

WORKING PAPER: IX

TRAVELS BY LEADERS: INDIA AND INDONESIA

Himanshu Prabha Ray

Susan Mishra



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1. Introduction

India and Indonesia's cultural contacts can be dated from a very early period. The earliest evidence of direct contact between these two countries is from pottery recovered from archaeological sites in Java. "The presence of Romano-Indian rouletted grey ware in northwest Java provides evidence of trade between India and Java during the first two centuries A.D. The pottery comes from precisely that region of Java which c. 450 CE was known as Taruma and seems to have been a recipient of Sanskrit culture."¹ Sherds of pottery hint at existence of trade contacts of Java with sites along the eastern littoral located in southern India and eastern India. An analysis of pottery by Walker and Santoso reveals that in Java the main form of pot lids were in the shape of an upturned mushroom and these bear close resemblance with the Wheeler's 36 from Arikamedu and pottery from the "Buni Complex" in northwest Javanese consists of "incised ware" which has also been encountered at some sites in eastern India.²

Inscriptional evidence recovered from sites across Indonesia reveal the presence of merchants and traders in Indonesia from the 9th century CE to the 14th century CE. The Tamil inscriptions found from sites across Indonesia, primarily from Java and Sumatra, clearly indicate the presence of Indian traders and merchants at various sites and simultaneously also inform us about donation and constructions carried out by them and indicate their inclusion in the administrative set up. The inscription from in Java, dated to c. 856 CE, written partly in

Sanskrit and partly in Javanese, refer to Klings (the people of Kalinga). "The Kuki Copper Plates (c. 840 CE) of Jaha (Java) speaks of potters and all sorts of servants of inner apartment hailing from Kling (Kalinga)."³ The inscription dated to 883 CE from the site of Kedu in central Java lists a number of foreign traders and of there are clear references to different regions of the Indian subcontinent such as Kling (Kalinga), Aryya (Aryapura/Ayyavole) and Pandikira (in Kamataka). The partially legible Palebuan charter of 927 CE, refers to traders from Pandikira.⁴ The Cane inscription of 1021 CE,⁵ from the Brantas delta region of east Java, lists foreigners from Kling, Aryya, Singhala, Pandikira, Drawida, Campa, Remen, and Kmir. The inscription of Patakan,⁶ from the same district, lacks a legible date, but was commissioned in the same period and contains an identical list. The new name in these two lists, Drawida, refers to the east coast Dravidian region of Tamil Nadu.

An East Javanese inscription dated to c. 1194 CE one finds mention of a Jurn Kling i.e., headman or chief of the Kalinga people.⁷ In the Balawi inscription of 1305 CE⁸ belonging to the Majhaphit era, the list of tax-farming foreigners are: "...wargga kilalan (tax-farmer group): Kling, Aryya, [.....], Singhala, Karnataka, [.....], Cina (China), Campa (Champa), Mandisi (?), Caremin (Ramanyadesa), Kmir (Cambodia),..." The Javanese text Nagarakertagama dating to 1365 CE, mentions merchants and others from Jambudwipa (India) - specifically from Goda (Gaur in Bengal) and Kamataka.⁹

The inscription from the site of Lobo Tuwa in West Sumatra dated 1010 Saka, or 1088 CE¹⁰ mentions: “In the Saka year 1010 current, month Masi, we, the Nanadesa-Tisaiyayirattu Ainnurruvar, having met at the velapuram in Varosu (Barus), also called ‘the pattinam (commercial town) for the welfare of the merchant body blessed by Siva’, decided to grant as follows to ‘our sons’, the nagara-senapati Nattu-cettiyar, to Patinen-bumi-desi-appar(?), and to the mavettugal (elephant-trainers?): [On each of the] ships’ [cargoes?], the ship’s captain and crew will pay the fee anju-tundayam in gold, pegged to the price of kasturi (musk), and [then only] may ‘step on the cloth spread’ (ie. enter the settlement to trade). Thus we, the Five Hundred of the Thousand Directions, known in every direction in all Eighteen Lands, had the stone inscribed and planted. Do not forget charity; charity alone will help you.”¹¹

The Tamil-language inscription from at Neusu Aceh,¹² north Sumatra, has been palaeographically dated to about the twelfth century, and contains the word mandapam, which possibly refers to a temple. The Tamil inscription datable to the 13th century is from Porlak Dolok Padang Lawas area of northeast Sumatra,¹³ which is carved on a stone pillar bearing the head of Ganesa. Yet another inscription is datable to 14th century CE and was found at Batu Bapat in Padang Highlands of west Sumatra. The inscription is bilingual and contains 13 lines in Tamil language carved in the south Indian script.

