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TAN MALAKA: A POLITICAL PERSONALITY'S  
STRUCTURE OF EXPERIENCE

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"die Autobiographie von allen Quellen die  
gefährlichste ist...Sie ist entweder Selbst-  
verteidigung oder sie ist im Wesen unwichtig."

Jan Romein

"Die Selbstbiographie im engeren Sinn hat  
es vor allen mit der inneren Entwicklung...  
zu tun; sie ist nicht nur Rückschau auf das  
Durchlebte, sondern zugleich und vorwiegend  
Innenschau."

Friedrich von Bezold

Introduction\*

The common colonial view of modern Indonesian political thought as an ideological stream not related to the archipelago's cultural traditions, but rather as an element implanted by Western influence, would find only limited support today. The continuity between "traditional" and "modern"--the importance of "tradition" as a factor in "modern" political development--is now generally recognized. Yet there is a permanent danger in the practice of Indonesian studies--which are inevitably concerned with so many "feudal" traits in the village sphere and with so much "Western" influence among the political elite--that disciplines like political science and anthropology, if separated from one another, may repeatedly create a false image of culture as "traditional" and of politics as "modern."<sup>1</sup>

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\* The writer would like to express his gratitude to Ruth McVey for her many valuable criticisms of and comments on this text, while of course assuming full responsibility himself for any errors of fact or interpretation.

This essay is essentially tentative and experimental in character. Since the writer hopes to work on a full-length study of Tan Malaka in the future, he would much appreciate any criticisms or further material which readers may be willing to provide. The writer is in the perhaps strange position of writing in one foreign language about autobiographical works in another. In an essay so much concerned with emotions, moods, perspectives and states of mind, nuances of language, sometimes the very structure of the language used, may significantly affect both form and substance. The writer therefore asks the reader's understanding and forgiveness for any unwarranted imprecision or inadvertent obscurity.

1. In this context it may be worth noting that most of the interest in Indonesian "tradition" has been aroused by work in which the narrow boundaries of particular disciplines have been crossed. For post-World War II scholarship the stimulus was provided primarily

The continuing reciprocal impact of "tradition" and "modernity" may be clearer, however, if one focusses on a topic neglected in great part by political science as being "too anthropological" and by anthropology as being "too political"--the topic I shall call a political personality's structure of experience.

Structure of experience is understood here as similar to "culture" as defined by Clifford Geertz, i.e., as "the accumulated totality" of the "cultural patterns, ordered clusters of significant symbols, [by which] man makes sense of the events through which he lives," as "the conceptual structure embodied in the symbolic forms through which persons are perceived."<sup>2</sup>

A political personality is defined by the way in which such a personality conceptualizes and deals with the conflict between the private, individual human outlook, selfhood, inside images of the world, on the one side, and political homogenization, standardization of the "popular will," outside images of the world, spiritual by-products of the political-institutions game, on the other.<sup>3</sup> The ordinary personality has to fight in order not to lose its self, its humanity, under the pressure of politics. (Whether this be the fear of politics, habituated indifference, or the arrogance of power.) The environment which is perceived and conceptualized by the political personality, however, is overwhelmingly a world of politics. There is almost no possibility for a political personality to retire--however temporarily or partially--from the battlefield between self and public; inside and outside images of the world can almost never be separated in such a personality's consciousness.<sup>4</sup>

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by the deep insights into the artistic soul of the "modern" Indonesian intellectual and into village and small town politics found respectively in the writings of Claire Holt and Clifford Geertz. See Claire Holt, Art in Indonesia: Continuity and Change (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967); and, for a bibliography of Geertz' earlier writings, Koentjaraningrat, ed., Villages in Indonesia (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), p. 414. Similar in character and origin has been a recent emphasis on "culturalism" in Indonesian studies in the United States--an approach which "posits basically the autonomy of non-Western cultures as authentic interpretations of unique experience. . . . Culturalism in effect 'rehabilitates' tradition, and reveals the possibility of going behind purely 'political' nationalism to its deeper social and historical roots." See Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, "American Values and Research on Indonesia" (paper presented at a meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, Washington, D.C., March 1971), p. 19.

2. Clifford Geertz, Person, Time and Conduct in Bali: An Essay in Cultural Analysis (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, Cultural Report Series No. 14, 1966), pp. 5 and 7.
3. On inside and outside images, political homogenization and standardization, see Masao Maruyama, Thought and Behaviour in Modern Japanese Politics, enl. ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), esp. pp. 333 and 340.
4. Some such separation as a means of individual self-defense against institutional political pressure is common to most societies. An extreme case of this type of separation was the sealed-off, parallel existence of Innerlichkeit and Gleichschaltung in the political culture of Nazi Germany. See ibid., pp. 326-333.

The political personality conceptualizes both self and public, the things of a human being and those of institutional politics--as well as the relation between them--within one conceptual system and according to the same cultural values.

Analysis of such a personality perhaps necessarily finds a place only on the periphery of political science and anthropology. (Possibly, in some sense, on the periphery of science in general: How many scholars would agree with Norman Mailer that "The only true journey of knowledge is from the depth of one being to the heart of another. . .")<sup>5</sup> This certainly implies a serious danger of methodological impurity. On the other hand, I hope, such an approach may make it easier to use anthropological tools in the realm of political studies (and, in the present instance, to open new perspectives on the "modernity" of the Indonesian nationalist elite).

I have chosen the Minangkabau revolutionary Sutan Ibrahim gelar Datuk Tan Malaka (1897-1949)<sup>6</sup> and his structure of experience for experimenting with this approach. Tan Malaka conceptualized his self, his private life, his innermost human problems as existing only through politics, never outside or independent of it. At the same time he did not depersonalize his life--he considered the concept of it to be one of the most important (possibly the most important) value of his structure of experience. He lived a life long and rich enough, he was a personality strong and deep enough to experience fully and conceptualize coherently the conflict between the local tradition of his birthplace<sup>7</sup> and the claims of "modern" Indonesian nationalism.

Towards the end of the last century Minangkabau society had come to think of its prime features as being dynamism and anti-parochialism, whether in fact these features were the core of its pre-colonial tradition, or whether the society had imperceptibly adopted a common contemporary Dutch view of its nature, derived from Minangkabau responses to colonial rule. According to this perspective, which has maintained its popularity to the present, traditional Minangkabau *adat*,<sup>8</sup> and traditional Minangkabau philosophy in general, regards conflict as essential to achieving the integration of the society. The society itself--Alam Minangkabau (Minangkabau World)--is always linked with the "dialectical" notion of the harmony of contradictions. As seen

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5. Norman Mailer, An American Dream (New York: Dell, 1970), p. 18.
  6. According to Djamaluddin Tamin, Tan Malaka was born on June 2, 1896. See his Kematian Tan Malaka (n.p.: n.p., 1965), p. 3. For other dates, see Ruth T. McVey, The Rise of Indonesian Communism (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1965), p. 117, n. 35.
  7. Minangkabau--a society of West Sumatra. Useful lists of works on Minangkabau can be found in Umar Junus, "Some remarks on Minangkabau social studies," Bijdragen tot de taal-, land- en volkenkunde [B.K.I.], 120 (1964), pp. 293-297; and P. E. de Josselin de Jong, Minangkabau and Negri Sembilan: social-political structure in Indonesia (Jakarta: Bhratara, 1960).
  8. Adat "is an elusive concept which ranges from the ideal patterns of behavior through actual social practice to the notion of acquiring personal and family glory (kemegahan)." Taufik Abdullah in B.K.I., 126 (1970), p. 244.

in the *tambo* (traditional Minangkabau chronicles), "through continuing exploration, the Alam's potentialities unfolded, and outside elements were incorporated."<sup>9</sup> In this view, the dynamism and anti-parochialism of Minangkabau thought "was not simply a response to unavoidable circumstances but something imperative in adat itself. Adat's ability to survive depended on its ability to maintain its form while gradually enlarging its content."<sup>10</sup>

The incorporation of outside elements finds its highest manifestation in the Minangkabau cultural symbol of *rantau*. "Going to the rantau [going outside the Alam Minangkabau], called *merantau*, is, according to adat philosophy, one way to fulfill that Principal Law which charges the individual to 'subject himself' to the largeness of the world."<sup>11</sup> At the same time, it is a way whereby a Minangkabau youth learns about his place in the Alam. The concept thus implies that Alam is the main beneficiary of the rantau experience, that a *perantau*<sup>12</sup> has to *return* to enrich his Alam, that he has "to act as an informant or teacher, enabling his community to 'adopt what is good [from the rantau] and discard what is bad [in the Alam].'"<sup>13</sup>

"Modern," Westernized Minangkabau intellectuals at the turn of the century eagerly accepted this view and made the dynamism and anti-parochialism of traditional Minangkabau thought the most important cultural symbols of their struggle for emancipation.<sup>14</sup> These qualities appeared to guarantee that Alam would undergo, smoothly and without basically changing its nature, the drastic transformation which the

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9. Taufik Abdullah, Schools and Politics: The Kaum Muda Movement in West Sumatra (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, Monograph Series, 1971), p. 4.

10. Ibid., p. 15.

11. Ibid., p. 20.

12. A man who is on the rantau.

13. Abdullah, Schools and Politics, p. 21.

14. For an analysis of this movement, see the following writings of Taufik Abdullah: "Adat and Islam: An Examination of Conflict in Minangkabau," Indonesia, 2 (October 1966), pp. 1-24; "Some Notes on the Kaba Tjindua Mato: An Example of Minangkabau Traditional Literature," Indonesia, 9 (April 1970), pp. 1-22; and "Modernization in the Minangkabau World: West Sumatra in the Early Decades of the Twentieth Century," in Claire Holt, ed., Culture and Politics in Indonesia (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), pp. 179-245. I profited very much too from Taufik Abdullah's Ph.D. thesis (later published as Schools and Politics) and from my conversations with him. He presents highly persuasive arguments on dynamism and anti-parochialism being the basis of traditional Minangkabau thought. These arguments, however, may also be a sophisticated expression of the concept of Minangkabau philosophy created at the turn of the century. In any case, he gives the best description of what a Minangkabau intellectual of that time thought of his "tradition"; as such, his work will be used extensively throughout this essay.

Western impact had caused just at this time. This view of their culture helped them particularly to cope with their own, otherwise shocking "modern" experience--being at new kinds of schools in distant places such as Java, the Middle East or Holland; it helped them to perceive the experience not as a disrupting one, but as only another form of what was deeply familiar to them--the traditional rantau.<sup>15</sup>

Into this Minangkabau World Tan Malaka was born. He left it at the age of sixteen--and for all practical purposes he never came back.<sup>16</sup> But he never ceased to feel a strong obligation towards his motherland, and he perceived all of his ways as homeward bound. After his contact with Western culture, this paper will try to argue, he did not leave the Minangkabau cultural realm in order to enter that of the West. The view of Minangkabau culture prevailing at the time of Tan Malaka's youth allowed him to conceptualize both the "dynamic" West and the "dynamic" Alam Minangkabau within one undivided view of the world. For in this view, the Minangkabau motherland (the Alam) and the outside world (the rantau) were mutually conditioned; the Alam was the center, the heart, while the rantau's *raison d'être* was to enrich the Alam.

### Rantau--Tan Malaka's View of His Life

#### The First Rantau (1908-1919)

Tan Malaka was born in the very center of the Minangkabau World, to a family deeply rooted in local Minangkabau culture and well known for its tradition of producing fighters for the cause of Minangkabau society.<sup>17</sup> Between his twelfth and sixteenth years (1908-1913), he matured at the famous Kweekschool (teachers' training school) in Fort de Kock, the center of the Minangkabau intellectuals' movement, in an atmosphere dominated by their dynamic view of Minangkabau tradition.<sup>18</sup> He was sent there by a decision taken by the elders of

15. On the virtual rush for Western schooling in West Sumatra at this time, see 'XY', "Het Inlandsche Onderwijs ter Sumatra's Westkust," Koloniaal Tijdschrift (1913), pp. 390-408. On the conceptualization of these modern schools as a form of the traditional rantau, see Abdullah, Schools and Politics, p. 21.
16. So far as I know, he made only two short visits, lasting several days each, in 1919 and 1942. Tan Malaka, Dari Pendjara ke Pendjara, I (Djakarta: Widjaya, n.d.), p. 47. [The second and third volumes of this autobiography were published in Jogjakarta (Pustaka Murba, n.d.) and Djakarta (Widjaya, n.d.). Henceforward, the title of this autobiography will be abbreviated as DPkP.] See also his Madilog (Djakarta: Widjaya, 1951), pp. 7 and 14.
17. Tamin, Kematian Tan Malaka, p. 3.
18. On the teachers' training schools, see K. A. Jones, "De Opleiding der Inlandsche Hoofden op de Buitenbezittingen," Indische Gids, I (1908), pp. 16-22. On the significance of the Fort de Kock school for the Minangkabau emancipation movement, see Abdullah, Schools and Politics, p. 10.

his *nagari* (village community), Nagari Pandan Gadang in Suliki. The traditional belief that the young perantau would eventually come back to enrich the Alam with the experience and knowledge he acquired in the rantau was clearly expressed by this act. His experience in Fort de Kock apparently implanted the concept of rantau even more deeply in Tan Malaka's mind and led him in the next years to perceive his life in its terms.

When he returned from Fort de Kock in 1913, his nagari saw the event as a return from the rantau. His reappearance in the Alam was to be ceremonialized by the conferment on him of a high adat title defining his new status in the traditional nagari structure.<sup>19</sup> Though Tan Malaka accepted the title, he viewed his rantau as only just beginning. He succeeded in getting money from a local fund for sending Minangkabau boys to be educated abroad and sailed for Rotterdam that same year. His immediate goal was to get a Dutch teacher's diploma.<sup>20</sup>

He stayed in Holland for six long years, the Minangkabau World seemingly far from his mind. At the time his father claimed that he was communicating with him by mystical means [*tarékat*], Tan Malaka was very probably playing soccer, violin or drum, reading socialist or nationalist books and newspapers, or having an enjoyable time in some other non-Minangkabau and definitely Western manner.<sup>21</sup> At a deeper level of Tan Malaka's mind, however, the characteristic qualities of the Minangkabau perantau matured. Alongside his "Westernism" there grew a deep anti-Dutch animosity; consequently, the danger he would be Westernized to the extent that the Alam-rantau balance in his mind would be upset never materialized.

During his years in Holland he contracted tuberculosis and became seriously ill. He noted later that this illness taught him early in his life the meaning of physical extinction.<sup>22</sup> The grave difficulties he experienced in his teachers' college, which he saw as the result of colonial discrimination by the Dutch educational system,<sup>23</sup> gave him the experience of loneliness, frustration and despair.<sup>24</sup> As described in his autobiography, the common cause of

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19. The word gelar in his title "gelar Datuk Tan Malaka" implied that he was a penghulu andiko, or formal head of a sabuah parui (a community of descendants of a maternal ancestor connected with a particular maternal house--one of the most important components of Minangkabau social structure). See Harsja W. Bachtiar, "'Negeri' Taram: A Minangkabau Village Community," in Koentjaraningrat, ed., Villages, pp. 369-370.

20. Tamin, Kematian Tan Malaka, p. 6.

21. Ibid., p. 7.

22. DPkP, I, p. 31.

23. Tan Malaka was eventually graduated with a Hulpacte diploma instead of the higher Hoofdacte which he was expected to achieve. Tamar Djaja, Trio Komoenis Indonesia: Tan Malaka, Alimin, Semaoen (Bukittinggi: Penjiaran Ilmu, 1946), p. 8.

