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History, Political Images and Cultural Encounter The Dutch in the Indonesian Archipelago

Abstraksi: Dalam artikel ini, penulis menjelaskan bagaimana penduduk Nusantara, sejak hubungan pertama dengan orang Belanda di penghujung abad ke-16 Masehi sampai kini, mengembangkan berbagai gambaran tentang pendatang asing tersebut. Berbagai gambaran yang berkembang di kalangan pribumi tentang orang asing menarik untuk dibahas karena mencerminkan pemahaman hubungan mereka dengan pendatang Belanda. Gambaran itu berfungsi sebagai sarana untuk membuat orang lain yang asing itu lebih dapat dimengerti. Gambaran tersebut juga berfungsi sebagai alat untuk menjadikan hubungan dengan orang asing itu tampak lebih dapat diterima. Karena pengetahuan penduduk pribumi mengenai orang Belanda semakin bertambah maka sifat hubungan mereka dengan orang Belanda mengalami berbagai perubahan.

Pada tahap pertama, kehadiran orang Belanda secara umum dianggap sebagai gangguan budaya. Penyebab gangguan tersebut terutama karena perbedaan agama. Karena itu, pada tahap pertama hubungan Belanda-Nusantara, orang Belanda umumnya digambarkan sebagai orang kafir. Gambaran ini sering kali disertai dengan pandangan negatif lain seperti licik, kikir, dan ingkar janji. Gambaran yang muncul dari pengalaman konkret ini telah melahirkan suatu ideologi yang mensakralkan perlawanan terhadap para saudagar Belanda —menjadikannya jihâd atau "perang suci"—, yang hanya bisa diakhiri kalau orang Belanda menerima Islam. Dengan demikian, perlawanan terhadap para pedagang asing

sebaliknya.

mendapat makna transendental, dan dukungan dari luar negeri mulai diharapkan atas dasar solidaritas Islam yang melampaui batas negarabangsa itu.

Namun setelah penduduk pribumi mengalami kekalahan demi kekalahan dan kekuasaan Belanda semakin besar, gambaran tadi tidak sesuai lagi dengan kenyataan empiris. Karena itu pada tahap kedua, berkembanglah gambaran tentang orang Belanda yang melipur hati bangsa yang kalah: orang Belanda mendapat tempat dalam dunia mitologis berbagai dinasti dan kelompok etnis pribumi. Dari musuh yang dibenci dan penguasa tak sah, orang Belanda mulai digambarkan sebagai mitra terhormat yang menduduki tempat mata rantai terakhir dalam berbagai genealogi penguasa yang bersifat mitis. Dalam beberapa mitologi, orang Belanda bahkan digambarkan sebagai penguasa yang masuk agama Islam. Dengan demikian, kekalahan dalam kenyataan politis telah diubah menjadi kemenangan dalam angan-angan budaya.

Ketika kenyataan empiris mengalami berbagai perubahan radikal, karena perkembangan pendidikan modern, eksploitasi kapitalis, urbanisasi, reformisme Islam, mobilitas sosial dan geografis, persatuan administratif dan "kemajuan" dan lain-lain, maka gambaran itu pun berubah. Orang Belanda kemudian dipandang sebagai wakil dunia Barat dan modern, imperialisme, dan kapitalisme. Sikap apa yang mesti diambil terhadap orang Belanda itu, ternyata tidak ada kesepakatan di kalangan pribumi: ada yang memandangnya sebagai kekuatan yang harus dilawan, ada yang melihatnya sebagai kekuatan yang harus dijinakkan, dan ada juga yang menganggapnya sebagai teman. Karena itu sejak awal abad ini gambaran penduduk pribumi tentang orang Belanda mulai majemuk. Diantara mereka ada yang bersikap nasionalis, sangat anti penjajahan, tetapi berorientasi Barat dalam bidang budaya, dan ada pula yang

Sekarang, setelah Republik Indonesia merebut kemerdekaannya dari Belanda, hubungan antara kedua negara belum zakelijk. Masih ada "sesuatu yang lain", yang khusus dalam hubungan kedua negara. Itu tampak dalam proses pengangkatan para pahlawan nasional Indonesia: kebanyakan tokoh historis yang diakui sebagai pahlawan nasional adalah tokoh yang menonjol dalam perlawanan terhadap Belanda. Karena itu akhirnya orang Belanda menjadi "pencipta pahlawan nasional".

توفيق عبد الله

التــاريخ، الصـورة، و الالتقــاء الثقــافي: المولنــدي فــي الأرخبيــل الإندونيسي

فى هذه المقالة يوضح المؤلف كيف طور الإندونيسيون صورا عديدة عن المستعمرين الهولنديين منذ أول لقاء بهم بأواخر القرن السادس عشر الميلادى حتى الآن. إن الصور المختلفة عن أولئك الأجانب التى تطورت بالتتابع بين المواطنين حديرة بالاهتمام لأنها تعبر عن كيفية فهم هؤلاء السكان عن علاقتهم مع الهولنديين. وما هى وظيفة تلك الصور؟ قهى تريد من إمكانيات فهم الأجانب وتجعل العلاقات معهم أحدر بالقبول. ولما كانت معرفة المواطنين عن الهولنديين تزاداد وتتحول، وقد تمت عدة تغيرات فى طبيعة علاقاتهم مع الهولنديين ولم تتم فى كل مناطق الأرخبيل فى نفس الوقت فإن تلك الصور أخيرا قد تغيرت عدة مرات، والمقالة توضح ذلك التطور.