The earliest Mahayana inscriptions of the Shrivijaya Kings in Java were written in a North Indian script which closely resemble the inscriptions dating to the 9th century CE at the Buddhist site of Nalanda.¹⁴ Additionally “the Siddhamatrka (pre-Nagari/ proto-Bengali) script used in the Sailendra records of Java has been used on the golden disc and inscribed in stone in the relic chamber of Maura Takus (Sumatra) and Bali. The first old Javanese script, evolved from the late Brahmi, as seen in the inscription of Dinaja dated AD 760.”¹⁵

A 9th century copper-plate of Devapala of the Pala dynasty of Bengal discovered at Nalanda in 1921¹⁶, states that Devapala being requested by the illustrious Maharaja Balaputradeva, King of

Suvarnavipa (Sumatra), granted five villages for the upkeep of the monastery built at Nalanada at the instance of the King of Suvarnavipa.¹⁷ “The Tibetan work of Kalyana Mitra, Phyag-sorpa (written about the middle of the 13th century) mentions the visit to Suvarnavipa of the great Bengali monk Dipankara (Atisha 980-1053 CE).”¹⁸

Movement of people from India to Indonesia continued in the colonial period. A number of Indians migrated to various parts of Indonesia in various capacities such as labourers, traders soldiers and as clerks of the colonial administration. Indians belonging to Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh moved across the sea to work as indentured labour to work on the plantations of north Sumatra, and the other set of immigrants consisted of merchants from Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Bombay who settled in the urban areas and set up business in textile and iron and steel.¹⁹

2. Indian and Indonesian Nationalist Leaders and Colonialism

The colonial period witnessed the coming of these two nations closer in their struggle against the colonial powers. Indian nationalist leaders supported the cause for Indonesian freedom, and were central in ensuring that Dutch attempt at re-establishing colonial rule in Indonesia post Japanese surrender in World War II. During the years 1945- 1948 there was close political relations and interaction between Indian and Indonesian leaders and both provided material help in the form of medical supplies and rice, in hour of need. While leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Azad provided political support and aid to Indonesia in their fight against colonialism, Indian journalist PRS Mani played a crucial role in highlighting the events in Indonesia and the Indian nationalist leader Biju Patnaik carried out rescue operation in his Dakota aircraft. It is also essential here to highlight the role of the Indians who were sent to Indonesia as soldiers in the British army and the Indian seamen, who in their own capacities provided support to Indonesian nationalist leaders and their cause of freedom from the clutches of colonial domination.

1945 onwards Indian politicians took a keen interest in the nationalist struggle of Indonesia. “For India, support to independence struggle in other parts of the world was an integral part of the Indian national movement. For Gandhi and Nehru no single country could attain true independence from European colonialism unless it was rid from the whole of Asia. In fact, opposition to colonialism and racial discrimination was built into India’s approach to world politics during India’s freedom struggle as well as in the post independence period. It was but normal that India would raise its voice when a ‘sister’ country was suffering from colonial occupation. India’s policy of supporting Indonesia’s struggle for independence was, therefore, part of her overall approach towards colonialism and racial discrimination.”²⁰

The Indian leaders opposed the idea of Indian soldiers being deployed to Surabaya to fight against the Indonesians. The use of Indian troops in Indonesia was vehemently opposed by Indians and 28 October 1945 was observed as Southeast Asia day in Bombay, Lucknow, Pune, New Delhi, Kanpur and Karachi demanding the immediate removal of Indian troops from Indonesia.²¹

P R S Mani was a journalist commissioned as a Captain in the British Army and served in the Public Relations unit. He reported directly the Battle of Surabaya from October 25 to 28, and his writings highlight the role of Indian soldiers in the Indonesian struggle for Independence. His official dispatch of 29 September 1945, describes a feeling of pan Asianism amongst the Indian troops as they crossed over to Java:

“to [I]ndian troops Java brings back the memories of Indian colonization in the country in the early centuries of its occupation by the ‘pallava’, ‘cholas’ and the ‘gupta’ of Indian history. Though not fully conversant the Indian ‘jaman’ [sic] has a vague idea of this ancient connection and [is] extremely anxious to renew and strengthen this centuries old bond of friendship. These views were expressed to me while on board by a [S]ikh soldier from Punjab.”²² His diary entries on Surabaya, however, “makes it clear that Indian troops faced dilemmas which were

simply not visible in the many military histories of the momentous Battle of Surabaya.”²³

Mani was posted along with the 23rd Indian Division which included Mahratti, Rajputs and Indians from other regions. They were sent to Surabaya on the pretext of fighting against the Japanese but soon came to realise that they were being used to suppress the Indonesian nationalists and they were in the midst of the Indonesian National Revolution. Mani reported that “The Indian troops were often nationalist, conflicted and desperate, yet did what they did, and Mani watched and recorded all this for history.”²⁴

