MODERN INDONESIAN LITERATURE

THE EARLIEST YEARS

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2. THE EMERGENCE OF BAHASA INDONESIA

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Before 1945 very little was known of Indonesia except that it was a colony of the Dutch (known as the Netherlands East Indies), in an area known as South-east Asia. The proclamation of national independence on 17 August of that year, followed by almost 5 years of armed struggle against its former colonial master, made the outside world slowly begin to realize the political entity.

The Indonesian struggle for independence was not surprising for a country of such diversities and with more than four centuries of colonial rule. Its sudden emergence into the modern world as an independent nation brought in its wake numerous problems: political, economic and social, which at times appear to be insurmountable. On the surface a semblance of national unity was maintained but underneath lurked an undercurrent of regional differences.

The term 'Indonesia', which means 'the islands of India', was given to the archipelago by a German ethnologist and has been in use since 1824. Originally, it was a geographical term indicating all the islands between Australia and Asia, including the Philippines. See Vieira: Indonesia, A History of Indonesia, pp. 6, 340.
INTRODUCTION

Before 1945 very little was known of Indonesia except that it was a colony of the Dutch (known as the Netherlands East Indies) in an area known as South-east Asia. The proclamation of national independence on 17 August of that year, followed by almost 5 years of armed struggle against its former colonial master for national survival, made the outside world slowly but steadily aware of Indonesia as a political entity. The Indonesians then made a series of attempts to set up an effective national government with a democratic base but without any apparent success. The ensuing rise and fall of governments resulted in political turmoil and economic chaos.

This certainly is not surprising for a country of such diversities and with more than four centuries of colonial rule. Its sudden emergence into the modern world as an independent nation brought in its wake numerous problems: political, economic and social, which at times appear to be insurmountable. On the surface a semblance of national unity was maintained but underneath lurked an undercurrent of regional differences,

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discontents, and jealousies and conflicting interests of various groups and factions, some of them professing different ideologies or isms.

To the outside world Indonesia was thus for a period preoccupied with her political and socio-economic problems than for anything else. But after sometime the other side of her image began to emerge largely due to studies made by students and scholars of various disciplines as well as greater contacts made with the outside world. On the other hand the Indonesians too had been hard at work to project their image in all spheres of their national life. This effort, in part, was successful and made the outside world understand more of the problems facing her and at the same time realize that Indonesia, despite all her seemingly insoluble problems, is also a country with a rich and diverse past and possessing what A. H. Johns calls 'a cultural personality.' By this he means:

it has a fully developed and accepted national language, an established modern literature and its own definite style in painting, sculpture and the theatre. 1

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Indonesia, with its numerous islands and inhabited by different suku bangsa or ethnic groups, has rightly adopted as its motto bhineka tunggal eka (unity in diversity). This, in fact, is an acknowledgement of the heterogeneous nature of its society. This is how Hildred Geertz, in her article *Indonesian Cultures and Communities*, describes Indonesia:

> there are over three hundred different ethnic groups in Indonesia, each with its own cultural identity, and more than two hundred and fifty distinct languages are spoken in the archipelago. Religious beliefs, too, are varied. Nearly all the important world religions are represented, in addition to a wide range of indigenous ones. ¹

And Legge adds that there is 'the obvious geographical, ethnic and cultural factors that help make one region similar to, or different from, other regions.' ² Its heterogeneity manifests itself particularly in the fields of language, the arts and to some extent culture. Basically, the various suku bangsa possess similar cultural traits as they were originally of one racial stock. Today, such diversities, although in many ways apparent, have to a certain extent been overshadowed by one single factor, viz. bahasa Indonesia (the Indonesian language). Although the bahasa daerah or the regional languages such as

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¹ Published in *Indonesia* (ed. Ruth T. McVey), South-east Asia Studies, Yale University, 1963, p. 24.
² J. D. Legge: *Indonesia*, p. 3.
the Javanese, Sundanese, Minangkabau and Balinese and numerous others still exist as a medium of communication particularly in their own areas, yet it is bahasa Indonesia which is the language of day to day government administration and commerce and as a medium of instruction in schools, colleges and universities. In short, it has become the sole official and national language of the whole of the Indonesian archipelago. Bahasa Indonesia is also the language in which Indonesian writers express their thoughts, feelings etc. which gives shape, form and meaning to Indonesian novels, poetry and drama.

Bahasa Indonesia is a modern projection of Malay. Malay has for a long time been the language of communication or lingua franca of the people of the archipelago; e.g. between the people of the different ethnic groups and between Indonesians and foreigners. On 28 October 1928 the various regional youth organizations, inspired by the common bond of national consciousness, met in Djakarta at the All Indonesia Youth Congress. It was at this congress that the historic resolution of one fatherland, one nation and one language was unanimously accepted.

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The fatherland was to be called Indonesia, the nation the Indonesian nation and the language bahasa Indonesia.

It was Malay that was to be the new Indonesian language. Malay was thus given its official status as bahasa Indonesia.

Indonesian literature to which the term modern can be attributed has its beginning in the early twenties. It was then, that for the first time, literature was written in a spirit and with a background which can truly be included in the Indonesian framework. The background was the political and cultural ideals and national aspirations of the people living in the area now known as Indonesia.

At the beginning of this century important new forces were at work in Indonesian society. These were, in many ways, the result of the Ethical Policy introduced by the Dutch government and the consequent spread of Western education among Indonesians. The emergence of modern elite, based on education rather than on birth, was an important feature in Indonesian society during this period. It was among this elite that ideas of cultural dignity and worth and consequently that of common interest and political unity were first thought of and later came to be expressed in cultural, socio-political

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1. The beginning of the modern period will be discussed in detail in Chapter III of this thesis.
and religious movements such as Budi Utomo, Muhammadijah and Sarikat Islam.

The birth of modern Indonesian literature in the twenties is a product or manifestation of these developments in Indonesian society. It is also these factors which make modern Indonesian literature unique and different from that of the modern Malay literature in the Malay Peninsula. The twenties can be regarded as the dividing line separating the modern period in the literary development of the two territories.

The development of modern Indonesian literature in the early stages was rather slow and tedious, but gained momentum in the thirties and forties as Indonesian writers grew in maturity and as the influence of traditional forms and themes began to loosen their grip on the new generation of writers and poets. In the forties and fifties modern Indonesian literature can be said to have achieved a recognizable standard and the trend now is one of slow but rather steady growth.

Thus, in a short span of about forty years modern Indonesian literature has developed from a very humble beginning to one which she can be proud of today.

But in spite of its growth and achievements modern Indonesian literature is still little known outside the borders of Indonesia and the Malay Peninsula except in few institutions of higher learning where Indonesian language and literatures have for some time been included in the academic curriculum.
One reason for this lies in the fact that too much attention has been focussed on Indonesia's post-independence political and socio-economic life with the result that other aspects of her national life remain very much in the background. This is rather unfortunate for Indonesia, for her seemingly chronic problems are just but a phase in her history and certainly will not be everlasting.

Another reason for this is the scarcity of translation of Indonesian works in English and other foreign languages. Foreigners with a sufficient knowledge of bahasa Indonesia are relatively few. So far two novels have been translated into English; both of which were written by Mochtar Lubis, a well known novelist and journalist. The first, Senja di-Djakarta, was translated by Claire Holt under the title *Twilight in Djakarta.* The other, *Djalan tak ada Udjung,* was translated by A.H. Johns under the title *A Road With No End.*

Besides these two novels a number of short stories have been translated and have appeared in various magazines.
John M. Echol's *Indonesian Writing in Translation* contains many translations of Indonesian prose and poetry. In poetry Burton Raffel and Nurdin Salam made an important contribution when they translated a number of Chairil Anwar's poems and published them in *Chairil Anwar: Selected Poems*. Burton Raffel edited and translated the complete works of Chairil Anwar and published them in *The Complete Poetry and Prose of Chairil Anwar*. He also edited the *Anthology of Modern Indonesian Poetry* which includes translations of works by a number of poets from pre-war Amir Hamzah to such post-war figures as Chairil Anwar, Sitor Situmorang and W. S. Rendra.

Stages in the development of modern Indonesian literature are generally classified among Indonesians by *angkatan* (generation); suggesting the existence of a group of writers, in a particular period of time, sharing certain common aims and views concerning society, literature, the arts, etc. which are expressed or projected in their works. This classification

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1. Published by Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, Ithaca, 1965.
2. Published by New Directions, New York, 1963.
is not entirely satisfactory for, according to Jassin, it includes:

...banjarnja sifat2 jang dimasukkan dalam satu pengertian besar, sedang sifat itu tidak ada jang berdiri sendiri selalu ada hubungnya jang satu dengan jang lain atau ada persamaannya jang satu dengan jang lain (too many characteristics have been included in a general concept, while there are no characteristics which stand alone, there are always connections or similarities between them)

Jassin goes on:

Demi "ian pengertian angkatan pun bisa dipernjata dengan perbedaan2nya hingga angkatan jang satu se-olah2 bertentangan dan berlainan dalam asas2nya dengan angkatan jang lain, sebaliknya bisa pula di-perkabur dengan menchari akar2nya jang bersamaan (thus the concept of generations can be distinguished if one looks at the differences until as if one generation is opposed to and has a different basis from the other generation and, on the other hand, it can be blurred by looking for similarities)

This thesis attempts to trace the development of modern Indonesian literature during its earliest years: namely the period between its birth in the early twenties and the beginning of the succeeding period known as Angkatan Pudjangga Baru (Generation of the New Poets) in 1933. Various terms have been used to describe this period. It has been called Angkatan Balai Pustaka (Generation of Balai Pustaka), after the name exist side by side; each influencing the other. At the same time it is of sociological interest because it portrays, directly or indirectly, the Indonesian society in this period of
of a government sponsored publishing agency Balai Pustaka (Bureau for Popular Literature) which was engaged in publishing, besides other activities, most of the novels of this period. Another name is Angkatan 20 (20 an) (Generation of the Twenties). This, as the name implies, is due to the fact that the works included in this category were mostly written in the twenties. The least known label attached to this period is that of Angkatan Sitti Nurbaja (Generation of Sitti Nurbaja) after Sitti Burbaja, the most popular novel of the twenties.

The period between 1900 and 1930 is one of the most important periods in the history of Indonesia because during this period forces of nationalism were unleashed for the first time culminating in the declaration of independence on 17 August, 1945. The birth of modern Indonesian literature also took place during this period. Its development can be said to have run parallel to the nationalist movement.

Indonesian society in the first quarter of this century was a society in transition, from the traditional to the modern. So was the literature of this period. Literature in the period of transition is important for two reasons: namely in such literature both the elements, traditional and modern, exist side by side; each influencing the other. At the same time it is of sociological interest because it portrays, directly or indirectly, the Indonesian society in this period of transition.
In chapter 1 a brief survey is made of the background which led to the emergence of modern Indonesian literature. It is hoped that this study will reveal the various factors: social, cultural and political, which influenced, directly or indirectly, the birth of a new kind of literary writing in Indonesia. Chapter II is devoted to the development of the Malay language which in 1928 came to be known as bahasa Indonesia. Its earliest manifestations and developments are discussed in Chapter III, IV and V. In Chapters IV and V attention is focused on the novels and poetry respectively.

Chapter VI offers some general conclusions.
CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND

Before the birth of what is termed as modern Indonesian literature in the twenties, there had existed in the Indonesian archipelago types of literature which can be subsumed under the general heading 'traditional'. These include a great variety of works and literary expressions, poetry as well as prose, in Malay, Javanese or in the other regional languages of the archipelago. In Malay, for example, they include hikajat (romances) of local, Indian or Arab-Persian origin, sedjarah (chronicles), works on Islamic theology, mysticism and law, and various types of verse; the most important of which are the pantun, saiar, and gurindam. 1

Traditional Indonesian literature is the product of Indonesian society before it experienced the penetration and impact of Western cultures. It was not a simple or homogeneous society, as is often assumed, but rather a society consisting of a hodge-podge of elements which can generally be traced to three distinct, and at times overlapping, 'layers':

1 See among others Winstedt: A History of Classical Malay Literature; Moh. Taid Osman: Kesusastraan Melayu Lama; Zuber Usman: Kesusastraan Lama Indonesia; Abdul Samad Ahmad: Sejarah Kesusastraan Melayu.
traced to three distinct, and at times overlapping, 'layers'\(^1\)
or 'ingredients'\(^2\) namely that of the indigenous, Hindu and
Islamic cultures. The dominant position of any particular
element or 'layer' varies according to the degree of the impact
of these foreign cultures had on a particular community.

In some communities the indigenous element is dominant, in
others the Hindu or the Islamic. In Bali, for example, the
Islamic element is largely absent. A form of syncretic mixture
can also be found. A good example is the abangan tradition
of the Javanese society in which animistic beliefs are
superimposed by Hinduism and Islam.\(^3\)

Traditional Indonesian society as a whole was communal
and at the same time hierarchical. It was socially stratified,
characterized by a large peasantry and a relatively small but
powerful aristocracy with a small group of middlemen in between.
The environment which made up the Indonesian traditional
society was comprised of the small village communities, the
Sultanates and inland Kingdoms.

The most important feature of Indonesian society before
the impact of Western influences and cultures was the presence


\(^3\)Ibid, op. cit., p. 24.
of units or small village communities which were the root of traditional life pattern. Each was a closed, cohesive and self-sufficient community and was characterized by a strongly developed group and communal consciousness with emphasis on collective action. Such communities can be found in many areas of the archipelago even to this day. The Indonesian language and almost all of the regional languages are rich in sayings or maxims which portray and emphasize the nature of mutual co-operation and communal solidarity. A good example is: *jang berat sama dipikul, jang ringan sama didjindjing.* It means everything should be shared equally. Such a community had its own laws, customs and often its own religious practices.

Robert van Neil says of such a community that:

not only controls the basic commodity of livelihood - land, but also regulates tastes and style, maintains spiritual and religious aspects of its own members' lives, cares for its members in times of stress and crisis, and ties each member to the group in a bond of communal solidarity.¹

The individual was in reality not himself but an indivisible part of the whole community and his action was restricted, in every way, by the *adat* or the lore of the past. Innovations of any nature were looked upon with disfavour and in most cases

¹Robert van Neil: *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite,* p. 16.
were strongly resisted.

Adat in its various forms was the most significant feature of the traditional Indonesian society, for it regulated the entire life of the community. W.J.S. Poerwadarminta defines adat as 'rules (of behaviour etc.) which have normally been followed or observed since time immemorial.'

Taufik Abdullah in his article Adat and Islam: An Examination of Conflict in Minangkabau defines it as 'that local custom which regulates the interaction of the members of a society...'

P. E. de Josselin de Jong refers to adat as 'the whole complex of customs, rules, beliefs and etiquette handed down by tradition from immemorial times....' Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana regards adat as 'the intellectual legacy he had received from his forefathers.' He goes on to explain that adat is not the same as custom or convention. It is much deeper for it includes:

- Everything we call law nowadays; and it went much further than law in determining the needs and the actions of individuals and the community.

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1 see Kamus Umum Bahasa Indonesia.
2 This article was published in Indonesia, Modern Indonesian Project, Cornell University, October 1966, op. cit., p. 1.
3 P. E. de Josselin de Jong: Minangkabau and Negeri Sembilan, Socio-Political Structure in Indonesia, p. 85.
4 S. Takdir Alisjahbana, op. cit., p. 4.
The importance of *adat* in the traditional life of Indonesia, especially that of small village communities, can best be seen from a proverb which describes it as *jang tak lapuk dek hudjan, tak lekang dek panas*, meaning that *adat* is indestructible, not even the forces of nature can destroy it. As such *adat* was very much resistant to change. Any transgression of the *adat* would be dealt with severely by laws based on beliefs and superstitions.\(^1\)

Traditional Indonesian society, however, remained relatively static throughout the centuries. It was only at the beginning of this century that signs of change began to be discerned in Indonesian society. This was the result of wider and deeper penetration made by the Dutch administration as well as Western economic enterprise on the life of the Indonesians. It was felt initially in Java, the centre of Dutch commercial and political activities in the archipelago; but with pacification and the consolidation of Dutch power in the outer islands, particularly in Sumatra at the beginning of this century they, too, began to feel the impact. In a number of places in the archipelago the impact was considerable for it brought about changes which, directly or indirectly, affected the social, economic, cultural and political spheres of Indonesian life.

\(^1\) Achdiat Kartamihardja (ed.): *Polemik Kebudajaan*, p. 8.
Events happening in the first quarter of this century are a clear testimony to the outcome of these changes which were in many ways the result of the introduction of Western education, welfare programmes and administrative reforms.

These changes also had an effect on the development of Indonesian literature which by the end of the last century appeared to be at a standstill. In poetry or prose the same themes were being repeated again and again. The forms and language used followed certain fixed pattern or convention.

As S. Takdir Alisjahbana commented:

Unfortunately, it was in the midst of these changes that a new phase in its development made its appearance. The new phase is the beginning of what is known as the modern period in Indonesian literature. Its beginning can therefore be regarded as the manifestation or product of that change.

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1 S. Takdir Alisjahbana, op. cit., p.36

1 J. B. Laga, op. cit., p. 62.
Dutch influence in the archipelago commenced shortly after the founding of the Dutch East India Company (V.O.C.) in 1602. The main object of its formation was to make maximum profits and to realize this it was felt necessary to monopolize imports and exports. At this early stage, the Dutch focused their attention mainly on Moluccas and the spice trade but soon they became interested in the already established and extensive trade centering on the island of Java. At first it went about its business of obtaining trading privileges of a limited nature and scope from the local rulers and, because of its limited resources, had little inclination to get itself involved in local politics; except, of course, to maintain and secure such privileges.

But as time went on the company found that involvement in local politics was unavoidable. This was due to the stiff competition it had to face from the Arab, Chinese, Javanese and other European traders and also the necessity of ensuring that agreements made with the local rulers were implemented and kept by the other parties. The company then became involved in what is called 'dynastic disputes' and by playing off one

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1 J. D. Legge, op. cit., p. 62.
2 G. M. Rahin: Elites and Revolution in Indonesia, p. 3.
state or Sultanate against the other (e.g. the Sultanate of Banten against the Sultanate of Mataram) the company managed to wrest greater concessions and the control of wider areas in Java. One factor which certainly helped the Dutch in widening their political influence was that Java in the seventeenth and eighteenth century was politically unintegrated. Between 1677 and 1777 the company extended its political and economic control over two-thirds of Java, while it dominated for the most part the economic life of the remainder of the island.¹ By 1797 the company had assumed control or sovereignty over most of Java.

The Dutch East India Company, because of its limited resources and a high demand for its annual profit, was not in a position to get itself involved in direct administration of the territory. The method employed for the attainment of its economic objectives, as a result, was the inexpensive system of indirect rule. In this system the company made use of the existing indigenous power structure in their economic exploitation. The aristocracy, particularly those in Java, was enlarged, maintained and supported; if necessary by Dutch force. It was turned into a hierarchic system and was made the company's apparatus in its dealings with the peasantry.

¹ G. M. Kahin: Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, p. 3.
The peasantry, through their village headmen etc., were compelled to make forced deliveries of a large portion of their crops and at the same time perform non-agricultural labour on an extensive scale.\(^1\) The aristocracy, besides working on behalf of the company, were also enriching themselves by adding their demands to that of their master. The aristocracy, in short, became an indispensable element or tool of the Dutch. Without them the whole operation of economic exploitation of the archipelago, and particularly that of Java, would not be as smooth sailing or profitable. But in doing so the aristocracy became more and more dependent on Dutch power and support and consequently the gulf separating them and the peasantry, which traditionally had existed, became widened and deepened. As time went on the Chinese came to occupy an equally important position in the economic structure of the company.\(^2\)

The beginning of direct administration of the territory was the result of the introduction of what is known as the Cultuur Stelsel (Culture System). This system was introduced in 1830 with the sole aim of making as much money in the shortest time possible for the Dutch treasury. The Dutch

\(^{1}\)G. M. Kahin, op. cit., p.7

\(^{2}\)Ibid, op. cit., p.9.
government was in financial difficulties as a result of the Java War (1825 - 1830) and the unsuccessful war with Belgium in 1830. The system of economic exploitation followed under the Cultuur Stelsel basically was the same as that pursued by the company.

Under this system, in theory at least, the peasants were required to plant one-fifth of their rice fields with certain commercial crops designated by the government and upon delivery of these crops the peasants would be exempted from paying land tax. They were also required to perform non-agricultural labour for 66 days in a year. But in practice the peasants were forced to continue paying the land tax and at the same time the restriction calling for the limitation of the government's crop area to one-fifth of the peasants rice fields was rarely observed. The number of days devoted to non-agricultural labour in most cases exceeded 66 days. The Culture System as a whole lasted until 1877, after which it was progressively abandoned. In 1915 it was completely abolished.¹

The Culture System marks the beginning of the disintegrative process in the structure of Javanese society. For the Javanese desa (village) the compulsory cultivation of export crops was not only an economic revolution but also made deep

inroads in the village structure. This was particularly in
time to the position of the villagers and the village
headmen. As Furnivall pointed out:

The headmen were in the same position as before,
but instead of standing on their own feet, they
were hanging on to the Dutch Government; it
was not from the consent of the people but
from the authority of the government that they
derived their power, and they used it for
Government, and for their own advantage. 1

The position of the aristocracy was also affected. The Culture
System strengthened the authoritarian control of the aristocracy,
in the words of Benda by 'turning the Regents into a hereditary
class with an economic stake in the governmental produce monopoly.' 2

The Culture System, thus, started a progressive alienation between
the aristocracy and the peasantry.

In 1870 the Culture System officially came to an end
and a new era began. 3 It is known as the Liberal Era.

1 J. S. Furnivall: Netherlands India: Study of Plural Economy, p. 140


3 The beginning of its collapse came in the 1860's. This was
due to a number of reasons. Among them were internal corruption,
strong pressures from private business and commercial interests
who had grown politically powerful in the Netherlands, pressures
from European entrepreneurs who wished to terminate governmental
land control so that they might make individual fortunes,
dwindling revenues and parliamentary speeches of van Hoevell and
the writings of Multatuli.
During this period the whole of the Indonesian archipelago was opened wide to the penetration of private capital from the Netherlands. The new era saw an accelerated undermining of the peasantry's economic life and a further disintegration of the structure of Indonesian society. There was rapid expansion of Western style enterprise (e.g. coffee, rubber and sugar plantations), particularly in Sumatra, which employed Indonesian labour on a large scale. A good number of peasants were recruited to work in the plantations, most of which were a good distance away from their villages. As a result there was a growing number of peasants being displaced from their village environments and from their traditional role in society. Many became dependent on a money wage. Thus money was set in circulation in the form of wages among the population. The money economy and its individualistic tendency made a devastating impact on the age-old communalism of the Indonesian society. As Wertheim commented:

The introduction of a money economy transformed many relationships based on mutual aid into contracts of a financial character. Greater mobility loosened the existing bonds between the individual and his village community. Several customs in connection with land ownership or cattle decayed, and the social status of the elders, the traditional upholders of

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the ancient adat, crumbling. ¹

The importation of cheap mass-produced goods, especially textiles, from the Netherlands almost destroyed the village industry. During this period the native aristocracy declined further in prestige and in most cases were reduced to political impotence. ²

The Liberal Policy was replaced in 1901 by what is known as the Ethical Policy. The ideas behind this policy were put forward, in the nineteenth century, by a number of people in the Netherlands concerned with the declining welfare of the Indonesians. Among them were K. P. Holle, C. Snouck Hurgronje and W. P. D. de Wolff van Westerrode. They were followed by J. H. Abendanon, F. Fokkens and P. H. Fromberg. This group believed that the days of crude exploitation were over and should be replaced by 'paternalistic colonialism'.³ Th. van Deventer, for example, wrote an article entitled A Debt of Honour in which he argued that the Netherlands was bound 'in honour' to refund some of the millions which had been acquired

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² The Dutch private enterprise, in search of land leases and labour, tended to establish direct contacts with the village heads. See van Neil, op. cit., p. 19.

³ D. Woodman: The Republic of Indonesia, p. 140.
in Indonesia throughout the years. The idea behind it was intervention in economic affairs and an ambitious program of welfare legislations. It was to create a viable social and political condition in the Netherlands Indies that would counterbalance the disintegrative effects of the Western impact upon Indonesia. The Ethicis envisaged that their policies and programs would bring about more or less rapid transition of Indonesian society from a static, Asian pattern to a dynamic, more Western pattern under the benevolent and paternalistic aegis of the Netherlands. Underlying the various motives was the idea that increased welfare among the Indonesian masses would in turn result in the expansion of markets for Dutch products.

The beginning of the new century saw the government adopting several measures as an attempt to make positive contributions to the welfare of the Indonesian people. These included such projects as irrigation, the introduction of Western education, the promotion of popular credit facilities and expert agricultural advice. The reformist experiments which went on for over a period of years affected almost

1 H. J. Benda, op. cit., p. 34.

simultaneously the fields of education, social welfare, administration and politics.

However, after some time the Ethical Policy was progressively abandoned because the colonial authority found that instead of securing the loyalty of the Indonesians and getting their closest co-operation the whole program of administrative reforms, Western education and welfare legislations had unleashed new forces within Indonesian society which threatened the social and political status quo of the Dutch in the archipelago. The forces set in motion by the Ethical Policy emerged in the form of national consciousness among Indonesians which soon found expressions in the various social, cultural and political movements after 1900.

THE EMERGENCE OF NEW ELITE AND INDEPENDENT INTELLECTUALS

The most significant development in Indonesian society at the beginning of this century was the emergence of new elite and independent intellectuals who came to play leading roles in the various social, cultural and political movements in the archipelago in the first quarter of this century.

It was a very small group, comprising mostly those who had benefitted from Western education which became available to a small section of the populace as a result of the Ethical Policy. Western education certainly had not produced results which some of the enlightened Ethicis had hoped for.
Instead of securing their allegiance and getting their closest possible co-operation Western education heightened national consciousness among its recipients.

The Dutch East India Company did not show much interest in education and the limited opportunities it provided were opened only to Christians, both Europeans and Indonesians. The only formal education available to the great masses was the teaching of the children to recite the Koran in Arabic and instruction in a few basic rules of Islam.¹

About the middle of the nineteenth century the Dutch government developed an interest in education for the Indonesians. It was purely out of necessity rather than due to any liberal influence in the government. With the expansion of Western economic enterprise during the liberal period there was an urgent need for educated and competent personnel. The government, too, was hardpressed for suitably qualified administrators to fill vacancies in the lower echelons of its administrative machinery. As Vandenbosch said, 'new conditions were demanding standards of administration which the uneducated native officials could no longer meet.'²

¹ See C. L. M. Penders: Colonial Education Policy and Practice in Indonesia, 1900 - 1942, pp. 2 - 5.

And Dorothy Woodman added that 'the colonial power needed workers; as commerce flourished, so local labour had to be trained to fill the lower posts.' However, the schools established catered mainly for the children of the prijapati (aristocracy) whose hereditary rights made them eligible for positions of clerks or administrators in the government service or in private enterprise.

In 1843 the government for the first time set aside a sum of 25,000 guilders for the establishment of schools among the Javanese. This was to be an annual contribution. In 1854 the East Indian Government Act was passed in which the Governor-General was given the task of providing education for the masses. Liberal influence was clearly reflected in the Act. But the government soon found out that education for the masses could not be attained simply because the problems and the cost would be too great. The alternative was of providing education for the sons of the aristocracies and as much as possible those from the lower class. With this in mind, two semi-professional institutions were set up in 1851; one a Teachers Training College to supply teachers to Javanese schools and the other a Dokter-Djawa school for the training

1 D. Woodman, op. cit., p. 278.
of vaccinators. The two institutions did not attract enough students from the prijaji class since the position of teachers and vaccinators were not highly regarded particularly among the Javanese. As a result the two institutions were forced to open their doors to students from the lower prijaji class as well as those from the merchant families. 1

In 1879 the Hoofdenscholen (or the Chief Schools) were established to cater specifically for the sons of the Regents which would enable them to undergo training for administrative posts. The Chief Schools were re-organized in 1900 and were given a new name OSVIA (Opleiding School Voor Inlandsche Ambtenaren) or Schools for Training Native Administrators. The standards in these schools were comparable to that of other secondary schools.

The government, in the meantime was attempting to find the best means of providing education for the sons of the aristocracies on the one hand and that of the sons of the masses on the other. In 1893 two types of elementary schools were established; one known as the Eerste Klasse School (First Class School) and the other the Tweede Klasse School (Second Class School) or the Standard School. The first type catered

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1 Robert van Neil, op. cit., p.29.
mainly for the sons of the aristocracies or those going to the semi-professional schools and the other for the children of the masses. Dutch was not taught in either of these schools. The medium of instruction in both the schools was either Malay or the local vernacular. Of the two the First Class Schools were in a better position academically since the course of instruction was longer, the teachers were better trained and the curriculum offered was much wider. The Standard Schools, on the other hand, offered nothing more than a basic course of primary instruction. There was no prospect at all for the graduates of these schools to pursue their education further if they so wished. It was a dead end. Many of these graduates became semi-skilled workers or minor clerks in government departments or in private enterprise. The Standard Schools thus served as a means to acquire basic education for the children of the masses before 1900. However, these schools were found only in the cities and urban areas.

In 1907 Governor-General van Heutz found what appeared to be a solution to the problem of educating the masses, namely in the establishment of desa or village schools. These schools were to be financed by the communities with subsidies from the central treasury.² The desa schools were designed for the

² Robert van Noll, op. cit., p. 69.
simple needs of the rural population with the aim of bringing the rudiments of the 3R's to the village children. It included two or three years of primary instructions. The medium of instruction was either Malay or the local vernacular. The teachers of the desa schools were recruited from the graduates of the Second Class Schools. The difference between the Second Class Schools and the village schools was that the first was Westernized and the other indigenous.

Between the two the line between Western and non-Western education can perhaps be drawn. Graduates from the Second Class Schools normally sought employment in Western economic enterprise or in various government departments whereas those from the village schools went back to their normal village life.

The desa schools, however, did not advance as rapidly as was expected. By the end of 1909 there were 723 of such schools and by 1912 the number has increased to 2500.

As had been said earlier the Ethical Policy made its impact on Indonesian society at about the turn of the century. Its influence was felt in the fields of education, administration and welfare programmes. One of the foremost advocates for the

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1 Robert van Neil, op. cit., p.69.
2 Ibid, op. cit., p. 68.
extension of Western education to the Indonesians was the
government adviser, C. Snouck Hurgronje. He advanced
the theory of cultural association in which education was
to form an integral and the most important part of the
scheme. Behind this move was Snouck Hurgronje's fear of
the spread and influence of Pan-Islamism.\(^1\) He realized
the potentialities of Islam as an instrument of political
extremism. To counteract the influence of Islam and to
ensure its ultimate defeat Snouck Hurgronje proposed that
Western education be made available to even larger numbers
of Indonesians. In this way he hoped that Indonesians, and
particularly those who had benefitted from Western education,
would steadily be drawn into the orbit of Western culture.
He declared that the Netherlands had 'assumed the moral duty
of teaching and of making them partners in our culture and
social life.'\(^2\) Once partnership or cultural association
had been achieved there would no longer be any gulf separating
the masters and the ruled. Both would share a common culture.
Snouck's attention was, first and foremost, focussed on the
Javanese nobility and the Indonesian aristocracies in general.

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1 H. A. R. Gibb, in Modern Trends in Islam, said that Pan-Islamism 'preached the doctrine of loyalty to the Ottoman caliph
primarily as the head of the most powerful Muslim state, and
therefore the authority most fitted to direct and to co-ordinate
the political forces of the Muslim people.' op. cit., p. lll.

2 Quoted from H. J. Benda, op. cit., p.26
This was because of their proximity to Western influence brought about by contacts with the European administration and also because of their traditional aloofness from Islam. Snouck hoped that Western education would in the end, bring about the decline and ultimately the downfall of Islam in Indonesia. Western education, however, was to be the first step. This would have to be followed by granting to those who had benefited from Western education an increasing share in the political and administrative affairs of the colony.

But Snouck Hurgronje's associationist principles as a whole were a failure. This can be attributed to a number of reasons; among them were the shortage of schools providing Western education, the limited opportunities for Western-educated Indonesians in the government service and the hereditary principle which barred non-aristocracies from access to important positions in the government. 1

After 1900 there was increasing demand for Dutch language education which was not being met in the indigenous school system. Dutch language education was certainly in great demand due to the importance placed on Dutch language for civil service appointments and as a requirement to a more specialized and

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1 H. J. Benda, op. cit., p. 27.
advanced schools. The opening of European primary schools to the Indonesians, which occurred about 1903, had resulted in the overcrowding of these schools.¹

Budi Utomo, an organization founded in 1908, became the champion for the extension of Western education as well as Dutch language training to the Indonesians.²

To meet these demands Governor-General van Heutz, in 1907, started to re-organize the First Class Schools to bring them in line with the European primary schools. Dutch was introduced and the course was extended by another two years. These schools were Western in character but the medium of instruction was still Malay or the local vernacular. But the re-organization was not sufficient enough to enable students to sit for the Kleins-Ambtenaarsexamen (Lower Civil Service Examination) or to give them access to professional training schools other than the OSVIA.³ It was only in 1914 that the re-organization was completed. In that year its name was changed to Hollandsch-Inlandsch Schoolen (HIS or Dutch-Native Schools) and the diplomas from HIS were equated

¹ Robert Neil, op. cit., p. 67.
² S. Takdir Alisjahbana, op. cit., p. 61.
³ C. Penders, op. cit., p. 128.
with those from the European primary schools. Dutch was the medium of instruction. Malay or the local vernacular was also taught.

The Dokter-Djawa school was re-organized in 1900 and 1902 and came to be known as STOVIA (School Tot Opleiding Van Indische Artsen or School for Training Native Doctors). The re-organization was the result of pressure from the Deli planters who were badly in need of better, yet cheaper, medical personnel. In 1904 the diploma from STOVIA could gain entry into a medical school in the Netherlands at an advanced level. The course at STOVIA was extended to seven years in 1913 to make it equal to NIAS (Netherlands Indische Artsen Schoolen or the Netherlands Indies Doctors School) founded in Surabaja in the same year. Other schools established were the Agricultural Secondary School in 1903, Teachers Training Schools in 1906, Veterinary School in 1907, and a Law School in 1908. In 1914 the Bestuurschool (or the Advanced Administrators School) was established. An Engineering College was established in Bandung in 1920 and in 1924 the Law School was replaced by the Faculty of Law. A Faculty of Medicine was set up in 1927. All these institutions provided Indonesians with advanced Westernized education and the graduates became professionals or semi-professionals in their own fields.

Throughout the nineteenth century European primary schools were the only educational institutions in which Indonesians
could obtain a Dutch education. In the beginning, when the number of Indonesians seeking places in these schools were very small admission was unrestricted. But when the number began to increase the government's attitude changed. The decrees of 1849 and 1851 put a limit to the admission of Indonesians to these schools. In 1863 the European primary schools were opened only to Indonesian Christians and the children of the aristocracies. In the following year they were in principle opened to all but with certain conditions to be laid down by the Governor-General. These conditions, which were fixed in 1872, included age qualifications, higher school fees and a command of Dutch. 1 During the eighties and nineties the general policy of making Dutch education more accessible to the Indonesians was not encouraged, but with the advent of the Ethical Policy at the turn of the century the policy of extending Dutch education to the Indonesians was once again pursued.