أما في المرحلة الأولى، فوحود الهولنديين يعتبر كإزعاج ثقافي. وهذا الإزعاج مبنى على الاختلاف الديني بين المواطنين و الدخلاء. لذا، خلال هذه المرحلة، يعتبرونهم كفارا بصفة عامة. وهذه الصورة بالإضافة إلى الصفات السلبية الأحرى مثل الخيانة والبخل. وقد نشأت هذه الصورة من التجربة الفعلية، ولكنها صارت أيديولوجية لمقاومة والجهاد ضد التجار الهولنديين. وهذه المقاومة لا تنتهى إلى في حالة اعتناق هؤلاء الهولنديين الإسلام. هكذا، فكانت المقاومة ضد أولئك التجار الدخلاء تعطيهم معنا إلهيا، كما

أرادوا بها الاتصال بالدول الإسلامية الأخرى من أجل التضامن والتعاون الإسلامي الذي يتجاوز حدود البلدان والشعوب.

ومع ذلك، بعد أن تغلّبت الهولنديون على الشعب الإندونيسى، و بدأت تزداد قوتهم، لم تعد الصورة تناسب مع الواقع. ولذا، ففى المرحلة التالية للعلاقات بين الشعبين قد تطورت الصورة عن الهولنديين التى قامت بتسلية الشعب المنهزم بصفة رمزية: وهى قد وضع الهولنديون فى العالم الميثولوجى لدى بعض الدول السلطانية والفرق الشعوبية، إذا كانت فى المرحلة الأولى تمت صورة الهولنديين كأعداء كفار، ففى هذه المرحلة، تحولت هذه الصورة فأصبح الهولنديون زملاء كرماء احتلوا مكانة محترمة عند سلاسل نسب السلاطين الأسطورية. ففى هذه المقالة يذكر المؤلف بعض الأمثلة من الميثولوجيات التى صورت الهولنديين كأولى السلطة الذين دخلوا الإسلام. هكذا، فبهذه الطريقة فإن الهزيمة في الواقعية السياسية قد تحولت إلى النصر فى التصورات الثقافية.

ولكن مع تغييرات حدرية عدة في التجارب الواقعية مثل تطور التعليم الحديث، واستغلال الرأسمالية، وتوسع الحياة الحضارية، والتحديد في التفكير الديني، والتنقل الإحتماعي والجغرافي، والتوحيد الإداري، و"التقدم"، كانت الصورة التي نشأت خلال المرحلتين القادمتين لم تعد تناسب مرة أخرى. ففي هذه المرحلة، أصبح الهولنديون ممثلي الغرب والحداثة والامبرالية والرأسمالية. والجدير بالملاحظة هنا أن المواطنين لم يتفقوا على الموقف الذي يجب أن يتخذوه تجاه أولئك الهولنديين. كما اعتقد البعض أنهم قوة أحنبية يجب مقاومتها، فيعتقد البعض الآخر أنهم أصدقاء. ولذلك، كما ذكر المؤلف، منذ بداية هذا القرن تحولت صورة الهولنديين إلى صور مختلفة. وبالإضافة إلى ذلك فإن الموقف السياسي والسلوك الثقافي لدى المواطنين تجاه الهولنديين يختلف أيضا. فهناك أشخاص اتخذوا موقفا معارضا ضد الاستعمار في الميدان السياسي الوطني، ولكنهم في بحال الثقافة لا يزالون يتجهون إلى الغرب. يذكر المولف عدة أمثلة.

والآن، بعد أن حصلت الجمهورية الإندونيسية على استقلالها من الهولنديين، يتسائل المؤلف: هل العلاقة بين الشعبين كانت بموقف Zakelijk (يعنى العلاقة اللائقة والمتجهة نحو التبادل التحارى وغيره بدون عناصر عاطفية، والمصطلح صدر عن لغة التحار

الهولنديين وقد دخل اللغة الإندونيسية). هذا هو السؤال المطروح في آخر المقالة. والمؤلف يجيب بلا. هناك لا يزال "أمر آخر"، وهو أمر خاص في العلاقات بين الشعبين. وهو في عملية تعيين "الأبطال الوطنيين" الإندونيسيين: إن أغلبية الأشخاص التاريخيين الذين يعترف بالأبطال، هم الأشخاص الذين امتازوا في مقاومة الهولنديين. وهكذا، ذكر المؤلف في خاتمة الكلام، فإن في آخر المطاف كان الهولنديون قد أصبحوا "حالقوا الأبطال الوطنيين" ولذلك هم مقيمون تقييما كبيرا.

Images in Cultural Encounter

Four hundred years may be a short passing time in the history of mankind, but it can be a long history of encounters between nations. In this span of time hundreds of important events may take place. In the everquickening course of events several dramatic changes have come about to each and every nation and to the nature of their relationships. Several types of social, let alone political, transformations may have occurred. When the first adventurous Dutch sailors and traders entered the port of Banten in 1596 the Indonesian nation was not even born. Now, what used to be called the young Republic of Indonesia is almost 50 years old. Not only it is an independent and unified nation-state, it has also become a member of increasingly important regional and international cooperations, such as ASEAN or APEC or the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Dutch ships set sail for eastern waters at the time when the Indian Ocean was still "a Muslim Mediterranean" as Chauduri puts it1 or the "sea of the Arabic Language" according to A. Johns² and the Indonesian archipelago consisted of a mosaic of kingdoms and principalities, which were either in competition with each other or were involved in the ever unstable overlord and vassal type of relationship. No less important was the fact that these competing centers of power had for centuries been engaged in long distance maritime trade. As early as the seventh century the Straits of Malaka had become what Wolters describes as a "favored coast" of growing international trade.³ By the beginning of the 9th century the maritime empire of Srivijava on the South-west coast of the Straits of Malaka was already on the political map of the ancient trading world. Cosmopolitan in cultural outlook, the ruling elite -the princely traders par excellence-were no strangers to various types of intercultural encounters. Arab travellers and cartographers of the 10th and 11th centuries reported the international character of Srivijaya, by counting, albeit not too accurately, the number of languages spoken in the entrepot. I Tzing, the Chinese Buddhist monk, stopped in Srivijaya on his way to Nalanda, because, according to him, the capital city was also one of the most important Buddhist centers of learning. The decline and eventual breakdown of the maritime empire, as a consequence of the challenges of the emerging maritime powers in the Indian Ocean and the Java Sea -a process that had begun in the 11th century—did not substantially reduce the

strategic importance of the Straits of Malaka for international trade.

