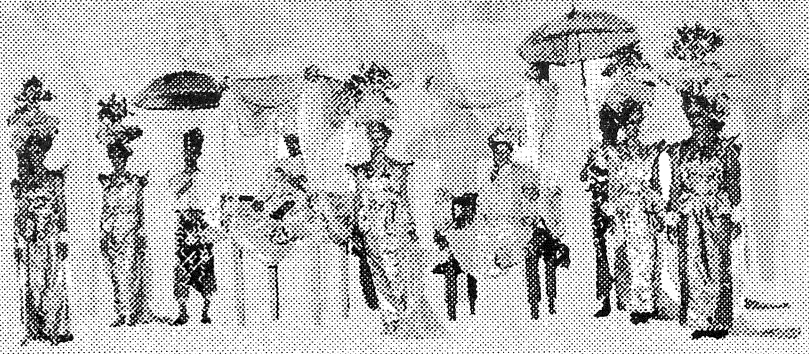
IDENTITY, MULTICULTURALISM AND THE FORMATION OF NATION STATES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA



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INTRODUCTION

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Recently, there has come about greater need to better understand Southeast Asian countries from Southeast Asian perspectives, since Southeast Asian Studies had been given attention by Europeans. The Japan Foundation as one of the outstanding institutions in the academic affairs in the world is really concerned about how Southeast Asian Studies could be developed in Southeast Asia, particularly by conducting collaborative work either through research or seminars/ workshops/ conferences with the main institutions regarding the development of the studies in the region.

The Research Center for Regional Resources - the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (PSDR-LIPI) is one of the new institutions at LIPI, established in June 2001. The embryo of this Center was the Program of Southeast Asian Studies, founded by Prof Dr Taufik Abdullah in 1983 (a former chairman of LIPI).

The Center undertakes comprehensive and comparative studies on the dynamics of society, culture, and economy in the region of Southeast Asia, the Asia Pacific and in European countries. In relation to the development of Southeast Asian Studies, PSDR-LIPI has not only established a network with its counterparts in Indonesia, but also with other countries, and national and international foundations. The Japan Foundation is one of its counterparts and supports the main goals of the PSDR-LIPI.

Now the challenges for Southeast Asian scholars are greater than those of many years ago. Southeast Asian scholars have to deal with serious problems in social, cultural, and economic affairs, especially in relation to identity, multiculturalism, the process of autonomy and integrity of the nations in Southeast Asia, and the formation of nation-states in Southeast Asia.

The question of cultural and ethnic identity, and multiculturalism in Southeast Asia has become prominent in public debate, particularly in response to the increasing attention to ethnicity and religion as sources of often violent conflict among people of different ethnic, religious and linguistic backgrounds. In what way can Southeast Asian scholars from different kinds of disciplines, contribute to the solution of the problems?

Southeast Asian Studies continue to be developed in terms of methodologies, theories, and objects of studies and currently we are witnessing the rapid development of interdisciplinary studies.

This international seminar held by PSDR-LIPI in cooperation with the Japan Foundation has the purpose to understand the development of Southeast Asian Studies in terms of the practices, methodologies and theories, particularly the understanding of identity, multiculturalism and the formation of nation states in Southeast Asia.

It is therefore time to look again at the role and function of Southeast Asian Studies and the recent trends in terms of its theoretical development. PSDR-LIPI would like to publish the results of the one day seminar on "Identity, Multiculturalism and the Formation of Nation States in Southeast Asia" in order to add to the existing

body of knowledge and to have better understanding of such issues from different angles. The four papers in this book dwell on the conceptions of identity, multiculturalism and nation states. Ileto, Ardhana, Ariffin and Abdullah analyse the emergence of the nation states in Southeast Asia, especially the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia particularly from the historical perspective.

They provide significant insights, based on their in depth studies. Whilst, in certain areas Southeast Asian countries have shared similar experiences, in other areas they have not shared the same problems. In this book, we can see the different ways the Southeast Asian states faced the colonial power in the past. For example, the Indonesian people struggled to gain their independence through revolution, while the people of Malaysia saw the colonial power as a liberator from the Japanese occupation. The strengthening identity of becoming Malay became particularly apparent when Malaysia was under the rule of Dr Mahathir Mohammad. Another important feature is that some of the Southeast Asian states emerged as the products of colonial influences. Under colonial power repression, Southeast Asian countries contributed greatly to reach their independence.

The first paper, by Ileto, highlights the relationship between power and colonial politics in the historical tradition of the Philippines. Ileto shows how the American power tried to manipulate the issues of the Great War, which had been conducted by the Philippines. From the American point of view, the Americans were "liberators" to help free the country from oppressive Spanish rule. According to Ileto, the American colonial power grip over the shaping of public memories was most effective in the schools.

The official view of the past also clearly follows the American perspective. Nevertheless, the official management of the collective memory did not fully take into account on the private memories of the Filipino-American war. The Americans attempted to leave out the bad images that there was not a Great War between the Americans and the Philippines. Both of the states have had good relations for a long time and Americans had "rewritten" the history of the Philippines. Historical memories are basically subject to change due to political interests.

In terms of the national unity, Ileto argues that national unification and identity creation have been possible in the past. He regards the need for the Filipino to understand the circumstances that made it possible to create national unification and identity instead of just moving on and focusing on current vogues like globalization.

At the end of his paper, Ileto argues that cold war politics have shaped the field of Southeast Asian Studies. He further argues that understanding how scholarship was shaped in the past should also enable us to better cope with the current pressures to shape Southeast Asian Studies in conformity with the discourse and dictates of still another war, the war on Terror.

Like Ileto, Ardhana is concerned with the formation of identity and the nation state but his argument is focused on the local experience. His paper is based on his research on the development of Nusa Tenggara (Southeast Indonesia) in the colonial era from 1915 to 1950 that touches upon several issues relating to the identity, multiculturalism and the formation of nation state. According to Ardhana, like other regions of Southeast Asia, particularly in the Netherlands Indies, in Nusa Tenggara, the

colonial government expanded its power through certain military expeditions to find out natural resources. This was the root of the rise of several conflicts between the people and the colonial power. However, the nature of relationship was not only coloured by political conflicts amongst them, but also cultural and economic relations. From the cultural aspect, for instance, we can see how the indigenous people, who were previously animist adherents converted to certain religions. Consequently, the people began to change their identities from adherents of native religions to adhering to Christianity or Islam. The religious organizations have been popular and played a major role against the Dutch during colonial rule.

Though organizations based on religion and ethnic origins were in existence, religious organizations and religious leaders did not play a major role in political activities leading to the Indonesian independence. One of the reasons was that the religious elites did not have much knowledge of how to lead a modern state or how to resolve some issues relating to the impacts of colonization in the region. The nationalists had won the political contest. Ariffin's paper provides an interesting historical case of identity construction in Malaysia. He argues that a nation state has been created by its historical experiences which can also be traced back through the development of colonialism. In his paper, he focuses on certain issues, including the concepts of state and nation-state in Southeast Asia.

He also believes that the emergence of many of the Southeast Asian countries like Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines has been the product of the development Western colonialism. To him, there are some important differences in the development of Southeast

Asian states in the colonial era. For instance, he argues that Malaysia and Indonesia have not shared the same problems if we look at their historical experiences. The Indonesian people searched for their identity through the revolutionary way against the Dutch colonial power, while, the people of Malaysia have never had such an experience. The people of Malaysia even see the British colonial power in the colonial period as a "liberator" from the Japanese occupation of the region. Abdullah examines the relation between the local collective memories and national identity. He provides a significant insight by comparing Sukarno's Partindo and Loetfi's Persatuan Muslimin Indonesia (Permi). He argues that Sukarno could never liberate himself from uttering Dutch, English or even French and German expressions, Loetfi was trained in Cairo and is a master in quoting Quranic verses and Hadith. Being a radical party, the Permi can be seen as an answer not only to the ideological controversies between Islam and nationalism (kebangsaan), but also to the dilemma faced by the Kaum Muda movement in Minangkabau.

The publication of this book not only contributes to the explanation of the creation of the nation and nation state in Southeast Asia, but also adds to the understanding of crucial problems faced by the nation states in Southeast Asia in the context of modernization and globalization. Historical contributions are always important because we need to learn the lessons from historical evidence. At present, the administrations of Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines are all entangled in a struggle over the politics of identity, notion of multiculturalism, and disintegration though each state has its own complexities and degrees. This leads us to the potential for fruitful deep research to fill the gap between the existing body of knowledge and the dynamics of contemporary issues on identity, multiculturalism and the formation of nation states in Southeast Asia.

WAR, SCHOLARSHIP, AND THE QUESTION OF NATIONAL IDENTITIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA : A PHILIPPINES PERSPECTIVE

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When Anglo-American forces invaded Iraq last year, my immediate reaction was one of déjà vu. It was the Philippines circa 1900 all over again. Of course, many commentators here and in the Philippines have been making comparisons between the wars in Iraq and the Philippines, albeit in contrasting ways. Among them is President George W. Bush himself, who evoked the Fil-American past in his speech last October to Philippine Congress. "America," he declared,

> *is proud of its part in the great story of the Filipino people. Together our soldiers liberated the Philippines from colonial rule. Together we rescued the islands from invasion and occupation. The names of Bataan, Corregidor, Leyte, Luzon evoke the memories of shared struggle and shared loss and shared victory. Veterans of those battles are here today. I salute your courage and your service. (Applause)*

In other words, America's part in the "great story" of the Filipino people is its participation in the Filipino struggle for liberation. The lesson Bush hammers into the heads of his seemingly enthusiastic audience of Filipino lawmakers is that the very

existence of their nation-state today is due to the shared Fil-American struggle against past tyrants and oppressors.

Bush's speech is filled with allusions to war, since his ultimate aim is to secure Filipino participation in the Great War against terror. But in order to hook the present war into our historical experience, he has to move back in time to the beginning of our "great story." Bush therefore begins with a tribute to Jose Rizal's teachings, paraphrasing Rizal's message that "nations win their freedom by deserving it, by loving what is just, what is good, what is great, to the point of dying for it." This was, of course, demonstrated by Rizal's heroic death during the war against Spain. Bush ends his speech with a tribute to the country's ongoing "commitments to democracy and peace, and ... willingness to oppose terrorism and tyranny. The United States and the Philippines have a proud history. And we face the future bound by the strongest ties two nations can share..."

Punctuated by applause all around, Bush's speech alludes to three wars that have cemented the common history and shared identity of the United States and the Philippines. As a professional historian, however, I seem to count not three but five wars in this shared history. So what are these 3+2 past wars that maintain their ghostly presence over the nation and the Fil-American relationship to this day? Permit me now to review some key events in modern Philippine history. Sometimes in our striving to bring intellectual sophistication to the discipline of history, we neglect the basic events and narratives that have dominated the discourses of political leaders and their audiences at critical junctures in the life of a nation. Among them we can single out narratives of wars for their ability

to organize memory and experience in socially comprehensible terms.

The first of our Philippine wars is the war of independence from Spain—a very memorable event acknowledged by Bush himself. We all know the story: It began in 1896 when the Katipunan secret society mounted a rebellion against the Spanish authorities in the outskirts of Manila. As the Katipunan grew, this rebellion turned into a major war between a Filipino separatist movement and the government of imperial Spain. A truce was worked out in 1897, however, and Aguinaldo and his fellow nationalists went into exile in Hongkong.

In mid-1898 Aguinaldo returned to the islands with U.S. assistance, reorganized his army, and vanquished the Spanish garrisons in Luzon. The Republican government he formed, however, was refused recognition by his erstwhile ally which proceeded to destroy it in 1899. This event, called the Philippine Insurrection, then, and the Philippine-American war, now, is the second "Great War" in our history. It led to the deaths of anywhere between 250,000 to 600,00 Filipinos in battle as well as the "collateral effects" of war. It lasted much longer than the Americans had anticipated, and only officially ended with the U.S. proclamation of victory on July 4, 1902.

Unfortunately in Bush's speech last October this 2nd great war was overlooked and most of our lawmakers, judging from their frenzied applause, seem to have forgotten it as well. Not surprisingly, though, for when the Americans administered the Philippines from 1902 on, they made sure that this "original war" of 1899-1902 would become largely a forgotten event. During the 40 years of

their rule in the islands, educated Filipinos were brought up to think that the future of their country lay in a special, permanent relationship with the United States untarnished by memories of an original war (here used in the same sense as "original sin").

The cozy Fil-American relationship, however, was put to the test when the Japanese Army arrived in December 1941 and attempted to purge the country of American influence. And so we come to the third "great war" in Filipino memory: the war with Japan from 1942 to 1945. This consisted of a joint effort by Filipinos and Americans to resist Japanese occupation. This is what Bush considered the high point of America's participation in Philippine history.

No sooner had the war with Japan ended when a rebellion by the Huks, a peasant army in Luzon led by the Communist Party, erupted in 1947. The war against the Huks and other movements led by the radical Left was part of the global "Cold War." This is the fourth "great war" in our shared Fil-American history. Bush doesn't call it the "Cold War," but this war is present in his speech in many ways – in his allusions to free enterprise, free nations, free Iraq, the protection of religious liberty, and the triumph of democracy over totalitarianism.

So here we have three great wars mentioned in Bush's speech, plus one great war he pointedly omitted. If the three wars in Bush's reckoning have made the Philippine nation what it is today, what difference would it make if a fourth war, the Filipino-American war, were factored in? My answer is probably too simple and naive: one cannot build a strong nation upon a narrative that is flawed. Many have said this before me: we cannot indefinitely pretend

that the second great war—the Filipino-American war— never happened. A national narrative without this crucial event makes us merely an appendage of empire. Bush's speech and the vigorous applause from our senators and congressmen could only happen because for over a century the memories of our past wars have been shaped by politics. Let me now take a closer look at those wars and the politics of memory surrounding them. War number one—the war against Spain—is deeply etched in the collective memory. In fact this war, which we call the Revolution of 1896, is recognized as the "foundational event" in the life of the nation-state. Without a collective memory of the first war, the present nation-state would have no meaning to its citizens.

This war is foundational because this was the first time that the term "Filipino" was used to refer to the inhabitants of the islands—not just the Spaniards living here but also, and most importantly, the indigenous peoples. Furthermore, the notion of a Filipino national identity was given political form in the sovereign republic of 1898.

Appropriately, we call the intellectuals and military leaders who led the separatist war against Spain, "the first Filipinos." Most of our national heroes stem from this first war: Jose Rizal, Apolinario Mabini, Andres Bonifacio, and Emilio Aguinaldo. They are remembered through their inscription in textbooks as the "founding fathers" of the nation. To facilitate their remembering, monuments have been built to commemorate their deeds; their birthdays have been declared national holidays; and their images are inscribed in postage stamps, billboards, magazine covers and town halls.

The way that the collective memory of the war against Spain was shaped during the 20th century can only be understood in relation to the Filipino-American war that followed it. The first and second wars are closely intertwined, yet the first is remembered while the second is largely forgotten.

The United States became implicated in the first war when it declared war against Spain in May 1898, in what is called the Spanish-American war. Much as the anti-communist Islamic groups were nurtured to fight America's war against the Soviets in the Middle East, so were the Filipino nationalist exiles in Hongkong and Singapore invited to be America's allies in this other war against Spain. Commodore Dewey, commander of the U.S. Navy's Asiatic fleet, helped the Filipino separatists in two ways: first, by destroying the Spanish fleet in Manila bay, and second, by bringing Aguinaldo back to the Philippines so that he could resume the "first war" or revolution against Spain.

In effect, Filipinos won the war of independence from Spain with American help. I expected George Bush to mention this in his speech, but he didn't. When he spoke of Americans liberating the Filipinos from tyranny, he was referring instead to General Macarthur's return in 1945 to liberate the Philippines from Japan. Why did Bush avoid mentioning the U.S. role in the 1898 liberation of the Philippines? My feeling is that this would have forced him to bring the Filipino-American war into the picture, and this would have caused some complications for his image of a shared Filipino-American past and destiny.

The Americans were indeed welcomed in mid-1898 as the liberators of the Philippines from the tyranny of Spanish rule. One of

Aguinaldo's manifestos states this explicitly: welcome the Americans, for they are our liberators. And why not? Both the Filipino and the American governments in late 1898 depicted the Spanish colonial past as a Dark Age.
After the victory over Spain, Filipinos hoped that their nation-state would be recognized by the Americans, who, after all, had won their independence from the British not that long ago. The liberators, however, had other ideas about what to do with the Filipinos.

By the 1890s the United States had recovered fully from its bloody Civil War; its Westward expansion across the continent was complete and so it was keen to join the family of imperial powers consisting of Britain, France, the Netherlands, and others. The Pacific was their zone of expansion, and the Philippine islands were to be their stepping stone—in the form of naval coaling stations and military bases—to the establishment of trade and influence in the Asiatic mainland. There were also profits to be made in the exploitation of Philippine agricultural and mineral resources—not quite oil, yet, but other similarly-desired substances. The U.S. wanted, therefore, to wrest control of the Philippines from "tyrannical Spain," and to keep it.

Bush could not mention war number two—the Filipino-American war—because this might lead to disturbing parallels between the Philippines and Iraq after their liberation. In the Philippines case, the war of resistance against the United States began in February 1899 when American troops crossed the line separating the U.S. and Filipino armies in Manila. During the first year of the war, the U.S. army managed to subdue the main Filipino defense forces in central and northern Luzon. The following year, they concentrated

on taking southern Luzon and the Visayas, managing to control major towns by the middle of 1900. At that point, Filipino resistance took the form of guerrilla warfare.

Even after General Aguinaldo was captured in April 1901, and even as more and more Filipinos were beginning to collaborate with their new American overlords, guerrilla resistance continued for another year. By the end of 1901, in regions such as Samar, Leyte, the Ilocos and southern Tagalog, the U.S. army introduced all-out measures such as the reconcentration of villagers, the burning of houses and food supplies, the torture of prisoners, and search-and-destroy operations. The remaining guerrilla leaders were forced to surrender owing to battle injuries, hunger, desertions by their troops, and fear of the tremendous firepower that was unleashed by the U.S. Army after, and in retaliation for, the September 28, 1901 surprise attack by Pulahan (a "fanatical" sect) guerrillas on a U.S. army camp at Balangiga, Samar, that led to the massacre of 55 Americans.

It takes quite a bit of persistent research in the archives to rescue fragments of this forgotten Second War. Through research in American military records I discovered, for example, that my wife's grandfather, Pedro Carandang, became involved in the Filipino-American war when he was appointed mayor of Tanauan, Batangas, after that town was occupied by the Americans in 1900. But Mayor Carandang only served the American commanding officer during office hours. The rest of the time, when his boss wasn't looking, he provided the guerrilla units of General Malvar with food, money, information, and secret access to the town. When the Americans discovered this, they arrested and imprisoned mayor Carandang until the end of the war.

My own grandfather, Francisco Ileto, participated in the war by providing information about the Americans to his friend General Isidoro Torres, the guerrilla commander of Bulacan province. The Americans intercepted a letter that my grandfather sent to Torres in 1900 and identifying him thus as an enemy spy. This I discovered from the Philippine Insurgent Records. But I do not know whether the Americans arrested him or not.

The reason I do not know what eventually happened to my grandfather is because, remarkably, neither he nor my wife's grandfather passed on their memories of the war to their children and grandchildren. They chose to keep such memories private, and to let their children carry on in life as if the war against the United States had never happened. However, they did pass on to their children their memories of the war against Spain. They spoke freely to their children about Rizal, Bonifacio and the Aguinaldo who declared independence from Spain. But they kept silent about Malvar, Lukban and the other Aguinaldo who had called for a guerrilla war against the Americans in 1900.

How do we explain this selective transmission of the memories of the two wars? After the Americans had pronounced victory on July 4, 1902, they proceeded to reshape the collective memory of those long years of war from 1896 all the way to 1902. The aim of the politics of memory was to encourage the remembering of the war against Spain, and the forgetting of the war against the United States. This was conducted through the censored press, civic rituals and, above all, the colonial school system.

What the American colonial officials wanted Filipinos to "remember" above all was that the United States army had come

as liberators to help free the country from oppressive Spanish rule. This was true at the beginning; the Filipinos indeed hailed them as "redeemers." But how could the liberators justify not recognizing the Filipino republican government? How could they justify their bloody suppression of any resistance to their takeover of the islands? How could liberators justify killing the people they were supposed to have rescued from Spanish tyranny? These are the sorts of questions that have been asked in Iraq during the past year. In the Philippines case, the answer is clear: the suppressed meaning of the coming of the Americans in 1898 was that it was just another invasion to serve foreign interests, following soon after the Spanish withdrawal. In order to combat the negative meanings and to establish the official memory of the two wars, the U.S. colonial government did the following:

First, it recognized the liberal aspirations of the leaders of the 1896 war of independence against Spain. The Americans specially promoted the ideas of the nationalist intellectual Rizal, who preferred a more gradualist road to self-rule through the education of the populace. The other hero of the first war, Bonifacio, was downplayed by the government because he led a secret society that advocated armed struggle.

Second, the American regime recognized the aspirations by General Aguinaldo and the Filipino educated class to form a republican state. However, the it insisted that Filipinos in 1898 were not prepared for democracy and self-rule. As "proof" of this lack of readiness, American writings pictured Aguinaldo as a despotic president, and the masses of the people as blind followers of their local bosses. The patron-client, caciquism, and bossism paradigms of local politics originate, in fact, from the war itself and were

further developed by American officials and writers during the "pacification" period from 1902 up to at least 1912. American scholarship in the field of Philippines Studies, I would argue together with my present students researching this subject, was born out of the war, and even today carries the imprint of that original conflict. The colonial administration and its local protégés wanted the new generation of Filipinos studying in the public schools to "remember" the coming of the Americans in 1898 as an act of "benevolent assimilation," wherein the Americans would stay for as long as was needed to help prepare the Filipinos for democracy and responsible self-government. Philippine politics and its academic study followed the contours of, and mutually reinforced, this colonial project.

Third, it follows from the above that the war of resistance to U.S. occupation would be regarded as a "great misunderstanding." In fact, these were the very words David Barrows, the superintendent of schools, used in his high school Philippine history textbook to describe the Filipino-American war. If only, he said, the Filipinos had fully understood the noble motives of the United States, and if only the Filipinos had accepted the fact that they were still an underdeveloped people needing to be uplifted by the superior civilization of the Americans, then they would not have resisted the U.S. occupation, and so the disastrous war would not have taken place.

Fourth and finally, the American colonial regime decreed in 1902 that anyone who continued to oppose their presence would be arrested for sedition, and that armed groups that attacked government forces would be treated as bandit gangs, religious fanatics, and remnants of the defeated guerrilla armies. They would

be treated as plain criminals and terrorists. Instead of resistance to foreign occupation, the war would be remembered as a time of banditry, fanaticism, disorder and dislocation.

