

Indonesian Islam and Its Relations with Nationalism and the Netherlands in the Early Decades of the 20TH Century : Some Important Notes

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ملخص

أكد شافعي معارف في هذه المقالة معتمدا على الحقائق التاريخية أن المسلمين في إندونيسيا يشكلون قوات التحرير من أغلال الاستعمار التي نشبت أظفارها في الأراضي الإندونيسية. وكانوا يقاومون الاستعمار منذ أن وطئت هو لانداه هذه الأراضي الخضراء وذلك لأن الإسلام يعتبر حرية الانسان وكرامته فوق كل شيء. ومن المقاومات التي قام بها المسلمون والتي لها أثر عميق في نفوس المستعمرين الهولانديين حرب بادري (Padri) في عام ١٨٢١ - ١٨٣٧ م في سومطرة الغربية وحرب ديونجورو (Diponegoro) في عام ١٨٢٥ - ١٨٣٠ م في جاوا الوسطى وحرب أتشيه (Aceh) في عام ١٨٧٣ - ١٩١٢ م في أتشيه . وبالنسبة للمسلمين فإن الحرب ضد كل أنواع الاستعمار لأجل استعادة الحرية حرب في سبيل الله، فقام المسلمون بنفس المقاومة عند ما احتلت القوات اليابانية الأراضي الإندونيسية بعد هزيمة الاستعمار الهولاندي رغم شدة التحديات التي تواجه المسلمين . ومن حسن الحظ -والحمد لله- أن الاحتلال الياباني لم يدم طويلا .

رأى شافعي معارف أن الفشل الذي أصاب المسلمين في المقاومات التي قاموا بها ضد الاستعمار يرجع إلى عدة عوامل منها : أولا، أن المقاومة كانت مقصورة على النطاق المحلي وغير مركزة. ثانيا، أن أمة الإسلام غير منظمة بنظام موحد. ثالثا، تخلف الأسلحة التي لدى المسلمين وفتوهم الحرية بالمقارنة عما لدى المستعمرين تخلفا بعيدا

كان المسلمون على وعى بهذه الحالة المحزنة فأخذوا يقيمون الحركات

والهيئات الاجتماعية منها الشركة الإسلامية والمحمدية والإرشاد والاتحاد الإسلامي ونهضة العلماء واتحاد التربية الإسلامية. ومنذ ذلك الحين أصبح مفهوم الاتحاد الإندونيسي كشعب واحد يظهر إلى الوجود كما أصبح الدين (الإسلامي) واللغة الإندونيسية والوطنية الإندونيسية رابطة تقوى اتحاد الشعب الإندونيسي .

Abstrak

Dalam artikel ini, Syafi'i Ma'arif mengemukakan argumentasinya bahwa umat Islam merupakan kekuatan pembebas wilayah Indonesia dari penjajahan bangsa asing. Sejak Belanda menginjakkan kuku kekuasaannya di bumi Nusantara, umat Islam tidak pernah berhenti mengadakan perlawanan terhadap pemerintah penjajahan. Hal ini disebabkan Islam sendiri menghargai kebebasan dan kehormatan manusia di atas segalanya. Di antara perlawanan bersenjata yang paling ditakuti oleh pihak kolonial Belanda adalah Perang Padri (1821-1837) di Sumatra Barat, Perang Diponegoro (1825-1830) di Jawa Tengah, dan Perang Aceh (1873-1912) di Aceh. Bagi umat Islam, perang terhadap segala bentuk penjajahan adalah perang di jalan Allah dan kemerdekaan penuh harus diperoleh kembali. Karena itulah, ketika tentara Jepang menggantikan Belanda untuk menjajah bumi Indonesia, perlawanan serupa juga terus dikobarkan, meskipun tantangan semakin berat. Untunglah, berkat Rahmat Tuhan, pendudukan Jepang tidak berlangsung lama.

Kegagalan perlawanan bersenjata disebabkan oleh beberapa hal. Pertama, perlawanan berlangsung secara sporadis dan hanya dalam lingkup lokal. Kedua, mereka tidak disatukan secara terorganisir. Ketiga, teknik perang dan persenjataan kaum pejuang jauh tertinggal dari yang dimiliki para penjajah. Mereka juga tidak memiliki ilmu pengetahuan dan teknologi untuk melawan. Selain itu, kaum terjajah juga mengidap mental terjajah yang kronis. Untuk menanggulangi hal-hal tersebut, umat Islam membentuk organisasi pergerakan sejak awal abad ke-20. Maka muncullah Sarekat Islam, Muhammadiyah, al-Irsyad, Persatuan Islam, Nahdlatul Ulama dan Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah.

