

## Part II The Development of Mass Media and Transformation of Colonial Society

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The development of transportation, the world economy and mass media at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century created a new type of popular perception about the changing face of Indonesian society. In the wake of the volcanic explosions which rocked central Java between 1911 and 1913, subsequent poor rice harvests and the rampage of such socially transmitted diseases as cholera, bubonic plague, malaria and small pox, the Javanese masses were plunged into large scale, widespread social unrest, amplified and accelerated by the development of communication systems. It was also a time when the development of print capitalism gave rise to a new consciousness of nationalism as an alternative to colonial rule. Sarekat Islam (the Islamic Association), which was established in late 1911 to combat the growing influence of Chinese residents in Java, gained many followers among Indonesian Muslims between 1912 and 14, developing into the region's first nationalist political party.

It was also during that time that the Indische Partij (Indies Party) (1912–13) was founded to advocate the creation of an independent state by “*Indiërs*,” who were to be identified by their political goals, not racial, ethnic or national origin. Fukami reexamines Dutch perceptions about an article written by Suwardi Suryaningrat, one of the main leaders of the Indische Partij, entitled *Als ik eens Nederlander was* (If I had been a Dutchman). The research done to date on this article (by, for example, the late Tsuchiya Kenji) has shown that Suwardi was attacking the Dutch colonial authorities on the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of the liberation of the Netherlands from Napoleonic rule, by pointing to a Dutch double standard towards themselves and the people of Indonesia, and that the party fighting against that double standard had been dissolved by the colonial authorities. By describing the social circumstances surrounding the Indische Partij movement, Fukami discovers that the plan to publish a Malay version of the Indische Partij's organ was the decisive factor that induced the colonial government to dissolve the Party and banish its main leaders from the colonies.

All the mass media at the time, from newspapers to entertainment, often, and at times ardently, discussed relationships between men and women in the new era. Up until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, foreign visitors to the Dutch East Indies were accustomed to take local women as concubines, since most European and Chinese men came to Indonesia without spouses. However, the rise of antiprostitution and sexual morality improvement movements in Europe at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century

put pressure on the Dutch colonial authorities to reverse their lenient policies concerning concubinage and the direct governmental management of brothels. Moreover, Indonesian nationalist movements also adopted similar attitudes about sexual morality improvement into their strategies for dealing with Dutch colonialism. The Sarekat Islam movement strongly condemned concubinage of local women to European and Chinese men, and Indonesian socialists severely criticized mixed marriage and cohabitation between local women and Europeans as capitalist exploitation. Nevertheless, given the increasing intensity of the Indonesian urban experience, which cut across ethnic and religious boundaries, the frequency of mixed marriages and cohabitation between Indonesian women and European men actually increased up until the late 1920s. Here, Hirosue argues that within such a milieu, the urban mass media helped to create far more diversified images among the masses about relations between men and women.