In 1900 there were 1615 Indonesians in European primary schools as compared to 17,025 Europeans. The number of foreign orientals (Chinese etc.) in these schools were 352.

By 1930, however, there were 71,618 Indonesians in these schools

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1 Vandenbosh, op. cit., p. 208.
as against 38,236 Europeans and 24,807 foreign orientals.\(^1\)

The number of Indonesians obtaining secondary education\(^2\) can be seen from the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Average number of Indonesians in schools giving European secondary education (incl. MULO grades 7-9)(^3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900 - 1904</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905 - 1909</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910 - 1914</td>
<td>135                                                                (^4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915 - 1919</td>
<td>675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920 - 1924</td>
<td>2,602                                                              (^4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) J. S. Furnivall: *Netherlands India*, p. 370

\(^2\) The secondary school system in the Netherlands Indies consisted of a three-year structure called the MULO (Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs or School for More Extended Lower Education) and a three-year superstructure called the General Secondary School. The MULO school served the purpose of preparing students for General Secondary School and the various trade schools. Then there was the General High School with three- and five-year courses. A diploma from the General School enabled students to gain admittance into one of the three professional schools (Law, Medicine, Engineering) in the Netherlands Indies as well as into Dutch universities; Van-denbosch, op. cit., p. 211.

\(^3\) Table from *Hollandsch-Inlandsch Onderwijs Commissie*, no. 12 Resume, Batavia, 1931, pp. 24-25; quoted from *Islam*, op. cit., p. 31.
Years | Average number of Indonesians in schools giving European secondary education (incl. MULO grades 7-9)
--- | ---
1925 | 4,431
1926 | 4,799
1927 | 5,692
1928 | 6,468

And Furnivall added that out of the total number of 1255 students receiving Western secondary education (MULO and secondary education in general) in 1901 only 29 were non-Europeans. By 1910 the number had risen to 2537, out of which 313 were non-Europeans. However, by 1930 (excluding those in vocational schools) there were 6994 Europeans, 7768 Indonesians and 2012 foreign orientals.¹

Besides government schools, there were other schools too. These were the mission schools² and the various private schools established by Indonesian organizations and individuals. In the context of Indonesian nationalism, these private schools played an important role in helping to shape the destiny of the Indonesian people.

¹ J. F. Furnivall, op. cit., p. 370
² The Christian missionaries, both Catholic and Protestant, had been active in this field and they had set up schools in Java and the outer islands. Before 1890 mission schools were excluded from government subsidy. But in that year a coalition of Catholic and Protestant parties came into power in the Netherlands and the result was a rapid growth of government-subsidized schools in the Indies. The increase became evident after 1895 when a coalition of religious parties gained a substantial majority in Dutch Parliament. Between 1909 and 1913 there was an increase of 40% in the number of Church-sponsored schools, Robert van Neil, op. cit., p. 98.
schools established by Indonesian organizations and individuals. In the context of Indonesian national awakening these private schools played a considerable part in helping to shape the destiny of the Indonesian people.

The first of these were the schools established by Muhammadijah, an organization founded in 1912 by Kijai Ahmad Dahlan with the aim of countering Christian missionary activities and also advancing the reformist or modernist ideas in Islam. In other words Muhammadijah attempted to modernize the way of thinking and the mode of living without, at the same time, abandoning the religious basis of the Islamic faith. The programmes of this organization were directed to social work and its activities, among other things, included the founding of schools, homes, and hospitals. In 1920 Muhammadijah began to establish schools throughout the islands. The subjects taught in these schools, beside religious instructions, were the same as those taught in government schools. The Muhammadijah schools attracted not only students who were unable to get admission into government schools but also those whose parents desired a more Westernized education than the pesantren or religious schools could provide, without fear of their children's religious beliefs being undermined.


\[2\] M. V. Warthman: Social Change, p. 220.  

\[1\] Robert van Neill, op. cit., p. 149.
In 1922 Soewardi Soerjaningrat, or better known as Ki Hadjar Dewantara, founded the first Taman Siswa (Garden of Learning) school at Jogjakarta. The Taman Siswa schools were more than schools in the ordinary sense of the word, for they taught not only Western culture but also Javanese culture and traditions.\(^1\) Thus, in the educational system started and developed by the Taman Siswa attempts were made to adopt the Indonesian cultural heritage to modern life and at the same time to imbue the expression of Indonesian culture with a nationalistic, anticolonial spirit.\(^2\) In this way Ki Hadjar Dewantara hoped to find a realistic synthesis of Indonesian and Western cultures. By 1933 a total of 17,000 students had attended Taman Siswa schools, ranging from primary to teacher training level.\(^3\)

The failure of the colonial government to provide enough schools for the masses had prompted many Indonesians to establish private schools, often known as wilde scholen or wild schools. More often than not, these schools were started by unemployed Western-educated Indonesians. It is not surprising that their frustrations and bitterness were also felt by their pupils.

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\(^1\) See Ki Hadjar Dewantara's *Some Aspects of National Education and the Taman Siswa Institute of Jogjakarta in Indonesia*, No 4, October, 1967, pp. 150-168.

\(^2\) W. F. Wertheim: *Social Change* \ldots \ldots \ldots p. 228.

\(^3\) Ailsa Zainuddin, *op. cit.*, p. 181
The significance of these schools in the nationalist movement cannot therefore be underestimated. As Penders commented:

During the 1920's and 1930's when the effectiveness of the nationalist movement was severely hampered by the repressive measure of the colonial government, many radical nationalists or would-be agitators who managed to stay out of prison channeled their energies into the independent national schools. It was in the 'wilde scholen' that the nationalist spirit was kept alive and that 'caders' were trained for the time when independence would arrive.¹

Such was the position of these schools that in the twenties and thirties the colonial government found it necessary to introduce legislations in order to curb their activities and influence.² In 1927 there were 573 such schools and by 1937 the number had increased to 1,961.³

Since its introduction Western education, although not widespread, had created an entirely new element in Indonesian social structure, namely a group of intellectuals or near-intellectuals. These intellectuals were very small in number in proportion to the general population but in terms of their influence they were the most versatile group. They had in

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¹ C. Penders, op. cit., p. 209.
³ C. Penders, op. cit., p. 380.
many ways taken over the leadership of the masses from the aristocracy who had for a long time been reduced to political impotence. As Bastin and Benda commented:

........... it was by no means the aristocracy as such that regained social and political ascendancy through modernization. Rather, it was the intelligentsia that emerged as the most versatile new group to fill, however slowly and hesitantly, the social and political vacuum created by direct colonial rule.¹

They went on to say that:

Their most significant accomplishment was the creation of a spirit of self-reliance and self identification, achieved through journalistic and other writings, and above all through the mushrooming of all kinds of associations and organizations, many of them fashioned after Western models. Political maturation was an inevitable concomitant of all these activities.²

Western education had therefore produced a new breed of Indonesian men. These were men whose mind had been carried far beyond the confines of the village life and environment. They had acquired new sets of values which were foreign and in most instances were in conflict with the traditional values or mores. Western individualism was, without doubt, the most significant of these new values. Like the penetration of the money economy Western education made a devastating impact on

¹ John Bastin and Harry J. Benda: A History of Modern Southeast Asia, p. 88.
² Ibid, p. 100
the age old family solidarity of the small communities. The social prestige and comparative material prosperity normally attached to people with a good Western education had parents endured great personal sacrifices in order to see their children through such education. And once successful the children realized it was through their individual efforts, rather than anything else, that had enabled them to go up the social scale. Western education thus placed great demand on personal efforts and sacrifices.

As such, the educated became increasingly discontented with the traditional order in society. They began to question the authority of the elders, the traditional chiefs and certain aspects of the adat, which regulated the entire communal life. At the same time they found the village cosmos strange and perplexing. Naturally this resulted in conflicts between the educated group who wanted to see changes and innovations in the midst of their society and the conservative group who wished very much to cling and maintain the traditional values and the traditional way of life. Such conflicts often brought about tensions and at times outright antagonisms between the two opposing groups in the community. The affairs surrounding

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marriage, and particularly the choice of one's marriage
partner, was such a case in point. The themes of the novels
of the twenties show quite clearly the conflicts between modern
and traditional values and the problems arising from such
conflicts.

But these intellectuals were not without their own
problems. A great number of the educated were forced to leave
their villages to study and after graduation to seek new life
in towns and urban areas and were thus removed from the
traditional culture pattern. In their new surroundings these
people found themselves in an anomalous position of having
to orient to two worlds, a traditional world which they had
left behind and a new world which they found strange, perplexing
and at the same time terrifying. They had been rooted out
of their village cosmos and, as van Neil pointed out, 'had only
taken shallow root in the Western tradition of which their
training and observation had only permitted a grasp of the
materialistic aspects.' And the existence of the two opposing
value systems were bound to create repercussions. Many found
themselves faced with the problem of adjusting their life to
two different value systems and social norms and the attempts
made to find a workable synthesis often led to serious psychological and spiritual problems. As Hildred Geertz said: 'The personal conflict is all the more intense when there is a meeting between a traditional culture and that highly brand of Western culture.'

Robert van Neil quoted the case of Dr. Radjiman Widijodiningrat, a court physician to the Susuhanan of Surakarta. Like many other Indonesian intellectuals of his day who sought to reconcile the two different value systems, Dr. Radjiman became an adherent of theosophy. The growth of theosophy in pre-way Indonesia is a most interesting example of the interaction between traditional and Western values among the intelligentsia.

It was among these intellectuals that the earliest signs of national consciousness could first be discerned. It appeared in the form of cultural awakening which can be regarded as a natural reaction to the growing influence of Western cultures on Indonesian society. Western-educated Indonesians, whether those from Dutch or vernacular schools, came out

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2 Robert van Neil, op. cit., p. 54

3 Heather Sutherland: Pudjanena Baru: Aspects of Indonesian Intellectual Life in the 1930s, pp. 112, 113.
into the world with a much broader outlook. They had learned about and in most instances come into direct contact with a new culture which was far more dynamic than their own. They had come into contact with Western thoughts and ideas and had also acquired a knowledge, even through Western eyes, of their own history and civilization. This naturally led to an awareness and a closer examination of their cultural heritage and of their position and that of their people in a colonial society.

A good example of such Western-educated Indonesian was Raden Adjeng Kartini. She had a very strict upbringing but

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1 Kartini, the second daughter of the Regent of Japara, was born on 21 April, 1879. When she was 16 her father was persuaded by his European friends to let Kartini visit Batavia and see something of European life and society. In those days it was uncommon for unmarried girls to leave home without their parents. However, her parents agreed and in 1900 she went to Batavia and stayed with Mr. J. H. Abendanon, a leading Ethnici and the Director of Education in the Indies from 1900 to 1904. Mr. Abendanon encouraged her plans to open a school for the daughters of Regents. Her Dutch penfriend, Stella, encouraged her to study in Holland. Kartini had to give up the idea of studying in Holland when, in 1903, she was married to the Regent of Rembang. Fortunately, her husband sympathized with her ideals. She set up a school for the daughters of Regents at Rembang. But her ideals and plans for educating Indonesian women were cut short because of her untimely death in 1904. After her death Mr. Abendanon collected and published her collection of letters under the title Door Duisternis tot Licht (Through Darkness to Light). Today, her birthday is celebrated by Indonesians as a national day.


2 Ibid. op. cit., p. 35.
was lucky to be able to enjoy a period of Dutch education. This, and together with her stay in Batavia with the Abendanons, had enabled her to see and experience both the traditional and Western way of life. In her letters, written in Dutch, she displayed the individuality, quality of mind and outlook of an independent and modern Indonesian intellectual. Kartini was critical of Javanese tradition and values which she said 'hold us fast cloistered in their unyielding arms.' However, she was not sure that full acceptance of Western civilization would in the end have benefitted the Indonesians. She said:

I fear that when once your Western civilization shall have obtained a foothold among us, we shall have that evil to contend with too. Civilization is a blessing, but it has its dark side as well. The tendency to imitate is inborn, I believe.

Kartini can thus be described as the sort of intellectual, in the twenties and thirties, who took to writing essays, poetry and novels.

Like Kartini, many of the early Indonesian intellectuals felt strongly that Indonesian society and culture must change if the Indonesians were to make any meaningful progress in the modern world. For most the only solution appeared to be

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1 See Pustak Kebudayaan (ed. Achdiat Karta Mhardja), Kemerdekaan Indonesia, F.V. Jan E., Djakarta, 1954.

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2 Ibid, op. cit., p. 35.
the adoption of new cultural elements from the West in a selective way and at the same time preserving certain valuable elements within the national culture. In other words, Indonesian cultural heritage must be adapted to meet the needs of the modern world. As Kartini pointed out:

> It is not in the least our intention to try to make European-Javanese of the Javanese by giving them liberal education; our idea is to develop the fine qualities that are peculiar to their race; to help them to gain by contact with another civilization, not to the detraction of their own, but to its enoblement.

Thus, for the new intelligentsia rejection of Western dominion over the Indies does not necessarily mean total rejection of Western culture.

The earliest expression of Indonesian nationalism was in the form of cultural nationalism rather than political nationalism. Organizations such as Budi Utomo (The High Endeavour), Muhammadijah and Taman Siswa were founded as an attempt to adapt the form and content of Indonesia’s cultural heritage to a changing world.

Western education, as such, can certainly be regarded as

1 See Polemik Kebudajaan (ed. Achdiat Karta Mihardja), Kementerian Perguruan P.P. dan K., Djakarta, 1954

2 R. A. Kartini, op. cit., p. 116
the catalyst of nationalism. It had the opposite effect of what was anticipated by the Dutch. Instead of creating closer cultural ties with the ruled, Western education brought new awareness among its recipients; e.g. awareness of their own potentialities and of cultural dignity and worth.

Among the new intelligentsia there were those who had bitter experience during their student days particularly as regard to the traditional dualism of the colonial education policy of favouring the sons of the aristocracies and discriminating against the rest. For example, when the Dutch-Native Schools or HIS were established in 1914 the government sought to limit the enrolment of these schools to children 'whose parents either through office, descent, prestige, or training were in a leading position in indigenous society'. Besides, for financial reasons the Indonesian parents could not afford to send their children to Westernized schools. With the exception of a very few who were able to obtain scholarships the Indonesian children generally had to pay substantial tuition fees. The Dutch and Eurasian children were not required to pay any tuition fees unless the annual income of their parents exceeded 1,200 guilders.

1 Robert van Neil, op. cit., p. 176.
2 G. M. Kahin, op. cit., p. 55.
And after leaving the educational institutions the Indonesian graduates had to put up with various discriminations in the economic and social spheres of life. Good jobs and positions in the civil service and private enterprise were reserved mainly for the Europeans and Indo-Europeans. The Indonesians had to be contented with jobs that often did not commensurate with their educational qualifications or training. All this made the intellectuals a frustrated and discontented lot with a growing desire to see changes in the traditional and political status quo.

The existence of a Western educated class had a dynamic effect on the traditional status system, particularly in Java. Originally the prijajis formed the uppermost strata of the Indonesian society. They were the privileged class. Under the principles of hereditary succession, which became law in 1854, positions in the civil service (Inlands Bestuur or the Native Local Government Service) remained the privilege of the higher prijajis. But this was not the case with positions outside the civil service, e.g. in the teaching and medical professions and in commerce. Among the higher prijajis positions of teachers, doctors or clerks in business houses were not highly

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1 C. L. M. Penders, op. cit., p. 151

2 W. V. Barthain: Indonesian Society in Transition, op. cit., p. 147
rated on the social scale. As a result when the Teachers
Training College and the Dokter-Jawa school were established
in 1851 the two institutions were forced to open their doors
to the children of the lower prijajis and the commoners.

Graduates from these institutions were able to find employment
in the government service which, according to Penders, 'carried
the highest prestige in Javanese eyes.'¹ Many of these
intellectuals or near-intellectuals were able to advance socially
and economically and thus became the symbol of authority and
respect which previously were accorded only to the higher
prijajis. The Western-trained school teacher was the first to
personify this new prestige.²

In another area Western education made a strong impact on
the colonial social stratification based on race. The spread
of Dutch power and influence in the archipelago, and particularly
in Java, in the nineteenth century witnessed the consolidation
of colonial status system based on racial distinctions. At the
top were the Dutch and the Indo-Europeans (whose father must be
a white man). They formed the dominant group in the civil
service or in business. However, the Indo-Europeans normally
occupied an inferior position to that of the Dutch. At the other

¹ C. L. M. Penders, op. cit., p. 151.
end were the 'inlanders' (natives). The Chinese and the Arabs occupied an intermediate position. The gulf separating the ruler and the ruled was practically unbridgeable. There was little social mobility between the racial groups. Discriminations of one form or another were made purely on the basis of race.\textsuperscript{1} There were discriminations in the social and economic spheres of life and in the field of judicial administration and penal legislation.\textsuperscript{2} But with the spread of Western education among the Indonesians the rigidity of the colonial caste structure was effected. This was particularly so in Java. Wertheim commented that 'both economic development and education opened the way to social mobility for significant numbers of Javanese, particularly in the urban sphere.'\textsuperscript{3} Western-educated Indonesians could hold positions which were before reserved mainly for the Europeans or the Indo-Europeans. For this reason Raymond Kennedy described Western education as acting like 'dynamite for the rigid caste system of colonies.'\textsuperscript{4}

\textsuperscript{1} W. F. Wertheim: \textit{Effects of Western Civilization on Indonesian Society}, p. 147.

\textsuperscript{2} G. M. Kahin, op. cit., p. 53

\textsuperscript{3} W. F. Wertheim: \textit{East-West Parallel}, p. 222

These Western-educated intellectuals represented the new emerging elite in Indonesian society.¹ Unlike the traditional elite who were mostly nobles and administrators, the new elite consisted of civil servants and administrators in all branches of government services and also those outside the government who had developed leadership roles in society. This latter group included professional men, certain entrepreneurs, religious teachers, and persons of social prominence.² They came to occupy special positions in the community as a result of academic achievements of one sort or another rather than an accident of birth. Quite a number of them were graduates of the Dokter-Jawa schools which, between 1900 - 1902, came to be known as the STOVIA. Robert van Neil calls this group the functional elite which he says includes 'those leaders who served, past and present, to keep a modernized state and society functioning.'³

With the founding and growth of a number of political parties and trade union organizations in the first quarter of this century a new type of elite group appeared on the Indonesian

¹ T. B. Bottomore, in Elites and Society, defines elite as 'functional, mainly occupational, groups which have high status (for whatever reason) in a society.' p. 14.
³ Ibid, op. cit., p.2.
scene. Members of this elite group adopted different attitudes toward the colonial government ranging from co-operation to non-co-operation and from mild socialism to communism and extreme nationalism. Rightly van Neil includes this group under the label of political elite. He describes this group as 'those Indonesians who engaged in political activities directed toward various ends but usually involving some alterations of the political status quo.'

It was this elite group which provided the badly-needed leadership of the various mass organizations which spearheaded the movement for national independence.

Among the new elite there were those who had been inspired by the teachings of Islam, particularly its reformist ideas. Before its contact with the Wahhabi and the modernist movements Indonesian Islam had been a syncretism of Islamic teachings and pre-Islamic thoughts and practices. It was especially so in the case of Islam in Java. In the nineteenth century Indonesian Islam came into contact, through Indonesian pilgrims who had been on pilgrimages to Mecca, with an orthodox form of the religion as typified by the Wahhabi movement. This movement was started in Arabia in the middle of the eighteenth century by Muhammad ibn-Wahab. It was a

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1 Robert van Neil, op. cit., p.2.
movement, in Gibb's words, to rid 'the contamination of pure Islamic monotheism by the infiltration of animistic practices and pantheistic notions...'. Improved sea transportation brought increasing numbers of Indonesian pilgrims to the Holy City and it was these returning pilgrims who became the carriers of the orthodox teachings.

But towards the end of the last century and the beginning of this century Indonesian Islam came under the influence of the modernist and reformist ideas from the Middle East, particularly from Egypt. The modernist ideas stemmed from the teachings of Muhammad Abduh. Gibb defines the modernist as:

Those who do care, and sometimes care deeply, about their religion but who are, in various degrees, offended by the traditional dogmatics and by the insistence of the conservatives upon the sanctity of the traditional social institutions in the Muslim world. For the majority the issues in disputes are mainly those relating to the practical duties and the social institutions of Islam.

In short, the modernist sought an accommodation between Islamic teachings and the modern world. The reformers believed that Islam could only meet the challenge of the world by purifying

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2 For a discussion on the ideas of Abduh and of his background see Gibb, op. cit., pp. 33-34.

3 Ibid, pp. 52, 53.
the Islamic religion of its accumulated corrupt and
superstitious influences and practices and at the same time
to adopt some of the knowledge and methods of the West.

The study of modern sciences, European history and Christianity
were to be included in the courses for higher education. And
in other fields political and social justice were emphasized.

The modernist teachings asserted a tremendous influence
on Indonesian society after 1900. The teachings attracted
a good number of middle class Indonesians whose members,
according to Legge, 'were not to be satisfied by the narrow
faith of the rural ulama.' This was manifested particularly
in the rise and popularity of the two mass organizations, the
Sarekat Islam (the Islamic League) and the Muhammadijah,
which became the vehicles for the spread of the new teachings.
In one area the teachings strongly attacked the formalism of
Islamic orthodoxy as well as pre-Islamic beliefs and institutions,
And in other areas the teachings placed strong emphasis on the
virtue of human effort and the use of reason and practical
arguments in solving particular problems or in justifying
particular actions. Thus, by the very nature of its teachings,
and particularly its social and political ideas, the modernist

1 J. D. Legge, op. cit., p. 54.
2 C. Geertz, The Religion of Java, p. 149.
movement came into direct conflict with Dutch interest.

**NATIONALISM AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT**

The first quarter of the twentieth century saw, for the first time in Indonesian history, the emergence of organized political movements which followed Western patterns and spread rapidly from their original base in Java to the other islands of the archipelago. The Indonesian masses had been a fertile ground for the growth of nationalist movement. So far it only lacked political leadership to become any danger or threat to the colonial government. But with the emergence of the educated elite after 1900 the Indonesian masses were provided with the necessary leadership which they had lacked for so long. The intelligentsia, as Benda commented, 'clamouring for political responsibility and co-determination, became the spokesman for an anti-Western Indonesian nationalism.'

Of course, there were other factors, too, which contributed to the growth of Indonesian nationalism and consequently to the emergence of mass organizations with definite political programmes and objectives. One factor was certainly the high

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1 H. J. Benda, op. cit., p. 39.
degree of religious homogeneity that prevailed in the archipelago. Over ninety per cent of the population were (and are still) Muslims. The Indonesians, in spite of their many differences were tied together by a common religion. Islam in many parts of the archipelago was a way of life as much as a religion. In the face of Dutch colonialism and imperialism Islam provided a sense of unity and identity as well as a symbol of separateness from, and opposed to, an alien ruler from a different religion. For many an Indonesian, Islam became the symbol of resistance to the colonial 'caste-system'. Very often in the course of Indonesian history Islam had been the rallying point in the struggle against Dutch imperialism. There were a number of what is called the 'Holy Wars' in which the Indonesians fought the Dutch in the name or under the banner of Islam. Such wars included the Banten War (mid 18th century), the Tjiribon War (1802-1806), the Java War (1825 - 1830), the Padri War (1821 - 1838) and the Atjeh War (1872 - 1908). 1

Administrative reforms also contributed to the emergence of national consciousness in Indonesia. The first of these was the Decentralization Act of 1903. Under this Act three

1 H. J. Benda, op. cit., p. 18.
kinds of councils were created; first, the regional or residency councils; second, the sub-residency or local councils; and third, the urban communal councils. These councils, as a whole, were undemocratic in character and had very limited powers. But at the same time they were useful as political training ground for many of the Indonesian elite. It was, in a way, through these councils that the Indonesian elite managed to come into contact with the methods, aspirations and thought pattern of the West.

Another step taken in administrative reform was the creation of the Volksraad (Peoples Council) in 1918. The Volksraad was merely an advisory body with no executive powers. The Indonesians were not proportionately represented and the members were mostly lower government officials rather than representatives from political organizations. However, its importance lies in the fact that the council became a forum for the expression of grievances as well as a good training ground for political activities. As Kahin commented:

In bringing together Indonesians from various parts of the archipelago and making them more

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1 Vandenbosch, op. cit., p. 129
3 J. D. Legge, op. cit., pp. 123,124.
aware of their common problems and common relationship with the Dutch, this body tended to develop in them more conscious unity which integrated their nationalism more closely.  

The growth of nationalism in Indonesia received additional impetus from political developments in other parts of Asia. Events such as the emergence of a modernized Japan in the late nineteenth century and its victories over China and Russia; the overthrow of Manchu rule and the proclamation of the Chinese republic in 1911 and the end of Spanish colonialism in the Philippines all contributed to the growing awareness in Indonesia. All these had created an awareness among many educated Indonesians of their own potentialities to achieve what had been achieved in other Asian countries. This was helped further by a much greater circulation of ideas as a result of the development of vernacular press as well as a great increase in geographical mobility of the people. It was, as Kahin puts it, a consequence of the twentieth-century pattern of economic organization in Indonesia and the transportation facilities which it entailed.

The first of these organized movements was Budi Utomo. As was mentioned earlier Budi Utomo's policies and programmes
were essentially non-political. The emphasis was on cultural rejuvenation of the Javanese people. Budi Utomo attracted a good number of the educated elite and by 1909 its membership had reached almost 10,000.¹ But as other organizations appeared on the political scene the influence of Budi Utomo started to decline rapidly.

In 1912 the first major Indonesian political party, the Sarekat Islam, was formed under the leadership of Hadji Samanhoedi, Raden Mas Tirtoadisoeirjo and Tjokroaminoto. It originated from an organization, the Sarekat Dagang Islam (Islamic Trading Association), formed in 1909 with the purpose of protecting the interests of Indonesian batik merchants against the incursion by Chinese traders. The policies and programmes of Sarekat Islam were greatly influenced by modernist Islamic teachings. Its influence began to spread rapidly among the masses and by 1919 its membership had reached almost 2 1/2 million. The popularity of Sarekat Islam was due mainly to the fact that Islam increasingly came to represent the Indonesians against the colonial government as well as the Indies Chinese and the Christian missionaries. Islam came to be regarded as the symbol of unity in the face of these external forces. However, as its popularity grew it was infiltrated by an increasing number of Indonesian merchants who, as a result, split from the leadership of the Surakarta branch of Sarekat Islam. The split was apparent at the Fourth National Congress of Sarekat Islam in 1914. By 1916 the Sarekat Group formed in 1914 had control over the structure of Sarekat Islam. In December 1918 the Indo-China Partij (Indies Party) was formed under the leadership of Douwes Dekker, Dr. Tjipite, Hangoekoesmono and Soerardi Soerinjangrat. This party advocated racial equality, economic justice and ultimate independence based on Indo-China. Another party emerged in 1912 that advocated the continuance of the government and after a year they were exiled to the Netherlands.

¹ Ailsa Zainuddin, op. cit., p. 175
the symbol of unity in the face of these external forces. However, as its popularity grew it was infiltrated by an increasing number of Indonesian members of a marxist group, the Social Democratic Association, founded by Hendrick Sneevliet in 1914. By 1918 the Marxist group managed to gain control of the Semarang branch of Sarekat Islam. The split was apparent and at the Fourth National Congress of Sarekat Islam in 1919 Samoen, the leader of the Semarang branch, and the other leaders of the Social Democratic Association converted their organization into Perserikatan Kommunist di-India (Communist Party of the Indies) or PKI. The complete rupture between Sarekat Islam and PKI took place on October 1921 at the Sixth National Congress of Sarekat Islam.

Meanwhile other political parties appeared on the political scene. In December 1912 the Indische Partij (Indies Party) was formed under the leadership of Douwe Dekker, Dr. Tjipto Mangoekoeseno and Soewardi Soerjaningrat. This party advocated racial equality, socio-economic justice and ultimate independence based on Indonesian-Eurasian co-operation. The leaders were very outspoken in their criticism of the government and after a year they were exiled to the Netherlands. In 1913 the party changed its name to Insulinde. Another organization which emerged in 1912 was Muhammadiyah. It was founded by Kijai Hadji Achmad Dachlan to further the teachings of
modernist Islam. This organization was basically non-political and it concentrated its activities on the founding of schools, clinics, orphanages, libraries and other social work. Muhammadijah came to play an increasingly important role among the Indonesian Muslims especially those who believed that their socio-religious and national aspirations could best be attained through non-political channels.

After its break with the Communists Sarekat Islam tried once again to exert its influence and re-establish its authority on a more purely religious basis. This it failed. Political development in Indonesia after 1920 showed a complete turn from a religious to the secular movement. For a time the initiative was taken by the Communists who sought the support of the growing urban proletariat as well as the rural population. However, government restrictions limited its political activities. In November 1926 its members staged an uprising in West Java, followed by another in West Sumatra in January 1927. Both the uprisings were a complete failure resulting in widespread arrests of the Communists.

Meanwhile, a number of organizations appeared on the scene, the most important of which were the various regional youth organizations, the Study Clubs, scout and women's organizations. The first regional youth organization was the Tri Koro Dharma (Three Noble Goals), a branch of Budi Utomo.
It was formed in 1915 and in 1918 its name was changed to Jong Java (Young Java). In 1917 the Sumatra youths set up their own organization known as the Jong Sumatranen Bond (young Sumatran Union). These were followed by other regional youth organizations such as Jong Minahasa (Young Minahasa), Jong Ambon (Young Ambon) and Jong Celebes (Young Celebes). At the beginning these regional youth organizations catered mainly for the interests of youths from their own areas, but it was not long before these groups came together under one organization. The new organization, Pemuda Indonesia (Indonesian Youth), was formed in Bandung on January 8, 1927. Nationalism was definitely the unifying factor. The use of the term Indonesia, without doubt, carried certain political overtones.

Indonesian students returning from their studies in the Netherlands started a number of organizations known as Study Clubs. The first of such clubs, the Indonesische Studieclub (Indonesian Study Club), was established in Surabaya in July 1924 by Dr. Soetomo. Its purpose, as conceived by Dr. Soetomo, was the stimulation of a sense of social responsibility.
and political awareness among the educated Indonesians. The Club held discussions on matters of national and local concern and concerned itself in seeking solutions to pressing social problems affecting the Indonesian people. Similar Study Clubs were also established in other cities such as Surakarta, Jogjakarta, Batavia (Djakarta), Semarang and Buitenzorg (Bogor).

The best known of these Clubs was the Algemeene Studieclub (General Study Club) founded in Bandung in 1926 by Soekarno, a young engineering graduate from the Bandung Technical College. Unlike Dr. Soetomo's Study Club, the Algemeene Studieclub was more a political organization than a mere Study Club. It had definite political programmes and objectives. The Bandung Study Club attracted quite a number of returning members of Perhimpunan Indonesia (Indonesian Association), a radical Indonesian student organization in the Netherlands.

Besides these, there were other organizations which appeared during this period. The scout movement was one of them.


2 In 1908 Indonesian students in the Netherlands formed an organization known as the Indische Vereeniging (Indies Club). For some years its programmes and activities were essentially non-political. But after 1919, as more and more Indonesian students arrived in the Netherlands, the mild nature of this organization soon gave way to political extremism. In 1922 its name was changed to Perhimpunan Indonesia. In 1924 the name of its journal was also changed from Hindia Putera (Son of India) to Indonesia Merdeka (Independent Indonesia).
Indonesian women, too, had set up their own organizations. The first, Putri Merdeka (Independent Women), was formed in 1912 with the aim of furthering education among girls. In December 1928 the various women organizations held their first Congress in Jogjakarta and decided to federate existing organizations. The result was the formation of the Union of Indonesian Women which became the spokesman and champion of women's rights in Indonesia. It also provided, as Dorothy Woodman commented, 'a platform on which an increasing number of women could play their part in the independence struggle.'

After the abortive Communist uprising of 1926/7 chaos dominated the political scene in Indonesia. There were numerous political parties and smaller organizations such as the labour unions, youth groups and religious organizations. Between them there certainly cannot be said to be any unity. However, three underlying political currents could easily be discerned during that period. These were nationalism, Islam and Marxism.

It was then that political leadership fell into the hands of a group of nationalists headed by Soekarno. Soekarno and a number of others from the Bandung Study Club formed the Partai...
Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian Nationalist Party or PNI) on July 4, 1927. The aim of the party was complete independence for Indonesia with an elected government, chosen by and responsible to the people of Indonesia. To achieve this the party advocated non-co-operation with the Dutch and at the same time emphasised the need for unity among Indonesians of whatever ethnic groups or religion. Soekarno believed strongly that in order to achieve the common goal the Moslems, Marxists and Nationalists must unite. For Soekarno nationalism was to be the common denominator. Under his able leadership the party grew rapidly and within two years its membership had reached 10,000. Its immediate programmes included the building up of labour unions, developing co-operatives and supporting the national education including the Taman Siswa schools.

At the same time PNI took the initiative of uniting the various political parties and organizations into a single united front. This succeeded in December 1927. A loose federation of these organizations, which included the PNI, Partai Sarekat Islam, Budi Utomo, Pascendan, Jong Sumatranen Bond and the Surabaja Club, was formed under the name of Perserikatan Perhimpunan-perhimpunan Politiek Kebangsaan Indonesia or P.P. P.K.I.  

1 Bernard Dahm, op. cit., p. 64.
This new organization lacked coherence and after the arrest of Soekarno in December 1927 the movement gradually broke apart. After this a number of nationalist parties appeared on the political scene but again they were beset by division and rivalry; and thus failed to form a united front in pursuit of a common goal.

1 Robert van Neil, op. cit., p. 238
CHAPTER II

THE EMERGENCE OF BAHASA INDONESIA

The Balai Pustaka novels as well as poems published outside this body were all written in Malay which, in 1928, came to be known as bahasa Indonesia. The formal acceptance of Malay as bahasa Indonesia in that year does not, in any way, change the character of the language overnight from Malay into what is now known as the Indonesian language. The change or transformation was a gradual, slow-moving and painstaking process. The proclamation by the All Indonesia Youth Congress on 28 October, 1928 should be regarded as a formal recognition given to a language that had for centuries been widely used and accepted as a language of communication in the whole of Indonesian archipelago.

That the choice fell on Malay is not entirely surprising. For centuries Malay had played an important role as a lingua franca in the Indonesian archipelago; for example between people of different ethnic origins and between the Indonesians

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1 On October 28, 1928 the All Indonesia Youth Congress met in Djakarta in which the historic resolution of one fatherland one nation and one language was unanimously accepted. The fatherland was to be called Indonesia, the nation, the Indonesian nation and the language the Indonesian language.
and the foreigners. Originally Malay was spoken only in parts of Sumatra and the adjacent Malay Peninsula. It was only one of about two hundred regional languages of the archipelago. Stone inscriptions dating back to the seventh century A.D. show that Malay was then widely used in the archipelago. This was during the period of the Malay Kingdom of Srivijaya. Srivijaya was a commercial maritime empire and its political authority covered a wide area extending from Java to Cambodia. Thus, it is not surprising that the use of Malay as a commercial and cultural language in Southeast Asia then was rather widespread.