24. DPkP, I, pp. 24 and 34.

all these personal sufferings was his being abroad, far from his motherland. (It is worth noting that in traditional Minangkabau thought going on the rantau necessarily meant personal hardship.)<sup>25</sup>

*Isolation* from the motherland, however, is probably not the most meaningful way to describe Tan Malaka's Dutch experiences. Rather, they should be seen as his subjection to a world whose nature was largely in conflict with what contemporary Minangkabau intellectuals regarded as the cultural values of Alam. In Minangkabau tradition, indeed, there could be no more drastic manifestation of conflict than the "subjection to rantau" which Tan Malaka was undergoing. Nonetheless the conflict manifested by his Dutch rantau--like conflict in Minangkabau in general--had a strong creative and integrative function. Rantau as conflict, or, in Tan Malaka's vocabulary as "antithesis," is conceived in his writings as essential for a true understanding of the values of the Alam and for his own re-integration with it. Only then would the "synthesis" occur, as the knowledge accumulated on the rantau stirred, enriched and changed the Alam.

Tan Malaka saw him mature Weltanschauung as created in large measure by the "antithesis" of his rantau. Even his illness was perceived in this light, for he wrote that just as a society in crisis breeds revolution, so his sick body gave birth to new thoughts.<sup>26</sup> It was, in his view, precisely the physical and spiritual stress he endured that stimulated a heightened sensitivity and a deeper understanding of, and empathy with the dynamic world.

Where the body suffers physical deprivation, where the spirit is imprisoned outwardly and inwardly, where, finally, all roads towards change and betterment are blocked, there the heart is opened, pulled by the force of a common destiny, and repelled by the force of conflict, a positive force and a negative force. The movement of thesis and antithesis within me was a reflection of the thrust of these two forces.<sup>27</sup>

Furthermore, his ailing body and troubled soul stirred in Tan Malaka a strong appreciation of dynamism, vitality and power during his Dutch years. "Tiger," the nickname his companions gave him, seems to have expressed his attitude and way of thinking (as opposed to his way of life) very well. In those years, power was the criterion by which he measured the value of all other things. He developed a contempt of Dutch culture in favor of the *stronger* German and American civilizations. Nietzsche, Junkertum, Uebermensch, the powerful Germany of the Great War--these were Tan Malaka's first political idols. As he recalled with a touch of irony in later years, he even applied for admission to the German Imperial Army, but was not admitted because they had no Foreign Legion.<sup>28</sup> The power aspect of the military profession seems indeed to have mattered more to Tan Malaka than the nature of the conflict between Germany and Holland, for he recorded that he wanted to be admitted to the Dutch military academy

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25. Abdullah, Schools and Politics, p. 21.

26. DPkP, I, p. 31.

27. Ibid., p. 27.

28. Ibid., p. 29.

at Breda as well.<sup>29</sup> His determination to become a soldier must have been very serious. Thirty years later, the reading he had done for that purpose in Holland provided the basis for his famous and influential book on Indonesian guerrilla warfare.<sup>30</sup>

Tan Malaka's immediate enthusiasm for the Bolshevik revolution in Russia,<sup>31</sup> which was for him the most creative experience of his rantau, indeed of his whole life, did not negate his respect for German culture in particular, and for the "power criterion" in general.<sup>32</sup> On the contrary, the same logic led him to admire both German and Bolshevik cultural values at once. In 1947 he could still write that the greatness of the Bolshevik Revolution lay in that it created a "synthesis" of the progressive, humanitarian qualities of the French Revolution on the one side and the power qualities manifested by Germany on the other. He described the dialectical movement of modern history, as evidenced:

In the field of philosophy in the form: Nietzsche as thesis, Rousseau as antithesis, and finally Marx-Engels as synthesis. In the field of politics in the form: Wilhelm-Hindenburg-Stinnes as genesis, Danton-Robespierre-Marat as negation, and the Bolsheviks as negation of negation.<sup>33</sup>

#### The First Return (1919-1922)

Tan Malaka returned to Indonesia in 1919, and in December of that year took up his first job there, with the Senembah Corporation in East

29. Ibid., p. 36.

30. Tan Malaka, Sang Gerilja dan Gerpolek: gerilja-politik-ekonomi (Jogjakarta: Pustaka Murba, n.d.), esp. pp. 1-2.

31. "It was only then," he wrote later, "that the old books, such as Marx-Engels' Das Kapital, . . . Marxist Economics by Karl Kautsky, etc., came alive for me." (DPkP, I, p. 30.) He recalled that he was first introduced to social-democratic ideas by his room-mate Herman, a young Belgian refugee, in the first months of the war. (DPkP, I, p. 28.) At the same time he was much impressed by his then landlady, whose husband was dying of a lung disease. Her proletarian simplicity, humanity and courage attracted him strongly. Later he went to stay for a short while with a left-wing socialist teacher.

32. There is a somewhat self-mocking tone to Tan Malaka's account of his youthful adoration of Germany, but he emphasizes that the German example showed him some qualities much needed at home. Moreover, while in Germany in 1922 as ex-chairman of the Indonesian Communist Party [P.K.I.], he greatly admired what he saw as the efficiency with which the German nation was then overcoming its crisis. He predicted a renaissance for that "sound people." (DPkP, I, pp. 93-94, 103.)

33. DPkP, I, p. 30.

Sumatra. A man of his views could not have come to a more impressive place. Here, in one of the biggest plantation centers in Indonesia, the "capitalist-imperialist Dutch" on the one side and "native Indonesian contract coolie labor" on the other were in the closest imaginable contact; here the conflict of their interests was most obvious, harsh and drastic.<sup>34</sup> Tan Malaka's revolutionary vision of Indonesian society developed further after he left Sumatra in June 1921 and moved to Semarang in Central Java.<sup>35</sup> In this city, the "Red City," the center of left-socialist activity in the archipelago at the time, the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) had been born just one year before he arrived.<sup>36</sup>

The newly born Party suffered from a serious lack of able leaders.<sup>37</sup> In the difficult political conditions prevailing in the colony, many Communist functionaries were arrested, exiled or lost their enthusiasm. It was essential to fill the leadership vacuum, and Tan Malaka appeared a specially suitable candidate given the particular situation in which the movement found itself. In the view of Semaun, then the Party Chairman, the Party was, and expected to remain for the time being essentially "introvert," going through a period of rest and "internal concentration on study."<sup>38</sup> "It was only fitting that I entered Semarang by the gate of education," Tan Malaka wrote later.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, Semaun put him in charge of the Party's schools for the children of members and sympathizers. Within a few months the schools were a striking success--in sharp contrast to the general stagnation of the movement.<sup>40</sup> The great success of the schools, which became known as

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34. Ibid., p. 39. ". . . in 1902 [in Holland] a pamphlet Millioenen uit Deli exposed the situation in lurid detail. As formerly on the publication of Max Havelaar, the country was thrilled with indignation," and the Colonial Minister admitted "a total collapse of morality" in this concern. See J. S. Furnivall, Netherlands India: A Study of Plural Economy (London: Cambridge University Press, 1939), pp. 353 and 459.
35. DPkP, I, p. 66. It should be noted here that one important consequence of Tan Malaka's Dutch experience was that he was led to begin thinking in archipelago-wide terms, and thus gradually became an Indonesian nationalist. It will be argued below, however, that the shift from a West Sumatran to an all-Indonesian frame of reference did not weaken or basically alter the essentially Minangkabau character of Tan Malaka's structure of experience. For the moment, let me retain the apparent inconsistency and ambiguity in the terms "Minangkabau" and "Indonesia," since some ambiguity and inconsistency certainly existed in Tan Malaka's mind at that time.
36. On the Indonesian communist movement at this time, see McVey, The Rise, chapters II-IV.
37. DPkP, I, p. 74.
38. Semaun, "Indiiskoe dvizhenie v Niderlandskoi Indii [The Indies Movement in the Netherlands Indies]," a report to the First Congress of the Toilers of the Far East, as quoted in McVey, The Rise, p. 399, n. 45.
39. DPkP, I, p. 68.
40. For more details on these schools, see McVey, The Rise, p. 398, n. 42; p. 433, n. 111; and p. 435, n. 127.

"Tan Malaka Schools," was undoubtedly the main reason for Tan Malaka's growing prestige and rapid rise within the Party. In the extremely short period between June and December 1921, he found himself moved, stage by stage, up to the position of Party Chairman, a post he held until March 1922 when he was exiled from Indonesia by the colonial government.<sup>41</sup>

From the point of view of the Party, Tan Malaka's brief chairmanship was not an unqualified success.<sup>42</sup> From the point of view of Tan Malaka himself, however, it was a manifestation of his successful re-emergence from rantau back to Alam. He clearly conceived the growth of the Party and his stay in Semarang as being closely connected. In his view, it was precisely the powers he had acquired on the rantau (in the West) that were the cause of his subsequent success in the Alam. It was his sophisticated knowledge of how politics were carried on in a more advanced Europe, it was his familiarity with the condition of contract plantation labor, one of the most important components of the newly emerging Indonesian working class--and, perhaps most important at a time when the Party was oriented toward "internal concentration on study," it was his exceptional education and training in pedagogics, that made his performance so impressive.

The experience of his rantau in 1921 and 1922 convinced Tan Malaka that the Dutch were a fundamental obstacle to the progress of Indonesian society towards its perfection.<sup>43</sup> It also showed him that there was fertile soil in Indonesia for accepting "good from the rantau"--what he called "Western proletarian philosophy." Most importantly he had learned that the knowledge accumulated on the rantau could be converted into political power. The dramatic experiences of his return were undoubtedly pondered over and over again during the hard years of his second rantau between 1922 and 1942. In effect, the "success" of his first return strongly confirmed the importance of the rantau concept in Tan Malaka's consciousness. The years 1921 and 1922 remained constantly in his mind and became a *model* according to which he conceptualized his second rantau and especially the most important part of his life--his second return to Indonesia in the mid-forties.

### The Second Rantau (1922-1942)

At the beginning of the story of Tan Malaka's exile as told in his autobiography, the echo of his successful first return can still be heard. From Indonesia Tan Malaka sailed straight to Holland. There he was immediately found to be just the man the Communist Party of the Netherlands needed for the forthcoming parliamentary elections. He became the first ever Indonesian candidate in such elections. His remarkable electoral success surprised everybody, not to mention Tan Malaka himself.<sup>44</sup> He had not even waited for the returns, but had

41. DPkP, I, pp. 69, 73-74, 77.

42. See McVey, The Rise, p. 124.

43. Tan Malaka's recollections of his life with the Senembah Corporation are full of bitter attacks on the stupidity and arrogance of his Dutch colleagues.

44. Only after the elections were over was it realized that Tan Malaka was too young to stand. McVey, The Rise, pp. 236-237.

left for Berlin to meet Darsono, his successor as chairman of the PKI.<sup>45</sup> He stayed only a short time in Germany before heading for Moscow, where the Fourth Comintern Congress was about to begin (November 1922).

As a delegate from the Dutch Indies he was given a place at the sessions. His speech proposing that the Communist movement cooperate with the Pan-Islamic movement, was, by his own account, "very satisfactorily received by the entire Congress."<sup>46</sup> He was asked to write a book on Indonesia for the Comintern.<sup>47</sup> He was appointed to a commission which was to prepare resolutions on the Oriental question.<sup>48</sup> When the final Congress decisions were made, however, most of Tan Malaka's initial success appeared rather superficial. For the membership of the Congress he was evidently too narrowly concerned with the Indonesian situation and did not take into account the global problems of the Revolution; thus his views and proposals were turned down by a decisive majority of the delegates. Moreover, he apparently made some enemies for himself at the Congress by his tendency to lecture everyone. He admits this himself in his memoirs and says that when he asked to go to school in Soviet Russia, people replied sarcastically "We don't have a university chair for you yet!"<sup>49</sup> At the same time some members of the Indonesian Communist Party expressed privately a certain envious concern over Tan Malaka's sudden prominence in the international movement.<sup>50</sup>

After eight months in Moscow, some time in the late summer of 1923, Tan Malaka was sent back to Asia as Comintern supervisor.<sup>51</sup> From this

45. DPkP, I. pp. 93-94.
46. DPkP, I, p. 101. For Tan Malaka's speech and its reception by the Congress, see Berichte über den IV. Kongresses der Kommunistischen Internationale (Hamburg: Verlag der K.I., 1923), pp. 49-50; Bulletin des IV. Kongresses der Kommunistischen Internationale, 1922, No. 7, Nov. 12, seventh meeting, pp. 6-9 (Feltrinelli Reprint, 1967).
47. DPkP, I, p. 102. This book appeared as Tan Malaka, Indoneziia i eŝ mesto na probuzhdaemsia Vostoke (Moscow: Krasnaia Nov', 1924). For contemporary Soviet reviews, see Ruth T. McVey, "Soviet Sources for Indonesian History," in Soedjatmoko, et al., eds., An Introduction to Indonesian Historiography (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1965), p. 274.
48. Bulletin des IV. Kongresses, 1922, No. 20, Nov. 23, twentieth meeting, p. 20. The other members of this commission were: Roy (India), Radek (Russia), Safarov (Russia), van Ravesteyn (Holland), Webb (England), Saleh (Turkey), Sen Katayama (Japan), Ch'en Tu-hsiu (China), Isakov (Bulgaria), and Cachin (France).
49. DPkP, I, p. 101.
50. See the interesting exchange of letters between two of the top leaders of the P.K.I., reflecting concern over Tan Malaka's performance in Moscow, quoted in McVey, The Rise, p. 205.
51. See Tan Malaka, Thesis (Djakarta: Murba, 1946), p. 39. There he claims that he was given authority to supervise communist activities in "all the Southern lands," i.e., in "Indonesia, the Philippines, Burma, Siam, Malaka and Indo-China." (But cf. also pp. 59-60, for a somewhat different statement of his jurisdiction.) For the views of the P.K.I. leaders who challenged his claims, see McVey, The Rise, p. 439, n. 37.

moment the echo of his first successful return began to fade, until, several months later, the negative, "antithesis" qualities of rantau prevailed--and to a far greater extent than during his Dutch years. The only dynamic discernible during the following twenty years of Tan Malaka's second rantau is the gradual deepening of Tan Malaka's solitude.

