahasa Indonesia, attending these schools was also not compulsory. Therefore, the nationalization of Malay, a language that no significant proportion of society spoke as mother tongue, was dependent solely on scattered efforts of nationalist elites and voluntary usage of masses until the Japanese imposition of it. That said, the most important outcome of this policy was experienced in countryside. Japanese efforts to mobilize all Indonesians for its war preparations led Bahasa Indonesia to travel with the Japanese occupiers to the remotest villages and islands of the archipelago.<sup>262</sup> Thereby, the national language, which was accepted in 1928, finally reached a country-wide usage in the East Indies.

Japan had also ambition to change the overall attitude of the Indonesians. If Indonesians were to provide necessary means for the great war, they had to be disciplined and hardworking like the Japanese. In the first days of occupation, one Japanese observer wrote the following in a local Japanese newspaper:

We must first rescue the Indonesians from their habit of idleness (*taida*). We must teach them labor, effort, patience, dedication. If they know how much trouble and suffering the Japanese have undergone in reaching today's level of national power and international status, they will realize that it is not such an easy thing being our brothers ... Up to now they've been idle coolies of the Dutch. Beginning now we must make of them diligent workers for Japan and Asia.<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>260</sup> Takdir Alisjahbana, "The Indonesian Language-By-product of Nationalism" *Pacific Affairs*, 22, no.4 (1949): 390.

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid*, 390.

<sup>262</sup> *Ibid*, 390.

<sup>263</sup> "Warera no shimei" (Author unknown), *Sekidōhō* March 12, 1942, p. 1. Quoted in Mark, *Japan's Occupation*, 81.

The section of the Indonesian society which was affected most from this will-to-discipline of the Japanese became the *pemuda* (youth).<sup>264</sup> Japan organized them as paramilitary groups and trained them to be recruited if Japan were to need them in the war. As Anderson argues, it was this youth section or *pemuda* who played a central role in the outbreak of the revolution since Japanese training of these groups sparked their *pemuda* consciousness.<sup>265</sup> According to him, Japan brought a new mode of political thought different than the Dutch, yet this mode of thought turned against Japan eventually. When the Dutch came back to its former colony after the defeat of the Japanese in the WWII, they found a different Indonesia.

Some of these organizations through which youth section was disciplined were *Pembela Tanah Air* (Fatherland Defense Force) or PETA, *Heiho* (Auxiliary Forces), *Barisan Hizbullah*, *The Seinendan*, *The Keibodan* (Vigilance Corps), *Java Hokokai* (Java Service Association), *Putera*. While some of them were designed for the defense of East Indies in a possible Allied invasion, some were established for internal security within the borders and some for mobilization of people for the great war but the experiences that the youth gained by being a member of these organizations was a sense of fraternity that freed them from the educational cast system imposed by the Dutch, and this fraternity feeling contributed to Indonesian nationalism.<sup>266</sup> According to Anderson, apart from growing solidarity within the youth who came back from different economic and social classes, equally important

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<sup>264</sup> It must be noted that there is a view that Japan's impact on the youth section of the society transcended the pre-independence period and impacted independent Indonesia's political life in a negative way. As early as the first months of the revolution, nationalist leader Sutan Sjahrir expressed his concerns that young groups which will be the future leaders of Indonesia were "psychologically conditioned simply to take orders, to bow down to and deify their superiors" by Japanese and they gone violent due to fascist legacy of Japan. Sutan Sjahrir, "Our Struggle," trans. Benedict R. O'G. Anderson (Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1968), 19-20. Kahin also in 1950s wrote that the most important trace Japan left behind was on the Youth, and Japan's long-term impact on the Indonesian youth was a legacy of narrowed and intensified nationalism. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution*, 130.

<sup>265</sup> Anderson, *Java in a time of Revolution*.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid, 30-31.

was the new political style introduced to East Indies by Japanese authorities.<sup>267</sup> Unlike the Dutch governing style which was a calm and businesslike administrative task justified by white superiority, rationalism, technological mastery and European civilizational mission, a combination of Japanese military and imperial traditions with violence and radicalism turned the political life into a theatre stage where parades, public oaths, encouraging broadcasts and many other mass demonstrations took place.<sup>268</sup> It was these militarized youth which turned into a force against Japan at the end of the day. When Japan surrendered in WWII, it was the members of these youth groups who forced Sukarno and Hatta to proclaim Indonesian independence immediately, and they were to become active fighters in the revolution which would be fought for four years first against the Japanese and then against the old Dutch colonial powers as well as the other European supporters of the Dutch.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

Pan-Asianism as an international idea became appealing to colonized and semi-colonized Asians including Indonesians since it offered an anti-colonial critique of the West by emphasizing virtues of Asian culture and yellow race. Pan-Asianist ideas became powerful especially after Japanese victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, since it was perceived as the victory of the Asian people over the West. Pan-Asianism in tandem with successful Japanese modernization and military power served as a refutation of the colonial racial discourse which portrayed Asians as backward which legitimated Western colonialism. In Indonesia, being part of the yellow race and Asian civilization, increased Indonesians' self-confidence, which was important to claim a national identity. Moreover, this refutation justified Indonesian demands for independence since they belong to powerful Asian race, they were capable of governing themselves.

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<sup>267</sup> Ibid, 31.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid, 31-32.

During the Japanese occupation of Indonesia, which this chapter read against the background of Pan-Asianism, Pan-Asianist discourse gained power since Japan easily defeat the Dutch who ruled the archipelago for three hundred years. On material grounds, Japan brought a momentum to nationalist movement through allowing the nationalist propaganda to reach wider population, replacing Bahasa Indonesia with the Dutch language in everyday interaction and changing the consciousness of Indonesian youth into nationalist and militaristic lines which would turn against the Japanese domination at the end of the day.



## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

This study is an attempt to understand the impact of the international on the emergence and development of Indonesian nationalism. In search for the question of how the international has influenced nationalism in the case of colonial Indonesia the main premise of this thesis is that four international ideational factors, namely Pan-Islamism, Modernist Islam, Marxism, and Pan-Asianism shaped the emergence and development of Indonesian nationalism. It further argues that the reasons for these ideas to have become influential in colonial Indonesia are embedded within the intensified impact of the colonial structure at the turn of the twentieth century and anti-colonial reactions to it both from the colonial and semi-colonial world including Indonesian society.