With the growth and development of Malacca as a commercial and political power in the fifteenth century Malay once again became the major cultural and commercial language in the archipelago. Malacca also became the centre for the spread of Islam and it was Malay that was made the vehicle for the spread of the new religion. Even in Java Malay was to a certain extent used. The earliest Islamic documents in Javanese show clearly the influence of Malay structure.

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So when Western powers reached the shores of the Indonesian archipelago in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, the use of Malay as a language of culture and commerce had been remarkably widespread. It was, in the words of Barnard H. M. Vlekke, 'the lingua franca of the Indonesian seas.' He goes on to say that 'the knowledge and use of the Malay tongue spread over all parts of the archipelago and gave that heterogenous area an outward aspect of unity.' And Teeuw adds that 'it was obvious to the earliest European travellers... that Malay was the only lingua franca throughout the archipelago.'

The importance of Malay was such that even Christian missionaries made use of the language as a vehicle in the spread of the Christian religion. Thus, Malay cannot be regarded solely as the language of any particular area nor as the prerogative of one particular group.

But when the Dutch had gained political control over most of the archipelago their language had also come to occupy a very important position in Indonesia. Proficiency in Dutch meant excellent opportunities to rise within the government's

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2 A. Teeuw: Modern Indonesian Literature, p.6.
administrative hierarchy as well as in private business.

As S. Takdir Alisjahbana puts it:

in their efforts to improve their position vis-à-vis the Dutch, many Indonesians were eager to attain proficiency in the Dutch language, which they regarded as the most direct and best medium for acquiring knowledge, skills and a social status equal to those of their Dutch rulers.¹

But opportunities for Indonesians to study in Dutch schools were very limited. European schools were opened only to the sons of the aristocracies besides those of Dutch and Eurasian children.²

Efforts to disseminate the knowledge of Dutch among Indonesians had been made by van der Chijs about the middle of the nineteenth century. He proposed that special schools should be set up for Indonesians where they could learn Dutch. In 1890 Prof. Kern suggested that Indonesians should be given the opportunity to learn Dutch.³ However, it was not until the advent of the Ethical Policy at the beginning of this century that real efforts were made by a number of Dutch educationists to provide some form of Dutch training for the Indonesians. This was in line with the Ethicis idea of


² See Chapter 1 of this thesis

³ A. Siswa Sukaryaditisa: Bahasa dan Kebangsaan, p.98.
extending Western education to the Indonesians in order to bring about cultural association between the rulers and the ruled.¹

Mr. J. H. Abendanon, who became Director of Education in 1900, made great efforts to promote the use of Dutch throughout the archipelago. He believed that Dutch was the only way through which Indonesians could absorb Western culture. His initiative was later taken up by Dr. C. J. Nieuwenhuis. Dr. Nieuwenhuis regarded Dutch as an instrument of both cultural and economic expansion. He said:

The dissemination of language and culture is the most direct way of economic expansion. Every Dutch book will help to popularize Dutch merchandise and create a demand for it. It will provide the Dutch with easier employment. If one million educated Indonesians are gradually taught to speak and understand our language, then Dutch books, Dutch industry and Dutch thinking will remain influential and Dutch merchandise will long remain in demand until Indonesia becomes an autonomous nation.²

He proposed that Dutch should be made the common language of the archipelago. But at the same time he was aware of Malay as a possible challenge to Dutch. He said: 'Any effort to make the Malay language a lingua franca will only make the spread of Dutch difficult. It will hinder the introduction

¹ See Chapter I of this thesis.
² Quoted from S. Takdir Alisjahbana's Dari Perdjuangan dan Pertumbuhan Bahasa Indonesia, p. 26.
to Indonesia of an international culture and also disrupt the continuation of our interests.¹

Dr. Neiuwenhuis' views were widely accepted in the beginning and the Dutch government took certain measures to provide facilities for Indonesians to study Dutch. However, the opportunities provided were still very limited.²

At the first Congress of Budi Utomo, held in Djakarta in 1908, the leaders demanded that conditions for admission into Dutch schools be relaxed and that special schools be set up for Indonesian children who wished to further their Dutch education after the elementary level. It was only in 1914 that these demands were met. In that year the government established the Dutch-Native Schools or HIS in which Dutch was the medium of instruction. The diplomas from HIS were equated with those from other European primary schools.

Attempts to provide greater opportunities for Indonesians to study Dutch went on for sometime but as more and more Indonesians came to occupy important positions in the government and as they began to clamour for greater privileges the attitude of many Dutchmen changed. Takdir Alisjahbana, for example, quoted the case of Dr. J. W. Meyer Ranneft who opposed

¹ Quoted from S. Takdir Alisjahbana's Dari Perjuangan dan Pertumbuhan Bahasa Indonesia, p. 27.

² See Chapter I of this thesis.
the imparting of Dutch education to the Indonesians on the
ground that he could not answer for the consequences, either
economic or cultural.  

Meanwhile, the limitations placed by the Dutch on
Indonesians to acquire the knowledge of their language had
the effect of making Malay more attractive to the Indonesians.
A growing number of Indonesians, and especially the intellec-
tuals, came to regard Malay as the only regional language
which would be able to play the part of a national language
among the various ethnic groups of the archipelago. At the
same time the Dutch, to a certain extent, also used Malay in
administration. This was done partly as a matter of expedience
and partly due to the belief among many Dutchmen that the best
way to maintain Dutch prestige and Indonesian's feeling of
inferiority was by refusing to allow an Indonesian to address
a Dutchman in the language of his 'master'. As Burton Raffel
commented:

Dutch colonial administrators gave Malay a kind
of inter-island status, frequently using it as
a 'native' language, in preference to their own
'civilized' one, when dealing with their brown-
skinned subjects.

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1 S. Takdir Alisjahbana: *Indonesia, Social and Cultural
Revolution*, p.63.

2 Burton Raffel: *Anthology of Modern Indonesian Poetry*,
p.2.
However, the most important factor behind the emergence and the final acceptance of Malay as the national language was the presence of national consciousness which transcended regional and parochial interests of the various ethnic groups in the archipelago. This was particularly so among a small group of Western-educated intellectuals who came to play an increasingly important role in the social, cultural and political movements after 1900. It was among them that the concern for a common language was first felt. They came to realize the need for a national language which could be the basis for the expression of their common national aspirations and cultural identity. As S. Takdir Alisjahbana said:

...they had slowly come to realize that they would never be able to create closer ties with the body of people by using Dutch, which would never be understood by more than a tiny minority of Indonesians. On the premise that only by uniting the entire Indonesian people could they generate a force strong enough to challenge the colonial power, they began spontaneously to look for a language which could be understood by the great majority of the people.

Their choice naturally fell upon the Malay language which, for a very long time, had been the lingua franca of the region. In Bousquet's words:

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since the Dutch did not allow the use of their language to spread before the birth of nationalism, nationalists now employ Malay as a weapon against Dutch influence. They believed themselves to be forging a chain for their subjects, but they see now that they have given him a weapon, that terrible psychological weapon, a common national language with which to express their common national aspirations.

One of the earliest and foremost advocates of Malay as the national language was Muhammad Yamin. Yamin, who in later years was to become a very prominent politician, was one of the first to realize the need for a national language which could be the unifying factor among the various ethnic groups if they were to be united as a nation with a distinct cultural identity. As early as 1920 Yamin had shown his faith in the future of Malay by writing poems as well as essays in that language and published them in the magazines Jong Sumatera.

In the twenties this was something uncommon especially among Western-educated youths who, for one reason or another, were more inclined to use Dutch or their own regional language in writing or for general communication. In a speech to the first Indonesian Youth Congress in 1926 Yamin said he was convinced that sooner or later Malay would be accepted not only as the language of general communication but also as the

1 C. H. Bosquet: A French View of the Netherlands Indies, p. 88.

2 The organ of the organization Jong Sumatranen Bond.
national language of the archipelago and it would become the
basis of Indonesian culture that would emerge in the future.¹

Major political parties which appeared on the political
scene after 1900 made use of Malay as means of communicating
with the masses because it was only in that language the
leaders hoped to get the best possible results from their
political programmes. S. Takdir Alisjahbana says that 'with
the growing development of a consciousness of Indonesian
nationality, and the rapid advances made by movements striving
for Indonesian unity under the stimulus of this new conscious­ness, the use of Malay became increasingly widespread!'² In
other words, Malay became the vehicle for expressing cultural,
political and social aspirations. As Teeuw commented:

The Indonesian political leaders for their
part became increasingly aware of the fact
that Dutch could never be the national
language of Indonesia; and the view that
only Malay, by its development and historical
background, was predestined and equipped to
serve as a truly national medium of communi­cation and as a unifying principle, finally
gave rise to the ideal of Bahasa Indonesia,
the Indonesian language...³

¹ Quoted from S. Takdir, Alisjahbana's Dari Perjuangan dan
Pertumbuhan Bahasa Indonesia, p.36.

² S. Takdir Alisjahbana: Indonesia, Social and Cultural
Revolution, p. 63.

³ A. Teeuw: Modern Indonesian Literature, p.3.
And Ailsa Zainuddin adds that 'while nationalism was limited to the elites, Dutch could be used for communication between different language groups; but the leaders soon realized that it would never be a suitable language of communication for the mass of the people.'

Thus Malay became the weapon of the nationalists. It also became the symbol of nationalism. The leaders of Sarekat Islam made use of Malay because, in the words of Dahm, 'they found in Malay an infallible means of distinguishing themselves from foreigners and of spreading their ideas from Java (which remained from beginning to end the head and centre of the Indonesian movement) to the surrounding islands.'

There was pride in using Malay. For example, Tjokroaminoto, the leader of Sarekat Islam, refused to speak Dutch when he was first received by Governor General Idenburg in 1913. Although he knew Dutch he spoke to the Governor General in Malay.

In 1926 Jong Java, basically a Javanese movement, accepted Malay as the national language. Earlier, a sort of official

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1 Ailsa Zainuddin: op. cit., p. 83.
2 Bernhard Dahm: op. cit., p. 37.
3 Quoted from Dahm, op. cit., p. 36.
4 Ailsa Zainuddin: op. cit., p. 83.
recognition was granted to Malay in the Volksraad when
the Dutch government, by a Royal Decree of June 25, 1918
permitted the use of Malay, together with Dutch, by the
Indonesian members of the council. Earlier only Dutch was
allowed.

But the most important step taken towards making Malay
the official and national language of the archipelago was
the historic resolution made by the representatives of the
various regional youth organizations which met in Djakarta
on 28 October, 1928. These youths met earlier in 1926 to
explore ways and means to merge their organizations into one
general association. They agreed on the merger in 1928
and the new association was called Indonesia Muda (Young
Indonesian). The merger can be said to reflect the growing
feeling of unity among the leaders from the different ethnic
groups under the banner of nationalism. It was on 28 October
of that year that the youths unanimously accepted the resolut­
ion of one country, one nation and one language. The resolution
was as follows:

Pertama: Kami putera dan puteri Indonesia mengaku
bertumpah darah jang satu, Tanah Indonesia.

Kedua: Kami putera dan puteri Indonesia mengaku
berbangsa jang satu, Bangsa Indonesia.

1 Quoted from S. Takdir Alisjahbana's Dari Perdjuangan dan
Pertumbuhan Bahasa Indonesia, p. 34.
Ketiga: Kami putera dan puteri Indonesia mendjundjung bahasa persatuan, Bahasa Indonesia.

The most important part of the resolution, as far as the development of Malay or the Indonesian language is concerned, is the third section which says that 'we the sons and daughters of Indonesia uphold as the language of unity the Indonesian language.'

It was Malay that was made the basis of the new Indonesian language. The resolution of 1928 should be regarded as the beginning of a conscious effort on the part of the Indonesians, and especially its intellectuals, to make the language suitable as a vehicle for the expression of modern thoughts and ideas. In view of this, it is appropriate that Teeuw regards the resolution as doopuur (the moment of baptism) for the Indonesian language. Prof. Slametmuljana, however, looks at the resolution in a different light. He refers to At the first Congress on colonial education held in Hague in 1916 Ki Hadjar said:

1 Firstly: We the sons and daughters of Indonesia declare that we belong to one fatherland, Indonesia. Secondly: We the sons and daughters of Indonesia declare that we belong to one nation, the Indonesian nation. Thirdly: We the sons and daughters of Indonesia uphold as the language of unity the Indonesian language.

2 Quoted from Nugroho Nottosusanto's Sastra Melaju Klasik dan Sastra Indonesia Modern dan Batas-Waktu Antara Kedua, p. 205; see also Teeuw's Pokok dan Tokoh 1, p. 33. 

See Chapter I of this thesis.
It as a 'manifestes politik pada djaman pendjajahan.' (political manifestation during the colonial period). He goes on to say that 'the choice of Malay as the national language by the nationalist youths was a challenge to the status of the Dutch language. Furthermore, the term Indonesia itself was an antithesis to that of Hindia Belanda. If in the years to come the Indonesian language was called bahasa nasional, then the concept nasional was an antithesis to that of kolonial.'

A significant contribution to the development of Malay before the war was made by private educational institutions; the most important of which was the Taman Siswa, founded by Ki Hadjar Dewantara in 1922. As early as 1916 Ki Hadjar Dewantara had realized the potentialities of Malay as a national language of the whole of Indonesian archipelago and had suggested that it should be taught in all schools. At the first Congress on colonial education held in Hague in 1916 Ki Hadjar said:

Since Malay had long been the lingua franca for all the population groups in Indonesia and the teaching of this language did not raise any difficulties, so this language should be taught at all schools.

1 Prof. Slametmuljana: Politik Bahasa Nasional, p. 6.
2 See Chapter I of this thesis
in helping to popularize the use of Malay as well as helping to create a new kind of language very much different to the language of the traditional hikajat.¹

The setting up of Balai Pustaka in 1908 also contributed to the development of Malay. This publishing agency, besides publishing translations, traditional hikajat, popular almanacs and magazines, also encouraged Indonesians to write novels in that language. The publications of Balai Pustaka would not, by themselves, have been sufficient to transform Malay into what is now known as bahasa Indonesia. But the language of its novels, even in the twenties, certainly cannot be called the language of the hikajat. Jassin regards it as modern Malay with its grammar based principally on traditional Malay grammar. He says that it is modern Malay, as opposed to traditional Malay, because it is 'baru dalam gaja dan tjara pernjataanja, serta baru dan segar dalam qija and semangatnja' (modern in the way it is presented and also modern because of its freshness and vigour).² However, in the twenties, the

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¹ See Chapter III of this thesis.

² H. B. Jassin: Bahasa Indonesia dan Kesusastraan in Madjalah Ilmu-Ilmu Sastra Indonesia, No. 2, Djilid 11, Djuni p. 252.
influence of the Minangkabau language is strongly felt in most of its novels. This is because the majority of the writers and staff of its editorial section originated from the Minangkabau area.¹

The importance of Balai Pustaka in the development of Malay is that it played quite a significant role in helping to popularize the use of the language. With its numerous libraries and its efficient distributing system Balai Pustaka publications became available to an increasing number of the reading public throughout the length and breadth of the archipelago.

In 1933 another important step in the development of the Indonesian language was taken when three young Indonesian writers: Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana, Amir Hamzah and Armijn Pane, founded the literary periodical Pudjangga Baru.² The new periodical, its founders hoped, would provide leadership for the development of a new and dynamic Indonesian culture. One of its sub-titles was majalah bulanan kesusasteraan dan bahasa serta seni dan kebudajaan (monthly periodical for

¹ See Chapter III of this thesis.

² On aspects of Pudjangga Baru see Jassin's Pudjangga Baru and Heather Sutherland's Pudjangga Baru: Aspects of Indonesia Intellectual life in the 1930's in Indonesia, no. 6, October, 1966, pp. 106 - 127.
literature and language, together with art and culture). From the outset, *Pudjangga Baru* offered scope for young Indonesians to publish short stories, essays and poems. It also served as a forum for the discussion of the basis and content of the new Indonesian national culture which the founders hoped to develop. The appearance of this periodical was therefore not isolated from the political and national consciousness of the time.

Since its inception in 1933 *Pudjangga Baru* played an important part in helping to shape the course of development for the Indonesian language. This was due, in many ways, to the *Pudjangga Baru* editors who from the very beginning adopted a very positive attitude towards the language and its future course of development. They were really men of vision. S. Takdir Alisjahbana, one of its editors, believed that in order for bahasa Indonesia to develop the language should not be tied to the hard and fast rules of classical Malay. He also believed that influences from both local and

1 At the start of its third year it declared itself a pem­bawa semangat baru dalam kesusasteraan, seni, kebudayaan dan gol masjarakat umum (bearer of a new spirit in literature, art, culture and general social affairs). At the beginning of the fifth year it became the pembimbing semangat baru, diramis untuk membentuk kebudayaan baru, kebudayaan persatuan Indonesia (Leader of the dynamic spirit to create a new culture, the culture of Indonesian unity), see A. Tseuw's *Pokok dan Tokoh*, p. 5.
foreign sources should be accepted as positive factors because they could help to enrich bahasa Indonesia, making it really fit to fulfil its role as the national language of modern Indonesia.¹

The editors welcomed contributions from writers and poets from all walks of life and from all areas of the archipelago. Unlike the early Balai Pustaka editors, who insisted that the language of the works published by the agency conformed strictly to bahasa Melayu tinggi, Pudjangga Baru editors gave their writers and poets a free hand to experiment with language as well as to introduce new words or expressions from the various regional languages or from foreign sources. As Jassin said:

Besar djasa Pudjangga Baru dilapangan pengembangan bahasa Indonesia jang ditangan pengarang dan penjaimja mendapat njawa baru oleh adanja experimen2 dalam penggunaannya. Oleh karna jang tergabong dalamja pengarang2 dan penjair jang berasal dari berbagai daerah Indonesia, maka bahasa Melayu djadi terbuka bagi perkembangan jang lebih luas. (Pudjangga Baru’s contribution to the development of the Indonesian language was considerable because at the hands of its writers and poets the language received a new lease of life as a result of experiments made in its usage. And because the writers and poets who were associated with it

¹ See S. Takdir Alisjahbana’s Dari Pertumbuhan dan Perdjuangan Bahasa Indonesia, pp. 17 - 51.
came from many areas of the archipelago, Malay was thus exposed to further development). ¹

Pudjjangga Baru's important contribution to the development of bahasa Indonesia was to show the potentiality of the language as a medium for literary expression as well as a language of the modern world. As A. H. Johns commented:

'by using bahasa Indonesia as a medium, after encountering great difficulty, they struggled to develop it. The only way of developing a language after all is to use it.' ² Heather Sutherland adds that 'Pudjjangga Baru did much to see that the language was accepted by the Indonesian intellectuals,' and 'it did play a major role in that central achievement of pre-war cultural nationalism, the evolution of a national language.' ³ Pudjjangga Baru's interest in the development of the Indonesian language was again shown when it took the initiative of convening the First Indonesian Language Congress in Surakarta in 1938. Among the resolutions passed at this Congress was the assertion of the need to set up an institution which could decide on the coining of new technical terms, a


³ Heather Sutherland: *Pudjjangga Baru: Aspects of Indonesian Intellectual Life in the 1930s*, in *Indonesia*, no. 6, October, 1968, p. 124
new system of spelling and the codification of a new grammar in accordance with the changes taking place in the structure of the language.¹ However, these resolutions could not be implemented.

During the Japanese occupation the use of bahasa Indonesia became widespread. This was due to the policy of the Japanese administration to allow the use of bahasa Indonesia alongside Japanese. Prof. Slametmuljana says that 'it must not be forgotten that the Japanese played an important part in the establishment of the national language. When the Japanese came to Indonesia they quickly replaced Dutch as a medium of instruction in various types of schools with that of the Indonesian language.'² The use of Dutch was strictly forbidden.³ The effects of this policy on the development of the Indonesian language were twofold; one was that the use of bahasa Indonesia as a language of general communication began to spread rapidly throughout the length and breadth of the archipelago and the

¹ S. Takdir Alisjahbana: Indonesia: Social and Cultural Revolution, p. 64.
² Prof. Slametmuljana, op. cit., p. 10.
other was that there was now greater contacts between bahasa Indonesia and the various regional languages.

Between the two, in Prof. Slametmuljana's words 'terdjadi kontak sosial dan budaja jang aktif.' (there were active social and cultural contacts)\(^1\) These contacts resulted in the enrichment of the Indonesian language as countless numbers of words and expressions from the various regional languages were absorbed into the national language. This process is still going on even to this day.

After the declaration of independence on August 18, 1945 bahasa Indonesia became the sole official and national language of the new nation. The enormous spread of education at all levels after independence ensured further development of the Indonesian language. It was also after 1945 (actually it had its roots during the Japanese occupation) that modern Indonesian literature really began to flourish, with names like Chairil Anwar, Achdiat Karta Mihardja, Pramudya Ananta Tur, Idrus and Situmorong appearing on the literary scene. These writers and poets and others that came after them produced works which truly depict the spirit and mood of the new Indonesian nation and its national language.

The Indonesian language, like the modern Indonesian literature, can therefore be regarded as the by-product of

\(^1\) Prof. Slametmuljana, op. cit., p. 11.
Indonesian nationalism. As Soebardi said:

The development of Malay into Bahasa Indonesia, which occurred in the first half of the twentieth century, cannot be separated from the development of Indonesian society from that of a colony to that of an independent country. An important and decisive factor in this development was the spirit of nationalism, which had as its ideals the establishment of an independent state with its own national language, Bahasa Indonesia.\(^1\)

It grew mainly as a result of the desire on the part of Indonesians of different ethnic origins, and particularly the intellectuals, to find a common language as a basis for the expression of their national aspirations and cultural identity. The proclamation made by the Indonesian youths on October 28, 1928 should be seen in this light.

The proclamation of 1928 was not enough to make Malay a language of the modern world. At this stage the Indonesian language was certainly not equipped to be used as a vehicle in which to express modern thoughts and ideas. The problems faced by the language were manifold and the advocates of the language certainly realized the monumental task ahead of them. On the one hand they had to struggle against prejudice towards Malay and on the other the natural interest of the Dutch to make their language a national language of the archipelago. But the Indonesians, and especially their intellectuals, through painstaking efforts were able to overcome these problems through the years and today the Indonesian language can certainly, and without doubt, be regarded as a truly modern language.

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\(^1\) Soebardi: The Development of Bahasa Indonesia as a Language of Instruction and as a Medium of Expression in Arts and Sciences in Westerly, October, 1966, p. 9.
The term 'modern', which is used to describe the new phase in Indonesian literature, carries with it certain distinctive concepts as opposed to the concepts of literature in existence before this period or in what is termed as traditional literature. In itself the word 'modern' means 'of or pertaining to the present and recent times', but in the context of Indonesian literature it is used specifically as the antithesis of traditional literature just as modern Indonesian society the antithesis of traditional Indonesian society. But the term 'modern' is such a relative term that any attempts made to define it in the context of Indonesian literature often results in ambiguity rather than clarifying the issue. Different people, very often, adopt different criteria or place different emphasis on aspects which are considered modern and those which are not. This is especially so when the literature is viewed, as is the case with Indonesian literature, covers only a very short period of time. It is almost as if the literature is viewed horizontally rather than vertically.

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1 From *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*.
very short period of time. It is almost as if the literature is viewed horizontally rather than vertically.

The novelists and poets of the twenties, for example, would certainly regard themselves as 'modernists' in a sense that they introduced new elements hitherto unknown in Indonesian literary works. But to those closely associated with Angkatan Pudjangga Baru, which succeeded the Generation of the Twenties, the novelists and poets of that period were given the label kolot or conservative. At a later stage the same label was applied to Angkatan Pudjangga Baru by its successor, the Angkatan '45. This sort of labelling would certainly go on because criteria or values attached to the concept of modern varies from time to time and from one generation to another. In view of this A. H. Johns refers to it as an 'unsatisfactory term.'

It is best, therefore, to view the modern period in Indonesian literature solely in its entirety in relation to the literature in existence before the modern period or in what is known as traditional literature. The differences between one phase and another arise as a result of continuing development and steady growth. Modern Indonesian

literature, like the society in which it reflects, is not static but constantly undergoing changes as a result of changing times and circumstances. In a way it can be said to represent a dynamic expression of the whole process of development in Indonesian society. The classification or sub-division into the modern, the less modern or the most modern or into the various angkatan should be regarded mainly as an attempt to distinguish the phases in the development of the modern period from its beginning or its earliest years to the present day.

The beginning of the modern period in Indonesian literature has for some time been the subject of a series of discussions among a number of literary figures and critics in Indonesia; and, judging from the severity and earnestness of their discussions, the problem had at one time certainly become quite an important issue in Indonesian literary circles. In these polemics five dates had been suggested as to the possible beginning of the modern period. The five dates suggested are 1908, 1920, 1928, 1933 and 1945.

Prof. Slametmuljana in his article *Kemana Arah Perkembangan Puisi Indonesia Moderen* (In which Direction Will Modern Indonesian Poetry Develop) suggests the year 1945 as the beginning of modern Indonesian literature. In that year, to

1 Published in *Bahasa dan Budaya*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1953, pp. 15-17.
be precise on 17 August 1945, the Republic of Indonesia was proclaimed. It was also on that date that *bahasa Indonesia* was accepted as the official language of the country. Prof. Slametmuljana must have regarded the birth of modern Indonesian literature as closely tied with the existence of Indonesia as a political entity and also with the formal acceptance of *bahasa Indonesia* as the official language of the Republic.

The literature of the twenties, according to him, should be regarded as modern Malay literature. It is the extension of what has been called traditional or classical Malay literature. He regards the literary works of the thirties as representing literature in transition; from modern Malay literature to modern Indonesian literature proper. To strengthen his argument Prof. Slametmuljana compares the language of selected works which he considers as representing the period of the twenties, the thirties and after. ¹

Drs. Umar Junus in his article *Istilah dan Masa Waktu* 'Sastra Melaju' dan 'Sastra Indonesia' (Terminology and Published in *Medan Lima Pemecahan*, vol. 1. no. 3, July 1960, pp. 245-260.

Periodisation of Malay and Indonesian Literature)\(^1\) disagrees with Prof. Slametmuljana's view point except for one point; that is the official acceptance of bahasa Indonesia as bahasa resmi or the official language of Indonesia in 1945. But bahasa resmi, according to Umar Junus, is not the same as bahasa nasional or the national language. The official language, in his opinion, is a language used in day-to-day government administration and the national language, on the other hand, is a language which can be used to foster the feeling of oneness among a big group of individuals until they can, through their own conscious effort, group themselves together as a nation.\(^2\) Umar Junus firmly believes that the name attached to a given literature must be the same as that of the language which becomes its vehicle.\(^3\) And since 1928 has been recognized as the date for the official acceptance of Malay as bahasa Indonesia or the national language of the archipelago he, therefore, assumes 1928 as the year for the

\(^1\) Published in Medan Ilmu Pengetahuan, vol. 1, no. 3, July 1960, pp. 245-260.

\(^2\) Umar Junus, op. cit., p. 250.

\(^3\) This is how he explains it: '.............. literature is closely connected with language, and literature will only exist if language exists. For this reason, classification of literature should be based on the classification of the language which becomes its vehicle.' Umar Junus, op.cit., p.249.
emergence of modern Indonesian literature. But, according to him, Indonesian literature proper only made its appearance in 1933, the year when Pudjangga Baru first established itself in the country's literary scene.\(^1\) He calls the period between 1928 and 1933 as the Pre-Pudjangga Baru (the Pre-Pudjangga Baru Period) or the Pre-Angkatan '33 (the Pre-Generation 1933) and the literature Pesisir Indonesia (Pre-Indonesian literature).\(^2\)

Umar Junus' theory on the beginning of modern Indonesian literature comes under attack from two well-known literary figures in Indonesia, Nugroho Notosusanto\(^3\) and Ajip Rosidi.\(^4\) Both, and particularly Nugroho, regard Umar's idea as out of date. Language should no longer be the main criterion or the deciding factor in identifying the literature of a particular

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<td>1</td>
<td>In July 1933 the first issue of the periodical Pudjangga Baru the organ of the new angkatan, appeared. The first editors were S. Takdir Alisjahbana and Aminj Pans. For a detailed study of Pudjangga Baru see Jassin's Pudjangga Baru, Gunung Agung, Djakarta, 1963.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Umar Junus, op. cit., p. 256.</td>
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country. The criterion as suggested by Nugroho Noto
dosusanto and Ajip Rosidi, and probably the most accepta-
able so far, was the pervading presence of national con-
sciousness in the Indonesian society in the first quarter of this century.

Nugroho Noto
dosusanto regards the founding of Budi Utomo in 1908 as the first expression of Indonesian cultural identity and the beginning of what he calls nationality Indonesia (Indonesian nationality). It is now commemorated as Hari Keban
tikan Nasional (Day of National Awakening). It is in this context that Nugroho Noto
dosusanto regards the literary expression or works which appear after this date as belonging to sastra nasional (or the national literature of the Indonesian people). However, he concludes that the earliest signs of the emergence of this new literature appears only after 1920.

Zuber Usman suggests 1908 as the beginning of what he calls 'kesusasteraan baru' (new literature) because it was in that year that Balai Pustaka, a government publishing agency,

Nase Kohn defines nationalism as follows:

1 Nugroho cites an example, 'English besides being the instrument for writing English literature is also the instrument for writing American literature, Philippine literature, Australian literature etc. Spanish besides being the instrument for writing Spanish literature is also the instrument for writing Mexican literature.' Nugroho Noto
dosusanto, op. cit., p. 203.
was founded. It was then known as Commissie voor de Inlandsche Schoolen Volkslectuur (Commission for Native Schools and Popular Reading). The Commission became known as Balai Pustaka in 1917. But between 1908 and 1920 Balai Pustaka was not involved in the publication of any original works. Its main concern during those years was the publication of traditional hikajat or silair and translations from Western works.

The birth of modern Indonesian literature can be said to be closely related to the extensive changes taking place in Indonesian society after the turn of the century. In fact, its existence may be taken as an indication of the changing phenomena. In the midst of these changes an undercurrent of national consciousness began to emerge which soon developed into a fully-fledged nationalism, both in its political and cultural manifestations. It was particularly the cultural aspect of Indonesian nationalism that provided the necessary stimulus to the emergence of a modern literature.

Hans Kohn defines nationalism as follows:

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1 Zuber Usman: Kesusastraan Baru Indonesia, p. 5.
the ideal and the only legitimate form of political organization and that the nationality is the source of all cultural, creative energy and of economic well being.¹

In Indonesia, and elsewhere in many parts of Asia, nationalism unleashes not just a political force directed against the colonial master but also the desire on the part of the people living under colonialism to re-examine their cultural heritage and at the same time to make the necessary changes in accordance with the needs of their struggles and that of the twentieth century world. As Soedjamoko puts it, "it is rooted in the need for self-definition in the face of the colonial power."² Rupert Emerson adds that "nationalism in South-east Asia as elsewhere is not merely an instinctive movement of resistance to the alien and the foreigner but a conscious assertion of the unity, the distinct and separate identity, of the community in question."³

With the emergence of Indonesian nationalism and the

¹ Hans Kohn: Nationalism - its Meaning and History, pp. 9, 10.


³ Rupert Emerson in his introduction to Government and Nationalism in Southeast Asia, p. 17.
spread of Indonesian national consciousness a truly
Indonesian nationality began to take shape. The birth of
modern Indonesian literature around this period was, in
many ways, the by-product of Indonesian nationalism and it
is this, more than anything else, that makes modern Indonesian
literature different from that of traditional or classical
Malay literature and the modern Malay literature in the Malay
Peninsula. As Ajip Rosidi points out it is Indonesian
national consciousness that constitutes the fundamental
difference between Malay literature and Indonesian literature. 1

Modern Indonesian literature, in the opinion of A. Teeuw, 2
H. B. Jassin, 3 Nugroho Notosusanto, 4 Ajip Rosidi, 5
Burton Raffel, 6 Boejong Saleh 7 and Fachruddin Ambo Enre, 8

1 Ajip Rosidi, op. cit., p. 6.
2 A. Teeuw: Modern Indonesian Literature, p. 2.
3 Quoted by Nugroho Notosusanto in Soal Periodisasi dalam
4 Nugroho Notosusanto: op cit., p. 207.
5 Ajip Rosidi, op. cit., p. 7.
7 Boejong Saleh: Perkembangan Kesenian Indonesia, in Almanak
Seni, p. 9.
8 Fachruddin Ambo Enre: Perkembangan Puisi Indonesia dalam Masa
Dua puluhan, pp. 18, 19.
was born in 1920. This is the most acceptable date since in that year the first original poem in Indonesian, then known as Malay, was written by Muhammad Yamin and published in the magazine *Jong Sumatra* (Young Sumatra). In the same year *Balai Pustaka* published its first original novel. The novel, *Azab dan Sengsara* (Misery and Torment) was written by Merari Siregar. These works were followed by a number of others, poetry as well as prose, all of which share certain similar characteristics which are different to that of traditional literature. The themes and forms are in many ways different from the themes and forms in the *hikajat*, *rantiun* or *siair* and so are the characters, language and social setting. Of this beginning A. Teeuw remarks:

> It was then for the first time that young Indonesians began to express feelings and ideas which were basically different from those current in the traditional indigenous societies, and to do so in literary forms which deviated fundamentally from those found in the older Malay, Javanese and other literature, oral or written.¹

The break with the past is unmistakably clear.

Western education contributed in no small measure to the growth and development of modern Indonesian literature. Its contribution was both direct and indirect in nature. In schools or colleges the students became familiar with Western

¹ A. Teeuw, *Modern Indonesian Literature*, p. 42.
works particularly those written in Dutch; and not surprisingly, quite a number of the earlier writers, especially the poets, were influenced in one way or another by Dutch works. A. H. Johns made this remark when he commented on the influence of a group of Dutch poets known as the Tachtigers or the 'Eightiers' (the Generation of 1880) on the early Indonesian poets:

A. H. Johns made this remark when he commented on the influence of a group of Dutch poets known as the Tachtigers or the 'Eightiers' (the Generation of 1880) on the early Indonesian poets:

the work of the 'Eightiers', finding their way into high-school textbooks during the 1920s, were the only specimens of recent European verse with which the new generation of Indonesian writers were at all familiar.¹

And A. Teeuw adds that 'the young Indonesian pujanggas became acquainted with this literature primarily through the Dutch language lessons at the teachers' training colleges.'² A good example of such Western-educated Indonesian was Marah Rusli, the author of Sitti Nurbaya. He was educated at a Malay school in Padang and in 1904 he joined the Hoofden School in Bukit Tinggi. After graduating from this school in 1910 he became a student at the Veterinary School in Bogor, graduating in 1915.³ Thus, Marah Rusli was,

¹ A. H. Johns: Genesis of a Modern Literature, pp. 420, 421.
² A. Teeuw: Modern Indonesian Literature, p. 42.
³ See Zuber Usman's Kesusaasteran Baru Indonesia, pp. 33, 34.
in Johns words, 'a Dutch educated expatriate Minangkabau of
the upper middle class, probably influenced to some extent
by Dutch literature.' He goes on to say that Marah Rusli was
'just the type of individual who, ..... , might be expected
to write a novel.'