Tan Malaka's health was again an important element in the drama. In his autobiography it is already described as the decisive force in his life.<sup>52</sup> Because of a brain ailment he suffered from between 1925 and 1935, he was unable to read for more than one hour a day.<sup>53</sup> During this rantau he also felt that he was being constantly hunted by the British, Dutch, and later the Japanese police. He recalled that on one occasion, even when he was released from prison, he felt that they played with him like a cat with a mouse.<sup>54</sup> He found that old friends were afraid to shelter him, and received him coldly.<sup>55</sup> On the other hand, every prison seemed to invite him, calling "Please come in!"<sup>56</sup> The only place where he was still greeted with the revolutionary salutation "Hidup Indonesia Merdeka [Long Live Free Indonesia]!" was in the prison yard.<sup>57</sup> Prison was where people were most helpful and where he felt most secure.<sup>58</sup>

Tan Malaka portrayed his second rantau as a time of virtually complete political isolation. Even in the early part of this rantau, up to 1926, when he was still fairly active, he mentions no important contacts with the Indonesian movement except for a few meetings with two party comrades, Alimin and Dawood, and some correspondence with another, Subakat.<sup>59</sup> Eventually, he recalled, "after I myself was arrested in Hong Kong towards the end of 1932 [for the third time],

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52. His tuberculosis was the reason why he could not participate in some of the most important political decisions taken by the P.K.I. at the time. On the advice of his doctor he had moved to Manila from Canton just at the moment when another Comintern representative came out to meet him. (DPkP, I, p. 121.) Sickness disabled him again in 1926, just at the time when a key party decision was made in Singapore. For details, see Thesis, p. 38.
53. Madilog, pp. 12 and 15. Tan Malaka describes this crippling ailment as kelumpuhan otak, which may mean cerebral paralysis, or some vaguer, more general complaint.
54. Ibid., p. 15.
55. DPkP, II, pp. 102-103.
56. Ibid., p. 55.
57. Ibid., p. 45.
58. Ibid., p. 62.
59. Alimin Prawirodirdjo, Dawood [Dawud] and Subakat were all important P.K.I. leaders in the early and middle twenties. For mention of these figures, see DPkP, I, pp. 146-147; II, pp. 41, 45, 72-73.

and all my comrades-in-arms in Singapore were arrested and sent to Digul, my contacts with friends and comrades everywhere were completely broken. Several times I tried to make contact with the Indonesian People from Singapore but all these efforts failed."<sup>60</sup> He made virtually no mention of Pari, the political party he founded in 1927 after the disastrous P.K.I. uprisings of 1926-1927, except to note that he received word of the arrests of other leaders of the party, and of the rupture of intra-party communications.<sup>61</sup>

A natural question may be: what period did this militant radical consider to be the climax of his rantau? The surprising answer is: the time when his solitude and political isolation were most complete--the years he spent in the early thirties in small remote villages in Fukien, Southeast China. In his description of this part of his rantau there is no mention of politics at all. Significantly, these were also the years when his illnesses were at their height. "I was completely cut off from the world, I rested and took treatment until I totally recovered."<sup>62</sup> Few of his experiences are celebrated so passionately in his writings as the beneficial effect which a native medicine made of black duck had on his sick lungs.<sup>63</sup> The tranquillity of the village was punctuated by periodic bustle--Chinese New Year, weddings, and funerals--and he experienced there a little bit of the human warmth he had missed since leaving the Minangkabau World.<sup>64</sup> It is revealing that he only left this village paradise after the majority of the family he was staying with migrated to the Philippines.<sup>65</sup>

How can one explain Tan Malaka publishing the facts of his long isolation and political inactivity, and his describing them in such an open, almost drastic way--when, at the same time, he clearly considered the concept of his life such an important weapon in the coming struggle? Would such revelations not weaken his own position after his return? One possible explanation is that he conceptualized his exile--as he had conceptualized his life in Holland--as "anti-thesis," as a rantau with strong creative and integrative aspects. It was precisely the hardship, solitude and isolation he endured which allowed him to think seriously about the defects and the needs of Alam, and sift out the good from rantau. He had a lot of time to spend in libraries; he was not "disturbed" by day-to-day political activity. And in fact, as I will try to show, it was just at this time that his thinking and writing became organized into a full-fledged philosophical system.

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60. Madilog, p. 12.

61. DPkP, II, p. 41. On Pari, see George McT. Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1952), pp. 85-86; and J. M. Pluvier, Overzicht van de ontwikkeling der nationalistische beweging in Indonesië in de jaren 1930 tot 1942 (The Hague: van Hoeve, 1953), p. 162.

62. Madilog, p. 15.

63. DPkP, II, pp. 64-66.

64. Ibid., p. 66.

65. Ibid., p. 71.

Thus Tan Malaka could view the experiences of his second stay abroad as an essential condition for achieving "synthesis." It was not only that this perspective gave Tan Malaka's exile life its *raison d'être*. More than that, the experience of exile becomes in the pages of his memoirs a clear manifestation of rantau as conflict, an opportunity to comprehend the qualities of both Alam and rantau, and to use rantau for an understanding of Alam. Tan Malaka clearly built such concept of his rantau in the hope that at the time of "synthesis," when his exile ended and he returned to Indonesian politics, the rantau's virtues *would create a power*.

### The Fruit of Rantau--Tan Malaka's View of the World

#### The Mission of a Teacher

As already shown in the first part of this essay, the concept of rantau was closely associated in Minangkabau culture with the roles played by students (or youth more generally) and teachers (*guru*). After trading journeys, educational ventures were the most important and frequent form of rantau at the turn of the present century. A youth's stay in a *surau*, the traditional Minangkabau "boarding school" was a well-known type of rantau. The situation was like that in neighboring Atjeh where no one could become an *ulama* [a religious scholar] or teacher, without *meudagang*--a term which now means "to study in a *pesantrèn*," but originally meant "to be a stranger, to travel from place to place."<sup>66</sup> A *surau* student necessarily interrupted, for the time of his study there, much of his contact with the traditional environment in which he had grown up. What he received in exchange was a close relationship with the spiritual father of the *surau*--the teacher. Not only had such relationships little in common with traditional authority in the Alam, but, more significantly, they tended to be seen as contrasting, contradicting and conflicting with it. Throughout Minangkabau history, the *surau* acted as rantau in relation to Alam, as places where discontent and new ideas could be articulated. Very often they became the centers for militant efforts to perfect Minangkabau society.<sup>67</sup>

As a Minangkabau himself, Tan Malaka too saw the cultural values of youth and rantau as being very close. It was in part this view that stimulated the kind of spiritual, intellectual and political affection he always felt for Indonesian *pemuda* [youth]. It provided a basis for his deep belief that in the *pemuda* lay the best hope of the Indonesian revolution. As the ideal form of a *pemuda* community,

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66. C. Snouck Hurgronje, The Achehnese, trans. A. W. S. O'Sullivan (Leiden: Brill, 1906), II, p. 26.

67. On the role of the religious teacher in modern Minangkabau social and political movements, see B. Schrieke, "The Causes and Effects of Communism on the West Coast of Sumatra," in his Indonesian Sociological Studies (The Hague: van Hoeve, 1955), I, p. 131, n. 59; W. M. F. Mansvelt, "Onderwijs en Communisme," Koloniale Studiën (1928), pp. 203-225; and 'XY,' "Het Inlandsche Onderwijs."

he described a traditional institution, "2,000 years in the past," which appears to be surau and rantau at the same time: it was "a special house, for pemuda only, where they could obtain spiritual (adat and religion), as well as physical (*silat* and *pentjak*) training."<sup>68</sup> From that institution, according to Tan Malaka, the "perantau spirit" emerged:

Guided by the moon and stars, sailing in tiny boats, safeguarded by their cleverly invented tools, with a spirit of solidarity and mutual help--in times of good fortune *hati gadjah sama dilepah, hati tungau sama ditjatjah*, and in times of danger *telentang sama minum air, terlungkup sama makan tanah*--the ocean was only a lake in their eyes.<sup>69</sup>

In this connection it is also worth noting how Tan Malaka looked at what he said was the most important influence on him in his Fort de Kock days. It had been the guidance given him by his Dutch teacher, G. H. Horensma, which had led him to prolong his first rantau and go to Holland in 1913. His affection for Horensma was still very strong three decades later; in his autobiography he compared their relationship to that of pupil and teacher in "traditional [*kolot*] Indonesia," where "parents were regarded as the source of the body . . . while the teacher . . . was the source of the spirit."<sup>70</sup>

It is not surprising therefore, that Tan Malaka, trying to find the most effective way to bring the "good from rantau" back to his Alam, decided to fulfill this mission through the role of teacher. It was indeed the vocation of teacher--and rather in the traditional Minangkabau sense of this word--that was most characteristic of the spirit of Tan Malaka's life from the Fort de Kock period until his death.

He was graduated from a teachers' college, and his first job was as a teacher. It was to a great extent because his views on education for coolie children clashed with the racism of his Dutch colleagues that he left the Senembah Corporation.<sup>71</sup> It was, as we have seen, mainly his qualifications as a teacher and his career as founder of the "Tan Malaka Schools" that brought him fame in Indonesian politics and made his first return in 1919-1922 such a success. During Tan Malaka's second rantau the concept of teacher grew even stronger it became less formal only to acquire more traditional connotations. Again and again Tan Malaka gathered groups of youths around himself, groups strongly reminiscent of the teacher-pupil relationships of Minangkabau tradition and indeed described by him in just this way.

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68. DPkP, I, p. 46. Silat--traditional fencing; pentjak--traditional art of self-defense.

69. Ibid. These are proverbial Minangkabau expressions for perfect comradeship. Literally, they mean: "Together, the heart of the elephant is devoured; together, the heart of the mite is eaten" and "Together, lying face up drinking water; together, lying face down eating earth."

70. DPkP, I, p. 89.

71. Ibid., pp. 56, 59, 62-63.

The place where he stayed in Moscow in 1922 had more the atmosphere of a surau than of a hotel room:

My room was open day and night for friends and students. Because it was large enough and quiet enough for study, at night, while I slept, it was usually used by two or three students who had to pass an exam. Indeed, that quiet room was given to me for writing a book.<sup>72</sup>

It is clear from his autobiography that he perceived the teacher-pupil relationship as the basis of almost all contacts with the outside world he had both as a professional revolutionary in the twenties and as a secondary school teacher in Amoy and Singapore in the thirties. According to the following account, his appearance in the early forties, when he had returned to Indonesia, was very similar to that of an ulama or a teacher:

He already looked very old. But I could tell from the way he behaved that he was someone extraordinary. He spoke of the international situation as a real intellectual would have. In that environment he stood out a great deal. We all talked and spoke of nothing but Japan, and complained bitterly. But occasionally he would tell us that Japan was not the real problem--the real problem was America and Britain, and how they were to be dealt with when Japan was finished. . . . You could tell he had been abroad for a long time from the fact that he never washed, except his face and hands, in the European way, not like us who have to wash fully twice a day. He couldn't speak a word of Javanese and his Indonesian was a bit bookish, intellectual . . . his talks were rather like lectures. . . . The local workers couldn't understand his ideas at all. He liked to take long walks by himself and you could see he was a man who talked and thought a lot, unlike the rest of us Indonesians. To keep us all amused I used to write plays and dramatic pieces for the boys; he used to be given the *pendeta* [priestly] parts. I especially remember that we made him Kjai Madja in my version of Diponegoro. He never had any sex and I think he was well past it. He liked to have young people about him and to have them hanging on his words. He usually had such pemuda with him wherever he went.<sup>73</sup>

And necessarily, in a way, all Tan Malaka's activities after he re-emerged in his Alam in the mid-forties were, as will be shown below, nothing else than the expression of his devotion to the youth or surau style of action, and of his belief in his guru-like influence on the Indonesian pemuda.

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72. Ibid., p. 102.

73. Interview with Soeharto, September 1963, quoted in part in Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, Java in a Time of Revolution: Occupation and Resistance, 1944-1946 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), pp. 275-276.

Madilog

*Madilog*, a lengthy philosophical work written by Tan Malaka in 1942 and 1943 was, in his own eyes, his supreme achievement, the treasury where his philosophical views were most completely and fully elaborated.<sup>74</sup> As he put it, Madilog was a new way of thinking; it was a *pusaka*,<sup>75</sup> an heirloom "acquired from the West" [from the rationalist, logical, Marxist-Leninist West, as he saw it] which he invited his Indonesian readers to study "humbly as openminded and honest pupils."<sup>76</sup> The Madilog way of thinking was proposed by Tan Malaka as a weapon against what he defined, in *Madilog* as well as in earlier writings,<sup>77</sup> as the old, mystical, idealistic, Oriental way of thinking [*ketimuran*],<sup>78</sup> still dominant, not merely in Indonesia, but in the whole of Asia too. Tan Malaka created Madilog for his countrymen, an Asian people "born into a world of mysticism," which, "like Medieval Europe," could not free itself of irrelevant philosophical questions, and where "there was no definition, no science . . . until the coming of the West."<sup>79</sup>

To stop at these quotations, however, would give a grossly distorted picture of the meaning of Madilog. Most significantly, *Madilog*

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74. Madilog is an acronym for Materialisme--Dialektika--Logika which can be roughly translated as Materialism--Dialectics--Logic (Reason).
75. Pusaka--magical or holy object, often inherited. The use of the term in Tan Malaka's writing may be only coincidental. But it is true, in one sense, that the fruits of Tan Malaka's intellectual exploration of the outside world was a *pusaka* indeed--no one knew what precisely it "contained," yet in spite of, or rather because of this, it provided a source of power to Tan Malaka in the Revolution of the forties. On secret knowledge as a source of power in the Javanese tradition, see Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, "The Languages of Indonesian Politics," Indonesia, 1 (April 1966), pp. 92-93.
76. Madilog, pp. 22 and 206.
77. Tan Malaka, Massa Actie (Djakarta: "Pustaka Murba," 1947; re-issue of the original Singapore edition of 1927), pp. 69-70: "You 55,000,000 people of Indonesia, you can not possibly become independent so long as you have not swept the 'dirt' of magic out of your minds, so long as you continue to value your ancient culture, full of error, passivity, and fossilized ideas, and so long as you still have the slave mentality. You must unite all economic and social forces at hand to fight Western imperialism, which is well organized but now internally divided, by using as your weapon the revolutionary proletarian spirit, viz., dialectical materialism. You must not yield to the Westerners in analytical thinking, honesty, enthusiasm, and readiness for any sacrifice. . . . Admit in all honesty that you will and must learn from the Westerners. . . . Only when your society has produced men who are better than a Darwin, a Newton, a Marx, or a Lenin, only then can you be proud."
78. Madilog, p. 206.
79. Ibid., pp. 24, 35, 49.

was "circulated at the request of the pemuda" for use in the Revolution where they were playing a leading role.<sup>80</sup> And indeed, as we shall see, Tan Malaka hoped that *Madilog* would be the fruit of his rantau, a concentration of accumulated knowledge to be transformed into a power in the Alam.

The most obviously striking feature of *Madilog* (already suggested by Tan Malaka's view that the fruit of his rantau was a *way of thinking*) is the extraordinary importance--given the fact that the book was presented as a Marxist work--attributed in it to the power of ideas, to the concept of *reason*. Throughout Tan Malaka's writings, in spite of the Marxist-Leninist terminology used, it is the power of ideas to stimulate social progress that is repeatedly stressed, rather than the dynamic force of class struggle. In general, Tan Malaka says very little about class struggle; rather, he talks simply in terms of helping people and, as suggested above, education was the "help" he made it his life mission to provide.

The role of the teacher in Minangkabau culture and in Tan Malaka's structure of experience undoubtedly had much to do with this aspect of *Madilog*. But, in addition, one should bear in mind the great importance that Minangkabau philosophy (or at least Minangkabau philosophy as the intellectuals of Tan Malaka's youth saw it) gave to *akal*--the ability to reason. In this Minangkabau view, through *akal* the "continuing exploration of the world potentialities" is carried on, the dynamic incorporation of outside [rantau] elements is realized, and Alam society progresses.<sup>81</sup> A deep Minangkabau belief that *akal* can be used to manipulate nature finds extreme expression in the widespread belief in the science of invulnerability.<sup>82</sup>

*Materialism* is the first of the concepts on which *Madilog* is based. Materialism in *Madilog*, however, has little in common with the usual Western meaning of that term. The basic axioms of Western materialism were for Tan Malaka of rather little significance. Besides *akal*, his primary concern was with *djiwa*--soul, spirit, energy, vitality. He evaluated animism, which he saw as based on the belief in *djiwa*, as the historical foundation of the *Madilog* way of thinking. Even when he wrote that "energy can change its form," he was actually arguing that the spirit, the soul is eternal:

According to *Madilog*, without body there is no vitality. Spirit or soul is only the specific vital force of a specific body, *but* like other forces, *it stops* [*berhenti*] with the death of the body. *It changes* into a chemical force after the body has returned to earth, water and

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80. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

81. There is some commonality between the Minangkabau concept of *akal* and what is described elsewhere as the modernist Islamic "preference for the application of *aql* [intellect and insight] in place of slavish submission to the old mujtahids and their school." See C. C. Berg, "Indonesia," in H. A. R. Gibb, ed., Whither Islam? A Survey of Modern Movements in the Moslem World (London: Gollancz, 1932), p. 271.

