Kyrgyzstan ~ A Country Remarkably Unknown

Kyrgyzstan is a remarkably unknown country to most world citizens. Since its conception in the 1920s, outside observers have usually treated it as a backwater of the impenetrable Soviet Union.
There was little interest and even less opportunity to gather information on this particular Soviet republic. But even within the Soviet Union, Kyrgyzstan was relatively unknown. It is as likely to meet a person from Russia or the Ukraine who has never heard of Kyrgyzstan as someone from the Netherlands or the USA. As one of my informants who has a Kyrgyz father and a Russian mother said:
I was raised in Kazan in Russia and went to school when the Soviet Union still existed. The kids in school did not understand that I was Kyrgyz. I sometimes explained, but they still thought I was Tatar, or from the Caucasus. We were taught some facts and figures about Kyrgyzstan in school, but that was it.

Kyrgyzstan briefly became world news in March 2005, when it was the third in a row of velvet revolutions among former Soviet Union countries. President Akayev, who had been the president since 1990 (one year before Kyrgyzstan's independence) was ousted, to be replaced by opposition leaders who had until recently taken part in Akayev's government.

A few years before that, Kyrgyzstan had become a focus of interest in the War on Terrorism, because of its majority Muslim population and its vicinity to Afghanistan. The country opened its main airport Manas for the Coalition Forces, who all stationed troops there.
The lack of a solid general base of background information gives the study of Kyrgyzstan a special dimension. Researchers and audience do not share images of the country that are based on a large number of impressions from different sources. Thus, every morsel of new information becomes disproportionally important in the creation of new images, and may be taken out of perspective. It also means that the researcher does not have an extensive body of knowledge to fall back on. Questions that are raised can often not be answered, as there is no corpus of data and general consensus. This can give the researcher a sense of

walking on quick sand, but it also keeps the researcher, and hopefully her audience as well, focused and unable to take anything for granted.
In this paper I will give an overview of images of Kyrgyzstan as it is portrayed in journalist reports, travel guides, and works of social scientists. This will provide the reader unfamiliar with Kyrgyzstan with a framework of background information that cannot be presupposed.

Kyrgyzstan Located

Map of Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan, a country of 198,500 square km, is about the size of Great Britain. Its population of 5 million is considerably less than that of the UK, however, because of the mountains that cover the larger part of the country. Kyrgyzstan's impressive mountain ranges, known as the Tien Shan, Ala Too and Alay ranges, are extensions of the Himalayas. Ninety per cent of Kyrgyzstan's territory is above 1,500 metres and forty-one per cent is above 3,000 metres. Perpetual snow covers about a third of the country's surface. Large amounts of water, in the form of mountain lakes and wild rivers, are a consequence of this landscape.
Kyrgyzstan is landlocked and bordered by four countries, three of which are former Soviet Union republics. Kazakhstan lies to the North, Uzbekistan to the West and Tajikistan to the South. The Eastern border is shared with China, or more precisely: with the Chinese province Xinjiang, home of many Turkic and Muslim peoples.
Administratively, Kyrgyzstan is divided into seven provinces (oblus, from Russian oblast) and two cities (shaar). The two cities are Osh city and the country's capital Bishkek. Bishkek was known as Frunze during Soviet times, named after Red Army hero Mikhael Frunze. In 1991, four months before independence, the city

was renamed Bishkek (Prior, 1994:42).
Kyrgyzstan is commonly divided in the North and South. The South consist of three provinces: Jalal-Abad, Osh and Batken. Batken was separated from Osh after the invasion of Islamic guerrillas in August 1999. The North consists of the Chüy, Talas, Ïssïkköl and Narïn provinces. Looking at the map, it is clear that 'North' and 'South' are not so much geographical indications, as Ïssïkköl and Narïn are at the same latitude as Jalal-Abad. A mountain ridge with very few passages, however, separates the North from the South, making them far apart in people's experience. If one travels from Osh to Narïn, for instance, one usually takes a triangle route through Bishkek. There is a road that traverses the mountain ridge that separates them, but snow often renders it impassable. Until 1962, there was not even a road between Osh and Bishkek (then: Frunze), the railway that connected the two cities ran by way of Tashkent.
The term 'Kyrgyzstan' is a choice out of a number of names for the country. Presently, the official name in the Kyrgyz language is Kïrgïz Respublikasï. In English, it is 'the Kyrgyz Republic', after the 'h' in Kyrghyz was dropped in 1999. One year before independence, shortly after Akayev's appointment as president, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan became the official name for the republic after it announced its sovereignty (Rashid, 1994:147). In May 1993, this was changed to the Kyrghyz Republic. Another often-heard name for the country is Kirgizia, which is based on Russian, who substituted the ï (usually transliterated as y) by an i to fit Russian grammatical rules. Popular in the country itself is the word 'Kyrgyzstan'. This term is not new, but was already in use in the early days of the Soviet Union. In this dissertation, I will join with popular habit and refer to the country as Kyrgyzstan.

History of Kyrgyzstan
The actual history of Kyrgyzstan begins in 1924, when the territory was first plotted to a map. Within the larger framework of the Soviet Union, the Kyrgyz Autonomous Region was drawn up as a separate political and administrative unit. By 1936, this unit had become a sovereign Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR), one of the eleven (later: fifteen) SSRs that made up the Soviet Union (Rashid, 1994:143). Of course, this delineation was not contrived in a historical vacuum but was built upon existing ideas of a certain population living in a certain area. However, the demarcation of the Soviet republics was based on choices that took certain ideas into account and left others out. A historical account of Kyrgyzstan that pre-dates 1924, then, easily falls prey to teleological reasoning. Taking Kyrgyzstan as a unit

for historic research about times when the idea of 'Kyrgyzstan' did not exist means placing a contemporary concept which is meaningless at the time of study, as the focal point. One may begin to look for the word '*Kyrgyz*' in historical documents and project the findings onto the group of people who are presently called Kyrgyz and who live in a Kyrgyz nation-state. Or alternatively, it is possible to project the boundaries of the territory back into the past and see coherences and connections that would not have made sense at the time. This is exactly what has happened in Soviet and post-Soviet historiography, as a part of conscious or unconscious 'community imagining' (Anderson, 1986). It led to a division of history into two tiers: the history of the Kyrgyz ethnic group and the history of the territory. The two do not come together until the sixteenth century, when the Kyrgyz are believed to have moved to the Tien Shan Mountains where they live today.

In a similar way, historians have projected the concept of the contemporary State back into the past. They have attempted to describe Central Asia's history as a succession of nation-states or their equivalents. The aspiration to bring order to thousands of years of human interaction has time and again led authors to look for names of ethnic groups who formed a political unity that arose, defeated another unit and was replaced in time by yet another unit. The situation in present-day Central Asia, Siberia, China and Mongolia, however, is far more complex than that. Political units changed constantly, they covered different territories at different times, merged with other groups at one time and fought them at another time. Various ethnic groups could be part of a certain political unit or ethnic groups themselves could deal with temporarily important divisions. Furthermore, it is by no means clear how individuals perceived their ethnic, linguistic, religious and political identities. Nomadic groups especially would organise their political structures quite differently from present-day nation-states. The attempts of different authors to compile a chronology of ethnic states, then, inevitably led to differing and often conflicting time lines.

Another confusing factor is the fact that political and ethnic groups were known under numerous and varied names, and in turn other names were shared by a number of different groups. L. Krader speaks of '*a pool or reservoir of ethnic identifications, or ethnonyms, upon which peoples could draw*' (Krader, 1963:81). Although this observation makes the use of ethnonyms seem random and arbitrary, it is indeed striking how ethnonyms continue to appear in differing contexts. The reasons that people had for using certain ethnonyms at certain

times remain obscure.
The process of producing a historiography for Kyrgyzstan is further hampered by the fact that data on both the history of Kyrgyzstan's territory and the history of the Kyrgyz people is scarce. A number of externally written sources (mostly Chinese, Persian and Arabic) have been discovered, in addition to some internal Turkic runic inscriptions and numerous archeological excavations. The lack of a firm historical framework for the analysis of these data leads to varying and differing interpretations. As most historians focus on providing a neat, complete and readable narrative, they omit confusing and conflicting data. However, when one attempts to align the pieces together in a neat and concise manner, the confusions reappear.
I will not burden the reader here with the perhaps frustrating chore of struggling through masses of foreign names belonging to ethnic groups with obscure status and abstruse interconnections. Instead, I will specify a number of historic patterns and mention those anecdotes that have become symbolic markers of entire historical periods for my informants. I will follow the method of periodisation which forms an obvious thread in this book: the periods before, during and after the Soviet Union.

Before the Soviet Union
It is within this period that a distinction between the history of the Kyrgyz and the history of Kyrgyzstan should be made. I will begin with the latter, as it is traced back further in time than the former.

