

Chapter IV Indonesia in 1913: The Social Background to the Deportation of Three Indische Partij Leaders

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Introduction

The formation of the Indische Partij (Indies Party) in Bandung on September 6, 1912 stands out in the history of the Indonesian nationalist movement as the birth of the first organization to call for independence from Dutch control. While it could not claim to have influence throughout the entire archipelago, the party's network of branches was by no means confined to the main island of Java. Again, while the mainstay of its membership was admittedly composed of Eurasians, it was the first organization to go beyond national and racial boundaries and to enjoy the participation of many of the indigenous peoples that made up the islands' population. And yet for all its historical significance, the Indische Partij has received scant attention from historians. Among the reasons for its apparent dismissal as no more than a sidelight in the country's fight for freedom can be included the party's short life, together with the central role that Eurasians played in its activities.

On September 6, 1913, one year to the day after the party's founding, three of its leaders set sail from Batavia (present-day Jakarta) for Europe under the terms of a deportation order served against them by the Dutch colonial government. With their departure the activities of the Indische Partij effectively came to an end, and the colonial authorities' attempt to maintain public order and calm by putting a lid on the party's radical propaganda bore fruit.

There was much to be puzzled about as the drama surrounding the deportation order unfolded. Following their arrest in late July–early August 1913, the three men were sentenced on August 18 to internal exile, but in the same breath the order added that, should they so wish, they were to be allowed to request deportation instead. They did indeed, and their request was granted on August 27. Tsuchiya Kenji [1987:68 n. 29] has conjectured that the reasons for this unusual measure lay in the specific circumstances of the three men: one of them, E. F. E. Douwes Dekker, was legally Dutch; another, Cipto Mangunkusumo, had made considerable contributions to the eradication of the bubonic plague from the colony¹; and the

¹ Cipto, a doctor, had volunteered in 1911 to be posted to Malang, Eastern Java, scene of one of the most virulent outbreaks of the plague. In January 1912 his efforts there led him to be considered along with several European doctors for a medal, and in July of that year he was awarded the Oranje Nassau medal [Douwes Dekker 1914:88–89].

third, Suwardi Suryaningrat, was a member of the aristocracy with links to the House of Pakualam, and was moreover a man of extremely mild disposition. Governor-General Idenburg, in his report to Minister for the Colonies De Waal Malefijt, further suggested that the colonial authorities had sought neither to punish nor to gain revenge on the three men but simply to prevent them from causing mischief [Wal 1967:324]. Another curious aspect of the affair, one which Tsuchiya does not pursue, was that not only were the three men released from prison following the August 18 verdict, but they were also allowed to spend the period from August 24 to September 3 travelling from one to another of the five main cities of Java holding political meetings to commemorate their impending departure [Douwes Dekker 1914:193]. A desire to examine what lay behind the colonial government's curious inconsistency in its treatment of the three nationalist leaders was the starting point for the present paper.

The following reasons may be put forward for the colonial authorities' ambivalent attitude. First, feeling secure in their control, they had determined that no immediate danger was being posed to the status quo [Tsuchiya 1987:21–22]. Their main concern was with the “dangerous ideology” represented by the ringleader Douwes Dekker, while the possibility was strong that Cipto and Suwardi had merely been “blinded” by Douwes Dekker and would present no problem should they finally come to their senses [Tsuchiya 1987:22]; until the last minute, the colonial government's main concern had been to ascertain whether or not there was a case for finding the two men guilty of “crimes of conviction” [Tsuchiya 1987:24–25]. As for Douwes Dekker, the authorities had long been considering the appropriate timing for intervening in his radical propaganda activities [Wal 1967:320], and in fact he had already been sentenced, on February 19, 1913, to two weeks' imprisonment on a charge of insulting the colonial government; (because of his appeal against the sentence, he had not been imprisoned immediately) [Douwes Dekker 1914:6, 43, 192]. The organizing of Cipto and Suwardi's Native Committee (*Comite Bumiputra*) had provided the authorities with the perfect pretext for intervention, but unfortunately for them Douwes Dekker had had no direct involvement with this organization whatsoever [Tsuchiya 1987:22]. As much as the colonial government hoped to expel Douwes Dekker and the small number of native intellectuals who supported him from local society, the opportunity provided by the case was complicated by this irritating detail.

The outlines of the Native Committee case have already been set out in chapter two (“The Prehistory of Taman Siswa”) of Tsuchiya's *Democracy and Leadership: The Rise of the Taman Siswa Movement in Indonesia* [1987:16–54]. Tsuchiya's work is particularly commendable for its astute analysis of Suwardi's pamphlet, *Als ik eens Nederlander was* (If I had been a Dutchman). However, precisely because its analysis focuses on this pamphlet, Tsuchiya's research leaves some problems unattended. Another curious aspect of his research is that the text

he relies on is not the original [Soewardi Soerjaningrat 1913]² but a later edition that was included in an edited volume translated into Indonesian, Javanese and English [Tsuchiya 1977:149]. As far as the main thrust of Tsuchiya's research was concerned, which was to clarify the significance of Suwardi's ideas and activities for the modern history of Indonesia, whether or not his text was the original edition was evidently of secondary importance.

And yet, it must be said, the issue was not entirely without significance. For one thing, the conditional phrase corresponding to "If I Had Been..." contained in the translation of the title in the Malay (Indonesian) edition is not "*Sekiranya saya*" (or "*Seandainya saya*") as Tsuchiya argues [1987:27], but "*Djika saja...*" (The reason why the title of the Indonesian translation on which Tsuchiya relied differed from the original is a mystery.) For another thing (as will be discussed later), the inconsistency between the Dutch and Indonesian versions of the Native Committee's full name, and the conflicting views of the facts behind the publication of Suwardi's pamphlet, have influenced interpretations of the deportation order served upon him and the others.

However, the advertisement for the Native Committee that the pamphlet contained provided useful clues for considering the way in which the above affair developed. This article, with Tsuchiya's research as its starting point, seeks to fill in a small gap in the history of Indonesia's nationalist movement by drawing a picture of the state of affairs in 1913. In Section 1 we will examine the events that took place from the formation of the Indische Partij up to the July 1913 Native Committee Incident. In Section 2, in the process of discussing the importance of Tsuchiya's work for the history of academic research on this period, we will identify two problems emerging from the background to the Incident. Following that, Section 3 will offer a description of the events underlying the tumultuous state of popular feeling at the time, while Section 4 takes up on the one hand the alarm felt by the authorities should the radical ideas of the Indische Partij be allowed to penetrate to local society, and on the other Cipto's and Suwardi's attempt to act as intermediaries for those ideas by creating their own media.

1. The Birth of the Indische Partij and the Native Committee Incident

1.1. The Indische Partij

The influence of Douwes Dekker on the Indische Partij, both ideologically and in

² The author was allowed to consult this work in the Library of the Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology (Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde) in Leiden.

practice, was unmistakable. Tsuchiya [1987:17–19] has described the events of Douwes Dekker's life prior to the party's formation succinctly, and Veur [2006] has added voluminous detail in his recent biography.³ While there is therefore almost nothing that needs to be added here, with regard to the chain of events that led from the Indische Partij's formation up to the Native Committee Incident, however, the present author would like to offer a few remarks regarding Douwes Dekker's reputation as a journalist. Adviser for Native Affairs G. A. J. Hazeu's report to the governor-general dated January 28, 1910 contains the following comments [Wal 1967:62]:

[In his series of newspaper articles,] Douwes Dekker not only praises to the skies the *Jong-Javanen-beweging* (Young Javanese Movement) and those with even the remotest connection to it, but also describes the government of the Netherlands East Indies as being “untrustworthy” and hostile to the efforts of modern Javanese.

As this report shows, Douwes Dekker's attacks on the colonial government and the irritation that his criticisms provoked in government circles were clear well before the formation of the Indische Partij. (The relationship between the two sides is well summed up in the title of [Veur 2006] “The Lion and the Gadfly.”)