82. Abdullah, "Some Notes on the Kaba Tjindua Mato," p. 15, n. 29.

air. It changes to become the vital force of plants if the body is consumed by plants. It changes to become the vital force of animals if the body returns to the animal world directly as water or salt, or indirectly as plants. Finally, it changes once again to become the human spirit if, either directly as water, salt or oxygen, or indirectly, as food, vegetables, or meats, it enters the mouth of peasant or professor, worker or capitalist, rogue or priest, thief or Moslem teacher.<sup>83</sup>

Similarly, he showed great respect for the Minangkabau *pawang*--an animist shaman with magical powers. His argument as to why the *pawang*'s powers can be one of the Madilog values reveals again his special concept of materialism:

We see that the *pawang* needs a fingernail, a hair or a skull to effect his aim. . . . Regarded from the scientific point of view, the *pawang* does not entirely base his power on his own resources. He needs some kind of material object and because of that I say that his [animist] belief can not just be discarded."<sup>84</sup>

Unlike Western materialism, the materialism of Madilog appears as the negative, but mirror-like obverse image of cosmocentrism and idealism, belief in ghosts, in short, of "anything connected with mysticism and magic."<sup>85</sup> Tan Malaka's materialism is thus a kind of anthropocentric realism and pragmatism, if one may use such Western terms. Neither the world of ghosts nor the material world is the focus of his materialism, but rather the human being, intellectually exploring his environment. Materialism, in Tan Malaka's view, is above all a way of thinking which is realistic, pragmatic and flexible. The human being who thinks in the Madilog-materialistic way is primarily concerned with what is *dekat*--what is close to him, what affects him in the most immediate and direct way.<sup>86</sup> The materialistic way means to "seek results which are based on a sufficient quantity of evidence, evidence which has been experienced and checked."<sup>87</sup>

Similarly, *dialectics* in *Madilog* is a concept shaped to combat the intellectual passivity of the old Alam way of thinking. Tan Malaka equated this type of thinking with "dogmatism," which he defined as the kind of belief in supernatural powers which causes disbelief in man's intellectual explorations and his ability to change the material world. Its basic defect, in his eyes, was that it saw knowledge as limited and finite:

He [the mystic] will sit with hands folded in his lap, focus on his nose, and say *oum*, *oum*. . . . He will no

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83. *Madilog*, pp. 281-282. Emphasis added.

84. *Ibid.*, p. 282.

85. *Ibid.*, p. 206.

86. *Ibid.*, p. 370.

87. *Ibid.*, p. 206.

longer be able to express any criticism of the knowledge he has received and will not search for knowledge which is more complete. He will die with his knowledge because his knowledge is dead.<sup>88</sup>

The direct consequences of non-dialectical thinking were "self-deception," "passivity," "a slave mentality," and the "repression of the East by the Western colonial powers."<sup>89</sup> By contrast dialectics--the art of thinking in movement--rested on a conviction of the unceasing development of human thinking, and a belief in the permanent power of such thinking to change the material world. [If we were to try to find the most appropriate term for *dialektika*, we would probably choose the term *dynamism*. Significantly enough, Tan Malaka himself used this term in many passages of *Madilog* where "dialectics" would make no sense without further explanation.]

In sum, Tan Malaka's intention to bring back a "pusaka from the West" was not an expression of some inferiority complex nor an effort to implant a "correct," "modern" Western in the place of a traditional or Eastern way of thinking. On the contrary, Tan Malaka built his Madilog system under a strong feeling of obligation towards his Alam. He was convinced, he wrote, that to implant a Western philosophical system in an Eastern society was impossible for the time being; such an endeavor could have no good results, since this philosophy had emerged in Western society which was so different "in matters of climate, history, spiritual condition, and ideals."<sup>90</sup> He never ceased to view the West simply as a rantau whose only *raison d'être* was to enrich the Alam. It was Tan Malaka's obsession with his Alam and his belief in the Indonesian pemuda's ability to absorb the "good from the rantau," that stirred him to create Madilog. It was precisely his concept of Minangkabau culture which gave him such high hopes for Indonesia's capabilities. It is therefore quite understandable that there was no direct equivalence between Madilog materialism and dialectics and the concepts bearing the same names in Western culture. Tan Malaka was looking for qualities already inherent in his Alam--particularly in the Alam Minangkabau, on which to base his maturing philosophy. In fact both *ketimuran* and the Madilog way of thinking were expressions of these qualities. He saw the former as essential for attaining the latter; together they would determine what could finally be "brought from the rantau."

### The Concept of Indonesian History

In the traditional Minangkabau view, "history moves toward its goal but the foundation of the Alam and the rhythm of its development are supposed to be permanent. This conception is not simply a basis for perceiving the past . . . but, more important, a message for the future."<sup>91</sup>

For Tan Malaka, it was less class struggle than akal, or rational thought, that was the motor force of history. The course of history

88. Ibid., p. 207.

89. Massa Actie, pp. 69-70.

90. Madilog, p. 13.

91. Abdullah, "Modernization," p. 189.

was directed upwards, and its goal, the perfection of society, was Tan Malaka's highest hope, both as Minangkabau and as revolutionary. His belief in the purposeful and upward course of Indonesian history is most clearly expressed in the picture he drew of its final stage. This would be the age of a *free and socialist Indonesia*, an era when the Madilog way of thinking would fully prevail and would create a human paradise. But, since it was still far from realization at the time when *Madilog* was written, it could only be described in utopian terms. Nonetheless, this vision of the future is the heart of *Madilog*, and, at bottom, is its *raison d'être*. Above all, it gives Tan Malaka's view of history its strong Minangkabau connotations of a "message for the future."

The cultural values of the Madilog way of thinking will not win their ultimate battle until the era of free and socialist Indonesia commences. But *from the very beginning* of Indonesian history they existed. Since then they have always been of basic importance, representing a kind of axis of historical development; their prominence in any particular period's culture determined the character of contemporary events. The permanent existence of these values is stressed again and again in *Madilog*, but especially in the sections devoted to Tan Malaka's concept of the first period of Indonesian history, what he called *Indonesia Asli*, Authentic or Original Indonesia. It is through his description of this period, which posits the existence of common cultural values throughout Indonesian history, that a permanent foundation for Alam and its development is created.

Quite in accordance with the Minangkabau Weltanschauung, Tan Malaka's concept of history was always based on a perception of *conflict* as essential for any integration or progress. This can be seen most clearly in the way he described the middle period of Indonesian history. Entitled *The Hindu-Dutch Period*, it dated from the end of the Indonesia Asli period [the first centuries A.D.] up to the present. During this era, after the Indonesia Asli way of life and thought was disrupted, the course of the Indonesian history moved away from its axis, from the cultural values of Alam, from the right way of thinking; it moved *outwards*, in a fashion analogous to rantau. It was then that the prevailing *ketimuran* way of thinking arose, conflicting with the Asli style of thought. Thus, in its own way, it stimulated the development of the Alam and paved the way for the ultimate integration of the future free and socialist Indonesia. In Tan Malaka's vocabulary, the Hindu-Dutch period was an antithesis, conflicting with a thesis (Indonesia Asli), but necessary at the same time for an improvement of the thesis, for its elevation to a much higher level, and for changing it into a synthesis--Free and Socialist Indonesia.

#### Indonesia Asli

In Tan Malaka's view, the people of Indonesia Asli believed in a power inherent in all material and spiritual things.<sup>92</sup> They learned to estimate realistically both the power of nature and their own. They learned too how to use their power effectively; they were "more practical, more matter-of-fact, more power concerned with evidence . . . than any people in the world at that time, than the Indonesians themselves

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92. *Madilog*, p. 281.

since they began to mix with foreigners."<sup>93</sup> In general, the Indonesia Asli way of thinking was very close to, indeed prefigured, Madilog materialism. Similarly, the dynamism of Indonesia Asli, as described by Tan Malaka, was very close to what he called dialectics in *Madilog*; for the people of Indonesia Asli were "more energetic, more courageous in undertaking new endeavors, however great the danger, than any of their descendants."<sup>94</sup>

Significantly, the Asli way of thinking depended directly on the beneficial influence of the rantau. Tan Malaka wrote that it was precisely perantau who brought these brave qualities to the Alam of Indonesia Asli. On the eve of the historical era they reached the Indonesian archipelago on their epochal journey from Central Asia. In their long struggle with impassable jungles and mountains, their rantau way of life taught them a proto-Madilog way of thinking; they brought it to Indonesia together with their "already advanced knowledge of tools, crafts, agriculture, and astronomy."<sup>95</sup> As a Minangkabau, Tan Malaka considered this "good from the rantau" to be the condition sine qua non of any development of the Alam:

If the Indonesians who came to this archipelago from Central Asia had not brought with them the art of making tools from copper and iron, they would certainly have known no other tools than those used by our brothers-in-law in Irian or in Ulu Pahang in Malaya, or in the mountains of Luzon up to the present time.<sup>96</sup>

The same stimulus from the rantau gave rise the model political organization that Tan Malaka praised so highly in *Madilog*. The essential quality of this political organization he called *kerakjatan*, a word frequently translated as democracy. But in Tan Malaka's conception, it is a phenomenon of decidedly Minangkabau provenance. According to *Madilog*, Indonesia Asli developed, under perantau influence, a particular organization of society in which the chief (*datuk*) was "a leader who was loved by his own kinsmen, because he was elected from among them. . . ." Law and adat emerged there simply in order "to ensure the welfare of society."<sup>97</sup> The description accords very well with Minangkabau conceptions of the ideal Minangkabau political order.

Most important, in relation to the whole Madilog conception, Indonesia Asli was for a long period strong enough to safeguard its identity--its *keaslian*--meaning, in effect, to safeguard the balance between Alam and rantau. It was this capacity that gave Indonesia Asli its name; elsewhere in *Madilog* it is referred to either as Indonesia before "it mixed with foreigners" or as the epoch "when the

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93. *Ibid.*, p. 135. Both of the examples of traditional materialism cited on pp. 15 and 19 above are taken from Tan Malaka's description of Indonesia Asli.

94. *Ibid.*

95. *Ibid.*, p. 139.

96. *Ibid.*

97. *Ibid.*, p. 285. Note that *datuk* is a high Minangkabau title, and one that Tan Malaka himself held.

Indonesian people still possessed a highly developed sense of self-respect."<sup>98</sup> Tan Malaka gives a most unusual and striking illustration of this quality, namely, the phenomenon of *amok*. As he put it, *amok* "is not a symptom of [mental] disease, as some Western scholars suppose," it is not a kind of Asiatic madness. It is rather a man's most effective defense against excessive pressure or humiliation from the outside and against the consequent weakening of his *akal*:

A man who is cruelly humiliated or purposefully exploited, oppressed or abused *should* be angry. Indeed he must be angry if his humanity has not been completely destroyed. In short, there is an anger which is not appropriate and an anger that is. The latter I call pure [selfless], for if the urge [*nafsu*] to be angry has died, there dies with it the urge for revenge, the urge to destroy all that is evil and rotten in society. . . . If pure anger on the one hand leads to a curse and on the other hand arrogance leads to failure, grief, or regret,<sup>99</sup> then the curse of the *pawang* can be seen as a success.

### The Period of Darkness

The middle period in Tan Malaka's concept of Indonesian history began during the first centuries A.D. and was still "in effect" at the time he was writing *Madilog*. It is clear that its "contemporaneity" gave the period what Tan Malaka saw as its most significant features: for it was the era which Tan Malaka himself experienced, suffered from and fought against. Tan Malaka conceived the mission of his life as making revolution, and the most important hindrance to this mission as being the persistence of "middle period" ways of thinking. Thus the period of darkness became a focus of conflict not only in the development of the Alam, but in Tan Malaka's personal life as well.

The outlook of this period was non-materialist; it was based on thought alone and not on matter and experience.<sup>100</sup> "Gone was matter-of-factness. Gone was respect for evidence. Gone was *nuchterheid* [sobriety]. Gone was openmindedness."<sup>101</sup> As a consequence of an "idealist" view of history at that time, the necessity of history's progress toward the perfection of society was blurred. The historiography of the period did not bear a message for the future and did not help to move history forwards.<sup>102</sup> Because an anti-*Madilog* way of thinking predominated, there was a lack of *semangat* [spirit, enthusiasm] and initiative.<sup>103</sup> As a result, the way of life of this period was changed. The Indonesian people were transformed from the *perantau* of the Indonesia Asli epoch, into a *honkvast* [stick-

98. *Ibid.*, p. 284.

99. *Ibid.*

100. *Ibid.*, p. 290.

101. *Ibid.*, p. 137.

102. *Ibid.*, pp. 290-292.

103. *Ibid.*, p. 137.

in-the-mud] population.<sup>104</sup> Instead of *kerakjatan*, *keradjaan* prevailed. The rulers of the middle period were to a great extent foreign to the Indonesian spirit; they were exponents of either Hindu or Dutch culture. Moreover, for all their successful conquests, they did not try to spread their culture "seriously, sincerely, and directly" among "the Batak, Kubu, Dayak, Toradja, and other [Indonesian] peoples outside of Java." As for Java itself, they "planted or deepened the inferiority complex of the Javanese."<sup>105</sup>

As the common denominator of all of these evils, Tan Malaka pointed to the fact that in the dark period the Indonesians lost their identity, their *keaslian*, their belief in the permanent foundation of the Alam; the balance between Alam and rantau was disturbed and conflict stimulated by the rantau prevailed within the Alam. As one manifestation of this sad condition, he complained, "until now the Indonesian people still rely too much on help from the outside; Indonesians are no longer willing to roll up their own shirtsleeves."<sup>106</sup> *Indian and Dutch influences* in Indonesia were, according to Tan Malaka, the main cause of the evils of the period of darkness.

It was the cultural influence of the Indian "masters" which brought to an end the era of Indonesia Asli and which gave birth to the ensuing dark age.<sup>107</sup> The highest expression of this devastating influence on the Indonesian culture was the art of yoga. While amok was seen by the author of *Madi-log* as a manifestation of Asli Indonesian identity, self-confidence and dynamism, yoga was the "killing of all activity [movement] of the mind."<sup>108</sup> Another manifestation of Indian cultural influence on Indonesia strongly attacked in *Madi-log* were Mahatma Gandhi's concepts of Ahimsa and of "spiritual power" [*kodrat djiwa*]-the very opposite of the Indonesia Asli concept that power is contained in things and bodies of the material world [*kodrat semua benda*]. Both of these Gandhian concepts, according to Tan Malaka, contradicted akal; their meaning was "absolutely dark for an intelligent man."<sup>109</sup> If they were seriously applied, there would be no doctors, factories or science, indeed no progress at all.<sup>110</sup> The Indian caste system too, in contrast to *kerakjatan*, could give no hope, no possibility of an advancement of mankind.<sup>111</sup>

Dutch influence was repeatedly attacked by Minangkabau intellectuals from the end of the last century as a cause of disequilibrium within the Alam. For example, the decline of the traditional *penghulu*-ship caused by a Dutch-invented supra-nagari organization and the imposition of Western criminal law "was seen as a reflection of the weakening social ties and deviations from the Minangkabau paradigm

104. *Ibid.*, p. 122.