Mani was in the middle of battle between Indonesian nationalists and troops under Britain’s South East Asia Command (SEAC), the Battle of Surabaya. In the initial reports from Indonesia from the city of Batavia he records that the Indian troops carried out “simple policing duties, although his dispatches showed that he was angered by the menial nature of the tasks they were asked to perform for British officers. He suggested in general that Indian troops were uneasy about their position, but as yet had little sense of urgency.”²⁵ This was to change dramatically with the arrival of the 23rd Indian Division at Surabaya on 25 October 1945. Mani reported “The port is ‘decorated’ with anti-Dutch and anti-imperialist slogans, and for the first time in Java, slogans have also appeared in Hindustani: ‘Azadi ya Khunrezi!’ (Freedom or Bloodshed!) Its effect on Indian troops, especially the Mahrattas and Rajrifs, who compose the Brigade, is remarkable. Reports have reached me that they are already beginning to ask their officers if they have to fight the Indonesians....”²⁶

Indians from various backgrounds in the The “Gurkha” regiment Muslims, Sikhs, Jats and Marathas, soon realised that they were not fighting the Japanese but rather were deployed to suppress the Indonesian struggle against colonialism. “Repeated cries of “Allah-u-Akbar” from the resisting Indonesians and their villages made the Muslim soldiers realise that they the British were making them fight against people from their own religion. Inspired by the speeches they heard on radio of Indian

national leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Muhammad Ali Jinnah on the circumstances and condition of Indonesians freedom struggle, 600 Muslim soldiers defected from the British forces and joined the Indonesian resistance group of freedom fighters along with their arms and ammunitions.²⁷

“Three brigades of Muslim troops landed on the Dutch-held island of Java. Brigade I landed in Jakarta, Brigade 38 in Semarang and Brigade 49 in Surabaya. Division 32 of Brigade 1 was commanded by Abdul Matin and Ghulam Ali. Without the knowledge of their British army commander, Ghulam Rasul and seven of his compatriots conducted a secret meeting and contacted the commanders of the army of the Republic of Indonesia in the Siliwangi division. Their code words for communication used to be “Assalamu ‘alaikum”. Their first task was to disarm and take all Japanese as prisoners and confiscate weapons from local residents. When they heard appeals made by Gandhi, Azad and Jinnah, Muslim troops became reluctant in carrying out the British orders which they felt as detrimental to Indonesians. Ghulam Ali and other Muslim soldiers unlocked a clothing warehouse and distributed clothes to the Indonesians. Many Indonesians did not have enough food and suffered from serious medical problems such as swollen feet. Ghulam Rasul distributed rice, sugar, salt and other items among them. Muslim troops jointly deserted from the British army and joined the Indonesian resistance army. They took their equipment and weapons too alongwith them. They were integrated into units of *Tentara Keamanan Rakyat* (TKR), *Badan Keamanan Rakyat* (BKR) etc. Major Ahmad Husein was made commander of Regiment III with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. These 600 soldiers fought shoulder to shoulder with the Indonesian freedom fighters and suffered heavy losses. By the time Indonesia gained its independence in 1945, the 600-strong band of deserters was reduced to only 75.”²⁸

Mani duly reported: “It is true that some were attracted by material things. But the choice between two bigger issues lay in us and we chose the more honourable one. We decided that aspirers of freedom

cannot become freedom suppressors²⁹ In keeping with the prevailing mood in India, where by October 1946 many had come to regard the INA as nationalist heroes rather than treasonous traitors, Mani opened with the statement: ‘Another Indian National Army is writing history in that island fortress of freedom, Java, in defence of the Indonesian Republic.’ Having established this patriotic lineage, he then explained that his story could now be told as Nehru had assured parliament that the government of India would not tolerate ‘any subterfuge or delay in the withdrawal of Indian troops.’³⁰

Jawaharlal Nehru was invited by Sukarno to Indonesia, to which he responded- “I should like to tell Dr. Sukarno that if I can be of any service to the cause of Indonesian freedom I shall gladly visit Java in spite of urgent and important work in India I believe that our freedom in India or Java or elsewhere hangs together and if I can serve the cause of freedom in Java better than in India I shall certainly go there. But that depends not so much on my wishes but on the facilities for within India and travelling to Batavia by air. If these facilities are available I shall set aside all the work and go there. Meanwhile I send my Dr. Sukarno and to my old comrades Dr. Hatta and Dr. Sukarno and wish them all success in achieving an independence of Indonesia.”³¹ (October 1945)

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, stated on October 19, 1945 that, “things have come now to the point when Congress will have to consider seriously what steps to adopt to prevent the use of Indian men and material against the Asiatic peoples fighting for their freedom”³² (*The Statesman*, Calcutta, 20October,1945).