Sejak itu, konsep persatuan Indonesia sebagai satu bangsa mulai didengungkan. Agama (Islam), Bahasa (Indonesia) dan faham nasionalisme menjadi perekat persatuan. Tidak seperti Budi Utomo, Sarekat Islam yang

dipimpin oleh tokoh berpengalaman H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto (1883-1934), beranggotakan secara terbuka, tidak memandang ras, bahasa, pengalaman sejarah dan sukunya. Pada tahun 1919, Sarekat Islam menjadi partai nasional yang sesungguhnya. Meski di tingkat elite, organisasi ini bersikap loyal terhadap pemerintah kolonial, semangat perlawanan tetap menyala di hati para pengikut tingkat bawah.

Introduction

Sociologically the term "Indonesian Islam" signifies some unique characteristics of Islam as has been understood and practiced by the majority of the Indonesian people. The Indonesian inhabitants were converted to Islam *en mass* in the 17th century, as many historians have correctly recorded. With regard to when Islam for the first time penetrated the Indonesian archipelago, no one knows for sure. Some have the opinion that already around the 7th or 8th century A.D., Muslim traders had probably been present in certain parts of northern Sumatra, though there is no conclusive argument agreed upon by scholars. This happens particularly because, according to Ricklefs, "the records of Islamisation which survive are so few, and often so uninformative."¹ But it will be safe to say that Islam needs centuries in order to establish itself as a decisive political factor in classical history of Indonesia. The focus of this paper is not to trace back the historical roots of Islamic penetration in the islands in the remote past, but rather to discuss critically the phenomena of the 20th century Indonesian Islam in its relations with nationalism and the Netherlands as part of European colonialism in the East. But before going in more detail into this discussion, one has to understand correctly the character and nature of Islam as a liberating force vis-à-vis the Dutch colonial policies towards the Muslims in the first decades of the 20th century. The weaknesses of Islam as politico-military factor before should also be properly elucidated.

Islam as a liberating force

When V.O.C. (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Company* or United East India Company) was formed in March 1602 which aimed primarily to exploit the indigenous resources in more effective way, "the Dutch had encountered Mus-

¹ M.C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesian*, (London and Basingstoke : The Macmillan Press, 1982), p.3.

lim hostility in Indonesia,"² wrote Benda a few years ago. From this very moment, the Dutch colonial apparatuses never felt secure in dealing with Muslim communities in Indonesia. "Time and again," continues Benda, "The consolidation of their expanding power was threatened by local out breaks of Islam-inspired resistance, led either by Indonesian rules converted to the faith of the Prophet or, at the village level, by fanatical ulama..."³ In this context, the 'ulama's fanaticism, the term used by many European writers, should be comprehended and interpreted as the logical reflection of their love of freedom and of their hatred of alien exploitative rule and domination. In the eyes of Islam, man's freedom and dignity should be fully respected and crowned with the highest values as the honest expression of man's faith in a just God. The colonial system had at will destroyed all this cherished value.

The most well-known and patriotic large-scale rebellion launched by the Muslims against Dutch colonial authorities in the 19th century were the Padri War (1821-1837) in West Sumatra, the Diponegoro War (1825-1930) in Central Java, and the Aceh War (1873-1912) in northern part of Sumatra. The Aceh War was the most violent and the lengthiest one. Thus, Aceh was the only region in Indonesia colonized by the Dutch for a very brief period (30 years), starting from 1912 to 1942, in addition to three and half years under Japanese military occupation (1942-1945). From this fact, Professor T. Ibrahim Alfian, an Indonesian historian and expert on the Aceh history, has contended that "the myth of the Dutch colonizing Indonesia for 350 years must be out rightly rejected, since there is no sufficient evidence for it".⁴ This myth is still on the air time and again through the lips and tongues of many Indonesian politicians, bureaucrats, and other government officials. As if they are proud of having been colonized for such a long period of history of their nation. As a matter of fact, the sphere of influence of V.O.C. for almost 200 years (1602-1799) was only confined to certain areas in Java and Moluccas. In other words, this trading company though protected by colonial armed-forces never dominated the whole area of the archipelago. As recorded above,

²See Harry J. Benda, *Continuity and Change in Southeast Asia*, (New Haven : Yale University Southeast Studies, 1972), p. 83. The late Benda (1919-1972), an Indonesianist, was professor of history at Yale University, U.S.A.