105. *Ibid.*, p. 403.

106. *Ibid.*, p. 137.

107. *Ibid.*, pp. 135-137.

108. *Ibid.*, p. 318.

109. *Ibid.*, p. 201.

110. *Ibid.*, p. 66.

111. *Ibid.*, p. 130.

from the alam."<sup>112</sup> When the coffee monopoly and corvée were introduced by the Dutch they were regarded as symbols of a generally intolerable condition. "Minangkabau referred to the time as a period in which *rodāt* [corvée], not adat, prevailed."<sup>113</sup> The whole Minangkabau emancipation movement at the turn of the century was in great part conceived as an effort to regain the old balance of adat culture disturbed by excessive Dutch influence. Even the most radical members of the movement tended to view Dutch capitalism mainly as a force disrupting the traditional pre-colonial Minangkabau World.<sup>114</sup>

Tan Malaka was a great admirer of dynamism and rationalism, and, as such, he had a very high regard for the kind of progress he saw and experienced in the West at the beginning of the present century. But he discovered only the opposite of progress in Dutch influence in Indonesia. It was not only that when he compared the Dutch and American economies during the First World War, he found Holland "backward" and far behind the requirements of its colonial empire.<sup>115</sup> More important, he found the Dutch mind surprisingly close to what he criticized in ketimuran: it was, in his view, full of fossilized notions, illogical, quarrelsome about trivial matters, while neglecting fundamental problems.<sup>116</sup> Dutch imperialism too merely "deepened the inferiority complex of the Indonesians."<sup>117</sup> It reinforced the old way of thinking, stunted the development of the Indonesian consciousness, and destroyed the happiness of the Indonesian people:

Friendship and faith between man and man have completely disappeared in a state of the capitalist era. . . . In the past, e.g., in the time of the family-state, the head of the family had no more power than what goodwill and friendly words could achieve. . . . The strength of the judiciary, the police and the jails [in capitalism are] things which, for example in the family-state of Minangkabau of a hundred years ago, were not to be found. . . . In Minangkabau, a hundred years ago, the family-state was democratic, everyone knew the laws and followed them. . . . The adat laws were common and had found their way into the heart and the thoughts of the whole Minangkabau people. However, after this 'people's jurisdiction' was replaced by the

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112. Abdullah, Schools and Politics, p. 7. Penghulu--head of a matrilineal political unit in Minangkabau society.

113. Ibid.

114. On this phenomenon among some groups within the Minangkabau communist movement during the twenties, see, for instance, Schrieke, "Causes and Effects," p. 155; "De Gang der Kommunistische Beweging ter Sumatra's Westkust, Deel I (Politiek gedeelte)," in Harry J. Benda and Ruth T. McVey, eds., The Communist Uprisings in Indonesia: Key Documents (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, Translation Series, 1969), p. 109.

115. DPkP, I, pp. 19-20.

116. Madilog, p. 21.

117. Ibid., p. 402.

'jurisdiction of the present government'--the people's knowledge of the laws has almost completely disappeared, as has their ability to argue. Remnants of this old tradition can be found in Minangkabau among the old people, men as well as women; they still know the adat and the laws by heart.<sup>118</sup>

In accordance with his dynamic concept of traditional Minangkabau culture, Tan Malaka could not see barriers of progress inherent to the Minangkabau World as the main reason for the frustration of the Minangkabau people. On the contrary, it was the suppression of the Minangkabau identity which was to be blamed. The Revolution--the solution of that frustration--had therefore to fight "in small part the remnants of feudalism, but for the greater part tyrannical Western imperialism. . . ."<sup>119</sup>

Like Tan Malaka's anti-Dutch attitude, his anti-Javanism and anti-Indianism can best be understood as part of his Madilog conception. He tended to equate the old ketimuran way of thinking with the island of Java and with Javanese culture, over which, he felt, Dutch and particularly Indian influences had been most strongly exercised. He was virtually systematic in his attacks on everything of any popularity, influence and value in Hindu-Javanese culture, as representing the bad qualities of the dark period.<sup>120</sup> He described the *wayang*--shadow-play--as having devastating effects, especially on Javanese pemuda. He saw the wayang as "childish stories, nonsense, unbelievable chatter." Wayang tales "do not stimulate intelligent thinking"; on the contrary, "none of their answers make sense."<sup>121</sup> It may be that the musician in Tan Malaka made his criticism of *gamelan* (traditional Javanese music), another of the more important Hindu-Javanese cultural values, more ambivalent:

For the author, the gamelan and the atmosphere around it have no equal in this world. The movements of the body in the *serimpi* make us feel we are lifted high above this vain world. The five tones of the Javanese scale often arouse feelings of sadness, serenity, depth and mysteriousness.

The Minangkabau in Tan Malaka, however, had the last word: "The objection to gamelan is perhaps that it is too soft [*halus*] for struggle [*perjuangan*]."<sup>122</sup>

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118. Tan Malaka, Parlement atau Sovjet? (Semarang: P.K.I., 1921), pp. 49 and 59. On p. 59 he observed: "The administration of justice in Russia is therefore almost identical to that in Minangkabau."

119. Massa Actie, p. 45.

120. It is interesting to note that Tan Malaka's views were evidently influenced by contemporary Dutch scholarly orthodoxy, which attributed much of Old Javanese civilization to Indian colonists and rulers. It was not until the thirties that scholars began to emphasize the authentic Javanese-ness of that civilization.

121. Madilog, pp. 374 and 136.

122. Ibid., p. 137.

The Djojobero prophecies predicting freedom for Java after a certain period of foreign rule were an important stimulus to the nationalist movement in Java in the twentieth century.<sup>123</sup> Its influence reached a climax just at the time that Tan Malaka was writing *Madilog*--during the Japanese occupation (1942-1945). For Tan Malaka, however, the Javanese king's prophecies were an extreme expression of the slave mentality, because, as he put it, "Djojobero was waiting for an Indian king [i.e., for outside help] to win its freedom for Java."<sup>124</sup> The most powerful ruler of Madjapahit, Hajam Wuruk, was in his view "a leader of a foreign caste," and a symbolic example of anti-popular *keradjaan*.<sup>125</sup> The Javanese organization Budi Utomo, whose founding in 1908 is generally celebrated as the beginning of the modern Indonesian nationalist movement, also got short shrift from Tan Malaka. It was "the laziest of all the bourgeois parties in Indonesia. Because of its timidity, like that of a lazy animal, it takes pride in its age . . . antiquated Borobudur, languid wajang and gamelan, all products of a culture of enslavement are added to and propagandized by them night and day."<sup>126</sup>

We may find some explanation of Tan Malaka's anti-Javanism in his experience as a political leader. His only practical experiences in mass political work were on Java and with the Javanese coolies contracted to the Senembah Corporation. From the difficulties he encountered, he may have come to associate "backwardness" with the Javanese. It is more likely, however, that Tan Malaka's attitude towards "Hindu-Javanese" culture simply reflected the anti-Javanism which pervaded the Minangkabau emancipation movement after the turn of the century. At the time of Tan Malaka's youth, indeed during the whole first half of this century, Minangkabau intellectuals tended to think in terms of a continuing opposition and conflict between what they saw as the dynamic, rationalist culture of Minangkabau and the soft, idealist civilization of Java. Quite naturally from their point of view, this opposition appeared one of the most striking obstacles to the building of an all-Indonesian nationalism. Minangkabau leaders repeatedly attacked sections of the Javanese emancipation movement for their alleged efforts "*voor de terugkeer naar het Hinduisme* [for a return to Hinduism]."<sup>127</sup>

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123. Djojobero was a legendary twelfth century ruler of Kediri (East Java). For a discussion of these prophecies and their political impact in the early part of the twentieth century, see Bernhard Dahm, Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969), pp. 3-10.

124. Madilog, p. 137.

125. Ibid., p. 403.

126. Massa Actie, p. 57.

127. The Minangkabau intellectuals' view of their tradition was evidently encouraged by the standard Dutch concept of Minangkabau society. For example, the Dutch Adviser for Native Affairs stated in 1918: "Jong Sumatra [the organ of the predominantly Minangkabau youth organization Jong Sumatranen Bond] . . . is, in contrast to the organ of Jong Java [the leading Javanese youth organization of the time] written in a generally very sober and practical style . . . [it has] a sound, critical perspective." See Hendrik Bouman, Enige Beschouwingen over de ontwikkeling van het Indonesisch nationalisme op Sumatra's Westkust (Groningen: Wolters,

They viewed their own movement's representatives as "men of sober understanding oriented towards economics and politics" as against the Javanese idealist orientation "towards art, philosophy and religion."<sup>128</sup> They rejected "Hindu-Javanese culture"--in almost the same phrases that Tan Malaka used--as a culture brought by foreign, Indian masters and encouraging a slave mentality among the Indonesian people.<sup>129</sup>

It may also be worth bearing in mind that Tan Malaka was writing *Madilog* just at the time when the quintessential "Hindu-Javanese" politician, Sukarno, was emerging as the central symbol of all-Indonesian nationalism and probable leader of the future independent state of Indonesia. As we shall see in the last section of this essay, Tan Malaka viewed himself as a principal opponent of Sukarno's. In this way, perhaps, the struggle between "Hindu-Javanese" and Minangkabau culture for predominance in the all-Indonesian movement merged in Tan Malaka's consciousness with his personal competition with Sukarno for leadership of the impending revolution.

In Tan Malaka's view, the whole of Indonesia and even vast neighboring areas) was originally culturally integrated through the Asli way of thinking.<sup>130</sup> In sharp contrast, ketimuran thinking, which dominated the dark period, was an expression of conflict *inside* Alam, and thus deeply dividing Indonesian culture, society and land. Accordingly, even though it prevailed in the middle period of Indonesian history, it could never be more than a part of Indonesian culture. Throughout this period, another stream of thought existed, which, however harshly suppressed, provided a link between the qualities of Indonesia Asli and those of the future Socialist society. This stream of thought, persisting through Indonesian history, manifested the permanency of the Alam foundation. In the period of darkness, the Asli tradition was carried on by Islam, which represented the permanent nucleus of Alam, its radiant center, and its dynamic thrust. Yet

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1949), pp. 60-61. It is indeed true that there is a certain calmness, gentleness and avoidance of open conflict in Javanese culture which contrasts with Minangkabau dynamism. Javanese *nrimo* (acceptance) vs. Tan Malaka's *dialektika* clearly stands for resignation vs. exploration. But there are also many common values; and the Javanese tradition has a strong military and imperial component which Tan Malaka generally underplays. The point here, however, is not the reality of the Javanese tradition, but rather Tan Malaka's conception of it.

128. Amir, chairman of the Jong Sumatranen Bond, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 60.
129. See, for example, the following remark of the well-known Minangkabau Islamic reformer and publicist, H. A. M. K. Amrullah (Hamka): ". . . It was precisely Buddhism that made Java so easily dominated." Amir, too, argued that "they are proud of the Borobudur, not realizing that this monument was the creation of the Hindu overlords who imposed forced labor on the Javanese." For both quotations, see *ibid.*, pp. 49, 50.
130. In the pre-Hindu period, he believed, Asli characteristics were widespread over a huge area embracing most of Southeast Asia and roughly corresponding to what was to become the territory of the future socialist Federation of Aslia. See below, pp. 33-35.

the period was indeed dark, because Indonesian history during its upward course--towards the perfection of society--deviated outwards, away from the axis, and the radiance of the nucleus was dimmed. Given this perspective, it was natural that Islam meant a great deal to Tan Malaka:

Even though the events of 1917 stirred up a flooding wave of passion in my pemuda heart, carrying me away and sweeping me along downstream to the present day, my interest in Islam has always continued.<sup>131</sup>

Though he often theorized on the role of organized labor, he almost never mentioned workers' solidarity as directly affecting his personal life. In striking contrast, the solidarity of Moslems is described in scattered passages and perhaps half-unconsciously, as being of help to him in the difficult years of his last rantau.<sup>132</sup> It is perhaps not surprising that some of his Minangkabau contemporaries felt justified in regarding him as an Islamic leader.<sup>133</sup>

Tan Malaka acknowledged the Alam Minangkabau as a decisive influence in giving Islam such an important place in his conceptual system:

The source I had for [learning about] Islam was a living source. As I have already mentioned in passing, I was born into a devout Islamic family. At the time when the history of Islam for the Indonesian people was, as it were, just dawning, an *alim ulama* was born into this family who up till now is still considered a saint. . . . When I was still a boy I could already interpret [*tafsir*kan] the Quran and was made an assistant teacher.<sup>134</sup>

According to C. C. Berg, "Hinduism in Sumatra has influenced Islam to a smaller extent than has been the case in Java, and therefore, Islam appears there in a much purer form."<sup>135</sup> New modernist currents in Islam, which reached the archipelago from the Arabian West at the turn of the century, "filtered down to Indonesia, at first principally through members of the communistically oriented Minangkabau society. . . ."<sup>136</sup> It was Islam that became the ideological expression of the Minangkabau merchants' exceptional economic adaptability and enterprise.<sup>137</sup> The basic idea of Islamic modernism,

131. Madilog, p. 343.

132. See, e.g., DPkP, I, p. 160; II, pp. 32 and 34.

133. See, for instance, Hamka's introduction to Tan Malaka, Islam dalam tindjauan Madilog, 4th ed. (Djakarta: Widjaya, 1951), pp. 3-4.

134. Madilog, p. 342.

135. C. C. Berg, as quoted in Bouman, Enige Beschouwingen, p. 43.

136. Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, p. 46.

137. On their political activities at the very beginning of the all-Indonesia nationalist movement, see R. Van Niel, The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite (The Hague: van Hoeve, 1960), pp. 86, 88-89. On the relation between Indonesian Islamic and entrepreneurial orientations, see W. F. Wertheim, Indonesian Society in

to acquire Western knowledge and methods and to purify Islam in order to make it "a weapon for social and political reformers,"<sup>138</sup> fitted nicely into the prevailing concept of Minangkabau culture. No wonder, therefore, that the Minangkabau intellectuals at that time were strongly influenced by reform Islam, used it effectively as a weapon in their emancipation struggle, and saw a basic affinity between Islamic and basic Minangkabau values. No wonder, too, that as Islam became increasingly recognized as a driving force within the all-Indonesian nationalist movement,<sup>139</sup> Minangkabau intellectuals tended to view Islam as a symbol of their own cultural superiority in the all-Indonesian movement and of a predestined leading role for Minangkabau in the Indonesian future.

Repressive Dutch policies did not succeed in eliminating Islam as an important element in Minangkabau cultural and political life.<sup>140</sup> On the contrary, for many Minangkabau--and *Madilog* is a clear example of such a view--Dutch persecution of Islam was seen as disrupting or causing a disequilibrium in Alam. The Islamic struggle against the Dutch unbelievers (*kafir*) was understood by these Minangkabau as an integral part of the struggle to regain the lost balance within the Alam Minangkabau.<sup>141</sup> Even the communist movement in West Sumatra was, to some extent, influenced by the unifying symbol of Islam. Young and inexperienced branches of the Party throughout the early twenties retained a strong religious orientation.<sup>142</sup> This trend is well illustrated by the career of one of Tan Malaka's closest followers, Djamaluddin Tamin. He began as a teacher of a *tawalib* school, teaching "modernist" Islam. According to a contemporary Dutch source, he "succeeded in reconciling 'the science of the regulation of the community for the benefit of the masses living in misery and poverty' with the 'intentions and requirements of the true Islamic faith.'"<sup>143</sup>

In Tan Malaka's concept of Islam, we encounter the cultural values already familiar to us from his descriptions of the Indonesia Asli and Madilog ways of thinking. For Islam, according to Tan Malaka,

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Transition: A Study of Social Change, 2nd rev. ed. (The Hague: van Hoeve, 1959), pp. 212-214.