In its heyday, in the 15th century, Malaka, on the other side of the Straits of Malaka, was not only one of the largest international trading empires, whose importance, as the Portuguese Strategist saw it, was comparable to Venice, but was also the most important religious center. It was in Malaka for example, that Islamic preachers from the Muslim world found their most congenial political environment and it was from Malaka that many Islamic missionaries embarked on their proselytizing activities throughout the Archipelago. An Arab sea pilot, who guided the Portuguese pioneer, Vasco da Gama to Calicut (1498), might have a low opinion of the level of the religiosity of the people in the port of Malaka but to the value of Malaka that consistently continued the process that had been started by Pasai, of making Islamic cultural cosmopolitanism the new dominant orientation in the Archipelago.

In her classic study on the early economic and political encounters between the Western powers and the Asian world, Meilink Roelofs' shows that the technology of the Europeans in weaponry and military organization by the time of their arrival in Indonesian waters (in the 16th century) had already surpassed that of their Asian counterparts. However, if this was the case, as van Leur⁸ had also suggested much earlier, the Asians were not at all impressed. The cosmopolitan tradition that was long entrenched was already accustomed to a variety of novelties. As a genuine crossroad of cultures the world of the Indonesian archipelago can also be considered a "cultural bazaar", where every cultural trait could expect its "customers".

The cosmopolitan character of the maritime centers of power can also be seen in their respective elite structures. They could easily absorb successful newcomers into their folds. "Stranger-kings" were not considered to be an irregularity, neither in the processes of transition of power nor in the establishment of new centers of power. The famous Sejarah Melayu, a 17th century historical text, suggests that the family of the Bendahara—the second most powerful man in the realm, whose position is next to the king— of the empire of Malaka originally came from a Tamil trading family. It was also a tradition among the ruling elite in Malaka or in any other trading center to appoint a "foreigner" as the Syahbandar or harbor master. The early 16th century Portuguese traveller, Tome Pires, reports in his Suma Oriental that successful Muslim traders might have the opportunity to became

local rulers or to be part of the local aristocratic establishments on the north coast of Java. ¹⁰ The inclusion of successful Muslim traders into these local ruling establishments was undoubtedly one of the most important factors in the relatively fast process of Islamization.

The coming of the Europeans, most notably the Dutch, however, created some substantial changes. Indeed it was the Portuguese, still imbued with the spirit of *Reconquista*, who began the history of colonial occupation in the region, by their conquest of Malaka, the once glorious international entrepot and great Muslim empire (1511). However it was the Dutch, who exerted a deep and long lasting political and economic impact on the Archipelago. If for no other reason, it was the tenacity of the armed traders of the Low Countries that enabled them to surpass the influence of the Portuguese.

The arrival of Cornelis de Houtman and his compatriots, to be followed by others, introduced something unprecedented in the history of cultural encounters in Indonesian waters. In a world that was accustomed to free-trade, the Dutch trading company, the V.O.C., gradually imposed a monopoly system, however imperfect the working of that system may have been. 11 In the tradition that recognized the principle of mare liberum, the Dutch, who also believed in the principle of "open sea" in their own country, ironically applied the principle of mare clausum in the distant seas. In the open maritime economic system, where the king and other local orang kaya, trading and ruling elite, openly and freely conducted their business with traders of other nationalities, the V.O.C. insisted on having their own fortified factories. 12 The longer they stayed in a particular locality the more and the heavier their demands became. A well known proverb in the Malay tradition is a succinct summary of the kind of diplomatic and trading relationships introduced and sometimes imposed by the V.O.C. It states, "Belanda minta tanah" —like the Dutch asking for land. Or as the rebellious adat leaders of Minangkabau put it, "Lalu panjaik, lalu kulindan," "You give the one inch, they would take an ell" 13

Although it took nearly three hundred years for the Dutch to make their presence felt—for better or worse— by local communities all over Indonesia¹⁴, their early arrival can be considered as the beginning of the interchangeable periods of cooperation, cultural accommodations, competition, conflicts and wars, peaceful coexistence, and subordination. None of these different types of encounters were experi-

enced at the same time by the divergent localities and indigenous centers of power, not even in the last 40 years of the Dutch rule —the time when the whole of the Netherlands Indies was officially and formally part of the pax neerlandica. While one local community began to realize the cultural implications of being subjected to a subordinative colonial relationship, another was still trying to defend its cherished political independence. While one region had already begun to find ways to obtain whatever cultural advantages were offered by the imposed hegemony, others were still in a fighting mood against unwanted political domination and economic exploitation.

Throughout this period divergent images about the Dutch were entertained by the different local communities. Some of the political images may be negative and stereotypical, while others simply indicate the differences between the indigenous people from those who came from "the land above the wind". Images about other people are actually a reflection of one's attitude toward the nature of the relationship one finds oneself in. Image-making is a way to make the strange "other" more understandable. It is also a means through which the nature of the relationship with the strange "other" can be made more tolerable and less threatening. By crafting the image, any image, the veils of ignorance can be thought to have been broken. The type of image that emerges is very much dependent on one's interpretation of the other's attitude towards one's self. It is only natural that image should change as the nature of the relationship changes and as knowledge about the other increases.