The first activities in which we can detect the seeds of Douwes Dekker's decision to form the Indische Partij came on September 1, 1911, with the inauguration of his first regular publication, the fortnightly *Het Tijdschrift*. Though the paper attained a subscribed membership of some 400 people, Douwes Dekker was not satisfied, and in an attempt to acquire a broader readership base he next created the daily *De Expres*. Both publications were subsequently to become organs of the Indische Partij [Ham 1913:104].

The central points of Douwes Dekker's propaganda can be summed up as, first, “An Indies freed from Holland” (*Indië los van Holland*), and second, the con-

³ Douwes Dekker's life and works have come under careful scrutiny in a recent biography [Veur 2006]. This massive work (16 chapters in all), based on an assiduous reading of Douwes Dekker's extensive writings, painstakingly traces the development of its subject's thinking as he honed his critique of Dutch colonialism. While the highlights of the first half of the book are its analysis of the creation and dissolution of the Indische Partij (Chapter 6) and of Douwes Dekker's subsequent expulsion from the colony (Chapter 7), the analysis (quite naturally, given its subject matter) focuses primarily on Douwes Dekker's own activities and ideological development. Consequently, while the book paints a valuable picture from Douwes Dekker's point of view of the complex series of events taking place during those years, such topics as the Native Committee and Suwardi's pamphlet *Als ik eens Nederlander was*, as well as the overall historical background, are mentioned only to the extent necessary for its own purposes.

cept of Indies Citizenship (*Indische Burgerschap*). This second point amounted to the abolition of the existing legal distinction between Europeans, natives, and “foreign Asians,” and the creation of one single legal and political category, “Indiër,” for all residents of the Netherlands East Indies, regardless of racial or national distinctions. In combination, the two points formed the basis of the call for “An Indies for the Indiërs” (*Indië voor Indiërs*) that became the central plank of Douwes Dekker’s own propaganda and later of the Indische Partij.

The publication of a manifesto in the 18th issue of *Het Tijdschrift* on May 15, 1912 [Ham 1913:104] marked the beginning of Douwes Dekker’s campaign to form the Indische Partij. Though his attempt to incorporate the two existing Eurasian organizations, *Insulinde* and *Indische Bond*, ended in failure, a large proportion of the *Insulinde* membership did in fact join the Indische Partij as individuals. These events make it impossible to deny charges that the party was an organization centred on Eurasians. We should also note that Dutch was the language used throughout these moves. Finally, on September 6, 1912, the creation of the Indische Partij with an initial membership of 60 was announced in Bandung. The 200 or so people who attended the mass meeting on that day (who evidently included a number of women) comprised not only Eurasians but also a small number of indigenous people and some ethnic Chinese as well.

The basic law for implementing Dutch colonial control in the Indies was the so-called Government Regulation (*Regeeringsreglement*; “RR”), Article 111 of which (later to be challenged by the Native Committee) declared that all political activities were prohibited. Though the meeting was by its nature political, the organizers later publicly announced that they had convened it without bothering to request the authorities’ permission [Ham 1913:105–6]. There was of course no chance of an application to hold the meeting being accepted even had it been made, but the circumstances underline the provocative stance taken by the organizers right from the start.

(As will be described later, the explosive growth of the Sarekat Islam (Islamic Association) which took place precisely at this time must be seen as another important factor in the circumstances leading up to the three leaders’ subsequent deportation.)

Over the following months, with a subsequent meeting to formally proclaim the Indische Partij’s inauguration scheduled for December 25, Douwes Dekker and his followers embarked on a strenuous programme of propaganda activities. Between the 15th and 22nd of September, they took the first campaign to various places in Java, holding a series of conspicuous mass meetings and forming party branches wherever they passed. Returning to Bandung, Douwes Dekker was audacious enough to send a telegram to the Dutch Queen Wilhelmina on September 24, informing her of the great success of their propaganda campaign. The telegram ended ironically: “the returned delegates of the Indische Partij beseech Your

Majesty to use your powerful influence to ensure that the light of Dutch political thought is not extinguished as a result of seeking to maintain your country's self-interest while avoiding the requisite political decisions" [Ham 1913:108; Wal 1967:99].

As provocative as the telegram set out to be, it appears that the Queen did in fact read it, and even asked the minister for colonies for his opinion [Wal 1967:99 n. 3]. The minister's response was a highly vexed report to the governor-general of the East Indies complaining of its "extremely impertinent" nature [Wal 1967:99]. Not surprisingly, following the Native Committee Incident, opinions were voiced within the colonial government that the real author of the pamphlet *Als ik eens Nederlander was*, "on the basis of its language and general tone," was none other than Douwes Dekker himself [Wal 1967:309].

On December 25, with the participation of 5,000 party members from 25 local branches (two of them in Sumatra), the formal inauguration of the Indische Partij took place in Bandung. The meeting also approved the party's programme and elected a set of six officials [Douwes Dekker 1913:58–101] including Douwes Dekker as chairman and Cipto as vice-chairman. Cipto appears to have been the only native representative, since the others all possessed European names [Douwes Dekker 1913:78–85]. He had announced his accretion to the Indische Partij in November [Douwes Dekker 1914:90; Wal 1967:116], and had joined the editorial committee of *De Expres* immediately prior to the December 25 meeting, an event that was loudly welcomed by the Indische Partij [Ham 1913:112]. We may assume that Douwes Dekker played a hand in these developments.

While the author has no definitive information as to when Suwardi arrived in Bandung and became involved in the Indische Partij, it may be conjectured as having been at about the same time as Cipto. Suwardi later took the initiative in the founding of Sarekat Islam's Bandung branch, a result of his contacts with the Sarekat Islam leader in Surabaya, one Surati, another participant in the December 25 meeting [Douwes Dekker 1913:70; Wal 1967:178; Fukami 1979:35]. He too had begun his editorial duties for *De Expres* by at least the middle of January 1913 [Wal 1967:113–14, 196–97].

The Indische Partij continued its energetic propaganda activities into 1913. According to colonial regulations, however, all organizations whether economic (such as companies) or social, were required to have their statutes recognized by the colonial government. Once recognized, they would be issued with the status of "legal personality" (*rechtspersoonlijkheid*), without which they were unable to con-

⁴ The publisher of *De Expres* was not the Indische Partij itself but a company named Eerste Bandoengsche Publicatie Mij. When the party was formally established at the conference held at the end of 1912, it sought to take over the paper's publication from the company, only to find that commercial activities also required it to acquire "legal personality" [Douwes Dekker 1914:6].

duct activities legally.⁴ The Indische Partij accordingly applied on January 7 for the programme passed by the December 25 meeting to be approved, and on February 6 asked for the approval to be expedited. Following the colonial government's March 4 announcement of its refusal to recognize the party, a fresh application was made on the following day after a section of the programme had been amended, but on the 11th of March this too was rejected. After a meeting on the 13th between the governor-general and several party delegates including Douwes Dekker produced no results, the colonial government adamantly refusing to recognize a body that advocated independence for the Indies, the Indische Partij became effectively an illegal organization, and faced criminal prosecution if it continued its activities. On March 31, finally, the party's HQ was forced to announce its dissolution. At the same time, it called on all its members to regroup within the Insulinde, while continuing to maintain the principles they had agreed upon at the party's founding meeting [Douwes Dekker 1914:9–12, 37–42].