In order to succeed in school, to become employed in the colonial civil service, and to embrace modernity introduced by the Americans, Filipinos were made to "remember" the Filipino-American war in the terms that the colonial administration dictated. Understandably then, my grandfather, who came to terms with the occupation when he was recruited as a teacher in the public school system, chose not to transmit his memories of the Filipino-American war to his children.

So as we were growing up, I got to know that my father, Rafael Ileto, had gone to West Point in 1940, and that he had been an officer in the first Filipino infantry regiment that was sent to liberate the Philippines from Japanese rule. What we never knew, until I as a historian discovered the pertinent documents in the U.S. archives, was that my grandfather Francisco Ileto had been a revolutionary spy against the U.S. invasion forces in 1900.

The American colonial grip over the shaping of public memories was most effective in the schools. As the English language spread, so did the official view of the past. The official management of the collective memory, however, did not fully subsume the private memories of the Filipino-American war. After all, countless Filipinos had been involved in the anti-imperial struggle; hundreds of thousands had been killed or injured. Many veterans of the Filipino-American war chose to keep alive these memories through veterans associations, patriotic societies, labor unions, and religio-political sects, just about all of which were illegal.

Beneath the official cluster of memories about the two wars, we can identify such alterative modes or channels of memory. One of the focal points of alternative memories was a veteran of the first and second wars: Artemio Ricarte. Trained as a school teacher, Ricarte was fluent in Ilocano, Tagalog, and Spanish. He became a military commander in battles against the Spaniards and rose to become a general in the war against the Americans. When the war ended, he refused to take the oath of allegiance to the United States and was imprisoned. But he managed to escape, first to Hong Kong, and then later to Yokohama. From these places of exile, Ricarte continued to keep alive memories of both wars, treating them as a continuous and unfinished event. From 1904 up to 1935, he inspired various secret societies and peasant movements which awaited his return from Japan to liberate the country from the Americans.

In order to understand the third war in our series—the Filipino-Japanese war—we need to relate it to the first two. Filipino revolutionists had always sought the help of Japan in their wars against Spain and the United States, but except for small shipments of arms, Japanese involvement in the Philippine revolution was slight. We must remember, though, that the U.S. victory over the Filipino nationalists in 1902 was followed by Japan's momentous victory over Russia in 1905. These two events together signal the beginning of American–Japanese rivalry for dominance in the Asia-Pacific.

It also signaled the beginning of American-Japanese rivalry for the attention of Filipino nationalists. For the rise of Japan as an Asian power did not escape the notice even of the new generation of Filipinos learning English in the American schools. The fact that the venerable Ricarte came to be based in Yokohama

heightened among Filipino nationalists the consciousness of Japan as an alternative model of development. And so when the Japanese came to occupy the Philippines in 1942, bringing with them Ricarte, there were quite a few Filipinos who welcomed them as liberators. Understandably, there hasn't been enough research on this phenomenon. What is well known is that the majority of Filipinos in 1940 regarded the Japanese as invaders.

The Filipino-American joint resistance to Japanese occupation, however, did not come "naturally." It was premised on the colonial construction of history propagated in the schools since 1903. In this "big story," the Filipinos had defeated the Spanish government with American help, and the Americans had stayed in order to train the Filipinos for future self-government. Due to the institutional power of this "big story," by the 1930s the vast majority of Filipinos had forgotten the Filipino-American war. They saw their fate and that of the U.S. as intertwined. So when the Japanese forces arrived, they were resisted with great persistence, particularly in Bataan and Corregidor. Nowhere else in Southeast Asia did the locals fight so hard on behalf of their colonial rulers.

After the surrender of the Filipino-American forces, a guerrilla war of resistance continued to be waged indefinitely. We can detect here the makings of an epic war story, and indeed this is how this period is remembered. From my perspective as a historian, however, the war with Japan was in reality pretty much a replay of the war with the United States forty years earlier. The fact that few if any dare to state this, is pretty much an effect of past memory wars in which academic writings are complicit.

The Japanese imperial administration itself became involved in the politics of memory when it encouraged Filipinos to revisit the history of both the first and second wars. No longer was it considered taboo to excavate memories of the Filipino-American war. Veterans and descendants of these two wars who had never forgotten that the Americans had come as invaders were encouraged to speak freely about the past and to play leading roles in organizations supportive of the Japanese administration.

If we examine the backgrounds and ideas of some of the leading "collaborators" of the Japanese, we find connections with the forgotten war against United States occupation. Jose Laurel, President of the Republic of 1943, came from the province of Batangas, a region devastated by U.S. armed operations in 1902. His father had been confined in an American concentration camp and died shortly after his release. A cousin was killed in an encounter with American troops. Claro Recto, Secretary of the Interior, remembered his mother crying while being interrogated by American officers who were hunting down his uncle, a guerrilla leader in Tayabas province. Veteran General Emilio Aguinaldo was not playing pretend when he graced the independence ceremony in October 1943 and hailed the Republic as a fulfillment of the dreams of 1898.

For these leaders of the wartime Republic, there was no particular love for their Japanese sponsors, but there wasn't much nostalgia for U.S. rule either. They remembered the war with Spain, the war with the United States, and the war with Japan as variations on the same theme: resistance to foreign domination. Their aim was to ensure the survival of the Filipino nation which had become sandwiched in a conflict between imperial powers.

I have no doubt that had the Japanese occupation lasted longer, there would have occurred a reprogramming of public memories similar to what the Americans had accomplished. The Filipino-American war would have been resurrected from oblivion, the Americans remembered as invaders, while the Japanese would perhaps have come to be perceived as liberators. But this was foiled by the return of General Douglas Macarthur in 1945, as he had solemnly promised when he left in defeat. This moment in Philippine history, appropriately celebrated in Bush's speech, is called "the Liberation."

As soon as the Commonwealth government was reinstalled in Manila by the liberators, it proceeded to restore those collective memories of a shared Fil-American past that the wartime period had begun to erode. Typically, President Osmeña in a 1945 speech compared Douglas Macarthur's liberation of the Philippines to the time when his father General Arthur Macarthur's entered Manila in 1898 to free the Philippines from Spanish rule. Like father, like son—both liberators of the Philippines. What Osmeña conveniently forgot was that General Arthur Macarthur had commanded the American troops who fought and defeated the Filipino Republican army in 1900.

The final six months of the war with Japan were very similar to the final six months of the war with the United States forty years earlier. Homes and buildings were razed, civilians suspected of aiding the guerrillas were tortured and executed; disaster accompanied the path of the contending armies. Personal experiences of the final months of the war were for the most part sad and tragic. This was the ideal environment for the promotion by post-war Filipino presidents Osmeña, Roxas and Quirino, of

the official memory of the war with Japan as a time when Filipino and American soldiers fought and suffered side by side to defend the Philippines. What was the "Death March" if not their common pasyon or Christ-like suffering and death? What was Capas, Tarlac, if not, said Quirino, the "Calvary" of the Fil-American forces?

The official interpretation of history propagated in public speeches, radio broadcasts, and the school system, encouraged the people to remember the American colonial period as a golden age when peace and prosperity reigned: "Peacetime" as it was fondly called. This age of bliss was shattered when the Japanese came and plunged the country into a dark age. The darkness was only lifted when the liberator Macarthur returned. Liberation meant the recovery of a lost age of happiness under America's tutelage. It was not difficult to establish this official rendering of the past war because it touched a chord with the countless private memories of death and destruction suffered at the hands of the Japanese army.

In this official postwar construction of the past—a crucial component of the nation-building process—again the Filipino-American war was a non-event, or at least relegated to the fringes of politics. Not everyone, however, could obliterate this war from memory, especially since its remembering had been encouraged during the Japanese occupation. A new generation of nationalist intellectuals had been nurtured during this wartime period – they included historians such as Teodoro Agoncillo and Renato Constantino. For them, both the war against the U.S. and the war against Japan were to be remembered equally.

One well-known organization that refused to "forget" the Filipino-American war was the Hukbalahap. Formed during the war against

Japan, the Huk army saw itself as a successor of the armies that fought the Spaniards and the Americans. Its commander Luis Taruc insisted that there was a parallel between the coming of the Americans in 1898, when they "crushed a people's movement that had come into being in the struggle against Spain," and their return in 1945 when they tried to "crush another people's movement that had come into being in the struggle against Japan." The historic U.S. role as liberator and tutor, so emotionally articulated in the speeches of our pioneering nation-builders Roxas and Quirino, is belittled by Taruc as a sham so that the U.S. could "make huge profits in our country." He termed the independence ceremony of July 4, 1946 a "performance" that unfortunately deluded many. After pseudo-independence in 1946 the Hukbalahap, led by the Communist Party, transformed itself into a national liberation army opposing U.S. imperialism and its local Filipino clients.

Thus began the fourth great war that swept upon our country: the Cold War. But for President Bush in his keynote speech, this was just the third great war. Forgetting the Filipino-American war enables him to bypass the bungled liberation of 1898, and to posit the 1945 liberation of the Philippines as the event that parallels or inspires the recent events of 2003. "Since the liberation of Iraq," he declares, ."..we ended one of the cruelest regimes in our time. . . And we're helping to build a free Iraq."

But democracy has its skeptics. Some say the culture of the Middle East will not sustain the institutions of democracy. The same doubts were expressed about the culture of Asia. These doubts were proven wrong nearly six decades ago, when the Republic of the Philippines became the first democratic nation in Asia. (Applause) Since then, liberty has reached nearly every shore of the Western Pacific.

Liberation by the U.S. followed by its granting of independence in 1946, have made the Philippines the model for Iraq, says Bush. But what about the turmoil following 1946? For Bush, of course, this turmoil was an effect of the Cold War in which freedom had to be defended. Today, the Cold War has its equivalent in the Terror War.

I shall not go into detail about the war that divided the world into Leftist and Rightist camps, one led by the communist and the other by the capitalist superpowers. What I would like to stress is that during this war, memories of the past wars were shaped and made to conform to the political exigencies of the times.

As I stated earlier, the immediate postwar governments of Roxas and Quirino highlighted the joint struggle by Filipinos and Americans against the Japanese. This strategy was aimed at solidifying the alliance between the Philippines and the United States. It was targeted at the Huks and the Communists who, being aligned with the Soviet Union, were critical of U.S. imperialism. However, after Laurel and most of the collaborators with Japan were pardoned in 1948, and as the Cold War intensified in the 1950s, the war with Japan gradually faded in official memory. After all, Japan was a staunch Cold War ally now, and Japanese war reparations were forthcoming. Officially, the war with Japan was to be forgotten during the Cold War, although privately it continued to be remembered as a dark age by those who had lived through it—that is, my father's generation.

The real battleground for Cold War memory-makers was our second "Great War"—the war with the United States. Few veterans of that war were now left to remind the younger generation of

their experiences. The government, of course, persisted in its official forgetting of that war. Even during the recent centennial celebration of the revolution in 1998, there was hardly any official mention of the violent American invasion. To remember the war with the Americans would harm the Cold War alliance and the "special relationship."

The official view was nevertheless challenged by a vocal group of activists who struggled to restore the memory of the Filipino-American war in public consciousness. Among them were politicians and intellectuals Claro Recto, Teodoro Agoncillo, Leon Maria Guerrero, Renato Constantino, Cesar Majul—the Muslim Filipino historian who died of cancer in California last year—and even wartime president Jose Laurel who founded the Lyceum to promote a pro-Filipino rather than a neocolonial understanding of the past. Some of them had served the Republic during the Japanese occupation. As a result of their reeducation campaigns in the 1950s and the 1960s more and more educated Filipinos came to learn about the "suppressed history" of the Filipino-American war. A new collective memory of that war became established particularly among the youth.

The global context for this 1960s resurrection of the Filipino-American war was another war of a similar nature: the Vietnamese-American war. This war, and the massive opposition to it in the late 60s, can be said to have brought about a kind of "golden age" in Southeast Asian Studies, at least in the United States. I would like at this point to shift my attention to the American scene, particularly Cornell University where I went in 1967 to study Southeast Asian history. To what extent was my experience at

Cornell related to the memory wars in the Philippines that I have been discussing?

Laurie Sears has summed up the "glorious Sixties" of Southeast Asian Studies in the following passages, which I can do no better than quote verbatim:

> *The Vietnam war years filled the classes of those few American historians and political scientists of Southeast Asia, whether notorious as hawks or doves, because they were the only scholars who knew anything at all about this small former French colony that had dealt such a stunning military blow to the French at Dien Bien Phu.*
>
> *Political scientists and historians from Cornell like Ben Anderson, Dan Lev, and John Smail . . . led teach-ins and antiwar rallies arising from political commitments forged during the days of their doctoral research when Indonesia's charismatic president Soekarno was head of the nonaligned nations of Asia and Africa. The Cornell scholars had been nurtured by their own mentor George Kahin, whose work on both Indonesia and Vietnam has been a model for a kind of committed yet rigorous area studies scholarship.*
>
> *These men—along with Ruth McVey—set the example for a liberal belief in the power of area studies—the rigorous learning of local languages and an analysis of "culture" by objective scholars that could explain political alliances if not actually politics itself. This model of area studies*

challenged the older more conservative Orientalist paradigm of the colonial scholars. (SSRC 1999, 7)

I would like to add that the triumphant Sixties also witnessed conflicts in the field of historical writing – conflicts that would have a bearing on what should be remembered and what should not. In the heavy decolonizing and nation-building days of the 1950s there were heated disputes between advocates of "Asia-centric" or "nationalist" history as against Eurocentric and colonial one. Cornell scholars, however, began to develop a "third way" to get around the Asia-centric/Euro-centric divide. Their target seems to have been mainly nationalist historiography. From 1955 to around 1958, Harry Benda, John Smail and other students of Indonesian history at Cornell wrote seminar papers that explored the pitfalls of nationalist historiography and suggested ways of breaking out of what they saw as the closed or limited universe exemplified by this mode of historical writing. Benedict Anderson has acknowledged how his focus on the pemuda, the youth who spearheaded the Indonesian nationalist movement at the local level, for his PhD thesis (submitted in 1967) was inspired by Smail's seminar papers in 1958. One of Smail's graduate essays was eventually published in 1961 under the title "On the possibility of an autonomous history of modern Southeast Asia." A year later (1962), Benda published a companion piece titled, "The structure of Southeast Asian history: Some preliminary observations."

Smail's essay, and to a lesser extent Benda's, became rallying points for students in the 60s and early 70s seeking a "third way" out of the apparent dead-end reached by the clash between Euro-centric and Asia-centric historical writing. "Autonomous history" was seen as an "opening up," a progressive development, towards

a more objective and universal history of Southeast Asia. Smail's approach, together with Benda's, were among the new intellectual fashions offered to me as soon as I entered the field of Southeast Asian history and historiography in 1967. As a fairly apolitical student from the Philippines, circumstances in the late 60s made me confront and come to terms with the nationalist scholarship that seemed to be the target of my predecessors Smail and Benda.

As I was about to complete my Bachelor of Arts degree at the Ateneo de Manila in 1967, it somehow entered my mind that I ought to travel overseas and do a postgraduate degree "somewhere." My major in Humanities was probably the most fun degree one could undertake at the Ateneo, but a real problem in the end was what sort of career and livelihood this would all lead up to.

At that time "Southeast Asia" was beginning to be much talked about because ASEAN had just been founded, the Vietnam war was at its height, and we Filipinos were being taught in school that our roots were really in Southeast Asia and not America. During the early 60s, President Diosdado Macapagal (Gloria M. Arroyo's father) established a close relationship with brother President Sukarno of Indonesia and attempted to form a coalition of "Malayan" states called Maphilindo. Southeast Asian studies seemed to be the wave of the future, and it seemed to have some "practical application," so I went for it.

I applied to various institutions, among them Cornell, considered the Mecca of Southeast Asian Studies. To my surprise came an offer of a PhD scholarship from the Cornell Southeast Asia Program. Thankfully, a British historian there named Oliver Wolters had somehow decided that my background in mathematics

and enthusiasm for philosophy would make me a decent historian despite my lack of undergraduate training in the discipline.

Wolters was then a virtual unknown in the field. He had moved to Cornell in 1964 from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. His first book, Early Indonesian Commerce and the Origins of Srivijaya, was published in 1967, the year I joined him. Wolters was a latecomer to the academe because he had served in the Malayan Civil Service for 19 years until his retirement in 1957. Only then, at the age of 42, did he commence a doctorate in history under the guidance of DGE Hall, the recognized "father" of Southeast Asian history based at the University of London. It was Hall himself who recommended Wolters' move to Cornell University "to complement the team of Lauriston Sharp, Frank Golay, Knight Biggerstaff and George Kahin."

My first meeting with the stern-faced Wolters in late August 1967 was one of the most terrifying moments of my life. In no uncertain terms was I made to understand that undertaking the PhD in Southeast Asian history would be no picnic. The first phase in the formation or "disciplining" of a student in this field was the learning of French, the language of much of the pioneering work on early Southeast Asia. Wolters had instructed me even before I came that I was expected to have read George Coedes' Les etats hindouisés d'Indochine et d'Indonésie before I could enroll in his classes. If I couldn't read French yet, then I had to pick it up in one semester. And if I wanted to study Indonesia, as I had indicated, I would have to learn Dutch and Bahasa Indonesia as well. Languages were a crucial component of Southeast Asian studies. Wolters then handed to me his thick reading list consisting of the texts that one had to read, the academic lineage and intellectual issues one had

to be familiar with, in order to be inducted into Southeast Asian historiography.

Wolters then took me to the Olin library, a section of which was called the Wason collection of Asian materials, within which would be formed the Echols collection on Southeast Asia. Wolters wanted me to meet two of his advanced students who had just returned from fieldwork: Leonard Andaya and Craig Reynolds. As stern-faced and professional as the master himself, they proceeded to show me their carrels filled with books and papers and tell me stories about the archival work they had done and the theses they were writing. I wondered how I would ever manage all that! But they were the sergeants and I was the frightened recruit.

I think Wolters had worked it out so that what I was experiencing then, during my first day at the Southeast Asia program, amounted to some kind of an initiation ritual. I should have known then that in Wolters's prior career in the Malayan Civil Service, he had risen to the position of Director of Psychological Warfare in 1955 during the anticommunist "Emergency" campaigns. Looking back at those days, I think Wolters was really psyching me out, making sure that through the "shock" of that initial encounter with the Guru and his advanced students I would gain a proper awe and respect for this field of study I was getting into.

My experience as a neophyte from the Philippines getting plugged into the Southeast Asian studies circuit in the West is probably commonplace, except for a gesture of Wolters', which even at that time I found a bit odd. Seated behind his desk, he reached back and pulled out of the bookcase behind him a book titled A Short History of the Filipino People, authored by a certain Teodoro

Agoncillo. Agoncillo was at that time one of the Philippines' most prominent historians, based in the University of the Philippines' History Department. Born in 1912, he was just three years older than Wolters. I didn't know much about this Filipino historian in 1967, because I had attended the Jesuit-run Ateneo de Manila, a rival of the University of the Philippines that set other textbooks. I was unaware of the history wars that raged in some university campuses in Manila from the late 50s on. I couldn't grasp the full implications, then, of Wolters' warning about this Agoncillo textbook: Mr Ileto, you are not going to write history like this!

It was only much later that I realized that Agoncillo's A Short History of the Filipino People typified for Wolters the genre called "nationalist history." There were two kinds of "bad" Southeast Asian history at that time, at opposite poles to each other. I alluded to them earlier: First there was Eurocentric history, which bred its antithesis, Asia-centric history, usually conflated with nationalist history. Both were regarded as two sides of the same coin. Wolters was avowedly critical of Eurocentric history. His teacher DGE Hall—nearly 25 years his senior—was in fact the first to castigate Eurocentrism in his 1955 general history of Southeast Asia. Both Hall and Wolters, however, were equally critical of some of the forms that the indigenous response to Eurocentric history took—particularly the one labeled "nationalist." For the theoretical working out of a solution, they deferred to the essay by the younger scholar Smail.

As I mentioned earlier, John Smail put forward his "autonomous history" paradigm in 1961 as a response to the challenge of nationalist historiography. This "problem" arose when historians who had rejected "pure colonial history" began "with varying

degrees of enthusiasm and conviction" to espouse the ideal of an Asia-centric history of Southeast Asia. This change in point of view, says Smail, was "a painful and confusing business and has barely began. The crisis is very much with us." What brought about his crisis? The immediate "great changes" in Smail's time consisted of "the rise of new and sovereign states where before there were colonies." Historiography was bound to reflect these changes: colonial historiography was fast being displaced by Asia-centric and nationalist historiography.

Smail's ultimate point, however, is that the shifts in historiography had not yet run their course—thus his comment that "the crisis is very much with us." Nationalist historiography for Smail was only a partial solution, in itself not commensurate with the "great changes" in the world that included the breaking down of particularisms, the "increasingly firm establishment of a single world culture, or civilization, within which there is a single universal physical science (already virtually achieved), a single universal history and so forth." Nationalist historiography, like its binary opposite colonial historiography, was for Smail a "closed system" that inevitably would become irrelevant as a single universal history was developed.

This is not the place to discuss Smail's legacy; Laurie Sears has edited an excellent collection of essays on this subject. I have dwelt on Smail somewhat because my arrival at Cornell coincided with the casual implementation of Smail's "third way" in the Southeast Asian studies curriculum. Wolters, Anderson (who had started lecturing the year I arrived), and, later, David Wyatt, were fairly committed to Smail's recommendations. These were, in brief, that it is possible to write an autonomous history of Southeast Asia if

we focus on the social history of the region; that, to avoid being Europe-centric or Asia-centric, one must look beyond the colonial relationship, shake off the preoccupation with the nationalist or anticolonial encounter, examine the underlying social structure, and detail the social changes of the people, other than the domestic elite, who make up the bulk of the population. In retrospect, my being admitted at Cornell had an agenda behind it. Taufik Abdullah (who had commenced his PhD in 1965), Charnvit Kasetsiri, and myself were Wolters' first three doctoral students from different parts of Southeast Asia. I'm pretty certain that the hope was that we would return to Southeast Asia to sow the seeds of autonomous history there and hopefully neutralize the evils of nationalist historiography. This is why Wolters told me in no uncertain terms, during our first meeting, not to write a book like Agoncillo's.

I must say, though, that even if Smail's proposal did point to exciting new areas of investigation (such as Anderson's pemuda and Benda's ulama in the Indonesian revolution), I remained unconvinced even at that time that "nationalist historiography" was simply a developmental stage that would be superseded by a more objective "third way." Smail, after all, was making generalizations based on his familiarity with Indonesian nationalist historiography, which even then he tended to treat superficially. When he waxed lyrical about the autonomy of Indonesian domestic history only lightly affected by Dutch rule, I wondered whether this applied to the Philippines with its 350 years of direct Spanish rule and 50 years (some say ongoing) of American colonialism. Could the preoccupation with the colonial relationship really be brushed aside in the Philippines of the 1950s and 60s, or even today?