138. H. A. R. Gibb, Modern Trends in Islam (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947), p. 42.
139. According to Bouman, Islam, through its emphasis on the solidarity of all Moslems, functioned as "an active factor for breaking out of regional nationalism." Enige Beschouwingen, p. 42.
140. Abdullah, "Adat and Islam," pp. 18ff.
141. See ibid., pp. 23-24, where a clear expression of the Minangkabau view of Islam as an inseparable part of the Minangkabau cultural pattern can be found.
142. On the "Islamic communist movement" in Minangkabau, see Bouman, Enige Beschouwingen, pp. 68-71; Schrieke, "Causes and Effects," passim; McVey, The Rise, pp. 175-176; Ju. V. Maretin, "Adat, Islam i politicheskaiia bor'ba u Minangkabau," Sovetskaia etnografiia, no. 6 (1964), p. 63.
143. See Benda and McVey, eds., The Communist Uprisings, p. 103.

realistic thinking is fundamental:

But the Arabs were not Hindus. Their soaring thoughts always came back down to earth. And indeed flight back and forth between clouds and earth can be very fruitful. Didn't a scientist like Newton and an inventor like Edison have to be able to "fly" in their thinking? But they "flew" with material things and also according to definite laws.<sup>144</sup>

Rationality is another important quality of Islamic thinking:

In [the accounts of] the battles of Mohammed (may the Lord bless him and give him peace!) we won't come across one thirteenth of the magical tricks of Ardjuna and Sri Rama. . . . In all the battles of Mohammed . . . there is nothing that defies rationality [akal].<sup>145</sup>

Islam, moreover, had also contributed to what he conceptualized as good from his own rantau to modern Western culture:

These more scientific among the [Christian, Western] historians admit that the Islamic culture of the Middle Ages formed a bridge between Greek and Roman culture on the one side, and contemporary Europe on the other.<sup>146</sup>

Islam brought Greek philosophy to Christianity which had hitherto been based purely on dogma and faith. A physician and philosopher, Ibnu Rushdi, famous in the West under the name Averroes, a pupil of the great Aristotle . . . was viewed by the Christian West of the Middle Ages just as Marxism is viewed by the capitalist world today. Christian students who returned home to Western or Northern Europe from Spain with diplomas from their Arabic teachers of philosophy, were regarded as revolutionaries by the Christian priests. Three Averroist universities in Italy developed "rationalism" as Islam's left-wing in Europe!<sup>147</sup>

Significantly, Mohammed brought his teachings to his countrymen from the rantau. He was twenty-five when he began his extensive travels.

Only then did he find place and time to clear his mind, to turn over, refine, correct, and deepen his thinking about [all sorts of] questions. . . .<sup>148</sup>

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144. Madilog, p. 346.

145. Ibid., pp. 326-327.

146. Ibid., p. 324.

147. Ibid., p. 325.

148. Ibid., p. 345.

At various lonely and silent places in the mountains outside of Mecca, many questions emerged. There are no clouds in the Arabian sky at night. Illuminated by the moon and stars it was bound to attract a serious man. No wonder that pemuda Mohammed was goaded by questions such as who directs the course of the moon and the millions of stars in so exact an order? Who lets fall the rain that brings life to plants, animals and men? What is the origin and what is the future of mankind? . . . No letters or schools could give him living material like this. Rather the living material he had enabled Mohammed bin Abdullah to create new letters and new schools.<sup>149</sup>

In Tan Malaka's view, Islamic thought is highly conscious of history's progress towards the perfection of society; thus, Islamic historiography is incomparably more advanced than "idealist" Hindu historiography.<sup>150</sup> It is from this consciousness that the dynamism of Islam in the struggle for perfection of society arises. In the Pantheon built by Tan Malaka at the end of *Madilog* to commemorate the great moments of Indonesian and world history, a prominent place is given to "heroes of Islam."<sup>151</sup> They fought for the "Islamic *suwarga* [paradise]," "a *suwarga* which is far from being chilly and cold like the Buddhist Nirwana or lonely like the heaven of the Prophet Jesus."<sup>152</sup> The importance of Islam in Indonesian history was all the greater because of its unifying power which he saw as inherent in the Islamic outlook. The greatest achievement of Mohammed, in Tan Malaka's eyes, was his success in building a "unity under one leadership inspired by one God."<sup>153</sup>

Tan Malaka's high esteem for Islam was evidently one of the reasons for the support he gave during early twenties to the idea of a cooperation between the Indonesian Communist Party and the Comintern on one side, and the Indonesian Sarekat Islam and the international Pan-Islamic movement on the other.<sup>154</sup> He admired Islam, however, as an expression of *Madilog* values. Whenever he considered that Indonesian Islamic political leaders departed from those values, he had only the harshest language for them: they were anti-Chinese, willing to exploit beliefs in mysticism and magic, dishonest, demagogic, and "with absolutely no understanding of class

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149. *Ibid.*, pp. 346-347.

150. *Ibid.*, p. 343.

151. *Ibid.*, pp. 403-404.

152. *Ibid.*, p. 349.

153. *Ibid.*, p. 347.

154. On Tan Malaka's speech urging the preservation of Islamic-communist unity at the Eighth Congress of the Sarekat Islam, December 1921, see *DPkP*, I, p. 74. On his high regard for the chief Sarekat Islam leader, H. O. S. Tjokroaminoto, see *ibid.*, pp. 68-69. For his pro-Pan-Islamic speech at the Fourth Comintern Congress, see above, p. 11.

conflict or revolutionary tactics and leadership."<sup>155</sup>

### The Federation of Aslia

The course of Indonesian history would end, in Tan Malaka's conception, with the emergence of a Free and Socialist Indonesia. The name Tan Malaka gave to the country of his dream was *Aslia*. He explained the name as an abbreviation of "Federation of Asia and Australia."<sup>156</sup> Yet by the sound of the word, the reader might initially assume Aslia to be an acronym for *Asia Asli*. As I will show presently, this assumption would not be wholly mistaken.

In Tan Malaka's view, technological progress was one of the basic attributes of the Madilog way of thinking and of life. The locomotive was perhaps for the Minangkabau intellectual at the turn of the century one of the most impressive symbols of the modern world. The same

155. Massa Actie, p. 60.

156. See Thesis, p. 62. Tan Malaka considered his planned book Gabungan Asliā [The Federation of Aslia] to be, together with his autobiography and Madilog, his political testament. However, he did not finish the book before the end of the war. (Madilog, p. 7; DPkP, II, p. 137.) According to the article on Tan Malaka in Ensiklopedia Indonesia (Bandung: van Hoeve, 1954-1956), p. 1318, the meaning of Pari, the name of the party he founded in Bangkok in 1927, was changed in 1946 from Partai Republik Indonesia (Party of the Indonesian Republic) to Proletaris Aslia Republik Internasional (International Republic of the Proletariat of Aslia). The article cites as evidence two booklets by Tan Malaka: Manifesto Djakarta (1945) and Pari (1946). (Only the second of these was available to me.) In Pari: Partai Republik Indonesia (Bukittinggi: Nusantara, 1946), p. 12, however, Tan Malaka simply says that Proletaris Aslia Republik Internasional is the "deeper meaning" of Pari.

As possible sources of the Aslia concept, the following come to mind: first, Tan Malaka was one of the few Indonesians of his generation to have travelled widely in Southeast Asia (while his contemporaries, if they travelled at all, typically went to Western Europe or the Near East, he lived in or stayed at Rangoon, Bangkok, Singapore and Manila); second, his close contacts with leading Filipino nationalists, including Manuel Quezon and José Abad Santos, may have encouraged him to think in Aslia terms, as Pan-Malay ideas were current in that circle; third, Tan Malaka recalled that as far back as 1923, when he was "given authority to supervise the communist movement in all the Southern lands and Australia," the assignment gave him "the suggestion, the idea, that all these countries should be federated into one. . . . Unity of geography, climate, race, economy and psychology had been strengthened by the unity of imperialist enemies under the reins of British imperialism." (Thesis, pp. 59-60.) In Madilog (p. 395), Tan Malaka named as the component parts of Aslia "Burma, Siam, Annam, Malaka, Inner [Sempit] Indonesia, the Philippine Islands and Equatorial Australia.

train was for Tan Malaka a symbol of his Aslia dream. Listen to the song of a train travelling through Aslia, and you will catch the country's atmosphere:

Just look at this machine! How hard it works! The smoke of its breath is puffing out! I feel the heat of its sweat. Listen to its whistle warning: Step aside! Step aside! I'm running! Don't get in my way! How many thousands of kilos of goods I am carrying as I speed on my course! How many hundreds of souls ride behind me! Men, women, girls, boys, children and babies! Step aside, step aside, I cry again. Your danger is my shame! I am responsible for your safety, I must keep to my promise. One minute late destroys my reputation. My brother, the machinist, is directly responsible. James Watt was my grandfather's name. Fast, sure and safe is my slogan. Perfection is my future!<sup>157</sup>

Post-capitalist Aslia was conceptualized in *Madilog* as having a level of technological advancement incomparably higher than the Indonesia Asli of the Iron Age. Does this mean that in its Aslia stage, Indonesian history would at last, as it were, cross the barrier between "traditional" and "modern"? Does it indicate that in this Utopia, the Minangkabau paradigm would lose its importance and meaning? To answer these questions, we must look more closely at Tan Malaka's Aslia dream.

In the traditional Minangkabau conception, the world emerged, grew and continues to grow through the incorporation of new lands from the rantau in wider and wider circles around Mount Merapi, where the first ancestors of Minangkabau alit from heaven. The three regions (*luhak*) around Mount Merapi which were first settled were viewed as "the static heartland"--the motherland which gave birth to the whole Alam Minangkabau. Without the three *luhak* around Mount Merapi, the continued existence of the Minangkabau World was not thinkable.<sup>158</sup>

Tan Malaka's Aslia, too, had its heartland. The geographical position and character of this heartland provides a key to the meaning of the concept, since it is the most emphasized characteristic of the Federation. This center is described by Tan Malaka as having its axis "near the equator, roughly demarcated by a line drawn from Bondjol to Malaka."<sup>159</sup> Thus the circle is closed. The heart of the future Aslia of Tan Malaka's dreams was also the center of his beloved motherland, the Alam Minangkabau. In this region Tan Malaka foresaw the rise of "the most important industrial center in Aslia, if not the world."<sup>160</sup> The destiny of the Federation would be determined by

157. *Madilog*, p. 396.

158. Abdullah, *Schools and Politics*, p. 3.

159. It is typical of Tan Malaka's Minangkabau outlook that the focal point of his Aslia, Bondjol, is to be found only with difficulty on a map of modern Indonesia; it represents, however, in the Minangkabau World, the famous fortress of Tuanku Imam Bondjol (1772-1864), a Minangkabau national hero, Islamic leader, and stubborn fighter against the Dutch.

160. *Madilog*, p. 395.

the very existence of this center. For, throughout the history of Indonesia, whenever a ruler endeavored to "unite Greater Indonesia, he had to pay full attention" to the Bondjol-Malaka axis because of its strategic, diplomatic and economic value.<sup>161</sup>

In his concept of the Bondjol-Malaka center, Tan Malaka expressed in the clearest way his belief in a Minangkabau cultural mission in Indonesian and Southeast Asian history. His belief is sometimes expressed in even stronger terms than those employed by the most ardent conventional Minangkabau nationalists.<sup>162</sup> He proposed to reformulate their favored slogan "The Moluccas were the past, Java is the present, Sumatra is the future" as "Sumatra was the pioneer, Java is the present, and the Indonesia's future may well return to Sumatra once again."<sup>163</sup> He felt that the Indonesian population would eventually be concentrated in the Sumatra-Malaka area.<sup>164</sup> There the economic center of Indonesia would arise, and, because economic activity is "the means for the existence and formation of culture. . . , the Bondjol-Malaka axis will eventually become a cultural axis as well."<sup>165</sup>

One reason Tan Malaka adduces for assigning so exceptional a position and mission to the Bondjol-Malaka area is that throughout history this area manifested the same cultural qualities which gave Indonesia Asli and Islam such historic roles.

Sumatra acted as a pioneer when it brought Islam to Java. . . . Sitting equally low, standing equally tall was a principle not to be found in Hindu-Javanese society. If a basis of this type, a basis of kerakjatan, is to be the standard, then we must look to Minangkabau society in its days of glory. . . . Even if Minangkabau is behind Java in literature and such arts as dance and music, Minangkabau technology and economics are not behind those of Java at all. . . . Indeed, in so far as irrigation techniques are concerned, Minangkabau is ahead of Java and all other parts of Asia as well. . . .<sup>166</sup>

Indeed, in his eyes, so far as trade and industry were concerned, "The prophecy 'Sumatra is the future' has already come true."<sup>167</sup>

Not only is the Bondjol-Malaka area is to be the center of Aslia, but no other important city or area mentioned in Tan Malaka's descrip-

161. Ibid.

162. Bouman quotes Hamka, for example, as comparing Minangkabau's role in Indonesian history to that of Prussia in the history of Germany. (Enige Beschouwingen, p. 90.)

163. Madilog, p. 398.

164. Ibid., pp. 398-399.

165. Ibid., p. 400.

166. Ibid., p. 399.

167. Ibid.

tion of the Federation. Furthermore, Aslia is viewed as being created by a radiation of the Minangkabau culture from its static heartland. There are only wider and wider concentric circles round the core, the areas with smaller and smaller significance for Aslia's development: the Bondjol-Malaka axis, Sumatra, Indonesia, and finally Greater Indonesia.

According to Taufik Abdullah, during the independence movement,

Experience abroad and awareness of ideas developing there helped the perantau to formulate new and enlarged meanings for traditional conceptions about the alam Minangkabau. The perantau introduced the notion of a unity of ideas and faith and a unity of destiny with people outside Minangkabau. . . . By these conceptions of a greater unity, the perantau threatened to eliminate existing adat ideas about an ever-expanding alam in geographic terms and at the same time to weaken the traditionally centripetal nature of the alam Minangkabau.<sup>168</sup>

Yet I suspect that as far as the perantau Tan Malaka was concerned this was not exactly the case. He too introduced notions of a unity of ideas and faith, and a unity of destiny with people outside Minangkabau. But this did not at all lead him to weaken his accent on the Alam-rantau balance in his Weltanschauung. On the contrary, it was above all his rantau experience (and perhaps his isolation from the Minangkabau World which changed so rapidly in the first half of this century) that stimulated its "traditional" aspects. His view of Aslia remained definitely Minangkabau-centered as we have just seen, and his view of the world [Alam together with rantau] remained no less "traditionally" centripetal. At the same time, he was always very conscious of the non-Aslia world. In accordance with the traditional Minangkabau view of rantau, he considered the permanent existence of the outside as necessary for the development of Alam. In *Madilog* Aslia is to be just one of the eight components of the future socialist world.<sup>169</sup> Even the eighth he admired the least--Hindustan--would, he hoped, reach a socialist stage of development, i.e., would eventually overcome the burden of Hindu culture.<sup>170</sup> And his affection for another eighth, China, was a clear expression of his belief that all over the world certain cultural values would prevail, which would make the rantau a potent source of stimulation to Alam forever.<sup>171</sup>

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168. Abdullah, Schools and Politics, pp. 21-22.

169. The other parts would be: North America, South America, China, Indo-Iran, Africa, Western Europe, and the Soviet Union. (See Pari, p. 47.) On other occasions he substituted "Hindustan" for "Indo-Iran."