Building on this founding premise, in the introduction chapter, this thesis engaged with three literature: IR, Nationalism Studies, and Indonesian Nationalism literature. This thesis argues that IR discipline reveals two tendencies toward nationalism: 1) Reduction of *international* relations to interstate relations; 2) Reduction of nationalism to its extreme forms such as ethnic conflict, minority/diaspora nationalism, or separatism.<sup>269</sup> It asserts that these tendencies originated from a set of assumptions that mainstream theories of IR hold: state-centrism, domestic-international as separate domains, and unchanging international system under anarchy. While state-centrism prioritizes state at the expense of the nation as an analytical unit, the emphasis on anarchy considers the state as an already finished entity without paying attention to its emergence. However, the distinction between the domestic and international realms became the most serious

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<sup>269</sup> Özkırımlı, *Theories of Nationalism*, 4.

obstacle to incorporate nationalism into IR studies as a study topic since through this separation, nationalism is located in the domestic area. When IR studies covered nationalism as a study topic, it shows that the nature of these nationalisms confronted these assumptions and created a challenge to the international community, which put them into the international area. The critical theories of IR, on the other hand, especially HSIR who emphasized the artificiality of domestic-international separation, also do not provide a substantial study agenda for nationalism. Thus, this study problematizes IR's neglect of nationalism as a study agenda.

In Nationalism Studies, it was the Modernist school that included the international in its analysis of nationalism. However, this field reduced the international only to structural conditions, thus neglected the importance of the ideational part of the international<sup>270</sup> and equated the international to the Western, thus misses the role of non-Western ideas in the formation of nationalism, especially in the colonial world.

Studies on Indonesian nationalism, on the other hand, have incorporated the international in the analysis of nationalism. However, they have taken the international as sectional. It is commonplace that they focus on only one of the international components of Indonesian nationalism and provide a partial explanation. For example, while a group of studies focus on the role of Western ideas in raising Western-educated nationalist elites, another group focus on Modernist Islam or Japanese occupation's impact but do not analyze their impacts altogether in one study. Three studies diverge from this compartmentalized account of the international: Kahin's *Nationalism and Revolution* (1952), Siegel's, *Fetish Recognition and Revolution* (1997) and, Sidel's *Republicanism, Communism and Islamism* (2021). However, while Kahin's account acknowledges the different dimensions of the international, it mentions them in passing and lacks detail compared to the rest of the book, which was a detailed study of internal politics of the Revolution. Siegel, on the other hand, focuses solely on the Malay language's role in the transmission of Western as well as non-Western ideas to Indonesia,

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<sup>270</sup> Özdemir, "A Historical Sociology Approach to Iranian Nationalism," 2.

which made it possible for elites to form Indonesian nationalism. Sidel's account is the most recent and detailed study which acknowledges different dimensions of the international in its analysis. However, Sidel's focus of analysis is the revolution and provides a denationalized account of the revolution while this study diverges from Sidel since its emphasis is on nationalism instead of the revolution and tried to provide an internationalized account of nationalism.

Starting from the problematized points of the aforementioned literature, this thesis defines the international not only as interstate relations, but it acknowledged state-nonstate and nonstate-nonstate actors' interaction as part of it. Also, the international in this study does not only denote structural conditions such as colonialism, but it also denotes the international ideas. Moreover, the international is not only equated to the Western but non-Western ideas were also analyzed as part of the international components of Indonesian nationalism. Contrary to focusing only on a single dimension of the international, this thesis brought together different components of the international in the case of Indonesian nationalism. To this end, it analyzed Pan-Islamism, Islamic Modernism, Marxism, and Pan-Asianism as the international ideational components of Indonesian nationalism as well as colonialism and Japanese occupation as more structural and material international impacts on the development of Indonesian nationalism.

In this study, Indonesian Nationalist Movement, which was considered to start with the foundation of *Budi Utomo*, a Javanese cultural organization, in 1908 and ended up with the outbreak of the Revolution in 1945, is located within the broader turn of the twentieth century in order to understand how international events and ideas shaped its course. The reason for this study to analyze its case at the turn of the century is based on several factors. At the global level, transportation and communication technologies such as railways, steamships, the opening of Suez, the telegraph, and radio connected the world more than ever and enabled rapid travel of ideas, people, and goods. Moreover, this era had witnessed the emergence of international ideologies which had an explicit or implicit critique of Western international order, which was increasingly characterized by racism, colonialism, and imperialism. It was within this *longue durée* that, on the global stage, Pan-Islamism, Modernist Islam, Marxism and Pan-Asianism started to challenge the

status-quo and were appropriated by different colonial and semi-colonial countries to counter Western hegemony. At the local level, the turn of the century in the East Indies was characterized by rapid bureaucratization and centralization of the colonial government, increasing European and Chinese population and introduction of European public education to the Indonesian population. Furthermore, it was in this era that Indonesians started to engage more and more with international ideas. Thus, while political manifestations of nationalism started in 1908, it would be plausible to locate the emergence and development of Indonesian nationalism in this dynamic era, that is, what Shiraishi appositely called as “age in motion”.

The second chapter of this thesis analyzed colonialism as a structural force that caused an irreversible change in the life of Indonesians and the anti-colonial and proto-nationalist reactions of Indonesian elites to it. Agricultural policies of the Dutch colonial government, its increasing centralization, and the increasing number of European settlers of the colony at the turn of the century made colonialism unbearable for Indonesians. In these conditions, introduction of European education to Indonesians and the development of the Indonesian press opened an area for Indonesian elites to question colonialism and feudalism as regressive forces, while the rural area was dominated by several peasant rebellions to end foreign rule. This chapter argues that this era was marked by a general sense of crisis that was felt by different parts of Indonesian society, and this crisis is equated to foreign rule, thus colonialism. In tandem with the realization of colonial rule and their situation within it, Indonesian elites started to engage with international ideas of the turn of the twentieth century, all of which, explicitly or implicitly, had an agenda of anti-colonialism and modernization. These ideas, which were appealing not only to Indonesians but also to colonial and semi-colonial Asia, had created an anti-colonial public sphere of which Indonesian elites became a part. Although these networks of non-Western solidarities are mostly treated as the bricks on the way to different revolutions in Asia, this thesis analyzed their impact on the emergence and formation of nationalism.