In this way the activities of the Indische Partij were tragically nipped in the bud. Douwes Dekker sailed from Batavia on April 19 with a brief to investigate the situation in the American-controlled Philippines, but on arrival in Hong Kong received a telegram from home informing him that the Dutch parliament was preparing to debate the action taken against the Indische Partij and ordering him to change course for Holland as soon as possible. Arriving there by the overland route on May 31, he immediately began a nationwide campaign of propaganda for the now-defunct party and the movement it had represented. The parliamentary debate having been postponed until a later session, however, on July 6 Douwes Dekker took ship again for Batavia and arrived there on August 1 [Douwes Dekker 1914:43, 193; Veur 2006:247–60]. Meanwhile, back in Java, even after the Indische Partij's dissolution and despite the absence of Douwes Dekker, *De Expres* continued to be published under the direction of Cipto and other former party members.

1.2. The Native Committee and the "Dangerous Writing" Incident

That July, while Douwes Dekker was still abroad, the Native Committee was formed, to be followed in quick succession by the so-called "dangerous writing" incident. The affair has been ably summarized by Tsuchiya, and we will here merely summarize the main features of Tsuchiya's account while making necessary corrections or adding detail.

The July 8, 1913, issue of *De Expres* announced the formation in Bandung of the "Native Committee for the Commemoration of One Hundred Years of Dutch Liberty" [Wal 1967:305]. While this English title is translated from the new orga-

nization's Dutch name, "Inlandsch Comite tot Herdenking van Neerlands Honderdjarige Vrijheid,"⁵ the Malay version of the organization's name was Komite Bumiputra guna merayakan pesta seratus tahunnya kerajaan Nederland, which translates rather differently, namely, "Native Committee to Commemorate One Hundred Years of the Dutch Monarchy" (emphasis added). To be sure, since the Dutch monarchy was established as a result of the country's gaining freedom from the rule of Napoleon, the 100th anniversary applied to both the establishment of the Dutch monarchy and the liberation of Holland from French control. On the other hand, since the offending pamphlet *Als ik eens Nederlander was*, at least in its original Dutch edition, pointed out strongly the irony of the Dutch celebrating independence in the Indies, a land that they had made into their colony, it was clear that, from a local point of view, celebrating the monarchy and celebrating liberation were far from being the same thing. Unfortunately, it is impossible to ascertain the reasons for this confusion.

The Native Committee itself comprised seven members including Cipto as chairman, Suwardi as secretary, and also Abdul Muis [Tsuchiya 1987:21]. Its two principal objectives, as proclaimed in a subsequent appeal (written in Malay), were first the abolition of Article 111 of the Government Regulation banning political activities, and second the establishment of a parliament of the Indies.⁶

On the 12th of July, four days after the inaugural meeting, the Native Committee issued its first circular, and on the 19th followed it with a second. In conjunction with the second circular, a pamphlet titled *Als ik eens Nederlander was*, the text that was to cause so much trouble, was also published, described as "Native Committee Pamphlet No. 1."⁷ The contents of the first circular included a report on the creation of the Native Committee, the names of the committee's members, and

⁵ In his report to the minister for the colonies on this incident, the governor-general frequently mistook the name of the committee, writing "tot" for "ter," "Nederlands" or "Nederland's" for "Neerlands," and so on [Wal 1967:305, 320]. Although such minor mistakes did not affect the meaning, they do suggest that the Dutch authorities had not examined the pamphlet carefully.

⁶ In Malay, "Parliament of the East Indies" was rendered *Parlement Hindia, ja'ni: Madjelis Oetoesan Ra'iat*, while the original Dutch edition of *Als ik eens Nederlander was* has *Indisch Parlement*. Official documents, however, generally used not "*parlement*" but "*volksvertegenwoordiging*."

⁷ Tsuchiya [1987:21] is clearly mistaken in calling this the Native Committee's second pamphlet. What he refers to as the first pamphlet (dated July 12) was in fact the first circular (see [Wal 1967:305]), while the second circular, issued on July 19, was not *Als ik eens Nederlander was* but a different publication altogether. It is unclear whether the publication date of *Als ik eens Nederlander was* was actually July 19. Douwes Dekker dates it to July 15, and says that the confiscation order was issued on July 19 [Douwes Dekker 1914:193]. The facts would suggest that publication was on or within 2–3 days of July 19. The present author has not been able to consult either of the two circulars.

an outline of its aims. The practical activities it proposed included sending a congratulatory telegram to the Dutch Queen on the occasion of the 100th anniversary the following November, and the attainment of the two objectives referred to in the preceding paragraph [Wal 1967:305]. Just a week later, the second circular announced that owing to unavoidable circumstances four of the seven members of the Native Committee had been obliged to resign, leaving just Cipto, Suwardi, and Abdul Muis in charge.⁸ It also contained an advertisement for Suwardi's pamphlet *Als ik eens Nederlander was*, confirming that it would be written, like the circulars, in both Dutch and Malay [Wal 1967:306]. It was on the inside back cover of the pamphlet that the above-mentioned appeal was carried.

A week later, on the 25th and 26th of July, the colonial authorities called the committee's members in for questioning and confiscated all copies of the pamphlet. Nevertheless, Cipto and Suwardi continued to express their ideas in the pages of *De Expres*, and the government, on the grounds that they were resorting to "dangerous writing," moved swiftly. On the 30th of July,⁹ in the name of the "maintenance of public order and calm," it made four arrests. The "dangerous writing" that had so offended the colonial authorities was an article published on July 28 titled, "One for All and All for One" (*Een voor allen en allen voor een*) [Tsuchiya 1987:21]. (The piece will be considered further in Section 4 below.) Three of the four people arrested were the remaining members of the committee, Cipto, Suwardi, and Abdul Muis, who had translated Suwardi's original Dutch text into Malay. The fourth man to be arrested, Wignyadisastira, was one of the four who had already resigned from the committee but, as chairman and chief editor of the daily *Kaum Muda* which had carried an advertisement for the pamphlet, he had presumably continued to attract official suspicion.¹⁰ Abdul Muis and Wignyadisastira were quickly released, but Cipto and Suwardi, as noted in introduction, were detained until August 18.

On August 1, in the midst of all this excitement, Douwes Dekker returned from Holland. He immediately sent a telegram of encouragement to Cipto in prison, and published an article in *De Expres* praising the two arrested men as heroes; his own

⁸ The Dutch side conjectured that "key figures" in the Native Committee must have been aware from the beginning of July (that is, from the time of the formation of the Native Committee) of the contents of the first pamphlet and that it would be likely to provoke intervention by the police [Wal 1967:306]. The withdrawal of the four, as Tsuchiya correctly points out [Tsuchiya 1987:47 n. 18], was most likely prompted by their desire to disassociate themselves from the pamphlet's radical contents. The "key figures" referred to by the Dutch were Cipto and Suwardi [Wal 1967:335–36 n. 2].

⁹ Some sources mistakenly give the date as July 31 [Wal 1967:335 n. 2], but the governor-general went out of his way to reaffirm that July 30 was in fact the correct date [Wal 1967:308].

¹⁰ The advertisement occupies the entire back cover of the pamphlet, followed by Wignyadisastira's name and credentials.

arrest followed soon after. Douwes Dekker [1914:6, 43, 192] himself has recorded, however, that his arrest and imprisonment from August 4 to 18 were not directly related to the Native Committee Incident but were the result of the sentence to two weeks' imprisonment passed against him in February having been confirmed by the Higher Appeals Court.

The authorities had first considered charging the three men under Article 26 of the Press Regulations (*Drukpersreglement*), which prescribed imprisonment for between one and twelve months and/or a fine of between ten and five hundred guilders [Douwes Dekker 1914:306]. In the light of the probable length of a trial, however, such a sentence was considered to be too lenient to have any effect [Wal 1967:307–8, 321, 331]. Consequently, the sentences of internal exile (more precisely, limitation of place of abode), followed by deportation passed against the three men derived neither from the Press Regulations nor from any other specific law, but from the “exorbitant right” invested in the governor-general by Article 47 of the Government Regulation. This extraordinary authority enabled him, in the name of public calm and order, to restrict the right of movement of individuals either by ordering them to reside in one specific place or else by forbidding them from residence in certain specified areas [Wal 1967:119 n. 1]. On September 6, as noted at the beginning of this article, the three men, accompanied by their families, left Batavia aboard a German ship bound for Holland.