Cultural Nuisance

One of the earliest and the most lasting images of the Dutch is purely empirical in origin. In times of peace this image is laid dormant or more likely is a subject of ribald mockery, but in times of conflict it may be easily manipulated so that it can incite resentment and rejection. From early on in the encounter the fact that the Dutch were not Muslims was not only felt and perceived as a source of political irritation but also a cultural nuisance. Thus it was not desired.

Frederick, the brother of the murdered Cornelis de Houtman, was destined to be the first Hollander to experience what it meant to be treated as the source of cultural nuisance by the Acehnese ruler. During his near two years of imprisonment (1599-1601) he was, by his

own account, constantly pressured to change his religion and promised a high political position in the kingdom.

They said,

You should first lay the foundation. When I asked what that was, they said you should first say *La illa illala Mahomet Rasoulalalla*, which is in our language means 'God of Gods and Mahomet, His beloved'. I replied that I could not lay such a foundation nor could I repudiate my Christ...' 15

Frederick de Houtman's translation of the statement of Islamic belief is incorrect and he may also have failed to resist the temptation to romanticize his experiences. But the story he told is plausible. It was with utter dismay that the writers of the V.O.C.'s *Daghregister* (diary) noted a highly successful policy of a 17th century king of Mangindanao in order to win the allegiance of Chinese merchants in competition with the V.O.C. The king would offer trading contracts and high political positions to the Chinese merchants if they converted to Islam and married Mangindanao maidens. ¹⁶ Similar "attraction policies" were also undertaken by the Sultan of Palembang in the 18th century. ¹⁷

Forced or otherwise conversion was not simply a way to get rid of the cultural nuisance, but also a strategy to win potential allies and — for the believers, at least— a means to receive heavenly blessings. It was along this line of thought that the powerful 17th century ruler of Mataram (the dominant inland state of central Java), Sultan Agung, persuaded and forced captured Dutch soldiers to convert to Islam. 18 Berg, who was always skeptical about the "Islamness" of Java, might have a point in his cultural interpretation of the transformation from a Javanese potentate to an Islamic ruler, the *sultan*. It began, he said, after Agung failed to take Batavia (the present day Jakarta) from the V.O.C. 19 But attempts to get rid of this cultural nuisance took place long before the attack was launched against Batavia. *Sejarah Banten*, a traditional account of the emergence of the Sultanate of Banten, refers to the Dutch as a "poison", that should be annihilated before it grew too large. 20

Although expressed differently it was also in terms of eradicating the "poison" that the most powerful and influential religious leader of the Aceh war, Teungku Chik di Tiro (Muhammad Amin) wrote a letter to the advancing Dutch army in 1885. In this letter he stated that "peace can only be established if the Dutch convert to Islam". ²¹ A

similar attitude was also taken by several Padri leaders, the religious reformers, in West Sumatra a half century earlier when the Dutch intervened in their religious civil strives. They were willing to listen to the Dutch, provided that they converted to Islam.²²

The Dutch, being the "infidel" or kafir or kaphe', as the Acehnese call it, were to remain an important element in the ideology of opposition. It was also on the basis of this idea, that other negative images of the Dutch were cultivated -such as being "untruthful", "wily" or "greedy". "Wilanda itu kafir yang cerdik (The Dutch were wily infidel)", states the 19th century Syair Perang Siak 23 in describing the Dutch involvement in the civil war of Siak. Also the 17th century Syair Perang Mengkasar, which tells the story of the battles between the V.O.C., under the leadership of Speelman and his Buginese allies, and the Makassarese kingdom of Goa (1669), leaves nothing to the imagination in describing the Dutch in terms of syaitan, la nat Allah, iblis, murtad, kuffar, kafir. In one sentence the poet describes the leader of the Dutch armada in these words: Amiral kutuk kafir yang bachil — "cursed", "infidel" and "greedy". Even in good humor the poet still finds the cultural awkwardness of the Dutch, Belanda iblis terlalu cerdik/dikayuhkan dengan perahu kecil/diturunkan dari pangkalan Garasi/supaya najisnya jangan memercik. In skinner's translation this means: "The fiendish Dutch, in their cunning way/sent a small rowing-boat to fetch their envoy/We made him embark at the Garassi landing-stage/so that his filth shouldn't splatter all over the place".24

The image of being "untrustworthy" was also emphasized on a more personal level. A biography of a 18th century Minangkabau-Malay pepper trader in Lampung is an excellent example of how awkward the position of the ruler was in the eyes of his subject if he allied himself with "untrustworthy" ally. Although the trader and his Malay trading community had shown themselves to be loyal subjects of the Sultan of Banten, the ally of the Dutch, they had to transfer their loyalty to the British, who had already established themselves in Bengkulu. They could not stand the Dutch's insulting and threatening actions after they, for humanitarian reasons, aided a British ship sinking. The merchant, his sons and his followers rebelled and killed the Dutch sentries and run away to Bengkulu. After the death of the merchant, his sons scattered over Sumatra, Java and Bali. "Wherever countries were still free from the Dutch company's control they (the sons of the merchants) made their stops. Like flying birds, they stopped

where there were ripe fruits". 25 It is a very somber ending of a biography that begins with a highly optimistic tone.