The third chapter of this study analyzed the impact of Modernist Islam and Pan-Islamism, which originated from the Middle East and became influential in the wider Muslim world, including the Malay-Indonesian archipelago. These two ideas

developed in close connection with each other at the turn of the nineteenth century when the Islamic faith and political community of Islamic word were perceived to be in decline in the face of Western dominance. This chapter shows that both ideologies provided an anti-colonial account of this decline. Moreover, Modernist Islam and Pan-Islamism were helpful in the formation of larger identities than the regional ones such as *Jawi* in the case of Modernist Islam which would eventually crystallize in Indonesian identity.<sup>271</sup> Pan-Islamism, on the other hand, with its aspiration to form a political community of *ummah*, inherited this imagination to the idea of Indonesian nationalism. The idea of Indonesia was also an imagined political community, but at the age of nation-states, it was a much easier task to accomplish. Lastly, education holds a significant place in Modernist Islam, and the schools that opened by modernist ulama helped to raise a new generation who were politicized by this Modernist education.

The fourth chapter of this thesis analyzed Marxism as an international ideology since Marxism, especially its Leninist interpretation, became influential in the nationalisms and revolutions of colonial Asia, including Indonesia. In this chapter, the high appeal of Marxism in Asia is attributed to three reasons: 1) theoretical contributions of Lenin that transformed Marxism from a pure European ideology to one which was applicable to pre-capitalist Asia; 2) Marxism's practical solutions to problems of colonial Asia such as the need for immediate industrialization and social change; and 3) Some of the core promises of Marxism's intersection with normative values and needs of Asian societies. This chapter asserts that it was especially this normative area that enabled Marxist contribution to be effective on Indonesian nationalism. Through localization of Marxist ideas to Indonesian context by Indonesian Marxist intellectuals and nationalist leaders like Sukarno, compatibility of Marxism with Islam, which was one of the unifying factors of colonial Indonesians before nationalist or Marxist identities' introduction, was proven. Furthermore, Marxist ideas and their Indonesian interpretation were also helpful in terms of breaking the stronghold of colonial racial discourse and leading to the formation of a shared identity of the oppressed class, which meant that all the

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<sup>271</sup> Laffan, *Umma below the Winds*.

Indonesians were oppressed under colonialism. The egalitarian promises of Marxism were also attractive to Indonesians who wanted to be freed from colonial and feudal hierarchies.

Pan-Asianism as an international idea and its reflection into political arena, that is, the Japanese occupation of Indonesia, was the main focus of the fifth chapter of this thesis. Pan-Asianism as an ideology was born among Japanese intellectuals and defended the virtues of a single Asian civilization or a yellow race that also became influential on Indonesian intellectuals who looked up to Japan as an example of successful modernization. Especially after the Japanese victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, Japan was not only considered to be a powerful state, but also a great source of inspiration as through the discourse of Pan-Asianism, colonial Asians started to feel victorious against the West, as well. This chapter argues that Pan-Asianist discourse not only provided a language of equality with Westerners, but it further constructed an Asian identity that was more powerful than its Western counterpart. It was the Japanese Occupation of Indonesia (1942-1945), which became a proof of this discourse when Japan easily defeated the Dutch on the archipelago. At the material level, the Japanese occupation acted as a catalyzer to revitalize the nationalist movement, which came to a halt during the 1930s when leaders of the nationalist movement were jailed or sent to exile by the Dutch colonial government. Japanese forces not only released these leaders but also allowed them to continue their nationalist propaganda as long as they urged people to join Japanese war preparations. With the Japanese propaganda machine, not only Japanese but also nationalist speeches reached all over the archipelago. Moreover, the Japanese language policy banned the usage of Dutch and replaced it with Bahasa Indonesia in every part of life. Therefore, the national language, which was accepted in 1928, reached a common usage all over the colony with this decision. Lastly, the Japanese occupation, especially the military training it gave to the youth section of society, changed these generation's mode of thinking and politicized them. It was these youth groups who turned against Japan at the end of the day and fought in the Revolution.

All in all, this thesis argues that Pan-Islamic, Islamic Modernist, Marxist, and Pan-Asianist international ideas of the turn of the twentieth century impacted the

emergence and development of Indonesian nationalism by providing a language of equality for colonial Asians with the West, thus breaking the colonial racial discourse; curbing the hold of regional identities of Indonesians to form a unified identity which would evolve into an Indonesian one; justified Indonesian demands for freedom from colonial rule with their anti-colonial rhetoric; and offered a different path to modernization than the Western one.



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## APPENDICES

### A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TRKE ZET

Bu alıřma, “uluslararası”nın Endonezya milliyetilięinin ortaya ıkıřı ve geliřimi zerindeki etkisini anlamaya ynelik bir giriřimdir. Smrge Endonezya’sı rneęinde uluslararasının milliyetilięi nasıl etkiledięi sorusunu arařtıran bu tezin ana nermesi, Pan-İslamizm, Modernist İslam, Marksizm ve Pan-Asyacılık olmak zere drt uluslararası dřnsel faktrn Endonezya’da milliyeti hareketin gidiřatını belirledięidir. Buna ek olarak, bu alıřma, bahsedilen dřnsel faktrlerin smrge Endonezya’sında etkili olmasının nedenlerinin, yirminci yzyılın bařında smrgecilięin etkisinin daha ok hissedilmesinde ve buna hem smrge hem de yarı-smrge dnyadan gelen smrgecilik karřıtı tepkilerde yerleřmiř olduęunu savunmaktadır.

Endonezya’da milliyetilięin 1908’de Cava kltrn korumak ve tanıtmak amacıyla oluřturulan bir ęrenci kulb olan *Budi Utomo*’nun kurulmasıyla bařladıęı yaygın olarak kabul edilir. Fakat 1945 yılından baktıęımızda *Budi Utomo*’yu Endonezya milliyetisi bir rgt olarak grmek mmkn deęildir; en iyi ihtimalle, Cava merkezli bir etnik/blgesel milliyetilik rgt olarak kabul edilebilir.<sup>272</sup> Kuruluřun adı, Cava dıřında konuřulmayan Cava dilinde “byk aba” anlamına geliyordu. Ayrıca, kuruluřun aktif olduęu ilk yıllarda sadece kltrel alanda hareket etme ilkesi vardı ve bu da rgtn veya yelerinin herhangi bir siyasi faaliyette etkin olmasını yasaklıyordu. *Budi Utomo*, kendilerini tek bir anavatan, Endonezya, tek dil Endonezya Dili ve tek millet Endonezya milletine ait gren ve siyasi amaları Endonezya’nın baęımsızlıęı olan 1945 Endonezya

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<sup>272</sup> Leo Suryadinata, “Indonesian Nationalism and the Pre-War Youth Movement: A Reexamination,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 9, no. 1 (1978): 101.

gençliğiyle tam bir tezat içerisindeydi. Bu tez 1908 ve 1945 yılları arasındaki bu zıtlığı yirminci yüzyıl dönüşündeki fikir hareketleri üzerinden anlamlandırmaya çalışmaktadır. Doğu Hint Adaları çapında bir milliyetçilik nasıl ortaya çıktı? Milliyetçi hareket amacına nasıl ulaştı ve Endonezya ulus devletini nasıl kurdu? Ve en önemlisi, uluslararası bu süreçte nasıl bir rol oynadı?