Following their arrival, the three exiles, particularly Douwes Dekker, continued their propaganda activities. In the name of the Native Committee, that November another pamphlet was produced with the title “A Reverie of Indiers Concerning the Dutch Festivities in the Colony.” Copies of the pamphlet were sent to the Indies, only to be confiscated on arrival [Douwes Dekker 1914:194]. Such post-deportation activities are outside the scope of this paper, however, and will not be pursued further here.

2. Loopholes in Current Research

While the Indische Partij and the deportation of its three leaders are referred to by every researcher on the history of the Indonesian nationalist movement, the two events that provided the catalyst for their deportation, the formation of the Native Committee and the publication of the pamphlet *Als ik eens Nederlander was*, were virtually ignored until the appearance of Tsuchiya's work. Some researchers [e.g. Niel 1970:65] have given the mistaken impression that the deportation order was a result of their contravention of the Press Regulations.

Tsuchiya [1977:132] attributes the lack of research on the significance of the Native Committee Incident to two factors: not only was the scope of the Incident minimal and its immediate effects highly limited, it also took place at a time in

Indonesian history when *Budi Utomo* (“Beautiful Endeavour”) was being replaced by Sarekat Islam as the prime mover in nationalist politics; the significance of the Indische Partij on which Suwardi and the others had placed their hopes was thus overlooked. While accepting the relevance of each of these points, the present author would suggest that the neglect is also due to problems in the way that research on Indonesian nationalism has been conducted, particularly the influence of J. Th. Petrus Blumberger’s work, which overlooks the Native Committee altogether.

Petrus Blumberger’s work is the starting point for all research on the history of the Indonesian nationalist movement. His trilogy *De communistische beweging in Nederlandsch-Indië* (The Communist Movement in the Netherlands Indies), *De nationalistische beweging in Nederlandsch-Indië* (The Nationalist Movement in the Netherlands Indies), and *De Indo-Europeesche beweging in Nederlandsch-Indië* (The Indo-European Movement in the Netherlands Indies) [Petrus Blumberger 1928, 1931, 1939, respectively], together with his numerous entries in the eight-volume *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch Indië* (Encyclopedia of the Netherlands Indies; hereafter *ENI*) including “Budi Utomo,” “Sarekat Islam,” “Communism and the Communist Party in the Netherlands Indies,” “The Nationalist Movement (Indonesian-),” “The Youth Movement (Native-),” and “The Indo-European Movement.” The fact that the second book of the trilogy, *De nationalistische beweging in Nederlandsch-Indië*, is still being reprinted more than 50 years after its first publication [Petrus Blumberger 1987] is evidence of its continuing iconic status as the “standard work” on the subject.¹¹

Throughout Petrus Blumberger’s work, unfortunately, from the trilogy to the *Encyclopaedie* entries, the Indische Partij is considered within the framework of the Eurasian movement alone. Furthermore, the disciplinary action taken against its three leaders under the terms of the governor-general’s “exorbitant right” is blamed on their failure to cease what he calls their “inflammatory activities” even after the colonial authorities had refused to recognize the Indische Partij, leaving the government with “no choice but to take action.” However, since Petrus Blumberger evidently saw no need to refer either to the Native Committee, either in his *De nationalistische beweging in Nederlandsch-Indië* or in his entries for the *Encyclopaedie*, we are not told exactly what those “inflammatory propaganda activities” were. For example, his article on the “*Taman Siswa-Scholen*” (Taman Siswa-Schools) [*ENI* 8:1463–64]¹² refers to the career of their founder Suwardi, but describes the cir-

¹¹ For an assessment of Petrus Blumberger’s works together with a brief account of his career, see H. A. Poeze’s Introduction in [Petrus Blumberger 1987]. Though the titles of the *ENI* entries have been cited in English for convenience, they were of course written in Dutch.

¹² Whether this entry was actually written by Petrus Blumberger is unclear. H. A. Poeze says that it was not [Petrus Blumberger 1987:xxiv].

cumstances of his expulsion simply as a result of his “having fallen under the influence of the radical agitator for East Indies independence, Douwes Dekker. Due to his revolutionary activities he was sentenced to internal exile, but was amnestied and allowed to leave for Holland.” By locating the three leaders’ deportation to Holland in the context of the Indische Partij affair alone, he fails to pay sufficient heed to either the entirely separate Native Committee Incident or to Suwardi’s pamphlet *Als ik eens Nederlander was*, both of which he allows to pass without analysis.

On the other hand, S. L. Van der Wal’s documentary collection *De opkomst van de nationalistische beweging in Nederlandsch-Indië* (The Rise of the Nationalist Movement in the Netherlands-Indies) [Wal 1967], which reproduces documents from the archives of the former Ministry for the Colonies, demonstrates clearly the role played by Suwardi’s pamphlet in bringing about the deportation of the three men. And yet, even allowing for the discerning eye of Wal in choosing the documents to be included in the collection, the fact remains that this is a documentary collection, not an analytical work. The task of analysis fell to Tsuchiya’s outstanding work, which not only filled in many serious gaps in the historiography but also threw light on both the nature of Dutch control and Suwardi’s resistance activities. In particular, Tsuchiya succeeded in locating Suwardi’s activities within the Javanese cultural framework.

Returning to the topic of Petrus Blumberger, we have noted that his opus has acquired the status of the “standard work,” but in considering the real value of his work we have to bear in mind the fact that at the time of writing Blumberger was an official in the Dutch Ministry for the Colonies, and prior to that had been employed for a number of years in the government of the Netherlands East Indies. Reading his “standard works” consequently leaves the impression that they were intended mainly for those envisaging a career in the Dutch colonial service. That being the case, it will be useful for us to consider next the contemporary Dutch government’s official position.

The clearest exposition of that viewpoint is probably *Koloniaal Verslag* (Colonial Report), the annual report of the Ministry for the Colonies to the Dutch parliament on the state of affairs in the colonies over the previous year. Since the *Koloniaal Verslag* came in for rigorous scrutiny by members of parliament, particularly those of the opposition Social Democratic Labour Party (*Sociaal Democratische Arbeiders Partij*), and was published each year as an appendix to the Minutes of Parliamentary Proceedings, its contents were normally quite straightforward with no arbitrary embellishment, a perfect example of Tsuchiya’s characterization of Dutch colonial control as being the territory not of “statesmen” but of “technocrats” whose brief was to deal with matters in a way that demonstrates “*zakelijkheid*”: practical, businesslike, and lacking in all private feelings [Tsuchiya 1987:25–26, 49 n. 46]. Its report on the Indische Partij, taken from the 1914 edi-

tion, was typical; as might be expected, both the Native Committee and the pamphlet *Als ik eens Nederlander was* are conspicuous by their absence [KV 1914:4]:

Even after the Indische Partij was refused recognition Douwes Dekker continued his propaganda activities, leading the colonial government to conclude that he was a danger to public order. What is more, Douwes Dekker made approaches to indigenous people, particularly young men who had received some education, seeking to convey the impression to them that a struggle against the colonial government was in their own interests. In this way he succeeded in gaining as followers in his revolutionary activities two of those young men, Cipto Mangunkusumo and Suwardi Suryaningrat. The former became the vice-chairman of the Indische Partij; the latter also was a member. The activities of these three men, in the circumstances of the times, gave rise to fears that calm and order were exceedingly threatened, and it was deemed necessary to curtail those activities. Under the terms of Article 47 of the Government Regulation, their place of residence was ordered to be restricted to Kupang on the island of Timor (Douwes Decker), and the islands of Banda (Cipto), and Bangka (Suwardi), respectively. However, the three were given special pardons and allowed to leave the territory of the Netherlands Indies altogether, and they subsequently departed for Holland. (Underlining added by the present author)

From this report we learn nothing specific about the background to the deportation order carried out under the terms of the governor-general's "exorbitant right," and the impression given, in the absence of any mention of the Native Committee, is that it followed naturally from their having continued activities in the name of the banned Indische Partij. This approach, as we have seen, is also characteristic of Petrus Blumberger's "standard work," but two points, underlined in the above text by the present author, stand out: the open admission by the colonial authorities that what alarmed them more than anything else was Douwes Dekker's "approaches to indigenous people," and their statement that the "circumstances of the times" (*de tijdsomstandigheden*) were such as to warrant invocation of the governor-general's "exorbitant right." Let us take a closer look at the significance of these two points.