History of the territory of Kyrgyzstan
Historians who concentrate on the history of Kyrgyzstan's territory regress as far back as the Paleolithicum by identifying archaeological findings of stone artefacts and rock paintings in the Tien Shan, İssïkköl and Ferghana areas. These have been dated to the Palaeolithic period of 800 thousand – 10 thousand years BC (Mokrynin and Ploskich, 1995:5). The first people to have been identified by name are the Sakas, also known as Scythians. The Sakas are said to have arrived in the area in the sixth century BC (ibid.:14). They were a nomadic people who inhabited various places in a vast area from South Siberia to the Black Sea. They have been identified as being speakers of an Iranian language. According to Mokrynin and Ploskich, the North and South of Kyrgyzstan were inhabited by two different Sakas tribes (ibid.).
Three elements of this depiction of the Sakas recur in descriptions of the history

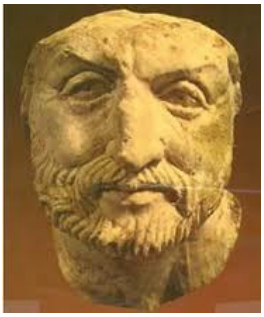
of Central Asia and Siberia: they are either nomads or settled peoples, they are Turkic or Persian/Iranian, and they inhabit Kyrgyzstan's North or South. First of all, the inhabiting groups are characterised as nomadic or settled peoples. This feature is often singled out as the driving force behind the interaction dynamics in the area. Historians discern a pattern of a continuous struggle between nomads and settlers. Nomadic groups are seen to form federations with the aim of conquering and subjugating settler groups. These nomadic federations advance over large stretches of land, looting and destroying towns and cities, until the nomads settle down themselves, form settled civilisations that are destroyed by new nomadic federations in their turn.

This meta-analysis has given rise to stereotypical images of nomadic peoples that are violent and freedom-loving versus settled groups that are industrious, religious and sustain high culture. When put to the test of the data on present-day Kyrgyzstan, however, the pattern fails. Nomadic groups often forced each other out of their territories, living peacefully alongside settler groups at the same time. Generally, the Tien Shan mountains are seen as cradles of nomadic groups, whereas the Ferghana valley gave rise to a number of urban civilisations. In 130 BC, for example, a Chinese diplomat who travelled Central Asia found a settled group, the Davan, in the Ferghana valley and a nomadic state of Wu-sun in the mountains (ibid.:34, 44). These groups are both remembered in Kyrgyzstan by compelling anecdotes. The Davan were the owners of the legendary 'Heavenly Horses'. The Chinese were keen on obtaining these to use them in their battles against the Xiong-nu (probably the Huns). They sent two armies to fight the Davan, in 103 and 101 BC, and only obtained the desired horses when they defeated the Davan in the second campaign (ibid.:46). Of the Wu-sun, a seventh-century Chinese writer wrote the following: *the Wu-sun differ greatly in their appearance from other foreigners of the Western lands. To-day the Turks with blue eyes and red beards, resembling apes, are their descendants* (Barthold, 1956:76).

During my fieldwork, I found that this comment had been modified into my informants' frequent assertion that 'the Kyrgyz used to look like Europeans, with red hair and blue eyes'. Interesting is the difference in assessment of the physical features – ape-like to the Chinese, which was probably a low-status qualification, and European-like to present-day Kyrgyz, that they generally regard as a high-status qualification. Also interesting is that in this case, my Kyrgyz informants traced their ancestry back to the early inhabitants of present-day Kyrgyzstan.

Commonly, the ancestor Kyrgyz are considered to be a people that migrated from Siberia. It is possible, of course, that in popular historiography the comment on the Wu-sun is taken entirely out of context and transferred to the Siberian ancestors.

In later years, the area was inhabited by members of the nomadic federation of the Juan Juan (ibid.:81), and other nomadic empires such as the Kök-Türk (Kwanten, 1979:39), the Karluks (ibid.:59) and the khanate of Chingiz-Khan's son Chagatai (ibid.:249). The urbanbased Karakhanid state was the first Islamic state in present-day Kyrgyzstan. In the tenth century it had power centres in Talas and Kashkar, and later also in present-day Uzbekistan's cities of Samarkhand and Buchara (ibid.:61).



However, not all empires that held power over the area can easily be defined as nomadic or settled. A second distinction has therefore been brought forward. The early inhabitants of Kyrgyzstan's territory are also identified as Iranian, Turkic or otherwise, usually by a reference to their language. As I have mentioned, the early Sakas were said to have spoken an Iranian language. The first Turks appeared on the scene in the sixth century AD. They are referred to as the Kök-Türk (Blue or Celestial Turks). Their khaganate gained momentum in 552, when the last Juan Juan khan was defeated (Mokrynin and Ploskich, 1995:58). Present-day Kyrgyzstan fell under the Western khanate when it split in 581 (ibid., Barthold, 1956:82). The Kök-Türk are remembered by my informants because of their so-called Orkhon Inscriptions. In 1889, a Russian expedition to Mongolia uncovered two monuments to Bilge Khan and his brother Kül Tigin in the valley of the river Orkhon. These monuments were adorned with runic inscriptions that are important to the present-day Kyrgyz because they mention a Kyrgyz people at the Yenisey River. At the Yenisey River itself, similar runic inscriptions have been found.

Other Turkic states have been formed by the Seljuk, a branch of the Oguz Turks (Kwanten, 1979:65) and the empire ruled by Timur, also known as Timur-i-leng or Tamerlane (ibid.:266). However, most of the empires that extended their influence over present-day Kyrgyzstan cannot be identified by one clear ethnic background. The Kara-Kitai, for example, are described by Kwanten as the refugee descendants of another empire, the Ch'i-tan empire (ibid.). He explains that scholars still debate whether they were Tungusic, Mongol or Turkic (ibid.:71). In many versions of the Manas epic, the Kara-Kitai are mentioned as

Manas' main enemies (Manas Enstiklopediasy I:276). According to B.M. Yunusaliev, the Kara-Kitai are also known as Kidan in the epic (ibid.), which appears to be the same word as Ch'i-tan. Nowadays, the word Kitai is used for China and the Chinese, but considering the above, care should be taken in identifying Manas' Kara-Kitai enemies as a group of ethnic Chinese (ibid., see also chapter four). The Kara-Kitai were ousted by the Nayman, another name that occurs in Manas versions, and whose ethnic affiliation is obscure. They were on the run from Mongols, but later referred to as Mongols themselves (Barthold, 1956:106-110). The subsequent Chagatai khanate is described as a loose coalition of Türks, Uighurs, Kara-Kitais, Persians and others under the leadership of a tiny Mongol minority (Kwanten, 1979:250). After Chagatai's death, the khanate became politically unstable and was ruled by eighteen subsequent khans, until its division in 1338 into Transoxiana and Mogholistan (ibid.:250-251). Most of present-day Kyrgyzstan fell under Mogholistan, Moghol being the word used by the Mongols to denote Turkic peoples (Mokrynin and Ploskich, 1995:135). The previously mentioned Timur, who was born in a Turkic family, came next. When he died, present-day Kyrgyzstan went back to being Mogholistan and was ruled by Mongol leaders who had to deal with Turkic coup attempts (Barthold:146-158). All of this clearly indicates that the population was not reducible to one single ethnic group.

The third recurring element in the description of Kyrgyzstan's history is the division between North and South. This division, that is so important today, is recovered in past epochs. The situation of the urban Davan in the South versus the nomadic Wu-sun in the North is paralleled in the eighteenth and nineteenth century by the Southern Kyrgyz who were part of the Khanate of Kokhand and the Northern Kyrgyz who fell outside of Khokand and were either independent, or under Russian and Chinese rule.

In the sixteenth century, the occupation of this area was taken up by the Kazakh and the Kyrgyz (ibid.:158). This is where the two story-lines – the history of the territory of Kyrgyzstan and the history of the Kyrgyz people – collide. Before returning to this point, I will summarise the historiography of the Kyrgyz ethnic group.

History of the Kyrgyz

The Kyrgyz are traced back to the third century BC, when Chinese annals speak of a people called the Hehun. Kyrgyzstani scholars argue that these must be the Kyrgyz, because they are also referred to as Hyan-hun, Kigu or Chigu (Mokrynin

and Ploskich, 1995:29). These people lived in Southern Siberia, along the River Yenisey (ibid.) or one of its sources in the Altai mountains (Krader, 1962:59), over 1,000 km north-east of presentday Kyrgyzstan. According to Barthold, the Hehun people were not originally Turkic but Samoyedic (ibid.), just like the Uralic peoples who live along the Yenisey River today.

Around the sixth to eighth centuries AD, Greek, Chinese, Arab and Uygur sources mention a Kyrgyz state halfway along the Yenisey River (Mokrynin and Ploskich, 1995:68). According to Mokrynin and Ploskich, the names used in these sources closely resemble the word Kyrgyz. Greek sources speak of Kherkis and Khirkhiz, Arab sources of Khyrgyz or Khyrkhyz, Chinese Syatszyasy or Tszilitszisy, and Uygur and Sogdi texts speak of Kyrgyz (ibid.). However, most of the available information about this group comes from a number of Chinese sources, which use names that can be transliterated in various ways.