Bu sorulara yanıt verebilmek ve uluslararası ile milliyetçilik arasındaki etkileşimi anlamak için, bu çalışma birinci bölümünde Uluslararası İlişkiler (Uİ), Milliyetçilik Çalışmaları ve Endonezya Milliyetçiliği literatürlerini incelemektedir. Bu çalışmaya göre, Uİ literatürü milliyetçilik konusunda iki temel eğilime sahip: 1) Uluslararası devletler arası ilişkilere indirgemek; 2) Milliyetçiliği etnik çatışma, azınlık/diaspora milliyetçiliği ya da ayrılıkçı hareketler gibi uç formlarına indirgemek.<sup>273</sup> Birinci eğilim Uİ'nin milliyetçiliğe neden çok az ilgi gösterdiğini açıklarken, ikincisi Uİ'nin milliyetçiliği nasıl incelediğine işaret etmektedir. Bu bölüm, bu eğilimlerin sebebinin ise ana akım Uİ teorilerinin üç temel önermesinden geldiğini savunmaktadır: devlet-merkezlilik, ülke içi ve uluslararası ayrılması ve anarşi altındaki değişmez uluslararası sistem. Devlet-merkezlilik devleti bir analiz birimi olarak millete tercih ederken, anarşi söylemi ulus-devleti bitmiş bir varlık olarak düşünüp onun nasıl ortaya çıktığına önem atfetmemektedir. Ne var ki, iç ve uluslararası alanların ayrılması, milliyetçiliğin Uİ'nin çalışma konularından biri olmaması önündeki en büyük engeli oluşturmaktadır çünkü bu ayrım sonucu milliyetçilik iç alanda kalmıştır. Uİ çalışmaları milliyetçiliği konu edindiğinde ise, sadece uç formlarını yani uluslararası sistemi tehdit eden milliyetçilik formlarını çalışma konusu olarak incelemişlerdir. Devlet-merkezli varsayım açısından bakıldığında, bu milliyetçilikler devlet değil, devlet altı/devlet dışı aktörler oldukları için bir tedirginlik yaratırlar; ulus-devlet olma arzuları, sistem içindeki birimlerin tamamlanmış halini tehdit etmekte ve en önemlisi uluslararası topluma tehdit olmaları bu milliyetçilikleri ulusal alandan çıkarıp uluslararası alana yerleştirmektedir. Öte yandan, Uİ'nin eleştirel teorileri, özellikle de uluslararası-ülke içi ayrımının yanlışlığını en çok vurgulayan Uluslararası İlişkilerin Tarihsel Sosyolojisi de milliyetçiliği ciddi bir çalışma konusu olarak almamıştır. Bu yazında

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<sup>273</sup> Özkırımlı, *Theories of Nationalism*.

milliyetçiliği bir iç fenomen olarak ele alıp uluslararası ile bağlantısını inceleyen çalışmalar sayıca çok azdır ve uluslararasıını sadece Batılı olana indirgemektedir. Bu sebeple, bu tez Uİ'nin milliyetçiliği çalışma alanına dahil etmemesini sorunsallaştırmaktadır.

Milliyetçilik Çalışmaları literatürü genellikle milletlerin ne zaman ortaya çıktığına dair verdikleri farklı cevaplardan ötürü Primordialist, Etnosembolist ve Modernist ekol olarak üç sınıfa ayrılır. Bu ekollerden milliyetçilik analizinde uluslararasıına önem atfeden tek ekolün Modernist ekol olduğu görülmektedir. Ulusun modern zamanlarda ortaya çıkan bir fenomen olduğunu savunan bu çalışmaların bir diğer ortak noktası hepsinin uluslararası bir fenomeni modern çağda milliyetçiliklerin oluşumunun katalizörü olarak görmesidir. Mesela, Anderson'ın çalışması, milliyetçiliğin oluşumunda genel olarak matbaa kapitalizminin önemini ve özel olarak sömürgeciliğin sömürge milliyetçiliklerinin oluşumundaki rolünü vurgular.<sup>274</sup> Gellner ise milliyetçiliklerin oluşum nedeni olarak sanayileşmeye işaret eder.<sup>275</sup> Fakat, bu ekol uluslararasıını sadece büyük ölçekli yapısal koşullara indirgemekte<sup>276</sup> bu sebeple uluslararasıının düşünsel tarafını göz ardı etmektedir. Bu tezin iddia ettiği gibi, Endonezya örneğinde, milliyetçiliğin ortaya çıkışı ve gelişmesinde, sadece yapısal koşullar değil birden çok fikir akımı da etkili olmuştur. Modernist ekole getirilebilecek bir başka eleştiri de uluslararasıını sadece Batılı faktörlere eşitlemesidir. Bu sebeple Batı dışı düşünsel faktörlerin, özellikle de sömürge milliyetçiliklerindeki önemini yok saymaktadır. Bu çalışmalarda milliyetçiliklerin oluşumuna yol açan kapitalizm, sanayileşme veya bunlara benzer diğer süreçler Batı kaynaklı fenomenlerdir, gerçek bir “uluslararası” ise yalnızca Batılı değil, küreseldir. Dolayısıyla bu tez, bu “Batılı” süreçlere ek olarak Batı dışı uluslararasıını da milliyetçilik analizine dahil etmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

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<sup>274</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

<sup>275</sup> Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*.

<sup>276</sup> Özdemir, “A Historical Sociology Approach to Iranian Nationalism, 2.