3. Tumult in Java — The Situation in 1913

The "circumstances of the times" referred to in the above-cited report undoubtedly referred to the public turmoil that was then rife in Java. To understand the nature of this turmoil, it seems best to examine it from two separate viewpoints: firstly, social disturbances stemming from primary causes—natural disruptions and disas-

ters, resulting sometimes in a scarcity of rice and consequent rise in the staple's price, sometimes in the spread of epidemic diseases; and secondly, the social discord accompanying the meteoric rise of Sarekat Islam. The latter was exacerbated by unrest among the ethnic Chinese population following the success of the 1911 Revolution in China. It should be noted that the following discussion focuses only on Java and Madura, and is not intended to include the so-called outer islands.

3.1. Social Disturbances Stemming from Primary Causes

3.1.1. The Convulsions of Nature

Natural disasters such as lava flows from volcano eruptions and abnormal weather conditions including floods in the rainy season, both creating major damage, were a regular occurrence during the period in question. Here we will examine other kinds of natural disruption, based on the reports found in the 1912, 1913, and 1914 editions of the *Koloniaal Verslag*.

In September 1911, in the Banten Residency, a number of villages (*desa*) saw mysterious fires in which numerous houses were destroyed. Investigations revealed that the cause had been spontaneous combustion of natural gas. It appears that a similar phenomenon had already taken place some twenty years before. On the 1st of November, Mt. Sumeru in eastern Java had erupted, causing widespread damage to crops through falls of volcanic ash. In the same month landslides in Sudimoro Village of the Kedu Residency left seventeen dead, and in several parts of Cianjur Regency of the Preanger Residency similar landslides caused damage to the local railway line [KV 1912:6-7].

In January 1912 there was a severe earthquake in the Sukanegara Controllor-District (*Controleur-Afdeeling*), also in the Preanger Residency. For several months of the year Mt. Sumeru continued to be active, and volcanic activity did not subside until November. From September to October, in and around the city of Majalenka in the Preanger Residency, seismic shocks were repeatedly felt, accompanied by a rumbling sound from beneath the earth, presumably caused by shifting of the tectonic plates, causing a subsidence of several centimetres [KV 1913: 8].

1913 saw eruptions by the three volcanoes of Mt. Merapi in Central Java, Mt. Sumeru again, and Mt. Raung in Eastern Java, causing several aftershocks in the affected areas. From May to June Mt. Raung rained sand and ash down on surrounding districts. When the water temperature of Lake Telagabodas in the Preanger Residency showed an abnormal rise, investigations found that the cause was the birth of a natural geyser beneath the lake. Mild earthquakes as well as landslides were recorded in various places throughout the year. At one point, residents of Pagasari Village in the Pekalongan Residency were forced to evacuate as a result

of subsidence and landslides [KV 1914:10].

3.1.2. Rice Harvest Failures and Consequent Price Rises

In addition to these natural disasters, abnormal weather patterns including drought—more precisely, the failure of rain to fall even in the rainy season—were still more important because of their adverse effect on the annual rice harvest. Java had traditionally produced enough rice to be able to export its surplus, but a population explosion during the 19th century saw the island's transformation by the 1880s to the status of a net importer of rice. After that import volumes grew steadily, from an annual average in around 1900 of some 120,000 tons to 260,000 tons in 1910 and to as much as 320,000 tons in 1920 [Nagata 1958:80]. Both production and import volumes tended to fluctuate year by year: while the annual import volume from 1905 to 1908 was between 120,000 and 180,000 tons, it exceeded 200,000 tons in 1909, and rose to as much as 490,000 tons in 1910 [Creutzberg 1974:177]. Since the rice yield for 1910 was some 2,540,000 tons [Nagata 1958:80], this would mean that between 7 percent and 19 percent—say, an average of 10percent—of the rice being consumed in Java was imported.

During the years 1911 and 1912, the entire Asian region saw poor harvests. In Java's case those were not particularly bad years [KV 1912:6, 1913:6], but its overdependence on imported rice meant that shortages leading to price rises (particularly of imported rice) were inevitable. The colonial government was forced to step in to ban rice exports and to buy up all the available rice in order to maintain supplies. Learning from this experience, it would subsequently pay special heed to ensuring the smooth circulation of rice within the colony [Creutzberg 1974:xxxix–xxxvi].

Regional variations had always been the norm for rice production in Java, as were year-on-year variations in yield. During the crisis years of 1911–12, however, failed harvests compounded this pattern. In 1911, for example, while the Pasuruan Residency enjoyed a good yield, in many regencies of the Banten, Batavia, Cirebon, Semarang, Surabaya, Kedu, and Kediri Residencies unseasonable weather patterns and floods, together with plagues of insects, rats, and so on caused the harvests to fail. Many parts of the Tangerang, Meester-Cornelis, and Krawang Regencies of the Batavia Residency suffered from a water shortage as a result of the unusually dry weather during February–March 1911, which should have been the height of the rainy season. Hardest hit were the Krawang Regency and the Mauk District of the Tangerang Regency where the lack of rain had left the ground too hard to till and consequently ruined the dry-season harvest too [KV 1912:6].

1912 saw similar fluctuations. While the Preanger and Rembang Residencies in general enjoyed good harvests, parts of Rembang as well as of Banten, Cirebon,

Pekalongan, Semarang, Surabaya, Banyumas, Kedu, Surakarta, and Kediri Residencies saw their harvests fail, sometimes because of floods or droughts, sometimes because of infestation by pests. Rice-fields in the Batavia and Banyumas Residencies as well as in Kangean Island in the Madura Residency were frequently abandoned sometimes because of floods or landslides, sometimes from lack of water [KV 1913:6].

3.1.3. The Spread of Epidemic Diseases

The half-decade or so after 1910 saw the rampant spread of epidemic diseases like bubonic plague, cholera, malaria, and smallpox throughout the archipelago. To illustrate the severity of the crisis, we will focus on the reports contained in the *Koloniaal Verslag* covering the years 1911, 1912, and 1913 (References are to [KV 1912:5; KV 1913:6; KV 1914:7–8]). Beginning with an overview of the entire period, we learn that the year 1911, while dismal in terms of public health, was nevertheless better than the previous year. 1912, though an improvement on 1911, remained serious, while 1913 saw even further deterioration: along with 1910, 1913 counted among the worst years for public health in the colony. In this section we will take up the most rampant epidemic diseases one by one.

a. Cholera

The cities of Batavia and Semarang suffered the worst cholera outbreaks during the period in question. While the disease had temporarily abated in 1910, the following year saw it return with a vengeance: in April 1911, Batavia and the Tanjungpriok district that adjoined it to the east were declared to be cholera-infested, as was Semarang City the following May. Not until the end of the year were they pronounced free of the disease. Cholera broke out again in 1912 throughout both Java and Madura, and the infestation warning was revived in Batavia City and Tanjungpriok district from March to December, followed by Semarang City from September to January 1913. Though not to the extent of preceding years, 1913 also witnessed outbreaks throughout the region: Batavia Residency was affected almost continuously, while February saw the infestation warning revived yet again in Batavia City and Tanjungpriok district. April and August were the worst months for those two areas, but it was not until December that the warning was finally lifted. Semarang suffered an especially virulent outbreak, and an infestation warning was issued for the city in December (it was lifted later in the same month).

b. Bubonic Plague

As for bubonic plague, the worst-hit area was the Pasuruan Residency, and it was not until April 1911 that the disease, which had been raging since the previous year,

was finally confined to the Malang Regency. As noted earlier, Cipto, a doctor, was working hard to treat victims in Malang from 1911 until his move to Bandung in 1912. It had also been raging in the cities of Surabaya and Kediri since the previous year, while there were fresh outbreaks in both Madiun City and Tulungagung City (Kediri Residency) in 1912. Well into 1912 the plague showed no signs of abating in the Malang Regency, while outbreaks were also noted further to the west in the cities of Madiun and Kediri and in the Pare region (Kediri Residency); October and November of that year saw the disease spread even further west to the Ngawi Regency of the Madiun Residency. Surabaya City was declared a plague-infested area in November, and while the warning was temporarily lifted in December it was renewed later in the month. 47 victims of the disease were recorded.