170. He suggested, hopefully, that the creation of the figure of Hanuman, the white ape of the Indian Ramayana epic, was a form of disguised mockery by "the Indian Asli people" of their white Aryan conquerors.

171. Tan Malaka praised the Chinese for what were in effect Asli or Madilog qualities. He wrote that "the Chinese scholars based their knowledge on proof and evidence," "they had their feet on the ground." (Madilog, p. 82.) The values of animism and

Such, I believe, was Tan Malaka's view of Indonesian history. I have tried to argue, in this section, that Tan Malaka conceptualized history from the point of view of a Minangkabau perantau; that he saw it as a process rooted in the Alam and as having as its goal the perfection of the Alam. I have also tried to show that in Tan Malaka's thinking, the course of Indonesian history--quite like the course of his personal life--was periodically associated with the cultural values of Alam and periodically with the rantau sphere. Indonesian history, and Tan Malaka's life, were, in this perspective, moved by nothing other than their relation to the cultural values of the Minangkabau World; their progress was hindered and their meaning blurred only when their identification with Alam, their *keaslian*, weakened.

Concept and Reality--Tan Malaka's  
Return to Indonesian Politics

An individual and his thought [akal] are the most important forces moving the Alam in Minangkabau. For Tan Malaka, as we have seen, ways of thinking determined the course of Indonesian history, and the significance he attached to the role of a personality in history is clear from the fact that he made the concept of his own life the second most important part of his system of consciousness.<sup>172</sup> This does not necessarily mean, however, that Tan Malaka's philosophy was introverted. He measured the strength and significance of a personality and/or its thinking primarily by their ability to move the material world, to contribute to the well being of a collective body. Accordingly, the points of intersection between the course of Tan Malaka's perantau life on the one side, and that of the development of Alam on the other--in other words, his returns back to the Alam--were what he regarded as the decisive periods of his personal career. Only then could he cross from the world of ideas into the real world [*melangkah dari dunia-pikiran ke dunia jang sesungguhnya*] of Indonesian politics.<sup>173</sup> Only then could his knowledge, the power he had accumulated on the rantau, be used, only then could the fruit of his rantau ripen.

dynamism were, in his view, "the foundations of basic Indonesian-Chinese similarities." (*Ibid.*, p. 355.) One can feel Tan Malaka's deep affection for the Chinese common man on many pages of his autobiography. The sympathy and human warmth that he received while in China were certainly one major source of this affection.

172. In the weight he gives to the concept of his own life, Tan Malaka makes a striking contrast to most other revolutionary leaders of Asia. As one can see, for instance, in some parts of Luis Taruc's autobiography or from Edgar Snow's remarks on Mao Tse-tung's inability to tell stories of his personal life, these leaders, by identifying themselves with the movements they led, in almost cosmocentric fashion, depersonalized the picture of their undoubtedly exciting lives. See Edgar Snow, *Red Star Over China* (New York: Grove Press, 1961), p. 121; and Luis Taruc, "Born of the People: The Life of Luis Taruc and the Hukbalahap" (typescript, dated June 1949, in my possession), esp. p. 138.

173. *DPkP*, III, p. 39.

Everything of any value in a Minangkabau individual and in his akal should be directed towards the "collective" and the "real"; more than that, there should be a permanent, real and dynamic presence of both, Alam and rantau, in the anthropocentric akal of a Minangkabau perantau. Alam and rantau should be unceasingly conflicting within the individual, never mutually isolated. The perantau's akal provides the link between them; their meaning or their real existence, therefore, can not change independently of the perantau's consciousness. Thus, *in the model case*, on his return back, the perantau is able to incorporate in his conceptual system the clash between his *concept* created in the rantau, and the *reality* of Alam. Let us now see if this happened in *the particular case* of Tan Malaka's second and last return to the real world of Indonesian politics.

Both Tan Malaka's view of his life and his view of Indonesian history were parts of one conceptual system. They were built out of common cultural values, and their periodization was adjusted to a common rhythm. Tan Malaka's two returns were conceptualized as concurrent with two of the most important milestones of Indonesian history's movement toward the perfection of society--the revolutionary upheavals of the early twenties and the Revolution of the mid-forties. The biological limits of his life accentuated his climactic concept of time still further: the aging and ill revolutionary necessarily saw his second return as the last. Consequently, he had to conceive it as the ultimate thrust of his rantau power into Alam. Concurrent Indonesian political developments had to be the decisive, successful Revolution. Thus, his second return was, in his view, the point at which the trajectory of Indonesian history and the course of his own life would intersect and join in the ultimate thrust of Madilog values into the Alam--the thrust which would bring the epochal struggle for a Free and Socialist Indonesia to its victorious conclusion.

In July 1942, Tan Malaka returned to his motherland after his years in China and later in Singapore.<sup>174</sup> His second rantau, almost exactly twenty years long, was now over. Where the thrust of the power he had accumulated during these years would depend on what he saw as the three main factors of Indonesian politics at the time, the Japanese military, the personality of Sukarno, and the pemuda. He conceptualized the two first as forces of the old way of thinking. The third factor, however, represented the highest expression of Madilog qualities.

Tan Malaka's deep affection for the pemuda has already been mentioned. During Tan Malaka's second rantau it became the most important influence on his consciousness. Already during the last two years of the Japanese occupation of Indonesia, he was concerned primarily with the pemuda. Working under an alias as a clerk for a Japanese company in a remote part of West Java, he organized a group of young people around himself. He lectured them on the falseness of Japanese propaganda, encouraged them to spread a "spirit of mutual help" among the other Indonesians in the area, and organized along with them theatrical performances of a covertly anti-Japanese and overtly anti-imperialist nature.<sup>175</sup> After the Revolution began in August 1945, Tan Malaka construed its internal politics as a

174. Madilog, pp. 7 and 17.

175. DPkP, II, pp. 160-162.

struggle between the *golongan tua* [Older Group], i.e., that of Sukarno and Hatta, on one side and the vanguard of the Revolution, the People and the pemuda, on the other.<sup>176</sup> As he put it, he had finally encountered "after a winding journey the group [he] had been looking for . . . the group of the pemuda." He now identified himself with the pemuda, "mixed with them as oil with oil, water with water."<sup>177</sup>

Sukarno, in Tan Malaka's view, was an embodiment of all the bad qualities of Hindu-Javanese culture. Worst of all, Sukarno's way of thinking contradicted Madilog materialism and dialectics. He does not "employ . . . a revolutionary way of thinking and a correct Philosophy of Revolution."<sup>178</sup> He changed his political philosophy opportunistically several times during his life.<sup>179</sup> He was a "Great Banteng of Indonesia."<sup>180</sup> His style was "*grande éloquence* combined with *grande élégance à la Sukarno*,"<sup>181</sup> and he exploited it "not for arousing conviction based on understanding of reality and rational, clear calculation," but the reverse: "With his thundering, resonant, persuasive voice, Bung Karno is able to intoxicate, to hypnotize any meeting of the common people." Political work of this sort could "arouse the people's hopes and give them dreams," but at the same time "it can conceal actions of a compromising nature, and camouflage thereby what is in fact anti-Mass Action [i.e., anti-revolutionary] activity."<sup>182</sup>

Sukarno was also guilty of an elitist, "keradjaan"-like attitudes towards the Indonesian common people. From the very outset, Tan Malaka's own "kerakjatan" is described in his autobiography in such a way as to build a striking contrast with Sukarno. While Tan Malaka reached Indonesia on the poorest prahu imaginable, without a place even to sit down, in the dead of night, Sukarno (who was returning from his own exile at about the same time) sailed for Djakarta on board a steamer "accompanied by a man from the Kempeitai."<sup>183</sup> While Sukarno was enjoying the good life of the Djakarta political elite, Tan Malaka was working with the most miserable victims of Sukarno's policy of cooperation with the Japanese--the *rōmusha*, peasants recruited for forced labor. While Sukarno was hypnotizing the masses, Tan Malaka suffered together with them, organizing a public kitchen, a field hospital, and self-supporting cooperatives for them, arranging funerals and entertainment for them, and preparing them for Independence.<sup>184</sup>

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176. DPkP, III, pp. 58 and 60.

177. Madilog, p. 8.

178. DPkP, III, p. 78.

179. Ibid., pp. 46-48.

180. DPkP, II, p. 164.

181. DPkP, III, p. 48.

182. Ibid.

183. DPkP, II, p. 129; and Madilog, p. 9.

184. DPkP, II, pp. 167-169.

Like Tan Malaka's conceptual system in general, his view of Sukarno was part of contemporary Minangkabau thought. At the very beginning of Sukarno's political career, he was the target of strong criticisms by his Minangkabau contemporaries. According to one account, for example, an article appeared in *Tjaja Soematra* in 1932 "strongly disapproving of the fact that the public during political meetings on Java, *inter alia* in Sukabumi, has, as it were, fought for the honor of shaking Ir. Sukarno's hand--and encouraged their children to do likewise--as though he were a sheikh. On Sumatra," the article concluded, "where there are plenty of fiery and firebreathing orators, nothing of the sort has ever happened."<sup>185</sup>

From his view of Sukarno, Tan Malaka's conception of the Japanese occupation authorities emerged. According to Tan Malaka, Sukarno's main sin was that by his policy of collaboration with the Japanese administration, he tried to coax Indonesian independence from a foreign power, that in effect he relied upon foreigners for help. This was the sheerest expression of the *ketimuran* way of thinking and the slave mentality that it encouraged. Nothing could contrast more sharply with Tan Malaka's own view of Indonesian independence as the climax of the renaissance of Indonesian keaslian. Tan Malaka's own non-collaboration became one of the most important values of his second return.<sup>186</sup> The later part of his *rantau* is described as a permanent flight ahead of advancing Japanese military forces, first in China, then in Southeast Asia, and finally in Indonesia itself.<sup>187</sup> Indeed, it was the Japanese in Indonesia who represented, in his view, the most powerful stimulus to non-*akal* fanaticism and exaltation of *ketimuran* among the Indonesian people.<sup>188</sup>

The first three years of Tan Malaka's second return (1942-1945) strongly resemble the start of his first successful return, the time when he worked for the Senembah Corporation in East Sumatra. And the resemblance seems to have had an influence on the structure of Tan Malaka's experience in the early forties. As in 1919, Tan Malaka underwent a kind of a transition between *rantau* and true return. He decided not to enter Indonesian politics at once. He did not call on the friends he knew from the early twenties in Holland, though some of them were now very important figures in Indonesian political life

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185. Quoted in Bouman, Enige Beschouwingen, p. 61.

186. There are several statements cited in Anderson, Java (pp. 276-277), which suggest some late war-time contacts with certain Japanese officials. But given that the views of these Japanese (mainly from the Naval Liaison Office in Djakarta) were clearly at variance with official Japanese occupation policy, these purported contacts would have had nothing to do with the Japanese war machine as such. (Letter from Benedict Anderson to the author.)

187. According to his autobiography, it was Japanese aggression which forced him to leave Shanghai in 1932, Amoy in 1937, and Singapore in 1942. (DPkP, II, p. 133.)

188. Here Tan Malaka uses ketimuran not only to mean passive, superstitious, anti-Madilog thinking, but also to refer to the Japanese propaganda line on the East's superiority to the West.

and, as he wrote, he could easily have entered the world of the Indonesian elite through these personal contacts.<sup>189</sup> On several occasions, however, he recalled, he was on his way to visit Sukarno, but always found "the iron fence of Dai Nippon" standing between him and the collaborating leaders.<sup>190</sup>

As if still on the rantau he "stayed alone amidst my people, who often called on my name without knowing my face."<sup>191</sup> Although physically back in his Alam, he still "had to use all [his] faculties of vigilance which had been sharpened during more than twenty years of flight."<sup>192</sup> Indeed, no one could experience deeper solitude and stronger negative rantau feelings than Tan Malaka alone and isolated within his Alam. It was thus at this time that the key values of Tan Malaka's rantau took on the utmost urgency and appeal.

Just as in the case of his stay in East Sumatra twenty years before, so now he observed and studied the real situation--and again precisely in places he considered most typical of the crisis in Indonesian society. First, he stayed in kampung Radjawati near the edge of Djakarta, in a *pondok* with bamboo walls and palm-leaf roof, his neighbors being workers at a nearby shoe factory, peasants, petty traders and *djago*--a kind of Javanese equivalent to the Minangkabau pawang.<sup>193</sup> From this vantage-point he "studied carefully the attitudes and the deeds of the Japanese army, the behavior of the [collaborating] leaders."<sup>194</sup> When he moved to a new job in 1943, to his "new social school,"<sup>195</sup> it was--just as in 1919--to a place where imperialist exploitation of the Indonesian people was most flagrant. As a clerk in a Japanese mining company in Banten, he witnessed the terrible conditions in which the company's rōmusha labor-force was living and dying.<sup>196</sup>

At noon on August 15, 1945, the Emperor's broadcast announcing Japan's surrender was received in Djakarta. Early in the morning, two days later, under strong pemuda pressure, the top representatives of the golongan tua--Sukarno and Hatta--proclaimed Indonesia's independence. Tan Malaka saw the Revolution which followed as the reemergence of Indonesian keaslian: "confidence [of the Indonesian

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189. Tan Malaka mentions at various points the names of Hatta, Subardjo (the chief contact-man between the nationalist elite and the Japanese Naval Liaison Office), and H. Dachlan Abdullah, for a time the mayor of Djakarta (DPkP, III, p. 61; Madilog, p. 11).

190. DPkP, III, p. 51; Madilog, p. 11.

191. Madilog, p. 11.

192. Ibid., p. 10.

193. DPkP, II, pp. 136-137, 150. A pondok is a kind of Moslem boarding-school, or, more generally, a simple lodging-house.

194. Madilog, p. 10.

195. DPkP, II, p. 156.

196. Ibid., pp. 160-170.

people] in their own strength, in their own weapons" prevailed. There was no dependence on "promises or help from the outside!!!"<sup>197</sup> For Tan Malaka the Revolution was the glorious moment when he would at last enter the real world of Indonesian politics, and thereby definitely cross the line between rantau and Alam.

Perceived through the lenses of Tan Malaka's conceptual system, his second return was a willed thrust of rantau power. As the dynamics of his second rantau were marked by growing solitude and political isolation, so the dynamics of his second return were characterized by a steady growth of his political influence, popularity, and power.

From the time of the Youth Congress held in Bandung in May 1945 Tan Malaka focussed his attention on the group of pemuda assembled there who were to become the most important youth leaders in the coming revolution.<sup>198</sup> He met these leaders again several hours before Independence was proclaimed and urged them fervently to push ahead with their revolutionary activity. When the same pemuda shortly afterward kidnapped Sukarno and Hatta in an effort to force them to give the signal for the Revolution to begin, Tan Malaka happened to be absent, to his own regret.<sup>199</sup> He was by then already "in" politics, but he still he did not reveal his identity to the pemuda, but presented himself as a certain Iljas Hussein from West Java. One week after the Proclamation of Independence, now under his real name, he met with Sukarno, who had meanwhile been chosen by the elite as the first President of the Indonesian Republic. As Tan Malaka described the meeting, Sukarno was much impressed by his rantau legend. He assured Tan Malaka, "if I should be incapacitated [*tidak berdaja*], I would transfer the leadership of the Revolution to you." They then parted, Tan Malaka accepting "a little financial help from President Sukarno."<sup>200</sup> One can then read in Tan Malaka's memoirs how in the following weeks he inspired the first major mass demonstration of support for the Republic on September 19, which, in his view, was the "*krachtproef* [test of strength]" of the new state. He invented the chief slogans which inflamed the Indonesian revolutionary spirit during those weeks.<sup>201</sup> His importance was so great, so he saw it, that he was invited to participate as a member of the inner circle of Indonesian statesmen in initial meetings with certain "American emissaries."<sup>202</sup>

The purpose of his activity during the first three months after Indonesian Independence was proclaimed was to urge the Revolution on from behind, not as yet to step into the full political limelight. At the same time, he let his nation know that "Tan Malaka would emerge

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197. DPkP, I, p. 151.