It is indeed bad enough to have the *kafir* as enemies. It is worse, much worse, to be defeated by them. Not without a feeling of despair and remorse the author of the history of Palembang (Text TR 1) describes the fall of the *kraton* of Palembang in these words —"Maka waktu itulah masanya perhentian daripada raja Islam di negeri Palembang akan gantilah kepada kafir". "That was the end of the rule of an Islamic king in Palembang, it was replaced by a kafir one". ²⁶ Historic continuity has been broken; a new, but highly uncertain, age has arrived.

Snouck Hurgronje, one of the pioneers of orientalism, who had long experience in Aceh as adviser to the advancing Dutch Indies government to that hitherto independent indigenous state, apparently was not surprised to learn that in the Minangkabau kaba, traditional narrative literature, the Dutch were referred to as Ulando setan, the devilish Dutch. He had occasion to see the randai (traditional dancedrama) to learn that the expression was usually followed by "mato kulabu", "gray eyes", an odd description, of course, since Dutch Caucasian eyes are usually bluish. But in the early 1920s, during the so-called Islamic-communist propaganda in the region, as Schrieke gleefully reported, the Dutch were called the capitalists or in the newly coined "folk etymology", kapie satali. In this folk etymology "capitalist" means nothing less than "kafir" and "twenty five cents" —hence "stingy and greedy infidel".

If the Dutch were *kafir* then a war against them would naturally be sacralized, whatever the real reasons for the war. A history of conflict —wars or rebellions— between Indonesian forces and the Dutch is the story of an almost uninterrupted series of "holy wars". This tendency can be seen as early as the 17th century when Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa of Banten and his advisor, the great religious scholar, Shaykh Yusuf, fought gallantly against the V.O.C's intervention on behalf of its ally, the Crown Prince,²⁹ and up to the time of the national revolution in 1945. Be it a war between the independent states, such as the Aceh war, or the opposition or rebellions of the royal aristocrats, such as Mangkubumi, Mas Said (both in the middle of 18 century, which resulted in the division of the Mataram kingdom and the cession of the North coast of Java to the V.O.C.), Diponegoro (in the first quarter of the 19th century Yogyakarta), the deposed Sultan Thaha of Jambi

(in the late 19th century), and a host of other events, or the countless rural protests, under the leadership of local religious leaders, that Sartono30 talks about, the sacralization of the conflict was a common rule. By sacralizing the conflict not only could death be made transcendentally meaningful, but a transnational Islamic solidarity could also be expected. As early as the 17th century a royal adventurer in the Straits of Malaka had already attempted to establish a new kingdom under the banner of Islam.³¹ How deep was the sense of crisis felt by the local people if the Islamic religious teachers found themselves in opposition to the ruling elite who had allied themselves with the kafir intruders? The westernized cultural style adopted by the political elite was reason enough for the religious leaders to have lost trust in them. Hardly a single indigenous state ever escaped from this structurally and culturally embarrassing situation. But let Snouck Hurgronje and his intellectual descendants in the Office of Native Affairs talk about the danger of the political manifestation of Islam and the attractiveness of pan-Islamic appeal in the modern period.32

In a conflict situation no name-calling is insulting enough and no perceived basic differences and contradictions are captivating enough. But the conflict and warfare often result in defeat and despair. Political accommodation may also mean nothing less than an acknowledgment of political inferiority. How do we deal with this empirical reality? Accepting it as it is tantamount to recognition of the invalidity of the already entrenched cultural foundation or even illegitimacy of whatever political claims one might have. At the beginning it might suffice to return to the old theme —that the Dutch were either untrustworthy or the conflict was just a matter of a misunderstanding. But soon this was felt to be far from adequate. A new type of relationship needed a new means of explanation. And in the process new images were created.

Occupants of the Mythological World

The erection of the fort in Batavia can be taken as an example of how the defeated people try to console themselves through symbolic means. It was taken as an example of how cunning and devious the Dutch could be. It is said that when the V.O.C. appealed to the Prince of Jayakarta for a piece of land the company was only allowed to occupy a piece of land as large as a buffalo skin. But the "wily" Dutch

simply stretched the buffalo's skin so thinly that it could cover a substantial plot of land. True to his words the Prince of Jayakarta could not do anything about it. The V.O.C. had indeed taken land as large as a buffalo's skin. But a fortified factory had been erected.

How about the failure of Sultan Agung to capture the port of Batavia which, by that time had become the center of the V.O.C.'s Asian trade? Babad Tanah Jawi explains the event as one of the states myths of Mataram; the failure was simply due to the fact that the Sultan thought it was better to leave Batavia alone because the kompeni, the V.O.C. actually "came only to trade". The Sultan also thought that in the future—typical of Javanese postfactum prophecy—the Dutch company would prove to be a reliable ally of the kraton, the royal court³³. Naturally the Babad, the Javanese traditional historiography, fails to mention that in fact the Sultan launched two successive attacks on Batavia (in 1627 and 1629).

The Minangkabau, who were defeated in the Padri war with the fall of Bonjol (1837), carefully preserve in their social memory the fact that, in 1832, during a short lull from war, the Commissary General issued a Plakat Panjang or Long Declaration (Lange Verklaring). This states that the kompeni (the government of the Netherlands Indies) come only to trade and to maintain peace. The Minangkabau would remain under the leadership of their respective penghulu or adat leaders, and they would never have to pay taxes. But since the kompeni needed money to carry its burdens the people were urged to plant coffee and sell all of it to the kompeni's pakhuizen, storehouses.34 After the fall of Bonjol the Plakat Panjang became a formidable "political myth".35 Hatta, a Minangkabau, who was the co-singer (with Soekarno) of the Indonesian proclamation of independence, and began to exert his influence in the course of the Indonesian nationalist movement while studying in the Netherlands, was amused to recollect that even in the 1920s, during the incipient radical nationalist propaganda in Minangkabau, the myth of Plakat Panjang was still very much alive in people's consciousnesses.36

These are but a few examples of the ways in which the defeated people tried to cope with their unavoidable fate. The Dutch were partners; they were neither illegitimate rulers nor hated enemies. In an interesting short article, entitled *Oosterse visie op Westers bewind* (Eastern perception of Western rule), Korn³⁷ shows how the people in different regions tried to solve the discrepancy between their percep-

tion of themselves and the empirical hard fact of being subjugated by a foreign rule.