Nehru held similar views and declared on October 28, “people of India will stand by the Indonesian demand for independence and will give all the help they can”. Nehru also demanded the withdrawal of British troops that were being used to suppress the Indonesian freedom struggle, from Indonesian soil and called for the recognition of Sukarno’s provincial government.³³

Severe famine hit India during the early 1946 in India caused severe shortages of food, and it was

Indonesia that came forward and offered help by provision of rice to India. In May 1946, Dr. Sjahrir, the Prime Minister of Indonesian Republic sent a cable to Nehru with the message:

“Indonesians will keep ready for shipment to India a quantity of rice amounting to half a billion tonnes. Every section of Indonesian community gives enthusiastic adhesion (sic) to the plan ... For the sake of mutual assistance between the two nations, we should like to receive in exchange goods mom urgently needed by the majority of population, e.g. textiles, agricultural implements, etc. In case you cannot dispense with goods mentioned above on account of Indian peoples’ own needs, we should call ourselves fortunate if we can secure some other exchange ... We are quite prepared to consider any other kinds of goods that happen to be at your disposal.”³⁴ A delegation under Morarji Desai was to be sent in July 1946 to Java to work out the details and on 20 August 1946, the first shipment of rice amounting to 6000 tonnes was received by India at the Cochin port.³⁵

The Indian nationalist leaders once again supported Indonesia in 1947 against Dutch intervention. As per the Linggadjati Agreement (LDA) signed on March 27, 1947 the Netherlands recognised the Republic of Indonesia as the de facto authority in Java and Sumatra. After the agreement the Indian government not only recognised and accepted the new Indonesian Republic, but also extended it invitation to the new nation to participate in the Asian Conference that was being organised by Nehru to be held in March 1947.³⁶ On 9 March 1947, India showed her support for Indonesian fight against Dutch by declaring that all Dutch passenger planes shall be forbidden from landing at Indian airports, and that the Indian Government shall not conclude any commercial treaties with the government of the Netherlands East Indies and would rather establish trade relations with the government of the Indonesian Republic (*The Statesman*, Calcutta, March 10, 1947).³⁷

In an address in Delhi on July 28, Nehru declared: “India has been and is especially interested in the freedom of the peoples of Asia Asia having suffered greatly in the past from foreign domination

and exploitation is determined to end it. Any attack on the freedom of the people in any part of Asia affects the rest of the great continent. The mere presence of a colonial regime or of foreign troops in any Asian country is an insult and challenge to Asia” and that India planned to approach the United Nations “within a few hours” regarding Dutch aggression in Indonesia “if nothing happened” (*The Statesman*, July 29, 1947; *The Hindu*, July 30, 1947).³⁸

Jawaharlal Nehru asked Biju Patnaik to fly into Jakarta to bring the leaders of Indonesia’s independence struggle to Delhi. He was instrumental in rescuing Md Hatta, former vice President of Indonesia, and Prime Minister Sultan Sjahrir of Indonesia. After the Japanese surrender of World War II, Indonesia declared Independence. The Dutch were not interested in losing their colony and carried out a full scale attack on 21 July 1947 in an attempt to regain control. Mohammad Hatta and prime minister Sutan Sjahrir were advised by Sukarno to leave the country and attend the first Inter-Asia Conference which was being organised by Nehru at New Delhi in July 1947. Biju Patnaik was a pilot and owner of the Kalinga Airlines, which mostly had the Dakota aircrafts in its fleet. Biju Patnaik and his pilots come to the aid of Indonesia by transporting humanitarian aid and medicines to Indonesia.³⁹ “The arrival of Patnaik with his plane meant that the air blockade had been run. Tonnes of medical supplies urgently needed by the people were carried directly to Jakarta. Not only that our leaders and other Indonesian people who had to go abroad in the interests of the struggle could also make use of this plane”.⁴⁰

He was asked by Nehru to rescue Indonesia leaders and bring them back safely to India. The Dutch authorities were aware of this and warned Patnaik that if he entered Indonesian airspace, which was now under the Dutch who had put a blockade on air and sea routes into Indonesia, he would have to bear with the consequences. Biju Patnaik responded to the threat of his aircraft being shot down by saying, “Resurgent India does not recognize Dutch colonial sovereignty over the Indonesian people. If my aircraft is shot down, every Dutch plane flying across the Indian skies will be shot down in retaliation”

was Biju's reply. He also sent a message to Prime Minister Nehru which read– "Take necessary steps should my aircraft be shot down".⁴¹ Biju Patnaik was a skilled pilot and after skilfully dodging the Dutch he manages to land his aircraft and managed to land "on an improvised airstrip and using left over petrol from abandoned Japanese military dumps, eluded the Dutch to land in Jakarta and flew back to Delhi with Indonesian leaders Mohammad Hatta and Sultan."⁴²

Biju Patnaik was given honorary citizenship in Indonesia and awarded the 'Bhoomi Putra', the highest Indonesian award as well as the highest national award, the 'Bintang Jasa Utama' by the Indonesian government during its celebration of 50 years of Independence in 1996.⁴³