Endonezya milliyetçiliği alanındaki çalışmalar uluslararası milliyetçiliğin analizine birçok yönden dahil etmektedir fakat uluslararasına karşı tikelci bir yaklaşım sergilemektedir. Bu çalışmalarda genellikle uluslararasının Endonezya milliyetçiliğine etki eden sadece bir boyutu üzerinde durulup, kısmi bir açıklama getirilmektedir. Örneğin, bir grup çalışma sadece Batılı düşüncelerin Batı tedrisatından geçmiş milliyetçi seçkinlerin üzerindeki etkisini incelerken, başka bir grup sadece Modernist İslam'ın ya da Japon işgalinin milliyetçilik üzerindeki etkilerine odaklanmaktadır. Fakat uluslararası farklı boyutlarıyla tek bir çalışma içerisinde incelenmemektedir. George Kahin'in *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (1952), James Siegel'in *Fetish Recognition and Revolution* (1997) ve John Sidel'in *Republicanism, Communism and Islam* (2021) isimli kitapları bu tikelci yaklaşımdan ayrılan çalışmalar olarak ayrıca bahsedilmeyi gerektirir. Fakat, Kahin'in çalışmasında uluslararasının farklı boyutlarına değinilse de bunlar yeterince detaylandırılmamış, daha çok Endonezya Devrimi'nin iç politikasına yönelik olan analizlerin yanında sönük kalmıştır. Siegel'in çalışması ise sadece Malay Dili'nin Batı ve Batı-dışı düşüncelerin Endonezya'ya aktarımına odaklanmıştır. Sidel'in kitabı alanın en yeni ve uluslararasının farklı boyutlarına odaklanan en geniş çalışmalarından biridir. Söz konusu kitapta Endonezya Devrimi, Filipin ve Vietnam devrimleriyle beraber incelenmiştir. Fakat Sidel'in analizlerinin odak notası milliyetçilikten ziyade devrimdir ve bu devrim(ler)in milliyetçilikten arındırılmış bir analizini sunmaktadır. Bu çalışma, Sidel'in çalışmasından devrimdense milliyetçiliğe olan vurgusu ve milliyetçiliğin uluslararasılaştırılmış bir incelemesini sunmasıyla ayrılmaktadır.

Bu üç literatürün sorunsallaştırılmış yanlarından hareketle, bu çalışma uluslararası şü şekilde tanımlamaktadır: uluslararası sadece devletler arası ilişkileri değil, devlet olmayan aktörlerin kendi aralarındaki ve devletlerle olan ilişkilerini de kapsamaktadır. Milliyetçilik Çalışmalarının aksine uluslararası sadece yapısal durumları değil uluslararası düşünce akımlarını da içermektedir. Son olarak, bu çalışmada uluslararası kavramı sadece Batılı olana indirgenmemiş fakat batı dışı yapılar ve düşünce akımları da bu kavrama dahil edilmiştir. Uluslararasının bu geniş tanımından hareketle, bu çalışma uluslararasının farklı boyutlarının Endonezya milliyetçiliğine katkılarını incelemeye almaktadır. Bu sebeple, Pan-

İslamizm, Modernist İslam, Marksizm ve Pan-Asyacılık uluslararası düşünsel faktörleri olarak, sömürgeleştirme ve Japonya'nın Endonezya'yı işgali ise uluslararası yapısal ve maddesel etkileri olarak Endonezya milliyetçi hareketi bağlamında incelenmektedir.

Bu çalışma, 1908'de *Budi Utomo*'nun kuruluşundan, 1945'te devrimin patlak vermesine kadar olan sürecin yani Endonezya Milliyetçi Hareketi'ni on dokuzuncu yüzyıl sonu ve yirminci yüzyıl başını kapsayan geniş bir döneme yerleştirmektedir. Milliyetçi hareketi bu tarihsel dönem içerisinde inceleme sebebi bu dönemde hem dünyada hem de sömürge Endonezya'sında meydana gelen bir dizi gelişmeyle alakalıdır. Global düzlemde demiryolları, buharlı gemiler, Süveyş Kanalı'nın açılması, telgraf ve radyo gibi ulaşım ve iletişim teknolojileri dünyayı daha bağlantılı bir hale getirdi ve sadece insanların ve ticaret mallarının değil aynı zamanda fikirlerin de daha hızlı seyahat etmesini sağladı. Pan-İslamizm, Modernist İslam, Marksizm ve Pan-Asyacılık, küresel sahnede Batılı devletlerin merkezinde olduğu statükoya meydan okumaya başladı ve sömürge ve yarı-sömürge ülkelerinde bazen resmî devlet politikası olarak bazen de seçkinler tarafından benimsenip, düzene karşı olan isyanların dile getirilmesinde bir aracı oldu. Aynı dönemde Endonezya'da küresel sahnedeki bu değişikliklerden ayrı okunamayacak bir değişim döneminden geçmekteydi. Sömürge hükümetinin hızla bürokratikleşmesi ve merkezileşmesi, artan Avrupalı ve Çinli nüfus ve Batılı tarzda eğitimin Endonezyalılara da açılması bu değişimin en büyük nedenleriydi. Tam olarak aynı dönemde, Endonezyalılar gittikçe artan bir şekilde uluslararası fikir akımlarıyla tanışmaya başladılar. Bu sebeple, Endonezya milliyetçiliğinin siyasi tezahürleri 1908'de başlamasına rağmen bu çalışma, Endonezya milliyetçiliğinin ortaya çıkışını ve gelişimini Shiraishi'nin “devinim çağı” olarak adlandırdığı dönemde konumlandırmaktadır.<sup>277</sup> Mekânsal olarak bu çalışmanın analizleri, adından da anlaşılacağı gibi ne Doğu Hint Adaları ile ne de Hollanda ile sınırlıdır. Bu mekânlara ek olarak, bu çalışma Endonezya milliyetçiliğinin Mekke, Kahire,

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<sup>277</sup> Shiraishi, *Age in Motion*.

İstanbul, Tokyo, Singapur ve Moskova'daki kökenlerini ve bu şehirlerden Endonezya'ya taşınan fikirleri araştırmaktadır.