Liu speaks of Ki-ku, Chien-k'un or Hsia-ch'a-ssu (Liu, 1958:175), Wittfogel and Chia-Shêng add Ko-k'un, Chieh-ku, Ho-ku and Hoku-ss (Wittfogel and Chia-Shêng, 1949:50). They remark that according to Barthold, these terms are a crude transcriptions by the Chinese of the original word best transcribed as ki-li-ki-si (ibid.). The variety of ethnonyms indicates that the contribution of specific information to the ancestors of the present-day Kyrgyz is problematic, to say the least. Furthermore, there is no conclusive evidence that the people who are called Kyrgyz today are descendants from these 'Kyrgyz' in Siberia.

Still, present-day Kyrgyz feel related to these 'Kyrgyz', and base their history on secondary information from the Chinese sources. In this interpretation, the Kyrgyz were the people who fought a fierce battle with the Uygurs in 840 AD. The Kyrgyz won and destroyed the Uygur capital Karabalghasun (Barfield, 1989:152-160). They were not interested in trade, and after having turned Orkhon into a backwater they were driven away from it by the Khitans fifty years later (ibid.:165).

In Suji in present-day Mongolia, a text has been found that was written in 'Kyrgyz letters' (Mokrynin and Ploskich, 1995:93), a rhunic script similar to the above-mentioned Orkhon Inscriptions. It is dated to the ninth or tenth century and contains eleven verses, the first of which are translated as: *'I have come from Uygur ground, called Yaklagar-Khan. I am a son of the Kyrgyz.'* (ibid.).

The Kyrgyz are mentioned again in connection to the conquest of a Karluk town in 982. Barthold writes:

At that time the Qirgiz lived in the upper basin of the Yenisey, where, according to Chinese sources, they were visited every three years by Arab caravans carrying

silk from Kucha. […] It is possible that the Qirghiz, having allied themselves with the Qarluk, took the field against the Toquz-Oghuz and occupied that part of Semirechyé which is their present home. In any case, the bulk of the Qirghiz migrated into the Semirechyé considerably later. Had they lived in the Semirechyé at the time of the Qarakhanids, they would have been converted to Islam in the tenth or eleventh century. As it is, they were still looked upon as heathen in the sixteenth century (Barthold, 1956:91-92).

In a later work, Barthold cites a manuscript from the tenth century in which the Kyrgyz are located near Kashkar, where they live now. He adds, however, that most of the extant sources, such as the Mahmud al-Kasghari, do not mention them (Barthold, 1962:76).

Barthold maintains that at the time of the Kara-Kita Empire (which in the twelfth century reached from the Yenisey to Talas), the Kyrgyz still lived near the Yenisey River (Barthold, 1956:92). The Kyrgyz were heavily embroiled in the continual warfare that went on until the sixteenth century (ibid.:152-158).

The Kyrgyz in Kyrgyzstan

During the second half of the fifteenth century, the Kyrgyz moved to the Tien Shan area (Mokrynin and Ploskich, 1995:144-149). In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Kyrgyz fought heavy battles against the Kalmaks of Jungaria (also known as Kalmaks, Kalmïks or Oyrats) (ibid.:161-3). These struggles are often seen as the inspiration for the battles in the Manas epic.

In 1757, the Jungarian empire was defeated by the Chinese (ibid.:167). The Kyrgyz now entered into a political relationship with China and had ambassadors in Beijing (ibid.:169). In the 1760s, the Southern Kyrgyz came under the control of the khanate of Kokhand (ibid.:192), one of the three city states (Buchara, Khiva and Kokhand) that ruled Central Asia. However, the Kyrgyz tribes in the North were not conquered before the 1820s, and even then they remained in opposition to the khanate (Prior, 1994:14). In the 1860s, a number of Northern tribes accepted aid from the Russians in their revolts against Kokhand, and managed to break free from it permanently in 1862 (ibid.). According to Prior, 'the locals went back to nomadizing and farming, and the Russian army continued to pound Kokand' (ibid.:16).

In spite of this, the Northern tribes were not all at peace, as the Bugu and Sarïbagïsh were at war with one another. In 1854, a fierce battle between the tribes had led to the defeat of the Bugu, even though the manap Urman of the Sarïbagïsh had been killed (Semenov, 1998:73). The Bugu left the shores of Lake

Ïssïkköl and went to the Santash region to the East. Here, they became subject to Chinese rule (ibid.).
The Southern Kyrgyz tribes remained linked to Kokhand until the end of the khanate. They fought the Tsarist armies and only fell into Russian hands when Kokhand surrendered in 1876 (Temirkulov, 2004, Prior, 1994:16). A famous name from this era is Kurmanjandatka, vassal to Kokhand and leader of the Southern Kyrgyz since 1862. She was the widow of the murdered Alimbek-datka, and is said to have commanded an army of 10,000 soldiers (jigit). When Kokhand fell, Kurmanjan-datka urged her people to give up their resistance to Russia, and she established good relations with Russian representatives. She retired from public life when her favourite son was executed under accusation of contraband and murdering custom officials. Her role of either heroine or traitor is debated until this day. Nevertheless, her picture adorns the 50 som banknote of independent Kyrgyzstan.

Under the Russian Tsarist administration, present-day Kyrgyzstan fell under various administrative units. The biggest part of the area fell under the Semirechye Province, which was part of the Steppe Governorate from 1882 until 1899, when it became part of the Turkistan Governorate (Murray Matly, 1989:93). From 1891 onwards, waves of Russian colonists came to the Steppe Governorate to settle. After the abolition of serfdom in Russia, landless peasants were attracted by the so-called Virgin Lands of present-day Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. In 1916, revolts of the Muslim population against the Russians broke out all over Central Asia (Carrère d'Encausse, 1989:210-211). The direct cause was a decree that mobilised the Central Asians into workers' battalions to replace Russian workers who fought in the first world war. Relations with Russian settlers had been tense, especially amongst the Kyrgyz of Semirechye, and as a result the revolt was fierce (ibid.). In Semirechye, 2,000 Russian settlers were killed, but far more locals perished. One third of the Kyrgyz population fled to China (ibid.).

The Soviet Union
The Socialist Revolution of 1917 was largely a Russian concern in Semirechye. According to Daniel Prior, the general Kyrgyz population did not take active part in the revolution (Prior, 1994:29). A number of educated young men took the opportunity to make a political career within the new communist structure, which sustained an active policy of indigenisation, or as Terry Martin terms it: affirmative action (Martin, 2001). By the end of the 1930s, all of them had

perished in the purges. In the years of civil war (1917-1920), famine ruled daily life in Central Asia (Brill Ollcot, 1987:149-152). After the civil war, once Soviet rule was firmly established, the construction of a socialist society began.
Martha Brill Olcott speaks of the Kazakhs when she writes: *those who could afford it migrated part of the year and stalled their animals in winter, while those who could not support themselves solely through livestock breeding practiced subsistence farming as well. […] Clan, village, and aul authorities simply reconstituted themselves as soviets* (ibid.:162).
During the years of the New Economic Policy, the economy gradually recovered.However, in 1929, a programme of collectivisation was initiated which caused another horrendous famine. People preferred to slaughter their animals rather than see them becoming communal property, even though each household was allowed to keep a few animals (ibid.:176-187). This did not prevent collectivisation to be implemented and becoming the basis for the economy for the following sixty years.

Another restructuring process of the first Soviet years is known as the national demarcation. The former Tsarist empire was radically reorganised on the basis of national autonomy. A number of ethnic groups were recognised as nations and were awarded republics or autonomous regions. The Kyrgyz were among them, and by 1936, the Kyrgyz SSR became one of eleven (later: fifteen) Soviet Socialist Republics (SSR). The status of SSR proved most important in 1991, when all fifteen SSR became independent states, in contrast to areas such as Chechnya, Dagestan and Tuva, which remained under Moscow's control as autonomous republics within the Russian Federation.
By the time collectivisation and national demarcation had been completed, the Purges began. In 1934, the first wave of purges swept over the Soviet Union. 'Bourgeois nationalism' was regarded as the evil that needed to be eradicated. The second wave in 1937 was even more lethal, and many Central Asian leaders were executed. The second world war, known as the Great Patriotic War in the USSR, left deep traces in Kyrgyzstan. Every village has a monument for the sons that fell in battles far away. By this time, the policy of indigenisation had shifted towards a Russian-oriented governance. Teresa Rakowska-Harmstone explains:
Local nationals were required to occupy the highest hierarchical positions and all posts of representative character. Invariably, however, a local leader was either seconded by a Russian or backed by a Russian or Russians close to him in the hierarchy. […] The lower executives were almost always Russians, especially in

the central Party and state agencies. While not in the public eye, they actually formed the backbone of the republican bureaucracy (Rakowska-Harmstone, 1970:96).