With the spread of Western education there was a gradual
increase in literacy and with it a corresponding development
of the reading habit. The reading public slowly but steadily
began to increase. But to these literates there was not much
reading materials available either in Malay or in the other
regional languages. As such their attention was focussed on
Dutch and other Western works. The setting up of the Commissie
voor de Inlandsche School-en Volkslectuur by the Dutch govern-
ment in 1908, and its consequent development and the change of
name to Balai Pustaka in 1917, was in a way a step taken to
overcome the acute shortage of reading materials for the
literates.

The impact of Western cultures and technology on Indone-
sian society affected not only the structure of Indonesian
traditional life but also the mentality and outlook of a certain
section of the populace, especially those who had benefitted
from Western education. Western education, in particular,

1 A. H. Johns: The Novel as a Guide to Indonesian Social History,
in Bijdragen Tot de Taal - , Land - en Volkenkunde, vol. 115,
1959, p. 234.
created in Indonesian man new sets of values very much different from those of their fathers or forefathers.

The educated Indonesians, many of whom had been living outside the traditional village cosmos, were slowly liberating themselves from what S. Takdir Alisjahbana calls 'the shackles of group-thinking and group-sentiments.'

He goes on to say 'by freeing themselves from the bonds of tradition, people found the courage to think for themselves, to search for their own identities, and to accept the consequences of their own actions.' In other words the new sets of values brought about the liberation of the potentialities of the individual and consequently to the rise of individualism, an element unheard of in the communal life of the traditional village society.

With these new sets of values the intellectuals or near-intellectuals began to look with critical eyes and in a much clearer perspective on the numerous problems facing their society and that of their relationship vis-a-vis the colonial government.

There was greater awareness of their own cultural heritage and of their potentialities. The nationalist movement in the earlier stage of its development took the form of cultural nationalism rather than political nationalism. It grew from

a new feeling of self-respect and personal responsibility and cherishing a desire for progress within the modern world based on their own efforts and capabilities.  

It was from the educated elite that a small group of Indonesian writers began to emerge. This group, like the educated elite generally, was effected in one way or the other by the tides of nationalism which swept the archipelago in the first quarter of this century. A few of them even became directly involved in political activities and in the nationalist movement in the Indies. The most important of these were Abdul Muis, Rustam Effendi and Muhammad Yamin. Abdul Muis, the author of *Salah Asuhan*, was a journalist and also one of the leaders of *Sarekat Islam*. During the first World War he became active in the movement for greater autonomy for the Indies. He visited the Netherlands as a member of a delegation of the 'Comite Indie Weerbaar' (Committee for the Defence of the Indies). In 1920 he was appointed a member of the *Volksraad*.  

Rustam Effendi was involved in the communist movement and after the communist uprisings of 1926-27 was forced to leave the country for the Netherlands. Yamin was at first active in the regional youth movement, *Jong Sumatranen Bond*. For some time he was the leader of this Young Sumatran Organization.

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In 1926 he played a major part in the first Indonesian Youth Congress held in Djakarta. The purpose of the Congress was to unify the various youth organizations of the time into one single organization. This was achieved in 1928 when the various youth organizations merged into one single organization, *Indonesia Muda* (Young Indonesia). On October 28 of the same year the all Indonesian Youth Congress was held in Djakarta and it was at this Congress that the historic resolution of one country, one nation and one language was unanimously accepted.

Thus, these early writers were not isolated from the current social, cultural and political movements of the period. In many instances they were really part of these movements. They lived during a period of rapid change and felt strongly that Indonesian society must change if it was to survive and at the same time be able to meet the challenge that was thrust upon them from the West. As part of their contribution toward achieving the cherished goal they started to write and express themselves in essays, novels and poems in a language, styles and forms that differ from those of traditional works. Part of the themes deal with contemporary social and political life and problems of the Indonesian people. It is not surprising, therefore that from the very beginning it looked as if, and this might well be so, that these early Indonesian writers were imbued with a sense of mission or purpose; viz.
of helping their people to prepare for a new and a much better future.

Some of these earlier works were actually written in Dutch because that was the language they knew best. A good example was Raden Adjeng Kartini who wrote her letters in Dutch and later published under the title Door Duisternis tot Licht (Through Darkness to Light). Another was Noto Soeroto who wrote poems in Dutch. He published his collections under the title Melatiknoppen (Melati Buds, 1915), Fluisteringen van de Avonwind (Whispers of the Evening Wind, 1917) and De Wajangliederen (Wajang Song, 1931).

Most of the writers in the twenties were from Sumatra and particularly from the Minangkabau area on the West coast. This can be attributed largely to the fact that the Minangkabaus were more at home with Malay than any of the other ethnic groups in the archipelago. The Minangkabau language may well be regarded as a Malay dialect. At this stage (the twenties)


2 A. Teeuw, Modern Indonesian Literature, p. 9.
not many people from the other ethnic groups made use of Malay in their writings although the language was spoken and understood by them. People from the other ethnic groups preferred to use either Dutch or their own regional languages. It was only in the thirties and after that the use of Malay became widespread.

At the same time it must not be forgotten that the conflict between traditional values and norms, as represented by the adat, and modern values and ideas were most severe in Minangkabau society than in any other societies of the archipelago. This is because of the matrilinial system in Minangkabau society which is most liable to tensions. Minangkabau youths who had received Western education, and had thus acquired Western sets of values, more often than not found themselves in direct conflict with the adat. The social tensions and conflicts within the Minangkabau society are reflected in most of the novels of the twenties.

Another factor which influenced the birth and growth of modern Indonesian literature was the Indonesian press which came to play a bigger role in the affairs of the country,
especially after 1900. At first it was represented mainly by Chinese-Malay newspapers but political developments at the beginning of this century led to the rise of independent Indonesian-Malay press. According to Drewes Balai Pustaka was subscribing to 40 newspapers in 1918 and by 1925 the number of newspapers subscribed had increased to about 200.¹

These newspapers became a sort of forum for new ideas for the younger, educated and politically conscious Indonesians. Almost all of them used Malay. The journalists and the younger writers had become, in the words of Justus van der Kroef, the 'disarrayed creators of a new, direct and businesslike language, an eclectic Malay, that liberally borrowed and 'Indonesianized' countless foreign terms and expressions.'² This is certainly not the language of the hikajat, nor that of the pantun or sijair, but more of a naturalistic prose style which was becoming the language of the younger, Westernized generation of writers.

Thus, the emergence of modern Indonesian literature in the twenties should be seen in the light of the extensive changes

¹ Jacques Sourage: An Introduction to the Study of the Novel.

that took place in Indonesian society since the beginning of the century. In many ways it can be compared to the appearance of the novel in Europe at the turn of the seventeenth century which, as Jacques Souvage says, 'must be seen in connection with the transition from a feudal world order to a world order based on the social relationships between individual persons.' And, according to Ian Watt, this 'transition' involves both 'secularization as well as individualism.'

Modern Indonesian literature is therefore the product of modern Indonesian society. In other words, it is the product of the modern consciousness. Its background is no longer the traditional small village communities or the palaces of the rulers of the city states or inland kingdoms but of a society which had, somehow or another, been affected by the impact of Western cultures. It was either a modern Indonesian society or a society, as at the beginning

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1 Jacques Souvage: *An Introduction to the Study of the Novel*, p. 66.

2 Watt goes on to say that '.... until the end of the seventeenth century the individual was not conceived of as wholly autonomous, but as an element in a picture which depended on divine persons for its meanings, as well as on traditional institutions such as Church and Kingship for its secular pattern,' see Watt: *The Rise of the Novel*, p. 84.
of the twentieth century, in the process of change from
the traditional to the modern.

Modern Indonesian literature can best be described as
a literature written by Indonesians for Indonesians using
as its medium a language which in 1928 came to be known as
bahasa Indonesia. Each piece of work is the product of
an individual, written for the individual readers, to be
read privately and not to be listened to as part of a social
function (as in traditional literature). In such work the
individuality of the author is projected in the choice and
treatment of subject matter and form and as such the work
is clearly and unmistakably the product of an individual
and not that of the community as a whole. The subject matter
is the world as it is with all its problems and complexities.

In the form novel the creation of characters help to show
'the predicament of individuals, the complexities of their
motives, and the tensions and animosities implicit in their
mutual relationship.' Modern Indonesian literature, in short,
is the product of a modern, twentieth century Indonesian
society, coming from the pen of writers who in a conscious

1 A. H. Johns: Indonesian Literature and the Social Upheaval,
in Australian Outlook, no. 4, vol. 13. p. 293.
way desire to portray or depict the whole or part of that society with all its problems and complexities and the individuals that live in the midst of it, in forms that deviate fundamentally from those used in traditional literature.

Traditional literature generally is not the product of an individual. It is anonymous. Literature at the level of the small village communities are manifold and consist of both prose and poetry. Like the adat, this form of literature has its origin in the long forgotten past and handed down by word of mouth from one generation to another. As such the names of the original authors are unknown to this day. This may be due to the nature of the traditional Indonesian society in which the emphasis was always on the community as a whole rather than on an individual. Activities of any sort were a community rather than an individual affair. So was literature. It was regarded as the possession and product of the whole community, depicting and projecting its entire cultural and spiritual life. It was thus closely connected with every aspect of the community's activities.

S. Takdir Alisjahbana says that 'it served a social function ............... , and was recited at such important moments in the life cycle as marriage, the building of a new home, and

The soka and the suruvan are identical poetic forms. The soka consists of both a two-line form and a four-line form. In four-line form, with its rhymes AAA or AAA, it resembles the pantun but without the pantun's usual introductory couplet. The suruvan is a two-line poetic form with strong emphasis on moral teachings.
the harvesting of the rice crops.\textsuperscript{1} It also played an important part in the religious life of the community as chants and incantations were often in rhythmic language.

There are a number of poetic forms in folk literature. Besides the chants and incantations of the pawange or dukune (mediums with magical powers to appease spirits) there are other poetic forms such as the peribahasa (proverbs and sayings),\textsuperscript{2} bahasa berirama (rhythmic language) or sesomba,\textsuperscript{3} seloka and gurindam.\textsuperscript{4} But the most important of the traditional poetic form is the pantun, a quatrain, which has the usual rhyme scheme ABAB. The number of words per line is four, and the syllables for each line vary from nine to twelve. The first two lines, known as the sampiran, is the introductory couplet and the next couplet contains the heavenly wisdom.\textsuperscript{2} The characters are confined strictly to the good, the beautiful and the powerful on one side and

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1} S. Takdir Alisjahbana, Indonesia: Social and Cultural Revolution, p. 34.
  \item \textsuperscript{2} The proverbs give instructions, commands and prohibitions to people in their relationship with fellow beings or with nature.
  \item \textsuperscript{3} This poetic form survives mostly in Minangkabau literature especially in such works as (Kaba) Pantjak diLabuh, Sabai nan Aluhi, Tiindu Mato and (Kaba) Si Umbuik Mudo, see Zuber Usman's Kesuasteraan Lama Indonesia, p. 143.
  \item \textsuperscript{4} The seloka and the gurindam are identical poetic forms. The seloka consists of both a two-line form and a four-line form. In four-line form, with its rhyme ABAB or AAAA, it resembles the pantun but without the pantun's usual introductory couplet. The gurindam is a two-line poetic form with strong emphasis on moral teachings.
\end{itemize}
the purpose or meaning the pantun wishes to convey. This poetic form is certainly the most popular in traditional literature and its popularity has not changed through the centuries. It is still so today. In fact, the influence of this poetic form on the early Indonesian poets, especially those in the twenties, is clear and unmistakable.

In prose, too, a number of forms can be detected. Among them are animal fables, legends, farcical tales and folk romances. The most popular of these are the folk romances or the tjerita penglipur lara. A good example of such stories are: Hikajat Balim Deman and Hikajat Awang Sulang Merah Muda. All of these deal with the adventures of superhuman princes and princesses and the creatures of the heavenly kingdom. The characters are confined strictly to the good, the beautiful and the powerful on one side and the bad and the ugly on the other.

At the courts of kings, however, a far more sophisticated

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1 Burton Raffel says that 'one reason the pantun is still popular today I suspect, is its easy convertibility to whatever subject happens to be on one's mind.' see Raffel's Anthology of Modern Indonesian Poetry, p. 4.

literature existed, namely that of written works. The birth of written literature resulted from contacts between the indigenous Indonesian civilization with those of Hindu and Islamic origin. Most of these are dedicated to the rulers and those around them and a great many are interwoven with myths and legends of Indian or Arabic-Persian origin, adapted in one form or another to the local scene. But in none of these the author, even if he is known, offers his own personal evaluation, critique and analysis of the society and the people living around him and in his day. The touch of individualism, an essential element in modern works, is not present in traditional literature.

It made a brief appearance, however, in the nineteenth century Malay Peninsula when Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir Munsji, in short Abdullah Munsji, produced works which in forms and contents were rather different from that of existing classical

1 But even after written literature had found a footing in the archipelago folk literature never ceased to lose its importance in the lives of the people especially those living in small village communities. Oral literature can be said to be the product of small village communities whereas written literature the product of a more sophisticated court civilization. Both forms of literature continued to exist side by side, one influencing the other, and in some instances there is no clear line of division separating the two forms of literature. see Mohd. Taib Osman's Kesuasteraan Melayu Lama, p. 20.
Abdullah Munsji did not write novels nor did he experiment with new forms of verse; but in his writing, particularly in Hikajat Abdullah (The Story of Abdullah), he noted in detail and with utmost clarity his own experiences and observations on contemporary events, adding here and there his own personal views and criticisms on the state of affairs prevailing among his people and in his society. His language is comparatively free from the conventional and stereotyped phraseological trappings of the hikajat. But Abdullah's works, in contents and spirit, were not part of the Indonesian scene.

Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir Munsji was of Arab-Tamil parentage and was born in Malacca in 1796. His father was a teacher of Malay to Marsden, one of the foremost Europeans of the last century who was later to become a Malay scholar, and besides doing some business of his own he worked as an interpreter and clerk to the Europeans in Malacca. Abdullah had a very strict upbringing and from an early age he had been taught Arabic, Tamil and Malay. Later he followed in his father's footsteps and worked as a clerk and teacher to a number of Europeans in Malacca and Singapore, including Stamford Raffles. Thus, from boyhood Abdullah was groomed to be a man of letters.

Today, his best known writings consist of two original works: Hikajat Abdullah, an autobiography, and Kisah Pelayaran Abdullah, an account of his voyage to the East Coast of Malaya, in which he describes about the local wars in Kelantan and about the life of the Malays on the East Coast. Another work of his, an account of his pilgrimage to Mecca, was not completed because of his death. He was also responsible for a translation of the Indian Pantjatanderan, which is known as Hikajat Galilah dan Damiah, as well as editing a text of Sedjarah Malaju. He died in 1854.
at least, not culturally. They were outside the mainstream of Indonesian national consciousness and the rising tide of nationalism that swept the archipelago in the first quarter of this century. As such his works cannot be regarded as belonging to the Indonesian literature proper as many would have liked it to be. Abdullah should therefore be looked upon as a precursor or the father of modern Malay literature rather than of modern Indonesian literature.

The greatest single contribution of the Dutch government towards the growth and development of modern Indonesian literature was the founding of Balai Pustaka in 1908. With the expansion of educational facilities the government realized the need to provide the growing number of literates with good and cheap reading materials. With this in mind the government, in 1908, established a Commissie voor de Inlandsche School-en Volkslectuur (Commission for Native School and Popular Reading) consisting of six members headed by the government adviser on native affairs, Dr. G. A. Hazeu. The main task of the Commission was to help the Directeur Onderwijs (Director of Education) to select suitable reading materials for use in schools as well as for the public. ¹ The Commission submitted

¹ See Zuber Usman's Kesusastraan Baru Indonesia, p. 29.
its report in 1911 and this was followed by the establishment of a library and an editorial department. At this initial stage the Commission turned its attention to works which would stimulate the taste for reading, the editing of some of the known legends in existence and also tales which would be for the general good of the population. It was also the policy of the Commission to give every possible encouragement to Indonesians who showed interest to write tales and travelogues.\footnote{From the 1930 Handbook of the Netherlands East Indies p. 81, quoted from 'Tempo Doeloe' and Padjajaran Baru, an unpublished M. A. Thesis by Heather Sutherland, p. 169.}

In 1917 the Commission was completely re-organized and was given the name Balai Pustaka. With the re-organization the number of staff was increased and a translation department established. In 1910 there was only one staff working for the Commission but in 1919 the number had increased to seventy five.\footnote{A. Teeuw: Pokok dan Tokoh 1, p. 58} Balai Pustaka established its own publishing and printing departments in 1918 and in 1920 it had its own printing press. Previously it worked with the Department of Education.

Since its inception it had been the policy of the government agency to undertake the task of translating and publishing in those magazines included those on local as well as on
works from European literature. These included such works as *The Three Musketeers*, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, *Prince and Pauper* and numerous others. In this way a new world was opened to a great number of Indonesians who were previously denied this opportunity due to the poor command or total ignorance of Dutch or other European languages.

Balai Pustaka also published almanacs and magazines. The almanacs first appeared in 1918 and were published in Malay, Javanese and Sundanese. It also published specialized almanacs for school teachers and peasants. In the first year thirty two thousand copies were published in the three languages, and after that the number of copies published reached one hundred thousand. It was also in 1918 that its magazine, the Malay language monthly *Sri Pustaka*, first made its appearance. In 1919 this magazine had 3000 subscribers. It was followed, in 1923, by the influential Malay language weekly *Pandji Pustaka*. In 1926 the Javanese edition of *Pandji Pustaka*, the *Kadjawen*, appeared and this was followed three years later by the Sundanese version, *Parahiangan*. The articles published in these magazines included those on local as well as on

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1 A. Teeuw: *Pokok dan Tokoh I*, p. 58.
international affairs with special emphasis on matters concerning education and agriculture. These magazines also published poetry, short stories, traditional tales, legends and serials.¹

But the most important contribution of Balai Pustaka was the encouragement given to young Indonesians who showed interest in writing. This was in the form of prizes offered and at the same time promises that their works, if accepted, would be published and distributed by the agency. As Justus M. van der Kroef commented, 'more significant for the development of modern Indonesian literature were the prizes awarded by Balai Pustaka to budding young Indonesian authors.'² It is therefore not surprising that quite a number of pre-war writers, S. Takdir Alisjahbana, Nur Sutan Iskandar and the two brothers Sanusi and Armijn Pane, to mention just a few, have worked at one time or another at Balai Pustaka.³ In 1920 the first original novel in Indonesian, Azab dan Sengsara, was published by Balai Pustaka. It was written by Merari Siregar. Many such original novels were published after 1920, as well as works on various subjects.

¹ Heather Sutherland: 'Tempo Doeloe' and Pudjangga Baru, p. 171.
² Justus M. van der Kroef, op. cit., p. 266.
³ A. Teeuw: Pokok dan Tokoh 1, p. 59.
Balai Pustaka did not concern itself solely with publishing but also with the setting up of its own libraries and a well organized and efficient distributing system for their publications. Its libraries were known as Taman Pustaka (The Garden of Good Reading) and were often housed in such places as the local elementary schools, barracks or other government institutions. It was started in 1911 but by 1920 the number of Balai Pustaka libraries were around 1200. The number had increased to over 2500 in 1925. These libraries were able to provide books and other reading materials very cheaply to a great number of Indonesians. To ensure a wider distribution of its publications Balai Pustaka also had its own distributing agencies which could be found throughout the length and breadth of the archipelago.

Most of those employed in the editorial department of Balai Pustaka in pre-war years were of Minangkabau origin and graduates of the Bukittinggi Teachers College. Zuber Usman mentioned a few of these editors; among them were St. Perang Bustami, Nur St. Iskandar, Muh. Kassim, Abdul Muis and K. St. Pamuntjak. The policy of Balai Pustaka then was that the

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1 A. Teeuw: *Pokok dan Tokoh 1*, p. 58.
2 See Zuber Usman's *Kesusasteraan Baru Indonesia.*
language, in this case Malay, used in the works published by the agency should strictly conform to *bahasa Melayu tinggi* or the language as used in the royal courts. It was for this reason that at the early stage of its development *Balai Pustaka* employed a good number of teachers from Minangkabau in its editorial department, because it was thought that only these people could uphold the official policy of the agency in maintaining the 'purity' of Malay.¹ This they did and as Heather Sutherland commented these editors were 'a formative influence on the post-war development of *bahasa Indonesia.*'²

The influence of these editors could also be felt in other spheres, namely in the forms and contents of *Balai Pustaka* novels.

*Balai Pustaka*, thus, became a major publisher. The number of works published was about five hundred in 1919 to well over two thousand in 1940. These included originals as well as translations of European works. But *Balai Pustaka* was restricted in many ways in its publishing work because of its official nature as an agency of the colonial government.

The first three decades of this century saw the emergence of a

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¹ Zuber Usman: *Bahasa Persatuan, Kedudukan Sedjarah dan Persoalan-Persoalan*', p. 88.

number of political parties often adopting extreme views and policies which threatened the very foundation of Dutch colonialism in the archipelago. There was mounting criticism of almost every aspect of Dutch rule and the government, as a result, took numerous steps to crush attempts to undermine its authority. Political leaders or so-called agitators were either gaol ed or exiled.

Strict censorship was imposed on publications and Balai Pustaka, because of its official nature, had to adhere strictly to the government's policies and requirements. Works which were considered damaging to Dutch interest or with political views contrary to that of the colonial government were rejected; and so were those considered morally unsuitable. The agency, however, took a strictly neutral stand on religious issues. These restrictions and together with the fact that it was an agency of the colonial government made many Indonesian writers condemn Balai Pustaka as an anti-nationalist instrument. This criticism is certainly true to a certain extent but at the same time it must not be forgotten that the agency had also made positive contribution to the development of modern Indonesian literature.

1 A. Tceuw: Modern Indonesian Literature, p. 14.

2 Among them Zub er Usman, Umar Jumis and Bakri Siregar.
As Teeuw puts it:

It not only stimulated Indonesian writers to create their novels by offering them publishing facilities which in the prevailing conditions could not be provided by any private publisher, Dutch or Indonesians, but it also assured them of a relatively large reading public, because of the large number of its public libraries and local selling branches and the low prices which it could set as a non-profit making, government supported institution.¹

And John M. Echols is also of the same opinion when he says that *Balai Pustaka* 'provided an outlet and an incentive to native writers to such an extent that its role in modern Indonesian literature can scarcely be overestimated.'²

The existence of *Balai Pustaka* before the war certainly created an atmosphere conducive to the growth and development of modern Indonesian literature, especially the novels. The facilities and incentives it provided were as important to the budding young Indonesian writers as were its libraries and its efficient distributing system to the creating of a reading public necessary for the growth and development of modern Indonesian literature. As Heather Sutherland commented, *Balai Pustaka* was of vital significance in developing a milieu in which Indonesians could produce literature, especially

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² John M. Echols: *Indonesian Writing in Translation*, South-east Asia Program, Cornell University, 1956, p. 1; quoted from Burton Raffel's *The Development of Modern Indonesian Poetry*, p. 27.
novels, and in creating a reading public for that literature with its efficient methods of distribution and sale." ¹

But the most important factor responsible for the growth of modern Indonesian literature was without doubt the presence of national consciousness in the archipelago after 1900. *Balai Pustaka* can be regarded as a contributing factor.

¹ The word *novel* in Indonesian is *roman*. It is borrowed from the term *roman*, to mean novel, in Dutch and in other European languages. The origin of this word is the Romance, the literary form most popular in Europe during the Middle Ages. In Indonesian literature, however, the word *novel* is used to mean a narrative prose much shorter than a novel but longer than a short story with its main theme centered principally at the most critical or important moment in the life of its characters. See Jassin's *Tiga Permainan Bugis Baru*, p. 72.

¹ Heather Sutherland: *'Tempo Doeloe'* and *Padiangga Baru*, p. 179.
CHAPTER IV

THE NOVEL

The form novel, as is understood in Indonesian literature today, had its origin in Western Europe. Like the sonnet the form novel made its appearance in Indonesia in the early twenties.

The origin of the novel in Western literature goes back to the early seventeenth century but it only became popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. 1 Its appearance was closely tied to the extensive changes taking place in Western Europe. These changes brought about secularisation or, rather, individualism. The rise of individualism, resulting from commercial individualism and the Puritan emphasis on self-reliance and individual responsibility, was an important factor behind the emergence of the form novel in Western Europe. The reason as Watt says, "This was helped further by a number of other factors such as the coming into prominence of the professional middle class, individual experience which is always unique and therefore new." 2

1 The word novel in Indonesian is roman. It is borrowed from the term roman, to mean novel, in Dutch and in other European languages. The origin of this word is the romance, the literary form most popular in Europe during the Middle Ages. In Indonesian literature, however, the word novel, is used to mean a narrative prose much shorter than a novel but longer than a short story with its main theme focused principally at the most critical or important moment in the life of its characters. See Jassin's Tifa Fenjair dan Daerahmja, p. 71.

2 Ibid., op. cit., p. 16.
popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth century.\(^1\)

Its appearance was closely tied to the extensive changes taking place in Western Europe. These changes brought about secularisation as well as individualism. The rise of individualism, resulting from commercial individualism and the Puritan emphasis on self-reliance and individual responsibility, was an important factor behind the emergence of the form novel in Western Europe. The reason as Watt says, is because the novel 'requires a world view which is centred on the social relationships between individual persons.'\(^2\) He goes on to say that its 'primary criterion was truth to individual experience - individual experience which is always unique and therefore new.'\(^3\) This was helped further by a number of other factors such as the coming into prominence of the professional middle class,

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\(^1\) At various stages of its development this literary genre had assimilated the characteristics of other forms of writing such as 'essays, and letters, memoirs and histories, religious tracts and revolutionary manifestos, sketches of travel and books of etiquette'; in fact, 'all the popular varieties of prose.' See Dictionary of World Literature, p. 405.


\(^3\) Ibid, op. cit., p. 18.
the emergence of a reading public, the development of journalism and the technological perfection of printing.

The emergence of the novel in Indonesia, too, involves secularisation as well as individualism. The spread of Western education and the introduction of the money economy, as had been said very much earlier, brought about the liberation of the potentialities of the individual and consequently to the emergence of individualism. As S. Takdir Alisjahbana commented: 'Modern education and economic life have introduced to the Asian people a certain individualism and businesslike attitude which undermines the old family solidarity of the small communities.' This was helped further by the teachings of the modernist Islamic movements which place strong emphasis on self-reliance and individual responsibility. In Johns opinion it was this new-found individualism that helped the individual writer to achieve sufficient self-realization to see his own system as against other systems of social values in contrast or interaction, and express the predicament of individuals

1 S. Takdir Alisjahbana: The Cultural Forces in Asia, in Papers on Cultural Affairs and International Understanding, p. 47.
as the working out of the process affects them. 1

It is never easy to define what is really meant by the term novel although this form has been, for the past two centuries, the major literary genre in England, France and Russia. Walter Allen puts it that 'true, it has never been found easy to define, but this does not prevent us from knowing a great deal about novels.' 2 If this literary genre is taken to mean a narrative prose or prose work of some considerable length than the hikajat in traditional Indonesian literature should also be included under the same category as that of the novel. After all the hikajat, whether in oral or written form, is also a narrative prose. But the hikajat is definitely not the same as the form novel that is popularly understood today. An understanding of the term novel will certainly help to draw a line distinguishing the two literary forms in Indonesian literature.

In A Dictionary of Literary Terms the novel is vaguely defined as a 'a fictional prose narrative of substantial length. 'So too is the definition given by E. M. Forster.


3 For Evans: A Short History of English Literature, pp. 149, 150.
He defines it as 'any fictitious prose work over 50,000 words.'\(^1\) G. S. Fraser regards the novel as 'an exploration of the variety of life, through realistic prose narrative, in the hope of finding a pattern.'\(^2\) And Ifor Evans in his book *A Short History of English Literature* describes the novel as:

> a narrative in prose, based on a story, in which the author may portray character, and the life of an age, and analyse sentiments and passions, and the reactions of men and women to their environments. This he may do with a setting either of his own times, or of the past.\(^3\)

Another definition comes from Ian Watt. In *The Rise of the Novel* Watt suggests that the essential nature of the novel is that it is an art form which attempts to portray life through a narrative method or procedures which he calls 'formal realism.' He defines formal realism as:

> the narrative embodiment of a premise ...... which is implicit in the novel form in general: the premise, or primary convention, that the novel is a full and authentic report of human experience, and is therefore under an obligation to satisfy its reader with such details of the story as the individuality of the actors concerned, the particulars of the times and places of their action, details

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\(^3\) Ifor Evans: *A Short History of English Literature*, pp. 149,150.
which are presented through a more largely referential use of language than is common in other literary forms.

This is the most acceptable definition so far because, as he says, 'formal realism of the novel allows a more immediate imitation of individual experience set in its temporal and spatial environment than do other literary forms.'

From the definitions given above it is clear that the novel is a narrative prose depicting human life and experience, partial or otherwise. The social settings portrayed and the characters involved may either be in the present, the past or the future. Interest in human life and experience is the most important factor which brought about the rise of the novel and also that of the other modes of literary expressions such as the epic, drama and romance throughout the centuries. Fraser says that 'interest in people's real actions and motives lay behind the rise of the novel.'

1 Ian Watt, op. cit., p. 32.

2 Ibid, op. cit. p. 32.

3 G. S. Fraser, op. cit., p. 23.
And Hudson adds that 'the novel owes its existence to the interest which men and women everywhere and at all times have taken in men and women and in the great panorama of human passion and action.'

Thus, it is safe to say that the main factor behind the emergence of this literary genre is the attempt by individuals to portray all varieties of human experience by means of narrative prose and employing a narrative method which Ian Watt calls formal realism. By means of this method or procedure the novel should provide both criticism as well as picture of society.

But in the traditional works such as the hikajat, formal realism is always absent. In traditional prose the author, even if he is known, does not venture to add a personal touch or criticism of what he experienced or saw of the life around him. He could only present, in Johns words, 'a view of his culture as it sees itself, and as it would like itself to be.' The use of formal realism as a means to provide an acute and critical analysis of society is an important factor which distinguishes the

1 E. M. Forster, op. cit., p. 31.
2 W. H. Hudson: An Introduction to the Study of Literature, p. 147
3 A. H. Johns: Genesis of a Modern Literature, p. 411.
modern works from the traditional prose.

The novel as a whole is a totality comprising a number of interdependent parts such as plot, characterization and dialogue. Different literary critics have used different terms to mean the different parts which make up the novel. Hudson, for example, uses the term 'elements,' Allen uses the term 'components,' Forster uses the term 'aspects,' and Rene Wellek and Austin Warren use the term 'constituents.' The relationship between one element or constituent and another is such that they must be judged as a totality.

In the words of Allen they 'condition and qualify one another.'

The novel, as is understood today, is thus a comparatively new literary genre in Indonesian literature. Its beginning can be dated back to the second decade of this century when the government-controlled publishing agency

\[\text{(footnotes from the original document are ignored for brevity)}\]

\[\text{1 W. H. Hudson, op. cit., p. 131.}\]
\[\text{2 W. Allen, op. cit., p. 17.}\]
\[\text{3 E. M. Forster, op. cit., p. 31.}\]
\[\text{4 Rene Wellek and Austin Warren: Theory of Literature, p. 216.}\]
\[\text{5 W. Allen, op. cit., p. 17.}\]
Balai Pustaka began publishing a number of original prose works in Indonesian. The first of such works, *Azab dan Sengsara* (Torment and Misery), was published in 1921. It was written by Merari Siregar. The publication of this novel and others in the subsequent years marks a new and an important step in the development of Indonesian literature. It was the beginning of a new period of fiction writing in which the events, characters or episodes portrayed are closer or much closer to reality than had previously been depicted in the traditional works.

The number of original works published between 1920 and 1933 are not many; the total added up to about thirty. Most of these were published by Balai Pustaka which, because of its official nature, was required to publish works of a non-political nature. The number of known works published outside Balai Pustaka are very small and from a literary point of view they can be considered as insignificant.¹

¹ Bakri Serigar in Sedjarah Sastra Indonesia Modern mentions a novel *Hikajat Kadhirun* written by Semaun, a well-known member of P. K. I. (Indonesian Communist Party). It was first published as a serial in the daily *Sinar Hindia* in 1920. Later (about 1922) it was republished by the P.K.I. office in Semarang. Bakri Serigar also mentions two other novels, *Student Hidjo* (1919) and *Rasa Merdika or Hikajat Sudjarno* (1924) written by another member of the P.K.I., Mas Marco Kartodikromo. Teeuw calls these novels 'political novels.' See Teeuw's *Modern Indonesian Literature*, pp.15 - 17
The following are the known works published between 1920 and 1933:

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THEMES

As had been said earlier in Chapter I, Indonesian society at the beginning of this century can be said to be in the process of change, from the traditional to the modern. This was in many ways the result of the impact of Western education and technology on the otherwise static Indonesian society. The impact was quite considerable for it brought about numerous changes in many parts of the archipelago; particularly in Java and Sumatra. Western education and Western methods of organization, together with the introduction of the money economy, had created new sets of values in Indonesian man. These new sets of values brought about the liberation of the potentialities of the individual from the ties of the communal village structure. It was these that gave rise to individualism which steadily began to encroach and undermine the traditional value systems and the old family solidarity of the small village communities.

The underlying themes of the novels of this period are generally focussed on the problems confronting the Indonesian society and the Indonesian man during this period of change and to a certain extent on the problems faced by the Indonesians living in a colonial society. The process of modernization and its consequent impact had brought about problems hitherto unknown, both in scope and intensity, in
Indonesian society. Traditional Indonesian society began to stir as a result of the impact.

The problems that are projected in the novels of the twenties are for the most part typical of the problems confronting Indonesian society at the beginning of the century, although the events or happenings portrayed generally took place in the Minangkabau society of the West coast of Sumatra. One reason for this, as had been said in Chapter III, is due mainly to the fact that most of the authors of this period originated from the Minangkabau area. The other is that it was in Minangkabau society that tensions and conflicts were most keenly felt than in any other areas of the archipelago. This is because the Minangkabau society possesses a pattern of social organization which is most prone to tensions and social conflicts.

The Minangkabau society is an interesting social group. It is a matrilineal society with property descending through the female line. The smallest unit in the structure of Minangkabau society is the kaum or parui'. The kaum is a term denoting a matrilineal extended family unit living in a large family house known as rumah gedang or the adat house.

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1 On the Minangkabau social organization see among others Josselin de Jong's Minangkabau and Negeri Sembilan: Socio-Political Structure in Indonesia, pp. 44 - 91.
Several *kaum* related to one another through a common female ancestor formed the larger lineage unit, the *suku*.