The Minangkabau, the Balinese, the Sasaks and other ethnic groups, anecdotally described by Korn, may find temporary psychological solace in this "make believe" world —a world that I have called schakel society³⁸— but it is far from adequate for an aristocratic tradition, such as Mataram, that had been accustomed to viewing itself as the center of the universe. Moreover, the foreign power not only made itself visible but also demanded certain loyalties and concessions. With these unending series of political and economic demands and pressures, the foreign power, along with its strange culture but unbeatable military prowess, began to be perceived as a real threat to the very foundation of Mataram's cultural world. After all, the indigenous rulers also had to bow to the directions given by the foreign ruler. How should they deal with this situation?

It was the task of the court poets, the pujangga, to make these culturally unbearable discrepancies more bearable and to maintain the lustre of the cultural sphere of the rapidly declining old political world. In the process, the Dutch, who used to be treated as a cultural nuisance, began to occupy an important position in the newly created mythological world. In this world not only were cultural differences eliminated but also the Dutch leader was included in the legitimate royal genealogy. In the high complex 19th century Serat Surya Raja, written at the Yogyakarta kraton, as Ricklefs points out39, Yogyakarta is described as being the center of a unified Java, in a cordial relationship with the Islamized Dutch Company. The serat, as he states, may not be history, but a scenario for the future of the already divided Java, under the domination of the "infidel" Dutch. In another book, Serat Sakendar, which is no less complex than the above item, Mur Jangkung (the nickname of Jan Pieterszoen Coen, the Governor General of the V.O.C.), is included in the royal genealogy.

With this highly complex process of inclusion, the fact that the kings of Java addressed the successive Governor Generals as "father" and later on "grandfather" becomes understandable. After all together they belonged to the highly complex genealogical arrangement. Thus life could go on as if nothing had really changed, except for the "rediscovery" of an almost forgotten genealogy. Humiliating political changes were transformed into an intricate network of genealogical rearrangement. But the cosmic order had been culturally restored and let real-

ity take care of itself.

The Dutch were not just respectable occupants of the Javanese mythological world, i.e. the mythology that describes the history of the world and the cultural concerns of the royalty as well as providing a scenario for the future. They also had a place in the post-Padri Minangkabau tambo or traditional historiography. It is said that once a furious battle took place between the Dutch armada and the two Minangkabau adat givers, Datuk Perpatih nan Sabatang and Datuk Ketemanggungan. The conflict occurred because the Dutch not only refused to convert to Islam but even insulted Islam and the Minangkabau adat. The two adat givers finally managed to defeat the Dutch and the latter willingly converted to Islam. 40 Since the Dutch were not longer kâfir and they stayed in Minangkabau only to trade and not to rule nor to exert taxation, their presence could be tolerated. Defeat in political reality can indeed be transformed into a victory in cultural imagination. But for how long could this make-believe world last?

Plurality of Images

The persuasive capacity of myth can be sustained only as long as the empirical reality gives credence to the inner logics of the myth. The position of the Dutch in the mythological world became insecure as the world itself began to crumble after a series of events in the empirical reality consistently undermined the rational validity of the make-believe world. Modern education, capitalistic economic exploitation, urbanization, Islamic reform movement, geographical and social mobilities, administrative unification and a host of other qualitative and quantitative changes had finally transformed the images of the Dutch —from the occupants of a mythological world to people whose real existence should be understood for what they were in empirical terms. They began to be seen as "the illegitimate rulers", "partners in progress", "reluctant modernizers", "capitalist exploiters" or even "a hope of the democratic force".

In 1906 a school teacher wrote an article in a local newspaper, published in Padang. In the article he persuaded his Minangkabau compatriots to willingly accept the introduction of an individual taxation system as a replacement of the government's coffee monopoly. Let us stop talking about the *Plakat Panjang*, he said, for the government

really needed money to introduce progress. What would happen if kompeni really came to Minangkabau only to trade without to trying to educate the people and lead them into the world of kemajuan (progress)? His advice went unheeded. When an individual tax system was finally introduced in 1908, scattered rebellions and mass protests occurred all over the Minangkabau area of West Sumatra. His advice, nevertheless, typifies the sentiment that had been carefully cultivated by the ethical policy. It was this sentiment that also characterized early Indonesian modern novels published by the Balai Pustaka, the government owned publishing house. By using love stories, melodrama or otherwise, these romantic and highly romanticized novel not only protested against alleged outdated adat and tradition but also urged people to enter the "progressive world" or dunia maju under the leadership of the benevolent government.