The death of Stalin in 1953 was lamented all over the Soviet Union. The statues and pictures of Stalin remained in place until Krushchev's famous 'secret speech' of 1956, in which he denounced the personality cult surrounding Stalin and accused him of crimes committed during the purges. But even today, many people in Kyrgyzstan speak highly of Stalin, praising his strong leadership and recognition of national culture and downplaying the scare of the purges.

The stretch of time between the end of the second world war and the beginning of perestroika in Central Asia is often characterised as the period of stagnation (Prior, 1994:38-41). Most historic overviews brush over these forty years as if nothing much happened. Politically, the scene was dominated by conservative party secretaries who stayed put in their positions for decades. In the Kyrgyz SSR, Turdakun Usubaliev was First Secretary from 1961 until 1985. In the areas of industry, agriculture, education, health care, infrastructure and culture, however, massive achievements were accomplished. Contrary to the image of the Soviet Union as a hated, totalitarian regime, the people I met in Kyrgyzstan looked back upon the Soviet period as a prosperous and pleasant era. Although they did appreciate the openness of the new times, they were not particularly relieved that the Soviet Union was over. The people I encountered had found means to get by and function within the framework of state socialism.

In November 2007, a news report on Dutch television drew parallels between the present NATO presence in Afghanistan and the Soviet Afghan war of the 1980s. An interviewed Russian general concluded: *We should never have tried to implement socialism in Afghanistan. It never gained foothold, just as it failed in Mongolia and Uzbekistan and Kirgizia.*

From my perspective, this seems a misinterpretation of the influence of socialism in Kyrgyzstan. In the life stories of my informants, socialism was deeply integrated into their social world. Their economic activities took place in socialist collectives, socialist world views were taught at schools and accepted by the pupils, children were active in organisations such as the Komsomol (Communist Youth Union), arts were celebrated in festivals with a socialist tinge, and so forth. The stereotypical image of a socialist state that forced itself upon the people, who kept their true convictions and expressions secret, also seems false in the light of what my informants told me. My host father in Kazïbek village, for instance, was a

fervent Muslim and socialist at the same time, and he saw no contradiction in that. I do not know if he would have expressed his adherence as vehemently during Soviet days; perhaps the demise of socialism had created room for a new assertion of his Muslim identity. However, he was so at ease with the combination of the two convictions that I deem it likely that this was not new for him. In a similar way, Manaschï Talantaalï Bakchiev had combined becoming a Manaschï with active socialist networking. He told me he had been an active and ambitious member of his local Komsomol department in his teenage years. These were also the years when he began to explore his Manaschïhood.

In 1987, as the perestroika and glasnost policies gave room for critical thought and discussions, a few debating clubs consisting mainly of young Russian-speaking intellectuals arose in Frunze (Babak, 2003) . By 1989, these political clubs had ceased to exist, partly because of harassment by the authorities, and partly because their position was taken over by groups that united over certain issues, such as ecology or culture (ibid.). In this climate, a political action group called Ashar became popular because of its standpoint on housing issues. There was a growing shortage of housing in the capital, and when young Kyrgyz people started to move to the city they built illegal dwellings outside and inside the city centre (Rashid, 1994:146). A group of young Kyrgyz intellectuals formed Ashar (litt: mutual help, solidarity) and managed to obtain land from the city authorities for legal home building (ibid.).

A few months later, in June 1990, riots broke out in Osh oblast. These evolved into a week of extremely violent clashes between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in the area between Osh city and Özgön. According to official numbers, 120 Uzbeks, 50 Kyrgyz and one Russian were killed and over 5,000 crimes such as rape, assault and pillage were committed (Tishkov 1995:134,135). As with any violent conflict, opinions on the culpability and the causes of the conflict vary enormously. In his study '*Don't kill me, I'm a Kyrgyz*!', Tishkov points to a wide range of factors that led individuals to commit their atrocities.

Poor living and health conditions and rivalry over land between the ethnic groups were structural causes. At the heat of the moment, fury seemed to be fuelled by rumours of Uzbeks killing Kyrgyz, by strong individuals who stirred up the youth, the absence of authoritative peace keeping and by alcoholic intoxication. Tishkov names another element of the frenzy of that week, which is of specific interest for this study: Young Kyrgyz on horseback were trying to demonstrate their strength and superiority by lifting up an opponent by his legs and smashing him down on

the ground – exactly in the way the legendary Kyrgyz heroes supposedly overpowered their enemies. '*We have read about it a lot, but this is the first time it's been possible to try it out for ourselves*!', they said (Tishkov, 1995:148).
The unrest of the housing and the Osh riots led to the dismissing of First Secretary Absamat Masaliyev. When none of three candidates managed to get a majority vote from the Kyrgyz SSR Supreme Soviet, Askar Akayev came into the picture, and after winning the vote he was installed as President. Akayev is often portrayed as the first non-Communist president of Central Asia. This is true to the extent that he was not on the top list of Communist leaders at the time of his election by the Kyrgyz SSR Supreme Soviet. His career was in mathematics and physics, and in 1989 he became the president of the Kyrgyz Academy of Sciences. However, Akayev did also have a political career within the Communist Party. In his 1999 biography Askar Akaev, the First President of the Kyrgyz Republic, his position of Head of the Department of Science and Higher Educational Institutions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1986 is boasted, as well as his election as Deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and his positions of member of the USSR Chamber of Nationalities and the Supreme Soviet Committee on Economic Reform in 1989 (Rud, 1999:21,23). Be that as it may, Akayev was an unexpected face at the head of the Kyrgyz SSR, and he brought with him an atmosphere of change and reform.

After the Soviet Union

Less than a year after Akayev's installation as president, conservative communists in Moscow staged a coup d'état against Gorbachov's government. Akayev was the only Central Asian leader who immediately condemned the coup. A few days later, the fifteen republics of the Soviet Union had all declared their independence, and the Soviet Union ceased to exist. His early denouncement of the coup gave Akayev the aura of a brave, strong and democracy-loving leader in the eyes of western observers. This was important, as Akayev took the standpoint that Kyrgyzstan, with very few natural resources of its own, was dependent on the outside world for economic security. The Kyrgyz government put enormous effort into building up good international relations, looking in many directions.
Western countries were charmed by his interest in economic reform and democracy. Japan was honoured by becoming the model for Kyrgyzstan's road to development as was Switzerland, South Korea and Turkey. Turkey was especially enthusiastic as it looked forward to forging alliances with the new Turkic republics. Ties with Russia had loosened rapidly, but Akayev went at great

lengths to keep good relations with Russia. Border disputes with China originating in Soviet times were resolved as quickly as possible and trade opened up immediately. Canada provided a gold mining company that in a joint venture with the Kyrgyz state started the exploitation the Kumtor goldmine.
The biggest sums of money obtained from diplomacy were the loans by the IMF and the World Bank. The introduction of shock therapy led to quick reforms of the economy, but did indeed leave the population in a state of shock. Over time, the position and power of the president changed, both in relation to the parliament (Jogorku Kengesh, litt: Supreme Soviet) and the population. As Akayev heeded the parliament less and less, most of the population started to regard him as a corrupt leader who enriched himself and his family, and who had proved unable to secure a strong international position for Kyrgyzstan. The presidential elections of 2000 also made international organisations such as the OSCE critical of Akayev, and when at the 2005 parliamentary elections the attempts at manipulation cropped up again, Akayev had fallen out of grace by almost everyone. The elections were followed by protest marches. To the surprise of many, these led to a true velvet revolution, known as the Tulip Revolution. President Akayev was ousted and escaped to Moscow.
A new era started with Kurmanbek Bakiyev as president and Felix Kulov as prime minister. Bakiyev and Kulov started off as political rivals for the presidential elections. Their campaigns increased precarious tensions in the country, because Southerner Bakiyev and Northerner Kulov both capitalised on long-standing antagonism between the North and the South. The escalations came to a halt when the two opponents proclaimed their unexpected alliance: if Bakiyev was chosen as president, Kulov would be his prime minister. This is what happened, but the tensions between North and South did not diminish. In 2007, a Kyrgyz informant wrote to me in an email that ‘we have a big North-South problem at the moment, an invisible war is going on’.

The new government renewed ties with Russia, allowing Russia to intensify its influence in economic and military spheres. In October 2005, the murder of two parliamentarians, who were also well-known businessmen, gave much unrest within the government and led to a sense of disappointment with most of the population in their new leadership. People felt unsafe, and rumours about criminal infiltration of the government became louder. The Tulip revolution had turned into disillusionment very quickly. Bakiyev faced numerous street protests against him, mostly on the issue of the promised new constitution that would

transfer some of the president's powers to the parliament. In April 2007, Bakiyev finally signed amendments to the constitution that would diminish presidential powers. Five months later, however, the new constitution was invalidated by the Constitutional Court of Kyrgyzstan. In response, Bakiyev called a referendum to be held in October, at which the new constitution was approved by over 75% of the votes. The referendum was heavily criticised by Kyrgyzstani and international organisations. Bakiyev then called early parliamentary elections in December 2007. With the help of new rules that made it exceptionally difficult for parties to pass the two established thresholds, these elections were won by Bakiyev's newly formed Ak Jol party, who thus gained control over the new parliament.