*Rumah gedang* or the *adat* house is a large house containing any number of rooms, from five to fifteen or more. The rooms are for each female member of the family. A son had no room in his mother's house, and after the age of twelve he may not even sleep there. He may either sleep in the *balai* (meeting house) or the *surau* (a kind of small mosque).¹

The most senior female member of the *adat* house is responsible for the arrangement of the house. If one of her daughters is married a room is allocated to her where she may receive her husband. And if her daughter has a daughter an extension is built onto the house.

Each family unit consists of all the relatives who are members of the matrilineal *kaum* - one's brothers and sisters, sisters' children, mothers' brothers and sisters and one's maternal grandmothers. Fathers and husbands are not considered members because they are regarded as part of their mother's *kaum*. The position of a wife, on the other hand, is different. After her marriage the wife continues to live in her mother's *adat* house. Her husband's status in the

household is almost like that of a guest. He is referred to as *sawando*, the Minangkabau kingship term for son-in-law. Usually he stays for the night and leaves again in the morning. As a *sawando* he is not expected to provide a living for his wife or children or provide expenses for his children's education. He cannot take part in any discussions affecting his wife or children nor would his advice on the matter be sought. The affairs of his wife and children, and also that of her sisters and their children, are the responsibility of the *mamak* (the matrilineal uncle). The *mamak* is the head of his (the husband's) wife's extended family unit or the *kaum* and is usually the oldest male in the family. The husband, however, has his own responsibilities; namely towards his mother's family. Thus, he in turn is a *mamak* to his sisters' children.

The position and role of a *mamak* in an extended family unit is very important. Besides looking after the upkeep and general welfare of his sisters and their children he is also responsible for maintaining the stability and smooth-running of the traditional social order. In other words, it is his duty together with the other elders of the family to see that the age-old *adat* is not transgressed and, if the occasions arise, to determine the sort of sanctions on any member of the family who violate the *adat*. 
In traditional Minangkabau society, as in most other societies of the archipelago, the part or role played by the elders in maintaining the social order cannot therefore be over-estimated. In fact, they are an essential element in ensuring the continuity of the adat or tradition and is thus instrumental in maintaining social integration in society. Their position and influence in society remain secure as long as there are no outside elements to challenge their authority or to interfere with the social order.

But after 1900 a new element began to emerge in Indonesian society. This new element comprised of intellectuals or near intellectuals who were the products of Western educational institutions such as the Teachers Training Colleges or the STOVIA. Many of the early writers came from this group. Merari Siregar was a student at a Teachers College (Kweek School) at Gunung Sahari in Batavia.¹ Nur Sutan Iskandar became a teacher in 1911. In 1919 he went to Batavia to work for Balai Pustaka. Marah Rusii was the product of the Chiefs school (Hoofden School) at Bukit Tinggi (graduated in 1915). Abdul Muis and Adinegoro were both products of

¹ See the introduction to Si Djam'an dan Si Djohan, published by Batavia Drukkerij Kho Tjeng Bee & Co., Batavia, 1918
the STOVIA. 1

These authors, like many other educated Indonesians of the period, had experienced life in one way or another in both the traditional and modern environments and consequently were familiar with, an in some instances were at home in, the traditional and Western value systems. In a way they can be said to be the product of both the worlds. At home and in the traditional village environment they were expected to live according to the traditional pattern of life and thus were at the mercy of the adat if they disobeyed or veered from the set pattern. But in schools or colleges or in the books which they had read and through social contacts with Europeans and Eurasians they began to learn of the existence of a new world in which the individual could aspire to live an independent life, unhampered by the claims and authority of his family or clan. Many of them were thus confronted with a new reality in which the individual had much greater freedom of action than was allowed in traditional village environment. The new experience had made them increasingly aware of the limitations imposed upon them by the adat.

1 On the authors' background see among others Zuber Usman's Kesuastaraan Baru Indonesia and Teeuw's Pokok dan Tokoh 1.

132.
Familiarity with the traditional and Western value systems and methods of social organization enabled the educated elite to look at the numerous problems facing their society with critical eyes and in a much clearer perspective. In other words, they were in a position to see and compare their own social background with that of Western systems of social organizations.

It was against this social background that the early Indonesian novels were written. The writers, in most of their works, seem intent on exploring the problems of a society in transition; especially concerning the predicaments of young people caught between the old world and the new. In this respect the finished products can therefore be regarded as part of their contribution in helping to create greater awareness among the general population concerning the numerous problems facing their society at the beginning of the century. The emergence of these early novels was, in effect, not isolated from the current political and national consciousness of the period.

It was begun earlier by Raden Adjeng Kartini. Kartini is typical of the intellectuals of her generation who found themselves caught between the forces of tradition on the one hand and that of modernity on the other. In her collection
of letters she showed clearly the desires and aspirations of the intellectuals and the problems they had to encounter at the turn of the century. Basically, these problems were not unique to Indonesia alone. They were also felt in most countries experiencing the impact of modernization. The differences, of course, vary according to the degree of the impact and the nature of the society experiencing it.

The tensions and conflicts in Indonesian society as portrayed in the novels of the twenties arise as a result of basic differences between the younger educated and the older conservative Indonesians. The authors, as spokesmen for the younger educated Indonesians were attempting to depict the dimension and intensities of the conflicts and especially the adverse effects the age-old adat had or seemed to have on the progress of their people. Idrus calls these conflicts the 'East-West conflicts.'

1 See Idrus' East-West Conflict in Indonesian Novels in Quadrant, November-December, 1966, pp. 38 - 44.
conservative group who desires to uphold and cling to the adat and the traditional values and social norms and on the other is the younger-educated group who wish to do away with certain aspects of the adat which they regard as obsolete and therefore an obstacle to progress.

To a foreigner or even to an Indonesian who has been detached from the traditional environment and the traditional way of life the tensions and conflicts as portrayed in the novels of the twenties may appear to be a bit far-fetched and out of this world. But in reality it is not so. The problems projected in these works are not the product of the authors' imagination or fantasy but real day-to-day problems of a society in transition. One has only to read the letters of Raden Adjeng Kartini and the autobiography of M. Radjab to realize the extent and seriousness of the problems in Indonesian society at the beginning of this century. Kartini, for example regarded the twin enemies of the Indonesians were paternalistic colonial exploitation.

As more and more Western-educated Indonesians came out from the social with new experience and outlook on life the conservative group actually became uneasy. Many felt that

1 In fact, these problems to a certain extent and in varying degrees still exist to this day in a number of communities of the archipelago.

2 In his autobiography Samaa Katijil Dikamunng, Muhammad Radjab gives a vivid description of a Minangkabau village life.

3 Alijahbama: Indonesia: Social and Cultural Revolution, p. 32.
and the traditional Javanese resistance to change. The seriousness of the problems and the resulting conflicts and antagonisms were felt in almost every aspect of life. As S. Takdir Alisjahbana commented:

These conflicts and antagonisms were not confined only to matters that directly affected the relationships between children and their parents, or between the individual and the community; the lines dividing the two generations were carried over and felt in every aspect of life: ideas of hygiene, methods of agriculture, theories and practices of bringing up children, table manners, household management, indeed any part of everyday life you care to mention.

The gulf separating the two was really wide. There was very little dialogue between the older and the younger generations and if there were the discussions or arguments tended to be obscured by what S. Takdir Alisjahbana calls 'semantic confusions.' This is not surprising since the two sides more often than not approached the same problem from two totally different viewpoints. Both sides had different value systems.

As more and more Western-educated Indonesians came out into the world with new experience and outlook on life the conservative group naturally became uneasy. Many felt that


3 Ibid, op. cit., p. 32.
the traditional social order was being threatened by the new element in society. But in facing the challenge of the younger generation the conservative group was by no means helpless. Their traditional weapon, of course, was the *adat* which at times were ruthlessly applied. When these happened the victims or the opponents of the *adat* either ended up in misery or as a social outcast. The victims of forced marriage, like Masri in *Pertemuan* or Mariamin in *Azab dan Sengsara*, end up in tragedy of one sort or another. In Nur Sutan Iskardar’s *Karena Mentua*, Ramli defies the social order by marrying a girl from another area (she is from Bandung) whom his society regards as a foreigner. For this reason he becomes a social outcast.

There are times when the elders find that *adat* alone is not enough to enforce their authority or maintain the traditional social order. At such times the elders find it necessary to resort to their ultimate weapon namely Islam. The Minangkabau society was, and still is, one of the most thoroughly Islamic groups in the archipelago and as such there is a tendency to regard the teachings of Islam as part and parcel of their life and tradition.

This is so in spite of the fact that the matrilineal system of the Minangkabau society has often been felt to be incompatible with certain aspects of the teachings of the
Islamic religion. No doubt there are conflicts between the two, especially concerning family organization and inheritance. But as Johns said, 'this appearance of opposition may be exaggerated by a too externalized approach to the life of the community.' He goes on to say that:

And this is bound to be the result if the rules of Muslim Canon Law (fiqih) are studied in the abstract and applied to any particular concrete situation. But this approach is not valid. In the study of Islam we are confronted time and again with the tendency to extreme systemization on the part of a few, and the broad commonsense attitude of the average practising Muslim. ¹

Further Johns argues that 'it seems possible that there is a great deal in common in the psychological emphases of Islam and the adat. Perhaps one of the most important is the stress on the integrity of the community.' Taufik Abdullah in his article Adat and Islam: An Examination of Conflict in Minangkabau regards the conflict as not between two separate entities but as one within the whole matrilineal system itself. As he said, 'In Minangkabau, the concept of conflict is not only recognized but is institutionalized within the social system itself. Conflict is seen dialectically

¹ A. H. Johns: Tantjak Dilabueh, A. Minangkabau Kaba, pp. xii, xiii.

² Ibid, op. cit., p. xiii.
as essential to achieving the integration of the society. 

In a number of these works the elders seem to regard the 'laws' of the adat as sacred as that of the teachings of Islam. They are something that cannot be violated. Anyone with modern ideas or Western style of thinking are branded as 'kafir' (infidel). The use of Islam as a weapon to counteract the influence of Western ideas may be seen as a desperate attempt on the part of the elders to put an end to any form of opposition to their authority. It seems the elders realize that the educated may oppose the adat but few or none will ever dream of going against the teachings of Islam.

In Apa Dayaku Karena Aku Perempuan, for example, Dato' Hitam a man with modern outlook and views is being branded as having 'the ways of an infidel' (hm, chara kafir). In the same story one of the characters says that 'dan setengah pula menyamakan dengan agama. Kalau ditinggalkan berdosa.' (Some have equated adat with Islam. Its sinful if its not observed). In Sitti Nurbaja Puteri Rubiah tells her brother, Sutan Mahmud, that he has so far deviated from the adat and

1 Published in Indonesia, October, 1966

2 Apa Dayaku Karena Aku Perempuan, p. 70.

3 Ibid, op. cit. p. 70.
the old way of life that he will soon change his religion and become a Christian (Memang adat dan kelakuan mu telah berubah. Tiada lama lagi, tentulah akan kautukar pula agamamu dengan agama Nasrani). ¹

It seems that these elders tend to equate the teachings of Islam with the 'laws' of the adat. Their attitudes on Islam vis-a-vis the adat are therefore significant indications that Islam in the Minangkabau area, as in many other areas of the archipelago, was a syncretic mixture of Islamic teachings and pre-Islamic thoughts and practices.

In Sitti Nurhaja Sutan Hamzah and his sister Puteri Rubiah, both of whom are portrayed as symbols of the adat, consider gambling as practically a normal pastime or occupation for the people of the upper class. ² In Islam gambling is a sin.

In the same story the author describes about a group of Minangkabaus who believe they can achieve invulnerability by simply practicing ascetism and using charms and spells given by their guru. This belief was common among the followers of the various mystical (Sufi) order, such as the Nakshabandi, which possessed many non-Islamic accretions. ³

¹ Sitti Nurhaja, 19 p. 19
However, at the beginning of this century Indonesian Islam came under the influence of the modernist Islamic movement. The new teachings gained popularity among the young ulamas in the Minangkabau area. Among them were Sjech M. Djambek, Sjech Abd. Karim Amrullah and Sjech Abdullah Ahmad. In 1911 Sjech Abdullah Ahmad, together with Sjech Djambek and Sjech Amrullah, published a periodical entitled Al Munir. This periodical was published in Padang. Al Munir was widely read in the Minangkabau area as well as in many other parts of the archipelago and it became the vehicle for the spread of the modernist teachings.

Without doubt a number of the authors of this period were influenced by the teachings of the modernist Islamic movement. In their works they show clearly that they were not opposed to the new cultural elements from the West, provided that these cultural elements were not detrimental

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1 See Chapter I of this thesis.

2 The teachings of the modernist Islamic movement in the Minangkabau area gained momentum as a result of the periodical Al Imam, first published in Singapore by Sjech Ahmad Taher al Azhari in 1906. This periodical was widely read in the Minangkabau area. Al Imam published many articles from Al Manaeer, a periodical founded by Muhammad Abduh, one of the chief architects of the modernist Islamic movement; see Drs. M. D. Mansoer and others: Sedjarah Minangkabau, pp. 176 - 161; see also Hamka's Ajarakhu.

3 Dr. M. D. Mansoer and others, p. 179.
to the progress of their society. They were also critical of many aspects of the adat and most important of all they emphasized the value of Western education.

It is interesting to note that in *Sitti Nurbaya* direct criticisms are made through a very religious figure, Ahmad Maulana.\(^1\) In a sort of family discussions between him and his daughter Alimah and niece Sitti Nurbaja, Ahmad Maulana speaks strongly against aspects of the adat or custom which are detrimental to the progress of his society. These direct criticisms are in themselves important since they are concerned with some of the basic problems facing Indonesian society of the period. But they are also significant because they come from a man as religious as Ahmad Maulana. This points to a significant fact that direct criticisms can only be accepted if they are made through religion or if they come from a very religious person. As Johns said, 'Presumably only on the basis of religion, in this case of modernist Islam, could any such criticism be tolerated, let alone accepted.'\(^2\)

In their criticisms of the adat it appears that the

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1 *Sitti Nurbaya*, pp. 217 - 244.

authors are not against the adat as a whole. In all cases criticisms are directed to certain aspects of the age old custom or tradition which they consider outdated and thus detrimental to the progress of their people. At the same time they are not against accepting what appears of value from the West. Merari Siregar in his 'permulaan kalam' (introduction) to his novel Azab dan Sengsara says that his main aim of writing the novel is 'to show aspects of the adat and customs which are bad and lacking in my society, especially those affecting married couples. 'Merari Siregar's attitude towards adat is typical of the attitudes of the other writers and possibly of most of the intelligentsia during the period. Nur St. Iskandar, through one of his characters, says that 'those which are good (in Western culture) should be accepted and those which are not compatible with the progress of the society should be rejected.' 1

Marah Rusli, too, is of the same opinion when he says that:

Adat dan aturan kita benar banjak jang baik, tetapi ada djuga jang salah. Apa-tah salahnya, kalau ditiru adat bangsa lain jang baik dan dibuang adat kita jang buruk? Adat mereka jang djahat itu djangan kita ambil dan adat kita jang baik disimpan benar-benar.' 2

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1 N. St. Iskandar: Apa Dayaku Karena Aku Perempuan, p. 67.
2 Marah Rusli: Sitti Nurbaja, p. 220.
What they hope to achieve is a workable synthesis of both the indigenous and Western cultural elements.

The criticisms directed towards the adat are many and in most cases can be found in most of the novels of this period. Most of these are matters relating to marriage and marriage customs; for example problems concerning forced marriage, under age marriage, polygamy, marriage based on considerations of property and rank and the 'mendjemput' custom as found in Minangkabau society. Other criticisms are those relating to the low status of women generally, class snobishness and wrong methods of bringing.

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1 This theme can be found in most of the novels of this period.
2 See, for example, A. St. Pamuntjak's Pertemuan, pp. 24 - 52.
3 See among others Marah Rusli's Sitti Nurbaja, pp. 225 - 227
4 See among others N. St. Iskandar's Karena Mentua, pp. 76 - 84.
5 In Minangkabau society the initiative for a marriage often comes from the woman's family which 'invites' (mendjemput) a man for the daughter's hand in marriage. If a man is 'invited' by several families then his status in society is enhanced. Since a man is not responsible for the upkeep and welfare of his family he normally takes more than one wife. Polygamy is therefore common. See Sitti Nurbaja, pp. 60, 61.
6 See among others N. St. Iskandar's Apa Dajaku Karena Aku Perempuan, Marah Rusli's Sitti Nurbaja, and N. St. Iskandar's Karena Mentua.
7 See Abdul Muis' Pertemuan Djodoh.
The younger educated Indonesian believes strongly in his own potentialities and feels that he should be personally responsible for his own actions. This is important in the choice of a marriage partner. In Pertemuan Djodoh, for example, Suparta is a doctor. It is these figures who are also made to have progressive ideas. In Sitti Nurbaja Sutan Mahmud is a penchulu and as a penchulu he is therefore no stranger to Western thinking and Western methods of organization.

The conflicts between Western and traditional values or between the forces of tradition and modernity is sharply brought into focus when the question of marriage arises. In almost every work of the twenties, from Azab dan Senpsara in 1921 to Karena Mentua in 1932, the question of love and marriage has emerged as one of the most important themes of the novels of this period. This is not surprising since the question of choosing one's marriage partner involves direct confrontation between the older and the younger generation. The differences between the two groups over this issue, in effect, represents the basic differences between modern values and traditional values.

1 See Merari Siregar's Azab dan Sengsara.

2 Idrus, op. cit., p. 39.
The younger educated Indonesian believes strongly in his own potentialities and feels that he should be personally responsible for his own actions. This is evident in the choice of a marriage partner. The choice of a spouse, he believes, is to be his own personal responsibility and not that of his parents or elders. They, on the other hand, believe that the choice is their responsibility. Very often the attitudes of both the generations are clearly expressed by the characters concerned. In Pertemuan, for example, they are expressed by Masri and his father. ¹

The portrayals of sufferings and mental agonies of the victims of forced marriages, as depicted in many of these novels, prove beyond doubt the intensity and seriousness of these problems in Indonesian society at the beginning of the century. It looks as if these authors must have either been silent witnesses to, or have personally experienced these problems themselves. Teeuw says that 'they could only react critically to compulsion, having experienced so painfully its bad consequences either in their own lives or vicariously through the lives of the

¹ Pertemuan, pp. 30 - 40
people in their immediate surrounding.\textsuperscript{1} Marah Rusli, the author of Sitti Nurbaja, fell in love and married a
girl of his own choosing while he was a student at the
Veterinary School in Bogor. As a result of this he was
disowned by his family in Padasri. He became a social
outcast.\textsuperscript{2} Merari Siregar, in his introduction to his
novel Azab dan Sengsara, says that the story is a true
account of what had happened in Tapanuli.

The conflict between Western and traditional values
affects the family life in another way. This concerns
conflicting loyalties of a husband; loyalty towards his
own nuclear family and also towards his extended family.
In traditional Minangkabau society a man is not required
by the adat to be in any way responsible for the upkeep
and welfare of his wife or children. The responsibility,
as demanded by the adat, lies with his wife's brother.
On the other hand he is responsible for the welfare of his
sister and her children. This sort of arrangement is
feasible as long as a person's individuality can be
submerged under the will of the general community. But
with the adoption of new cultural values from the West,

\textsuperscript{1} A. Teeuw: \textit{Modern Indonesian Literature}, p. 54.

\textsuperscript{2} Zuber Usman: \textit{Kesusasteraan Baru Indonesia}, p. 34.
particularly it's individualistic aspects, the traditional social order is threatened. A man now begins to think more of the interest of his own nuclear family rather than that of the extended family. It is particularly so in the case of education for his children.¹

This naturally leads to tensions and conflicts in society. The conflict between Sutan Mahmud and his sister Puteri Rubiah in *Sitti Nurhaja* arises as a result of his insistence on personally providing expenses for his son's education rather than setting aside money for the wedding of his niece. In *Karena Mentua*, Ramli becomes a social outcast because of his marriage to a 'foreigner' and his refusal to look after the interest of his sisters and her children.

The conflict between Sutan Mahmud and Puteri Rubiah is interesting because it represents the general conflicts between the forces of tradition on the one hand and that of modernity on the other. Marah Rusli portrays these two figures as symbols representing the old and the new. There is no doubt that Sutan Mahmud is against many of the social norms of the Minangkabau adat. For example, he is not interested in hereditary social distinction and although of

royal blood he has a 'commoner' wife. He has only one wife and this, according to his sister, is disgraceful. A man of Sutan Mahmud's social standing should have more than one wife. Puteri Rubiah despises her brother for behaving the way he did. To her tradition and adat values should be maintained at all costs, as the traditional saying indicates:

*Ibu tagada.i, anak tadjua
asa adaik dipakai djuo.*

In all of these novels the authors seem to place great emphasis on the value of Western education. The authors, like most of the other intellectuals of the period, felt that it was only through Western education the Indonesians could hope to combat the forces of tradition and be able to prepare themselves for a better future. As Edward Shils commented: 'education is commonly regarded as one way of diffusing the scientific spirit among the new generation, and of breaking the hold of traditional beliefs and the traditional privileges associated with those beliefs.' Kartini in her letters realized the urgency of the problem and pleaded the colonial government to provide greater opportunities for Indonesians to study in Western schools. In Chapter I it can be seen that organizations

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1 E. Shils: Political Development in New States, p. 9.
like Budi Utomo were constantly clamouring for a better deal for Indonesians in the field of education. After 1920 the Indonesians themselves took the initiative. Organizations like Muhammadijah and Taman Siswa set up their own schools. There were also schools established by individuals or small private organizations. These schools came to be known as 'wilde schoolen.'

But among the intellectuals of the period few had certain misgivings about the effects of Western education. These intellectuals did not dispute its inherent values but questioned its effects on an Indonesian man if it was transmitted to the Indonesians without any consideration of their cultural and spiritual needs. They realized that Western education alone, without the accompanying instructions in their own history, culture and traditions, would not be sufficient to create a balanced personality in an Indonesian man. When this happened he would become alienated from his own culture and civilization and at the same time would not be able to become part of the new civilization due to the superficiality of his conversion.

As Ki Hadjar Dewantara commented:

How often we have been misled by presumed needs which we considered natural but which we later realized were proper to alien forms of civilization. We discover too late that such demands can be satisfied only with difficulty or not at all from our own resources. Dissatisfaction has thus befallen us, and worse: slowly but surely we have become alienated from our own people and our own environment. This alienation would have been bearable had it not been that in our case the abandonment of our own culture
did not at the same time bring access to another civilization. Thus we have sacrificed what was ours but have not gained in its place anything that might be considered its equivalent; we have lost our world, but we have not entered another.\(^1\)

Earlier, Kartini was also of the same opinion when she said:

\[\text{We do not wish to make our pupils half Europeans or European Javanese. We want a free education, to make of the Javanese, above everything, a strong Javanese. One who will be blessed with love and enthusiasm for his own land and people, with a heart open to their good qualities and to their needs.}\(^2\)

In line with his thinking, Ki Hadjar Dewantara established the *Taman Siswa* schools which he hoped would provide proper training for Indonesians as well as giving them a sense of their own culture. Beside those subjects normally taught in Western schools special emphasis was given to the teaching of their own language (Malay or the local vernacular), history, music and dance.\(^3\) The establishment of these schools, in Ruth T. McVey's words, 'was a reaction to disappointment in the fruits of western style education as much as it was


\(^2\) Kartini, op. cit., p. 172.

\(^3\) Ki Hadjar Dewantara, op. cit., p. 162.
an attempt to make that schooling available to the
Indonesian public.\(^1\)

The adverse or disruptive effects of Western education on individuals is portrayed in a very effective way by Abdul Muis in his novel *Salah Asuhan*. Hanafi, the hero of the story, is portrayed as a tragic figure. He is educated in a Dutch school in his home town Solok and later is sent to Betawi (Djakarta) to finish his schooling (Mulo level). In Betawi Hanafi stays with a Dutch family. It was quite a common practice in those days among a few enlightened Dutchmen to have sons of the *prijajis* to stay with them to be trained in European traditions and way of life.\(^2\) But unfortunately for Hanafi his education in a Dutch school and the atmosphere in which he is brought up has not only alienated him completely (or at least he thinks so) from his society but also makes him despise his own people and culture. His attitudes and values are so changed that he even feels ashamed of being born a 'bumiputera' (native). He feels that his only link with his society and with the past is his mother.\(^3\)

There is no doubt that Hanafi worships the West and its culture. He tries very hard to become part of it. He even

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\(^1\) Ruth T. McVey: *Taman Siswa and the Indonesian National Awakening*, in *Indonesia*, no. 4, October, 1967, p. 137

\(^2\) Robert van Neil, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

\(^3\) *Salah Asuhan*, pp. 47, 52.
But that is the limit. Once the 'bumiputra' oversteps
the extent of applying for and obtaining civil
rights as a European (staatbied European). In doing so
he thinks he has cut off himself completely from his
society and culture. To him the civil rights he obtains
as a European and finally his marriage to Corrie are
both symbols of identification that he has really become
part of the West. But in spite of all this Hanafi finds
little happiness. The colonial society keeps on reminding
him that whatever has happened to him he is still very
much an 'inlander'. He finds that he is not accepted in
either society, his own or the European society.

What Hanafi fails to realize is that in a total colonial
situation it is impossible for him to become part of the
West. The rigid colonial status system does not permit
him to do so. The gulf separating the Dutch and the
'inlander' is practically unbridgeable. As Wertheim
commented:

A person’s position depended not on what he was
himself but on the population group to which he
belonged. Punitive measures were framed to
ensure that the colour line should not be over-
stepped - it was forbidden to dress otherwise
than in the manner customary in one’s own popu-
lation group.

Among the Dutch an educated 'bumiputra' is given a certain
amount of respect. He is also accepted in their company.

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But that is the limit. Once the 'bumiputera' oversteps the limit, for example by marrying a Dutch woman, he becomes a social outcast. This is clearly expressed by Hanafi's friend:

"...... tapi insaflah engkau, pada rasa bangsaku, engkau masih Bumiputera, dan engganlah mereka menerima engkau, bila engkau menjerubukan diri memasuki bangsa itu. Pada pendapatan mereka, lebih tinggallah daradjatmu sebagai manusia, bila engkau tinggal kekal didalam bangsamu sadja, tapi menjatkan per-indahanmu sadja terhadap kepada bangsanja, bangs Eropah. Djika engkau melakukan seden-kian nista jaya kehormatannya kepada akan lebih besar, dipandangnya dirimu sebagai seorang Bumiputera yang sopen dan terpeladjar. Tapi setjara jang engkau lakukan sekaran, sekali-kali tiada dipandangnya."

Earlier Corrie's father is also of the same opinion when he warns his daughter against mixed marriage.


Thus, Hanafi's marriage to Corrie is doomed right from the start.

1 Salah Asuhan, p. 184.
2 Ibid, op. cit., 19.
It is, as John's said, 'fate in the form of the total colonial situation that is responsible for the tragedy.'

The pressure from society is too much for them to bear.

Hanafi's dilemma, as suggested by Abdul Muis, is due mainly to his upbringing which cuts him off completely from the Minangkabau tradition while his training and observation has only permitted him to grasp the materialistic aspects of the Western tradition and culture. He fails to find purpose and meaning in the new culture which he so idolizes. As S. Takdir Alisjahbana commented:

'superficial imitation and faith in empty slogans create individuals who are forever deprived of the tranquility, peace and happiness which the old traditions provided, and who are intoxicated by meaningless and futile fantasies.'

This can be avoided, according to Abdul Muis, by giving a child the best in Western education as well as proper training and guidance in his own tradition. Abdul Muis, like many other Indonesian intellectuals of the period, believes in getting the best from both cultural traditions, the East and the West. He says this clearly when he describes about Hanafi's reminiscences and thoughts:

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1 A. H. Johns: Genesis of a Modern Literature, p. 416.

Semantara itu berkarya-haraplah ia supaya anaknya, Sjafei, djangan membut djudaknya kalak. Biarrlah anak itu menerima pelajaran Barat setjukanja, sedang segala kebiasaan orang Timur jang buruk-buruk boleh dibuangnya dan diganti dengan adat kebiasaan orang Barat yang baik, tapi sebab ia orang Timur, hendaklah asuhaninya itu tetap memurut tjara Timur djuuga. Teringat pulalah ia akan tutur tuan rumahnya jang berkata, bahwa kebanjakan orang lebih suka melihat orang Timur jang bergepadjaran Barat, bila ia tidak keluar dari ketimurannya.

The problems of Indonesians living in a colonial society, especially the relationship between the rulers and the ruled has not been dealt with in any significant way by the authors of this period. The reason, as has been said earlier, is due to the fact that these novels were published by Balai Pustaka, an agency of the colonial government. The Dutch government certainly would not like to see Balai Pustaka publish works which could be an embarrassment to its policies as well as a threat to its position in the Indies. Censorship was very rigid.  

1 Salah Asuhan, p. 207.  
2 Sjafei Radjo Batuah says that Abdul Muis sent his manuscript of Salah Asuhan to Balai Pustaka in February 1927. For about nine months Abdul Muis did not hear anything from the agency. According to Sjafei Radjo Batuah the Balai Pustaka editors were not happy with certain episodes in the story, particularly the episodes concerning Corrie. In the original manuscript Corrie was portrayed as a prostitute. The editors wanted Abdul Muis to make certain changes before they could give the green light for its publication. This can be seen from the letter written by Abdul Muis to the Balai Pustaka editors as well as their letters to him which Sjafei Radjo Batuah appended to his article. Finally, Abdul Muis agreed to make the changes. In the revised manuscript Corrie is no longer a prostitute but a decent girl whose only connection with Corrie of the original manuscript is her association with Tante Lian who operated a call-girl service. Sjafei Radjo Batuah suggested that the Balai Pustaka editors did not approve of Corrie, a Eurasian, being portrayed as a prostitute. It is also possible that the changes were made on moral grounds. According to Voorhoeve the Tante Lian episode is the later edition to the story. See Sjafei Radjo Batuah's Dibalik Tirai Salah Asuhan in Pustaka dan Budaya, no. 22, vol. V. November, 1964. pp. 30 - 39.
But in spite of the rigid censorship there are certain episodes which help to throw light on the nature of the colonial society in the Netherlands Indies. In Salah Asuhan, for example, Abdul Muis shows that the colonial society of the period could not accept mixed marriages, between natives and Europeans. This was because of the rigid status system imposed by the colonial authority.\(^1\) In the same story Abdul Muis, through Corrie's father, describes how an Indonesian of high birth and a graduate from a university in the Netherlands was refused entry to a restaurant. Apparently the restaurant is reserved only for whites. This episode shows the extent of racial discrimination in the Netherlands Indies.\(^2\)

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1. See Chapter I of this thesis.


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3. Ibid., op. cit., p. 21.
FORMS (PLOT AND NARRATIVE METHOD)

Every novel has a story. It is the basis, or in E. M. Forster's words, the 'backbone' of a novel. But the story itself is not necessarily a plot. The plot, according to Jacques Souvage, is 'a concatenation of episodes' and an episode is 'a concatenation of events.' He goes on to say that the plot is 'the chain of causally related incidents in the novel.' Albert Cook in The Meaning of Fiction regards it as a story whose incidents proceed in causal sequence. Forster makes a clear distinction between a story and a plot. He regards both the story and the plot as a narrative of events; the former with emphasis on arrangement in their time sequence and the latter on causality or causal relationship between the various episodes.

From the definitions given above it can be seen that this literary device is very much lacking, if not non-existent, in the traditional hikajat. Drs. Aning Retnaningsih says that although the presence of the plot is sometimes felt

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1 E. M. Forster, op. cit., p. 35.
4 Albert Cook: The Meaning of Fiction, p. 16.
5 E. M. Forster, op. cit., p. 93.
in the *hikajat* but in reality it is only the various 'parts' or episodes which have no causal relationship between one and the other. She mentions *Hikajat Hang Tuah* as an example. In the *hikajat* the story normally consists of a number of episodes which are related to the exploits or adventures of the main character or characters.

But in the works of the twenties this literary device has to a certain extent been utilized by the authors. It looks as if these early Indonesian writers were conscious, or may be partly so, of the importance of the plot in a novel. This may be due to the influence of Western works, particularly those written in Dutch, which became the main source of reading material for the Western educated Indonesians at the beginning of the century. It was through these works that the Indonesians first came to discover the existence of a new kind of fictional prose narrative which in later years came to replace once and for all the traditional form *hikajat* from Indonesian literature.

The new form is the novel.

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1 Dr. Aning Retnaningsih: *Roman Dalam Masa Pertumbuhan Kesusastraan Indonesia Modern*, p. 19.

2 Kartini, for example, was familiar with a number of works written in Dutch, see *Letters of a Javanese Princess*, p. 35.
At the same time it must not be forgotten that at the turn of the century the intellectuals were also no stranger to the traditional hikajat. At the time the hikajat, whether in Malay or in the other regional languages, were the only local source of reading materials available to the literates. One of the earlier tasks of the government - controlled publishing agency Balai Pustaka, for example, was to collect and publish as many as possible the hikajat so that they could be made available to the reading public.¹ For this reason it is not surprising that the influence of the traditional form on the early Indonesian novels is rather considerable.

After reading most of the works of the twenties one of the things that stands out clearly in one's mind is the similarity of the plot pattern and the narrative method of a great number of these works. It looks as if these works had come from the same mould with very little individuality existing between them. This is possibly due to the fact that these authors were new in their field; with very little or no knowledge at all of the methods and techniques of writing a novel. What they had were just pens and papers, and

¹ A. Teeuw: Pokok dan Tokoh 1, p. 57.
most important of all, a burning desire to put in writing the numerous problems facing their society which they thought should be conveyed to the Indonesian people. Their works certainly contain the messages they wished to convey and to this end they can be considered as having succeeded in their prime objective.

Another factor lies in the similarity of the themes of these novels. Similarity in the themes may not necessarily bring out similarity in the plot pattern or the narrative method of the works concerned. Two novels may have exactly the same themes but a totally different plot pattern. It is the individual treatment of the themes by the authors, rather than similarity in the themes, that brings about originality and individuality in the development of the plot pattern. This can only be achieved if the authors possess the necessary knowledge and training in the art or techniques of writing a novel. Unfortunately, this is what these authors lacked. They were pioneers in a new field and thus they were really at a disadvantage.

But what is really encouraging is the fact that in these early works the plot patterns are already visible, even to a reader with little knowledge of literary criticism. In a number of these works the story, at first glance, seems to
follow the pattern or mould of the traditional *hikajat*; in that it contains a number of detached incidents or episodes with little connecting link or causal relationship between them. But on closer examination there emerges what Hudson calls the 'machinery of the action' or, in other words, the causal relationship between the various incidents or episodes. In *Azab dan Sengsara*, for example, the story consists mainly of two episodes; the first about Sutan Baringin and the other about his daughter Mariamin. But between the two episodes there is clearly a connecting link. Mariamin's sufferings and agonies in the later part of the story are in many ways connected with her father, especially in relation to the personality and character of her father in his younger days. Merari Siregar, the author, portrays Sutan Baringin as a spoilt child who grows to be a man possessing the worst possible character traits. He is reckless, arrogant, greedy and spend-thrift. It is these qualities that finally bring about his downfall and also that of his family.