Indian seamen working on board Dutch ships⁴⁴ were also crucial in undermining Dutch authority and attempts at regaining control of Indonesia. After Indonesia declared Independence, the Dutch set up their government in exile in Australia. "The involvement of Chinese and Indian seamen in maintaining the boycott of Dutch shipping was ultimately crucial in the campaign for an independent Indonesia."⁴⁵ Inspired by the speeches they heard on radio of the Indian nationalist leaders, the Indian sea men resorted to non-co-operation and refused to board or load the Dutch ships. They were also able to gather support of the new recruits employed to replace the striking workers, against the Dutch authorities in support of the Indonesian nationalist movement. In a letter addressed to Sardar Patel on 16 October 1945, Nehru stated, "The Indonesian struggle is becoming more intense and I feel we ought to give it greater prominence. It would be a good thing if there are meetings etc. But the most dramatic thing would be for our dock workers and sea men to refuse to load the war materials for Java, as the Australians did."⁴⁶

Heather Goodall's in depth research has brought to light significant data and information regarding the role of Indian seamen in subverting Dutch authority and aiding the Indonesian declaration of Independence. Ligorio de Costa, a Goan, and Abdul Rehman, an Indian from Poona represented of two major groups of the Indian seamen in Australia, and

they were later joined by Dasrath Singh. Singh had reported that "There's a ship at Ball's Head [one of the North Sydney docks]. There are Indian seamen on it and the Dutch are loading munitions! The Indian seamen are very concerned about it but they don't know what to do. We've got to get those men off!"⁴⁷

The incident of 20 October 1945 highlights the importance of the Indian seamen in ensuring that *Petras* was unable to sail out to Indonesia. "An extraordinary chase down Sydney Harbour ensued in which a small launch driven at high speed by Australian unionists like Barney Smith (Seamen's Union) with Dasrath Singh and other Indian seamen pursued the large Dutch cargo ship. From the launch, Singh addressed the crew by megaphone in Urdu or Hindi. He explained the Dutch attempt to re-arm their colonial forces in Indonesia and argued the case for joining the strike to the receptive crew, but the presence of Dutch troops made it impossible to intervene further and the ship steamed out of the heads. Yet within hours it had limped humiliated back into port. As the Indian crew poured over the sides into waiting launches, they described how they had taken the dramatic, confrontational decision to refuse to stoke the engines. The Indians had agreed to go back to work only if the ship returned to port, leaving the Dutch little option but to comply."⁴⁸ Similar incident occurred with the *General Vespjick* "where armed Dutch guards formed an intimidating presence when Singh and others stood off the boats stern and addressed the crew. Here too the Indian crew members decided on direct confrontation, letting the steam down in the ship's engines, and then leaving the ship spectacularly en masse in lifeboats lowered over the side. They argued they would not carry armaments 'for use against their "Indonesian brothers"'.⁴⁹ "As more Indian seamen arrived in Australia by British ships as replacement crews, Indian seamen organisers spoke in Hindi, Urdu, Goanese or Bengali to the replacements arriving in Australia by sea and air, and told them the cause behind the boycott and succeeded in mobilising them as well to adopt the non-violent method of non-cooperation for the cause of the Indonesian struggle against colonial rule."⁵⁰

Between October and November it has been estimated that a total of 200 Indians walked out and about a 100 on board the Dutch ships did not co-operate with the NEI or the Dutch Government in exile.⁵¹ The efforts of the Indian organisers were able to convince even replacements recruited by the Dutch to adopt non co-operation and support the Indonesian cause. Heather Goodhall's study reveals that "the only Indian crews who sailed were those being coerced by Dutch troops and even those sailing at gunpoint were prepared to mutiny where they knew they had support on shore."⁵² According to estimates about 700 Indians were part of the boycott during 1945 and 1946.⁵³

On the other end, the Indonesians aboard Dutch ships anchored at Indian ports received the support of Indians. Fuelled with an intense feeling of nationalism the Indonesian workers working on Dutch ships during World War II refused to perform their duties while in India. They received support from the Indonesian Students Committee in India, who submitted a memorandum to Jawaharlal Nehru stating that these men were recruited forcibly into the Dutch Navy without their consent. Nehru sent a letter to Yusuf Meheralli, the Mayor of Bombay, asking him to immediately attend to the problems regarding food and accommodation of these Indonesian workers. Meheralli tended to it and as India was not keen to hand them over to the Dutch, they were sent back on a neutral British ship, Dunera, which set sail from Madras in June 1946.⁵⁴

The words of President Sukarno echo the deep rooted ties that have existed between India and Indonesia and the unconditional support provided by the Indians to the cause of Indonesian freedom. "In the wide world around us are countless friends and well-wishers who are aiding us with their moral support and active help. Among you, our brothers and comrades in India there are a host of sympathizers and helpers. Your press is supporting our cause. Your great leader Nehru's passionate utterances on behalf of our freedom have been a source of immense strength in our hour of trial and tribulation. How should I ever be able to convey to you the deep stirring of emotion that swells up in every one of us

when we think of the wonderful manner in which you have rallied our cause. Deep down in his hearty every Indonesian utters a silent prayer 'God bless you, our brothers and friends in India.'⁵⁵