The new year of 1913 showed no let-up for the Malang Regency, where the number of victims soared from 1,503 in 1912 to no less than 6,918; similar increases were recorded for the Madiun, Kediri and Surabaya Residencies. The Madiun Residency saw the number of victims hover between 30 and 40 each week; while Madiun City was the worst-affected, Ngawi and Magetan Regencies also saw scattered outbreaks. In the Kediri Residency, which recorded 3,679 victims of the plague, Kediri Regency was the worst affected, while the disease also raged through Berbek and Tulungagung Regencies. The city of Surabaya, which as noted above had buried 47 plague victims in 1912, saw the number increase to 353 in 1913, five of whom were Europeans, and the infestation warning issued the previous year remained firmly in place. Districts surrounding the city were also affected, though to a lesser extent. Not until February 1914 did the governor-general take it upon himself to tour the plague-affected districts and issue orders for stronger measures to be taken to combat the disease.

c. Malaria

Following on from the previous year, in 1911 malaria raged in Batavia Regency, in Surabaya City, and along the entire coastal region from Sidoarjo Regency in the Surabaya Residency to Bangil Regency in the Pasuruan Residency. The same year saw major outbreaks in the Kayen District of Pati Regency and the Undaan District of Kudus Regency in the Semarang Residency. The situation in 1912 was similar, particularly along the coast: not only did both Surabaya City and Sidoarjo Regency continue to be affected, but the affected area spread into the Pasuruan Residency. In the following year almost everywhere in the islands of Java and Madura was hit by malaria, particularly coastal areas. While not as seriously affected as in the previous year, coastal parts of Sidoarjo Regency saw the number of malaria patients rise to 34,924, 3,364 of whom eventually died. The situation in the Banyumas Residency was even more serious, especially in the Cilacap Regency, where 8,428 out of 45,856 malaria victims succumbed to the disease. The early part of the year

also saw a major outbreak in the city of Indramayu in the Cirebon Residency.

d. Smallpox

Unlike the preceding year, which had seen only limited outbreaks, 1912 brought a major smallpox epidemic to many parts of the colony. Semarang City was one of the worst hit, with a smallpox infestation warning issued in November and not lifted until March 1913, while Jember Regency in the Besuki Residency was also widely affected. Epidemics were also reported from several villages in the Meester-Cornelis and Batavia Regencies of the Batavia Residency, from Surabaya City (declared a smallpox-infested area in May 1912), from Pamekasan City in the Madura Residency, from several villages in the Bangil Regency of the Pasuruan Residency, from the Purbalingga District, and from Madiun and Ponorogo Regencies in the Madiun Residency and Tulungagung Regency in the Kediri Residency. In 1913, victims were recorded in every province of the colony, the worst affected being Purwakarta City in the Batavia Residency, a district of the Pekalongan Residency, Semarang Regency in the Semarang Residency (particularly Semarang City), and the regencies of Grobogan and Kudus in the same residency, Malang Regency in the Pasuruan Residency, Jember, Bondowoso, and Panarukan Districts in the Besuki Residency, and Ponorogo and Pacitan Regencies of the Madiun Residency. Not until the end of that year of 1913 did the outbreaks begin to die down.

While not on the same scale as these four major diseases, high death-rates from other infectious diseases such as dysentery and typhus, which caused diarrhea leading to death from dehydration, were recorded throughout the period, especially in 1913.

The preceding argument has examined three factors that underlay the social tumult affecting Java during these years: natural disasters, a shortage of rice leading to price rises, and the prevalence of epidemic diseases. The failure of the rice crop due to abnormal weather conditions and natural disasters such as floods and landslides is clearly recorded in the pages of the *Koloniaal Verslag*. While the cumulative effect of repeated natural disasters on the state of mind of the people affected can be readily imagined, there is no concrete evidence to back up such speculation. To be sure, the drop in the food supply never became serious enough to cause widespread famine, but the deaths of so many people due to cholera, plague, malaria and smallpox can hardly have been unconnected to the general state of malnourishment among the poor of Java, which had been made even more serious by the spiraling price of rice following the bad harvests. It remains to future research to draw a more precise picture of Java in those years.

3.2. Disturbances Arising from Social Factors

3.2.1. Popular Upheavals Involving Ethnic Chinese

The success of the 1911 revolution in China and the inauguration of the Republic of China in the following year led to an upsurge of nationalistic feeling among Chinese people living in the Dutch East Indies including those ethnic Chinese who had already been apparently assimilated into the colony's population. The stand-off in 1912 between Chinese residents and the colonial authorities over whether or not to allow China's national flag to be raised and firecrackers to be let off during the Chinese New Year period led to riots in Batavia, where police and troops put down the disturbance with great severity, and also in Surabaya. Disturbances in Semarang on April 21 also originated in protests by ethnic Chinese people, and riots in Tuban on May 9 were suppressed by troops dispatched from Surabaya [KV 1912:3]. Although the *Koloniaal Verslag* lists only these four cases for the first half of 1912, evidence that similar cases of unrest among ethnic Chinese erupted elsewhere too (such as in Cianjur in April–May) can be found in the “Press Overview” (*Persoverzicht*) column carried in each issue of the newly-established monthly *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*. Since a full account of the details of these disturbances lies beyond the scope of the present article, we propose to focus on the accounts carried in the *Koloniaal Verslag*, pausing merely to note that its reports covered only the most serious of the disturbances and ignored many others. One point that needs to be made, however, is that the decision of many Chinese shopkeepers to roll down their shutters when a riot began tended to inflame the situation still further by creating suspicions among local people that it was they who were responsible for hiking up the price of rice.

As an illustration of the disturbances involving ethnic Chinese (particularly the relatively new arrivals) following the Tuban Incident, the issue of *Koloniaal Verslag* covering the year 1912 lists stand-offs with both people of Arab origin and indigenous people, and with indigenous people alone, in Bangil (September 4, October 24–25, respectively), in Cirebon (October 26 and the days following), in Surabaya (October 28–30), and in Semarang (March 27, 1913) [KV 1913:3]. The following year's edition, while continuing to list stand-offs and disturbances in various places, identifies them as conflicts between ethnic Chinese and “members of Sarekat Islam who did not correctly understand the organization's principles.” It adds that Sarekat Islam's attacks were directed not only at ethnic Chinese but also at indigenous people who had not joined the group, as well as at administrative offices and the police. Some of the fiercest of these incidents took place in Tangerang and Meester-Cornelis Regencies in the Batavia Residency, the Indramayu and Cirebon Regencies in the Cirebon Residency, the Tuban Regency of the Rembang Residency, and Sapudi Island in the Sumenep Regency of Madura Residency [KV 1914:3]. The next

edition, reporting on the situation in 1914, noted that conflicts between ethnic Chinese and indigenous people had more or less subsided, but that in their place the activities of Sarekat Islam members, while not to the extent of 1913, were causing widespread disturbances. Most notable were those recorded in the Meester-Cornelis and Buitenzorg Regencies in the Batavia Residency, and in the Bondowoso and Jember Regencies of the Besuki Residency [KV 1915:3–4].