The basic plot of most of these novels revolves around the conflicts between the younger Western educated Indonesians and the older conservative group. These conflicts
arise as a result of differences in values, namely between modern and traditional values. The younger educated Indonesians, because of their education and the resulting contact with Western individualism, are more inclined to think and act independently which more often than not runs counter to the pattern of life as demanded by the age-old adat. But the elders are determined at all costs to uphold the adat which they regard as sacred. In trying to curb the individualistic tendencies and aspirations of the educated group the elders find it necessary to resort to various methods of persuasion or overt threat of social sanctions. When these happen the people concerned more often than not succumb to the demands of the adat. Thus it is not surprising that quite a number of these novels are infused with an atmosphere of despair, with the main characters ending in tragedy. In fact, death seems to be the most favoured plot solution. In Azah dan Sengsara Mariamin, the heroine, dies after she is divorced from her husband, Kasibun. In Sitti Nurbaja, the heroine is murdered and towards the end of the story Sjamsulbahri, the hero, is killed in a clash with Datuk Meringgih. Marah Adil in Karena Mentua stabs and kills his wife while attacking his mother-in-law and in despair he kills himself.

But in a few others the authors seem to be on the side of the younger generation. In A. St. Pamuntjak's Pertemuan,
Adinegoro’s *Darah Muda* and Asmara Bjaia, N. St. Iskandar’s *Salah Pilih* and Abdul Muis’ *Pertemuan Djodoh* the younger generation manage to triumph over the *adat* after encountering numerous obstacles and hardships.

Almost all of these novels were written with the didactic purpose of illustrating the adverse side of the age old *adat* in a changing society and, as in *Salah Asuhan*, of the disruptive effects of Western education and the perils of mixed marriage. The authors seem to have felt very strongly about these problems and have come to regard it as their sacred duty to expose the numerous social ills confronting their society. In their enthusiasm they tend to act as if they were preachers giving sermons to a live audience rather than novelists writing novels to a reading public. Their presence is always felt, either directly or indirectly. In Jacques Souvage’s words, they are ‘not only omnipresent and omniscient, but also continually visible to the reader.’

All these have the effect of making the plot pattern or the machinery of action to be less coherent. There is no

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1 Jacques Souvage, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
concentration of plot. The plot is felt to be rather loose.¹ This accounts for the plot to be somewhat forced or laboured.

The author makes his presence felt in a number of ways. Like the penglipur lara or the story-teller of bygone days he often addresses the readers in a direct way. This is done either directly or indirectly through the characters concerned. In Sitti Nurbaja, for example, Marah Rusli calls the readers' attention so that he might get on with the story:

Sekarang marilah kita kembali mengikuti keempat sahabat kita, jang kita tinggalkan di atas bendi tadi, sebab kalau terlalu lama kita berhenti ditaman ini, takkan dapat lagi kita susul keempat anak muda itu.¹

In Pertemuan A. Sutan Panuntja.k n.s. has got these words to say before he goes on with the story about Masri:

Akan menghilangkan keheranan itu, marilah fakir tjeriterakan Masri dari ketjilnja, barang kadarnja.²

In a number of these works the authors seem to forget themselves completely and take time off to comment upon the

¹ Of loose plot Hudson says that it is a story which is 'composed of a number of detached incidents, having little necessary or logical connection among themselves; the unity of the narrative depending not on the machinery of the action, but upon the person of the hero who, as the central figure or nucleus, binds the otherwise scattered elements together,' W. H. Hudson, p. 139.

² Sitti Nurbaja, p. 32.

³ Pertemuan, p. 48.
characters for behaving the way they did. In *Karena Mentua*, for example, Nur St. Iskandar talks about Guna:


Hum, banyak! Hava napsunya tiada terpuaskan. Yang indah, yang berdarjat tinggi, yang senang dan mulia .........., karena kekayaan atau pangkat, sangatlah menggetarkan hatinya.

Likewise, Marah Rusli in *Sitti Nurbaja* criticizes Datuk Meringgih for being selfish and greedy:

Demikianlah Datuk Meringgih, saudagar jang termasjhursti di Padang itu. Ia kaja dan ber-ingin hendak bertambah kaja, dengan tiada bers-maksud lain, melainkan karena hendak kaja itu-lah; artinya karena hendak mempunjai harta. Bukan kekajaan itu jang dimintainja hanja harta itulah jang dikendara. Hai Datuk Meringgih! Apakah paedalnya ke-kajaan jang sedemikian bagimu dan bagi sesama-mu? Engkau diledarikan dari dalam perut ibumu dengan tiada membawa suatu apa, dan apabila engkau kelak meringgalkan dunia jang fana ini,
karena maut itu tak dapat kauhindarkan, wa­
laupun hartamu sebanjak harta radja Karun se­kalipun, tiadalah lain jang akan engkau bawa
ketempat kediamarmu jang baka itu, melainkan
selembar kain putih jang tjujuk untuk menu­
tup badanmu djua.

The didactic nature of these novels can be felt strongly
by the frequent exhortations, reminders and advice given to
the readers either directly by the authors or indirectly
through the characters. But even if they are spoken by
the characters they can still be felt to come from the mouths
of the authors themselves. Some of these are long and dragging.
They cover almost all aspects of the right moral code of
behaviour and aspects of the adat which the authors consider
good and those which are detrimental to the progress of the
Indonesian society. These are usually accompanied by proverbs
or sayings which have been handed down from one generation to
another.\(^2\)

The discussions between Ahmad Maulana and his daughter
and niece on the general problems of marriage, polygamy and
relationships between husbands and wives cover more than ten

1 Sitti Nurbaja, p. 92.

2 For example see Sitti Nurbaja, p. 157.
168.

During the discussions Ahmad Maulana speaks clearly of what he (or the author himself) disapproves of in his society and offers the girls lengthy advice on what they should or should not do in life. Another lengthy advice can also be found in the earlier part of the novel. This time it is given by Baginda Sulaiman to Samsulbahri and Sitti Nurbaja. Interestingly enough this lengthy advice is given by Baginda Sulaiman who is lying on his death bed. In Pertemuan Diodoh the discussions between Suparta and Raden Mangun Suriakusumah on the problems surrounding love and marriage cover about thirteen pages of the book. In fact, the whole chapter (chapter VII) is devoted to these discussions. The chapter is entitled Tjinta (Love).

Besides these lengthy pieces of advice there are also episodes which are actually not part of the main story or plot. In Azab dan Sengsara, for example, there are two of such episodes. The first one, between pages 44 and 55, tells about a man who is never thankful of what God has given him. The second episode, between pages 66 and 75, tells about the sufferings of a woman on account of forced marriage. Such

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1 Sitti Nurbaja, pp. 218 - 227
2 Ibid, pp. 142 - 157
episodes can also be found in Sitti Nurbaja. By adding these episodes to the main story the author hopes to emphasize further the problems he wishes to convey to the readers.

However, in Abdul Muis' Salah Asuhan one comes across a novel very much different from the other works of the twenties. Salah Asuhan has very few of the faults or shortcomings that are commonly found in the works of this period. The plot pattern and the narrative method as a whole are acceptable although the relationship between certain episodes is rather forced. A good example is the incident in which Hanafi is bitten by a dog suffering from rabies. This incident may have its dramatic effect as well as symbolic value. To Abdul Muis this incident is an act of God and as a punishment on Hanafi for sinning (mendurhaka) against his mother. But, on the other hand, it is also this incident which enables Hanafi to meet his beloved Corrie in Djakarta since no treatment on rabies is available in his home town. Abdul Muis must have realized that this is the only way he can bring the two lovers together again.

This novel, like the rest of the works of the twenties, is also written with a didactic purpose but unlike the others

1 Sitti Nurbaja, pp. 50 - 51.

2 Salah Asuhan, p. 80.
the author never indulged in moral judgments on his characters or preached against what he thought was wrong in his society. Abdul Muis has managed to produce the desired effect on the readers without resorting to the techniques used by the other authors. On the problems of mixed marriage, for example, Abdul Muis let Corrie and her father discuss the matter freely. Later on in the story the discussion is between Hanafi and his friend Piet. There is very little interference from the author. These discussions and the atmosphere in which they take place are realistic as well as convincing.

Another aspect of the plot pattern common in the novels of this period is the use of a plot device known as foreshadowing. Jacques Sauvage defines foreshadowing as 'a plot device based on association in time and through which future (climactic) events and scenes are prepared and anticipated.' The most common form of foreshadowing in these novels is dreams. In Azab dan Sengsara, for example, the sufferings of Sultan Baringin and his family are foreshadowed in his wife's dream. Masri, in the novel Pertemuan, dreams that he is unable to get to the peak of a mountain.

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1 Salah Asuhan, pp. 10 - 21.
2 Ibid, pp. 179 - 186.
3 Jacques Sauvage, op. cit., p. 87.
4 Azab dan Sengsara, p. 88.
This foreshadows the decision of his parents to stop him from going on with his schooling. In his next dream Masri find himself being caught by a tiger and not soon after he finds himself being forced to marry a girl not of his own choosing. Samsulbahri, too, has a bad dream. This is how Samsulbahri relates his dream to Sitti Nurbaja:

This dream foreshadows the events that finally end up in tragedy for both Samsulbahri and Sitti Nurbaja. In *Salah Asuhan* Rapiah has a bad dream before she receives a letter from Hanafi about the divorce. Her dream is followed by her child's unusual behaviour which to Rapiah is a bad omen.¹

Foreshadowing may be a useful plot device which can be used to help readers to foresee the climax of a story or events leading to that climax. But if it conveys too much of what is going to happen then there is no element of surprise or tension in the story. This in turn can make a story rather boring. In *Sitti Nurbaja*, for example, Samsulbahri's dream has the effect of making a reader foresee clearly the course of events which lead to the climax of the story and the final tragedy for him and Sitti Nurbaja.

A number of the authors of this period also make use of letters as a plot device. Letters can be effectively used as a plot device provided they help to give form and shape to the structure of the plot. In other words, they must be used within the limits of the plot pattern so that they can assist in its development rather than weaken it. In *Salah Asuhan*, for example, the letters written by Corrie to Hanafi form part of the plot pattern. So too are the

¹ *Salah Asuhan*, p. 102.
letters in *Sitti Nurbaja*. In *Pertemuan*, the letters are used by the main characters, Masri and Rasdiana, to express their love and longings for one another. But in *Pertemuan Djodoh*, the author uses the long letters written by Suparta and Ratna as means to propagate his ideas on what he thinks are right or wrong in his society.\(^1\) They are very didactic in nature. It is this which makes these letters appear rather unconvincing. Clearly they are not part of the plot structure.

As such, it is not surprising that some literary critics have placed too much emphasis on characterization. Arnold Bennett, for example, believes that 'the foundation of good fiction is character-creation and nothing else.'\(^1\) This is rather an extreme view because characterization, however essential it may be, is only one element or component in the overall structure of a novel. Like the other elements or components characterization, too, has got a part to play in determining the success or failure of a novel. Thus, it's true, as Walter Allen puts it, that no great master of convincing characters is essential to a

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\(^1\) *Pertemuan Djodoh*, pp. 18 - 29.

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\(^2\) Quoted from Jacques Sourage, op. cit., p. 77.

\(^3\) Walter Allen, op. cit., p. 39.
CHARACTERIZATION

The success or failure of a novel depends to a certain extent on whether the author is able to portray his characters in such a way as to be authentic as well as convincing in relation to the time and place of action. A novel is after all a projection of human society in its broadest sense, depicting human lives and experience and the problems they have to face in their day-to-day existence.

As such, it is not surprising that some literary critics have placed too much emphasis on characterization. Arnold Bennett, for example, believes that 'the foundation of good fiction is character-creation and nothing else.' ¹ This is rather an extreme view because characterization, however essential it may be, is only one element or component in the overall structure of a novel. Like the other elements or components characterization, too, has got a part to play in determining the success or failure of a novel. Thus, it's true, as Walter Allen puts it, that the gift of creating convincing characters is essential to the novelist. ² Without this gift, a novelist may not be

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¹ Quoted from Jacques Sauvage, op. cit., p. 77.

² Walter Allen, op. cit., p. 39.
able to create characters which are both authentic as well as convincing and these will undermine the value of his work as a piece of literary creation.

In the works of the twenties certain elements of characterization of a truly modern novel can already be discerned, particularly in Abdul Muis' Salah Asuhan. It seems that these early authors were aware of the importance of characterization in a story. The techniques used to bring out characters are in many ways different from those used in the traditional hikajat. So are the characters portrayed. For one thing they are no longer portrayals, as in the hikajat, of characters in and around the palaces of kings or sultans with all the magnificence and splendour and intrigues of a feudal court. They are not just embodiments of heroism and treason or of good and evil. The characters in the novels of the twenties are men and women from various walks of life and thus possessing character traits, strengths as well as weaknesses, of ordinary human beings. In other words they are no longer 'superhuman princes and princesses and the creatures of the heavenly kingdom.\(^1\)

\(^1\) Mohd. Taib Osman: Modern Malay Literature, p. 1.
This is indeed an important step in the development of fiction writing in Indonesian literature because in the traditional *hikajat*, be it in Malay or in the other regional languages, elements or techniques of characterization as is understood today are almost non-existent. In the *hikajat*, the 'author' or the story-teller seemed unaware of characterization as a component part of a good story. As Kassim Ahmad pointed out:

"He was not aware of any techniques for bringing out characters. What he knew was that he must tell a good story — interesting enough to hold his literarily unsophisticated audience."

This does not, however, mean that there are no character portrayals in the *hikajat*. But in the *hikajat*, the 'author' portrays his characters not as he sees them but according to what his society or culture would like to see. The portrayals are, as a whole, determined by the cultural values of the period rather than by the psychological and mental make up of the 'author'. His characterization is therefore not the product of what Hudson calls 'realistic imagination' of the 'author' but more the projection of

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1 Kassim bin Ahmad: *Characterization in Hikayat Hang Tuah*, p. 4.

his society. This accounts for the characters to emerge just as caricatures or types rather than living personal-

ities.

In the works of the twenties the authors resort to various methods or techniques of bringing out characters which are as a whole closer to the techniques used by later novelists. The techniques used are both direct and indirect in nature. By direct method the author portrays his characters from the outside; he gives descriptions of his characters' physical appearances as well as their thoughts, feelings, passions and motives. At times he adds his comments or pronounces judgment upon them. In the second method the author stands apart from his characters and gives them freehand to reveal themselves through dialogue or actions as well as comments made and judgments passed on certain characters by others in the story.

Both these techniques are used by the novelists of the twenties but the direct method is the most favoured. Most of these authors prefer to give direct portrayals, physical appearances as well as character traits, of their characters together with personal comments or judgments. This is how

1 W. H. Hudson, op. cit., p. 147.
Marah Rusli portrays Sitti Nurbaja:

Alangkah elok parasnja anak perawan ini, tatkala berdiri sedemikian: ••••••••••

Pipinja jang sebagai pauh di-lajang, jang kemerah-merahan warnanja kena bajang badju dan pajungnja, bertambah-tambah merah rupanja, kena panas matahari. Apabila ia tertawa, tjekunglah kedua pipinja, menambahkan manis rupanja, istimewa pula karena pada pipi kiri-nja ada tahi lalat jang hitam. Pemandangan matanja tenang dan lembut, sebagai djanda baru bangun tidur. Hidungnja mantjang, sebagai bunga melur, bibirnja halus, sebagai delima mererah, dan diantara kedua bibir itu kelihatan giginja, rapat berdjedjer, sebagai dua baris gading jang putih ••••••••••

He goes on:

• • • • • • • • • seorang gadis, jang dapat dikatakan tiada bertahtjahtja, karena bukanja rupanja sadja jang tjantik, tetapi kelakuan dan adat-nja, tertib dan sopannya, serta kebaikan hati-nja, tiadalah kurang dari pada ketjantikan parasnja.2

It seems that there is nothing wrong with Sitti Nurbaja, the main female character in the story. She is portrayed as if there is no flaw at all in her physical appearance or character. It is too good to be ture. Likewise, Marah Rusli also finds very little fault with the hero of the story, Samsulbahri. Of him he says:

1 Sitti Nurbaja, p. 4.
2 Ibid, pp. 9, 10.
But unlike Sitti Nurbaja or Samsulbahri, Datuk Meringgih is portrayed as the real 'bad guy' or villain of the story. He is bad in every sense of the word.

Sungguhpun Datuk Meringgih seorang jang kaja raja, tetapi tiadalah ia berbangsa tinggi. Konon chabarnja, tatkala mudanja, ia sangat miskin. Bagaimana ia boleh mendjadi kaja sedemikian itu, tiadalah seorang djuga jang tahu, lain dari pada ia sendiri. Suatu sifat jang ada padanja, jang dapat menambah keka- jaannja itu, ialah ia amat sangat kikir......


1 Sitti Nurbaja, p. 9.
Marah Rusli's portrayal of the principal characters in *Sitti Nurbaja* is in many ways similar to the portrayal of characters in most of the other novels of the twenties. On one side are the 'good guys', possessing all the best possible character traits whilst on the other side stand the 'bad guys' or the villains with all the worst possible human character traits. The division is almost clear cut.

It is indeed difficult to imagine a situation where such division or grouping can be found in human society except, of course, among the characters of the *hikajat*. Human beings or human personalities are too complex for such a clear cut division of their character traits. Human behaviour or actions are not wholly predetermined. The authors appear to be unaware of, or were still unable to grasp, the complexities of human personalities. The portrayal is therefore psychologically unsound. In this respect these authors, except, for Abdul Muis, are very much like the 'authors' of the traditional *hikajat*.

This method of bringing out characters is very popular...
among the authors of the twenties. The portrayals are usually done at the beginning of the story, as in Sitti Nurhaja. On page 12 of Pertemuan, for example, the author A. Sutan Pamuntjak n. s. gives a clear picture of Masri, one of the main characters in the story. He says:

Mendengar tutur-kata Masri jang lemah lembut, serta air mukanja jang bersih, jang menandakan ia seorang jang peramah dan berhati-asih penjanjang kepada sesama hamba Allah... 

...........

And in Salah Pilih a reader can become fully acquainted with Asnah just after reading a few pages of the novel. On page 8 of the novel the author, Nur Sutan Iskandar, gives a clear description of Asnah:

Rambut Asnah jang ikal itu di-raba2 oleh orang tua itu, dan wadjahnja jang molek lagi ber-seri2 itupun dipandangnya dengan suka-nja. Rupa nja benar gadis itu dan subur-sehat tubuhnya! Hatija jang suki dan pikiranja jang tajam ter-bajang2 pada matanja, jang bulat sebagai bintang timur.

Jacques Souvage calls this method of bringing out characters 'block characterization'. He defines block characterization as 'a complete description of a character upon(one of) his first appearance(s).

1 Jacques Souvage, op. cit., p. 34.
to get a clear picture of the main characters without much help from his imagination. In *Sitti Nurbaja*, for example, a reader has only to turn or read a few pages to know about the main characters; *Sitti Nurbaja*, Samsulbahri and Datuk Meringgih. But without using his imagination the reader may find this method of characterization, and in turn the story, to be rather boring. It is more imaginative for the author to reveal his characters, or let his characters reveal themselves through their own actions or words, as the story progresses and building up to a climax. In this way characterization and the machinery of action become inseparably knitted together. After all, as Edwin Muir pointed out, 'the given qualities of the characters determine the action, and the action in turn progressively changes the characters, and thus everything is borne forward to an end.'

In other words, characterization should be part and parcel of the machinery of action. Characterization should not be a separate entity. In the words of Jacques Souvage the novelist should reveal his characters 'by placing his protagonists in specific situations and by having them act in these situations.'

1 Edwin Muir: *The Structure of the Novel*, p. 41.

2 Jacques Souvage, op. cit., p. 82.
The indirect method of bringing out characters has to a certain extent been utilized by the authors of the twenties. The characters are made to reveal themselves through dialogue, either through what they say or what others say about them. But in the novels of this period most of the authors fail to portray their characters as living personalities. Instead they are portrayed more as puppets rather than as human personalities. They move about in the story in a very mechanical way, as if they have no life of their own. The characterization therefore lacks, what Elizabeth Bowen calls, 'the play and pull of alternatives.'

The words uttered appear not to come from their own mouths but directly from the mouths of the authors. It looks as if these characters exist merely because they are required by the authors to propagate their ideas concerning certain problems facing the Indonesian society. For example the

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1 She says that 'action is the simplification (for story purposes) of complexity. For each one act, there are an x number of rejected alternatives. It is the palpable presence of the alternatives that gives action interest. Therefore, in each of the characters, while he or she is acting, the play and pull of alternatives must be felt. It is being seen to be capable of alternatives that the character becomes, for the reader, valid.' See Elizabeth Bowen's Notes on Writing a Novel, in Perspectives on Fiction, pp. 219, 220.

2 Persepsi Bacaan, p. 47.
words uttered by Sitti Nurbaja on the sufferings of women are clearly the words spoken by Marah Rusli himself:

Memang demikianlah nasib kita perempuan. Adakah akan berubah peraturan kita ini? ........ Aku tidak hendak meminta, supaya perempuan disamakan benar2 dengan laki-laki dalam segala hal; tidak, karena aku mengerti djuga, tentu tak boleh djadi. Tetapi permintaanku, hendaknya laki-laki itu memandang perempuan, sebagai adiknya, djika tak hendak ia memulaiakan dan menghormati perempuannya, sebagai pada bangsa Eropah. Djanganlah dipandangnya kita sebagai hamba atau suatu makhluk yang hina. Biarlah perempuan menuntut ilmu yang berguna baginjia, biarlah ia dianinkan melihat dan mendengar segala yang boleh menambahkan pengetahuanja; biarlah ia boleh mengeluarkan perasaan hatinja dan buah pikiranja, supaya dapat bertukar-tukar pikiran, untuk menadjamkan otaknya. Dan berilah ia kua sar atas segala yang harus dikuasi inja, agar djangan sama ia dengan boneka yang bernjawa sedija.\(^1\)

Likewise, the words spoken by Suparta in Pertemuan Djodoh:

Bilakah kemegahan tentang turunan itu, bilakah penjakit gila kebangsawanan usul itu hendak musnah dari dunia ini? Apakah yang kurang pada orang yang bukan turunan? Benarkah keruh daralnja? Asal djalan sama dibuka, kurangkah orang kebanyakan jang sampai kepada tingkatan atas? Si Untung Surapati, bukankah ia budak belian pada asalnja?\(^2\)

Here, it is not Suparta that is speaking but Abdul Muis himself.

\(^1\) Sitti Nurbaja, pp. 236, 237.

\(^2\) Pertemuan Djodoh, p. 47.
Abdul Muis is trying to convey to his readers the futility of trying to maintain class superiority.

This sort of 'interference' by an author on his characters certainly produces undesirable effects on the readers. For one thing, the characters portrayed appear to be less convincing and this in turn makes the whole story seem forced. The characters are not free to act or speak in the way they like. Even if they are given a certain amount of freedom the author is always felt to be lurking somewhere in the background. There is no way at all of escaping from the grip of the author. This can also be felt in some of the later works too. In *Lajar Terkenambang*, for example, the words uttered by Tuti seem to come direct from the mouth of the author, Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana.¹

It is not uncommon for some of these authors to indulge in moral judgments on their characters. It seems that these authors are not satisfied in giving portrayals of their characters physical appearances and character traits but also deem it necessary to add their criticisms or comments or pass judgments on them. This is how the author says of Sjamsiar in *Pertemuan*:

¹ Published in 1936.
"Ha, itu perkara mudah," kata Sjamsiar Jang durjana itu.

Marah Rusli has got this to say about Datuk Meringgih:

Saudagar ini adalah seorang jang bachil, loba dan tamak, tiada pengasih dan penja-jang, serta bengis kasar budi pekertinja. Asal ia akan beroleh uang, asal akan sampai maksudnya, tiada bilangkannya barang sesuatu, tiadalah ditakutinja barang apapun dan tiadalah ia pandang-memandang.

And of mak Guna Nur St. Iskandar says:

Hawa napsunya tiada terpuaskan. Yang indah, yang berdaarat tinggi, yang senang dan mulia ..........., karena kekayaan atau pangkat, sangatlah menggetarkan hatinya!

These comments by the authors leave no chance at all for the readers to evaluate for themselves on the merits or shortcomings of each individual character.

Thus, it is not difficult to see that the characters portrayed in these novels emerge more as types or caricatures rather than as individuals with human personalities and attributes. They remain very much the same throughout the whole length of a story. There seems to be no variation or development at all of their mental make-up or in their psychological constitution. Their attitudes towards life in

1 Pertemuan, p. 82.
2 Siti Nurbaja, p. 90
3 Karena Mertua, p. 121.
general and towards other characters remain unchanged. They are created, as Forster says, 'round a single idea or quality.' He calls these types of characters 'flat' characters."

It seems that the main characters in these novels are created to fit in with the roles that have been predetermined by the authors. As such they cannot step out of their given roles. Thus they are not living personalities but merely symbols to represent what the authors believe to be the forces of virtue and evil in society as well as those representing the forces of conservatism and modernism. In other words these characters are not much different from those characters in the traditional hikajat or in the Javanese wajang (shadow play). In Sitti Nurbaja, for example, Datuk Meringgih clearly and unmistakeably represents what the author thinks are the bad or evil qualities in man whereas Samsulbahri and Sitti Nurbaja both represent the elements of virtue and goodness. In the same story Puteri Rubiah is created as a symbol of the forces of adat and conservatism who tries her best to uphold as well as defend the age-old tradition from being destroyed by modern ideas from the West. Her brother, Sutan Mahmud, is portrayed as a figure symbolizing the forces of modernism. This method of

1 E. M. Forster, op. cit., p. 75.
characterization is common in most of the novels of the twenties and it is this factor which makes characterization in these works appear to be very unconvincing.

But in Salah Asuhan Abdul Muis has managed to a certain extent to portray his characters in a rather convincing way. Unlike the other authors of the period he does not indulge in moral judgments on his characters. His characterization in Salah Asuhan, particularly that of Corrie and Hanafi, are both consistent and credible. Both these characters can be included under what Forster calls 'round characters.' They act and move about in the story in a very convincing way and are always full of surprises. Unlike the characters in other novels of the period their pattern of behaviour or action cannot wholly be predetermined.

In Corrie du Bussie one comes across a characterization unique in the works of the twenties. Corrie, a Eurasian born of an Indonesian mother and a French father, is portrayed as a spoiled and an impetuous girl. She is in love with Hanafi, an Indonesian, but realizes the problems ahead if they ever get married. This is especially so after her marriage to Hanafi, a 'manutung.'

1 E. M. Forster says that 'the test of a round character is whether it is capable of surprising in a convincing way. If it is never surprising, it is flat. If it does not convince, it is a flat pretending to be round. It has the incalculability of life about it - life within the pages of a book.' op. cit., p. 85.
heart to heart talk with her father. As a Eurasian Corrie has not much liking for 'bumiputeras', except for her mother and Hanafi. But in spite of the misgivings about her marriage to a 'bumiputera' Corrie finally succumbs to her own feelings and marries Hanafi.

Abdul Muis' portrayal of Corrie's temperament and overall personality is very credible. At the beginning of the story Corrie is portrayed as a girl with a warm and lively personality. But as she becomes deeply involved with Hanafi, culminating in their marriage, Corrie seems to lose much of her old self. Hanafi realizes this and complains bitterly to Corrie about her change of behaviour:

Aku ingin mempunjai Corrie, setjara Corrie dahulu, Corrie jang sehat pikirannja, jang hidup berbantah-bantahan dengan aku, jang pandai tertawa dan meradjuk, jang pandai menangis dan membudjuk, jang .......... ja, Corrie dahulu, jang mengikat diriku sampai tertawa! Corrie! Apakah jang sudah terjadi atas dirimu setelah engkau mendjadi isteriku, maka fiil engkau sekarang bagai bumi dengan langit perbedaanja dengan fiil dahulu? ¹

What Hanafi fails to realize is that Corrie is experiencing great emotional problems as a result of being alienated from all her friends. Her marriage to Hanafi, a 'bumiputera',

¹ Salah Asuhan, pp. 136, 137.
has made her friends turn away from her. And Corrie is the type of person who finds it impossible to live without friends. She explains her problems to Hanafi:

In Hanafi, Abdul Maiz has projected an Indonesian youth who has, in his own words, "there is no way to turn back the clock. I am only trying to preserve the socialistic aspects that was of the time." Hanafi behaviour and actions are consistent with the character and personality of such an individual like Hanafi while he was working as a journalist and later as a politician. As one who had a sincere desire to help others, he was working in the social field for social services. He was of the time of the generation of many cleverer and more talented than we, who worship the West and he tries very hard to identify himself.

This Minangkabau youth can be said to be the product of a Western education as initiated by the Ethicis at the beginning of this century. His education and upbringing has made him worship the West and he tries very hard to identify himself.

1 See for example Salah Asuhan, pp. 51 - 62.

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1 Salah Asuhan, p. 139.

2 Amal Hamzah: *Buku dan Perulis*, p. 35.

3 Ibid, pp. 35, 36.
as part of the new culture. This is shown clearly by his actions and utterances.¹

In Hanafi Abdul Muis has projected an Indonesian youth who has, as Robert van Neil pointed out, been rooted out of his own civilization and has only taken shallow root in the Western tradition of which his training and observation has only permitted a group of the materialistic aspects.² Hanafi's behaviour and actions are consistent with the character and personality of such an individual.

It is possible that Abdul Muis met or knew of an individual or individuals like Hanafi while he was working as a journalist and later as a politician. As one who had 'a sincere desire to improve the welfare of the Indonesian people'³ Abdul Muis must have regarded such individuals as not helping, if not actually harmful to, their common cause and struggle for social and political justice. Earlier Kartini, too, was of the same opinion when she wrote:

There are many educated native women, many, many cleverer and more talented than we, who have hampered not all in the cultivation of

¹ See for example Salah Asuhan, pp. 51 - 62.
² Robert van Neil: op. cit., p. 54.
³ Ibid, op. cit., p. 108.
their minds, who could have become anything that they would, and yet they have done nothing that could lead to the uplifting of their sex, and of their race. They have either fallen back wholly into the old civilization, or gone over to that of the Europeans; in both cases being lost to their people to whom they could have been a blessing, if they had but willed it.

Further, Kartini said 'is it not the duty of all those who are educated and on a higher plane to stand by with their greater knowledge and seek to lighten the way for those who are less fortunate. No law commands this, but it is a moral duty! Abdul Muis must have felt the same way.

The depth and the realistic way in which he portrays Hanafi's character shows not only his knowledge and awareness about these problems but must have also convinced him that Indonesian society of the period could not afford the luxury of having such individuals in its midst.

1 Kartini, op. cit., p. 109.

The twenties, besides witnessing the birth of the novel, also saw the beginning of a new kind of poetry which was different in many respects to the traditional poetic forms such as the pantun or the sijair. The use of unconventional forms as well as originality of contents mark an important departure from tradition and thus constituted a conscious effort on the part of the young poets to experiment with new forms, techniques and modes of expression more fitting to their needs and aspirations. It is, in the words of S. Takdir Alisjahbana, the product of a new society and of the spirit of the educated group which began to emerge in that society.¹

The young poets of the twenties were the product of Western education and through it had come in close contact with Western literature, including its poetry. Thus, they were familiar not only with traditional poetic forms but also with Western poetic forms. They had found that the traditional poetic forms and the language used in pantun

¹S. Takdir Alisjahbana: Puisi Baru, p. 16.
or *siair* could no longer serve as the vehicle or medium in which to express their ideas or emotions. They were attracted to the Western poetic forms because through them they were free to pour out their inner feelings and not be tied down by the hard and fast rules of the traditional *pantun* or *siair*.

The first to experiment was Muhammad Yamin; followed by Rustam Effendi and Samusi Pane. Between 1920 and 1922 Yamin produced 21 poems; all of them published in the magazine *Jong Sumatra* (Young Sumatra), the journal of the organization *Jong Sumatranen Bond* (The Young Sumatran Union). Another of his works *Tanah Air* (Fatherland), a cycle of verses, was published as a booklet in December 1922. Its publisher is unknown. This poem was written as a commemoration for the founding of the Young Sumatran organization. In 1928, on the occasion of the All Indonesia Youth Congress, Yamin wrote *Indonesi Tumpah Darahku* (Indonesia, Land of My Birth). Like *Tanah Air*, this poetry is also a cycle of verses. In later years, however, Yamin also published a number of other works which have very little connection with this thesis and therefore will not be discussed here.

Rustam Effendi's contribution to the literary development in Indonesia are his allegoric drama *Bebasari* and a
collection of his poems which he calls Pertjikan Permenungan (Sprinkled Meditation).\(^1\) There is some confusion regarding the chronology of these two works; originating, in a way, from the author himself. In his preface to the second edition of Pertjikan Permenungan he said that this collection was first published in Padang in March 1925, just after Bebasari had made its appearance.\(^2\) But in his preface to the second edition of Bebasari Rustam Effendi gave 1928 as the date for the first publication of this work.\(^3\) And in his letter to Ajip Rosidi dated 18 March 1962 Rustam said that Bebasari was written during Governor-General Fock's repressive measures which took place after the abortive Communist uprisings of 1926 - 1927.\(^4\) From the dates given it seems that Rustam himself is not certain of the dates or chronology of his two works. The difficulty

\(^1\) In his letter to Ajip Rosidi dated 18 March 1962 Rustam Effendi admitted that he had published a number of works of 'literary nature' in the periodicals Asjraaq and Per-kumpulan Kaum Ibu in Padang. Rustam's letter was published in Ajip Rosidi's Kapankah Kesusaeteraan Indonesia Lahir?, p. 61.

\(^2\) Pertjikan Permenungan, p. 5.

\(^3\) Bebasari, p. 4.

\(^4\) Published in Ajip Rosidi's Kapankah Kesusaeteraan Indonesia Lahir, p. 53.
in ascertaining the dates of the two works is the absence of the first editions of Bebasari or Pertjikan Permenungan.

A. Teeuw is of the opinion that Rustam's allegoric drama was first published in 1924 and his collection of poems in 1925.¹ Both Jassin² and Armijn Pane³ regard 1926 as the date for the first publication of both the works. Boejoeng Salleh⁴ regards 1924 as the date for the publication of Bebasari. And Zuber Usman gives 1925 and 1928 respectively as the dates for the publication of Pertjikan Permenungan and Bebasari.⁵ Fachruddin Ambo Enre is not certain of the chronology but says the two were published at about the same time, between 1925 and 1928.⁶ Ajip Rosidi concludes

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¹ A. Teeuw: Modern Indonesia Literature, p. 18.
³ Armijn Pane: Kort Overzicht van de Moderne Indonezische Literatuur, p. 23; quoted from Fachruddin Ambo Enre’s Perkembangan Puisi Indonesia dalam Masa Dua Puluh, p. 36.
⁴ Boejoeng Salleh: Perkembangan Kesusasteraan Indonesia in Alamanak Seri, p. 20.
⁵ Zuber Usman: Kesusasteraan Baru Indonesia, pp. 163, 165.
⁶ Fachruddin Ambo Enre: Perkembangan Puisi Indonesia dalam Masa Dua Puluh, p. 37.
that *Pertijikan Permenungan* was published in March 1925 and *Bebasari* at an earlier date.  