Bu çalışma sırasında yararlanılan kaynakların çoğunu İngilizce yazındaki ikincil kaynaklar oluşturmaktadır. Fakat bunlara ek olarak, bu çalışmada *Marxists Internet Archive* (Marxist.org) ve *Cornell Modern Indonesia Project* tarafından İngilizce'ye çevrilen ve yayınlanan bir dizi birincil kaynaktan da yararlanılmıştır. Bu kaynaklar arasında Sukarno ve Sutan Sjahrir gibi milliyetçi liderlerin yazıları ve konuşma metinleri bulunmaktadır. Aynı zamanda Endonezya Komünist Partisi liderleri Tan Malaka, Semaun ve Aidit'in yazıları ve Comintern raporları ve konuşmaları da yer almaktadır.

Tez boyunca, Endonezya Dili'nde bir kelime kullanıldığında, 1972 öncesi imlâ kurallarını kullanan eserlerden doğrudan alıntı yapılan durumlar dışında, Endonezya Dili'nin 1972 yazım revizyonu takip edilmiştir.

Bu tezin ikinci bölümü, sömürgeciliği Endonezyalıların hayatında geri dönüşü olmayan bir değişikliğe neden olan yapısal bir güç olarak incelemekte ve bu yapısal koşullar içerisinde Endonezyalı seçkinlerin sömürgecilik karşıtı ve proto-milliyetçi tepkilerini analiz etmektedir. Hollanda sömürge hükümetinin ekonomik sömürüye dayalı tarım politikaları, artan merkezileşmesi ve yüzyılın başında kolonideki Avrupalı yerleşimcilerin sayısının artması, sömürgeciliği Endonezyalıları için dayanılmaz hale getiren faktörlerdi. Bu gelişmelere paralel olarak, Hollandalı liberallerin propagandası sonucu Endonezyalıları Batılı tarzda eğitim olanağının sunulması ve Endonezyalı basınının gelişmesi, Endonezyalı seçkinlerin sömürgeciliği ve feodalizmi gerici güçler olarak sorgulamaları için bir alan açmıştı. Seçkinler içerisinde bulundukları duruma karşı memnuniyetsizliklerini basın aracılığıyla dile getirirken, kırsal alana yabancı yönetimi sona erdirmek için ortaya çıkan köylü isyanları hâkim olmuştu. Bu bölüm, bu çağa Endonezya toplumunun farklı kesimleri tarafından hissedilen genel bir kriz duygusunun damgasını vurduğunu ve bu krizin Endonezyalıları tarafından yabancı yönetimle dolayısıyla sömürgecilikle ilişkilendirildiğini savunmaktadır. Endonezyalı aydınlar sömürgeciliğe karşı artan farkındalıklarına paralel olarak, yirminci yüzyılın dönüşünün uluslararası fikir akımlarıyla ilgilenmeye başladılar; bu akımların tümü,

açık ya da dolaylı olarak, sömürgecilik karşıtıydı ve modernleşme gündemine sahipti. Bu özellikleriyle, sadece Endonezyalılara değil, Asya'daki diğer sömürge ve yarı-sömürge ülkelerin aydınlarına da hitap eden bu fikirler, Endonezya aydınlarının da bir parçası olduğu sömürgecilik karşıtı bir entelektüel alan yaratmıştı. Batılı olmayan bu dayanışma ağları çoğunlukla Asya'daki farklı devrimlere giden yolda birer araç olarak görülse de bu tez onların milliyetçiliğin ortaya çıkışı ve oluşumu üzerindeki etkisini analiz etmektedir.

Bu tez esas olarak milliyetçiliğin cumhuriyetin ilanına kadar geçen sürede ortaya çıkışını ve gelişimini kapsamakla birlikte, devrim sırasında ve sonrasında meydana gelen bazı gelişmelerden de bahsetmek yerinde olacaktır. Çeşitli uluslararası fikirlerden etkilenen çok çeşitli aktörlerin anti-sömürgecilik bayrağı etrafında toplanarak oluşturduğu milliyetçi hareket devrimin hemen sonrası bir dağılma dönemi yaşadı. Bu dağılma devrim öncesi dönemin enternasyonal ve milliyetçilik arasındaki ilişkiyi anlamak açısından bağımsız bir zaman dilimi olarak değerlendirilebileceğini göstermektedir. Çünkü devrimin bazı aktörleri ve onları etkileyen uluslararası fikirler, devrimci ve devrim sonrası dönemde, yeni ilân edilen cumhuriyetin düşmanları haline geldi. Endonezya'nın bağımsızlığa her zamankinden daha yakın olduğu bu anda, uluslararası fikirler enternasyonalist gündemleri için çabaladı. Kartosuwiryo'nun liderlik ettiği ve Endonezya'nın bir İslam devleti olması için uğraşan *Darul Islam* hareketi ve çeşitli Marksist grupların Marxist çizgide bir devrim yapma isteği bu çabalardan en önemlisidir.

Bu çalışmanın üçüncü bölümü, Orta Doğu'da ortaya çıkan ve Malay-Endonezya coğrafyası da dahil olmak üzere hemen hemen tüm Müslüman dünyada etkili olan Modernist İslam ve Pan-İslamizm'in Endonezya milliyetçiliğine etkisini analiz etmektedir. Bu iki fikir akımı, İslam inancının ve İslam siyasi topluluğunun Batı hakimiyeti karşısında düşüşte olduğu kanısının yükseldiği 19. yüzyılın başında birbirleriyle yakın ilişki içinde gelişti. Bu bölüm, her iki ideolojinin de bu düşüşe sömürgecilik karşıtı bir açıklama sağladığını göstermektedir. Modernist İslam örneğinde, Michael Laffan'ın da gösterdiği gibi Mekke ve Kahire'deki Malay-Endonezyalı topluluk bu şehirlerdeki fikirlerin modernist basın ve haç sayesinde Endonezya'ya yayılmasında etkili olurken, kendilerini de bölgesel kimliklerindense, daha geniş kimliklerle tanımlamaya başladılar. Pan-İslam ise

Endonezyalıların da dahil olduğu bir ümmetin siyasi bir topluluk olarak hayal edilmesine yardımcı oldu. Bu yönleriyle Modernist İslam ve Pan-İslamizm, sonunda Endonezya kimliğinde kristalleşecek olan bölgesel kimliklerden daha büyük kimliklerin oluşumunda yardımcı oldu. Endonezya fikri de hayalî bir siyasi topluluktu, ancak ulus-devletler çağında tüm İslam ümmetini sınırları içerisine alan bir topluluk kurmaktansa başarılması çok daha kolay bir görevdi. Ek olarak, Modernist İslam'da eğitimin önemli bir yerinin olması ve modernist ulemanın açtığı okullar, Endonezya'da bu modernist eğitimle siyasallaşan yeni bir neslin yetişmesine yardımcı oldu.