Economy

In the late nineteenth century, the Kyrgyz practised transhumance animal husbandry. Their livestock consisted of the 'four cattle' (tört tülük mal): camels, horses, sheep-goats and cows. Radloff adds that they herded yaks too (Radloff, 1893:527). My informants claimed that before the revolution, the Kyrgyz diet was made up mostly of meat and diary products. However, Radloff reports that the Kyrgyz (Kara-Kyrgyz) practised agriculture on a wider scale than the Kazakhs (Kasak-Kyrgyz) (ibid.:528). According to Radloff, they grew wheat, barley and millet, for which they used a carefully maintained system of artificial irrigation (ibid.).

Shahrani notes of the Pamir Kyrgyz, a group of Kyrgyz who fled the communist regimes in the Soviet Union and China, that hunting and collecting were marginal economic activities in the 1970s (Shahrani, 1979:108). It seems likely that the same counted for the pre-revolutionary Tien-Shan Kyrgyz. Radloff writes that the Kara-Kyrgyz only practised hunt for amusement (Radloff, 1893:528). In the time of my fieldwork, my informants mentioned ibex (gig) hunts, and I saw many fox and wolf skins decorating the walls. Still, hunting does not appear to have been vital for survival. Collecting of berries, herbs and wild onions was practised during my field research, and presented by my informants as part of the Kyrgyz way of life. Goods such as tea and guns were purchased through trade with settled peoples. Semenov, who travelled in Kyrgyz lands in 1856-1857, tells that the tomb of a hero named Nogay was built by craftsmen from Kashkar, for which his family paid two iamby of silver, two camels, five horses and three hundred sheep (Semenov, 1998:167).

Shahrani describes how the Pamir Kyrgyz traded their animal products for grain

from their agricultural neighbours, or directly through itinerant traders (Shahrani, 1979:110). The traders very often cheated the Kyrgyz by asking high prices or never coming back for payments. The nineteenth-century Tien-Shan Kyrgyz had an additional way of purchasing goods: they raided merchant caravans. Explorer Semenov Tien-Shanski mentions an encounter with a group of 'Karakirgiz bandits' of the Sarïbagïsh clan who were pillaging a small Uzbek caravan, which was going to Vernoe (presently Almatï) (Semenov, 1998:92).

In summer, the people and their livestock lived in mountain pastures up in the mountains. In winter, they moved down to lower fields where temperatures were higher. The people lived in round tents they called boz-üy (grey house, depending on the colour they could be called ak-üy (white house) or kara-üy (black house) as well) in Kyrgyz. In English, these tents are called yurts, an adaptation of the Russian word yurta. The following information about yurts was provided by my informants, based on present-day habits that they regarded as unaltered since time immemorial. The frame of the tents is made of fir wood, the cloth of thick felt. The tents are warm and comfortable and large enough for families to stand, eat, cook and sleep in. They are easily taken down and transported to the next camp site. The lay-out of the yurt is subject to a number of rules and traditions; the right side is for the women (epchi jak), the left side for the men (er jak) and the place opposite the door, the tör, is the place where the most respected guests are seated.

The fireplace is in the middle so that smoke can get out through a hole in the roof (tündük, now the symbol on the Kyrgyz flag). Decorations play an important part in the interior of the yurt. Usually, there is a decorated chest used to store things in and on, the walls of the yurta are adorned with patterns made of coloured wool curled around reeds, and the felt carpets on the floor are made in various designs. The carpet called shïrdak is made of a patchwork of coloured felt and the ala-kiyiz carpet has the design worked into the carpet during the felting process. Designs are usually abstract forms that resemble the French lily, representing a magic bird.

Wealth was not equally distributed among the nineteenth-century Kyrgyz. Radloff compares the wealth of the Kyrgyz to that of the Kazakh, and implies the existence of the category 'rich':

In general it can be said that the black Kirgis {Kyrgyz] own less cattle than the Kirgis of the Great Horde [Kazakh]. People who have 2000 horses and 3000 sheep already count as extraordinarily rich (Radloff, 1893:527).

In the travel journal of Semenov, we read that he has encountered both

impoverished and wealthy Kyrgyz. The poor Kyrgyz were often deprived due to the war between the Bugu and Sarïbagïsh clans. Once, Semenov and his group met a group of captives from the Bugu clan who had been abandoned by their Sarïbagïsh capturers. They were: *… dragging themselves along, hungry, emaciated and half-clothed, so that we had to share our food with them, in order that they should not starve to death* (Semenov, 1998:149).

The wealth of the clan leaders where he stayed as a guest was not so lavish that he spent any words on it. He was more interested in the appearance and character of the people he met than in their wealth and possessions. Semenov does write that when he tried to befriend Umbet-Ala, the manap of the Sarïbagïsh clan, to secure a safe passage through the Tien-Shan, the manap reciprocated his gifts with three excellent horses (ibid.:97). This transaction proved to be successful and Semenov did indeed travel the Tien Shan safely. It is not unlikely that traders for whom the Tien Shan was a part of their trading route engaged in similar contracts with the leaders of Kyrgyz clans. For these agreements to work, it was vital that the leaders exerted a degree of control over their subjects. The case of Semenov's agreement suggests that Umbet-Ala did have the necessary amount of authority. Previous to the agreement, Semenov and his party feared the Sarïbagïsh and avoided them where they could. Later, the bond of friendship (called tamyr by Semenov) with Umbet-Ala even helped Semenov to persuade the Sarïbagïsh to let go their Bugu captives (ibid.:179).
In the Soviet period, Kyrgyz pre-revolutionary society was typified as feudal, which made the richer Kyrgyz into feudal lords who extorted their serfs and slaves. This image can be nuanced, however, if we remember that wealth was counted in livestock – a highly perishable good in the harsh mountain climate. The richer Kyrgyz were therefore highly dependent on the poorer for their labour to keep the livestock intact and flourishing.

Shahrani explains that among the Pamir Kyrgyz in the 1970s: *… this stratification has not caused any serious confrontation or conflict between the very rich and the very poor. On the contrary, the existing ties of kinship, friendship, and affinity in many cases have been strengthened through herding arrangements between rich and poor relations, while new ties based on economic interdependence have developed* (Shahrani, 1979:182).
It seems likely that among the nineteenth-century Tien Shan Kyrgyz, a similar mechanism was at work. One informant said to me that there were rich people

among the Kyrgyz, but it depended on the person himself. Whether you were rich or not was determined by what kind of person you were. On the other hand, he also knew of the existence of slavery among the Kyrgyz, and assumed that people were slaves by birth, for the suffix -kul in personal names indicated their status as slaves.

The main basis for Kyrgyzstan's economy is still animal husbandry. Transhumance is still part of the herding technique, but nowadays it is not the entire clan or village that moves to the summer pastures. Most people remain in the village, and a number of shepherds take the livestock into the mountain pastures (jailoo). Next to herding, the cultivation of vegetables, fruit, nuts, cotton, hemp and tobacco is an important source of income. A large part of the industry is made up of agro processing and mining. Kyrgyzstan has a number of gold, coal, uranium and other mineral mines. Most of the mining sector has declined dramatically since independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. The exception is formed by gold mining, which attracted foreign investment. The Canadian Cameco gold mining company obtained a 33% interest in an agreement with the Kyrgyz state company Kyrgyzaltïn to exploit the Kumtor goldmine in the Tien Shan range, south of Lake Ïssïkköl.

The government remains an important source of employment. The informal economy is another important pillar of Kyrgyzstan's economy, accounting for almost 40% of the GNP in 2000, mostly in street vending (Schneider, 2002). Kyrgyzstan very rapidly became a poor country when the infrastructure of the Soviet Union suddenly collapsed. Collective farms and factories were no longer supplied with fuel and other raw materials and the market structure fell apart. The government under president Akayev opted to apply the so-called 'shock therapy' method for economic reform that was promoted by the IMF and the World Bank (Abazov, 1999). Shock therapy has as its main goal a quick implementation of economic reform, in a concentrated period of less than two years, with a focus on reaching a macroeconomic equilibrium. In Kyrgyzstan, this meant that the system of central planning and state-controlled prices and subsidies was abandoned. State property such as houses, factories and land was privatised. Although after a free-fall of six years the economy did indeed show signs of recovery in terms of GDP, the effects on the standard of living for most of the population was negative, according to Abazov, a Kyrgyzstani political scientist at the Columbia University (ibid.). He explains that the Soviet state had used overstaffing as a means to hide unemployment, and had used price control to maintain a good standard of living.

When this state-controlled system was abandoned so quickly, unemployment, economic passivity and poverty were the immediate results. Next to this, as Abakov puts it:

Withdrawal of the state from playing an active role in economic development and maintaining law and order led to the growth of the so-called 'robber-capitalism' and created a chaotic business environment (Abakov, 1999).