Furthermore, Smail's depiction of nationalist historiography as a "closed system" seems to have meant more than "particularistic" and "local" as opposed to the universal and global he celebrates. It also signifies a space of historical writing, controlled by the formerly colonized peoples, to which the so-called universal historian is denied access. At times, Smail laments, this space is marked by the "thoughtless hatred" and moralizing of anticolonial scholars. Was Smail's "third way," I wonder, a reflection of postcolonial anxiety? Framed in universalist language, his discussion of a "third way" seems to reflect a fear that "level-headed" and "scientific" scholars, who once dominated scholarship during the old days of empire, would be displaced by these combative nationalists.

Let me now return to my earlier discussion of wars and memory. In the Philippines context, Smail's formulation of a third way to surpass nationalist historiography, paralleled by Wolters' warning that I must not write like Agoncillo, were actually reactions against a new development from within Southeast Asia itself. Agoncillo, as I soon discovered after my meetin with Wolters, was a pioneer in Filipino attempts to recover the lost history of the Filipino-American war. He was also arguing that the first "Great War," or the Revolution against Spain, had distinctly socialist, anti-elite, overtones to it. To pursue these agendas, it was necessary to dwell on the colonial relationship, not to push it aside as Smail was urging scholars.

The Filipino domestic academic scene, in which so-called nationalist scholars like Agoncillo were challenging the old colonial myths and imagining a more socialist future for the nation, could not but grab my attention even as I was busy as a graduate student

in the US. Could I, then, as a "concerned Filipino" simply submit to the dictates of the new vogue, the "third way" labeled autonomous history? Looking back, it now seems that to follow that road and write in the style of Smail or Benda would have meant surrendering de facto to the dictates of the Cold War. It would have meant leaving uncritiqued the old myths left behind by past memory wars. My eventual response, then, to Wolters' early admonition not to write history like Agoncillo was to understand where this so-called "bad" Filipino historian was coming from, then to critique and build on him.

Unfortunately, the burst of critical domestic scholarship in the midst of the Cold War soon dissipated in the course of the 1970s and 80s—partly a result of government repression, and partly due to a failure to sustain creative scholarship on the part of the activist scholars. Basically, then, in the politics of memory surrounding our four past wars the conservative, neocolonial renderings eventually triumphed. This should help us understand how Filipinos have come to position themselves in the present so-called war on terror. When U.S. soldiers returned to the Philippines in the early months of 2002 to help the government pursue the anti-terror war, a significant portion of the populace led by the President welcomed them with open arms. Kindled in their minds were memories of the Americans as their allies and even their liberators in the war against Japan. Only a minority saw the return of the U.S. army as a ghostly echo of their arrival in 1898 to occupy the Philippines by force.

Last October, President Bush cemented this perception by highlighting the common Filipino-American struggle against the Japanese as the precedent for the present terror war. Most Filipinos,

it seems, read about the wars in the Middle East and fail to see them as a mirror of their own country's experience in 1899. They have largely forgotten the Philippines' second "Great War." Thus the enthusiastic applause that punctuated Bush's address to our politicians.

Bush told his Filipino audience to take sides in the war on terror, just as during the Cold War we had to take sides. "You are either with us or against us," he warned. And of course the Philippines, being a poor country in need of aid, has been compelled to join the coalition of the willing. But it is not just poverty or pragmatism that has led to this. What we see are the effects of a century of manipulation or reshaping of collective memories about our past wars. Having American troops fighting side by side with Filipino troops in the war on terror may bring back memories of the joint struggle against Japan, but it also entails forgetting the equally terrible Filipino-American war. When President Bush called on Filipinos to participate in waging war against what he termed the "new totalitarian threat" against "civilization," he was reviving the Cold War call to all members of the "Free World" to fight communism. But when Filipinos are asked to "defend ourselves, our civilization, and the peace of the world," isn't this thing called "civilization" a proxy for something else . . . like empire?

There is something more ominous, however, about Bush's framing of the current war in terms of civilization against terror. For he unintentionally alluded to a series of events—and a powerful sentiment informing them—that have bedeviled Philippine history ever since the Spaniards arrived in the 16th century. I am referring to the age-old attempts by the Spanish and American armies, the Philippine national government, and elements of the Filipino

Christian population, to place the Muslim areas in the south under their control and ownership, often using the trope of "civilization" to justify their acts. Responses from the Muslims have taken such forms as the raiding of Christian towns for slave captives, armed resistance to intrusions, an intensification of their own separate identity, and secessionism. The war on terror, or the war of "civilization against terror," is clearly derivative of an old, ongoing, war, collectively called "the Moro Wars." This, I would argue, is the fifth "Great War" in Philippine history whose significance the present war on terror seeks to displace.

Given this situation, how should Philippine Studies or, by extension, Southeast Asian Studies, position itself in the coming years? First, I think that we should begin to seriously revisit our domestic scholarship from the 1950s to the 1970s, and try to capture the creative and dynamic aspects of what is now being criticized to death as anti-colonial and nationalist scholarship. When we read accounts of the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, we should ask ourselves whether imperial adventures like those of the British in Burma, the Dutch in the Indonesian archipelago, and the French in Indochina—not to mention the American invasion of the Philippines—really belong to the dead past. To me these events are still working themselves out in the present. But why do modern textbooks on Southeast Asia give so little attention to such imperial acts? Why is there, instead, a preoccupation with so-called local tyrants and backward-looking rulers that needed to be deposed by the newcomers? Why the focus on post-war modernization projects and so-called democratization? Southeast Asian Studies, it seems, has been trying to make us forget certain things about our past.

When we read accounts of popular resistance in places like Fallujah, we should ask ourselves whether the narratives of anticolonial struggle common in nationalist historiography are really as obsolete as academic trends from the West have been telling us. When we read about Shi'ite and Sun'ni groups coming together to face a common enemy, we should ask ourselves whether we have been led too much in the direction of studying and valorizing differences of all sorts—ethnic, religious, regional, cultural, gender, etc.—to the detriment of studying how, under certain circumstances, unity can be forged. National unification, identity creation, and all such developments have been possible in the past, and we need to understand the circumstances that made them possible instead of just moving on and focusing on current vogues such as "globalization."

And finally, in revisiting our earlier domestic scholarship, we should cast a sharp eye on how this scholarship was entangled in Cold War politics, and how the effects of such entanglements are still being felt today. The field of Southeast Asian Studies has, indeed, been shaped by Cold War politics. Knowing this fact should now enable us to read our past scholarship in a new light. For example, we could do away with the ideological and moral certainties that Cold War discourse imposed upon our interpretation of events. Knowing how scholarship was shaped in the past should also enable us to better cope with the current pressures to shape Southeast Asian Studies into conformity with the discourse and the dictates of still another war, the Terror War.

LOCAL POLITICAL DYNAMICS AND THE FORMATION OF A NATION STATE: THE CASE OF NUSA TENGGARA, SOUTHEAST INDONESIA, FROM THE COLONIAL TO THE INDEPENDENT INDONESIA PERIODS (1915-1950)

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ABSTRACT

Today, the question of regional autonomy has become a significant topic for academic discourse in Indonesia. Local people celebrate their 'power' to control and manage their own people and regions. For a long time, especially during the New Order government period, local people often perceived that they were neglected by the central government in Jakarta. Historically, local people had sacrificed their own interests to gain national unity as can be seen through the social and political developments at the local level, particularly in the process of the formation of a nation state in the Indonesian Archipelago. This creation of a nation state was not based on a notion of ethno-chauvinism. Most of the people in Nusa Tenggara used to be adherents of native religions. Later they converted to Christianity or Islam. The dynamics of social and political organisations were in line with the notions of ethnicity, religion, and nationalism. This paper will examine the local political dynamics in Nusa Tenggara and the role played by Nusa Tenggara society within the context of the formation of Indonesia, as a nation state.

I. INTRODUCTION

Recently, the issue of cultural and ethnic identity in Southeast Asia has become important in public debate, particularly in response to the increasing attention to ethnicity and religion as sources of often violent conflict within groups from different ethnic, religious and linguistic backgrounds. This happened particularly after the monetary and political crises of 1997 and 1998, which were followed by the period of 'reformasi'. While on the one hand this marks a transitional phase from authoritarian rule by a strong state to a new democratic system, on the other, it can be contested that this is an optimistic view and, instead, a negative transition from 'order to disorder'. In the light of recent outbursts of ethnic and religious violence in the regions, regional resistance movements and the failure to curb collusion, nepotism, and corruption, pessimists are inclined to place Indonesia in the category of 'messy state'. Indeed, they even predict that further disintegration will take place, which may eventually lead to the break up of the nation-state, and almost lead to a negara preman (Henk Schulte Nordholt, 2003: 550-551; Henk Schulte Nordholt, 2002: 51).

This paper will discuss how Nusa Tenggara in Southeast Indonesia, consisting of various ethnic groups and beliefs underwent some critical experiences particularly from the pre to the actual emergence of the Indonesian state. Like other parts of the Indonesian archipelago, Nusa Tenggara is home to various ethnic groups. Their behavioural definition merely suggests that while there are cultural differences among the ethnic groups, critical distinctions reveal themselves only in interaction with other groups (Brass 1991: 18). In Timor for instance, most of the inhabitants are Timorese or Rotinese, in Sumbawa they are Sumbawanese or

Bimanese, in Sumba, Sumbanese and in Flores, most are Ngada or Endeh. The Indonesian state consciously tries to preserve the diversity of its ethnic groups in the context of the nation state, despite there being many ethnic groups in the region. Somehow, in the history of the region, particularly in the period of pre-independence of Indonesia the identity of each group was preserved in the face of a perceived threat from other ethnic groups, however, if foreign influence seemed a threat, namely, as a result of the Dutch colonial policy, then they would unite themselves against the colonial power. This paper will analyze and discuss how the changes took place in Nusa Tenggara from the early period to the development of the national movement at local level in Nusa Tenggara. The analysis will be divided into three parts:

From historical evidence we know that Nusa Tenggara which is home to various ethnic groups began to be affected by Hindu, Christian and Muslim beliefs, and that these influences have subsequently dominantly characterized the people of Nusa Tenggara. Christianization for instance, can be considered an early western influence, particularly through its education system. It can even be said that in comparison with other parts of the Indonesian archipelago such as Bali and Lombok, the development of education was stronger in Nusa Tenggara, if considering the number of schools in the Netherlands Indies in 1900 (Dahm 1971: 16). These processes have strongly influenced the main streams of the political organizations in the region and were continued by the succeeding programs of the colonial Dutch to integrate the various ethnic groups in the province of Timor (Residentie Timor en Onderhoorigheden).

In this period, various ethnic groups played a major role and we can see how they tried to formulate their identities when faced by threats from other ethnic groups. It can be understood that since the people were more exposed to western education in their regions as well as in the several excellent schools in Java and Sulawesi the idea of nationalism grew fast, however, the idea of the earliest nationalist organization in Nusa Tenggara was not actually established there first, but in Makassar where the students studied early in the twentieth century. There they founded the Timorsch Verbond (Timor Association) which eventually became the foundation for the later political, national, communist, social and religious organizations in Nusa Tenggara. These organizations played a major role in obtaining Indonesian independence, with various groups finding their way to take part in the national movement at local levels. Later, the massive transformation that occurred in the decade 1940-1950 was decisive in shaping the modern history of Nusa Tenggara in particular, and the Indonesian state in general.

II. Ethnicity, Language and the Indigenous People

Historical research on the eastern parts of the Indonesian archipelago has had hardly any impact. This means that mostly Indonesian historians have been interested in researching in the western part of Indonesia, particularly in Sumatra and Java. It is quite true, that Bali and Lombok have been paid more attention, probably due to the fact, that both of these regions have been influenced by Hindu and Indian cultures for a long time. Otherwise, in comparison to Sumatra and Java historical research in the eastern islands of the Indonesian archipelago such as Sumbawa, Sumba,

Flores and Timor has been rarely carried out perhaps due to the fact, that the information about these regions comes only from ethnological and anthropological works. Meanwhile, in Nusa Tenggara, as well as in other parts of Indonesia, the long imposed silence enforced by the New Order Government on the so called 'sensitive issues' of ethnicity, race, and religion lies broken as ethnic and religious conflicts become a daily feature of Indonesian politics. As Brass (1991) with reference to De Vos, explains, ethnicity is a sense of ethnic identity, which includes any aspect of culture, consisting of the subjective, symbolic or emblematic use by a group of people, in order to differentiate themselves from other groups (Brass 1991: 19). Therefore, it can be said that historical research about these regions, particularly in the context of ethnic identity and its formation amongst the local people of the regions, of migration movements or various impacts of the Dutch colonial policy, have hardly been conducted.

The indigenous people in Nusa Tenggara speak their own languages. From the linguistic point of view these languages belong to the Malay/Polynesian language groups (Jonker 1904: 251 and Lebar, 1972: 97-103). Most Timorese, in the northern part of the island speak Tetun, called Timor language or bahasa Timor and Marai or Kemak in the southern part. The other language on the island is Kupang or bahasa Kupang, which has a relationship with Rotinese and Timorese (bahasa Roti and bahasa Timor). It can be said that they do not actually understand each other. This has given a good opportunity for the development of the Malay language as a lingua franca for the majority of the people in the Indonesian archipelago.

Initially in Flores for instance, there was only one language. However, mixture with other languages has led to the formation of a number of dialects. In Flores itself there are more than 10 languages, namely, Endeh, Sikka, Ngada, Alor, Solor and Sawu which belong to the Malay/Polynesian languages. In addition there are other languages such as Longa, Rokka, Bonga. Doewa and the Endeh language, spoken in the mountains. However, here the people can understand one another. In the Ngada region for instance, the people speak Badjawa, Nageh, Keo and Riung. In the Endeh region the people speak the Endeh and Lio languages. In the Maumere region the people speak Sikka, Solor, Buginese and Lua. In East Flores the people speak the Solor language. In Sumba which was divided into many regions, the people live in kampong or negeri. and there we can still see the democratic principles of their society. The Sumba language has a relationship to other languages, namely, the Sawu, Bima and Manggarai languages. However, there is also differentiation between the East Sumba and West Sumba languages (Lebar, 1972: 74). As in Sumba, in Sumbawa the people speak a Malay/Polynesian language. In West Sumbawa the people speak Sumbawanese and in the eastern part Bimanese. Sumbawanese has a close relationship with the Sasak language in East-Lombok.

III. The Creation of a Multicultural Society

The creation of a multicultural society is strongly influenced by the migration, which has taken place over a long period in several parts of Southeast Asia. As in the region, the creation of a multicultural society in Nusa Tenggara has taken place due to the spread of people and ideas through trade activities. In this we can

see, as Furnivall argues, a plural society is a society that comprises "two or more elements of social orders which live side by side, yet without mingling, in one political unit" (Furnivall 1944: 446). For a long time the classical trade route was from Arabia, India and China through to Malacca. The traders moved along the coasts while waiting for good seasons to continue their travels and exchange of goods with the indigenous people in the region. In fact, however, they did not only exchange goods but also ideas from the coasts to the interiors. On the coast this process was faster than in the interior. Malacca enjoyed the greatest share, although trade throughout the region was not dominated by any single kingdom or principality, but was based on the networked collaboration of many small states (Hefner, 2001: 15).

We can understand why processes, like the spread of religious ideas, occurred first on the coast, although not at the same time in every region. The influence of Hinduism, for example, can only be clearly seen in Central and East Java and in Bali, and not so obviously in Nusa Tenggara. This gave other religious ideas, such as those of Islam and Christianity, the chance to develop. In Sumbawa, Muslim ideas developed more as a result of the influence of Islam in South Sulawesi. Meanwhile, in Timor, Flores and Sumba due to the Christian missionaries both Catholic and other Christian religions developed. Here we can see how members of the same ethnic group changed their identity from not being only indigenous, but indigenous with the addition to their identity of an adherence to a certain religion. The Dutch, at first, discouraged Christian missionaries in the areas of established Muslim populations, recognizing that it might well undermine the 'security and order' necessary for European enterprise. However, as Dutch rule penetrated even remote hinterlands of the Archipelago in the late

Nineteenth Century, the state gave the green light to missionizing (Hefner 2001: 15).

The early development of the spread of religions in the region, we can explain as follows: From the historical background we can see that Nusa Tenggara was an area, which had been influenced by Hinduism over a long period. For instance, Van Naerssen reports in: "Hindoejavaansche Overblijfselen op Soembawa" (1938), Majapahit and Indian influences in places like Taliwang, Dompo, Sapi and Bima. Bima, before the coming of Islam (1350-1600), had accepted the influence of Shiwa. G. P. Rouffaer (1928) shows the influence of Shiwa in the 14th and the 15th Centuries. The same explanation was given by Henri Chambert-Loir in "State, City, Commerce: The Case of Bima" (1993).

Hinduism did grow in Nusa Tenggara although its influence was not as strong there as in Java and Bali. In the 14th Century Hindu kingdoms were not only attained in Sumbawa, but also in Sumba, Flores and Timor, although at the peak of Majapahit supremacy they were not direct powers in this region. Hinduism remained the religion of the noblemen, particularly of those in the surrounds of the palaces and its influence was quite limited. This created some differences when comparing Nusa Tenggara to Java and Bali.

The most important product, in Timor, before the coming of the Europeans, was sandalwood. A Chinese chronicle from the year 1436 showed, that sandalwood was planted in the mountains. There were three aspects to trade activities Ptak (1987) says: Firstly, some Chinese traders traded directly with the Timorese. Secondly, the Timorese exported their sandalwood and imported various goods from abroad. There were, of course, other traders, namely, the

Javanese, Arabs, Malays and Indians from Gujarat, who were most active. This means that in the region resided not only the indigenous people but many from other ethnic groups. Ptak argues that other than those from 'Indonesian' ethnic groups, there were also Chinese who came from the north through Sulu to the Moluccas. Thirdly, he states, outside influences had already existed for a long time in the region. Negarakertagama noted that there was a list of "states" of the Majapahit kingdom such as Timor, Galiyao, Sumba, Solot (Solor), Taliwang, Dompu, Sapi, Sanghyang Api and Bhima (Bima) (Wetering, 1926: 486-487). At that time the Timorese already had contact with other ethnic groups. The Chronicle describes how an expedition from Java invaded Timor in 1357. In this attempted expansion Dompu and Sumbawa were also defeated. After that the fleet sailed to the east and attacked other surrounding regions such as Flores and Larantuka (Barnes, 1982: 410). Before the beginning of the colonial time, Timor and Flores can only be traced back to the Majapahit period. In 1297 Flores was part of the Majapahit kingdom. It is still up to the present believed that the origin of Waimahing in Flores was from Majapahit. It is also clear that Majapahit controlled the trade routes through the spice-islands in the Moluccas.

How can we describe development in Nusa Tenggara before the coming of foreign influences? Since long ago, the concept of the naga for example, can be found in Nusa Tenggara as in other regions of Southeast Asia. However, it is important to note here that in Dale's book we can see a photograph of how people in Flores burnt the nagas when they converted to a new religion like Christianity. As mentioned above, there has been more ethnological and anthropological research in Nusa Tenggara than historical

research. One of these is by Frank M. Lebar, "Ethnic Groups of Insular Southeast Asia (1972).
He describes the origin of the local people in the region. H. C. Schulte-Nordholt, who was a Dutch colonial official between 1939 and 1947 also produced anthropological work and completed the monographic writing of Frank Lebar, in: "The Political System of the Atoni".

James J. Fox, as well, has written from an anthropological perspective. He analyses the relationship between the Rotinese, the Savunese and the Dutch at the end of the 19th Century and the early 20th Century. Goethals (1961) shows the trade contacts amongst the Javanese, the Makasarese, the Buginese, the Badjo, and the Mandar in Nusa Tenggara. From his viewpoint, we can understand the process of the emergence of a multicultural society in the region. After the coming of Muslim traders the role of the Hindu kingdoms declined.

The Islamic kingdoms of Goa (South Sulawesi) and Ternate (North Molluccas) took over local powers in Flores. They controlled Flores through Ternate, Solor, and Alor. It is also important to look at the position of Manggarai in the 17th Century. At this time Goa strongly claimed that both Manggarai and Bima were a part of its sultanate. The research on Islam can be seen in Noorduyn's work, Bima en Soembawa: Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis van de Sultanaten Bima en Soembawa door A. Ligtvoet en G. P. Rouffaer (1987) and in Michael Hitchcock's Islam and Identity in Eastern Indonesia (1996) which analyses that the Bimanese like other Indonesian Muslims are Sunni, categorized as the Sjafei Madzhab. However, we do not know, if in Nusa Tenggara syncretism with the old traditions developed as in Java.

The island of Sumba had also been populated by other ethnic groups like the Bimanese with outside influences able to be traced back in the coastal regions. Negarakertagama notes that Sumba was a part of the Majapahit kingdom. From historical evidence we know that Sumbawa was also strongly influenced by Indian and Majapahit traders. It can be seen in Negarakertagama, which notes that some regions such as Taliwang, Dompo, Sapi, Sanghyang Api and Bhima were part of Majapahit (Stuart Robson, 1995: 34). Majapahit supremacy in this region lasted until the 16th Century when Islamization began taking place. Makassar played an important role in the process of Islamization, when I-Mallingkaang Daeng-Mannyonriq was king between 1570 and 1636 (Noorduyn, 1956: 259). The Makasarese mobilized military action to conquer Sumbawa three times. The first expedition was in 1618, the second in 1619 and the third in 1626 (Noorduyn, 1991: 327-329). Ligtvoet (1872: 47) noted that in 1650 the rulers of Sulawesi, East Kalimantan, Buton, Sumbawa, and Flores acknowledged the Makassarese supremacy. Through Islam the dependency of Bima and Sumbawa on Makassar was firmly created. What we can see here is that Islam was to be seen as a state religion, which was very different from Hinduism. It is also important to show that the Muslims in this region until now have not been fanatic, because as among other Indonesians, Islam here has been dominantly influenced by the Sjafiite persuasion.

As in Timor, in Flores there were many separate kingdoms. After the coming of Europeans, Catholicism spread throughout the region. At that time the majority of the population consisted of black Portugese, who originated from the first Portugese colonialists (Stohr and Zoetmoelder 1965: 129). In the Dutch

colonial era, the number of people who converted to certain religions can be seen in the Table below:

The number of Catholics, native priests and foreign priests in Nusa Tenggara between 1915 and 1950

Year	Catholics	Native Priests	Foreign Priests
1915	33.379	-	14
1920	57.874	-	24
1930	168.990	-	62
1940	365.962	-	163
1950	527.720	14	180

From the above Table we can see that there was an increasing number of Catholics, native priests and foreign priests between 1915 and 1950 in Timor, Flores, and Sumba. In addition we can see that the development of a school-system ran parallel to the increasing number of Christians in the region. This also means that native people, who were previously animist, converted to Catholicism. A Timorese was no longer only an adherent of a native religion, but could be a Timorese who was a Catholic. This development occurred particularly after the establishment of the Dutch colonial power in Nusa Tenggara in the early Twentieth Century. Later on these people became supporters of certain political parties such as the Catholic parties in the region.