3. Travels by Religious Leaders

Travels by religious leaders across India and Indonesia and their impact on the socio cultural and religious aspects of Indonesian life has been a lesser known and studied subject. These deep rooted ties are evident in the words President Sukarno, "In the veins of every one of my people flows the blood of the Indian ancestors and the culture that we possess is steeped through and through with Indian influences. Two thousand years ago people from your country came to Javadvipa and Suvarnavdipa in the spirit of brotherly love. They gave the initiative to form powerful kingdoms such as those of Sri Vijaya, Mataram and Majaphit. We learnt then to worship the very gods you worship still and we fashioned a culture that even today is largely identical with your own. Later we turned towards Islam but that religion too was brought to us by people coming from both sides of the Indus."⁵⁶

"I would like to argue that Indian Muslims have played an important role since the first coming of Islam to Southeast Asia. The development of intellectual network can be found in the links between 'ulama' from India and Southeast Asia, especially through mystical teaching propagated by a Gujarati scholar Nurdin ar-Raniri, the great 'ulama' of Aceh who had authored many books in Southeast Asia."⁵⁷

The coming of Islam in Indonesia is credited to Indian sailors and merchants from Gujarat and the southern regions, who sailed from Indian shores to various parts of Indonesia. Nuruddin ar-Raniri is credited with the standardization of Islam in Indonesia, particularly in the region of Aceh. "He can be regarded as the father of Islamization and standardization of Islam in Indonesia."⁵⁸ He hailed from Raniri in Surat district of Gujarat and his family had contacts with Pahang and Aceh in the 16th century. Ar-Raniri paternal uncle, Muhammad Al-

Hamid travelled to Aceh between 1580-1583 Aceh to teach logic, rhetoric, ethics, fiqh, science of the sources and other religious and intellectual subjects.

“Ar-Raniri also played a vital role in documenting the extremely needed literature in Malay and Arabic language on principles of Islam which never existed before the early missionaries of Islam conveyed the teaching Islam by oral instruction, and practical application and taught masses how to conduct themselves according to the basic tenets of Islam.”⁵⁹ In 1637 he travelled to the Malay peninsula and then to Aceh where he not only became proficient in the Malay language and literature, but was also employed in the court of Iskandar Tsani who later appointed him as Shaikh al-Islām, which was the highest religious post.⁶⁰ On the request of the ruler Raniri in 1638 produced *Bustān Al-Salātīn*, which was to become the main Islamic text that served as a reference and guide to the Malay rulers laying down the duty of the rulers towards their country and subjects based on Islamic laws.⁶¹

“Nuruddin ar-Raniri played a vital role in terms of spiritual and intellectual upliftment of the people by facilitating the establishment of new ground for social order through Islamic teachings and consequently adoption of Sharia. As a result, the impact of Islam in Indonesia was real especially in transforming the body, the soul and mind of different groups within the society.”⁶²

This interaction between Indian and Indonesian Islam continued in the 20th century as well which is evident from the presence of the Ahmaddiyahs, Islamic Socialism and Tablighi Ja'maat in Indonesian.

Mushir Hosain Kidwai's writing and thoughts were central to the introduction of Islamic socialism propagated by Oemar Said Tjokroaminoto.⁶³ Kidwai was born in India's United Provinces in 1878 in a noble family that traced its roots back to the companions of the Prophet.⁶⁴ By referring to the verses in the Quran and Hadith, Kidwai demonstrated the existence of the notion of socialism among the companions of the Prophet, but this socialism aimed at all “Muslims (and later all humanity) working together to help one another, uphold the dignity of

humanity, and run society in accordance with God's laws.”⁶⁵

Tjokroaminoto was influenced by Kidwai's thoughts and works, which is apparent in the work published by him in 1924 *Islam dan Socialisme* [Islam and Socialism], which drew heavily from and was mostly an affirmation of Kidwai's work.⁶⁶ What is essential to note is that Tjokroaminoto concluded his book by pointing to pan-Islamism as the ultimate goal of Islamic socialism.⁶⁷ “H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto, whose work on Islamic socialism had a strong influence on Indonesian Islamic organizations and political life for the remainder of the century. The means by which Tjokroaminoto came to study Kidwai's work are especially interesting, and speak to the influence of yet another South Asian Islamic movement, the Ahmadiyyah, on Indonesia's intellectual development.”⁶⁸ Tjokroaminoto's interest at tracing the non-Arabic influences in Islam prompted his interest in understanding and gaining information of South Asian Islam. He thus sent his son to India to be able to comprehend Islam in the context where the Hindus were in majority, to be able to carry out a comparative study of the religions, in addition to receive further education in Islam. Harsono Tjokroaminoto travelled from 1929 to 1930, primarily across northern India and visited Calcutta, Poona, Lahore, and Kashmir.⁶⁹