³*Ibid*, The ulama (Muslim religious scholars) were regarded by Muslim communities in the past as the only guardians of the Islamic faith.

⁴T. Ibrahim Alfian, "Perang Aceh 1873-1912 : Perang di Jalan Allah. "Suara Muhammadiyah, Vol. LVI, No. 2 (June 1981), p. 34.

even during the 19th century, the indigenous rebellions against the alien authorities never went to sleep. In other words, their fighting spirit never died out.

Having observed the soil of the Muslim hostility toward the Dutch colonialism, C. Snouck Hurgronje (d. in 1936), the one who successfully formulated the so-called Dutch Islam Polity in Indonesia earlier in this century, often remarked: "... a government of unbelievers is by its very nature illegal in the eyes of Islam."⁵ Though the majority of Muslims in Indonesia was illiterate at that time, their mind was "literate" enough to see the reality of the danger and poison of colonialism. As human beings who had been humiliated for decades, they never stopped to think that one day this bitter historical reality should come to an end through whatever possible means, and political action was one of them. Therefore, for a Muslim to fight against any type of colonialism was to fight in the cause of God, as was strongly commanded by the Qur'an, his Holy Book. The Netherlands' armed-forces had to be expelled from the archipelago, and full independence had to be regained ! This was the very core of the Muslim long-term struggle against the Dutch, though the Muslims failed to do so until after the second World War in August 1945, partly due to the victory of the Japanese troops over the Dutch colonial forces in 1942, as mentioned earlier. From this perspective, the coming of Japanese intruders to Indonesia to replace the Dutch position might be considered ahistorical necessity, though it will not be easy for the Indonesians to erase from their collective memory the mistreatment imposed on them by these "Old Brothers" from the north.

Fortunately and by the grace of God, the Japanese occupation did not last long. A few days after the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were bombed by the U.S. Air Forces to end the second World War, on behalf of the Indonesian people President Soekarno and Vice President Mohammad Hatta officially read the declaration of independence of the Republic of Indonesian on August 17, 1945. This means that the long period of humiliation and injustice experienced by the Indonesian people under different types of colonial rules and systems had come to an end. Indonesia was now entering the new phase of its national history as a free nation with its complex socio-economic

⁵Quoted in G.H. Bousquet, *A. French View of the Netherlands Indies*, tr. By Philip E. Lilienthal, (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1940), p. 19. Bousquet was a political adviser for French colonialism in North Africa.

and political problems that ensued.

Let's discuss some certain weaknesses of the Muslim rebellious movement against colonial system long before independence in order to have more information of the causes of their failure in the efforts to achieve freedom. During the 19th century, the outbreaks of Islamic-inspired resistance were always local and sporadic in nature. They were never total and organically united. In addition to this, one must not forget the Dutch superiority in war techniques and weaponry, totally uncomparable to what had been demonstrated by the Indonesian Muslims in various local rebellion in Java and in the outer islands. In the last century, European imperialism was on the top of its glorious history, while the Muslim world, Indonesia was not excluded, was among the victims of that glory. Indeed, there was no doubt that Muslims everywhere in the globe had strong spirit to fight, but they had no science and technology as *sine qua non* for success in every battle field : political, military, and economic. But the more serious problem facing the Muslim worlds as the whole in addition to its technological fragility was that it had long suffered from chronic colonizable mentality⁶, to quote Malek Bennabi, an Algeria writer. "Naturally," Bennabi concluded, "a colonizer does not come to 'promote' but, like a spider, to paralyze its victim ..."⁷ That was the rough picture of the Muslim nations during the 19th century, and unfortunately that grey picture to a very great extent is still with the majority of the Muslim today. Neoimperialism with all its shadows and shapes has taken over the role of classical colonialism and imperialism. Until the end of the 20th century, the Muslim world is still in a helpless defensive position vis-a-vis the West and other developed nations.