The Number of followers of Native Religion, Christianity and Islam in Nusa Tenggara between 1928 and 1931

District	Total	Native Religion	Christianity	Islam
Timor	442.605	349.030 (78.86%)	91.575 (20.69%)	2.000 (0.45%)
Flores	716.165	465.867 (65.05%)	180.298 (25.18%)	70.000 (9.77%)
Sumba	182.354	176.624 (96.86%)	4.849 (2.66%)	881 (0.48%)
Sumbawa	315.512	2.000 (0.63%)	395 (0.12%)	313.118 (99.24%)
Total	1.656.636	993.521 (59.97%)	277.116 (16.73%)	385.999 (23.30%)

(ARA, MMK: 343, Onderwerp: Memorie van Overgave van den afgetreden Resident van Timor en Onderhoorigheden. P. F. J. Karthaus (Overgelegde Stukken/ No. 708/ Geheim).

From the Table above we can clearly see that in every district the majority of the people were still adherents of a native religion with the exception of Sumbawa. In Sumbawa most of the people, around 99.24 %, were Muslim and the number of adherents to a native religion was smaller in comparison with other regions such as Timor, Flores and Sumba. Apart from this, the division of religions in each district varied. In Sumba, for instance, the number of the adherents to a native religion was still dominant (Ardhana 2000: 234).

The creation of a multicultural society in Nusa Tenggara occurred through the movement of people from various ethnic groups as well as the spread of new religions (Catholic and Protestant), which

have expanded particularly in the regions of non-Islamic spheres of influence. This process occurred not only in terms of harmony, but also in terms of conflict, as we can see in the conflict between the Sumbawanese and Balinese, or competition between Muslims and Christians which we will see in the development of religious and political parties in the later period. There was change in the social systems in the society. The society of Nusa Tenggara changed from a society which was monocultural to a multicultural one although the concept of a multicultural society is debatable, in the broader sense it can be said that a multicultural society is constituted of various ethnic groups which have their own cultures and who live in a state. As Hoffmann-Nowotny (1992) explains, the consciousness of a togetherness and identity regarding order and peaceful conditions. This condition we can see in a later period, particularly when Nusa Tenggara was under Dutch colonial power.

IV. The Indigenous People and Dutch Colonial Power

Although the Europeans were mostly Christians, they did not want to radically change the religion of the native people. Their important goal was to increase the possibilities for trade activities. From the earlier period before the coming of the European traders the people such as the Javanese, the Buginese, the Makassarese, and others played a major role in trade activities. We can find information about these activities in Albuquerque's letter. Albuquerque noted, that sandalwood was traded by traders from Gujarat (Ligtvoet, 1876: 556). Besides sandalwood, other products such as waxes, turtles, cloths and spices were traded by the traders from the Moluccas, Timor, Solor, Endeh, and Bima. Slaves were also traded,

a matter well known since the 16th Century. This was possible, because the slaves had been prisoners. Slaves mostly belonged to the Chinese minorities. Before the coming of the Dutch, the Portuguese had already visited Solor and other small islands surrounding the island of Timor (Ptak, 1987: 92-94). De Boer notes that they visited Lifao and Oekoessi. The Dutch arrived in Kupang under the leadership of Apolonius Schotte. When the Dutch conquered Malacca in 1641, they greatly limited the Portuguese power in Solor and Timor (Ezerman, 1917: 9). In 1653 the Dutch established a strong position in Kupang and contests between the Dutch and the local rulers of Timor took place (Boxer, 1960: 216-217). In the next period, the Dutch (VOC) built their strong monopoly in the region. However, it can be said that the influence of the Dutch in Nusa Tenggara was more limited in comparison with that in Java. Everywhere there was headhunting, not only for ritual ceremonial purposes but also to symbolize political strategies, to counteract Portuguese influence.

The Dutch made several agreements with local rulers, to abolish slavery and the slave trade. Since the coming of the Europeans the political condition was unstable. Due to the disturbances of piracy, the Dutch made an agreement in 1756, which was signed by the Commissaries Paravinisi and eight rajas from Timor. The Dutch also made an agreement with the Sultan of Bima in 1669 ("Soembawa 1 October 1669", Bijdragen, 87, 1931: 419-426).

Although the Dutch abolished the slave trade in 1838, it nevertheless continued. At the end of the 19th Century (1878) the abolition of the slave trade was still not a fact and in 1915 one could find that slave trade was rampant in Sumbawa. However, by the end of the 19th Century the slave trade had decreased. At the

beginning of the 20th Century apart from sandalwood, there were new products, such as coffee, cotton, and onions available From this we can see that the Dutch gradually not only controlled the economic but also the political aspects. Following the Portuguese, the Dutch arrived in Nusa Tenggara in 1611 and tried to control it through political agreements. In order to destroy competition with other European states the Dutch asked the local rulers to sign agreements with them. The borders between the Dutch and the Portuguese were also determined by signing a regulation of 1854. This caused the division of the Timor Island between two powers: the Dutch in West Timor and the Portuguese in East Timor.

Between 1859 and 1906 the Dutch practiced non-interventionist policies in Nusa Tenggara, and did not directly involve themselves with the issues of trade, local rule and sultans which can be seen through what is called the "Short Declaration" (Korte Verklaring). The idea of practicing the "Short Declaration" came from van Heutsz, who became Governor General of the Dutch East Indies. His task was to ensure the acquisition under Dutch sovereignty. He made the local rulers, who had already submitted and the other local authorities sign a so called "Short Declaration" through which they recognized Dutch supremacy, promised to conduct no negotiations with foreign powers and to carry out all orders from the colonial government (Dahm, 1971: 6). In Nusa Tenggara, this "Short Declarations" applied to Timor, Flores and Sumba, and a "Long Declaration" ("Lange Verklaring") was negotiated for Sumbawa. "The Long Declaration" was an agreement in relation to the detailed acknowledgement by the Dutch of the existence of the local chiefdoms. The Sultan of Bima and the Dutch reached an agreement which consisted of several statements. Firstly, the Sultanate of Bima was part of the Netherlands Indies. Secondly,

there was no connection with other foreign powers. Thirdly, the Dutch acknowledged the right to pay tax.

It is important to note that as in other cases in Indonesia, in Nusa Tenggara, the economic factor was not the main factor why the Dutch mobilized a military expedition against it. The key factor to why the Dutch conquered Nusa Tenggara Locher-Scholten (1994: 111) argues was that the Dutch initially tried to find out whether minerals were available in this region. This was unfortunately unsuccessful but caused the Dutch to conquer Nusa Tenggara in order to be able to consolidate their authority in the Indonesian Archipelago. This does not mean that the Dutch directly controlled Nusa Tenggara in a broad sense, even though, as has been noted the local authorities had already signed agreements with them. Middendorp (1929: 39-40) states that it was almost 200 years after that that there was still no central administration in the outer islands.

After taking over the authority from the British on 13 August, 1814, the Dutch tried to enforce their authority. The reason was that no local authority had clear borders. Another reason for attacking Nusa Tenggara was the competition amongst the European states that emerged after 1830. This gave a chance for the emerging of collaboration between the European and the local rulers at the periphery (Kuitenbrouwer, 1991: 10). It seems that the Dutch tried also to avoid military conflicts between them, as was represented by the Governor General in the form of the "Long Declaration" (Lange Verklaring).

The local rulers had long acknowledged the authority of the Dutch and the Sultan of Bima clearly showed his loyalty. Besides that,

the conquered local rulers were asked to sign, the already mentioned, "Short Declaration" (Korte Verklaring). The detailed contents of the "Long Declaration" were here left out. In contrast to Sumbawa, Flores, Sumba and Timor had their status determined with the "Short Declaration" (ARA, MMK: 341, Maier, 1918: 140-142). The idea of imposing a "Short Declaration" and not the "Long Declaration" in Nusa Tenggara came from Snouck Hurgronje (Reid, 1969: 271). He believed that this way was very effective, due to the fact that the local rulers in Nusa Tenggara sometimes did not respect the contents of the "Long Declaration". The Idea for a "Short Declaration" came in 1898. The content of this agreement is as follows. Firstly, the local ruler ceded his suzerainty to the Dutch. Secondly, there was no political connection with other third foreign powers. Thirdly, the local rulers agreed with the regulations, which had been already determined by the Dutch colonial power (Furnivall, 1939: 237).

At the beginning of 1890, the Dutch colonial government regulated their colonial borders particularly in the regions, where they had already made claims. It can be seen in the new agreement between the Dutch and the Portuguese about their claims on East Timor in 1893 (Kuitenbrouwer, 1991: 256, 339, 356). The aim of this effort was to consolidate their powers in the region from informal to formal. The idea of conducting military action against the local rulers can be considered as a reaction, because the problems in the periphery could not be solved. Locher-Scholten (1994) argues that the reason why mine expeditions in Flores failed, was because the expeditions were attacked by the local people. Then the Dutch weakened the regulations regarding their non-interventionist policies. This means that the Dutch tried to take an initiative to

conduct military actions against the local rulers in the periphery (Locher-Scholten, 1994: 97).

This was the reason, why the Dutch attacked Timor, Flores, Sumba and Sumbawa. In Timor for example, the Dutch researches about mines in 1869 did not make sense due to the fact that Timor was not suitable for capital investment. The Dutch furthermore, left this region ("Ontwerp van Kopermijn Ontginning op het eiland Timor" Leyden: de Breuk: Smits, 1869: 32, 47, 69). Political resistance emerged in Timor under the leadership of Liurai Sonbait, Sait Mas Nisnoni (Van Dijk, 1934: 621). This was the reason, why the colonial Dutch mobilized military expeditions to Timor in 1905, which resuted in the capture of Said Mas Nisnoni in 1906 who was then exiled to Sumba (KITLV, MS, 1112, Couvreur, "Memorie van Overgave ...", 1924: 109).

A similar situation occurred in Flores when an attempt was made to prove whether minerals were available on the island or not. The research, organized by Ir C.J. van Schelle was done in 1889 to check whether in Rokka, mines were available. This research was also followed by the Dutch troops in May 1890. After researching in fact, there were no mines available in this region (Tissot, 1907: 762: cf. de Klerck, 1925: 384). The following military action was conducted in Flores on 15 November, 1890. Because the Dutch were worried that the local people would attack them (Locher-Scholten, 1994: 96-97).

The Dutch also attacked the island of Sumba. The reason was that there emerged resistance and political instability, causing never ending turmoil (Prins, 1916: 103). Sumba was attacked because in Waingapu the local rulers were fighting each other. The attack

against Sumba proved that the events in the peripheries played a major role, and was the main reason why the Dutch mobilized their military actions ("Varia: Kort Overzicht van de onregelten op het eiland Soemba", IMT, 37, 1906: 100).

In Sumbawa the "Long Declaration" was signed by the Sultans of Bima, Sanggar, Sumbawa and Dompu in 1905 and the Dutch put an officer in Bima in July, 1907 (Ziville Gezaghebber), A. C. Munsch. This caused a change in the traditional structural system in the region (Regeeringsalmanak voor Nederlandsch Indie, 1910: 273) and meant that the people were no longer directly under the authority of the Sultans, but under the colonial Dutch bureaucracy.

Actions of the people, expressing dissatisfaction emerged following the imposition of the monopoly of tax payment and compulsory work. The Sumbawanese for example, ignored a census, which was conducted by Dutch officials. This was caused by provocateurs encouraged by local rulers. A. Banse (Civille Gezaghebber) reported to the Governor General, Swart in Makassar who took military action against the Sumbawanese. Like the Sumbawanese, the Bimanese organized themselves in the spirit of Sabil ideas, as had happened previously in Aceh.

A military expedition was sent to Bima under the leadership of Captain Liefrinck in 1908 ("Uittreksel uit het Verlag....", 1910: 39) with similar expeditions sent to Dena and Donggo, and caused the fall of the Sultanates in Sumbawa. The defeat of the local rulers in Timor, Flores, Sumba and Sumbawa was a process in the fall of local kingdoms in Nusa Tenggara, replaced by Dutch supremacy in the early Twentieth Century.

The discussion on the role of the Dutch colonial government in this year marks the end phase of the imperialism. Therefore, an attempt will be made to contribute to the discussions of imperialism in a broader sense, where the characteristics of the Dutch policy were researched in the region. In the case of the application of the imperial policy in Indonesian, it is important to look at some discursive works on imperialism like those analytically carried out by John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson on the theory of free trade (John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, 1979: 183-199).

It is also important to look at the arguments of Dutch experts like Elsbeth Locher-Scholten who discusses early imperialism developments from a national perspective (Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, 1994: 91-111), H. L. Wesseling (Wesseling, 1988: 58-70) and Maarten Kuitenbrouwer (Kuitenbrouwer, 1991). In considering the several interesting points, the question is which argument can conform to the theories of imperialism in Nusa Tenggara. Another question is, to what extent can one consider Nusa Tenggara a multicultural society, due to the facts of historical development in this region, to the migration movements and togetherness among the different ethnic groups over a long period.

Finally the question is how do we consider that national unity in outer areas could be developed, when the ideas of nationalism from Java were accepted in the regions? Which impacts succeeded in the peripheries?

Even though the analysis in my paper is from the early developments until the integration of Nusa Tenggara into the Indonesian government in 1950, I concentrate on the process of the Dutch colonial policy from informal to formal power.

For the discussion on imperialism let me refer for my research in Nusa Tenggara to the theory of the British historians, John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson about the transition from informal to formal power. The theory analyzes the developments of British colonial policy in India and Africa in the 19th Century, resulting from the increasing competition amongst the European states in the region. The theory claims that: "British policy followed the principles of extending control informally if possible and formally if necessary" (Gallagher and Robinson, 1979: 185). It means that, the consolidation of colonial power from informal to formal was a gradual process. From the beginning, the colonial rulers tried to apply their political interests in the colony through indirect and informal power methods. It means that, they did not directly intervene in the policies of the local authorities. Even though the Dutch applied informal and indirect power in the region, how could they control the economic activities in the region? One possibility was by installing colonial advisers. But when this method did not work they tried to act through the imposition of formal power by installing their representatives in the cities.

The transition from informal to formal power was caused occasionally not only by the performance of international competition amongst the European states, but also by social, economic and political developments in the colony itself. The latter theory is the so called peripheral oriented imperialism theory (Mommsen, 1986: 340). This theory is suitable for the analysis of the development of imperialism in Indonesia. It can be seen how the Dutch showed the main motives at the end of the 19th Century and at the beginning of the 20th Century by mobilizing military troops. This can be seen at the break out of the Aceh war (1873-1903), the robbery of Lombok (1894) and in Bali in the so called,

Puputan (ritual or ceremonial suicide) in 1906 (Henk Schulte-Nordholt, 1906: 213-214). From this point of view, it can be seen that the Dutch began mobilizing their military actions in the Indonesian Archipelago, where they had previously already applied informal and indirect power in some regions.

Besides the above theories, Elsbeth Locher-Scholten explains that it is important to look also at the Dutch experts. She argues that one can differentiate between the Dutch colonial and other European states regarding the discussion of theories on imperialism. She says that, in accordance with the theory of imperialism there are three points in conjunction with the differences between the Dutch and other European colonialists. Firstly, the Dutch attained the peak of their expansion around 1900, when other European colonialists had already finished their expansions. Secondly, the Dutch spread their powers within the acknowledged borders. Thirdly, the Dutch expansion was dominantly motivated by ethical ideas (Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, 1994: 93).

Elsbeth Locher-Scholten argues that in the old European theories about modern imperialism there are three main reasons for the spread of European imperialism, namely, the economic aspects of the colonial interests, the international competition, and the efforts of the people to deviate from inside the political problems to the imperial states. One other reason for the expansion was mainly caused by changing orientation from the western to the non western world, when the impulses emerged in the peripheries. Elsbeth Locher-Scholten's arguments on the theory of peripheral imperialism have also been supported by H. L. Wesseling, who says that Dutch imperialism was not a matter of an "action", but a "reaction" (Wesseling 1988: 66). The decision of taking action

was always a reaction to the unsolved problems. Another Dutch expert, Maarten Kuitenbrouwer points out that the Dutch did not have political and economic impulses towards Indonesia.
Elsbeth Locher-Scholten and Kuitenbrouwer agree that the difference from other European powers was due to the fact that the Dutch colonial power applied strongly its policies on ethical ideas (Kuitenbrouwer, 1991: 17-19). Based on the mentioned above theories I have shown in this paper the process of the establishment of the Dutch colonial power in Nusa Tenggara.

V. The Indigenous People and the Emergence of Modern Organizations

After the Pacification, the Dutch established Nusa Tenggara. The emergence of a protest movement against the Dutch cannot be separated from the political developments in Java and Sumatra. In Java, for instance, the first modern organization Budi Utomo, had been established, while in Nusa Tenggara there were still many local rebellions against the Dutch. Sartono Kartodirdjo argues that the colonial power through the registration of the people, the tax payment and kerja rodi affected he social changes. The Dutch colonial system affected the lives of the people in the villages. As in other parts of Indonesia these rebellions were characterized by traditional and archaic issues (Sartono Kartodirdjo, 1982: 207-209).

Although there emerged several rebellions, the Dutch tried to give more education to the local people. The Dutch registered the number of students in Opleidingsscholen in Sumba from 1913 to 1925 based on their ethnicity:

Year	Sumbanese	Savunese	Rotinese	Ambonese	Total
1913	2	6	1	-	9
1914	1	5	6	2	14
1915	1	5	-	3	9
1916	3	-	-	2	5
1917	5	7	-	-	12
1918	5	5	-	-	10
1919	2	7	-	2	11
1920	3	8	-	-	11
1921	10	9	-	-	19
1922	12	7	-	-	19
1923	13	2	-	-	15
1924	14	3	-	-	17
1925	12	2	-	-	14

ARA, MMK: 343, Karthaus, 1931: 11

Although the Dutch introduced the Western education system, rebellions continued to break out in the region, including the rebellion which was organized by Raja Sobe in Timor between 1913 and 1921. In Flores, the Dutch colonial power saw a rebellion from the local people in Manggarai, who were against the Bimanese, whom they did not want to rule Manggarai (Erb, 1997: 55). In Sumba a similar rebellion broke out, which the Dutch succeeded in quelling on 7 September, 1913. Because the majority of people in Sumbawa were Muslims, there were many influences there from Sumatra, with the Sumatrans supporting the struggle of the people. This can we see on the role of Baham who was from Sumatra and came to Sumbawa. Baham himself was a supporter of the Sarekat Abang in Sumatra.

In the following period the establishment of schools affected the social and political development in Nusa Tenggara. In Timor the establishment of Persatoean Timoer Besar occured on 22 January, 1947.This organization was against the establishment of Negara Indonesia Timur, as this organization had the goal to cooperate with the Dutch colonial power. Initially this organization was founded by more than 500 Ambonese, Menadonese, and Timorese, mostly from military groups and was not incorporated into the United States of Indonesia (Negara Indonesia Serikat), which they did not want ("Makassar", in Timor Bode, No. 19, 25 January, 1947).

In contrast with this organization there were several others which were pro-Indonesian. The political developments in Java had strongly affected the political development in Timor. Recently, the question of the concept of Great Timor has become a serious topic in academic circles after the independence of East Timor.

The idea of Timor as a unity emerged for the first time when the Timorsch Verbond was established in September, 1921 (ARA, MMK 342, C. Schultz (Resident), Memorie van Overgave van den Residentie Timor, 13 June, 1927). This organization was actually established not in Timor but in Makassar (South Sulawesi). What is important to show here is that this Timorch Verbond was not only encouraged by the Timorese but also by the people of Sawu and the people of Roti who claimed that they were indeed Timorese (J. J. Fox, Harvest of the Palm: Ecological Change in Eastern Indonesia, 1977: 178).

Even though these people were loyal to the Dutch, they had the initiative to establish this new organization. The members of the

Timorsh Verbond numbered 1256 people constituting 504 members from Roti, 135 from Sawu and only 107 from Kupang.

The possibility of becoming a new elite generation was the reason behind the recruitment of many members from outside Timor. They perceived that they had responsibility for the whole region of Nusa Tenggara (Southeast Indonesia), especially in terms of local unity and harmony (Dahm, 1999).

The first congress was conducted in Makassar in 1923 when the participants decided that they would send a delegation to the Volksraad in Jakarta (legislative body in the colonial era) (A. J. L. Couvreur, Memorie van Overgave van den afgetreden Resident van Timor en Onderhoorigheden, 1924: 114). In order to encourage the unity of the region, the Timorsch Verbond published its own journal in Malay, called Soeloeh Timor (the light for Timorese). The Timorsch Verbond did not play a major role after the Perserikatan Timor, which was strongly encouraged by the Dutch colonial power, opposed this organization. However, the spirit of unity amongst the people in the region did not weaken. This can be seen through the emergence of another new organization. When the Dutch signed the Linggardjati agreement on 7 December, 1946, the Negara Timoer Besar (Groote Oost) was established. Consequently, on December 19, 1946, the representatives of the people of Timor, Flores, Sumba and Sumbawa demanded to be the regional representatives in this Negara Timoer Besar (L. E. Mantero, "Conferentie Den Passar", in Flores, No. 2. 8 January, 1947).

At that time, Timor was an autonomous region like twelve other regions, namely, South Sulawesi, Minahasa, North Sulawesi,

Central Sulawesi, Sangihe and the islands of Talaud, North Maluccu, Bali, Lombok and the small islands of Flores, Sumbawa and Sumba (Goudoever, 1946: 102-103). Each region was considered to be in the process of democratization under the power of the Dewan Radja-Radja, which was formed by the chosen Parliament (Dewan Perwakilan Rakjat) (Dietrich, 1989: 128). The Timor province was a part of the Eastern Indonesian State and was part of the Groote Oost (Negara Timoer Besar) (Groote Oost, Timor en Onderhoorigheden en eilanden, Zuid-Midden-Timor, Memorie van het eiland Timor c. 1912) until the beginning of the Second World War. The pertinent question is how can this idea develop in the context of the drastic change in social, economic, and political development in the region due to the East Timor independence (Monika Schlicher, Portugal in Ost-Timor: eine kritische Untersuchung zur portugiesischen Kolonialgeschichte in Ost-Timor 1850-1912. Dissertation: Heidelberg: Fakultat fur Orientalistik un Altertumswissenschaften, 1994).