Kartini, the national heroine, however, was well aware that in spite of their cultural attractiveness the Dutch were basically "reluctant modernizers". How she wished to be the part of the new age that was experienced by her Dutch penfriends, but how disappointed was she to experience that quite a number of the Dutch educated people she met would rather speak with her in low Malay than in the Dutch language that she had already mastered. Her biography was a story of hope that turned sour —the Dutch officials preferred to see her fulfilling her obligation as the daughter of her father, the Regent of Jepara. ⁴³

Kemajuan or progress, under foreign tutelage was bound to produce its anti-thesis. It was during this period of "kemajuan" that the exploitative nature of the colonial relationship and a sense of national dignity began to be articulated. Commenting on the forthcoming 100th anniversary of Dutch liberation from the Napoleonic French domination, Suwardi Suryadiningrat, a Javanese aristocrat from Pakualaman, asked himself how would he feel if he were a Hollander celebrating the independence of his country among subjugated people? The article, Als ik een Neerlander was ("if I were a Hollander") finally resulted in his exile to the Netherlands. He But a sense of national dignity began to be articulated. The concept of "we"—the Indies, the blijvers (settlers) and the inheemsche bevolking (indigenous people) or even "bangsa Islam" (the Islamic nation)— began to be defined. With this the image of the Dutch became less important.

A change in the nature of the relationship and increased knowledge about "the other" had indeed created the need to examine the old

image of "the other". Their ability to make sense out of the changing realities had been significantly eroded. Social mobility an pluralization which accompanied the course of change also resulted in the emergence of divergent types of images about the other, the Dutch. In this period of plurality of images, cultural attitudes were no longer in conjunction with political opinions, as they definitely had been in the past. The Dutch were no longer seen simply as the Dutch, who had at one time occupied an important position in the crafted mythological world. They could also be viewed as representatives of Western and modern culture —that is a culture to be emulated, rejected or accommodated. Nor were they just seen as a nation from "above the wind" but as an imperialist and capitalist power to be opposed, domesticated or befriended.

Controversies over the "proper" cultural orientations of the newly born nation, Indonesia, that took place in the late 1930s, clearly show that one's political stance need no longer reflect one's cultural attitude. One could be a staunch anti-colonial nationalist yet at the same time "Western" in one's cultural orientation. One could be a supporter of Dutch rule, which one considered to have introduced peace and order, but at the same time strive for the maintenance of Islamic orthodoxy and unity. Political image of the Dutch became more complicated when cultural concern and political stances were formulated in the ideology of struggle. Ideology being a systematic strategy to achieve certain normative goals, it is also a way of making the world more understandable. In this capacity ideology not only motivates one to execute certain actions but also determines the course of action. What an historical irony may have come about if ideologically motivated action took place at a crucial historical juncture. This is exactly what happened when the radical nationalist leaders found themselves in the position of "allies" of the "enemies", the Dutch, when fascism, nazism and militarism emerged as threatening world powers. In spite of their uncompromised nationalist stance the radical and strongly non-cooperative nationalist leaders, such as Soekarno and Hatta, allied themselves with the "Western democracy" to which the "mother country", the Netherlands belonged.

"The fall of the fascist government in Europe", Hatta wrote in Islamic magazine, the *Panji Islam* (1939), "can only be to the advantage of the colonized peoples of the world. It is only from democracy that we can expect progress towards our "goals". 45 He was to repeat

similar themes in his other writing. At that time he was still in exile, on the small island of Banda. Soekarno who was also in exile, was even more poetic in his support for the democratic forces who fought against the invasion by Hitler Germany. "I am closing this article by bowing my head, as a token of my respect to those who have given their lives in the fight against Hitler. To the heroes ... in the air ... on the ground of all nationalities — British and Russia and the Netherlands... who played chess with death in the desserts and oceans of war against Hitler". ⁴⁶

The moderate and co-operative nationalists, on the other hand, were toying with the idea of allying themselves with the advancing "Asian" power. Attachment to the notion of democracy had forced the radical nationalist to see the Netherlands as one of the last bastions of democratic force, while the later, who had lost confidence in the "wily" Dutch, began to realize that the future of Indonesia lay in its ability to cultivate its Asian or Eastern roots. How could they maintain their trust in the Dutch who, despite the war, remained adamant in their refusal to give an inch to their political demands? The old image of the Dutch as "stubborn", "ungrateful" and, of course, "untrustworthy" reemerged among the moderate and previously cooperative nationalist leaders.⁴⁷

Finally, what was still in store? In this overall strategy, Syahrir, the first prime minister of the revolutionary Republic of Indonesia, may have been willing to give what he called "hypothetical trust" to the Dutch. Diplomacy could be also a way to achieve political independence. But others, most notably Tan Malaka, the nationalist-communist leader, and Sudirman, the "great commander" of the young republican armed forces⁴⁸ could never entertain any trust in the incoming Dutch military might, even as a mere hypothesis. But the Dutch presence was a harsh reality. During the struggle for independence and the national revolution their presence needed no cultural interpretation. It was a colonial power, pure and simple. The only controversy that was worthy of a note was the strategy and tactics used to face the imposing presence of the Dutch.

A taken-for-granted sphere can also be observed in the important role of the Dutch in the now dissolved IGGI. An opinion of an educator illustrates this case. Mohammad Syafei, the founder of the famous I.N.S. of Kayutanam, told the story of how he eventually applied for Dutch aid in the late 1960s. "I was offered subsidies several times dur-

ing the colonial period. I turned them down. I did not want any help from the colonial government. When the Dutch were no longer the colonial master, I reminded them of the offer. The Dutch had benefited a lot from our country. It is their obligation to give something in return". 49 Normal and equal relationships seems to have eventually arrived.

When the Indonesian government finally declared "enough is enough" in reply to incessant public criticism launched by a Dutch minister on the human rights situation in Indonesia, IGGI, which since its inception had been under the chairmanship of a Dutch minister, was dissolved (1992). In other words, Indonesia from then onwards would refuse to receive any foreign aids from the Netherlands. Despite the shock of this news, nearly everybody took it lightly. Thus can we say that from then on the relationship between Netherlands and Indonesia is likely to be friendly, but realistically and naturally, also zakelijk? Since then in the eyes of Indonesians, the Netherlands is just like any other nation who has diplomatic relations with Indonesia. The story, however, does not end here.