"Experience is a good teacher," says a proverb. Fully and deeply aware of the failure of Islamic-inspired revolts to regain complete independence from the alien power during the 19th century, by the advent of the 20th century, the Muslim creatively changed their strategy from the fruitless battle field to socio-religious and political movement. The leadership of the movements in general also shifted from the hands of traditional religious 'ulama to the hands of those who had been inspired by European educational aspirations. They began to use modern organizations in order to come near to the goal. Demo-

⁶See Malek Bennabi, *Islam in History and Society*, tr. Asma Rashid, (Kuala Lumpur: Berita Publishing, 1991), pp. 52-59.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 54.

cratic ideas and modern nationalism became part of their political ideology. This shift indeed marked a sharp demarcation line between the old and the new ones with all their specific characteristic. Below some important Islamic movements will be listed in order to make the map of discussion clearer up.

Among these earlier modern Muslim organizations we have to recall the rise of Sarekat Islam (Islamic Association), Muhammadiyah, al-Irshad (organized by the Indonesian Arabs), Persatuan Islam (Muslim Unity), NU (Nahdhat al-Ulama, The Awakening of Traditional Religious Scholars), Perti (Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah, the Unity of Islamic Education). All these movements, born during the first three decades of this century as the logical consequence of their interaction with Dutch (European) educational system, were nationalist in the sense of being anti-colonialism with their own way and strategy. Except Sarekat Islam which was political movement a year after its birth in 1911, the others were socio-religious and humanitarian organizations. Our attention is only to focus on Sarekat Islam, Muhammadiyah, and NU.

Sarekat Islam was one of the most illustrious of 20th century Indonesian political movements. It was a transformation of the SDI (Sarekat Dagang Islam, Islamic Trading Association), founded by Haji Samanhadi, a pious Muslim businessman in Surakarta, Central Java. SDI was first directed primarily against the Chinese businessman who enjoyed privilege and dominant positions in the commercial world at the expense of the natives. Secondly, SDI was silently directed against the Dutch who gave priority and privilege to and protected the aggressive Chinese traders vis-a-vis the natives who were mostly Muslims.

Indonesian Islam, modern ideologies, and the Netherlands

In 1912 Sarekat Islam gained a new capable leader and organizer, H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto (1883-1934). A graduate from a Dutch Administrator' School, Tjokroaminoto was the first Muslim in Indonesia who "proclaimed Islam as binding factor and national symbol"⁸ leading gradually but steadily to a complete independence for the natives. The 19th century traditional Islamic sporadic movements never thought of Indonesia as a nation. Thus the concept of an Indonesian nation was a 20th century phenomenon. To this very

⁸Donald E. Smith (ed), *Religion, Politics, and Social Change in the Third World*. (New York: The Free Press), 1971, p. 65.

concept, modern nationalism had of course contributed a lot, in addition to Islam and the Indonesian Language (Bahasa Indonesia). These three interdependent variables: religion, language, and nationalism were the true ingredients to give birth to a nation called Indonesia in modern era. Without these powerful adhesive elements, one cannot dream of having a unified Indonesia today.

Greatly different from Budi Utomo (Noble Endeavor) organized in 1908, which confined its membership to Indonesian civil servants in Java and Madura, Sarekat Islam was open to all Indonesians regardless of race, language, historical background, and ethnicity. This strategy of "open door policy" had brought SI to the climax of its history within a very brief time. In 1919 it had become a real national party with around half a million members spread throughout the country. Budi Utomo as an aristocratic organization was unable to build up its national network to compete with the great influence of Sarekat Islam. Though formally Sarekat Islam proclaimed loyalty to the Dutch regime, at the grass-roots level, the feeling of anti colonialism was no doubt secretly indoctrinated by its leaders and supporters. True, Sarekat Islam was a movement of ordinary people who felt discriminated unfairly by the colonial apparatuses.

Until the leftist elements (Marxists) left this first Islamic movement in 1921, Sarekat Islam was the largest and the most appealing political organization in Indonesia. After the communist split, Sarekat Islam has never been successful in restoring its past glory. At present, Sarekat Islam only constitutes a minor Muslim organization, hardly comparable to the Muhammadiyah and the NU with their large-scale socio-religious, humanitarian, and educational institutions and activities. These last two main streams of Islam have to a very great extent contributed to shaping distinctive Islamic sociological phenomena in Indonesia : urban-reformist and rural-traditional, though in recent times this distinction has gradually disappeared from the scene, thanks to the relative success of modern mass education in the country since independence.