There was a vacuum of power when the Indonesian Independence was proclaimed, since the Dutch troops escaped from Indonesia to Australia. De Jong (1988) writes that there was great willingness to be an independent state, not only in South Sulawesi, but also in Timor itself (De Jong 1988:244). In Timor, the raja of Amarasi, H. A. Koroh since the proclamation of Indonesian independence is to be considered an important nationalist figure among the twenty rajas of Timor (Alor, Roti, and Savu). However, there were also several rajas of Timor for instance, Amanuban, who collaborated with the Dutch rulers. In contrast to these actions, the Indonesian nationalist influences we can see in the underground actions such as occurred in Sumbawa, and which had been organized by the Islamic groups. The Sultan of Sumbawa was also influenced by

the supporters of the Republic. At the end of September or at the beginning of October, 1945, three students came from Bali to Bima. These students brought a letter which was signed by Soekarno. In Bima they swore that they would remain loyal to the Republic of Indonesia. Here we can see that even though they were different in terms of ethnicity they shared the loyalty of the Republican groups (S. L. van der Wal, 1945: 34)

In comparison to Sumbawa, it seems that the influence of the nationalist groups was not strong in Sumba, Flores and Timor. The reason was that most of the population in the regions had been strongly influenced by missions and zending. Regarding this issue, the Dutch colonial power had tried to stop any Republican influences in the regions. To strengthen the idea of national and Indonesian in the region, the branches of PDI in Timor were established and spread not only in Timor itself, but also in Flores (Endeh, Kalabahi and Adonara) and in Sumbawa (Bima and Dompu). There was contacts between the PDI members and other Islamic organization namely PERSIT (Persatuan Islam Timor). In this we can see also that PDI played a major role in PERSIT meetings. However, the Dutch colonial power tried to strengthen the cooperative Dutch organizations such as Perkoempoelan Kebangsaan Maloekoe. The reason was it could thus weaken the influence of the national Indonesian organizations in the region and separate and break them up. To fight against the nationalistic organization from Java, the Persatoean Timor Besar was established on January 22, 1947, with the aim of encouraging cooperation among organizations which supported the needs of the Dutch. This organization claimed a special status for Timor, Ambon and Minahasa outside the Negara Indonesia Timur (Ardhana 2000: 408).

The nationalist group under the leadership of Doko recognized that the creation of the Negara Indonesia Timur was not a goal, but only a means to be part of the Republic of Indonesia (Doko, 1981a: 132), proclaimed on August 17, 1945. His idea was different if we compare it with the idea of Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung who was in charge as Prime Minister of NIT and supported the federal system in NIT since he wanted to build good foundations for the young state. In his perception, NIT as well as other parts of the Indonesian Archipelago, consisting of several islands could not appropriately fit into a central system since it comprises an area from England to Athens and consists of hundreds of islands, ethnic groups, and characteristics. However, it does not mean that NIT would reject the idea of nationalist notions (Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung 1985: 619-620).

When the Dutch acknowledged the Republic of Indonesia on December 27, 1949, the local elites suggested unifying Timor and the Republic of Indonesia in the early 1950s, under the leadership of Soekarno and Mohammad Hatta. This meant the leaving out of the NIT and the Negara Indonesia Serikat. Finally, the region of Nusa Tenggara was accepted as part of the Republic of Indonesia, and it has become absorbed into the nation-state. The integration of Nusa Tenggara into the Republic of Indonesia was conducted on August 17, 1950. At the same year Timor, Flores, Sumbawa and Timor have been united into the administrative province of Propinsi Sunda Ketjil. This region is called Nusa Tenggara since the end of 1954.

VI. Conclusion

As has already happened in other parts of the Southeast Asian region, it can be concluded that religious orientation has played a major role in the region. It had awakened the spirit of the native people against the Dutch colonial power. From the description we can see how the indigenous people, who were previously animist converted to certain religions. Consequently, the people began to change their identities from adherents of native religion to be Christians or Muslims. The religious organizations have been popular and played a major role against the Dutch during the colonial rule.

Though organisations based on religion and ethnic origins were in existence, religious organizations and religious leaders did not play a major role in political activities leading to Indonesian independence. One of the reasons is that the religious elites did not have much knowledge of how to lead a modern state or on how to resolve some issues relating to the impacts of colonization in the region. The nationalists have, however, won the political contest.

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IDENTITY, MULTICULTURALISM AND THE FOUNDATION OF NATION STATES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: THE MALAYSIAN EXPERIENCE

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In a comparison with any Southeast Asian nation that has achieved its independence since the ending of the Second World War, the case of the Malay states of Malaya must indeed appear unique. Malaya must be the only state in Southeast Asia that achieved its independence without the substance of a genuine nationalist struggle. To begin my discussion, it has often been pointed out that many of the nation-states of Southeast Asia were the products of western colonialism. If it were not for western colonization, these states would not have their present form. For example, the Republic of Indonesia emerged from the destruction of Dutch colonization and the boundaries of the Republic conform to the boundaries of the former Dutch East Indies. The same could be said for the Philippines, Burma and the Indo-Chinese states of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. In these states, it can be stated that there was a desire of the colonized populations to demand independence for the occupying colonial power and to set up their own state structures. They did so because they had a conception of a national state – their nation of intent was in their minds. The common symbols that were the paraphernalia of a nation-state such

as a national language, a national flag and the idea of a common nationality were readily evident.
Thus the transition from colonialism to independent nationhood would not be such a jarring experience even though the struggle for independence could be long and bloody in some instances as was the case of Indonesia and Vietnam.

In the case of the Malay states of Malaya, the ending of the war did not lead to the demand for independence from the British. From all available historical accounts, the British were welcomed as liberators from Japanese oppression. Malay newspapers, in particular the Majlis stated in no uncertain terms that the Malays wanted a return to the status quo as it existed before the war and were against any dramatic change. The Malays, it added wanted protection (naungan). The Malays, from the rajas to the commoners did not want self-government much less independence.[1] I had suggested that the concept of naungan had been prevalent way before the war: in treaties signed between the British and the Malay rajas, it was agreed that the British would protect Malay interests. The Malays also considered the Malay states (tanah Melayu) to be the domain (hak) of the Malays.[2] The terms 'Malaya' and 'Malayan' were anathema to the Malays who saw themselves as Melayu. These two terms were rejected for they were seen as distinctly anti-Malay. Tanah Melayu (land of the Malays) was the only acceptable term for the Malays to describe the Malay states. However, there was no notion of state or nation within that term. Malaya or British Malaya (inclusive of Singapore) was a British

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1 Majlis, 26 October, 1945

2 Ariffin Omar, Bangsa Melayu: Malay Concepts of Democracy and Community, 1945 - 1950, Kuala Lumpur, Oxford University Press, 1993, pg. 50.

invention which had no roots in the culture or thoughts of the indigenous Malays who did not see themselves as either Malayans much less so as British subjects.

Of course with the extension of British colonial rule in the Malay Peninsula, the idea of a British Malaya emerged at least in the minds of the British as they united the Malay states of Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang and in political framework known as the Federated Malay States which was established in 1896. The remaining Malay states could not be tempted or even cajoled into joining the Federated Malay States at least until after the war when the British tried to impose the Malayan Union on them in 1946. Ironically enough, Malays whether in the Federated Malay States or the Unfederated Malay states did not develop a sense of solidarity that transcended state boundaries. Yet, the problems that affected the various Malay communities were similar. There was the mounting unease at the unrestricted immigration of Chinese and Indians into the Malay Peninsula. The unhappiness of the Malays at their backwardness in the educational, economic and political spheres was apparent. Indeed by the 1930s, the Malay states of Selangor, Perak , Pahang, Negri Sembilan and Johor had non-Malay populations that equaled the Malays. Only the Malay states of Kelantan, Trengganu, Perlis and Kedah still retain Malay majorities. Furthurmore, many non-Malays were now clamoring for political rights and equal status with the indigenous Malays in the Malay states. In the Straits Settlements of Penang, Malacca and Singapore, the Malays had virtually no political influence. These non-Malays saw themselves as Malayans and Malaya as a united entity under the benign and paternalistic guardianship of the British.

Thus we see an opposing perception of the Malay states emerging within the Melayu and the Malayan communities. In the 1930s, an intense debate could be seen in the Malay newspapers concerning the demands of the non-Malays especially the English educated Chinese (a small number) to be given equal status as the Malays in the Malay states.[3]

Demands by some Malays to have a voice in the running of the Malay states forced the British to build administrative structures that gave the illusion of participation but had no substance in reality. Thus in 1909, the Federal Council were set up in which the Sultans of the Federated Malay States were members. The Malay College at Kuala Kangsar was also set up in 1910 mainly to cater to the demands of the ruling class for education and employment in the Civil Service. To accommodate them the Malay Administrative Service was set up in 1910. The bulk of the Malay masses were left in abject poverty and in ignorance of the political future of the tanah Melayu. British attempts at centralizing the administration of the Malay states ended in abject failure because the Sultans of the Unfederated Malay states knew that centralizing would mean greater British control over their states. This situation carried on until the war ended. But the British in their own convoluted way had an idea of the differences between Melayu (Malay) and Malayan. Michael Ardizzone stated that:

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[3] See in particular articles in Majlis and the Majalah Guru during the 1930s

> A Malay is a member of the Malay race; a Malayan is a person of any other origin who happens to live in Malaya. There are 2,250,000 Malays; and 3,050,000 Malayans.[4]

While the British saw the non-Malays as Malayans, it is doubtful if the majority of the Chinese and Indians in the Malay states even considered themselves as such. The Chinese community in the Straits Settlements were proud to be considered British subjects and definitely did not want to be considered Malayan. They were proud to be Straits Chinese loyal to the British Crown. The Chinese and Indians living the tanah Melayu were more involved in politics of their native homeland. The Chinese in the Malay states established a branch of the Kuomintang in the 1920s. The Indians were interested in events in India and the visit by Nehru to the Malay states in 1935 was an event that led to the establishment of the Central Indian Association of Malaya. In 1941, another organization the Malayan Indian Association was established.

As stated earlier non-Malays saw the Malay states as one political entity under British rule unlike the Malays. Even more ominous was the establishment of the Malayan Communist Party in 1930 which had as its aim the desire to overthrow the British and establish a Communist Republic in Malaya.

While the Malays in the Malay states viewed these developments as a threat to their tanah Melayu they could hardly find a meaningful basis to unite. At a time when the non-Malays saw the Malay states as one political unit, the Malays could not even decide on an acceptable definition of what constituted a Malay. A Pan-Malayan

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[4] Michael Ardizzone, A Nation is Born, London: Forum Books, 1946, pg.34.

Malay Congress of Malay state associations held in Kuala Lumpur 1939 came to grief in deciding which of two Malay associations representing the Penang Malays could be accepted as truly Malay (Melayu jati) while the second congress in Singapore in 1940 failed so dismally to define a Malay.[5] Therefore it would be fair to conclude that nationalism among the Malays was non-existent. Thus it was clear that there was hardly any basis on which to build the foundations of an all-embracing Malay nationalism much less a Malay nation. The Japanese Occupation of the tanah Melayu in 1941 during World War Two brought home to the Malays that dependence on the British was no guarantee of political safety since the British failed to contain the onslaught of the Japanese armies. The Japanese Occupation lasted slightly more than three years and it ended in September 1945 with memories few would forget.

With the ending of the war some of the Malay conservatives who were linked to the istanas looked forward to the resumption of the pre-war partnership between the Malay aristocrats and the British colonial authorities. However the Malay left-wing who had acquired some degree of political prominence during the Japanese Occupation put forward the view that the tanah Melayu should be united with the Indonesian Republic in an independent Indonesia Raya. These Malays who were members of the pre-war Kesatuan Melayu Muda had considerable influence within the Malay community during the Occupation. These Malays established the Partai Kebangsaan Melayu Malaya during a meeting at Ipoh, Perak on 17th. October 1945 during which an eight point programme was adopted.

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[5] Details of the minutes of the Malay Congress held in Singapore can be found in Cheah Boon Kheng (ed.), Tokoh-tokoh Tempatan, Pulau Pinang: School of Humanities, USM, 1982 pp.

Among the eight points that deserve our attention point 1 states that the PKMM plans to "Unite the bangsa Melayu and plant kebangsaan in the hearts of the Malays with the aim of uniting Malaya in a big family, that is, the Republik Indonesia Raya."[6]

Unlike the Malay masses, the politically conscious left-wing Malays felt that the Malay masses could acquire political consciousness only if they were united with Indonesia and thus it was no surprise that the PKMM adopted the Merah-Putih flag as its banner.[7] For the PKMM which aspired to make the tanah Melayu to be a part the Republik Indonesia Raya, their aim was to establish a Republic of Malaya first and than link up with Indonesia. The PKMM's main contribution to the Malays was propagating the idea of kebangsaan. The PKMM was basically a Melayu-centric party and its idea of a nation state was not confined to the Malay Peninsula but encompassed all the Malay speaking peoples within one political entity in which the bangsa Melayu would again be reunited again with their Indonesian kith and kin as had been the case during the time of the Majapahit Empire before colonial rule separated them. This union was basically covertly anti-Chinese but openly anti-feudal. Burhanuddin ALHelmy was the chief ideologue of such a view and he had argued passionately for a union between the Malay Peninsula and the Indonesian Archipelago. His view were well propounded in his pamphlet

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6 See UMNO/S.G. No.96/1946, Arkib Negara, Malaysia.

7 Ironically the PKMM Congress voiced it support for the Malayan Union. The reason put forward for this strange decision was because the Malayan Union united the various Malay states. This decision was to be the undoing of the PKMM during the anti-Malayan Union campaign launched by the Malay conservatives.

entitled 'Perjuangan Kita – 17 Oktober 1945 – 17 Oktober 1946.'[8] To Burhanuddin and the Malays in the PKMM, they saw the Filipinos and the Indonesians as other Melayu communities which could be united in an great Indonesia Raya. Thus tragically, the Malays in the PKMM equated Indonesia Raya with Melayu Raya. In the Malay Peninsula they used the terms Indonesia Raya and Melayu Raya interchangeably as if they meant the same thing. However, it did not occur to the PKMM the concept of Melayu Raya had serious flaws when viewed in the context of Indonesian nationalism. Indonesian nationalism transcended and supplanted ethnicity but this was not understood by the naïve left-wing Malay politicians. The Indonesian nationalists had never used the term Melayu Raya but were consistent in their use of the term Indonesia Raya which was accepted by every ethnic group in Indonesia (save for the Malays in East Sumatra).

If the Indonesian nationalists had used the term Melayu Raya, it was unlikely that the nationalist movement would have received such widespread support, since the term implied Malay cultural and ethnic dominance over the others. In Indonesia the suku Melayu (Malay community) was insignificant. Even in the Malay Peninsula it was unlikely that the Malays themselves would have accepted such a broad definition of Melayu because it may pose a serious threat to their ethnic identity or kebangsaan. Thus the early attempt to construct a national state to be named Melayu Raya/Indonesia Raya which would be multi-cultural with a plural society ended in failure because the PKMM did not possess political power, support or credibility among the Malay masses to propagate their political ideology.

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[8] The pamphlet was published in Singapore in jawi but was later transliterated into romanized Malay in Kamaruddin Jaafar's Dr.Burhanuddin AlHelmy: Politik Melayu dan Islam, Kuala Lumpur, Yayasan Anda, 1980.

Now it was the turn of the British to try their luck in the business of creating a national identity and a new nation state. We note that the end of the war saw the return of the British who were warmly welcomed back by the Malays and non-Malays. Unlike other Southeast states where the return of the colonial powers was hotly contested by a politically aware native elite, in Malaya the British were welcomed as liberators. Ironically, the British squandered the goodwill shown to them by the Malays with the introduction of a new policy that forced the Malays to face head on the issue of nationalism and nation state at a time when they were most vulnerable. This new policy was the Malayan Union. Under the Malayan Union, the tanah Melayu (Malay states) will be united in a new political arrangement. To achieve this Union it was necessary to obtain the consent of the Malay rulers to transfer the sovereignty of the tanah Melayu to His Majesty's Government. What did the British hope to achieve with their Malayan Union? The immediate aim was to integrate the large Chinese community and the smaller Indian one into a Malayan polity with a sense of 'Malayaness.' Secondly the British hoped to do away with the cumbersome pre-war administrative structure which comprised of the Federated Malay States of Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang; the Unfederated States of Johor, Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan and Trengganu; and the Straits Settlements comprising Penang, Malacca and Singapore. With the exception of Singapore which will remain a crown colony, the other states will be united into a single, centrally controlled state. The third goal was to lead Malaya to independence at a future date which was yet to be determined.[9]

[9] For more details concerning the Malayan Union kindly refer to Great Britain, Malayan Union and Singapore: Statement of Policy on Future Constitution, Cmd. 6724, London, 1946.

For the British government to achieve these aims, it was necessary to reorganize citizenship qualifications whereby 83 percent of the Chinese and 75 percent of the Indians would qualify for citizenship under very liberal laws.[10] At the same time, the British intended to open up the Civil Service - hitherto a British and Malay preserve – to all communities.[11] In the Union the Malay rulers would forfeit their positions as head of their respective states but retain restricted authority in the religious domain.[12] In short a new 'nation-state' to be known as Malaya was to be invented from scratch with no consideration to be given to the historical background of the Malay states nor any recognition accorded to the indigenous inhabitants concerning their historical claims to the land which they saw as their tanah Melayu. The British calculated that if they could obtain the consent of the Malay rulers to their new scheme, it could be carried out quickly with clockwork precision. To acquire the 'willing' consent of the Malay rulers to the Malayan Union, Sir Harold MacMichael was dispatched to Malaya, arriving at Port Swettenham on 11 October 1945, a day after the first public mention

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[10] K.J. Ratnam, Communalism and the Political Process in Malaya, Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1965, p.75.

[11] Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, From Malayan Union to Singapore Separation: Political Unification in the Malaysia Region, 1945-65, Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti Malaya, 1974, p.24.

[12] B. Simandjuntak, Malayan Federalism 1945-1963: A Study of Federal Problems in a Plural Society, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1969, p.39. 'They [the rulers] were given legislative powers on matters of the Muslim religion but not on the collection of tithes and taxes, and even such legislation required the Governor 's assent. ' See also Malayan Union and Singapore: Statement of Policy on Future Constitution, Cmd. 6724, London:HMSO, January 1946, p.4 for confirmation of the rulers' diminished position vis-à-vis Islam.

of the Malayan Union scheme in the House of Commons in London.[13]

Malay newspapers made brief comments concerning the announcement, as few details were available.[14] These papers were to pay a crucial role in destroying the Malayan Union through a campaign of public awareness among the Malays later.

MacMichael acted with remarkable haste in acquiring the signatures of the Malay rulers for the transfer of sovereignty of their states to the British Crown. He conducted his first interview with a ruler on 18 October 1945 and by 21 December 1945 he had concluded his interviews. The bullying tactics of MacMichael have been aptly described by other writers.[15] Aside from the public instructions handed over to MacMichael, one particular set of instructions not publicly revealed but crucial towards obtaining the rulers' consent was as follows:

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[13] See instructions to MacMichael in Malayan Union and Singapore: Statement of Policy on Future Constitution, p.6, which reads: 'You will visit Malaya at a date to be agreed by the Supreme Allied Commander, Southeast Asia Command, and invite each Malay Ruler 's cooperation in the establishment of a fresh constitutional organization of Malaya which has been approved by His Majesty 's Government and communicated to you and which is intended to ensure and facilitate the progress of the people of the country towards unity and ultimate self-government within the British Empire.' 'In furtherance of this object you are authorized as Special Representative of His Majesty's Government to conclude with each Ruler on behalf of His majesty's Government a formal Agreement by which he will cede full jurisdiction to His Majesty in his State.'

[14] Among the Malay newspapers published after the war, the most important ones were the Majlis, Utusan Melayu and the Warta Negara.

[15] See in particular Allen, The Malayan Union; A.J. Stockwell, British Policy and Malay Politics during the Malayan Union Experiment, 1942-1948, Monograph No.8, Kuala Lumpur: MBRAS, 1979.

> *In any Malay state where the Ruler recognized by His Majesty's Government is either no longer in Office or has so compromised himself in relations with the enemy as to be no longer prima facie worthy of being recognized as Ruler by His majesty's Government, you should telegraph to the Secretary of State for the colonies through the Supreme Allied Commander the name and credentials of the Malay personage whom you recommend as competent and responsible to undertake such a commitment in respect of the State concerned.*[16]

MacMichael was also empowered to

> *open discussions with the individuals recommended as competent and responsible to undertake formal commitments as Rulers, to recognized them on behalf of His majesty's Government and to sign Agreements with them, without the risk of delay and complication attendant upon interim reference.*[17]

It was clear that MacMichael was not in Malaya not only to invite the rulers to sign away their states to the British in order to fulfill British desires to invent a new 'nation' of 'Malayans', he was instructed to coerce and cajoled them into surrendering the tanah Melayu, the rights, privileges and historical heritage of the Melayu

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[16] MacMichael, Sir Harold, Report on a Mission to Malaya, October 1945-January 1946, London: HMSO, 1946, paragraph 10, sub-paragraph 3.

[17] Ibid., paragraph 12.

to the British Crown. The Malay rulers signed, some willingly as in the case of Sultan Ibrahim of Johor, some under vehement protest as was the case with Sultan Badlishah of Kedah and Sultan Abdul Aziz of Perak, some indifferently as was the case of Sultan Abu Bakar of Pahang and some because there was no option such as the Raja of Perlis, the Sultan of Trengganu and the Yang diPertuan of Negri Sembilan.

The British had gambled that the Sultans being the head of the Melayu communities in their respective states could get away with signing the MacMichael treaties and that their subjects would accept unquestioningly what they had done because the Melayu would never disavow their sultans. Their gambled failed badly. Having learned that their 'beloved' sultans had signed away their rights and privileges (which in reality existed on paper only) and worse their tanah Melayu, the Melayu communities of the various Malay states were galvanized into action. Since it was suggested that there was no concept of all embracing Melayu nationalism the various Melayu communities reacted by reestablishing the various state organizations that had existed before the war. Thus within a short period associations like the Persatuan Melayu Selangor (Selangor Malays Association), Persatuan Melayu Perak (Perak Malays Association), the Persatuan Melayu Pahang (Pahang Malays Association) reemerged. In addition, new associations such as the Perikatan Melayu Perak (Malay Leagur of Perak) and the Pemuda Melayu Kedah (Malay Youth of Kedah) came into being. Most if not all were hostile to the sultans for signing away the rights of the Malays.

The influential Malay newspaper the Majlis recognized that these associations were set up because many Malays felt that their

interests could be protected by these associations rather than by rulers who could be intimidated by the British. In terms of Malay political culture the emergence of these associations represented a new and major development. The role of the rulers was now diminished and in place of the rulers, Malay associations emerged to defend and safeguard the rights of the Melayu. In the past, the Melayu could only see his existence within the framework of the kerajaan in which he is subservient to his rulers on whom he depended on for complete protection. The British destroyed this tradition through the Malayan Union and unwittingly freed the Melayu from his psychological-feudal mentality of depending on the rulers.