Many of my informants spoke approvingly of Uzbekistan, that had rejected the shock therapy, and wished that Kyrgyzstan's government had chosen a similar route of gradual and controlled reform. Outside observers may find it difficult to estimate the true extent of poverty in Kyrgyzstan. A Dutch OSCE election observer who had stayed in Naryn for three months for the 2000 parliament elections asserted to me that there was hardly any poverty in Kyrgyzstan. Everywhere she went, the table was loaded with food. She seemed not to realise that the rules of Kyrgyz hospitality require an excess of food, and that people had probably drawn on their entire social network to feed their esteemed foreign guests properly. It was not until my second year in Kyrgyzstan that I began to witness glimpses of the true effects of the crumbling economy. One day, a befriended couple confided that they did not have any money left to buy food. It was days away until the husband's salary was expected, but the cupboards were empty. I gave them some money and stayed home to baby-sit for the two children. When my friends came home from the market with a bag of flour and some sugar, the children burst into singing and dancing in a way I had not even seen Dutch children rejoice over a beautiful birthday cake.

A factor that makes poverty hard to deal with for most Kyrgyz is the shrill contrast with the relative wealth and security they had experienced in the Soviet era. Basic needs such as bread, health care and education, but also pleasures such as an evening at the cinema and eating ice cream had been available to everyone. Now, daily life has turned bleak and a struggle to survive. In the late 1990s, the time of my fieldwork, people often mentioned the loss of simple pleasures. For villagers, it was no longer enjoyable to go to Bishkek, because the attractions of the city had become unaffordable. One day when my German friend and I were laughing out loud, a Kyrgyz old man sighed: '*Such a long time ago that our Kyrgyz girls could laugh like this*!'

The increase in prices, inflation and loss of sources of income has fuelled corruption. Those who maintained a position with relative power often find only one way to make ends meet: capitalise on that power in a downward direction. A policeman or a school teacher who does not receive enough wages from the

government will extract money from those who depend on him or her. This way, the burden for public services falls on the very poor rather than being shared through a tax system. Generally, however, there is a lot of tolerance for this petty corruption. If people do not make enough money to live on, what are they to do? The corruption of high government officials who put foreign loans into the refurbishment of their luxury homes is mostly regarded with resignation – it is seen as annoying and offensive, but that is what the rich do. In 2005, this resignation quite unexpectedly turned into action when the president was ousted. Unfortunately, nothing seems to have changed with regard to corruption. The system of all-pervasive corruption and nepotism paralyses many people in their personal initiative and upward mobility. On the other hand, this system also provides social survival and advancement in Kyrgyzstan. It may not be easy to find one's way in this web of dependency, but it is the game one has to play.

Social Organisation of the Kyrgyz: Family Structure and Politics

At the time of my fieldwork, the Kyrgyz traced their descent patrilineally. Surnames are based on a person's father, in that a person inherits either their father's surname (for instance, president Akayev's son is called Aidar Akayev and his daughter Bermet Akayeva), or their surname becomes the first name of the father followed by uulu (his son) or kïzï (his daughter) (for example the son of one of my Manaschï informants, whose name is Kazat Taalantaalï Uulu). Furthermore, descent is based on knowing one's seven fathers (jeti ata), that is the patrilineage up to the seventh generation. In enumerations of a person's seven fathers, the seventh father is often primal father. An informant once listed his seven fathers for me, with the name of his seventh father coinciding with the name of his family's sub-clan. When I asked what the seventh father of his son was, he became slightly confused and was not sure whether he should skip a father or make the sub-clan's name the eighth father of his son. Every Kyrgyz person is supposed to know his or her seven fathers, first of all because it is proof of being 'a good Kyrgyz', and secondly it is needed to maintain a marriage taboo. The Kyrgyz consider marriages between people from the same fathers up to the seventh generation out of bounds. Marriage with a person from one's mother's line is allowed, even if he or she is a first cousin. A number of informants told me that this is because 'blood goes through the father'. Although the family of a daughter-in-law (kelin), the kuda, are treated with high respect, children belong to the family of the father and should stay there in case of separation or death of the mother.

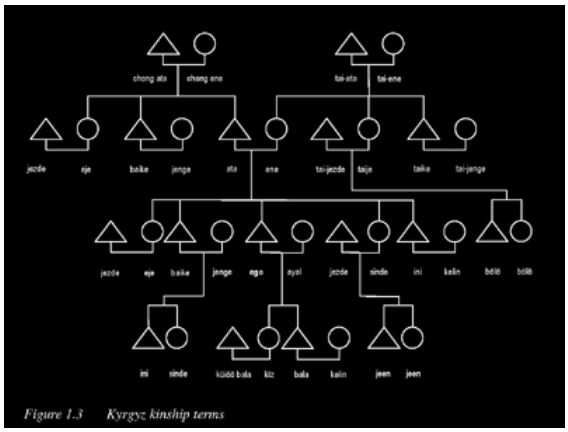


Figure 1.3 Kyrgyz kinship terms

The Kyrgyz observe patrilocality: generally, the bride moves to the household of her husband's parents after (or during) the wedding. After a few years they may move out to a home of their own. Ideally, the youngest son and his family never move out but remain in the house of their parents, taking care of them in old age.

Figure 1.3 presents a genealogy of Kyrgyz kinship terms as I found them in the village Kazïbek in the province Narïn. Most noticeable is that terms for relatives on the father's side differ entirely from the terms for relatives on the mother's side. Furthermore, relative's age is a distinguishing factor: one's older sister is addressed with a different term than one's younger sister. People address one another by their first names followed with the appropriate kinship term – whether they are actual kin or not. Implicit in these terms is a high respect for older generations. This carries far: older siblings are addressed with the polite sïz (you) instead of the informal sen (you). I encountered a number of situations where an older brother had demanded to adopt a younger brother's child when he remained childless himself. Family relations that were out of the ordinary, such as adopted children, second wives, or illegitimate children were a source of shame and embarrassment, and not openly spoken of. However, after staying with a family for a number of weeks, I was often told – in a low voice – about the true nature of relationships.

Political leadership among the Kyrgyz was traditionally family and clan based. Ideas on leadership among the nineteenth-century Kyrgyz has been subject to the Soviet political tunnel view, which made the term bi-manap stand for a group of despotic tyrants. Saul Abramzon, a Soviet historian and ethnographer, wrote that at the end of the nineteenth century, the Kyrgyz already had a society with patriarchal-feudal characteristics (Ambramzon, 1971:155). He explains:

Before the Great October Revolution, the mass of the Kyrgyz population owned comparatively small herds. At the head of certain groups of the population stood feudal-tribal nobles personified by bis and manaps. The exploitation of the workers by manaps and bis occurred in the framework of the penetration of social life with the ideology of 'tribal unity' and 'tribal solidarity' which found its expression in many forms of the patriarchal-tribal mode of life (ibid.:157).

The ideas of exploitation and despotism of the bis and manaps may not have come

totally out of the blue, for Radloff reported that: *The division of lineages is entirely as among the Kasak-Kyrgyz. In stead of Sultans, however, they had lords elected from the black [i.e. ordinary] people, that they called Manap. The Manaps, I was told, had exerted almost despotic authority over their subjects* (Radloff, 1893:533).

Daniel Prior describes the situation as follows: *There is no doubt that the institution of manaps was brought on in part by the fragmented Kirghiz tribes' craving for security, yet the tyrannical power of these chieftains amounted to despotism and became an extra burden on the population. There was much to bear in their lot: while attempting to live as they were being squeezed politically, militarily, and economically by Kokand, China, the Kazakhs, and later Russia, most tribes existed in a state of constant movement and readiness for battle* (Prior, 2002:50).

Semenov, however, only mentions one instance of a despotic ruler, namely Vali-khan of Kashkar, saying that he was noted for great brutality (Semenov, 1998:197). Shahrani describes an entirely different version of leadership among the Pamir Kyrgyz in the 1970s. Of course, it is impossible to extrapolate their society directly to the nineteenth-century Tien-Shan Kyrgyz. Although the Pamir Kyrgyz faced a lot less interference from a larger state than the Tien-Shan Kyrgyz, their permanent migration to the high summer pastures of the Pamirs, as well as the loss of ties with the other Kyrgyz groups, must have had an impact on the political sphere as well. However, their case does bring into light a different possible political organisation among the Kyrgyz, which opens the mind to new readings of the role of nineteenth-century leaders. Furthermore, Shahrani's descriptions of leadership coincides strongly with the position of elders (aksakal) and heads of the family during my fieldwork, although these had a less clear political position vis-à-vis the state of Kyrgyzstan.