An astonishing event occurred in Banda Aceh on May 19, 1978. The Dutch ambassador, the Governor of Aceh, the chairman of the local Council of Ulama and other civil and military dignitaries attended what seemed to be an important ceremonial occasion. This was the re-burial of General J.H.R Kohler, who had led the first expedition to Aceh in 1873. He was hit by an Acehnese bullet, and as a myth states, he could still say, oh, god, ik ben getroffen. He died. But why should the descendants of the gallant warriors of the sabilillah war honor the great enemy? As if that was not enough, pictures of Kohler and other Dutch generals of the Aceh war plus their cemeteries and the re-burial ritual were also ceremoniously included in the expensive and richly illustrated bilingual book, Perang Kolonial Belanda di Aceh —a book published to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Dutch aggression in Aceh. What symbolic meaning can be attached to this gesture of honoring the enemies?

What a twist of logic has taken place if we also reflect on the fact that the Acehnese have finally bestowed high honor on the soldiers of the nation who had given them countless local heroes and four national heroes and heroines (Teuku Umar, Tgk. Chik di Tiro, Chut Nya' Din and Chut Meutia) during their almost never-ending war of conquest. More surprising still, is that the Acehnese are not the excep-

tion. Other regions and ethic groups feel and act the same way. Also the national government, which since the early 1960s began to bestow the official honorific title of pahlawan nasional (national hero) on important leaders of the past, shares a similar attitude. Only those who had been proven to be gallant fighter against the Dutch, in whatever capacity, may be acknowledged as "national heroes". The others? Well, they have to wait until all the supporting data can be collected and evaluated by a ministerial committee. Thus it is that, without much fanfare and ceremony, the Dutch, who came to the archipelago as a cultural nuisance, unknowingly or unconsciously, have become the "creators of national heroes". The official Indonesian national pantheon would perhaps remain sparsely populated were it not for "the Dutch intervention".

But heroes are not just daring people. They are the symbols and the personification of higher ideals. The disruptive and disintegrative role of the cultural nuisance in the past has now become a contributor to the creation of national pantheon that serves as an integrative symbol.

What a career of political images the Dutch have had in the four hundred years of our encounter. What conclusions can we draw from this experience? Well, whatever historical and political misgivings or "sweet memories" may still continue to haunt or bless the relationship between Indonesia and the Netherlands, it would take several decades for the two nations to have a really friendly and zakelijk relationship. "Something else" would still exist in the nature of the relationship. At least that would remain the case for sometime.

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3. O.W. Wolters, Early Indonesian Commerce (Ithaca, London: Cornell Univer-

sity Press, 1967).

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phies supports these claims.

Sihab al-Din Ahmad bin Majid, supposedly the Arab sea-pilot who guided Vasco 6. da Gama from Malandi to Calicut, wrote a book entitled Hiwâyât al-Ikhtisâr fî 'Ilm al-Bihâr (1462 A.D./866 H.) which describes among other matters sea routes, from the Maghrib to Southeast Asia, and short descriptions on the port-cities. He spares no polite words in his description of Malaka. "The people than come out to you -and what people. They have no culture at all. The infidel marries Muslim women wile the Muslim takes pagans as wives. They do not know whether they are Muslim or not ... Always be careful of them for you can not mix jewels with ordinary stones". Tibbets, A Study, p.206. According to Tibbets, the book is rather sketchy, and contradictory statements often make it ambiguous (p. 14).

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- 44. He was later better known as Ki Hajar Dewantara, the founder of nationalist school, Taman Siswa. On the importance of the article, see for example, Kenji Tsuchiya, Democracy and Leadership: The Rise of Taman Siswa Movement in Indonesia (translated from Javanese by Peter Hawkes) (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987).
- 45. "Becoming the Ideological War" (1939), translated and reprinted in *Portrait of a Patriot: Selected Writings by Mohammad Hatta* (The Hague & Paris: Mouton Publishers, 1972), p. 469.
- Soekarno, "Beratnya Perdjoangan Melawan Facisme" (1941) reprinted in Dibawah Bendera Revolusi (Djakarta: Panitia Penerbitan Dibawah Bendera Revolusi, 1963), Vol. I, p. 559.
- On the political frustration of the "moderate" Indonesian nationalists, see S. Abeyasakere, One Hand Clapping: Indonesian Nationalists and the Dutch, 1939-1942 (Clayton: Monash University, Center of Southeast Asian Studies, 1976). See also J.M. Pluvier, Overzicht van de Ontwikkeling der Nationalitische Beweging in Indonesia in de jaren 1930-1942 ('sGravenhage/Bandung: W.van Hoeve, 1953).
- 48. Controversies between the two factions in the revolutionary Indonesia are widely known. See among others, George McT. Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1970). A rather different perspective is given by B.R.O'G. Anderson, Java in a Time of Revolution, Occupation and Resistance 1944-1946 (Ithaca/London: 1972). Sjahrir's notion of "hypothetical trust" was recorded by a Dutch official, Prof. P. Sanders, "Sjahrir dan Perjanjian Linggarjati" in H. Rosihan Anwar (ed.) Mengenang Sjahrir (Jakarta: Penerbit P.T. Gramedia, 1980), pp. 272-288.
- 49. Interview with M. Sjafei in Padang, 1968.
- 50. Perang Kolonial Belanda di Aceh (The Dutch Colonial War in Aceh) (Banda Aceh: Pusat Dokumentasi dan Informasi Aceh, 2nd ed., 1990), p. 229.

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