Bu tezin dördüncü bölümü, Marksizm'i uluslararası bir ideoloji olarak analiz etmektedir, çünkü Marksizm, özellikle de onun Leninist yorumu, Endonezya da dahil olmak üzere Asya'daki sömürge ve yarı-sömürge milliyetçiliklerin ve devrimlerin gelişmesinde etkili oldu. Bu bölümde, Marksizm'in Asya'da geniş kitlelere hitap etmesi üç nedene bağlanmaktadır: 1) Lenin'in Marksizm'i bir Avrupa ideolojisinden kapitalizm öncesi Asya'ya uygulanabilir bir ideolojiye dönüştüren teorik katkıları; 2) Marksizm'in, hızlı sanayileşme ve toplumsal değişim ihtiyacı gibi sömürge Asya'sının sorunlarına pratik çözümler sunması ve 3) Marksizm'in Asya toplumlarının normatif değerleri ve ihtiyaçları ile kesişmesi. Bu bölüm, Marksizm'in Endonezya milliyetçiliği üzerinde etkili olmasını sağlayanın özellikle bu normatif alan ile olan etkileşimi olduğunu iddia ediyor. Bu bölüm bahsedilen normatif alanı İslam, ırk ve eşitlik olarak üç alt başlıkta incelemektedir. İlk olarak, Marksist fikirlerin Endonezyalı Marksist aydınlar ve Sukarno gibi milliyetçi liderler tarafından Endonezya bağlamında yerelleştirilmesiyle, milliyetçi veya Marksist kimliklerin tanıtılmasından önce sömürge Endonezyalıların birleştirici faktörlerinden biri olan İslam ile Marksizm'in uyumluluğu kanıtlandı. Birçok milliyetçi ve Marksist düşünürün yazı ve konuşmalarında İslam peygamberi Muhammed'e ilk gerçek sosyalist olarak atıfta bulunmaları, İslam'ın Marksist doktrinle benzerliğini göstermek için bazı Kuran âyetlerini veya hadisleri alıntılarını, İslamî zekât uygulamalarını toplumsal yeniden dağıtım için bir araç olarak göstermeleri ve tefecilik kavramlarını haram olarak göstermeleri yaygın bir yerelleştirme çabasıydı. Bu sayede Marksist fikirler hem çoğunluğu oluşturan

Müslüman Endonezyalıların kabul gördü hem de Marksist ve İslamî gruplar sömürge karşıtı bir arenada halkı örgütlemeye bir arada devam edebildi.

İkinci olarak, sömürge toplumunun gündelik gerçeği olan ırka dayalı toplumsal tabakalaşma Marksist ve milliyetçi aydınlar tarafından Marksist sınıf konseptiyle birleştirildi. Orijinal Marksist analizde üretim araçlarının mülkiyeti aracılığıyla salt ekonomik terimlerle tanımlanan Marksist sınıf kavramının ve sınıfın sınırlarının Endonezyalı aydınların yazılarında büyük ölçüde sömürge toplumundaki ırksal hiyerarşi aracılığıyla belirlendiği görülmektedir. Bu hiyerarşide, üretim araçlarına sahip olma şansı ait olunan ırka bağlıydı. Hollandalılar, sırf piramidin tepesinde oldukları için üretim araçlarına sahip olmak için her türlü imkâna sahipken, Endonezyalılar kapitalizm ve sömürgeciliğin pençesinde ezilen topyekûn bir proleter sınıf oluşturuyordu. Bu yazılarda, özellikle proletaryanın neredeyse tüm Endonezya toplumunu kapsayacak şekilde yeniden tanımlanması, kitleleri kendilerini tek bir topluluk olarak hayal etmeye itti ve kendi güçlerini gerçekleştirmeye teşvik etti. Beyaz ırkla eşitlikleri ve onlara karşı mücadeleleri, maruz kaldıkları baskıyla meşrulaştırıldı. Sömürge zihniyetinin Endonezya'nın yoksulluğuna olan açıklaması Endonezyalıların sözde geri kalmışlıkları iken, Endonezyalı Marksist yorum onların içinde bulundukları koşullara küresel kapitalizm ve sömürgeciliğe değinerek nesnel bir açıklama getiriyordu. Dolayısıyla, Endonezyalı aydınların bu özgün sınıf yorumu, ırkçı sömürgeci söylemin etkisini kırma yolunda etkili oldu ve ilk önce ezilen topyekûn bir sınıf olarak inşa edilen ortak kimlik nihayetinde Endonezya kimliğinin kristalleşmesine katkıda bulundu.

Son olarak, Marksizm'in eşitlikçi vaatleri, sömürgecilik ve feodalitenin yarattığı hiyerarşilerden kurtulmak isteyen Endonezyalılar için çekiciydi. Marksist fikirler, milliyetçiliğin de bir özelliği olan toplum kesimleri arasındaki eşitliğin gerekliliğini sağladı. Anderson'ın deyişiyle millet olmanın temel özelliklerinden olan “yatay yoldaşlık” için gerekli bilinç bir bakıma Marksizm tarafından da sağlanmış oldu.

Uluslararası bir fikir olarak Pan-Asyacılık ve bunun siyasi arenaya yansımaları, yani Endonezya'nın Japon işgali, bu tezin beşinci bölümünün odak noktasını oluşturmaktadır. Pan-Asyacılık uluslararası bir ideoloji olarak Japon entelektüelleri