Rustam Effendi regards his two works as 'pasangan jang sedjoli' (an inseparable pair) and that *Bebasari* was written and published earlier than the collection of poems. Judging from the contents of the two works this is indeed true. In *Bebasari* the struggle for freedom is clearly depicted and because of this the colonial authority placed a ban on its circulation. And in his poems Rustam was forced to conceal his ideas in metaphors and allegories. It seems certain that Rustam published his works before the 1926/7 Communist uprisings because after the uprisings he was forced to leave the country for the Netherlands. Rustam had said that *Bebasari* was written at the time when D. Fock was Governor-General of the colony; which was between 1921 and 1926. It was during his term of office that the governor began to embark on a stifling colonial policy. Both of Rustam's works then must have been written and published between 1921 and 1926. If, as he said, *Pertijikan Permenungan* was published in March 1925 then *Bebasari*'s publication should be dated around 1924.

The third poet to emerge in the twenties is Sanusi Pane.

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3. Published in Ajip Rosidi's *Kapankah Kesusaasteraan Indonesia Lahir?*, p. 53.
His works which will be of interest in this discussion will be his two collection of poems entitled *Puspa Mega* (Cloud of Flowers, 1927) and *Madah Kelana* (Wanderer's Song, 1931). Earlier in 1926 Sanusi Pane had published a small collection of rhythmic prose which he calls *Pantjaran Tjinta* (Outpourings of Love). This collection has not been available for some time and therefore will not be discussed here.

**THEMES**

The poems of this period, unlike the novels, present a much clearer picture of the struggle and aspirations of the Indonesian people against the background of Dutch colonialism and the mounting tide of nationalist feelings among the masses. The first quarter of this century was a period of growing political consciousness; followed, at the same time, by considerable amount of political activities which threatened or seemed to threaten the very foundation of Dutch rule in the archipelago. The national consciousness is portrayed, in one way or another, in the poems of the twenties, particularly those written by Muhammad Yamin and Rustam Effendi. Their works became the channel or vehicle for the expression of political, language and cultural ideals of the educated and political elite of the period. The young poets were in a better position to express these
ideals and the national aspirations since their works were published outside the government controlled publishing agency, Balai Pustaka.

However, not all of the poems written and published during this period had any bearing or relevance whatsoever with the current social, cultural and political developments of the archipelago. A great many are mere expressions of personal experiences and feelings.

Muhammad Yamin was the earliest of this new generation of poets to use unconventional poetic forms to express his ideas and feelings and to give shape to the political, language and cultural ideals. In his early works, published in the magazine Jong Sumatra, these ideals could already be discerned although not clearly expressed or defined.

As had been said earlier the beginning of the twentieth century was indeed a period of growing national consciousness among the Indonesian people, particularly among its educated elite. It was among them that the earliest signs of national awakening could first be discerned. It appeared in the form of cultural, language and political ideals. Many of these intellectuals came to regard the struggle for a common language and a truly Indonesian national culture were as important as the actual political struggle against the colonial master. In the context of Indonesian nationalism, particularly in the twenties and thirties, these ideals...
were inseparable. It was difficult to separate one
from the other. In Yamin, for example, these ideals were
closely intertwined. This can be seen clearly from his
poems.

Right from the beginning of his literary activities
Yamin was extraordinarily possessed with the idea of
giving bahasa Indonesia, which before 1928 was known as
the Malay language, its rightful place as bahasa persatuan
or the national language of the whole of Indonesian
archipelago. It seems that Yamin was really conscious of
the need for a common language which could not only act
as a national language but also as a basis for the national
Indonesian culture that would emerge in the future. His
choice of Malay as bahasa persatuan was indeed a logical
one as was proved in later developments.

As far back as 1921 Muhammad Yamin had predicted the
birth of a nation with its own national language. This he
said in his poem Bahasa, Bangsa (Language, Nation): ¹

Berbuai sajang malam dan siang
Buaian tergantung ditanah mojang
Terlahir dibangsa berbahasa sendiri

In his poems Yamin refers to the language which he so
cherished as 'intan' (diamond), ² 'bunga' (flower)³ and

¹ Published in Jong Sumatra, no. 2, vol. IV, 1921
² In Kemegahan (Glory), Jong Sumatra, no. 9, vol. IV, 1921
³ In Gubahan (Composition), Jong Sumatra, no.4,5, vol. IV, 1921.
"kekasih" (beloved). To him Malay was 'pusaka nenek milik bersama' (a common legacy), and he was not at all happy at the status given to Malay at that time. He observed that even among his own people Malay was pushed aside in preference for Dutch. This is implied in the lines 'sepantun bulan diliputi awan' (meaning like a moon enveloped by clouds) and 'berdiam sahadja tiada berdaja' (meaning in a helpless position).

But Yamin was never a pessimist. As if in a dream he looked to the future and saw that Malay would one day be given its rightful place as the language of the whole of the Indonesian archipelago. This can be seen in his verse Kemegahan (Glory) in which he said:

Didalam mimpi ditengah malam
Kulihat langit, hijau nirmala
Berta'bur bintang, berseri silam.
Kemudian kedjora ditengah kelam
Timbul berseri intan kemala
Menjinari bumi diatas alam.

And again in the poem Niat (Intention):

Ketika tuan didalam kandungan
Belum sedjengkal, tiada bergaja
Sudahlah sedia sajang gerangan
Permata ini akan bertjaja.

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1 In Kemegahan, Jong Sumatra, no. 9, vol. IV, 1921
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
Here, and especially in the lines 'permata ini akan bertaja' (this stone will one day shine), he shows clearly his confidence in the future of Malay becoming the national language of the Indonesian archipelago.

In his desire to popularize and promote the use of the language he exhorted his countrymen to use the language wherever and whenever they could, in conversation as well as in writing. This he said in his poem Kemecahan:

**Beta berahi bersuka raja**
**Sekiranja bunga puspa mulia**
**Dipetik handaiku, muda usia**
**Didjadikan karangan, nan permai kaja.**

And Yamin himself took the initiative not only in writing poetry but also a number of essays in Jong Sumatra. This should be seen as part of his contribution to promote the use of the language as well as an attempt to show that the language could be used as a vehicle to express modern and abstract ideas. This was his intention when he said:

**Semindjak kuntum, ketjil semula**
**Beta bermiat membuat pahala**
**Menjadikan perhiasan diatas kepala.**

Yamin believed that beside making use of the language in writing and conversation efforts should also be made to study

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the language and the problems associated with it. Research in this field had been neglected and if this challenge had been taken up by the Indonesians themselves then the future of the language would indeed be bright.¹

It is interesting to note that before 1928 the 'tanah air' or fatherland which Yamin referred to in his poems was always Sumatra, sometimes known as the island of Pertja or Andalas. It seems that Yamin and others² before the All Indonesia Youth Congress of 1928 were not clear of the concept of Indonesia as a nation or as a political entity or as A. Teeuw says 'at least did not poetically inspire them.'³ This is understandable since the Indonesian youths before 1928 were grouped under the regional youth movements such as Jong Java, Jong Sumatranen Bond, Jong Minahasa and others.⁴ These regional associations were formed with the idea of fostering closer ties among the youths of a particular ethnic

¹ Muhammad Yamin: Dua Djalal, quoted from Mentjari Ketetapan by Dr. G. W. J. Drewes (ed.), p. 7.
² See among others Sanusi Pane's Tanah Airku in Jong Sumatra, no. 11. vol. 1921.
³ A. Teeuw: Modern Indonesian Literature, p. 12.
⁴ For a detailed study on the youth movement see Sadjarah Perdjwangan Pemuda Indonesia, compiled by the Bureau of Youths, Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, Balai Pustaka, Djakarta, 1963.
group and at the same time to look after their interests and needs. Yamin himself was for some time the leader of the Young Sumatran organization. The formation of these regional groups was a prelude to the formation of the All Indonesia Association Indonesia Muda (Young Indonesians) in which Yamin was one of its architects. Thus Yamin's reference to Sumatra or Andalas as his 'fatherland' should be seen in the light of this development and his political career.

Throughout his life Yamin was always obsessed with Indonesia's past and its glories. A. Teeuw rightly calls this obsession 'a quest for a historical foundation of the national concept and ideal of Indonesia.' This can be seen from his long poem Bandi Mataram (Hail Motherland), published in 1923 on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of Jong Sumatra, and his cycle of verses Indonesia, Tumpah Darahku. In Indonesia, Tumpah Darahku, for example, Yamin looked back proudly to Indonesia's glorious past with its heroes such as

1 A. Teeuw: Modern Indonesian Literature, p. 13.

2 In this issue of Jong Sumatra there is another poem of the same title but written in Dutch. Fachruddin Ambo Enre has republished both versions in his book Perkembangan Fusi Indonesia dalam Masa Dunia (pp. 73 - 78). The Indonesian version was written by M. Jamin D. I. and the Dutch version by Amir D. I. Fachruddin Ambo Enre suggests that Amir D. I. is a pseudonym for Muhammad Yamin. Fachruddin Ambo Enre, op. cit., p. 30.
Gadjah Mada and Hang Tuah, its kingdoms of Srivijaya and Majapahit and the spread of the Indonesian people and language extending from Madagascar in the West to the Phillipines in the East. The archaeological remains such as the Borobudur and the Mendut became a living testimony to Yamin of Indonesia’s glorious history and civilization.

Yamin’s awareness of the glorious past can be seen clearly in the following lines:

Buat kami anak sekarang
Sedjarah demikian tanda nan terang
Kami berpojang asal nan gedang
Bertenaga tinggi petang dan pagi;
Serta kami dinusa Hindia
Turunan bangsa bertanah mulia
Kepada darahnya berdjandji setia.

It was not that Yamin worshipped the past, but in the spirit which made it great he found a source of inspiration which he thought would be useful to the people of his generation and the generations to come. Yamin thought that the spirit of the glorious past should be kept alive and handed down to posterity; for if this spirit became dimmed or died out then there would be no future for the Indonesian people. He expressed this in these lines:

Pelihara pelita pusaka pojangku
Sepantun permata harga beribu

1 From Indonesia, Tumpah Darabku.

3 Ibid.
In Indonesia, Tumpah Darahku Yamin no longer regarded the island of Sumatra as his fatherland. His fatherland was now Indonesia. The concept of Indonesia as a nation or as a political entity was then clearly in front of him. It also became clear to him that in order to achieve nationhood, Indonesians of different ethnic groups must unite; without unity the task would be impossible. He said:

Oleh bersatu kita pun kuat
Seperti iberat lidi seikat
Tiada terpatah selagi berdekat.

At the same time he exhorted his people to prepare and be ready for the time when they would be the masters of their own destiny. He said:

Sekarang bangsaku semua segala
Sedialah siap bersama-sama
Zaman jang mulia datang kalanja ......

The national consciousness as portrayed by Yamin is concerned more with the search for a national identity based on a historical foundation which he hoped would become the

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1 From Indonesia, Tumpah Darahku.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
basis of a future Indonesian nation. The struggle for a language and culture of their own was as important as the actual political agitation against the colonial authority. Yamin must have realized that. His works can therefore be regarded as a prelude to that struggle.

But in Rustam Effendi's works the nationalist sentiments and ideals of the Indonesian people are clearly expressed and presented. This can be seen clearly in his allegoric drama Bebasari and in some of his poems in the collection Pertjikan Permenungan. Unlike Muhammad Yamin and Sanusi Pane, Rustam Effendi was more radical in his whole outlook and attitudes. He was a Communist and in his political activities he became involved in direct political agitation against the colonial authority. After the abortive Communist uprisings of 1926/7 he was forced to leave the country to seek refuge in the Netherlands. He continued his struggle while he was in the Netherlands and became a Dutch parliamentarian, as one of the representatives of the Communistische Partij Nederland (The Communist Party of the Netherlands), from 1933 until 1946.

1 See his letter to Ajip Rosidi. Published in Ajip Rosidi's Kapankah Kesusaeraman Indonesia Lahir, pp. 52 - 63.

2 Zuber Usman: Kesusaeraman Baru Indonesia, p. 165.
radicalism was reflected in his works which quickly caught the attention of the colonial authority. The Dutch authority confiscated copies of Bebasari and this book was banned from circulation.¹

Rustam Effendi in his preface to Pertijikan Permenungan stated that Bebasari and Pertijikan Permenungan were written at the time when 'Dutch oppression was heightening as an opposition and reaction to the flaring of the spirit of freedom in Indonesia.'² He went on to say that in Bebasari the cry for freedom could be heard loud and clear.³ This is so without question. The title Bebasari (the name of the princess who is one of the main characters) itself, which contains the element of the word bebas meaning freedom, suggests the nature and theme of the drama. In the story Bebasari is clearly and without doubt the symbol of freedom, Budjangga the symbol of Indonesian youths who were fighting and struggling for freedom and national independence and Rawana of Dutch authority. Bebasari, according to H. B. Jassin, is a satire as well as a protest against colonialism and

¹ Ajip Rosidi: op. cit., p. 53.
² Pertijikan Permenungan, p. 6.
³ Ibid, p. 6.
injustice and in it can be seen the symbol of Indonesian desire for freedom and justice. Jassin goes on to say that 'the spirit of rebellion and the desire for freedom becomes the underlying theme of this drama.'

In the earlier part of the drama Rustam Effendi described Indonesia as a rich and a happy country. Rustam then portrayed Indonesia under Dutch rule. The message he tried to convey is clear when he said:


Rustam Effendi observed that the sky which had been bright when the Indonesians were a free people was then becoming dark (mendjadi limbur) as a result of Dutch control over the archipelago. Rustam believed that in their struggle to gain freedom the Indonesian people possessed two important weapons; namely the love for the fatherland and faith in God.

2 Bebasari, p. 16.
The two combined could overcome any obstacle. He said this in the following lines:

Sisip asmara,
Dalam dadamu.
Ini sendjata jang sangat tadjam,
Tjinta kepada
Tanah airmu,
menentang musuh menahan radjam.

Iman keTuhan mendjadi sendjata.

Armed with these Rustam was confident that one day freedom could be achieved. It was so destined by God. He said:

O, ra'jat Tanah Umanat,
Usah takut usah dasjat,
Merdeka Lela musti didapat,
Djandji Allah telah tersurat.

And Rustam Effendi in unequivocal terms stated that the time had come for the Dutch to go and leave the Indonesians to look after their own destiny.

In his collection Pertijikan Permenunggu Rustam Effendi generally appeared to be subdued and less radical in his tone than in Bebasari. This Rustam Effendi himself admitted in the preface to Pertijikan Permenunggu. The poems in the

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1 Bebasari, p. 39.
2 Ibid, p. 56.
3 Ibid, p. 56.
collection were written after Bebasari had been published. The action taken by the Dutch authority in confiscating and banning the book from circulation had made Rustam Effendi realize that the best way to put his radical ideas across to the people, under such circumstances, was to conceal these ideas in metaphors and allegories. He said that 'the voice of freedom was hidden behind the cloak of love; the heroism of Bebasari was transformed into eroticism and romanticism in Pertijkan Permenungan.' There is no doubt about that. There are many such poems in this collection. The best example is Dimana Aku Pergi (Where Would I Go) in which 'djantung hatiku' (my sweetheart) is used here to mean fatherland. In the last verse of this poem he said:

Tiada pada ku, ah, tiada harta yang sakti.
Kekaki mu aku menangkap, menghantarkan njawa sebuah.
Kekasih peluk tjintaku, o, perjintaan menentang mati.
Sah engkau, tidak jang lain, ah, Tempat Darah Tertumpah.

In Tanah Air (Fatherland) Rustam showed clearly his love for the country (Indonesia) which he said was very beautiful, fertile and rich in natural resources. But under Dutch colonialism the country was not a happy place for the people to

1 Pertijkan Permenungan, p. 6.
2 Ibid, p. 64.
3 Ibid, pp. 37, 38.
live. He said:

O, tanah airku jang sangat larat,
mengeluh merapat nasib,
bertunduk mendjunjung 'aib;
dipidjak peluh dan darah.

This made him sad but he felt much worse when he realized
that antagonism and discord, of one form or another, existed
among his own people and among them there were those who
were willing to betray their own people for personal reasons.

He said this in the following lines:

O, nasib tanahku, jang sangat malang.
Didalam merindu untung,
bersabung kesumat pusung,
antara sesama Put'ra
tersebab chisnat, menerbitkan tjidera.
O, nasib tanahku jang malang.

O, tanah tumpahku jang sangat malang.
Bilakah waktu fora datang,
terlepas darimu, bimbang?
Mengharamkan pendjilat bangsa kebiri
karena mengingat keperluan sendiri.
O, tanah tumpahku jang sangat malang.

The nationalist sentiments and ideals did not attract much of
Sanusi Pane's attention; except, rather vaguely, in the poems
*Dilingkungan Adat Lembaga* (Enclosed by Tradition)\(^1\) and
*Tjandi* (Temple)\(^2\) In *Dilingkungan Adat Lembaga* Sanusi Pane
described the condition of a girl being imprisoned in

\(^1\) In *Puspa Meba*, p. 23.

\(^2\) Ibid, p. 32.
the cage of tradition. The girl can also be the symbol of the Indonesian people living in a colonial society. Literally, it can represent Sanusi Pane's criticism of the adat which has also been the main theme of the novels of this period. In the poem *Tjandi* Sanusi Pane looked with pride at Borobudur as a relic of the distant and glorious past. The sight of the *tjandi* had made him ponder as to whether the Indonesian people would one day regain the glory that they had lost. This can be seen from the following lines:

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Apa gerangan masa dimuka
Djadi bangsa jang kutjinta ini?
Adakah tanda megah kembali?
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In these lines Sanusi showed his concern for the future of the Indonesian people. This should be seen in the light of the political developments in the twenties. It seems that Sanusi Pane, whether he liked it or not, was also affected by the tide of nationalism that swept the archipelago during this period.

The last line 'adakah tanda megah kembali?' (are there signs they would regain their glory) shows clearly that Sanusi Pane, like Yamin and Rustam Effendi, was also politically conscious of what was happening around him and also of Indonesia's past history. His interest in Indonesian history had prompted him to write a book entitled *Sedjarah...*
The poems of Yamin, Rustam Effendi and Sanusi Pane are mostly the outpourings of love, anxiety and despair; the Sturm-und-Drang type. This is typical of the poems of the twenties. These poets were at such an age, they were either in their late teens or early twenties, when intellect could easily be swayed or carried away by personal feelings or emotions. Serious subjects such as freedom, nationalist ideals and aspirations, the relationship between man and his Creator etc. were all seen through the eyes of a romantic. They were thus a romantic as well as an idealist.

The love and longings which Yamin, Rustam Effendi and Sanusi Pane had in common were those directed to the fatherland; the fatherland which they loved so much and which they would like to see restored back to its former glory. This could only be achieved if the Indonesians were once again masters of their own destiny. The cry for freedom was loud and clear in Rustam Effendi's works and to some extent in Yamin's poems. Yamin was more concerned with the search for a cultural and historical basis for his nationalist ideals.

Beside the outpourings of love for the fatherland Rustam
Effendi also wrote a number of poems showing his love for his beloved. A good example are the poems Kenangan Lama (Memories of Bygone Days), 1 Bulan (Moon), 2 Dewi Asmara (The Goddess of Love) 3 and Pekik Asmara (The Cry of Love). 4 This love affected him more than anything else. The separation from his beloved and the thought and longing for her very often made him lonely and left him in despair; as is shown in the poems Gelap-Celita (In Darkness), 5 Lencang (Solitude), 6 Leutan (Ocean), 7 Lagu (Song), 8 Bernasib (Fate), 9 Ditengah Sunji (In the Middle of Solitude), 10 and O, Hati (O, Heart). 11

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1 Pertjikan Permenungan, pp. 39 - 47.
2 Ibid, p. 50.
3 Ibid, p. 55.
4 Ibid, pp. 82 - 90.
6 Ibid, p. 27.
7 Ibid, p. 29.
8 Ibid, p. 34.
9 Ibid, pp. 75 - 80.
10 Ibid, p. 92.
11 Ibid, pp. 94 - 95.
Even though he was in despair his faith in God remained resolute. This is shown in the poem *Hudjan Badai* (Storm).\(^1\) In *Bapuhija Iman* (Lack of Faith)\(^2\) he showed that misery was due to the lack of faith in God. One must have faith. But human patience has got its limit and when misery was unbearable Rustam, in despair, called on death to relieve him of his sufferings and miseries. This can be seen from the poem *Kekasihku* (My Beloved).\(^3\)

Even in the poems mentioned above it is also possible that Rustam's girl or sweetheart, whom he loved so much, can be taken to mean the fatherland. This is not at all surprising if one looks at Rustam's overall outlook and personality and his political background. Like Yamin, Rustam too was highly idealistic. His idealism was connected with social justice and political freedom for the people of the archipelago. But in the harsh realities of the colonial situation he soon discovered that his idealism could never be realized. It was this, more than anything else, that made

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1. Pertjikan Permenungan, p. 33.
2. Ibid, p. 36.
3. Ibid, p. 32.
Rustam sad and lonely and at times a pessimist.

Of the three Rustam Effendi appears to be more restless. This can be seen from his collection of poems and his allegoric drama *Bebasari*. This may be due to the very nature or personality of the man himself. His whole attitude was revolutionary and his involvement in the political life in the Netherlands Indies and consequently in Holland was the result of his revolutionary spirit and his desire to see radical changes taking place in his country. His restless spirit reflects itself not only in the contents but also in the forms of his works.

Yamin too was restless. He was a nationalist who devoted much of his adult life (he died in 1963) to the nationalist cause. He was active in both cultural and political life of the archipelago before and after independence. Teeuw describes him as a 'fierce, intelligent and indefatigable fighter.'

But in Sanusi Pane one can easily detect a personality somewhat different from Yamin and Rustam Effendi. Unlike the two, Sanusi Pane's approach to life appears to be much calmer and at times almost philosophical. From the beginning of his

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1 A. Teeuw: *Modern Indonesian Literature*, p. 11.
literary career Sanusi Pane had shown great interest in philosophy, mysticism and theosophy. He spent two years in India, 1928 and 1929, and during his stay there he became acquainted with Indian philosophical ideas and was, to a certain extent, influenced by it. He was attracted to the teachings of Tagore in which art is regarded as a link or bridge connecting the individual and the world around him. As J. U. Nasution commented:

It is clear that the point of departure of Sanusi Pane's thinking is Indian philosophy. It can be interpreted further that the poet can be regarded as a romantic who likes himself to be in the midst of nature. But with Indian philosophy as the basis of his thinking nature is not an element different from man. And to Sanusi beauty lies in one's ability to merge with the cosmos. His thinking is thus based on Indian thinking; although we know that Sanusi was an outsider who made use of Indian thoughts to merge his self with nature. Indian concept of nature is searching for harmony with nature, man can think because his thoughts are in harmony with nature.¹

Sanusi's poems in the collection Madah Kelana clearly show his philosophical conviction and his leaning towards Indian philosophy as a source of inspiration. To Sanusi India was not only a great country but also a place in which he

would always get his inspiration. 1 A. H. Johns adds that 'Indian religious ideas dominated his mental make-up, and the titles of his poems - "Taj Mahal," "To Kresna," and "Arjuna" - give a fair idea of his interest. 2

In the poem Kepada Krisjna (To Krisnja) 3 Sanusi longed for the oblivion and to be detached from all ideals because to him happiness is something that can never be attained. The second and the last verse of this poem illustrate Sanusi's conviction:

Hatiku kosong, tanganku hampa,
Tidak ada jang sudah tertjapai.
Aku bermimpi didalam tapa,
Mengingat untung termenung lalai.

Biarkan daku sekali lagi
Djatuh kedalam djurang gulita,
Supaja luwa, tidak bertjita.

And in the poems Sjiwa Nataradja 4 and Mentjari (Searching) 5 Sanusi at last discovered that happiness, which he had been longing and searching for so long, could in fact be found in his own heart. This can be seen from the lines in Sjiwa Nataradja:

1 A. Teeuw: *Pokok dan Tokoh* 1, p. 117.


3 *Madah Kelana*, p. 9.


5 Ibid, p. 45.
"O, putra Duka Nestapa, jang berdjalan dari tjandi Ketjandi, dari negeri kenegeri, mentjari Kelupaan dan penglipur buah hatimu, jang dibelah Oleh melapetaka dan keinginan, jang belum pernah Bisa diobati barang suatu, ketahuilah, Bahwa Bah'gia berada dalam hatimu.

And in the poem Mentjari:

Aku mentjari Dikebun India, Aku pesiar Dikebun Junani, Aku berdjalan Ditanah Roma, Aku mengembara Dibenu.a Barat.

Segala Buku Perpustakaan dunia Sudah kubatja, Segala filsafat Sudah kuperiksa.

Achirnja 'ku sampai Kedalam taman Hati sendiri.

Disana Bahagia Sudah lama Menanti daku.

In reading these lines one cannot help but remember a verse from a sjair written by Hamzah Fansuri, a sixteenth century mystical poet from Barus. In these lines he said:

Hamzah Fansuri didalam Mekah Mentjari Tuhan dibaitul Ka'bah DiBarus keKudus telah pajah Achirnja dapat didalam rumah.

The difference between the two was the object of their search, one was happiness and the other God. But both discovered that
the object of their search was to be found in their own heart. Sanusi Pane, finally, found real happiness in the unity of the soul with the Eternal. This can be seen from the last three lines of the poem Siwa Nataradja:

ketahuilah,
Bahawa Bah'gia berada dalam hatimu. Satuilah,
Tari segala 'alam, Masukilah Api bernjala,
Sehingga engkau achiirnya djadi Sjiwa-Nataradja.

In the poem Sungai (River), found in the collection Puspa Mega, Sanusi regarded the river as man's spiritual path flowing from the tumultuous life in the upper stream to a much calmer one at the mouth; ending in the sea which to Sanusi is the symbol of peace and tranquility. Here lies the difference between Sanusi Pane and S. Takdir Alisjahbana, a well known literary figure in the Padjangga Baru. Takdir, in the poem Mendu'ju Kelaut (Heading for the Sea), regarded the sea as a symbol of action and unending struggle. The root of their differences lie in the fact that Sanusi Pane looked to the East for his inspiration whereas Takdir, on the other hand, looked to the West. Sanusi Pane stressed the spiritual truth, enlightenment and harmony of Eastern values and Takdir emphasized the rationality, individuality

1 See Usman Effendi: Sasterawan-Sasterawan Indonesia I, p. 47.
and materialism of the West. ¹

Most of Sanusi Pane's poems reflect his tranquil and calm personality. And in others Sanusi poured out his feelings and emotions; his happiness, anxiety, pessimism and optimism. The voice of a romantic, of a twenty year-old in love can be seen from the lines below:

Dengar laguku ditepi pantai,
Diajun gelombang tjinta kalbu,
Dari kata kuatur rantai,
Mengebat engkau pada djiwaku. ²

And Sanusi's feeling of unhappiness and despair can clearly be seen from the following lines:

Keluh kesah menurut awan,
Setelah menjala sebentar sadja,
Pergi perlahan bermuram djurdja.

Hatiku menangis dipalu rawan,
Mengenang ba'gia musnah terus,
Setelah bermegah baru sedjurus. ³

This appears to be the general characteristic of Sanusi's poems in the collection Puspa_ Moga but in his later collection, Madah Kelana, Sanusi seems to be more concerned with his theosophical and philosophical convictions. In Madah Kelana

¹ See Polemik Kebudayaan, edited by Achdiat Kartamihardja.

² From the poem Ke pantai (to the beach), in Puspa Moga.

³ From the poem Tedja (The Glow of Sunset), in Puspa Moga.
Sanusi can be said to have advanced a step further in his intellectual development. This is not surprising since the poems in *Puspa Mega* were written much earlier than those in *Madah Kelana*.

Nature was an important source of inspiration for the poets of the twenties and to a certain extent with those that came after them. Like the Romantic poets of the West these early Indonesian poets found in nature an important source of inspiration and a great many of their works are concerned or are connected, in one way or another, with nature. Nature poetry has been written in all ages and in many countries, though its character and quality change according to the tastes of the age and the individual poet. In Europe nature poetry was very popular during the Romantic period. In England, for example, the first thirty years of the nineteenth century are usually given the label of the 'Romantic revival'. Sometimes it is known as the period of the 'Return to Nature.' Jacques Perk, a well known Dutch poet of the 'Eightiers' or the Generation '80, was a Romantic poet. So was Gorter.

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1 Ifor Evans: *A Short History of English Literature*, p. 48.

2 Elizabeth Drew: *Poetry, A Modern Guide to its Understanding and Enjoyment*, p. 71

3 Theodoor Weevers: *Poetry of the Netherlands in its European Context, 1170-1930*, p. 150.
said: 'they all had a deep interest in nature, not as a centre of beautiful scenes but as an informing and spiritual influence on life.' And A. E. Powell adds that:

The romantic wants to recreate a moment of his own spiritual experience, and in doing so he is afraid to use the very forms of real things, lest they suggest the objects of a material world. He seeks to rarify form, to create shadowy images, swaying and atmospheric, composed of faint intangible suggestions, not moulded into clear outlines. Such expression, while it is sometimes only vague, at other times really creates a new kind of form, expressing, with exquisite sensibility, a state of the soul hidden and intimate.

To the romantics nature is not just a thing of beauty but the symbol of freedom and as freedom is the ultimate or cherished desire of mankind these poets therefore turn to nature as their source of inspiration.

It is not difficult to detect the influence of nature on the works of Yamin, Rustam Effendi and Sanusi Pane. Nature seems to be everywhere. It looks as if these young poets were not only fascinated by nature for its own sake but in nature they also found means to express their feelings and

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1 Ifor Evans, op. cit., p. 48.

emotions. Thus, it is not at all surprising that in some of these works, particularly those written by Sanusi Pane, the poet appears to have become part of nature.

Many of these poems are mere descriptions of nature. In *Pagi* (Dawn), for example, Yamin portrays the beauty of dawn. And in *Malam* (Night), Rustam Effendi looks at the coming of nightfall.

In other poems elements of nature are used to portray the poet's feelings and emotions such as love, happiness, longings, hope, frustrations and despair. Sanusi Pane's feelings of joy are reflected in his poem *Sawah* (Padi Field):

![Verse](image)

In *Jong Sumatra*, no. 6, vol. IV, June 1921.

1 In *Jong Sumatra*, no. 6, vol. IV, June 1921.

2 Pertijikan Permenungan, p. 16.

3 In *Puspa Mega*, quoted from Jassin's *Pudjangga Baru*, p. 269.

1 In *Puspa Mega*, quoted from S. Tokdir Alijahdana's *Puisi Baru*, pp. 120, 121.
Desik berdesik daun buluh,
Dibuai angin dengan sajang,
Ajam berkokok sajup suara.

Here, in the midst of the beautiful countryside
Sanusi discovers he is at peace with himself. In the
poem Tedja (the glow of sunset) Sanusi likens the glow
of sunset to that of his own happiness. ¹

Lihat langit sebelah Barat
Lautan warna dibuat Tedja,
Ber-kilau2 dari Barat
Ketjakrawala bajangan mega.

Makin lama muram tjahaja;
Awan kelabu, perlahan melajang,
Melajang, melajang entah kemana,
Iaksana mimpi ia menghilang.

Keluh kesah memurut awan,
Setelah menjala sebentar sadja,
Pergi perlahan bermuram dudja.

But like the glow of sunset which is threatened by dark
clouds his happiness is short lived.

But like the glow of sunset which is threatened by dark
clouds his happiness is short lived.

Elements of nature are also used as images symbolizing
certain objects, persons or events in real life. In Gubahan
'bunga' (flower) is used by Yamin to symbolize the Indonesian
language, then known as Malay. The same word is used by

1 In Puspa Mawar, quoted from S. Takdir Alisjahbana's Puisi
Baru, pp. 120, 121.
Sanusi Pane, in his poem *Bunga*, as a symbol of a person who devotes his time and energy to the well being of his fellowmen. In *Kusuma* (Flower) Rustam Effendi likens the position of a 'kesu ma' or flower to that of a girl.

In the poem *Batan Berinrin* (the Banyan tree) the banyan tree is a symbol of the fatherland which in the past was able to enjoy a certain measure of peace and prosperity. But under Dutch colonialism conditions had changed. This is how Rustam Effendi describes it:

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Berbisik batang menghela napas,
jang sedang bertjinta disikuku.
tandanja bersadih dan bersaju.
Lihatlah dah an berdjari lemah.
Bertanja beta kepada batang,
jang telah berabad berdirinja.
Apakah sebah berkuha hati,
seperti merindu, mentjintanja?
Berbisik batang mengembus sedih,
Sebangkit datang, sekubur hilang,
jang silam terkenang dimatanka
beribu berdjalan melintasinja.
Seorang tidak menanjan batang,
jang sama seorang bertangisan.
Pe bila tua, ria jang lenja,
menggigir bangsaku menantikan.
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The main outside influence on these early Indonesian poets, and to a certain extent among those that came later,

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1 In Puspa Masa, p. 27.
2 In Pertjikan Permenungan, p. 23.
3 Ibid, p. 57.
was a group of Dutch poets known in Dutch literature as the **Tachtigers** (or the Generation of 1880). The **Tachtigers** as a movement started shortly after 1880 when a group of young poets and writers, dissatisfied with the literary scholasticism in Dutch literature at that time, revolted and published a journal called **De Nieuwe Gids** (The New Guide) in 1885. This was in direct response to the name of a leading journal **De Gids** (The Guide), started by Potgieter in 1840, which represented the views of the earlier poets. ¹

The young poets and writers in the new movement had very little in common except their reaction against the past. Among those in the forefront were Jacques Perk, Willem Kloos, Lodewijk van Deyssel, Frederik van Eeden and Albert Verwey. The influence of English romanticism is particularly noticeable in this movement. ² In their rejection of the past the young poets put forward such slogans as "de allerindividueelste expressie van de allerindividueelste emotie" (the most individualistic expression coming from the most individualistic emotion, Willem Kloos) and "Kunst is passie" (Art is passion, Lodewijk van Deyssel). They were also subscribers to the theory of l'Art pour l'Art, and as Jassin

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¹ H. B. Jassin: *Pudjangga Baru*, p. 29.

² Theodoor Wevers, pp. 149, 150.
pointed out their works 'were subjective, individualistic and a-social.'

The young Indonesian poets became acquainted with the works of the Tachtigers through their lessons at the schools or the teachers training colleges. Jassin said that 'every pre-war student from HBS, AMS and HIK knew the fiery works of Lodewijk van Deyssel.' Familiarity with the works of van Deyssel and others of the Tachtigers movement had made a deep impact on the young Indonesian poets because, in the words of A. H. Johns, 'the romantic poetry of this Dutch generation was exactly the sort of verse that would influence comparatively young writers without a training in literary criticism.' And Teeuw adds that the Tachtigers was 'the main outside source of inspiration for this early generation of poets.'