Throughout the 1930s, the Ahmadiyyah continued to influence young, Western-educated Islamic thinkers, including the next generation of Islamic socialists. The journal of the Jong Islamieten Bond, a group of Muslim student activists trying to promote a modern, rational, Islamic future for their country, “was also heavily influenced by the writings of the Ahmadiyah movement in India.”⁷⁰

The initiative of three students from Minangkabau (South Sumatera) who had studied in Lahore, British India, namely Abubakar Ayyub, Ahmad Nuruddin, and Zaini Dahlan, the connect between Ahmadiyah of India and Indonesia was established. Upon hearing about the renowned Islamic educational centres in India whose Islamic education was considered at par with that of the Middle East, in 1922, they visited India and chose to stay at Qadiyan. Upon

their return in 1924 to Indonesia they encouraged fellow students to study at Qadiyan not only because Islamic education imparted was of high standards, but the cost of living was low and the poorer students could also get scholarships to pursue their studies. They were granted permission to preach the tenets of the Qadiyan school in 1924. In the year 1925 they invited Rahmat Ali (an alumnus of the Punjab University and a Qadiani follower) who was the first missionary of Qadiani Ahmadiyya to be sent to Hindia Belanda (nowadays Indonesia). He arrived in Sumatera Island and “the teaching and belief of JAI was firstly brought and introduced in Indonesia on 2 October 1925 by in Tapaktuan, Aceh.”⁷¹

Rahmat Ali then travelled to Padang where the Jemaat Ahmadiyah Indonesia (the JAI) was officially established in 1926 with the aim of advocating Qadiani Ahmadiyya belief, establishing branches in different parts of Indonesia and also enlisting more members. “Ali moved to Batavia (nowadays Jakarta), the capital city of Hindia Belanda, in 1931. In that year, the teaching of Qadiani Ahmadiyya was rapidly developed in Jakarta and Bogor. From these two cities, the understanding of Qadiani Ahmadiyya then developed in many cities on Java Island, such as in Tangerang, Cianjur, Sukabumi, Bandung, Garut, Tasikmalaya, Ciamis, and Karawang.”⁷² With the establishment of a Central board on 16 December 1935 its official headquarters was established at Jakarta. A national conference was held in December 1949 in Jakarta, wherein it was mutually decided to change the name from Ahmadiyah Qadiyan Department Indonesia to Jama’ah Ahmadiyah Indonesia. “This organization had structural and formal relations with the Ahmadiyah Headquarters in India because its chairman (amir) was responsible directly to the khalifah in Qadiyan.”⁷³

Cultural and religious interactions with India had left their imprint on Balinese Hinduism since the ancient times. In the mid-20th century this Hinduism was reformed due to the efforts of Indian and Indonesian intellectuals. Narendra Dev Pandit Shastri, who was a Sanskrit lecturer by profession travelled Bali to 1950 where he eventually settled down. The Dasa Sila Agama Bali was a short book

written by him, but it changed the Balinese religion and reformed it. Shastri investigated the common factors between the Balinese religion and Hinduism which were discussed in ten points in the book, and it also contained the Tri Sandhya prayer.⁷⁴

Prior to his arrival in Bali, Hindu rites and rituals had become the prerogative of the priestly class leading to ignorance of religious knowledge amongst the common people. Pandit Shastri aimed at reforming the old Balinese Hinduism and make it more accessible to the common people, as well as educating people on purer form of Hinduism. Shastri, in an interview with Ketut Subagiasta, revealed that “At the beginning, Balinese performed Tri Sandhya with only one mantra, which was the Gayatra mantra [...]’ and by teaching this sacred mantra to students of Denpasar’s Dwijendra School in 1953 for the first time Pandit Shastri made Hindu mantras easily accessible to all, bringing an end to dominance of Saiva priests in religious matters of Bali Hinduism. Pandit Shastri later taught Hinduism and Sanskrit at the same school.”⁷⁵ Pandit Shastri “illustrated with drawing of asana (appropriate posture) and pranayama (breathing control), and provided meaning of the Sanskrit words used in the mantras (of Puja Tri Sandhya).”⁷⁶ Intisari Hindu Dharma (The Essence of Hinduism) served as the framework for neo Hinduism in Bali. His success is evident by the fact that in 1958, a “Hindu Bali section was finally established within the Ministry of Religions”⁷⁷ and in 1961 Hindu Dharma became one of the five major religions practiced in Indonesia.⁷⁸