arasında doğdu ve başarılı bir modernleşme örneği olarak Japonya'yı örnek alan Endonezyalı entelektüeller üzerinde de etkili oldu. Bu fikir akımı tek bir Asya medeniyetinin veya sarı ırkın erdemlerini savunmaktaydı. Özellikle 1905 Rus-Japon Savaşı'ndaki Japon zaferinden sonra, Japonya sadece güçlü bir devlet olarak değil, aynı zamanda büyük bir ilham kaynağı olarak kabul edildi. Pan-Asyacılık söyleminin etkisi altındaki sömürgeleştirilmiş Asyalılar da bu zaferden dolayı kendilerini Batı'ya karşı galip gelmiş saymaya başladılar. Bu bölüm, Pan-Asyacı söylemin yalnızca Batılılarla bir eşitlik dili sağlamadığını, aynı zamanda Batılı muadilinden daha güçlü tasvir edilen bir Asyalı kimliği inşa ettiğini iddia ediyor. Özellikle Japonya, Endonezya'daki Hollanda gücünü kolayca yenip takımadayı işgal ettiğinde bu söylem daha da güç kazandı. Kahin'e göre, Hollanda kuvvetlerinin Japonlar tarafından bozguna uğratılması, Endonezyalıların gözünde sömürgecinin prestijini zayıflattı ve onlara, eğer silahlar sağlanırsa, Japonlar gibi Hollandalılara karşı savaşabilecekleri fikrini verdi.<sup>278</sup> Bu bölüm, Endonezyalıların özgüvenindeki bu artışın, öncelikle ırk kategorilerinin anlaşılmasındaki değişiklikten kaynaklandığını iddia ediyor. Aslında sarı ırka mensup Japonların, kendilerinin yüzyıllardır tahakkümü altında bulunduğu beyaz Hollandalıları yenmesi, Endonezyalıların kendilerine olan güveninin artmasına yol açmıştı. Daha önceki bölümlerde değinildiği gibi, sömürge rejimini meşrulaştıran en önemli gerekçelerden ve araçlardan biri, ırkların eşitsizliği fikriydi. Bununla birlikte, Endonezyalıların Hollandalı “efendiler”e karşı sözde ırksal geriliği Hollandalılar tarafından inşa edilen bir söylem olmasına rağmen, günlük yaşamda tekrarlanan uygulamalar Endonezyalıları Hollanda gücünün beyazlığından geldiğine ikna etmişti. Ancak, Pan-Asyacılık, bir Asya ırkının -ya da sarı bir ırkın- var olduğu ve en az beyaz ırk kadar muktedir olduğunu savunan bir ideolojidi. Bu nedenle, Endonezyalıların ve Japonların (ve genel olarak tüm Asyalıların) ırksal aynılığına dayanan Japon propagandası ve Japonya'nın Endonezya'da Hollandalılara karşı kazandığı zafer, sarı ırkın beyaz ırka eşitliğinin güçlü bir kanıtıydı. Dolayısıyla, ırksal kategoriler içerisinde düşünmeye eğilimli Endonezyalıların zihinlerinde, Japon eylemleri daha geniş bir düzeyde sarı ırkın bir başarısıydı ve aynı sarı ırka mensup oldukları için kendilerinin de aynı güce muktedir olduklarının bir

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<sup>278</sup> Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution*, 102.

işaretiydi. Japonya'nın Endonezya'yı işgali başladıktan sonra Japonya'nın baskıcı bir güç haline gelmesine ve Japonların Endonezyalılardan daha üstün olduğu başka bir kast sistemini dayatmasına rağmen, propaganda düzeyinde hala Asya ırkı retoriği bir ırk kategorisi olarak kullanılmaya devam ediliyordu. Bu nedenle, Hollanda tahakkümü Endonezyalıların böyle bir güce sahip olamayacaklarını garanti altına alacak şekilde çalışırken, Japon gücü ve egemenliği, Endonezyalılara yöneltile ve onlar üzerinde uygulansa bile, paradoksal olarak Endonezyalılar için kendilerinin de sahip olduğu potansiyel bir güce işaret ediyordu. Bu anlamda, Pan-Asyacılık önce retorikte daha sonra ise Japon işgali sırasında ırkçı sömürge söyleminin etkisini alışıya eden ve milli kimliğin inşa edilmesi ve bağımsızlık talep etmesi için gerekli olan toplumsal özgüveni sağlamada diğler uluslararası fikir akımları gibi önemli bir rol oynamıştı.

Maddi düzeyde ise, Japon işgali, Hollanda sömürge hükümeti tarafından milliyetçi liderlerin hapse atıldığı veya sürgüne gönderildiği 1930'larda durma noktasına gelen milliyetçi hareketi yeniden canlandırmak için bir katalizör görevi gördü. Japonya sadece bu liderlerin sürgünden dönmesini sağlamakla kalmadı, dahası onlara Japonya'nın savaş hazırlıklarına yardımını da özendirdikleri sürece milliyetçi propagandalarını da yapma imkânı tanıdı. Bu propaganda sonucu milliyetçi fikirler takımadanın dört bir yanına taşınmış oldu. Dahası, Japonya işgal süresince Felemenkçenin sözlü ve yazılı kullanımlarını yasakladı ve böylece onun yerine geçen Endonezya Dili hayatın tüm alanlarında kullanılmaya başlandı.<sup>279</sup> 1928'de milli dil olarak kabul edilen bu dil, bu kararlarla beraber nihayet yaygın bir kullanıma ulaştı. Son olarak, işgal sırasında Endonezyalı halkın genç kesimine verilen askeri eğitim bu jenerasyonun düşünme biçimlerinin değişiminde büyük rol oynadı ve onları politize etti.<sup>280</sup> Günün sonunda, tam olarak bu genç jenerasyon Japonya işgaline karşı çıkan grup oldu ve devrim boyunca da büyük bir rol oynadı.

Sonuç olarak, bu tez Pan-İslamcı, İslami Modernist, Marksist ve Pan-Asyacı uluslararası fikir akımlarının Endonezya milliyetçiliğinin ortaya çıkış ve gelişme

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<sup>279</sup> Alisjahbana, "The Indonesian Language-By-product of Nationalism," 390.

<sup>280</sup> Anderson, *Java in a time of Revolution*.

sürecini birçok açıdan etkilediğini savunuyor. Öncelikli olarak bu akımlar, sömürgeleştirilen Asyalılara Batılılarla eşit olduklarını gösteren bir söylem sağladılar ve bu şekilde ırkçı sömürgeci söylemin gücünü azalttılar. İkincisi, bölgesel kimliklerin gücünü azaltarak bunların birleştirici bir Endonezya kimliğine evrilmesine yardım ettiler. Üçüncü olarak bu fikirler açık ya da kapalı şekilde yaptığı sömürge karşıtı eleştirilerle Endonezyalıların sömürge yönetiminden özgürlük ve bağımsızlık taleplerini meşrulaştırdılar. Son olarak, bu fikirler Endonezyalılara Batı'ya alternatif olarak görülen modernleşme yolları sundu.



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