There was a paradox of history in the early development of Sarekat Islam. The Netherlanders not only introduced modern education to Indonesia, but also Marxist ideology. The Dutch leftists such as H.J.F.M. Sneevliet, J.A. Brandsteder, and P. Bergsma during the second decade of this century effectively propagated an anti-Islamic Marxism through Sarekat Islam, especially though Semarang branch, as slightly touched upon above. Sarekat Islam then got torn in two competing and rival ideologies: Islam vs. Marxism. The only

choice open for Sarekat Islam at that time was to fight against this aggressive imported ideology in order to survive as a pioneer of anti-colonial political movement. But the battle-field was so complex and not easy to identify. It seems that Sarekat Islam with its mostly illiterate members were not in position to deal with this modern radical ideology.

The situation then was even getting worse due to the new revolutionary political change in Russia. By the victory of V.I. Lenin in the 17 October Revolution 1917, the Indonesian communist felt they were on the wind. They enthusiastically tried to take the Russian pattern as a good and appealing example of how to change dramatically a political status quo in Indonesia. Consequently, the Lenin Revolution greatly inspired the Indonesian communist, then known as PKI (Partai Komunis Indonesia, Indonesian Communist Party) since 1921. This party subsequently adopted more radical policy against Dutch colonialism, though in reality it was not quite ready to initiate a rebellion. But the revolt did occur in Java and Sumatra in 1926/1927, and, as had been predicted, it would totally fail. The PKI was outlawed out rightly and many of its Sarekat Islam's ex-leaders were forced to leave the country as political banishment. With the disappearance of the PKI, Sarekat Islam with its trio competent leaders Tjokroaminoto-Salim-Moeis was ironically unable to restore its central position as the leader of the colonized people in national politics. Its organizational network was also almost paralyzed in addition to the colonial government's more repressive measure on any political activity. To fill up this political vacuum with the spirit of radicalism, Soekarno and his friends founded a nationalist party called PNI (Partai Nasional Indonesia, Indonesian Nationalist Party) on July 4, 1927 which did not last long as well due to particularly the arrest of Soekarno in 1929. Before (1926) Soekarno wrote an article in which he tried to bring peace between the competing ideologies of nationalism, Islamism, and Marxism, but only few intellectuals were ready to buy this idea. The attempt to make Islamism and Marxism coexistent peacefully according to the leaders of Sarekat Islam was certainly absurd. The one was theistic, the other atheistic, though there were one or two of the Sarekat Islam's ulama adopted communism as their political weapon and ideology, something strange and ironical in the eyes of many. As we already know, both nationalism and Marxism were imported ideologies. The channel by which Indonesia became familiar with these secular ideologies was through its intellectual and cultural interaction with the Netherlands in particular during the first decades of the 20th century. Then the polemics on ideologies among political leaders followed.

Agus Salim in the late 1920-s in his response to Soekarno's spirited advocacy to nationalism only reminded that this ideology should not be separated from one's faith in God. He said : "Love of the motherland, of religion was for the sake of Allah and was merely in accordance with His command."⁹ The phrase "for the sake of Allah" was quite crucial for Salim since in his view that nationalism without being guided by the spirit of religious universalism could be dangerous and aggressive. This Sarekat Islam's leader then gave many examples in the world history, and one of those is: "In the name of 'motherland' the Prussian kingdom destroyed Austria from its noble status."¹⁰ What Salim was afraid of was the fact that nationalism might have become an ideological idol for its advocates. Thus in the name of nationalism, Indonesia in the future might follow the steps taken by aggressive and expansive nations without considering the principles of justice and moral-religious universal values. It was to anticipate this unwanted possibility, Salim reminded the nationalist leaders of their moral responsibility before God and history. For most of the secular leaders in fact, religion was primarily as individual affairs.

In his writings, Salim, however, did not put nationalism as absolutely against Islam, provided that this new ideology had no objection to transcend itself by absorbing prophetic values as was taught by God's revelations. Being guided by the highest values, nationalism was expected to avoid itself from the danger of destructive and stupid parochialism which might destroy the house of humanity into pieces. Salim did not want to see that Indonesian nationalism relinquished the Islamic universalism. His appeal to the Indonesian nationalist students in the Netherlands in the 1920-s to comprehend history of the Prophet Muhammad should be viewed from this effort to introduce Islam to the future leaders of Indonesia. Unfortunately, the number of nationalist leaders who were interested to study Islam was very few indeed. This phenomenon was in part responsible for creating the gap of understanding of Islam between Indonesian intellectuals in the past, though the majority of them were no doubt Muslims.