In the years 1945 to 1950, the Taman Siswa was taught in the Balinese village schools or people’s schools which focussed on moral and character building (budhi pekerti). In the 1940s, Ida Bagus Mantra, Oka Puniatmaja, and Cok Rai Sudharta were handpicked Balinese got grants to study in India.⁷⁹ Ida Bagus Mantra, and Nyomn S Pendit studied at Visva Bharati University and Oka Puniatmaja and Tjokordo Rai Suddharta studied at Benares Hindu University. Ida Bagus Mantra on his return to Indonesia became lecturer in Indian History and Culture at University of Indonesia, in Jakarta.⁸⁰ I Gede Puja, “on the advice of Pandit Shastri Gede

Puja departed to India in order to study Indian philosophy, religion, architecture and arts at the Indology College of the Banaras Hindu University in Varanasi in 1956.”⁸¹

In the year 1959 the Hindu council was established which was instrumental in translating many Hindu religious texts into Indonesian language. Ida Bagus Mantra, Ida Bagus Oka Puniatmaja, and Cokorda Rai Sudharta translated Indian scriptures as the Bhagavad Gita and the Law of Manu (Manawadharmasastra) into Indonesian language. They also composed the Upadesa which became “the first short standard reference volume covering the raw essence of Hindu teachings in Bali. ... The Upadesa was the first book to introduce Hindu teaching in a systematic way.”⁸² The key role in compiling the Upadesa was Ida Bagus mantra, who invited seven more scholars to his home and together they worked tirelessly and incessantly till they completed their task. The seven people were Bagus Oka Punia Atmaja, Pedanda Wayan Sidemen, Ida Bagus Mantra, Ida Bagus Dosther, Ida Bagus Alit, Mertha from the MORA, and me- Cok Rai Sudharta.⁸³

“The key agencies involved in the field of Hindu education, were three research sites in Bali’s municipality Denpasar: the Dwijendra Foundation (Yayasan Dwijendra, hereafter YD), the Indonesian Hindu University (Universitas Hindu Indonesia, hereafter UNHI) and the State Hindu Dharma Institute (Institute Hindu Dharma Negeri, hereafter IHDN).⁸⁴ Influenced by Pandit Shastri’s amongst other things, Balinese reformers decided to found the Dwijendra foundation in Denpasar, and Pandit Shastri was actively involved in teaching at the Dwijendra foundation and the Saraswati School.”⁸⁵ The Dwijendra Foundation aimed at preservation of Hindu heritage and knowledge and a “modernized and rationalized knowledge and understanding of agama, culture, and literature should be increased in the Agama Hindu Bali congregation and/or people interested in it.” To further these aims the Foundation established schools and colleges with Denspar as their stronghold and a focus on Agamic Hinduism. Narendra Dev Pandit Shastri delivered the first religious discourse at Dwijendra Foundation and he

is also credited with conceiving and implementing a uniform style of prayer at Dwijendra which was the Tri Sandhya. The languages taught were Balinese, Sanskrit and old Javanese. “In consequence, the Dwijendra Foundation (Yayasan Dwijendra) played a significant role in the recognition process of Indonesian Hindu Dharma and the implementation of the Hindu class and Hindu education system, because it was the epicenter of the reformers’ rationalization and systematization efforts the 1950s and early 1960s.”⁸⁶

The Parisada Dharma Hindu changed its name to Parisada Hindu Dharma in 1964 thus casting aside its Baines origins. The Parishad not only was instrumental in the translation of a number of Hindu sacred texts, but it also played a crucial role in standardizing Hindu religion. The Balinese Hinduism was reformed from a stage where religious knowledge was handed from generation to generation among a privileged few and when priests and kings played a prominent role, to a religion where all had equal access to sacred texts and scriptures and could practice Hinduism in their own right without the aid of the ritual specialists. “The Parisada was now instructing the Balinese on what to believe and how to practise their religion accordingly.”⁸⁷ The theological canon of Agama Hindu was composed by Ida Bagus Mantra’s which was based on “five articles of faith – the Panca Çraddha – conceived on the model of the five pillars of Islam: belief in the one and only God (Sang Hyang Widhi), in the eternal essence of life (atman), in the retribution of all actions (karmaphala), in reincarnation (samsara), and in the final liberation (moksa).”⁸⁸

Historical, archival and archaeological evidence clearly speaks of interactions between India and Indonesia from the ancient to the modern period of history. In the field of art and education mentioned may be made of Rabindranath Tagore’s travels to Java and Bali and the influence it had on subjects taught at Santi Niketan, as well as the influence of Tagore in the Taman Siswa system of education in Indonesia. This theme has already been dealt with in another paper, and the focus of this paper was to further highlight Indian and Indonesian interactions

in the sphere of religion, both Islam and Hinduism, and in the nationalist struggles against colonialism. The key participants involved were not only well known leaders but lesser known Indians such as soldiers and seamen whose significant contributions in forging these linkages often go un-noticed.

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