It is never easy to determine the degree of influence the Tachtigers had on the early Indonesian poets. Like the Dutch poets Yamin, Rustam Effendi and Samusi Pane are also

1 H. B. Jassin op. cit., p. 29.
2 Ibid, p. 29.
3 A. H. Johns: Genesis of a Modern Literature, p. 421.
4 A. Teeuw: Modern Indonesian Literature, p. 42.
romantic poets and also made nature, among other things, as their source of inspiration. This does not necessarily mean that the early Indonesian poets, in this respect, were merely following the footsteps of the Dutch poets. It must be remembered that at the time of writing their poems these poets were young and at such an age when intellect could easily be swayed or influenced by feelings or emotions. Everything was seen through the eyes of a romantic. This could account for their idealism and romanticism. As far as liking for nature goes these young poets certainly found in nature a source of inspiration and as a vehicle in which to express their feelings and emotions. The liking for nature, as had been said earlier, is universal and has been popular among poets throughout the ages. These early Indonesian poets are no exception. Without doubt, the Tachtigers slogan 'the most individualistic expression coming from the most individualistic emotion' had certainly made considerable impact on the young Indonesian poets. The poems written by Yamin, Rustam Effendi and Samusi Pane are certainly not the product of a general culture, as in traditional works, but the product of individuals. That is the limit of their individualism. Unlike the Tachtigers, these Indonesian poets were not a-social or
subscribers to the theory of l'Art pour l'Art, ¹

FORMS AND LANGUAGE

The most remarkable achievement of the poets of the twenties was the conscious effort made to find new poetic forms which would enable them to express their feelings and emotions without being tied down by the hard and fast rules of traditional poetic forms. Yamin was the pioneer in this field; followed by Rustam Effendi and Sanusi Pane. These young poets had found that the traditional poetic forms were no longer suited to their needs and this made them experimented with new forms and techniques.

Without doubt, the sonnet is the most popular poetic form among the poets of this period. Of the 21 poems written by Yamin in Jong Sumatra, between 1920 and 1922, only two are not sonnets. In Rustam Effendi's Pertjikan Permanungan there are 64 poems, out of which 10 are sonnets. And in Sanusi Pane's collection Puspa Moga there are 33 sonnets out of the total of 34 poems. In his Madah Kelana there are 49 poems in which 11 are sonnets.

¹ H. B. Jassin; op. cit., p. 31.
In a *Dictionary of World Literature* the sonnet is defined as 'a lyric of fourteen lines, with a formal rhyme scheme.' This poetic form originated in Italy about 1220. Petrarch was one of the best known of the early Italian poets to use this poetic form. From Italy it spread to other countries of Europe. The Italian sonnet, sometimes known as the Petrarchan sonnet, comprised of a rhyme abba abba cdcd cdcd. During its spread in Europe the Italian rhyme scheme underwent considerable changes with the result that today there exists a number of rhyme schemes. In England, for example, there are the Shakespearean sonnets with the rhyme scheme abab cdcd efef gg and a Spenserian sonnet with the rhyme scheme abab bcbc cdcd ee. Such changes occurred in the Netherlands. This can be seen from the works of Dutch poets such as Willem Kloos and Jacques Perk.¹

The sonnet came to Indonesia through the Netherlands. This poetic form had been popular among the poets of the *Tachtigers* or the Generation of 1880. J. U. Nasution says that the early Indonesian poets were educated at Dutch secondary schools in which Dutch literature formed an

² *The Sonnet* by Armijs Pante and Umar Junus.² In fact there are two other Indonesian poets who also wrote sonnets. They are Mr. J. L. Wester and Mr. J. S. Widhjaya.
important part of the curriculum. It was at these schools that the Indonesians first became acquainted with the form sonnet.¹

Judging from the number of sonnets written in the twenties and thirties it looks as if this poetic form certainly had a profound impact on these early Indonesian poets. These early Indonesian poets are romantic poets and like the romantic poets in England and the Netherlands Yamin, Rustam Effendi and Sanusi Pane had great fondness for this poetic form. In sonnets these young Indonesian poets found a poetic form very much suited to their temperament and romantic nature, as had been the case with the ¹achtigers. Their liking for the sonnet is certainly not the result of the sonnet having any similarities with the traditional poetic form pantun as were suggested by Armijn Pane and Umar Junus.² In fact there is very little similarity between the two poetic forms. This was discussed at length by Nasution.³


² Armijn Pane: Sonnet dan Pantun in Pudjangga Baru, vol 1, no. 2, August 1933, published in Jassin's Pudjangga Baru, pp. 259 - 266.

Among the sonnets written by Yamin, Rustam Effendi and Sanusi Pane, the verse form 4,4,3,3, is the most popular. Of the 23 sonnets written by Yamin (he actually wrote 19 sonnets but one of his poems Gita Gembala comprises of 4 sonnets and the other Kemegahan comprises of 2 sonnets) 19 are in the verse form 4,4,3,3, and of the other 4 one comprises a verse form 4,4,2,2; 2 comprise a verse form 4,4,6 and the last one comprises of the verse form 8,3,3. Rustam Effendi's sonnets in Pertijikan Permnenungan comprise of 5 in the verse form 4,4,3,3; 3 in the verse form 4,4,6 and one in the verse form 4,4,4,2.

One of his poems Kenangan Lama, comprises of 8 independent sonnets and one which is not a sonnet. Of these 8 sonnets, 5 are in the verse form 4,4,3,3 and 3 in the verse form 4,4,6. It seems that Rustam Effendi had the liking for two types of verse form; 4,4,3,3 and 4,4,6. Sanusi Pane, too had the liking for the verse form 4,4,3,3. All of his sonnets in Puspa Mega and Madah Kelana are in these verse forms.

In Yamin's sonnets the quatrain mostly rhyme whereas in Rustam Effendi's and Sanusi Pane's sonnets most of the quatrain does not rhyme. Commenting on Yamin's rhyme schemes Fachruddin Ambo Enre said: 'It seems that Yamin holds strongly to the belief that a good sonnet must always
have the same rhyme scheme in its two quatrains.\footnote{1}

The influence of the traditional poetic forms, especially that of the pantun, is strongly felt in most of the poems of this period. In fact, the influence is even felt in the works of later poets. This is not surprising since the poets of the twenties were pioneers in a new field and thus there was no one they could turn to for guidance. As Jassin said:

It is not that they favoured the old but in their search for new ones they were still unable to break free from the hold that the traditional poetic forms had on them. After all, these traditional poetic forms have been part of Indonesia's cultural heritage and tradition for a very long time.

Of the many traditional poetic forms the pantun is the only one that has managed to survive the trials and

\footnote{1 Fachruddin Ambo Enre, op. cit., p. 27.}

\footnote{2 H. B. Jassin, op. cit., p. 25.}
tribulations of the changing years. In many parts of Indonesia and Malaysia today the pantun is very much alive as it was hundreds of years ago. On many occasions, marriage is one of them, the pantun still finds a place in the lives of the people. Asrul Sani, the poet, says that the pantun 'lives in the Indonesians heart, gives wealth to his conversation and beauty to his life.'

W. S. Rendra, another famous Indonesian poet, finds that 'the art of the pantun has penetrated our people's lives.' In pantun the Indonesians possess what Burton Raffles calls 'the frame of mind, the poetic craft, and the wit' that 'are easily adaptable to the needs of modern verse.' He adds further that 'exposure to pantun from childhood cannot help but sharpens a poet's abilities, whether the influence is direct or even acknowledged.' To a certain extent this 'frame of mind, the poetic craft, and the wit' certainly plays an important part in determining the form and substance of the works of these early poets and even that which came after them. Thus, it is not surprising that

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1 Quoted from Burton Raffle's The Development of Modern Indonesian Poetry, p. 38.

2 Ibid, p. 38.

3 Ibid, p. 38.
the pantun has been a potent influence, and in the twenties and thirties a very direct influence, on modern Indonesian poetry.¹

As had been said earlier Yamin can be regarded as a pioneer in Indonesian poetry. He was not only the first to realize the potentialities of the Indonesian language as a vehicle for expressing new ideas in unconventional poetic forms but also introduced the sonnet, the poetic form hitherto unknown in Indonesian literature. But the rhyme schemes in some of his sonnets do not follow the traditional Italian rhyme schemes of abba abba cdc dcd. This can be seen from the poem Gubahan in which the rhyme scheme is aaaa aaaa aaaa aaaa. In the poem Pagi² the rhyme scheme is abba abba ccc ccc:

Tedja dan tjerawat masih gemilang,
Memuramkan bintang mulia raja;
Menjadi pudar padam tjahaja,
Timbul tenggelam ber-ulang².

Fadjar ditimur datang mendjalang,
Membawa permata keatas dunia;
Seri-berseri sepantun mutia,
Berbagai warna bersilang².

Lambat laum serta berdandan,
Timbullah matahari dengan perlahan;
Menjinjar bumi dengan keindahan.

Segala bunga harumkan pandan,
Kembang terbuka, bagus gubahan;
Dibasahi ambun, titik didahan.

It seems that Yamin was consciously trying to experiment with

¹ Burton Raffle: Anthology of Modern Indonesian Poetry, p. 5.
new rhyme schemes in his sonnets and at the same time to 
show that the Indonesian language can be adapted to suit 
the requirements of the new poetic form.

Besides the sonnets, Yamin also introduced other poetic 
forms which certainly cannot be called pantun or sair. This 
can be seen from his poems *Tanah Air,* 1 *Bahasa, Bangsa* 2 and 
*Bandi Mataram* 3 and his cycle of verses *Tanah Air* and 
*Indonesia, Tumpah Darahku.* The poem *Tanah Air,* for example, 
consists of 3 verses of 9 lines each with the rhyme schemes 
abcdddee/abccaaadd/abccdddcc. *Bahasa, Bangsa,* as can be seen 
from the first three of its five verses, is not a pantun or 
a sair:

**Selagi ketjil berusia muda**
Tidur siana dipangkuan bunda.
Ibu bernjanji, lagu dan dendang
Memudji siana banjukna sedang;

Berbui sajang malam dan siang
Buaian tergantung ditang alojiong.
Telahir dibangsia, berbahasa sendiri
Baipit keluarga kanan dan kiri.
Besar budiman ditang alojiong
Berduka suka, sertakan raju;
Perasaan serikat menjadi padu,
Dalam bahasa, permai merdu.

1 Published in *Jong Sumatra,* no. 4, vol III, April 1920.
In Yamin's sonnets one can easily feel the influence of the pantun and in his cycle of verses that of the sjair. Of Yamin's sonnets S. Takdir Alisjahbana commented that 'in his sonnets one can still feel the rhythm and language of the pantun.' Like the pantun, his verse consists of 4 words per line with a mid-point caesura. The inclusion of such words as 'dan' (and), 'jang' (which) or 'nan' (which) are very limited. The number of syllables per line in his sonnets are very much like that of the pantun. In his cycle of verses, however, the influence of the sjair is strongly felt. As Fachruddin Ambo Enre said:


Yamin's rhyme schemes in many of his quatrains resemble that of the pantun's rhyme scheme abab. A good example is the quatrains from his poem Gita Gembala:

Lemah gemalai lembut derana
Bertiuplah angin sepanun ribut

1 S. Takdir Alisjahbana: Puisi Baru, p. 27.
Menundju gunung arah kesana
Membawa awan bertajam pur kabut
Dahan bergerang sambut menjambut
Menjatuhkan embun djerneh berwarna
Menimpa bumi, beruap dan lembut
Sebagai benda tiada berguna.

In rhyme scheme Yamin was still very much tied to the past. He appears to be very conscious and particular about rhymes and in his effort to get the desired rhymes he often made use of cliches and stopgaps which are characteristics of the traditional pantun or sjair. For this reason, it is not surprising that cliches and stopgaps are plentiful in his poems, whether they are sonnets or cycle of verses. Anyone who is familiar with the traditional pantun or sjair certainly cannot fail to notice such expressions or lines as 'lemah gemalai lembut derana', 'saperti permata didada perawan', 'belahan djiwa se-pantun tulang', 'seri-berseri sepantun mutia' and 'menggembirakan djantuung serta hati.' Of these Teeuw says that they are 'an unpleasant remainder of the practices of the professional poet, the tukang sjair ......'

It seems that Yamin was still very much tied to the concept of 'kata nan indah' (the beautiful word) in Malay literary tradition.

1 A. Teeuw: Modern Indonesian Literature, p. 12.
Yamin's frequent usage of cliches and stopgaps are not only an unpleasant remainder of the past but also have undesirable effects on a reader. The language and forms of his poems generally seem to be forced or stilted. His poems as a whole lack freshness and vitality with the result that they make a very uninteresting reading. Compared with the works of the other poets of his generation there is very little individuality in Yamin's works.

Yamin's main contribution to the development of modern Indonesian literature, and particularly in the field of poetry, lies in the fact that he introduced the sonnet form as well as having experimented with a number of verse forms and rhyme schemes. The themes of his poems are not the same as those in pantun or sijair. And in making Malay the vehicle for expressing these new ideas Yamin not only showed the potentialities of Malay as a language of the modern world but also paved the way for others to write in that language.

However, his works as a whole show no marked progress. The first sonnet which he wrote in 1920 is very much the same as those which he wrote in 1922; so are his first cycle of verses in 1922 and his second in 1928. But Yamin, in spite of his many and varied activities, had done all he could in the field of poetry. He was the pioneer or in the

1 Burton Raffel: *The Development of Modern Indonesian Poetry*, p. 36.

words of Burton Raffel 'the beginning of the beginning.' 1
His works or his literary career should be viewed in
this perspective.

But the real experimenter was Rustam Effendi. Like
Yamin, Rustam also wrote sonnets, but most important of
all he experimented with varieties of verse forms, rhyme
schemes and a new kind of language very much unlike the
language of the pantun or sijair. Of Rustam Effendi S.
Takdir Alisjahbana said:

What Takdir Alisjahbana said above is true. One has only to
read through his collection Pertjikan Permenungan to see the
extent in which Rustam Effendi had departed from the
traditional poetic forms.

Rustam Effendi, in one of his best known poems Bukan Beta
Bidjak Berperi (I am no Good at Story Telling), made clear
his poetic conviction when he said:

Bukan beta bidjak berperi,
Pandai menggubah madahan sijair;

1 Burton Raffel: The Development of Modern Indonesian Poetry,
P. 36.

The second stanza is particularly interesting because in it Rustam Effendi clearly rejected all the traditional poetic forms because he wrote according to the promptings of his heart. But in spite of his apparent desire to repudiate the old it seems that Rustam, in some of his poems, was still not free to do so. It is even so in the poem quoted above. The fact is that Rustam, however desirous of a complete break with the past, was unable to do so because the grip of the past was still strong in him, just as it was with the other poets in the twenties.

But in Rustam Effendi the influence of the traditional poetic forms are rather limited to a small number of poems. They are exceptions rather than the rule. In the majority of others one comes across a great variety of verse forms and rhyme schemes. There is no doubt at all that Rustam was consciously trying to experiment with new verse forms and rhyme schemes and it is in this respect that he can be regarded as a pioneer in modern Indonesian poetry.
Rustam Effendi experimented with a great number of verse forms ranging from 3 to 12 lines in a stanza. At the same time he does not always maintain the same number of words per line in a stanza as is common in traditional poetic forms. A good example is the poem *Kekajean Tuhan* (The Greatness of God):

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Berbukit, berbatu,
bersungai, berngarai.
Berbunung membubu
Menjorak permai, kesawang sawai.

Membelit, membalut,
bedjalan perlahan.
Mengalir menjemut
Mengantar hanjutan kahibir lautan,

Meminta, memetjah,
meleng lang tjereng lang,
Serasah membasah,
melembahkan lawang, menjubur ladang.
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In this poem (only the first three stanzas are quoted) the first three lines of each stanza consist of 2 words per line whereas the last line consists of 4 words. The rhyme scheme is abab. All the stanzas have the same scheme or arrangement: 2-a, 2-b, 2-a, 4-b. This can also be seen from other poems such as *Lagu Waktu Ketjil* (p. 15) and *Berkawan* (pp. 71, 72). It seems that in these poems Rustam Effendi was more concerned in maintaining uniformity.
of arrangement for each individual stanza. He must have regarded each poem, rather than the individual stanza, as an independent unit. This concept was something new in Indonesian poetry and Rustam Effendi can well be regarded as the pioneer.

Rustam Effendi experimented with syllables. The syllables for each line vary greatly, unlike that of the pantun or s洁air. What he was trying to do was to show that rhyme as well as rhythm are both important elements in Indonesian poetry. His fondness of shortening words can be seen as an attempt to experiment with syllables. It was done mainly to get the right amount of syllables to fit in with the rhythm required. Very often these present quite a problem for a reader who is unaware of the changes. The following are examples of such changes:

'dang' (for sidang, p. 13.), 't'galan' (for tegalan, p. 16)
'k'hati' (for kehati, p. 16.), 'd'atas' (for diatas, p. 18), 'dir' (for dari, p. 19), 'deta' (for detik, p. 30.), 'menung' (for menunggu, p. 35), 'mutiar' (for mutiara, p. 50) and 'duni' (for dunia, p. 53). From the examples shown above it can be seen that it is not just the omission of a vowel or syllable that has taken place but also word deformation (examples are 'dir' for 'dari' and 'deta' for 'detik').

Besides experimenting with syllables Rustam also experimented with various types of rhymes such as alliteration,
assonance, end rhymes and internal rhymes. In using these poetical devices Rustam seems to demonstrate what Teeuw calls 'the power of individual word' in Indonesian poetry. These poetical devices are used by Sanusi Pane in many of his poems. In utilizing these devices the power of the individual word in each line is intensified to give effect to the rhyme itself. This can be seen from the second stanza of the poem Bukan Beta Bidjak Berperi:

Sarat saraf saja mungkiri,
Untai rangkaian seloka lama,
Beta buang beta singkiri,
Sebab laguku menurut sukma.

And in the poem Kekajean Tuhan (The Greatness of God):

Berbukit, berbatu,
bersungai, bermgarai.
Berburung membubu
Menjorakan permai, kesawang sawai.

Membelit, membalut,
Berdjalan perlahan.
Mengalir menjemut
mengantar hanjutan kebibir lautan.

Meminta, memetjah,
memelang tjemerlang,
Serasah membasah,
melembahkan lawang, menjubur ladang.

Menggunung membudung
djabalan tegalan.
Mendada tjahaja
melentun kiriman suami bulan.

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1 A. Teeuw, op. cit., p. 19.
Rustam Effendi’s experiment with various types of rhymes, particularly alliteration, assonance and end rhymes, had the effect of producing certain freshness and vigour as well as beauty to these poems. It is particularly so in the poem quoted above.

In other poems Rustam Effendi made use of these poetical devices to act as emphasis on the idea he wished to convey. A good example is the first stanza of the poem Lautan (Ocean):

Terdengar derai ombak, bertjerai, 
terhampar ke pantai, sorai terurai.
Mengam deram derum lautan, 
walau pun didalam malam jang kalam.

In the first two lines of the stanza quoted above the end rhyme ai seems to convey the picture of waves breaking on the beach. And the sound m in the third line helps to give a clear picture of the noise made by the waves.
In another poem, Rahasia Alam (Secrets of Nature), Rustam uses reduplication to give emphasis to the root meaning of the word or to show the continuity of particular action or movement. The first stanza of the above mentioned poem is a good example:

Kulihat kupu kupu
berkedjar kedjaran.
Kulihat burung
beredar edaran.
Kudengar air menderu deru,
Kukang lutung berseru seru.

The effect of reduplication on rhythm is also considerable. In order to get a dynamic rhythm Rustam also employs what is known as enjambment. This poetical device is unheard of in traditional poetic forms. This can be seen from the first two stanzas of the poem Dilintas Tjinta (Disregarded by Love):

Selintas beta
dilintas mata.
Hitam
dan dalam;
sebagai tjernin
pembatja Bathin
alam
didalam.

Selajang mata
memandang beta.
Sampai
melambai
kedalam tjita
menanam tjita,
rampai
dan permai.

Another remarkable aspect of Rustam Effendi's poem is...
the absence of any forms of cliches which are prevalent in traditional poetry and to a certain extent in the works of Yamin and Sanusi Pane. His language generally and in some instances his choice of words is very personal. He introduced quite a number of words of Minangkabau origin such as 'djamak' (p. 9), 'bun' (p. 9), 'sum' (p. 10), 'tumpak' (p. 12), 'runut' (p. 13), 'sum' (p. 27), 'tanai' (p. 27), 'manang' (p. 28), 'pusung' (p. 36), 'londong' (p. 41), 'kumuh' (p. 46), 'sanan' (p. 56) and 'rajan' (p. 82). And in a number of others the origins are unknown, possibly very archaic. Rustam Effendi's effort in introducing words from his own dialect or regional language is not an isolated incident in modern Indonesian literature. As Zuber Usman puts it:

it was not only done by Rustam Effendi 30 years ago, but if we read the works of Generation '45 the influence of regional languages is inevitable, for example Pramudya Ananta Tur or Utuy Tatang Sontani on many occasions introduced words from their regional languages. 1

In fact, in all these years Indonesian writers from the various ethnic groups have all been contributing, and will undoubtedly continue to do so, their share in the enrichment...
and growth of the Indonesian language.

Besides introducing new words from his own area, Rustam Effendi picked up enough courage to introduce words from Dutch such as 'setrip' (strip, p. 19), 'metode' (method, p. 22), 'komidi' (comedy, p. 22) and 'musik' (music, p. 46). Of course, such words and a great many others are a common feature of bahasa Indonesia today, but in the twenties these were very rare.

Thus, Rustam in his works can be regarded as a real experimenter who tried his utmost to replace traditional worn out forms by new ones. He experimented with great varieties of verse forms, rhyme schemes, rhythm and all sorts of arrangements and combinations of words and syllables. Burton Raffel puts it that 'Effendi wrestled with his country's developing language, pushed and pulled it this way and that, trying to find the key to new and better modes of expression'.

As such it is not surprising that most of his poetry appears to be forced and stilted but at the same time conveys a strong personal character and to some extent a certain amount of freshness as compared with that of the traditional pantun or gajair or to the works of Yamin or Samusi Pane.

His experiment does not end in poetry. In his allegoric drama...

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1 Burton Raffel: The Development of Modern Indonesian Poetry, p. 47.
Bebasari Rustam admitted having written a piece of work that was revolutionary in both forms and contents. Of the form he said it was 'a la Shakespeare.' Further, he said that Bebasari was written particularly 'as a guide to our youths' in the use of new literary forms and devices. There is no doubt about his works being revolutionary. In these works Rustam Effendi was one step ahead of his counterparts and it is not surprising that he was often branded as 'a person of unsound mind, who pretends to be an expert in writing poetry.'

Samusi Pane, like Yamin and Rustam Effendi, also favoured the sonnet. In Puspa Mega only 1, out of the total of 34 poems, is not a sonnet; and in Madah Kelana there are 11 sonnets out of the total of 49. All of his sonnets are in the verse form 4,4,3,3. Only his rhyme schemes vary. The influence of the traditional pantun is strongly felt in his poems in the collection Puspa Mega and to a small extent in Madah Kelana. It is particularly so in his sonnets rather than in other poetic forms. In Puspa Mega all except 2 of his poems comprise of the traditional 4 words per line.

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2 Ibid, p. 55.
3 Ibid, p. 56.
Connectives such as 'dan', 'jang' and 'nan' are excluded. The exceptions are in the poems Kenangan (Memory) and Dilingkungan Adat Lembaga (Surrounded by Tradition). 6 of his sonnets in Madah Kelana have got the 4 words per line and the rest vary from 2 to 4 words per line. The number of syllables per line in his sonnets vary between 9 and 10, very much like that of the pantun. It seems that Sanusi developed his sonnets based on the number of syllables in Indonesian pantun. This is also true of rhythm in quite a number of his sonnets. Sanusi Pane, like his counterparts, was not able to free himself completely from the influence of the traditional forms.

Even in a number of his poems which are not sonnets the influence of pantun can also be felt. In Kenantai (Towards the Beach), the only poem which is not a sonnet in Puspa Mega, Sanusi Pane made use of the first 4 lines in an eight-lined stanza as a sort of introductory line and the other 4 lines as means to express what he had in mind. This can be seen from the lines below:

Ombak berdesir,
Dipantai pasir.
Suka lagu,
Ditjium sjamsu.
Mari gerangan adindaku sajang,
Mendengar laut memudji tjinta.
Waktu datang kuat terbajang,
Kalau laksmi mengikat kita.

Fachruddin Ambo Enre regards this poem as a 'synthesis
between pantun and sonnet. 1

In some of these poems (which are not sonnets) the rhythm of the pantun can easily be felt. An example is from the poem Biarkan Daku in Madah Kelana:

Biarkan daku
Mereka kembang,
Biarkan daku
Mengarang tembang.

Biarkan daku
Mengisi puan;
Biarkan daku
Memudji tuan.

And also in the poem Betapa Kami Tidakkan Suka:

Betapa Sari
Tidakkan kembang,
Melihat terang
Simata hari.

Betapa kami
Tidakkan suka,
Memandang muka
Sijdantung hati.

The forms of the two poems quoted above have in many ways departed from the traditional poetic forms but their rhythm still follows closely that of the pantun. It seems that Sanusi Pane was consciously trying to experiment with new forms without abandoning the traditional rhythm of the pantun. He must have realized that the dynamic rhythm of the pantun.

1 Fachruddin Ambo Enre, op. cit., p. 49.
rantun could still be utilized to give certain effects, freshness as well as beauty, to a poem without having to adhere closely to the hard and fast rules of the traditional forms.

In his collection Puspa Mera Sanusi seems to adhere closely to the hard and fast rules of the traditional forms.

In his sonnets Sanusi appears to be more capable of adapting this poetic form to the structure of bahasa Indonesia than either Yamin or Rustam Effendi. His language is much simpler, smooth flowing and certainly not forced. This is true not only of his sonnets but also in other poems as well. Unlike Yamin, cliches are lacking in his works.

In his Sadjak (Poem), in the collection Puspa Mera, Sanusi seems to put poetic forms above everything else. To him the contents or purpose of the poem is secondary. The most important is the form of the poem itself; including the use of what he termed as 'kata nan rantjak' (beautiful and high sounding words). The poet, according to him, must
take pains in choosing the right words for his poems. What he meant by right words is of course 'kata nan rantjak'.

This can be seen from the first stanza of the above mentioned poem:

Dimana harga karangan sadjak,
Bukan dalam maksud isinja,
Dalam bentuk, kata nan rantjak,
Ditjari timbang dengan pilihan.

From the stanza quoted above it is clear that Sanusi Pane considered forms above everything else. To him the value of a poem should lie essentially in a poet's ability to use and maintain the right forms as well as the choice of the right words or expressions. He attached little
importance to the message that a poet should convey.
In this connection it looks as if Sanusi was adhering
to the concept of l'art pour l'art.

In his collection Puspa Mecra Sanusi seems to adhere
closely to this poetic creed. In reading the poems in this
collection one gets the feeling that Sanusi must have put
a lot of effort into his choice of the right words, rhythm
and rhyme schemes. There is very little difference in
poetic forms in this collection. The sonnet predominates.
In the sonnet Sanusi must really have found a poetic form
very much to his liking and at that stage would not wish
to consider experimenting with new ones.

But in Madah Kelana Sanusi Pane seems to have taken a
different line all together. In one of his poems, also
entitled Sadjak, he declared:

O, bukannja dalam kata jang rantjak,
Kata jang pelik kebagusan sadjak.
O, puidjangga buang segala kata,
jang 'kan tjuma mempermainkan mata,
Dan hanja dibatja serintas lalu,
Kerana tak keluar dari sukmamu.

Here Sanusi no longer regarded 'kata nan rantjak' as necessary.
The poet should not use beautiful or high sounding words just
for the sake of using them in his poems. What is important,
the words must come from the poet's own heart or inner self
and at the same time must contain the message the poet
wishes to convey.

J. V. Nasution, op. cit., p. 32.
The poems in *Madah Kelana* clearly reflect Sanusi's change of attitude. The language of most of his poems in *Madah Kelana* appear to be more natural. There are much less 'kata nan rantjak' and those that are used seem to carry the meaning or message the poet wishes to convey. They are not just high sounding words or expressions devoid of meaning or message. As J. U. Nasution commented: 'We feel there is harmony, although not in its entirety, between the sentences and the ideas that they carry.' This is helped to a certain extent by the fact that quite a number of the poems in this collection concern his philosophical beliefs and convictions. They are the product of lengthy meditations or reflections rather than of spasmodic outbursts of emotions or passions (as is the case with his earlier collection). In this way his language in these poems is less charged with emotions. But since he was a romantic at heart there is really no way for him to escape from his emotions or feelings.

In *Madah Kelana* the sonnet no longer predominates. He began to experiment with a number of verse forms, rhythm and rhyme schemes. His poems in this collection show more originality and maturity of thoughts than those in *Puasa Meja*. Thus, in contents as well as forms *Madah Kelana* shows clear progress as compared to his earlier works.

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1 J. U. Nasution, op. cit., p. 32.
CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that the Indonesian people today owe much to the handful of young poets and novelists who, in the twenties, gave form and meaning to the beginnings of a modern literature in Indonesia. Their involvement in creative writing came at a time when traditional Indonesian literary forms had ceased to be productive. In many aspects their efforts were very modest; nevertheless they provided a foundation for the new literary tradition that emerged in the thirties, and was to show such striking achievements after the Japanese occupation.

The works of these early writers then, in form and content, signal the beginning of a new tradition, for they are clearly the products as well as the projections of their individual experiences rather than that of a general culture. In this attempt to be themselves, to be individuals, these writers found that the forms they had grown up with, the product by and large of an oral, 'collectivist' folk tradition were stale and restrictive when they wished to express their inner thoughts and feelings. This was particularly the case when they wished to write poetry. Hence their efforts to muster new forms and techniques, some of which they discovered in the Dutch poetry that was part of their school curriculum. Thus, education in Dutch schools or colleges not only helped them to broaden their outlook and revolutionize their way of thinking but also brought them into contact with a new kind of literary tradition which partly helped them to abjure the formal and restrictiveness of traditional styles and find their own means of expression.
'modernity' than Yamin or Samusi Pane. 'Modernity' is a
outlook and revolutionize their way of thinking but also
relative term however. Perhaps the most important aspect
brought them into contact with a new kind of literary
tradition which certainly helped them to shape the forms and
contents of their own works.

The western form that had special appeal for the three
poets - Muhammad Yamin, Rustam Effendi and Samusi Pane-
was the sonnet. As a form it was more complex than the pantun
we have discussed, in their portrayal of the problems of a
society in transition, have displayed, what C. S. Fraser calls,
had used it to express emotions which they recognized as akin
to their own.

But more important for future developments, these poets
began to make a conscious effort to experiment with other
forms and techniques. This was particularly so in the case of
Rustam Effendi. He was the real experimenter. Besides the
sonnet he experimented with varieties of verse forms and rhyme
schemes, and many of his poems reflect this desire to experiment,
to use the linguistic resources of Malay in a new way. His
Salak Lembah, written by Abdul Hadi, is clearly the best
work clearly project his individuality of outlook and temperament.
There is thus a notable degree of freshness and vigour in his
poetry which in places approach the 'dry, objective tone' that
a western critic has discovered in the work of Chairil Anwar. 1

He has accordingly progressed further along the path to
convincing, and the author shows that he does possess to a very
high degree 'an imaginative awareness of the stress of social
change' in his presentation of the problems encountered by an

1 Burton Raffel: The Development of Modern Indonesian Poetry,
p. 42.

1 C. S. Fraser, op. cit., p. 11
'modernity' than Yamin or Sanusi Pane. 'Modernity' is a relative term, however. Perhaps the greatest achievement of these three young poets is that they succeeded in establishing their individuality as poets, and that it is hardly possible to confuse the work of one with the work of another.

In prose, too, writers made major advances. The authors we have discussed, in their portrayal of the problems of a society in transition, have displayed, what G. S. Fraser calls, 'an imaginative awareness of the stress of social change.' Their imaginative awareness was derived from the new sets of values gained through Western education in an urban environment and participation in life outside the traditional village environment. It was this imaginative awareness that made it possible for the best of them to portray their society using a narrative method characterised by what Ian Watt calls formal realism.

Salah Asuhan, written by Abdul Muis, is clearly the best novel of the period. It is successful as a work of art. The language, compared to other works of the twenties, has a certain simplicity and directness of expression, perhaps the result of Muis' experience as a journalist. The characterization is convincing, and the author shows that he does possess to a very high degree 'an imaginative awareness of the stress of social change' in his presentation of the problems encountered by an

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1 A. K. Joffe: Through Myth and Pressure: The Indonesian Quest for Reality, p. 26

1 G. S. Fraser, op. cit., p. 11
inter-racial marriage in colonial society. In this respect
the novel can be regarded as a forerunner to later works such
as Armijn Pane's Belenggu and Achdiat Karta Mihardja's Atheis.

But in spite of their conscious efforts made to replace
outmoded forms with new ones their works show clearly that
they were still very much the creatures of their environment
and upbringing. It could hardly be otherwise. Traditional
forms had been part and parcel of their cultural traditions
for so long, and models and experience for any alternative
so sparse, it was impossible for their past not to have a
constricting effect. Even Rustam Effendi, the most 'revolut­
ionary' of these early writers, found it difficult to free
himself completely from the influence of traditional forms and
ways of thinking. As Johns said, among the Indonesian inte­
lectuals 'old habits of mind remain.'\(^1\) In other words, trad­
tional values were still dominant in their mental make-up.
Possibly, these traditional values or old habits of mind have
something to do with their inability to reject completely
the traditional forms.

Besides, they were also handicapped by other factors.
They were pioneers in a new field and as such they had no
one to turn to for guidance. They were completely on their
own. Their knowledge of world literature, if any, was very

\(^1\) A. H. Johns: Through Myth and Dreams: The Indonesian Quest
for Reality, p. 25.
limited and because of their youth they lacked the necessary experience to see the various problems in their proper perspective.

But what is important is in their works they created the beginnings of a modern literature in Indonesia, a literature which is the product of individual way of thinking rather than that of a general culture. It is this and their experience of urban life which divide their work from traditional writing and this in itself indicates how great is the gulf between the new world and the old. And by writing in Malay, which in 1928 in Indonesia was christened bahasa Indonesia, they were consciously or unconsciously helping to shape not only the future course of development for a literature that would be distinctly Indonesian but also for a modern development of Malay.

The works of these writers, as a whole, are therefore not isolated from the political and national consciousness of the period. In poetry, the poets display a consciousness as well as an allegiance to the ideals of a common fatherland and a common national language. In the novels the authors wove into their narratives their perceptions of the numerous problems in their society which they considered as obstacles to progress. What these authors hoped to achieve was greater awareness among the general population of the complexity and fundamental nature of these problems, to promote a sense of self-respect among their people as well as educating them on the importance of changing their mentality and outlook in accordance with the times.
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