Soekarno's article as mentioned above aimed to eliminate the climate of hostility between three major political ideologies at that time. However, his ambitious venture to blend Islam and Marxism was in view of many com-

⁹ Ibid., p. 347.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 307.

pletely unrealistic, as we have mentioned before. It seems that Soekarno's acute love for a national unity had forced him to overlook the unreconcilable basic difference between Islam and communism/Marxism. Soekarno was a romantic leader. Mohammad Hatta, another top leader of the nationalist group, was among those who were fully aware of the absurdness of Islam to unify with communism. Hatta was also known as a pious Muslim, but he was not of the opinion to convert Indonesia into an Islamic state.

What's about Hatta's nationalism? The most conspicuous manifestation of Hatta's concept of nationalism was his anti-western imperialism and colonialism. In his inauguration address as the new chairman of the *Indische Vereeniging* (Indonesia Association) on January 17, 1926, Hatta clearly revealed his conviction:

"I have mentioned that western imperialism should be put to an end for the sake of humanity, and colonized nation has an obligation to liberate itself from colonialism. And therefore, Indonesia must attain its independence based on humanitarianism and civilization. I am afraid that the only way to undertake this task ... is not other than violence".¹¹

For Hatta, "to destroy western imperialism is a civilizing struggle."¹² The style of Hatta's speech was the mirror of this strong and firm character as one of the distinct spokesmen of the colonized world. His anticipation of a violent method for achieving Indonesian independence after the second World War was indeed and fully justified by history. From the moral point of view, Hatta is perhaps one of the best exemplary personalities of the Indonesian leaders in contemporary history. From this perspective, there is no reason for the Muslims to suspect the principles of this concepts of nationalism. For Hatta, nationalism was the ladder for "achieving the brotherhood of all nations."¹³ In line with this argument, Hatta's nationalism was very different from those found in certain countries in the West. According to A.J. Toynbee, in the West nationalism as an extension of tribal-mindedness was one of the major causes of warfare between nations.¹⁴ Of course Hatta and even Soekarno did not share

¹¹ Mohammad Hatta, *Memoir*. (Jakarta : Tintamas, 1978), p. 195.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

this type of expansive nationalism. In Indonesia, nationalism was a vehicle to attain independence or to liberate the nation from the yoke of colonialism and imperialism.

A Concluding Remark

As the largest Muslim nation in the world, Indonesia for centuries had experienced a long journey of its history in dealing with European colonial and imperialistic powers on the basis of unequal foot. Because of being inferior in modern science and technology vis-a-vis Europe, Indonesia became helpless to defend itself against the white aggressors, particularly the Netherlands. Beginning with the founding of V.O.C. in 1602, by gradual processes, one by one, Muslim kingdoms in Indonesia fell into the hands of Dutch colonialism. When the Muslim kingdom of Aceh was finally subjugated in 1912, the formation of Dutch East Indies (former name of Indonesia) was complete. If the second World War (1939-1945) did not break out and the Japanese troops did not come to Indonesia with all its negative and destructive implications in the life of the people, very probably Indonesia was still under the yoke of alien political and military power.

But the paradox of history indeed occurred. Started from the first decade of the 20th century, through western educational system implemented by the Dutch colonial government in Indonesia the ideas of nationalism and democracy began to penetrate the hearts of the intellectual elites of the native. Fortunately enough, they used effectively these "western weapons" to change the course of history of the relationship of colonizer and colonized. Inspired by Islamic anti-colonial fighting spirit and Muslim sporadic military action against the alien powers for centuries before, Indonesian nationalism was successful in consolidating and directing the energy of the natives for achieving the final political goal : the independence of the nation. However, in recent time, specifically in economic life, since "the free fall" of rupiah in July last year, Indonesia is now facing a new type of imperialism: economic imperialism in the mantle of international loans, aids, and the like. We can not say for sure when the drama of this dependency comes to end. As a "falling nation", Indonesia of course badly needs international economic

¹⁴See Marvin Perry, *Arnold Toynbee and the Crisis of the West*. (Washington D.C. University Press of America, 1982), p. XIII.

assistance, but we sincerely hope to the donor countries to also respect our political sovereignty and national integrity. Times do not move according to the linear theory of history. The ups and downs of a nation can happen any time in accordance with the "law" of history. Indonesia now is certainly under the desperate and critical economic condition. But as an independent nation, we will never give up !