The preceding account illustrates how the high tide of public disturbances that affected the island of Java (though by no means limited to Java) between 1912 and 1914 reached its peak in 1913, and how the centre of the disturbances shifted from ethnic Chinese to members of Sarekat Islam.

The next example is from the *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*'s November 1913 "Press Overview" column, which lists clashes and other disturbances for the month covering July–August 1913. Apart from a series of clashes in Batavia between Chinese and indigenous people including a riot in an amusement park and an attack on the police by forty Sarekat Islam members, similar disturbances (including some between ethnic Chinese and Sarekat Islam members as well as with non-Sarekat Islam Muslims) occurred at Pamanukan in the Krawang Regency, twice in Cirebon, and also in Temanggung, Lasem, Situbondo, and Banyuwangi. Clashes between Sarekat Islam members and non-members were recorded in Meester-Cornelis, Kendal and Pasuruan, while mass demonstrations by Sarekat Islam members to demand that local officials either release arrested members or else hand over convicted criminals took place at Tangerang and Situbondo. We also find examples of boycott movements, while in the vicinity of Batavia riots broke out on privately-owned estates (*particuliere landerijen*).

In addition to these specific incidents, the magazine reported rumours that on the 21st day of Ramadan (corresponding to the beginning of September) 1913, local people would seize the national treasury, local administrative offices, and the armoury before beginning a general massacre of Europeans: in Malang and other places, troops were obliged to make a demonstration of strength, and special measures were taken to protect railways and telegraph offices [KT 1913:1488, 1491]. It was also at about this time that the press began to report stories that the anger of the people of Java, originally directed against ethnic Chinese, was now coming to pinpoint Europeans and government functionaries as well as their local chiefs [KT 1913:1491].

3.2.2. *The Explosive Growth of Sarekat Islam*

When it was conceived in Surakarta in November 1911, Sarekat Islam was no more than a group with a vague mission to advance indigenous people's social, economic, and religious interests. By the second half of 1912, however, against a back-

ground of increasing communal conflict between ethnic Chinese and both indigenous and Arab people, the organization had begun to take on a new identity as a body that would stand up for indigenous interests against outsiders, and its membership grew accordingly. Following a ban on its activities issued in the Surakarta Residency in August 1912, power in the organization gradually shifted to Surabaya branch and its leader Cokroaminoto, and in a largely spontaneous process an attempt was made to transform what had been basically just a gathering of individual households into a modern organization. (As noted already, this was also the period when the Indische Partij was being launched.) When Sarekat Islam, in November 1912, presented its statutes to the colonial government in a bid to win legal recognition (the so-called “legal personality”), the authorities balked, pointing out that the organization’s leadership did not have sufficient control over the membership.

There was no small degree of truth in this observation. With both the overall membership of Sarekat Islam and the number of local branches growing at a furious rate, there was a double-layered problem of control: not only was the central leadership unable to keep the local organizations in check, but the local leadership was also finding it difficult to exercise any sway over their own members. The following chart shows how the membership of Sarekat Islam exploded from 1912 to 1914 [Fukami 1976–77, 2:164–65]. While the individual figures may leave room for argument, there is no questioning the fact that membership was expanding at an astonishing rate, a development that was causing headaches for more than one set of local law enforcement authorities:

Date	Membership
April 1912	4,500
June 1912	40,000
July–August 1912	66,000
August 1912	80,000
November 1912	93,000
December 25, 1912	90,000
January 26, 1913	90,000
February 1913	90,000
April 1913	150,000
July 10, 1913	300,000
April 18, 1914	366,913

During early- to mid-1913, Cokroaminoto and the leadership of Sarekat Islam convened a series of meetings in Surabaya (January 25–26) and Surakarta (March 23–24, July 10), bringing local delegates together in an attempt to regularize the organization’s structure. This was also its most remarkable growth period, the num-

ber of branches represented at each of the above meetings growing from 13 in January 1913 to 42 in March and to 74 in July; a corresponding growth could also be observed outside Java. Meanwhile, the governor-general conducted a series of audiences, first with top leaders of the Indische Partij on March 13th, then with their counterparts in Sarekat Islam on the 29th, in which the two sides exchanged ideas and the governor-general indicated that he was not necessarily opposed to the official recognition of Sarekat Islam. On June 30, following further approaches to the central leadership of Sarekat Islam by the Adviser for Native Affairs D. A. Rinkes, a curious compromise was announced by which, while Sarekat Islam would not be recognized as a national body, its local organizations at the regency level (there were some eighty regencies in Java) would be individually recognized, and would be permitted to federate under the name of “Centraal Sarekat Islam.” This policy was proposed and accepted at the July 10 meeting of Sarekat Islam mentioned above, and, in line with a set of model statutes laid out by the central leadership, it was decided that the local organizations would make a fresh application for recognition [Fukami 1976–77, 1:132–39].

Contacts between Sarekat Islam’s central leadership and the authorities to have the model statutes recognized commenced in August, and on November 22 they were at long last accepted [Fukami 1978:74]. Accordingly, from February 1914 onwards the local branches of Sarekat Islam one by one came to acquire the status of “legal personality”; ironically, though, it was precisely in the latter half of that year that Sarekat Islam entered a state of rapid organizational decline. By 1915, Adviser for Native Affairs Rinkes was accurately characterizing the history of Sarekat Islam as a process of “agitation, confrontation, discontent in every form, financial outflow, legalization, followed by decline” [Fukami 1983:72–73].

In September 1912 the Indische Partij had been launched, late the following March it was disbanded, and in September of 1913 its three leaders had been deported from the colony. That one year also corresponded to the period when the explosive energies of the people brought together under the auspices of Sarekat Islam proved to be too much for either the organization’s central leadership or the colonial authorities to control. The Native Committee Incident took place precisely at the time when it seemed that a solution had been found to the problem of Sarekat Islam’s demand for “legal personality” status.

4. Hindia Mulia (*De Expres Melayu*)

In this section we propose to revisit a point made in Chapter 2 of this article (see pages 98–99 above) concerning the *Koloniaal Verslag*’s report on the reasons for the arrest of the three Indische Partij leaders in 1913, particularly the alarm felt by the colonial authorities at Douwes Dekker’s contacts with indigenous people which

led to the decision to deport the three men. The importance of this report has been stressed by Tsuchiya, and in this section we will examine it in more detail.

On July 31, 1913, a meeting of the Council of the Indies, the governor-general's supreme advisory body comprising the governor-general himself and four others, resolved to implement Article 47 of the Government Regulations (the decision was formally approved on August 18). The governor-general expressed his opinion that "the principal difference between the current events and those of six months ago [when the *Indische Partij* was formed] is that, whereas activities at that time were limited to newspapers read by Europeans, now they are also being published in Malay" [Wal 1967:308; Tsuchiya 1987:25].

Suwardi too, on ship bound for Holland, reflected: "When the legal authorities said I would not have been punished or exiled if only my articles had not been translated into Malay, it can only have meant that it would not be permitted for the people to know or be told about (the anomaly of the liberation centenary)" [Tsuchiya 1987:23].

As has already been pointed out, the colonial authorities had long been awaiting the appropriate timing to remove the "dangerous agitator" Douwes Dekker from the scene for his crimes in spreading the "dangerous ideology" of independence. As Tsuchiya [1987:24] has noted, Suwardi and Cipto were preparing to play the part of "intermediaries" in spreading these "dangerous ideas" among the indigenous people, and therefore, in the eyes of the government, were equally guilty of "crimes of conviction." Even more alarming, it was with local society as represented by Sarekat Islam that the pair were preparing to mediate, and their medium of communication would be Malay.