They took the first step in liberating the Malays from their politico-psychological serfdom. Milner defined the kerajaan as the political condition of the Malays who considered themselves to be living in a community oriented around a raja who was not only the focus of what is called political life but also the endowment of religious and psychological significance.[18]

Thus after realizing that their kerajaan had become an anachronism in the age of democracy, the Melayu had to grapple with the problem of defining a new role for them. An article in the Majlis called upon 'the Melayu to be aware that democracy is the dominant political force and that they must now rely on themselves and no longer look to the raja and his chiefs for guidance.'[19] This remark was made before the full extent of what was conceded by the sultans

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[18] Refer to A.C. Milner, Kerajaan: Malay Political Culture on the Eve of Colonial Rule, Tucson, Arizona: university of Arizona Press, 1982.

[19] *Majlis*, 8 December 1945.

became public but by January 1946 the cat was out of the bag and the sultans bore the full brunt of the wrath of the Melayu.

A series of article by Ayub Abdullah of Kedah attacked the sultans for having signed the MacMichael agreements. Ayub, contrary to the reality of Malay political culture made the claim that 'according to custom from time immemorial, every ruler is chosen and enthroned by the people. When a ruler dies, it is incumbent upon the people to agree [on a new ruler], come together, and discuss [the matter of] a replacement.'[20] I would like to suggest that Ayub 'conferred' upon the people the right and power to choose their rulers, rights that never existed in the past. This was a new element in Malay political thinking because in the past the subjects were merely hamba raja (slaves of the raja). Thus in a situation of political urgency, a 'tradition' was invented in order to justify a break with past traditions. Ayub next goes on to argue that the people (rakyat) who were now no longer to be considered as hamba raja have rights just as the rulers have rights. In an amazing distortion of recorded history Ayub states that:

> *Therefore, when the custom of enthronement of the raja is settled, the person who is now the raja or sultan acquires in his hands the authority to govern and pronounce judgement in the state and on the people in ways that are just. However, if his administration and judgement is not just or in keeping with the wishes of the state and people, he can be deposed and replaced with another...In Perak, our people – the Perak Malays – had deposed one of their sultans from the throne of Perak, that is the late Sultan*

[20] *Majlis*, 4 January 1946.

Ismail, and enthroned instead the late Sultan Abdullah to replace him... Therefore, when a raja or sultan wishes to sign any treaty to surrender the rights of the state and the people to whomsoever, without obtaining prior agreement from the people of his state, is the treaty recognized as legal?[21]

Thus Melayu perceptions of the sultans and rajas had undergone profound changes. Terms that were sacred such as taat dan setia (loyal and true), derhaka (treason), kedaulatan raja (sovereignty of the raja) acquired different interpretations and could no longer be applied in a one sided manner favoring the raja. The crisis brought about by the Malayan Union now gave ample scope for the raja to be accused of being disloyal and committing treason while his sovereignty was no longer accepted. Commenting on the conflict between himself and Sultan Ibrahim of Johor, Dato Abdul Rahman Yasin, the pre-war State Treasurer and a member of the Council of Ministers of State argued that "To a Muslim, loyalty is reciprocal. The fact that the Malays have hitherto, through ignorance or otherwise, been blindly obedient does not reduce loyalty to a one-sided affair."[22] That the attitude of the Melayu had indeed undergone a fundamental change was highlighted in the Majlis which declared that if ever a ruler committed an act that was against the interests of his rakyat, that act that act would be seen in the following light: 'Whereby, it is not the rakyat that have committed derhaka against the raja, but on the contrary, it is the raja that has committed derhaka against the rakyat."[23] The proof that such a

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[21] *Majlis*, ibid.

[22] R.C.J. No.217/46:Dato Abdul Rahman to the resident commissioner, Johore, 8 July 1946, Arkib Negeri, Johore Bahru.

[23] *Majlis* , 13 April 1946.

change did indeed take place can be seen in the state of Johor where the rakyat Melayu of Johor disavowed Sultan Ibrahim as their sultan.[24] This had never happened in Malay history. For the first time, a reigning sultan was accused of committing derhaka against his throne, his state and his people and all because he had signed the MacMichael treaty without consulting his people and he had also violated Article 15 of the Johor State constitution which prohibited the ruler from signing away any part of the state to a foreign power. In doing so he had committed derhaka against his throne and the state and people of Johor.[25] To clinch the argument that the rulers were no longer the lynchpin in Malay political power, the Majlis stated in no uncertain terms that, 'the aura of daulat is not just the raja's but that the rakyat's daulat is even higher. If there is no rakyat, there will be no raja, but if there is no raja, the rakyat can become raja.'[26]

I had suggested that bangsa and kebangsaan Melayu replaced the rajas as the focal point of Malay political ideology. I still stand by this because there is little evidence to suggest that at the time of the Malayan Union crisis, the Melayu developed an all embracing nationalism. The Malay state associations that held a Congress in Kuala Lumpur on 1-4 March 1946 did not agitate for independence, they merely called on the British to respect past treaties and continue with the policy of protection (naungan). It was at this meeting that the decision to found the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) was made so as to launch a Pan-Malayan struggle to oppose the Malayan Union. At no time did UMNO developed into

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[24] *Majlis*, 19 February 1946.
[25] *Majlis*, 19 February 1946.
[26] *Majlis*, 6 February 1946.

a true nationalist party because the kebangsaan that UMNO fought for cannot be interpreted as nationalism. The term kebangsaan is derived from the Malay word bangsa which can mean race, people, community or even nation depending on the context of its use. But in 1946 the struggle was more for ethnic solidarity since the Melayu felt that the British via the Malayan Union had betrayed them by giving citizenship under very liberal terms to non-Malays. There was no discussion of forming a nation or even of uniting the various Melayu communities into one bangsa (nation). At the same time the Malays rejected a 'Malayan' nationality or even a united Malayan nation which was precisely what the planners of the Malayan Union wanted to achieve. The British were trying to create a Malayan bangsa – something unacceptable to the Malays If the bangsa Malayan became a political reality, the bangsa Melayu would be merely a subset of the bangsa Malayan and not a sovereign bangsa in its own homeland. Worse still the Malays would lose their identity to an artificial Malayan identity which had no historical roots or cultural acceptance among the Malays who were the indigenous people of the land.

UMNO differed greatly from most nationalist parties and movements in other parts of southeast Asia because it saw no need to fight for independence, it demanded continued British 'protection' (naungan) for the disparate Malay entities. The Malays under UMNO did not even see the need to dismantle the outmoded Malay monarchies which had betrayed their interests. Instead these petty monarchies were reinvented to fit in with the emergence of the new focus of bangsa and kebangsaan Melayu. After having stripped the Malay rulers of their dominant role in Malay society, they were now to be brought to the level of their rakyat. Dato Onn as the President of UMNO had cleverly succeeded in diverting the

hostility of the Malays towards their rulers. The rulers were now to be a part of the rakyat and to partake in the struggle of the rakyat to oppose the Malayan Union. The role of the rulers now can be likened to that of cement which bond the Malays together.[27] By catchy slogans such Raja jadi rakyat; Rakyat jadi Raja, (the ruler is the subject and the Subjects are the rulers) Dato Onn healed the rift between the rulers and their subjects. But I would like to suggest that another reason why the rulers could not be dispensed with is because mass political agitation through organizations was a relatively new experience for the Malay masses. Political organizations, parties etc were a new phenomena to many of the Malays. They were only familiar with the institution and structure of the kerajaan which was an institution and a structure that was deeply rooted in the Malay psyche. If the kerajaan was destroyed there was hardly anything that could legitimately replace it in the Malay psyche. At that point in time, the Malays still saw themselves as subjects of the various kerajaans. Even the modern understanding of the term 'state' had yet to emerge in the mind of the Malay peasants.

The term the Malays used for the word 'state' in their language was negeri but negeri at that point in time came to mean settlement In fact A.H.Hill, an editor of Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai, has provided a more specific definition. He denotes negeri as 'a fairly large community, centred usually on a river estuary, an entrepot for foreign merchants, with some political influence over the surrounding territory.'[28]

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[27] *Majlis*, 14 May 1946.

[28] See A.H. Hill, 'Hikayat Raja-raja Pasai, ' JMBRAS, XXXIII, 2 (1960): 173, n.2 Virginia matheson has also noted the absence of 'evidence for the existence of the state as a concept' in her chapter, 'Concepts of State in the Tuhfat al-Nafis,' in Anthony Reid and Lance Castles (eds.), Pre-Colonial States systems in Southeast Asia, Monograph No.6, Kuala Lumpur:MBRAS, 1975, p.21

However, it was made clear that that henceforth, the bangsa and kebangsaan Melayu was to be the center of Malay political culture. That the rajas were relegated to a secondary role was amply demonstrated when Dato Onn as Preseident of UMNO was able to force the raja to boycott Sir Edward Gent's installation as the first (and last) Governor of the Malayan Union on 1st April 1946 (April Fool's day). The rulers were told in no uncertain terms that they will be disowned by the rakyat if they attended the installation.[29] The unwillingness of the rulers to attend Gent's installation as well as their public repudiation of the MacMichael treaties sounded the death knell of the Malayan Union. The ability of the UMNO leadership to heal the rift between ruler and rakyat and present a united front in opposing the Malayan Union was not lost on the British. Gent himself realized that the Malayan Union was a dead letter and proposed that a new political arrangement be worked out with the Malays. Strangely enough, the idea of replacing the Malayan Union with a federation originated not from UMNO but from the Malay sultans. As early as March 1946, Sultan Abdul Aziz of Perak on behalf of the Sultans of Selangor and Kedah, and the Yang Di Pertuan of Negri Sembilan had sent a cablegram to the Secretary of State for the Colonies proposing a federation of all Malay states with a central body to take charge of matters of common interest.[30] The Pan-Malayan Malay Congress, which met in early March and which claimed to represent the rakyat Melayu, could only suggest was a return to the pre1941 system which had been rejected by the British.[31] Thus I can conclude that even the process of imagining a Malay nation had yet to arise within the ranks of the men who claim to represent the Malays.

[29] *Majlis*, 2 April 1946.

[30] *Majlis*, 27 March 1946; Malaya Tribune , 27 March 1946.

[31] Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, From Malayan Union to Singapore Separation;, p.26.

Before long UMNO which met in Johor Bahru acknowledged that the 'subject of a Melayu federation, made public as a proposal to the British Government by the Malay rulers was discussed.'[32] The British quietly agreed. A Working Committee of twelve was appointed to consider a replacement for the Malayan Union. This Committee met on 6-16 August, 6-28 September, 11-1 November 1946 behind closed doors to draft new constitutional proposals. The general principles adopted by the Working Committee were that :

(a) there should be a strong central government so as to ensure economical and effective administration of all matters of importance to the welfare and progress of the country as a whole;

(b) the individuality of each of the Malay states and of the Settlements should be clearly expressed and maintained

(c) the new arrangements should, on a long view, offer the means and prospects of development in the direction of ultimate self-government

(d) with a view to the establishment of broad-based institutions which would be necessary if principle © is ultimately to become effective, a common form of citizenship should be introduced which would enable political rights to be extended to all those who regard Malaya as their real home and as the object of the loyalty; and

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[32] *Straits Times,* 14 May 1946.

(e) as these states are Malay states ruled by Your Highnesses, the subjects of Your Highnesses have no alternative allegiance to another country which they can regard as their homeland, and they occupy a special position and possess rights which must be safeguarded.

Thus Malay political agitation had succeeded in returning the rulers to their thrones and restoring the special rights and privileges of the Malays while at the same time maintained the continued existence of the Malay states as separate entities united under a strong central government. However some concessions were made by UMNO such as a common citizenship to be extended to the non-Malays on strict terms. In essence the British obtained what they had wanted all along which was a strong central government. But the federation agreed to was legally known as the Persekutuan Tanah Melayu (federation of Malay lands).[33] It may appear that the Malays had triumphed but in reality this was not so because the federation that was set up was a masterpiece of political deception. There was no provision in the federation to establish a representative council for the people, there were no voting rights or even the formation of a cabinet with ministers. Worse still there was no national symbols such as a national language, a national flag. There was no indication that the Persekutuan Tanah Melayu was a nation with a national identity through a common nationality. As for institutions, there was the Federal Council whose members were appointed by the British with the aim of providing some experience and training for a very distant future self-government.

[33] Strangely enough the British with the agreement (or perhaps connivance) of UMNO and the Malay rulers translated the Persekutuan Tanah Melayu as Federation of Malaya which is totally inaccurate.

As for citizenship for the non-Malays, it must be noted that citizenship 'was not a nationality, neither could it [be] developed into a nationality. It would not affect or impair, in any respect whatever, the status of British Subjects in the Settlements or the status of subjects of the Rulers in the Malay States. It is an addition to, and not a subtraction from, nationality and could be a qualification for electoral rights, for membership of councils and for employment in Government service, and it could confer other privileges and impose obligations. It was not possible at present to lay down precisely what these privileges and obligations would be.'[34] Thus it was clear that there was no intention to develop any concept of the nation, national state or national identity. There were no structures or institutions that were created to give substance and scope towards greater participation in government by the people who were given citizenship rights in the federation. However this political hoax perpetrated by the British with the connivance of the Malay Rulers and UMNO did not go unchallenged. A small group of Malays and some Chinese and Indians did get together to work out the foundations for a nation-state and a nationality acceptable to all the ethnic communities residing in the Malay states. These Malays were from the Parti Kebangsaan Melayu Malaya (Malay Nationalist Party) who with other Malay groups such as the API or Angkatan Pemuda Insaf (Movement of Conscious Youth) and AWAS or Angkatan Wanita Sedar (Movement of Conscious Women) formed the PUTERA or Pusat Tenaga Rakyat (Center of Peoples' Power) to oppose the federation.

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[34] Constitutional Proposals for Malaya: Report of the Working Committee Appointed by a Conference of His Excellency the Governor of the Malayan Union, Their Highnesses the Rulers of the Malay States and the Representatives of the United Malays National Organization, Kuala Lumpur: Government Printer, 1946, p.23.

These Malay groups were not alone because the non-Malays especially the Chinese had set up the All Malaya Council for Joint Action to agitate against the federation. These two groups joined together to form the PUTERA-AMCJA front and came up with an alternative to the proposed constitution drafted by the British. Their alternative was known as the Peoples' Constitution of PUTERA-AMCJA and it remains to this day a remarkable document. This constitution had a concept of a nation state, an all embracing nationality to be known as Melayu which would be expunged of its ethnic connotation so that it can be applied to Malays, Chinese, Indians inclusive of even a European who chose to make Malaya his homeland. It upheld democratic values by insisting on a speedy transfer of power so that self-government can be a reality. It proposed to end British colonialism and turn the sultans into constitutional monarchs while election will be held for a Parliament. Malay will be the national language while a Council of Races will be established to eliminate racial discrimination in the promulgation of laws for the land. Of greatest interest was the suggestion that Melayu would be the nationality – a suggestion that was accepted by many of the non-Malays including Tan Cheng Lock himself. This document revealed a clear intention on the part of the formulators of the Peoples' Constitution to develop an all embracing nationality. Needless to say, this Peoples' Constitution of PUTERA-AMCJA was rejected by the British, UMNO and the Malay rulers. The struggle of the PUTERA-AMCJA continued until 1948 when with the declaration of the state of Emergency in the Malay states, the coalition ceased to exist as many of its component organizations were proscribed as communist organizations. Thus a major attempt to set the Malay states on the true path to nationhood with all the attendant structures and symbols of nationhood came to a tragic end. It is thus no surprise to me that

in 1968 Dr.Jan Pluvier a lecturer teaching in the University of Malaya stated unequivocally that nationalism in Malaya was a myth and that there was never a Malayan bangsa that came into being before 1957 as there was no Malayan consciousness at that time. Perhaps he might have a point.

In reality, the Federation of Malaya Agreement which ushered in the Persekutuan Tanah Melayu was an Anglo-Malay compromise. There was hardly any Chinese or Indian involvement even though their views were solicited before the Agreement became law.[35] Thus the Chinese and Indians were given some measure of political rights through Malay sufferance. Malay privileges and special rights, the position of the Malay rulers were acknowledged as was the 'legitimate interests' of the non-Malays.[36] Thus what we see in the Federation of Malaya Agreement was a mere political agreement to accommodate the conflicting demands and interests of both the British and the Malays and certainly not the framework or even foundation for the construction of a nation state. In other words the Persekutuan Tanah Melayu was a Malay state. This was the state of affairs from 1948 till the declaration of merdeka in August 1957. It was not surprising that five months (May 1948) after the formation of the Federation of Malaya the Chinese dominated Malayan Communist Party instigated a confrontation with the British by burning down rubber estates and sabotaging tin mines while British rubber planter and tin miners were murdered. By June a full scale communist insurrection was clear and on 18 June 1948 the British declared a state of Emergency.

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[35] K.J. Ratnam, Communalism and the Political Process in Malaya, p. 105.

[36] Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, From Malayan Union to Singapore Separation, p.37.

The Malayan Communist Party and its other organizations were banned. For 12 years the British and the Malayan authorities battled the Communist led Malayan People's Anti British Army (MPABA).[37]

This insurrection pitted British and Commonwealth troops in support of the Malayan Police which was overwhelmingly Malay against the Chinese communists who were supported by the Min Yuen (People's Movement).

Brilliant strategies especially the resettlement programme of Lieutenant-General Sir Harold Briggs, Director of Operations in Malaya deprived the Communists of support when half a million squatters (85% of whom were Chinese) were resettled into new villages which were guarded day and night. Land titles were given to them as were basic amenities such as water and electricity, schools and community halls.[38] This plus effective military action had a decisive effect on the insurrection and weakened it considerably. The insurrection widened the gap between the Malays

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[37] The Malayan People's Anti British Army changed its name to the Malayan Races Liberation Army (MRLA) on 1st. February 1949 in order to project an image of multi racialism within its ranks. Unfortunately it could never rid itself of its Chinese image and Malays who joined the Communist insurrection were portrayed as stooges of the Chinese communists who had betrayed the race and religion.

[38] While many Chinese felt that they had been picked upon by the British unfairly as communists sympathizers, Malays felt that the insurrection which was started by the mainly Chinese supported Malayan Communist Party benefited the Chinese community because even though the Chinese were uprooted and resettled into New Villages, these villages were supplied with water, electricity, schools and basic medical care which many law abiding Malays who live in their kampongs did not even enjoy.

and non-Malays who now had even more reasons to doubt the loyalty of the non-Malays to the land. However, military victories will not guarantee political or even social stability of ethnic animosities were not dealt with. On the political front many Chinese leaders were against the 'special position' of the Malays and they also objected to the restricted rights of citizenship given to the Chinese under the Federation of Malaya. There was the fear that if merdeka to be given to Malaya by the British the Malays would be dominant politically and would threaten the economic position of the Chinese. Thus any hope of a Malay-Chinese political rapprochement was out of the question – more so when it became clear to the Malays that as a result of military conscription which was introduced in November 1950 for Malayan Youths between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four many young Chinese were opting to leave Malaya for Singapore, Hong Kong and even mainland China.[39]

The British were well aware of the ethnic tensions existing between the Malay and the non-Malays. The Malays had UMNO which was influential and powerful to safeguard their interests. The Indians had their Malayan Indian Congress to look after their interests. The Chinese established the Malayan Chinese Association mainly through the efforts of Tan Cheng Lock with encouragement and backing from Sir Henry Gurney, the British High Commissioner. The British had every reason to ensure that the Chinese had a legal political organization so that they could be weaned away from the Malayan Communist Party. The MCA came

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[39] Virginia Thompson and Richard Adloff, Minority Problems in Southeast Asia, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1955, p.33.

into existence in February 1949 with Tan Cheng Lock as president. Only Chinese who intended to settle permanently in Malaya and had either been born there or had lived there for five years can become members. Initially it was a welfare organization to help the Chinese community but it later evolved into an organization that represented and championed Chinese political interests. Like the UMNO and the MIC, the MCA was a communal party. But since the top leadership of these communal parties were composed of English educated Malay, Chinese and Indian elites they were able to hold discussions and cooperate with one another. But cooperation at the elite level did not mean greater harmony, understanding and integration at the ground level and this has always been the Achilles heel of Malaysian communal politics.

To help build a Malayan identity and nationality the Barnes Committee was set up and it was recommended that a unified system of education be introduced into Malaya in order to speed up integration. The most important feature of the national primary schools was that they would be bilingual and pupils of all races would be taught in English and Malay and that the best students would move up to English-medium secondary schools. Hopefully by this method the groundwork for common nationality and outlook would be laid. The school syllabi would be Malayan oriented.[40] But in 1951 Sir Henry Gurney the High Commissioner appointed a committee headed by Dr. W.P. Fenn and Dr. Wu The-yao to look into Chinese education in Malaya and it recommended (ironically) that a system of belonging could be fostered by

[40] This was the recommendation of the Barnes Committee which was set up to look into the system of Malay vernacular education which was in a dismal state.

maintaining the different cultures and separate systems of the main ethnic groups in Malaya. Since there appeared to be a conflict between the two committees, a third committee was set up in 1951 which determined that national schools be formed and that English and Malay would be the media of instruction. Thus when the Education Ordinance was promulgated in 1952 it tried to achieve a compromise between the differing views. Though it insisted that national schools would be set up, it accepted that Chinese and Tamil language be taught as a third language but Chinese and Indian schools were to remain outside the national education system. To add to the controversy, the late Tun Abdul Razak Hussein when he was Education Minister headed a committee in 1955 and produced the Razak Report from which emerged the 1957 Education Ordinance which read as follows:

The educational policy of the Federation is to enshrine a national system of education acceptable to the people as a whole which will satisfy their needs and promote their cultural, economic and political development as a nation, with the intention of making the Malay language the national language of the country while preserving and sustaining the growth of the language and culture of peoples other than Malays living in the country. [41]

Thus on the eve of merdeka, the seeds of educational separateness was sown from which we will reap a bitter harvest on the road to nation building. The political was equally rough. The British were aware that unless attempts were made to promote ethnic integration, a racial conflagration in Malaya was inevitable. On the initiative

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[41] Leon Comber, 'Chinese Education – A Perennial Malayan problem', Asian Survey, Vol. 1, No. 8 (October 1961), p.33.

of Malcolm MacDonald, the Commissioner-General for Southeast Asia a Communities Liaison Committee (CLC) was established with Malay, Chinese, Indian, Eurasian and European community leaders on it. Its aim was to lessen friction among the various races and help create a united Malayan nation. Thus I note that the foundation for a Malayan nation state will not be an ideological or political belief but more the result of horse trading among the various communities. Thus it was proposed that all government and government aided primary schools should teach Malay and English. Elections to local and federal councils should be quickly introduced and citizenship requirements should be liberalized so that non-Malays can acquire citizenship. The Chinese were urged to be understanding as well as to help in promoting Malay economic progress.