198. DPkP, II, pp. 177 and 181. On the Youth Congress, see Anderson, Java, pp. 50-54.

199. DPkP, III, p. 55.

200. Ibid., p. 51. On the question of Sukarno's so-called Testament, see Anderson, Java, pp. 279-280.

201. DPkP, III, p. 63.

202. Ibid., pp. 65-66.

in accordance with the situation and the strength of the people."<sup>203</sup> This moment came at last, after feverish Dutch and British efforts to restore the pre-war status quo ante aroused a violent pemuda reaction. When fighting became widespread, Tan Malaka felt he should "join in bearing the responsibility for the defence of Indonesian independence in an clear and open manner."<sup>204</sup> At the end of December 1945 he made his first public appearance, and by the beginning of January he had founded the Persatuan Perdjungan (Union of Resistance), which, in his view, united the forces of the revolutionary people and pemuda and represented the Madilog qualities in the Revolution. On March 17, 1946, the leaders of the Persatuan Perdjungan, Tan Malaka included, were arrested by the authorities of the "golongan tua" government. But because Tan Malaka's belief in the coming victory was unshakable he saw his arrest as only a temporary end to the "period of glorious fighting." The period of defeatist "diplomacy" would last only for a very short time. He remained convinced that within several months the "glorious fighting" would reopen and that the pemuda would rise again. For their use in the continuing struggle he decided, while in the last of his prisons, to write his autobiography.

In Tan Malaka's conception, then, his second return was a successful passage through the trial of his encounter with Indonesian reality, marked by an increasing application of his rantau power. From other, less subjective accounts, however, we get a different picture, out of which a certain disparity between Tan Malaka's concept and the reality of his Alam undoubtedly emerges. The nature and degree of this disparity would involve us in a lengthy description of two different, parallel pictures of the same period of Indonesian history. Let us rather ask, therefore, another--and, I believe, more meaningful--question: To what extent and in what ways did Tan Malaka's conception influence his behavior during this time, and through it, the general course of the Indonesian Revolution?

Where Tan Malaka's rantau power was aimed and where, indeed, it proved most effective, was the Javanese "pemuda revolution." The spirit of this revolution and the Javanese pemuda's dynamism in general has been described as being in a broad sense analogous a traditional Javanese idea of rantau.<sup>205</sup> Directed inward to the spirit, rather than outward to the world, the Javanese rantau created "a sense of weightlessness, a free-floating intuition of liberation." Only in times of crisis did its inner utopia "assume an external aspect in response to the social disintegration and natural catastrophes which were traditionally regarded as the visible signs of danger in the cosmological order."

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203. A phrase from Pembentuk Manifesto Djakarta, apparently a pamphlet of Tan Malaka's, quoted in Sudijono Djojoprajitno, PKI-Sibar contra Tan Malaka: Pemberontakan 1926 dan "kambing hitam" Tan Malaka (Djakarta: Jajasan Massa, 1962), p. 5.

204. DPkP, III, p. 70.

205. For the following description of the Javanese rantau I have used Anderson, Java, esp. pp. 2-10, as well as letters and interview materials I received from him. It is worth noting in this context that it was from their rantau in Java that young intellectuals from various parts of the archipelago developed their ideas of all-Indonesia nationalism in the early part of this century.

Significantly, the hitherto unimaginable fall of a "superior" white race in 1942 and of another "superior" yellow race only three years later, inflammatory Japanese and nationalist propaganda campaigns, unprecedented social mobility, appalling suffering mingled with limitless hope--all stimulated in 1945 a visionary energy and a messianic exaltation not just among the Javanese pemuda, but over much of the Indonesian archipelago, the Minangkabau World included.

Between such states of mind and Tan Malaka's own rantau experience some striking similarities are apparent. All, Tan Malaka's and the Javanese rantau, and the spirit of the Indonesian Revolution as well, implied a heightened sensitivity to the crisis of their respective societies. As with the Javanese rantau, for Tan Malaka being "outside society" encouraged a certain "non-akal" inward orientation; in Tan Malaka's case, homesickness naturally if unconsciously strengthened a sensual rather than a rationalist view of his Indonesian Alam. He could even write of the "feelings of sadness, serenity, depth and mysteriousness," and the sense of being "lifted high above this vain world" that Javanese gamelan and dance aroused in him. These same words, however, could be easily taken as an expression of much of the harmony of spirit which emerged between this Minangkabau perantau, the Javanese pemuda and the Indonesian Revolution.

These were, however, only feelings; as such, and especially in their particular character, they were basically marginal to Tan Malaka's rantau Weltanschauung. Rantau in Minangkabau is seen as a *normal*, necessary, healthy function of society. Both of the basic notions in the Minangkabau concept--the changing of Alam through influence from the rantau, and the safeguarding of the Alam, i.e., respect for its permanent foundation--are directed, not like the Javanese rantau (and perhaps the exaltation of the autumn of 1945) towards the cosmos, but towards the real world. After a Minangkabau perantau is back in his alam, his rantau experience, however often "non-akal" in appearance, has only one possible meaning--that of an intellectual exploration of the outside world through which the progress of the Alam is assured. In sum, by contrast with Javanese culture, where the "Alam" does not develop or expand, and where rantau and ordinary life are symmetrically opposed, in the Minangkabau concept, Alam and rantau are dynamically interdependent.

Tan Malaka's high esteem for the Indonesian pemuda developed long before 1945, and the Minangkabau cast to his view of them remained dominant after that time as well. Tan Malaka admired the pemuda as the *vanguard* of the revolutionary masses and his personal aim was to become a *leader* of the pemuda revolution. All of this meant that he considered hierarchical order and *organization* to be a necessary aspect of the pemuda spirit. He wrote as early as 1926:

Mass Action [i.e., the Revolution] has nothing to do with the empty fantasy of a putsch-maker or an anarchist or with the courageous deed of a particular hero.<sup>206</sup>

There could be no revolutionary spirit where there was no akal, and so "while an ignorant force (as in the feudal period) can stage a

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206. Massa Actie, p. 48.

putsch, the leader of a modern mass movement must be a capable and wise man."<sup>207</sup> In Tan Malaka's view, the existence of a strong revolutionary party with "iron rules" was an indispensable condition for a successful revolution.<sup>208</sup> And it was with an organizational structure again, this time the organization of the Indonesian armed forces, that Tan Malaka was so much concerned during the Revolution.<sup>209</sup>

Such, undoubtedly, was Tan Malaka's conscious view of how a successful pemuda action should look. But what about the application of this view? How was Tan Malaka able to realize this particular concept?

It was of great significance for postwar Indonesian history and it was the personal tragedy of Tan Malaka's life, that the power he brought back from his rantau proved to be nothing more than the legend of this rantau. More than that, the foundations of the rapport on which the Tan Malaka-pemuda "revolutionary" alliance was built, turned out to be just the qualities that Tan Malaka viewed as deviations from the correct Madilog way of thinking. The cosmocentric, mystical, non-akal exaltation of 1945 proved to be the only solid link between the rationalist Tan Malaka and the Indonesian Revolution. It was the legend of Tan Malaka's rantau and not Tan Malaka himself that appealed so much to the pemuda. A "cosmic misunderstanding" rather than a revolutionary alliance is probably the aptest term for describing the historic meeting between Tan Malaka and the Indonesian pemuda in the Revolution of 1945. Something very similar is portrayed in a recent study of modern Atjeh. Like Tan Malaka in a way, also the Atjehnese *ulama* "drawing on their experience of crossing institutional boundaries, could appeal on this basis and thereby mobilize masses of people."<sup>210</sup> But when they, like Tan Malaka, made an effort to use their power for concrete goals, a misunderstanding emerged: "While the *ulama* wanted to build a new society on earth, only the afterworld appealed to villagers."<sup>211</sup> While Tan Malaka wanted to perfect the society of his Alam, only the magic of his legend meant something to the Javanese pemuda. It was less that Tan Malaka was a rationalist and the pemuda were not than that their respective conceptions of the Indonesian reality were ultimately incompatible.

Tan Malaka, after reemerging amidst the "glorious fighting," rose meteorically to become a prominent figure in Indonesian politics. His legend, however, gained ground even more rapidly. According to one of the men who helped to spread the legend, Tan Malaka's coming "wrote the last of the thousands of pages of the

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207. Ibid., p. 50.

208. Ibid., p. 51.

209. Sang Gerilja dan Gerpolek, passim.

210. James T. Siegel, The Rope of God (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), p. 77.

211. Ibid.

212. Muhammad Yamin, Tan Malaka, Bapak Republik Indonesia (Djawa Timur: Murba Berdjuang, 1946), p. 2.

story of [his] last twenty years, a story composed around a political romance stretched out like a new Tales of A Thousand and One Nights on the shores of the western Pacific from Shanghai, Manila, Bangkok, Singapore, Medan, Bukittinggi to Djakarta."<sup>212</sup> Tan Malaka would be placed in the topmost sphere of the heaven where the greatest figures of the history of mankind were seated, alongside Rousseau, Voltaire, Sun Yat-sen and Quezon, and higher than Plato "who was able to create a Republic only on paper." He was the Father of the Republic "side by side with the fathers of their Republics, Masaryk and Washington."<sup>213</sup>

Tan Malaka's coming seems to have given new currency to his pre-war and wartime fame as the hero of spy novels, Patjar Merah, a "man slippery as an eel."<sup>214</sup> Stories began to circulate that he could vanish into thin air, disguise himself to look like anything, and commanded all kinds of magical powers.<sup>215</sup> Above all, Tan Malaka's rantau power became a subject for mystical adoration and utopian expectations:

I wait for the year, I wait for the time  
when you, Tuan, will return again;  
I pronounce, I invoke your name  
and the word pronounced consoles my heart. . . .<sup>216</sup>

You, Tuan, are not a leader for one year or two, you are not  
a leader of collaborators with every sort of colonialism. . . .  
Because of this, Tuan, because of this, you have become a  
Star. . . .<sup>217</sup>

Once our ears caught the sound of Your name, once Freedom  
returned, once the Red and White Flag waved, we all said:  
Ibrahim is our leader  
Tan Malaka is the Father of the Republic  
Tan Malaka is the Defender of the Nation  
Tan Malaka is the Leader of Asia.<sup>218</sup>

Though leader of the Persatuan Perjuangan, Tan Malaka was the only member of its executive council without any organizational

213. Ibid., pp. 6-9.

214. Tamar Djaja, Trio Komoenis, p. 14. On pp. 15ff., Tamar Djaja refers to Tan Malaka by the nom de guerre Patjar Merah (somewhat analogous to Scarlet Pimpernel). In Sakti Arga, Tan Malaka . . . Datang!!! (Bukittinggi: Tjerdas, 1946), mention is made (p. 4) of a series of popular spy novels featuring Tan Malaka as Patjar Merah written by Matu Mona (pseudonym for Hasbullah Parinduri), including Spionage-dienst, Rol Patjar Merah Indonesia, and Panggilan Tanah Air.

215. Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, "The Pemuda Revolution: Indonesian Politics, 1945-1946" (Ph.D. Thesis, Cornell University, 1967), p. 460.

216. Ratu Sukma, Tan Malaka . . . ! (Bukittinggi: Pustaka Rakjat, 1948), p. 30.

217. Ibid., pp. 16-17.

218. Ibid., p. 21.

following.<sup>219</sup> As he himself admitted, his real political support was provided by--"five or six pemuda I knew."<sup>220</sup> His rantau power elevated him far above the reality of the Indonesian political struggle. Each time he tried to step down from his pedestal and to enter reality his power vanished.

During the first months of 1946, the fame of Tan Malaka's legend climaxed. Yet in March he was arrested together with some of his pemuda supporters and other leaders, and after the confused July 3rd Affair he was accused by the government authorities of leading a so-called "Tan Malaka coup d'état."<sup>221</sup> With this, Tan Malaka's second return ended in disaster. The same fate struck the revolutionary pemuda, the force which he had hoped would achieve the Madilog paradise for Indonesia--they were suppressed at the same time.<sup>222</sup> The verdict that "poor Tan Malaka . . . clearly had no idea of what was happening" is quite plausible.<sup>223</sup> For he wrote that only when in prison again did he learn the "who's who in the pre-war movement, the contradictions in the attitudes and histories of the men who had been prominent in Indonesian politics during the quarter of a century since [he] left it." It was not until these talks with his fellow-prisoners that he was provided with "a bridge to span the broken pieces of history--the period of history between the time [he] left the Indonesian movement in March 1922 and January 1946 when [he] returned to be among the Indonesian Masses [Rakjat Djelata]."<sup>224</sup> It was too late, however. Tan Malaka was already out of the real world of Indonesian politics, out of direct contact with his Alam once again.

### Conclusion

To sum up the argument of this essay, I have tried, using the particular case of a Minangkabau politician, to show that the experience of a personality is constantly being organized during his lifetime into a structure with its own rules of development.

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219. Anderson, Java, p. 293.

220. DPkP, III, p. 70.

221. On the July 3rd Affair, see Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution, pp. 188-194; and Anderson, Java, pp. 370-403.

222. After thirty months in prison without trial, Tan Malaka was released during the extremely confused period of the Revolution (September-December 1948) which witnessed both the Madiun Affair and the second Dutch attack on the Republic. He proceeded to found a new political party--the Partai Murba--on his old principles. Following the Dutch attack and the capture and internment of Sukarno and other Republican leaders, he undertook to lead the guerrilla resistance. He was killed by Republican troops on February 19, 1949, near Kediri, under circumstances which have remained mysterious to the present day. See Tamin, Kematian Tan Malaka, pp. 32, 34-35.

223. Anderson, "The Pemuda Revolution," p. 600.

224. DPkP, III, p. 123.

These rules basically influence the way in which each new aspect of the real world is conceptualized and so built into the structure. In every political personality such a structure of experience is discernible. For its analysis, study of all aspects of the personality--not only the political, but even the most private--is necessary. Often, I suppose, was the case with Tan Malaka, the basic framework of the structure is "constructed" during childhood and early maturity, i.e., not merely before the personality gets any "political" ideas at all but even before it develops a *conscious* way of perceiving the world.

An understanding of the structure of experience is perhaps especially important for Western studies of Asian political elites. Many Asian leaders apparently conceptualize the Western or "modern" impact into an already established structure of experience, built during earlier parts of their lives under the strong influence of their traditional environments. Here a potential danger for a Western scholar lurks. What these political personalities retain of their traditional culture is very often remote from the "modern" mind of the scholar--frequently too remote even to be noted seriously by him. To complicate the problem further, the language used as a rule by these Asian leaders for expressing their views, including their traditional components, is so "modern," so "Western," that it can not be passed over; indeed this is often precisely what is eagerly seized upon and analyzed at length by the Westerner.

But this approach will lead merely to superficial conclusions, if the personality's views are analyzed and compared with established political-science models in mind. Only an understanding of a political personality's thought and behavior as being determined by his structure of experience, can lead to genuinely critical evaluation. Only then does the political personality emerge, not as a "marginal man" or as a "hybrid," but as an identity born from the clash between a human intellect and a human environment.