The Pamir Kyrgyz were headed by a khan in the 1970s. The term khan was known in the Tien Shan in the nineteenth century, but it was hardly ever used for (or by) a Kyrgyz leader17. The headmen of different clans (uruu) were called manap. Other titles for public functions were bek (a military rank) and bi (judge). The dispersion of the various Kyrgyz clans under different states (Khokand, China, Russia) probably prevented the rise of a single khan. The Pamir Kyrgyz, in their isolation from a larger state, had located the upper authority amongst themselves. Shahrani describes three layers of leadership: the headman of a camp (qorow) is called a be, the headman of a clan (oruq) is an aqsaqal, and the khan heads all of

them (Shahrani, 1979:164). Of the aqsaqal (litt: white beard), Shahrani writes:

The aqsaqal is expected to be a man over forty years of age, known for his impartiality and good judgement. The position is not elective or hereditary. Rather a man is acknowledged by the members of a group as they turn to him for help, advice, or the mediation of conflicts. Therefore, the position is attained through public approval and maintained as long as such consent continues without public challenge from another member. The aqsaqal is treated in public gatherings with such special attention as seating him in the place of honor. He acts as the spokesman for his group in all matters of public or private concern, and represents the interests of his membership to the khan, and through him to the local government (ibid.:156).

Shahrani does not elaborate on the position of the camp elder (be). About the khan he says the following: *The office of the khan is the single vehicle through which the unity of the Kirghiz community is achieved. (…) The rank of khan is nonhereditary in principle nor is it elective or ascribed. Instead, it is generally assumed by the most obvious candidate, usually the aqsaqal of one large and powerful oruq, and is legitimated through public consent by the Kirghiz and/or recognized by external forces – local government authorities or outsiders such as the neighbouring Wakhi, traders, visitors, and so forth. (…) strong and effective leadership qualities in Kirghiz society entail bravery (military prowess in the past), honesty, abilities in public persuasion and oratory, sound judgement, being a good Muslim, membership in a large oruq, and of course success as a herdsman, with a large flock and wealth in other tangible goods. (…) what is important in this instance is not the possession of goods and animals, but how they are used to help the community. Hospitality, generosity, and the offer of help to one's relatives and to the needy and poor, stand out as the signs of being a good Muslim and are personal qualities desired among the politically ambitious in Kirghiz society. (…) His role is very often reconciliatory and mediational (…) He does not have a police force and does not bring individuals to trial* (ibid.:164, 165).

If we compare the ethnographic study of Shahrani with what we know of the nineteenthcentury Kyrgyz, we find that first of all, the leaders of the different clans played a central role in the reception of guests. Valikhanov, Semenov and Radloff were all fed, entertained and given a place to sleep in the households of the chiefs. Semenov mentions a night spent at the camp of the nobles of the Bugu

of Boronbai's clan. They were received by Baldïsan, a Bugu of 'blue blood', who was 'peace-loving by nature', did not participate in the bloody strife, never went on a raid, but busied himself with music (he played the dombra) and listening to 'the songs of folk-tale narrators and improvisers' (Semenov, 1998:181). The night that Semenov stayed at his camp, Baldïsan played the dombra for him and called on the bards to recite poetry for his guests.

Semenov also elaborates extendedly on the war between the Sarïbagïsh and the Bugu that was in full swing during his travels in the Tien Shan. He assigns an important role to the leaders (manap) in these wars by focussing his descriptions of the motives and effects of the war on the leaders personally. He speaks of the leaders as if they singlehandedly decide on the fate of their subjects, as in the following passage: *One of the powerful Bogintsy [Bugu] clans, the Kydyk, led by Biy Samkala, and bearing the same relationship to Burambai [Boronbai] as the appanage princes did to the grand princes in ancient Russia, had quarrelled with the chief Bogintsy manap and having detached himself from him, decided to move with his whole clan, numbering 3,000 men capable of carrying weapons, beyond the Tian'-Shan', across the Zauka Pass. The Sarybagysh, who already occupied the whole southern littoral of Issyk-kul' (Terskei), insidiously let the rebellious Kydyk go through to the Zauka Pass, but when the latter with all their flocks and herds were ascending the pass, they attacked from both sides (…) and completely routed them. (…)*

However, old Burambai grieved not so much for the losses of the Kydyk, who had wilfully defected from him, as for the loss of all his territory in the Issyk-kul' basin, of his arable land and small orchards on the river Zauka and for the female captives of his family (ibid.:145).

Whether this view on the position of the leaders as all-powerful reflects the actual situation, or whether Semenov projected an ethnocentric view on the Kyrgyz, remains a question.

There appears to have been a certain sense of unity among the different Kyrgyz clans in the nineteenth century. Russian observers speak of the Kara-Kyrgyz or the Dikokamennye-Kyrgyz as distinct from the Kasak-Kyrgyz. It is unclear what the basis of this distinction was, however. There appears to have been no political form for unity or federation in the nineteenth century. At some point, the different clans that are known as Kyrgyz today even fell under three different states: the Southern Kyrgyz were ruled by the khanate of Khokand, most Northern clans were subjected to Russia and the Solto fell under Chinese rule. Two of the

Northern clans, the Bugu and Sarïbagïsh, were involved in a bloody feud. Still, they are presented as one group by outsider contemporaries and presentday historians.

The clan structure appears to have been fluid and flexible. Although according to legend, the name Kyrgyz may have come from 'kïrk ïz', meaning forty clans, there is no conclusive enumeration of precisely forty clans. Kyrgyz genealogists (sanjïrachï) provide very detailed family trees, but none are the same. Sub-divisions of clans can become important units in their own right, others lose their importance over time. Although there is a distinction between ulut (people, the Kyrgyz), uruu (clan, e.g. Bugu, Cherik) and uruk (sub-clan, e.g. Sarï-Kalpak, Akchubak), these divisions are not as clear-cut as the terminology suggests.

It seems likely that clan membership was patrilineal in the nineteenth century, as it is today. However, Daniel Prior quotes G. Zagriazhskii, 'an observer in 1873', who gives an entirely different account of clan membership: *The membership of a Kirghiz to one tribe or another is not permanent and unchanged. One of them has merely to move from the Sarïbagïsh lands to the Solto, and he will not be called a Sarïbagïsh, he becomes a Solto. Moving to the Sayaks, he becomes a Sayak […], but this may only be said of the common people, the bukhara […] Manaps preserve the division into tribes, and strictly maintain them* (Zagriazhskii in Prior, 2002:70).

It has become fashionable to describe contemporary Kyrgyz politics as tribal, with clan members favouring each other. A joke I heard on a bus, told by a Kyrgyz passenger, makes clear that region overrules clan in this respect: *A bus driver walks up to a passenger and asks him: 'Are you from Kemin?' (Kemin is the birth place of Akayev)? The passengers replies: 'No.' 'Are you from Talas, then?' (Talas is the birth place of Akayev's wife) The passengers replies: 'No.' 'Then take your feet off the chair!'*

Ethnicity, religion and language

Three important markers that characterise a country are ethnic composition, religion and languages of the population. These markers are especially strong because they link up easily to global images and patterns in an individual's world view. Islam in Kyrgyzstan will be linked to Islam in one's home country, the Islamic states in the Middle-East and nowadays almost inescapably to Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism. The ratio of ethnic groups and its meaning for ethnic relations will be compared to those at home and elsewhere and fit into one's understanding of global settlement and migration patterns.

Knowing what languages are spoken falls into the jigsaw image of the languages of the world and their attached ethnic affiliations. However, Kyrgyzstan, together with the other post-Soviet countries, has a particular history in these three aspects that need to be kept in mind if one wishes to understand the meaning of ethnicity, religion and language for the people who live in Kyrgyzstan. For the purpose of introduction, a general overview will suffice.

Ethnicity

At the end of the Soviet era, the Kyrgyz republic proudly claimed to house more than eighty ethnic groups, or 'nationalities'. In Soviet terminology, the Kyrgyz were the titular nation of the Kyrgyz SSR, meaning that they were the name-giving ethnic group of the republic. Political power was reduced to a minimum, as well as the sense of ownership of the republic. The right of all nations for self-determination was an important communist slogan, but it was placed second to the socialist project. This led to a dynamic of different freedoms and restrictions at different times. The Kyrgyz SSR was inhabited by people from many other ethnic groups, most notably Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Kazakh, Tajik and Russian. These groups already inhabited the territory at the time of the border demarcation. Over time, more people from all over the Soviet Union settled there, some out of free choice, some with forced migration as punishment and some professionals such as doctors and teachers who were sent to peripheral areas to perform socialist duties. The Kyrgyz SSR, like the other soviet republics, was proud to house over eighty nationalities.

In the years since independence, there has been a significant shift in the ethnic make-up of the country. Most notable is the halving of the percentage of Russian inhabitants. The rapid decline of economic and emotional security led Russians, Germans and Jews to move 'back' to Russia, Germany or Israel. Apart from these push factors, there were pull factors for the migrants as well. The governments of Germany and Israel offered preferential access to their 'compatriots' from the former Soviet Union, who were regarded as finally having the chance to come home. Although the entire population of Kyrgyzstan was well educated, it was the Russians and other Europeans who often held high positions,and their exit caused important shifts in the labour market. In the 1989 population census, a slight majority of the people claimed Kyrgyz ethnicity. Russians formed the second largest group, and together with other Slavic groups they formed almost a third of the population. In the 1999 census, almost two-third of the population claimed Kyrgyz ethnicity, and the Uzbeks had become the second largest group (see table

1.1).