However, when Dato Onn Jaafar tried to persuade UMNO, a communal Malay party to accept some of the CLC's proposal, he ran into stiff opposition. Undeterred he even wanted to change the UMNO to the United Malayan National Organization and allow non-Malays to join the organization. He failed and was forced to resign. Tengku Abdul Rahman replaced him as leader of UMNO. Till today Dato Onn is seen as a traitor who betrayed the Malays even though he was the man who had successfully led the Malays to oppose the Malayan Union. Onn's failure became more stark when a party that he founded the multi-racial Independence of Malaya Party which advocated a platform of economic and political equality, a common citizenship for all and the opening of the Malayan Civil Service to Chinese and Indians with independence within ten years was not even supported by the Chinese and Indians

let alone the Malays.[42] Thus only communal parties could exist in Malaya. The path to a modus vivendi among the various races in Malaya came about when the UMNO and the MCA joined forces in a coalition to oppose Dato Onn's IMP in the first general election held in Malaya in 1955. The UMNO-MCA coalition known as the Alliance captured 51 or the 52 seats even though there was no accord on the question of citizenship and nationality rights for the non-Malays. It was not long before the MIC became a member of the Alliance and Tengku Abdul Rahman became the first Chief Minister of the new government and preparations to negotiate independence with the British were in gear.

It was agreed to that Malaya would be given independence on 31st. August 1957. A Constitutional Commission headed by Lord Reid was set up to draft the Constitution. The commission met in Malaya from June to October 1956 and the most important views it considered were those presented by the Alliance Party as it had majorities at both the federal and state levels. UMNO, MCA and the MIC decided to speak with one voice even though the represented different ethnic communities. This agreement is said to be the origin of a bargain between the UMNO and the MCA leaders whereby as a quid pro quo the MCA will accept that the 'special rights and privileges' of the Malays be protected and in return UMNO representing the Malays would concede that the

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[42] While Dato Onn could understand why the Malays did not support him, he felt that he was completely betrayed by the non-Malays because the cause for which he was fighting for would ultimately benefit them. After the IMP was dissolved, he founded the Parti Negara which was far more communal than UMNO. However, he still could not garner enough Malay support to build his new party.

Chinese and the other non-Malays should be granted 'easier' citizenship rights based on jus soli. UMNO also agreed that the Chinese will be given a free hand to pursue their economic interests.[43] The Reid Commission completed its work and the draft constitutional proposals were published in 1957 amidst objections by both Malays and Chinese. Malays were unhappy that their 'special rights' were not been provided for while the Chinese were dissatisfied with some provisions concerning citizenship as well as the 'special status' of the Chinese language which was not to their satisfaction.[44] There were extremist factions in both UMNO and the MCA but their influence was checked because the top leaders were able to hold them in rein. In order to lessen tensions between the various races the draft proposals were reviewed and modified by a working committee comprising of representatives of the Alliance, the Malay rulers and the British government at a meeting in London. In the Malayan Constitution, Islam became the state religion, but other religions are allowed to be practiced. The sultans were head of Islam in their states and the Yang di Pertuan Agong would be selected among the rulers to be the paramount constitutional ruler for a period of five years. Malay was the National Language but English was permitted to be used in parliament, the state legislatures and court of law for a period of at least ten years after merdeka. Malay Reservation still remained in the law books. The consent of the Conference of Rulers was needed on matters dealing with the 'special position' of the Malays

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[43] R.S. Milne and D.K. Mauzy, Politics and Government in Malaysia, Federal Publications, Singapore, 1978, p. 48.

[44] The Reid report proposed that the special position of the Malays should be reviewed after fifteen years with a view to their eventual withdrawal but this suggestion was strongly opposed by UMNO and thus was not included in the Malayan Constitution which set no time limit.

or the legitimate interests of other communities. However it was also agreed that not too openly that the Chinese role and dominance in economic matters would continue. With this general consensus arrived at by leaders of the Alliance Party, the Persekutuan Tanah Melayu obtained its independence on 31st August 1957.

I doubt whether the ordinary Malay, Chinese or Indians knew anything about the political agreements reached by the leaders of the Alliance because each of the various ethnic groups had a different perception of independent Malaya. The Chinese masses saw it as a state where they would enjoy to the hilt the rights and obligations of citizenship as well as equality in all sphere with the Malays. The Indians though a smaller minority was aligned with the Chinese view. The Malays still saw Malaya as distinctly Malay states and that the Chinese and Indians were accepted so long as they remained in the respective niches and did not challenge Malay rights and privileges. It is a miracle that Malaya did not descend into social anarchy since there was hardly any social or political philosophy that held the various ethnic communities together. While Indonesia could justly proclaim that it had achieved Unity in Diversity, Malaya was a dangerous example of diversity without unity. What kept the various races from falling on each other was the economic growth and prosperity that the country was blessed with. Perhaps, it was hoped that through the passage of time Malayans can evolve a common nationality as well as a modus vivendi among the various races that would be acceptable to all as well as guarantee peace and harmony.

But scarcely had we realized what exactly are the ramifications of independence, it was decided to establish the Malaysian Federation which would encompass Singapore, Brunei, and the East Malaysian

states of Sabah and Sarawak. The Tengku made a suggestion to unite these territories into a new nation state in May 1961. Singapore under Lee Kuan Yew was enthusiastic about the proposal and worked tirelessly to achieve the establishment of Malaysia. Brunei under its Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin was not keen while Sabah and Sarawak were ambivalent but nudged into the Federation by the British who wanted to get these territories off their hands. There was hardly much explanation given to the people of Malaya, Singapore, Sabah and Sarawak as to the necessity of forming a new nation state save for the fact that Malaysia was necessary to prevent the communists from gaining a foot hold in Singapore and thus threaten Malaya. As for the Sabahans and Sarawakians, they came into Malaysia more to balance the Chinese from Singapore who would become the majority in the Malaysian state. Indeed, there was hardly any ideological cement that could bind all these diverse communities together. The natives of Sabah and Sarawak who were non-muslims feared that Islam would be imposed on them. Singapore gained by being allowed to retain control over education, labour and other matters and Singapore citizenship was equivalent to citizenship of the Federation of Malaya. The Tengku made it plain that for reasons of 'national security' and 'mutual economy' Singapore and Malaysia should work together and the states of North Borneo were brought in because it was hoped that through this, the indigenous peoples of Borneo who outnumbered the Chinese there by three to one, would balance the Chinese majority in Singapore.[45]

The birth of Malaysia was ill starred in that both Indonesia and the Philippines opposed the formation of the new nation state.

[45] Mohamed Noordin Sopiee, From Malayan Union to Singapore Separation, p. 57.

Indonesia opposed it on the grounds that it was a neo-colonial entity perpetrated by the British government with the connivance of the ruling Malay feudal elite in Malaya to encircle Indonesia and threaten it sovereignty.[46] The Philippines opposed Malaysia because it felt that Sabah which belonged to the Sulu sultanate in the past was an integral part of the Philippines. While opposition to Malaysia from Indonesia and the Philippines may have kept the lid tight on ethnic violence, it did not prevent the succession of Singapore from Malaysia in August 1965.

While it was accepted that Malaysia was a plural society, there was hardly any integration among the various ethnic groups living in it. The formation of Malaysia placed a great strain on the precarious compact or agreement between the Malays and the Chinese whereby Malay special rights should not be questioned and the political predominance of the Malays would never be challenged provided the Chinese were allowed to pursue the commercial and industrial activities unimpeded.
Could this compact hold after the formation of Malaysia and especially with Singapore's entry since the Peoples' Action Party of Lee Kuan Yew was never a party to this arrangement?[47] The entry of the PAP into the politics of peninsula Malaya created serious ethnic tensions.

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[46] There was some justification for this fear because during the PRRI-Permesta Rebellion in 1958, the Malayan Federation was used as a base by Indonesian rebels as well as CIA operatives to undermine the government of Indonesia.

[47] In the first place, such a compact was unrealistic. The Chinese would in a matter of time demand a greater role as well as share in the political arena while the Malays would definitely demand a higher stake as well share in the economy of the nation. Thus this compact had a statist mentality that would doomed it to failure in a matter of time.

The PAP was brash and aggressive and its method of politicking was through a no holds barred debate while UMNO was very conservative and deliberate and preferred settling disagreements through quiet negotiations and mutual agreements. However, the breaking point came when the PAP decided to contest for seats in Peninsular Malaysia even though Lee Kuan Yew had given an undertaking to the Tengku that the PAP would not do so.[48] The PAP also made it clear that it intended to replace the MCA as UMNO's Chinese partner in the Alliance. The Tengku stated that he would stand by the MCA and rejected the PAP.[49] The PAP found itself in a quandary and it performed very badly in the elections as it won one seat out of eight that it contested.[50] The PAP now decided to play the role of an opposition and planned to overwhelm the Alliance by forming a coalition of opposition parties known as the Malaysia Solidarity Consultative Convention with the catchy slogan of 'Malaysian Malaysia.' Its manifesto stated that 'the nation and state is not identified with the supremacy, well-being and interest of any one community or race.'[51] Thus, the PAP was undermining the compact made between the UMNO and the MCA during the pre-merdeka discussions between them. The PAP also questioned the implementation of Malay 'rights and privileges', and it method of political campaigning and UMNO's response to the PAP aggravated serious ethnic tensions between the Malays and the non-Malays.

In July 1964, there Sino-Malay riots in Singapore which broke out on the occasion of a Muslim procession celebrating Prophet Muhammad's birthday.[52] The riots were blamed on Indonesian

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[48] Chan Heng Chee, Singapore, The Politics of Survival 1965-1967, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1971, p.8.

[49] Ibid., p. 9.

[50] Chan op.cit, p.6.

[51] J.M. Gullick, Malaysia, Ernest Benn Ltd., London, 1969, p.179.

subversive elements but it was clear to astute political observers that there were deep social, economic and political cleavages among the various ethnic groups in Malaysia.

By May 1965, Sino-Malay relations had reached a dangerous point. Lee Kuan Yew had now reached the stage when he questioned and openly challenged the special rights and privileges of the Malays. Sharp exchanges between Malaysian and Singaporean leaders aggravated the situation to the point of a possibility of a racial blood bath. Such a situation led the Tengku to make a decisive move by breaking off with Singapore. According to the Tengku, he had one of two options which were 'one, take positive action against Mr. Lee Kuan Yew; and, two, break with Singapore and save the nation from a blood bath.'[53] On 9th August 1965, the Tengku made an official announcement in Parliament that Singapore was no longer a part of the Malaysian Federation.[54] Thus Malaysia, a new nation that came into existence barely 3 years ago had to expel Singapore whose merger with Malaya was the main reason for having Malaysia in the first place. The Tengku maintained that had Singapore with all the ethnic tensions continue to remain in Malaysia, there would have been unprecedented fighting between the Malays and the Chinese. In his own words: 'If we had not separated there would have been blue murder.'[55]

I beg to disagree with the Tengku on this. The departure of Singapore from Malaysia merely postponed the hour of reckoning. The political debates between the PAP leadership and the Alliance

[52] Gordon P. Means, Malaysian Politics, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1976 (2nd. Edition), p. 16.

[53] Tengku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, Looking Back. Monday Musings and memories, Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur, 1977, p.127.

[54] R.S. Milne and Diane K Mauzy, Politics and Government in Malaysia, Federal Publications, Singapore, 1978, p. 74.

[55] Ibid., p.74.

showed very clearly that the basis of the Malaysian nation state has not been accepted by its citizenship. The Malays still saw Malaysia as a distinctly Malay nation state while the non-Malays saw it as a new nation where everyone irrespective of the ethnic origins or religion would be treated equally in all spheres. The political conflict between Malaysia and Singapore had effectively unraveled the bargain or compact between the UMNO and the MCA. If there was no widespread ethnic conflict in Malaysia after Singapore's withdrawal, it was because 'Konfrantasi' with Indonesia was still on. But when it ended in 1966, the 1969 general election revealed all too clearly that the dangerous communal politics that was left behind by the PAP had effectively poisoned the Malaysian political system. Opposition political parties such as the Democratic Action Party which patterned itself after the PAP as well as the Peoples' Progressive Party took over the racial politics of the PAP and campaigned once again on the platform of the PAP's 'Malaysian Malaysia' political manifesto.

The Alliance manifesto had no appeal to both Malays and non-Malays and its reference to the historic compact between the MCA and the UMNO was seen as a sell out by both ethnic communities and ethnic polarization had reached a critical level. Even though the Alliance suffered losses during the elections it still retained political power. But to the Malays the psychological shock of having come close to losing power in some states led to the most serious racial riots after merdeka. UMNO won 51 of the 67 seats that were contested, the MCA won only 13 of 33 while the MIC won two out of three. The opposition DAP won 13 seats. Penang had fallen to the opposition, while Selangor was within a whisker of falling to the opposition. Kelantan fell under the control of PAS. The Riots of 13 May 1969 were effectively the turning point in

Malaysian history and politics. On 14 May the Yang di Pertuan Agong proclaimed a state of emergency throughout Malaysia. The Malaysian Constitution and Parliament was suspended. A National Operations Council headed by Tun Abdul Razak was set up and he was the effective ruler of Malaysia. Even during these dark times, steps were taken to mend the rift between the Malays and non-Malays. Non-Malays were appointed and also included in the institutions set up after the riots such as the National Operations Council and the National Goodwill Council. Attempts by Malay ultra nationalists to impose complete Malay control over the political system was successfully contained.

In January 1970, the department of National Unity and the National Consultative Council came into being. Discussions were held between leaders of the various ethnic groups to find a basis for consensus and agreement. A national ideology was discussed and the drafting of the ideology was done by the Department of National Unity. This culminated in the Rukunegara which was promulgated by the yang di Pertuan Agong on 31st August 1970. It was hoped that the Rukunegara will be the cement that will bind Malaysians together irregardless of the ethnic origins. It is to the credit to the political elite representing the various political parties that that the Rukunegara was successful in restoring harmony to the Malaysian nation state.

The success of this was clearly seen when on 23 February 1971, the new parliament was opened, ending twenty months of rule by the National Operations Council. Malays and non-Malays have come to accept the political and social realities confronting the nation and to cooperate towards ending the economic, social and political gap between the various races.

Undoubtedly, while it has been argued that amendments to the Malaysian Constitution that makes it an offence to question Malay rights and privileges, the position of Islam and the Malay language as the national language of Malaysia, we should note that there are also ironclad guarantees that safeguard the interests of the non-Malays. Thus the middle path chosen by the ruling elite has succeeded in defusing the ethnic tensions and created a consensus of political behavior among the various races in Malaysia. Perhaps this could well be the first step in our path towards formulating a truly Malaysian identity acceptable to all.

LOCAL COLLECTIVE MEMORIES AND NATIONAL UNITY

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Mochtar Loetfi (1901 – 1950) was a great orator. Many contemporary observers liked to compare him with Sukarno, with one important exception. If Sukarno could never liberate himself from uttering Dutch, English or even French and German expressions, Loetfi, being trained in Cairo, was a master in quoting Quranic verses and Hadith. Whatever the case this comparison was apt because the two leaders also found many things in common, ideologically, and they soon became good friends the moment they met. In early 1933 — that is not long before they were both arrested and exiled — Sukarno's Partindo and Loetfi's *Persatuan Muslimin Indonesia* (better known as Permi) agreed to collaborate in their efforts to advance the independence movement. No Partindo branch should be established in any region wherever the Permi had already had its branch and Permi would not be formed in the region or town if Partindo had already had its branch. With the slogan " *Indonesia Merdeka, Islam Mulia*" (Indonesian independence, Islamic glory), the Permi was the first party to base itself on "*Islam dan kebangsaan*" (Islam and nationalism).[1] Established by the

[1] On the origin and the ideology of the Permi, see Taufik Abdullah, *Schools and Politics: the Kaum movement in West Sumatra (1927-1933)*, Ithaca, New York: Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University, 1972

graduates of the Islamic "modernist" school, the Sumatra Thawalib of Padang Panjang and some former students of al Azhar (Cairo), who had observed (some of them even participated in [2]) the Egyptian nationalist movement, the Permi , as its founders stated, was an answer to the continuing debate between Islam and nationalism. Not only that with the formation of this party the former students of the *kaum muda* (Islamic reformist) *ulama* had also definitively abandoned the idea of internatioanalist "pan Islamic" idea that had for awhile entertained by their teachers. [3] Mochtar Loetfi was the most articulate spokesman of the party.

As a radical political party the Permi can be seen as an answer not only to the ideological controversies between Islam and nationalism (*kebangsaan*), but also to the dilemma faced by the *kaum muda* (Islamic reform) movement in Minangkabau. The opening of "the gate of *ijtihad"* such as propagated by the first generation of the k*aum muda* had not only rekindled religious enthusiasm and introduced new religious consciousness but had also arisen political radicalism among its young adherents. The opening of the "gate of *ijtihad* might also in effect undermine the authority of the teachers, whose judgment was traditionally taken as binding. What the non-political pioneers of the Islamic *kaum muda* could do if

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[2] See, D.van der Meulen, *Ik stond er bij* . The author was the Consul of the Netherlands in Cairo in the late 1920s. See also Mona Abaza,, *Changing Images of three generations of Azharites in Indonesia,* Singapore: ISEAS, 1993 and her , *Islamic Education, perceptions, and exchanges: Indonesian Students in Cairo,* Paris : Association Archipel, 1994. On the political activities of the students in the Middle East, see also Abdullah, *Schools and Politics.*

[3] Haji Abdullah Ahmad and Syeikh A.Karim Amrullah received their honorary *doctor al fiddin* from the Conference of Khilafah, held in Cairo in 1926.

some of their own students had been persuaded by the politics of opposition to the colonial government? What is the basic different between the Islamic notions of justice with the one that had been preached by the communists, the students might ask. It was after several young teachers and students of the oldest and then the biggest *kaum muda* school, the Sumatra Thawalib, joined the communist movement that the PKI spread out rather rapidly in the region. A major split in the rank of the young leaders of the *kaum muda* could not be avoided. In the meantime a track written by a great Egyptian *ulama*, which attacked the principles of historical materialism had also reached the community of the school. In order to spread its influences the Islamic oriented communist movement also published journals and established branches throughout the region. In their understanding communism was never conceived as an ideology, much less as a system of belief. As the Islamic communist leaders perceived it communism was just an *ilmu,* a branch of knowledge that might help one to understand their present social and political predicament and a way to solve the problems. When finally the radicalization of the PKI had reached the climax, the ill-timed rebellion broke out in Silungkang, a village known for its textile home industry. The rebellion was crushed, but the Sumatra Thawalib as an organization and as a school had to seriously redefine its orientation. Many of its young leaders joined the Muhammadyah, which had been very introduced to the region since 1925. They not only politicized the non-political reformist organization but also radicalized it as well. Pressed by the colonial government, the Muhammadyah in its biggest national conference in 1930, held in Bukittinggi, had to expel the young and energetic local leaders. That was the time the organization of Sumatra Thawalib had to be revived. In a few

months the organization was transformed into the Permi, with a much clearer political program and ideological orientation.[4]
Not unlike Sukarno, who liked to use traditional imageries to illustrate and even to emphasize his political messages[5] with the highly glorified past events, Mochtar Loetfi also excelled himself in using *tarikh* (Islamic moral history) and Minangkabau *tambo (*traditional historiography). One of his political metaphors that remained in the public memory was his statement that " when Indonesia has achieved its independent, the ruler of the country would be Dang Tuanku"— the legendary *Rajo Alam* (King of the World) of Minangkabau. People took this statement in good humor, but at the same time the idea of having a culturally familiar figure as the ruler caught their imagination. The future they were now striving for was not a strange future, but a legitimate one. Moreover by referring to the traditional Minangkabau ideal of a just king, Mochtar Loetfi not only gave cultural sanction to the formation of the supra-ethnic national community, he also made the concept of " the independence of Indonesia" culturally make sense. After all Dang Tuanku, the *Rajo Alam,* according to the Minangkabau concept of royalty, stood above the other two kings, namely the King of Adat (*Rajo Adaik)* and the King of Religion (*Rajo Ibadaik).* In other words the *Rajo Alam* symbolizes the harmonious blend between religion, Islam, and traditional custom or adat. [6]

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4 Abdullah, *Schools and Politics,*

5 On this see, Dahm, *Sukarno, loc.cit.*

6 On this Minangkabau "state myth", see Taufik Abdullah, "The *Kaba Tjindue Mato* : an example of Minangkabau traditional literature", *Indonesia,* (October,1969), 1-23. Mochtar Lutfi and his friends, Iljas Jacub and Djalaluddin Thaib, the three top leaders of the Permi were arrested and exiled to Digul 1934. During the war they were taken to Australia and in 1946 the Dutch returned them to Indonesia. But only Iljas Jacub and Djalaluddin Thaib were brought back to West Sumatra. Mochtar Lutfi was sent to Makassar where he emerged as an important pro Republican Muslim leader. In 1950 he was shot to death by the rebellious KNIL soldiers.

Sukarno was telling the truth when he said in his famous defense speech, *Indonesia Accuses,* that he sought to implant in the people's hearts the notion of the past glory, the dark present, and the promising and bright future. In admitting this strategy Soekarno was actually also stating that he had been engaging himself in the myth-making process. The future might be something one could dream of and the present was something one could enjoy or suffer but the past could be made alive by recalling collective memories, either symbolically recorded in local historiographies or kept in oral traditions. The use of traditional collective memories in spreading the modern idea of nationalism may not only give the notion of the illegitimacy of the present situation but also the sense of interrupted historical continuity. There was a time when the fact of being subjected to a colonial power had to be culturally accounted for—a new history might have to be revised and rewritten or a new way at interpreting the present to be formulated[7]. That was the time when the wounded pride of being subjected to the outside power had to be healed and the economic burden of the exploited people had to be culturally neutralized. But when colonialism began to be conceptualized as what it was the foreign rule could always be seen as an illegitimate interruption to the sense of historical continuity.

The mirror of the past — the mythologized past— was used not only as an inspiration to "recover" the lost glory and to create a

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[7] See for example Merle C. Ricklef, *Jogjakarta under Sultan Mangkubumi, 1749-1792: A history of the division of Java,*London-New York: Oxford University Press, 1974. See also his *Modern Javanese historical tradition. A study of an original Kartasura chronicle and related materials.* London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1978. See also a short article by Sartono Kartodirdjo,== in Sartono Kartodirdjo (ed.), *Profiles of Malay Culture,* Jakarta: Directorate General of Culture, Department of Education and Culture, 1976.

promising future, but also, and more importantly, to legitimize the struggle for independence.