To say that the Native Committee had direct links to the Bandung chapter of Sarekat Islam would be an understatement; in reality, the Native Committee actually was the Bandung leadership. This was the direct reason for the authorities' fears concerning the influence of the Native Committee on Sarekat Islam as a whole [Tsuchiya 1987:23]. Suwardi himself had played a central role in the establishment of the Bandung chapter [Wal 1967:178], becoming its director, with Abdul Muis as his deputy and Wignyadisastira as secretary [Wal 1967:196–97; Fukami 1979:35].

Immediately following the arrest of the four Native Committee leaders on July 30, 1913, the authorities began an investigation into the extent to which the organization's publications had influenced Sarekat Islam. Such was the sense of crisis inspired in the government by Sarekat Islam that the government found it impossible to relax until it concluded that, at least as far as the central leadership of the organization was concerned, there was no perceivable effect [Tsuchiya 1987:23]. Indeed, when it moved to arrest the four in Bandung it had ordered "widespread preventive measures by the army" (though in fact the arrests provoked no disturbances whatsoever) [Wal 1967:335–36 n. 2]. Even prior to this, on April 16 of that year, the governor-general had ordered the colonial army headquarters to conduct

an investigation into the extent of Sarekat Islam's influence among the troops. The report of the investigation was released precisely at the time of the Native Committee arrests—on August 18—and its conclusions that, first, no more than twelve soldiers, all from Java, had joined Sarekat Islam, and second, for the time being there was no need for concern about the influence of Sarekat Islam among the troops [Wal 1967:314–15] must have provoked a general sigh of relief in government circles.

If, however, Tsuchiya is right in claiming that there was no perceivable influence of the Native Committee upon Sarekat Islam as a whole, even if a case could be made for Douwes Dekker's arrest there would appear to be no reason to order both Suwardi and Cipto to be deported as well. Accordingly, rather than Sarekat Islam itself it would seem to be their use of Malay, together with the media by which they were preparing to transmit their message that require attention. In this respect it is noteworthy that the governor-general was paying far more attention than he had six months previously to the fact that Douwes Dekker's ideas were being published in Malay: as indicated earlier, the Native Committee had published its first and second circulars as well as its first pamphlet *Als ik eens Nederlander was* in both Dutch and Malay editions.

Adviser for Native Affairs Rinkes pointed out that, while *Als ik eens Nederlander was* had had “virtually no impact on indigenous people,” Suwardi's editorial in the July 28 edition of *De Expres*, “One for All and All for One,” was likely to appeal far more strongly to the hearts of Javanese people because of two Javanese phrases it contained [Wal 1967:307; Tsuchiya 1987:24]. The phrases in question were “*Rawe rawe rantas, malang malang putung*” and “*Kalimasada*.”¹³ Concerning the first of the two phrases, Rinkes explained that its meaning of “all obstacles can be torn down, there is nothing that can hold us back” made it a deeply profound and suggestive remark, calculated to have maximum effect on readers. What Rinkes omitted to point out, however, was that the very same phrase had appeared in a single line of Javanese script at the top right-hand side of the first page of the Malay edition of *Als ik eens Nederlander was*.¹⁴ This phrase alone, therefore, would not be sufficient to support the claim that “One for All and All for One” would have the greater impact.

The odd thing is that, while the pamphlet *Als ik eens Nederlander was* was deemed to pose little direct danger and the editorial “One for All and All for One” held to be the more incendiary, the newspaper which carried the editorial was the Dutch-language *De Expres*, in which the governor-general found little cause for alarm. All of this leads us to the conclusion that the decisive factor for the government must have been the Native Committee's (or, more accurately, Suwardi and

¹³ For the meaning of the two phrases, see [Wal 1967:307; Tsuchiya 1987:49 n. 42].

¹⁴ I am grateful to Ms. Fukushima Hiroe for her translation of this Javanese script.

Cipto's) plan to inaugurate the Malay-language newspaper *Hindia Mulia* (*De Expres Melayu*). In his August 25 report to the minister for the colonies, the governor-general explained in detail the circumstances leading up to the implementation of his "exorbitant right" invested in Article 47 of the Government Regulation. The following section of the report is significant [Wal 1967:320–21].

I believe that this (Native) Committee is intended for no other purpose than to attempt to set up a particular type of organization, namely, an organization which, using the methods of *De Expres*, is designed to propagate the principles of the Indische Partij among the native middle class, using a language that people anywhere in the East Indies can readily understand. That propaganda will be unleashed in the not-too-distant future, in the Malay-language edition of *De Expres*, publication of which has already been announced as due to commence in August.

In short, the issue was the Malay edition of *De Expres*, the *Hindia Mulia*. As has already been explained, the Dutch-language version of the paper had been launched in March 1912 by Douwes Dekker, and became the organ of the Indische Partij following the party's inauguration. The need for a Malay edition had been raised as early as the party conference held at the end of 1912 when, toward the end of the conference, the Surakarta delegate Raden Mas Soleiman requested that the Dutch-speaking delegates also consider all those tens of thousands of people who, while they could not read Dutch, nevertheless wholeheartedly supported the aims of the Indische Partij. He then queried whether there could not be also a Malay edition of *De Expres*, adding that it would surely be read at least as enthusiastically if not more so than the Dutch edition. Douwes Dekker's response as chairman was that such a project had already been on the drawing board for some time, that he hoped it could be realized in the near future, but that there were certain technical difficulties that had to be resolved first [Douwes Dekker 1913: 98–99].¹⁵

Within a half-year or so, it would seem, those problems had been solved. Turning the cover of the pamphlet *Als ik eens Nederlander was*, published in July 1913, one could have found on the very first page a full-page notice advertising a new Malay-language newspaper and calling for subscribers. The advertisement proclaimed that the *Hindia Mulia* (*De Expres Melayu*), edited by Cipto Mangunkusumo and Suwardi Suryaningrat and with a select team of reporters, would commence publication in mid-August. The cost of a subscription would be 0.75 guilders per month or 2.25 guilders per quarter, and readers were urged to save money by placing an advance order. (The advertisement was, inexplicably, written in Dutch rather

¹⁵ What exactly those problems were is not made clear, but one of them may have been the difficulty of writing articles in Malay.

than in Malay.) Following on from the two circulars and the pamphlet *Als ik eens Nederlander was*, both of which had appeared with Malay translations, at long last a clear timetable had been set for a Malay edition of *De Expres*. Because of the potential of such a paper to bridge the gap with indigenous people, from the point of view of the colonial authorities there could be no prospect more alarming.

Conclusions

At the time of the Indische Partij's activities, particularly around the time of the Native Committee's "dangerous writing" incident, Java was in a state of popular ferment. Amidst it all, the explosive energies of the people who had gathered under the auspices of Sarekat Islam could be said to have posed the greatest threat to the status quo. The deportation of the three Indische Partij leaders, a result of the "circumstances of the time," became inevitable when Cipto and Suwardi, far from discontinuing their "dangerous writing," announced their intention to launch the *Hindia Mulia*, clearly labelled as a Malay version of *De Expres*. The governor-general's late-July ~ early-August 1913 decision to take the radical step of exercising his "exorbitant right" in banning the three men was a result not so much of the radical ideas expressed in *Als ik eens Nederlander was* and "One for All and All for One," but rather of his becoming aware of the two men's intention to publish *Hindia Mulia*. The revolutionary ideas of the Indische Partij and of Douwes Dekker were about to be conveyed, in Malay, by and for the indigenous people themselves. Far from being "blinded" by the ringleader Douwes Dekker, Cipto and Suwardi were indeed, as the colonial authorities had sought to ascertain, guilty of "crimes of conviction."

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