Within the context of a multi-ethnic nation, it is not too difficult to understand that the notion of Indonesia, being as what it was then — as Hatta said in his defense of the name— " a fatherland in the future"— tended to be perceived by the people from their own respective concept of the past. Indonesia was one but it could be perceived differently. It was more likely to be seen as the ideal extension of one's own traditional world. From the beginning, therefore, one can assume that the emerging nation of "Indonesia" promised to be a cultural *bazaar*, where every cultural assumptions or ideological orientations may have to establish workable system of symbolic communication or conduct of dialogue. They may even have to find themselves in competition with each other. Let the dynamic of exchanges in the bazaar decide which cultural or ideological commodity would get the most buyers.

Perhaps no society could sustain its existence without the support of the memories of the past. The structure of the present itself is an invitation to a host of innumerable questions about the past. Why this and that should have been like this and that and why not this or that and so on. Collective memories of the past may provide the answers to such questions. If they fail to give the answers then for whatever ways myths may already there to provide them. Collective memories are also the reservoir of recollections on inter-ethnic or inter-polity relation in the past. The *babad*, *sejarah, tambo, lontara, hikayat* or whatever term the divergent ethnic communities use for describing their cultural perceptions of the past, as what traditional historiography is, never forget to mention their knowledge on and their relationship with the other

communities and polities . This relationship sometimes is seen as one of the cultural and structural foundations of the polity or community. A local dynasty in a certain region might remember its origin from some other part of the Indonesian world. These and those cultural traits may still be remembered as worthy and sacred influences from this or that community, across the sea. The *Nagarakertagama,* the 14th century text on the empire of Majapahit may well be only a cultural claim of the empire and therefore should not be taken as its political territories.[8] The fact that the text describes so many localities in the Nusantara world, from the northern tip of Sumatra to eastern most part of Indonesia, proves not only the ancient existence of the localities mentioned but also the state of existing knowledge on the regions. And if the *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai* also tells the story of the political relationship between the earliest Islamic kingdom in Northern Sumatra with the mighty Hindu empire in East Java then one can surmise that there must be something going on between them. And indeed the Malay text talks about the defeat of the Islamic kingdom against the onslaught of the Majapahit and the marriage between the king of Majapahit and the princess of Pasai[9]. In the Javanese collective memory on the process of Islamization the role of Pasai is never forgotten.

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[8] This is a famous and controversial theory of C.C. Berg, who sees traditional historiography as a cultural instead of historical testimony. See his "The Javanese Picture", in Soedjatmoko, et.al (eds.) *An introduction to Indonesian Historiography,* Ithaca, New York : Cornell University Press, 1964. On the text see Pigeaud, *Java in the Fourteenth Century*, The Hague; Mouton, 19 , 4 vols.

[9] See, T.Ibrahim Alfian, *Kronika Pasai,* Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 197

The people of Minangkabau may acknowledge it as an historical fact that their first king was Adityawarman, a 14th century Majapahit prince. But in their cultural imagination of the past the name Minangkabau came into being after their water buffalo *(kabau)* defeated that of the king of Majapahit. The people of Manggarai in the island of Flores still remember that their first king was a Minangkabau , who came, via Gowa (Makasar), in the 17th century[10]. How can the people of Banjar (South Kalimantan) forget the fact that the sultanate of Banjarmasin was established because the Sultanate of Demak (North coast of Java) came to help Prince Samudra, who had been expelled from the kingdom of Daha by his uncle, the usurper? After all, this event has been described in the famous *Hikayat Banjar.*

The spread of Islam[11], which most likely followed trading sea-route, is undoubtedly instrumental in creating a highly intricate complex of networks of regional collective memories. The Nine Saints (*Wali Sanga)* as the propagators of Islam in Javanese cultural tradition can never be separated from Pasai , since one of them is supposed to have come to Java through this oldest known Islamic kingdom in Southeast Asia (late 13th century). Pasai and later its successor, Aceh Darussalam (and of course, Malaka) occupy special positions in the local traditions on the spread of Islam in many regions in the Malay world (including the Malay Peninsula and Southern Philippines).[12] The tradition of Ambon (*Tanah Hitu)* and that of Ternate remember Sunan Giri (one of the Nine Saints

[10] Dami N.Toda—

[11] Unless otherwise cited, this portion is based on Taufik Abdullah, *Islam dan Pluralisnme di Asia Tenggara,* Jakarta: PMB-LIPI, 1996, vol.I.

[12] See for example A.A.Teeuw & David Wyatt (eds.) , *Hikayat Patani,* The Hague: Mouton,

of Java) as being the teachers of their leaders, who later spread the new religion. But then how the people of Gorontalo in the Northern part of Sulawesi could forget the fact that it was during the time when their country under the domination of the Sultanate of Ternate that the process of Islamization began. The competition between Ternate and the kingdom of Gowa to dominate the region only hastened the process of Islamization.[13] The people of Bima (Sumbawa) remember that it was the traders and fighters from Makassar who introduced Islam to them. The Makassarese however, never forget the recorded fact that the Islamization of their double kingdoms took place in 1604. That was the time when three *ulama* from Minangkabau succeeded in persuading the king of Tallo (who was the prime- minister of Gowa) and the king of Gowa to convert into the religion that recognized the Absolute Oneness of God. In the Minangkabau collective memory the genesis of the tradition of religious school was laid down in the early 17th century by Syekh Burhanuddin, after his return from Aceh, where he studied under the great ulama, Syekh Abdur Rauf al-Singkili.

In spreading its influence Islam might, as in the case of Pasai and others, establish a supra-village kingdom, or, as in the case of the double kingdom Gowa-Tallo and others, converted the center of power, or, finally managed to conquer the center of power. This was the case when finally the alliance of the small Islamic principalities on the north coast of Java, conquered the Majapahit empire. In the process Islam also laid down different kinds of political traditions. Pasai (and its successor, Aceh Darussalam) or

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[13] J. Bastiaan, "Persekutuan Limbotto-Gorontalo", in Taufik Abdullah (ed), *Sejarah Lokal di Indonesia,* Yogyakarta, 1990, 203-232,

even Gowa-Tallo might have relative freedom to Islamize their respective traditional worlds. The spread of Islam really began after the center of power had been converted. Demak, Pajang, and Mataram, the three successive centers of Islamic power in Java, however, did not have this relative cultural freedom. From the beginning the Islamic centers of power had to struggle to maintain certain kind of cultural continuity for the sake of gaining legitimacy[14]. By the time the colonial power began to advance to these Islamic polities — a process that took place about three hundred years— certain kind of political tradition had been established in these Islamic kingdoms and polities. If Aceh had the luxury of defining itself entirely in Islamic terms, these Javanese Islamic polities conceptualized their world as ones that were maintained by the unending dialogue between the *kraton,* as the center of power, and the *pesantren,* the religious school, as the center of religion.[15] These political traditions were to continue to exert their influences in the post-independence period.

These collective memories might have been disappeared had the early acquaintance with this religion not been followed by the activities of the wandering *ulama*, religious teachers, who traveled from one place to another to propagate " a slice of *ayat"* (Qur'anic sentence). When Raja Haji became the *Raja Muda* (Viceroy) the Johor Riau empire, according to *Tufhat an Nafis* the empire was at

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[14] H.J. de Graaf, & Th.G. Th. Pigeaud, *Eerste Moslimse vorstendommen op Java: Studiën over de staadkundige geschiedennis van de 15e en 16e eeuw. VKI* 69, s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhof, 1974

[15] See Taufik Abdullah, Islam and the Formation of Tradition in Indonesia : A Comparative Perspective", *Itenerario*, (Special Issue; India and Indonesia: General Perspective), xiii,1 (1989). See also *Islam dan Pluralisme di Asia Tenggara* , Jakarta : PMB-LIPI, vol.I.

the peak of its power. It was the time when many junks from China came to Riau and it was also the time when "many *khatibs* from Java " came to teach religion.[16] The wandering *ulama* not only maintained the relationship between the "sender of Islam" and "the recipients" and tried to safeguard certain notion of religious orthodoxy, they also took with them books on Islam. The Sumatran origin *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai* was discovered in the North Java. It was said that a favorite book of Hamengkubuwono I, the first Sultan of Yogyakarta after the division of the Mataram kingdom (1755), was the Javanese translation of *Tajus-salatin,* written in Aceh Darussalam (in early 17th century). It is ,perhaps, first political theory written in Malay. Diponegoro, the great warrior against the Dutch in the Java (1825-1830) also used this book as his guidance.[17] The 19th century Syekh Ismail al-Banjari wrote a book, a much simpler one, he said, because, *Sirat-al Mustaqim,* the *fiqh* book written by the 17th century Syekh Nuruddin Arraniri of Aceh was too difficult for the novice to understand. The 20th century the wandering *ulama* sometimes brought with them new ideas and understanding of the true teaching of Islam. Only this time they had already organizations, such as Muhammadiyah at their disposal. The famous ulama and religious thinker, Hamka (1908-1985), who originally came from Minangkabau, spent several years in Makassar as a representative of the Central Board of the Muhammadiyah. In the late 1930s, after completing his tenure in Makasar, he published a novel, depicting the romantic

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[16] On this very fine 18th century Malay historical text, see Virginia Matheson and Barbara Andaya, *The Precious Gift,* Singapore, Kuala Lumpur : Oxford University Press.

[17] A short discussion on the ideas expressed in the *Tajus-salatin,* see Taufik Abdullah , == in Anthory Reid,

love between a Buginese, whose father was a Minangkabau (hence he was not Minangkabau, according to the matrilineal kinship system), with a Minangkabau girl, in a journal he edited, published in Medan (North Sumatra). [18] By that time print-culture had become very much part of the "modernist" Islamic means of communication. There were already several Islamic journals and magazines published at that time.[19] Hamka was one the writers who creatively used the place of Islam in the collective memories to advance the notion of belonging to one "national" community.

The pilgrimage to Mekka had since the beginning of the formation of the colonial state of the Netherlands Indies suspected by the government as a source of political subversion. The government never allowed a *haj,* the one who has perform the pilgrimage, to be elected or appointed as an indigenous village or district head. In his book on Mekka in the 19th century, C. Snouck Hurgronje, who more than anybody else was responsible for laying the foundation of the so-called Islamic policy[20], noticed to his dismay that the *Jawah* community, the pilgrim community from the Malay

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[18] See Hamka, *Tenggelamnya Kapal van der Wijk,* One of the most popular novels, it has been printed several times. On Hamka as a novelist, see A.A. Teeuw, *Modern Indonesian Literature,* The hague: Mouton, 1972, vol.1

[19] The earliest Islamic "modernist" journal in the Malay world was *Al-Imam,* published in Singapore in 1904. In 1911 *Al Moenir* was published in Padang. In the 1930s there were two nationally distributed Islamic "modernist" weekly magazines published in Medan, the *Pandji Islam* (under the editorship of Zainal Abidin Ahmad) and *Pedoman Masjarakat* (under Hamka). Jakarta, Bandung, Solo were also the centers of Islamic publications in the 1930s.

[20] See among other Harry S.Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun,* Bandung/ The Hague : W. van Hoeve, 1960.

World, showed deep sympathy to the Acehenese who were fighting against the Dutch aggression. Snouck also describes of the attachment of the community to the religious teachers who came from the region.[21] Although Snouck would later advise the government that the majority of the returnees did not change much, the suspicion continued. Mekka and the pilgrimage did blur the ethnic boundaries of the believers. In the biography of his father, Syekh Dr.A.Karim Amrullah (1879-1945), one of the pioneers of the Islamic *kaum muda* ("modernist") in Minangkabau, Hamka tells that his father was offered the position as the *mufti,* religious chief justice, of the Sultanate of Ternate, when he was about to return to Minangkabau after completing his study in Mekka.[22] By the beginning of the First World War the colonial government had already seen another ghost in the form of pan-Islamism. The Sarekat Islam's venture into this new movement only lasted until end of the first Khalifat Congress in Mecca (1924). In the early 1930s Indonesian *mukims,* settlers, in Mekka were also engaged themselves in the politics of national independence by establishing political party and nationalist religious school.[23]

Colonial exploitation and rule might have given the feeling of shared destiny among the colonized people. Urban environment with its plural society and the use of racial category in colonial relationship might have created the need for having a new sense of community. Modern schools, voluntary associations, and print-

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[21] C.Snouch Hurgronje, *Mekka in the latter part of the nineteenth century*

[22] Hamka, *Ajahku,* Djakarta: Penerbit Djajamurni, 1967,65

[23] Michael Francis Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia: The* Umma *below the winds*, London and New york: Routledge Curzon,2003,215-228

capitalism or even commercial arts might have provided the channels through which new ideas could be propagated.
But memories of the distant past and the traditional recollections of the spread of Islam could provide a believable aura to the notions that the divergent ethnic communities may actually ultimately destine to be constituted as one national community.

Be that as it may, Islam and the memories of the distant past soon become inseparable parts in the dynamic of ideological discourse. Cultural nationalism, that was particularly nurtured by the educated local *literati* might have eventually given way to political nationalism, which emphasized the need to solve colonial problems and the urgency to form a new and modern community, that cut across ethnic boundaries, the continuing local perceptions on the meaning of nationalism can never be easily discounted. Nor local concerns in the process of building a nation state can be rejected as an anachronism. Occasionally these concerns would emerge to the surface. They would question, sometimes seriously, the political and cultural legitimacy of the center in imposing its hegemonic interpretation on the nature of the nation state.

It was only after the communist-elements, which had for some years formed some kind of a "bloc within", were forced to abandon the Sarekat Islam [24], the process of the ideologization of Islam began. How Islam, being the universal and eternal religion, recognizes no state or national boundaries and its teachings are valid through the ages, be strategically interpreted into a program of struggle in a certain time and space? Islam is indeed a *din*, and as such by itself it is a "complete civilization" (as, the great British

[24] See . McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism, loc.cit.*

Orientalist, Gibb [25]puts it) but can it deal with specific political case? The concept of "justice to all" has from the beginning been the normative and ideological foundation of Islamic state (*daulah*). These notions are some of the enduring elements in Islamic political discourse. With different levels of sophistication these enduring elements can easily be found in any Islamic political discourse.

In their discourses Islamic ideologues in Indonesia usually make references to two other equally enduring elements. Firstly, the sociological claim of Islam as being the religion of the majority. The implication of this sociological claim is clear enough. It is the attachment to this religion that could guarantee the continuing unity of this multi-ethnic nation. The networks of collective memories formed by the spread of Islam only added to this claim. It is therefore understandable if the Islamic groups have from the beginning opposed the cultural nationalist tendencies to glorify the pre-Islamic period. " They are only preaching *Majapahit* nationalism, not Indonesian nationalism", the Islamic leaders used to say. Secondly, the historical claim of the Muslims as being the vanguards of the opposition to the colonial rule. It is not too difficult to recite the names of the heroes from the 17th to the early 20th centuries who fought against the Dutch. After the kings failed, members of the royal aristocracy would come forward. Diponegoro, who fought under the banner of Islam (1825-1830), was the last member of the royalty to lead the opposition against the penetration

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[25] In his introduction to the book he edited. H.A.R.Gibb, *Whither Islam?,* London: Victor Gollanz, Ltd,1932. It was, perhaps, Mohammad Natsir (the future leader of the Masyumi) the first to introduce Gibb's 'complete civilization' thesis to the Indonesian reading public. See his pre-war collection of writings in his *Capita Selecta,* Bandung/Den Haag : W.van Hoeve, 1956.

of the Dutch power in Java. Pangeran Antasari was the last royal family of the Sultanate of Banjarmasin to take arms against the Dutch in South Kalimantan. After *plakat pendek* (*korte verklaring*), that is the recognition of Dutch sovereignty, was signed and the politics of exploitation had to be endured, scattered rebellions, under the leadership of the rural *ulama*, broke out here and there[26]. The second half of the 19th century may to some extent be seen as the period of scattered rural rebellions in Java[27].

The religious legality of national community and the tendency to sacralize the symbol of fatherland were seriously debated in the 1920s and early 1930s. If the meaning of the "nation" was the separation from the rest of the larger community of the *ummah*, then the nation could easily be identified *asyabiyah* or "tribalism".[28] This is definitely *haram* or forbidden according to religious law. What is the basis of the Indonesian nation? And, if the glorification of the fatherland meant the deification of it, then the national community had committed an unpardonable sin in the face of God. Only the one and the only God should be treated as the Deity.[29] No

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[26] On this "periodization", see Taufik Abdullah, " Response to Colonial Power: the Jambi experiences in Comparative perspective", *Prisma: the Indonesian Indicator,* 33, September, 1984, 13-29.

[27] Sartono Kartodirdjo, *Protest Movements in Rural Java,* Singapore, New York : Oxford University Press, 1973.

[28] Hassan, the leader of the Persatuan Islam, was very sensitive on this issue. On the Persatuan Islam, see Howard Federspiel, *The Persatuan Islam,* Ithaca, New York: Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University, 1966. On the debates , see Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia,* Kuala Lumpur : Oxford University Press, 1972.

[29] This problem was raised by Haji Agus Salim in his criticisms to Sukarno's over-zealous (in Salim's opinion) nationalism. On the debate, see Dahm, *Sukarno, loc.cit.*

final solution to be found of the debates. They were only solved by the course of events—a new nation was here to stay. A more long lasting debate deals with the question of the basic foundation of the state. This is the debate that was later used by President Sukarno to dissolve the elected Constituent Assembly in 1959.

A National Community

In the beginning there were several colonial towns, where people lived in a racially segregated environment[30]. In a way these colonial towns were not unlike the coastal towns during the flourishing time of the maritime kingdoms in the Indonesian archipelago. That was the time, as the reports of the so many travelers state, when many languages were spoken in the maritime trading centers.[31] The coastal trading centers attracted people to come and to stay until the proper wind came. Similar things can also be said about the colonial towns. Since the time the VOC managed to maintain the security and the safety of the settlers the colonial towns had become the magnets to the people of the surrounding areas to come. In the process of some colonial towns might emerge as a kind of the place where several communities of strangers had to tolerate each other's presence. In the coastal towns in the old days, it was the king and his royal coteries and, perhaps, also the rich foreign

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[30] Old Batavia may be taken as the real proto-type of the colonial town, see Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia, loc.cit* On the intre-racial relations in the segregated society see Leonard Blussé, *Strange Company, Chinese Settlers, Mestizo Women and the Dutch in VOC Batavia,* Dordrecht: Foris Publications, 1986..

[31] See for example, Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450-1680, Volume Two; Expansion and Crisis,*New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993.

merchants, who had managed to seal some kind of commercial and political arrangement with palace, had the privileged positions. In the colonial towns the indigenous ruling class had been set aside. Their position as the privileged class had been taken over by the new masters who came from the country "above the wind". The ordinary people occupied the lowest ladder in the hierarchy. Then a question was raised among the so-called indigenous people, who might as well come from the surrounding villages or even distant islands. How come the foreigners, who came from the distant country, were more powerful and richer? Gradually a desire to catch- up with the richer and more powerful foreigners emerged. But then suddenly the subordinating nature of the colonial relationship was also realized. What did we do wrong that the foreigners came to rule our country? Are we destined to be the subjugated people? Or could it perhaps only a matter of historical bad luck? Then history was studied and the almost forgotten collective memories were recounted. Then again the experience of other countries were studied. Finally a new idea came to mind—a new nation, an imaginatively constructed one, was needed. Who would then be surprised to learn that Ernest Renan's ideas on the nation captured the imagination of the early leaders of the nationalist movement? *Une nation est une âme, un princip spirituel... L'une est la possession en commun d'un riche legs de souvenirs; l'autre est le consentement actuel, le désir de vivre ensemble, la volonté de continuer à faire valoir l'héritage qu'on a reçu indivis.*"[32] A nation is a matter of how one would define one's community subjectively. It is a matter a desire to belong to.

[32] Quoted in Van Miert, *Dengan semangat,* 21-22.

The great symbolic importance given to October 28, 1928 in the national consciousness can then be understood. That was the time when the island- and ethnic-based student organizations agreed to disband themselves and to form an all-Indonesia youth organization. Though much less meaningful symbolically the day, in 1935, when several ethnic-and island-based political parties decided to dissolve themselves and to establish the Greater Indonesia Party, *Partai Indonesia Raja* or Parindra is also important. These two events reflect the growing concern for the future and, not less significance, the wisdom in understanding the past. By abandoning the island or ethnic based national solidarity these organizations liberated themselves from the fetters of the past— the past that was crowded by the instability of the pattern of relationship and the past that may have crowded with the sense of unfulfilled revenge. By joining to visualize a new kind of community— "the fatherland of the future", Hatta once remarked— which was supposed to be modern and democratic, they had followed the steps of the other parties that had from the beginning imagined "Indonesia" as a new nation. At the same time they could also perceive the past from different perspective. Therefore whatever the present official ideology might have said about the genesis of the Indonesian nation one thing is certain, the nation is not something inherited from the so-called "glorious past". It began with an idea or, perhaps, only an imagination, but it ended up with a new sense of community that was something worth fighting for. How many places of exile the colonial government had established in order to terminate the gradual process of nation-formation? In the process not only the intricate relationship between primordial attachment and the new concept of political community should be conceptually imagined different types of ideological persuasion also began to debated and entertained. The origin of some

ideologies may be traced to its foreign sources but others may as well be the results of the systematization of traditional values. One can therefore say that by the end of the colonial rule the newly formed nation had already acquainted itself with all kinds of modern ideas on what a nation state should be based on—democracy, social justice, social solidarity, or whatever.

Whatever the participants of the eventful day of the Proclamation of Independence might say and whatever the historians might in their turn reconstruct the event, the proclamation itself was a brave and bold action. How could the leaders and the radical youths guarantee that the people would support their daring act? When they did proclaim the independence of Indonesia and elected their leaders the people who attended the simple ceremony had actually announced that a new nation state had been born. A national community had established a nation state.

Indonesia might still be a "geographical expression" as conservative Dutch officials never ceased to remind the world community. The "nation-makers"—as what once the leaders of the youth organizations proudly called themselves—were determined to continue the process of nation building. After the Proclamation of Independence, Indonesia was no longer "the future", but had become "the present" to be defended and developed. With the Proclamation of Independence Indonesia had entered into the uncharted future. There was no past to be continued and there was no model from history to be emulated. It was the first experience without precedence. But how then to create a new political and cultural sphere where every body may feel at home? It was also actually more than that. The proclamation was also a promise to dignified life, economic justice, and so forth. In retrospect the

process of nation formation may arouse romantic historical feeling, but the long way to nation building may sometimes create the feeling of anxiety and hopelessness.

This is the story of the struggle of Indonesia to fulfil the promises of its independence. Not a very heartening story, perhaps, it is a continuing struggle, nonetheless. This is what really counts. Was it not Aristotle who made the different between tragic event and tragedy? The former is just a sad story, but the latter evokes struggle that has not brought victory.