Table 1.1 Ethnic groups in Kyrgyzstan according to the 1989 and 1999 population census.
Source: UNDP LIFE project[20]

Ethnic group	1989 census	%	1999 census	%
Kyrgyz	2,229,663	52.4	3,128,147	64.9
Russian	916,558	21.5	603,201	12.5
Uzbek	550,096	12.9	664,950	13.8
Ukrainian	108,027	2.5	50,442	1.0
German	101,309	2.4	21,471	0.4
Tatar	70,068	1.6	45,438	0.9
Dungan[21]	36,928	0.9	51,766	1.1

Table 1.1 Ethnic groups in Kyrgyzstan according to the 1989 and 1999 population census.

In the Soviet Union, ethnicity (natsionalnost) was registered in individual passports. After independence, the passport entry was removed, but soon re-installed. Natsionalnost (Kyrgyz: ulut) had become an important identity marker, and both the population and administration did not want to do without it.
Outside of Kyrgyzstan, there are a number of Kyrgyz communities. In China, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and until recently Turkey, there are groups of ethnic Kyrgyz who settled there after they fled the Soviet regime, or who found themselves outside when the borders were drafted. Nomadic movement and transhumance were not taken into account when the national boundaries were determined.

Religion
After 70 years of Soviet governance, it seems odd to find religion so much alive in Kyrgyzstan. However, the Soviet Union was officially committed to freedom of religion, although it also agitated against the anti-class interests of organised religions (Stalin, 1948:77). Thus in Soviet times, the republics of Central Asia and several others were referred to as the Muslim Republics without a problem. There had been campaigns to open up people's eyes to the backwardness of Islam and other religions. Many Muslims abandoned habits of wearing headscarves, praying and visiting mosques. But being Muslim remained a part of the identity of most Turkic people, entangled with their ethnic identity. So even today, being Kyrgyz is being a Muslim, and when one asks a Kyrgyz if he or she is Muslim, the answer will often be: '*Of course, I am Kyrgyz!*' From that same perspective, a Kyrgyz friend sadly shook his head when we passed a group of Christian converts, saying: '*And that is five less Kyrgyz…*' Other Turkic groups such as Uzbeks, Kazakhs and Tatars also combine ethnicity with (Sunni) Islam. There are also a number of non-

Turkic Muslim groups in Kyrgyzstan, such as the Tajiks and Dungans.
A Muslim identity in Kyrgyzstan is more than just a derivative of ethnicity, however. Muslim practices, behaviour and believes also play a role. 'Reading the Kuran', an expression for the recital of the first sura of the K'uran, followed by personal prayers in Kyrgyz, is a recurring ritual through which Kyrgyz people experience and express their Muslim identity. In these prayers, the arbaktar (spirits) of one's ancestors or of Kyrgyz heroes are often called upon. This, in combination with the importance placed on the divinity of nature, leads many observers to think of the Kyrgyz as 'superficially Muslims with shamanistic beliefs'. As Bruce Privratsky points out in his study on Islam in Kazakhstan, however, ancestor spirits and the forces of nature play a significant role in many Muslim belief systems all over the world (Privratsky, 2001). Thus there is no need to deny the Kyrgyz claim that they are Muslims. The need is rather in adjusting the image of Islam.
Most of my informants stated that Uzbeks are 'more Muslim' than Kyrgyz, and Southern Kyrgyz are 'more Muslim' than Northerners. With this, they refer to the way people keep to the rules of Islam. Northern Kyrgyz often spoke of the way the Kyrgyz and Uzbeks of the South keep their women subordinate. Also the rules of not eating pork or drinking alcohol are kept more strictly in the South. However, although very few Northern Kyrgyz refrain from drinking alcohol, knowing that one is supposed to still reminds them of their Muslimness.

Mosque attendance is not a heavy obligation for most Kyrgyzstani Muslims. Since independence, the number of mosques has grown rapidly, however. According to the head of the State Agency for Religious Affairs Toigonbek Kalmatov there were 39 mosques in Kyrgyzstan in 1991, and another 1,000 without official status. In 2007, the Spiritual Directorate of Kyrgyz Muslims unites over 1,725 religious objects (seven regional administrations in Osh and Bishkek cities, one university, six institutes, 45 madrasahs and Koran classes, three missions of foreign Muslim faith, 26 centres, foundations and unions and 1,619 mosques). The popularity of the Turkish-Kyrgyz Lyceum is an important factor in raising a new generation of more or less devote Muslims. During my research I met very few Muslims with an interest in fundamentalist ideas of Islam. However, there is a process of rediscovery of Islamic values and practices, and many people have a keen interest in learning the right ways of doing things. I can therefore not exclude the possibility that fundamentalism will gain a hold among Kyrgyzstan's Muslim population.

Other religions that are practised in Kyrgyzstan are Russian Orthodox Christianity and Judaism. The Russian Orthodox Churches that can be found in Kyrgyzstan's cities are experiencing an increase in church attendance, especially with festivals such as Easter. In Bishkek there is a small synagogue, but no rabbi. Since independence, missionary groups of different Christian persuasions, Jehovah's Witnesses, Bahai and other faiths have come to Kyrgyzstan to acquaint the population of the former Soviet Union with their beliefs (Pelkmans, 2007:881-899).

Language

The state language in Kyrgyzstan is Kyrgyz. This is a Turkic language that is categorised in various families by different linguists, such as the Chagatai, Nogai and Altai language families. Kyrgyz was standardised in the early Soviet years on the basis of the Northern dialect (Korth, 2005:78). Soviet scholars first used the Arabic script, the then-current script for Turkic languages. In 1925, a transition to the Latin alphabet was set in, and in 1937, this was replaced by Cyrillic (ibid.:78-81). After independence, there were repeated calls for changing the script back to Latin. Although in Uzbekistan this idea was turned into a policy, in Kyrgyzstan the discussion did not surpass the question whether the new alphabet should be based on the English or Turkish transliteration of phonemes such as ü, ï and ö. These sounds occur in Turkish, but are absent in English. The Turkish alphabet is thus far better equipped for Kyrgyz. Politically, however, most Kyrgyz would rather connect to the Anglophone world than the Turkophone.

Although Kyrgyz is the state language, a large number of Kyrgyzstani do not speak it. Non-Kyrgyz only rarely speak the language, as this was not necessary nor promoted in Soviet times. Since independence, attempts to teach Kyrgyz to non-Kyrgyz have started enthusiastically, but over time have ceased to be popular. On top of this, many urbanised, Russified Kyrgyz also do not speak 'their own language'. They were educated in Russian and ceased to speak Kyrgyz. During Soviet times, the lingua franca was Russian, and has remained so after independence.

In 2000, Russian was awarded the status of '*official language*' of Kyrgyzstan. This decision emanated from the acknowledgement of the lingering importance of Russian, and from the wish to keep peace with the Russians inside and outside of Kyrgyzstan. Next to the state language and the official language, many other languages are spoken in Kyrgyzstan. Only Uzbek and Tajik are used as languages of teaching next to Kyrgyz and Russian. In the year 2000 there were 138 Uzbek

and 2 Tajik schools (UNDP, 2000). There were 1259 Kyrgyz and 133 Russian schools.

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Nienke van der Heide – Spirited Performance – The Manas Epic and Society in Kyrgyzstan
Rozenberg Publishers 2008 – ISBN 978 90 5170 883 2

In the heart of Asia, straddling the western Tien Shan mountain range, lies the former Soviet republic Kyrgyzstan. The country prides itself in an age old oral epic tradition that recounts the mighty deeds of the hero Manas.
When explorers first encountered Manas performers in the late nineteenth century, they hailed their art as a true representation of the heroic age, and compared it to masterpieces such as the Kalevala and the Iliad. Today there are still many excellent performers who can keep their audiences spellbound. They are believed to draw their inspiration from the spirit of Manas himself.
This book portrays the meaning of this huge work of art in Kyrgyz society. Based on extended periods of anthropological fieldwork between 1996 and 2000, it explores the calling of its performers, describes the transformations of the oral tradition in printed media and other forms of art, and examines its use as a key symbol for identity politics.
It deals extensively with the impact of the Soviet period, during which Kyrgyzstan became an autonomous republic for the first time in history. The tremendous changes initiated during these years had far-reaching consequences for the transmission and reception of the Manas epic. The specific Soviet approach to ethnicity was also elementary in the decisions to assign the Manas epic the role of national symbol after 1991, when Kyrzygstan was thrown into the turnoil of a post-socialist existence.

Professional Blindness And

Missing The Mark ~ Preface

The articles contain the edited versions of the presentations discussed during the Wertheim Seminar, held on June 4, 2008 in the International Institute of Social History (IISH) in Amsterdam. The subject was Blind Spots and Preoccupation in the research on Post War Indonesian Political Crises. The seminar was part of the 3-day Wertheim Centennial. It was hosted by the International Institute of Social History (IISH), the ASIA Platform of the University of Amsterdam and the International Institute of Asian Studies (IIAS) and organized by a team from the Wertheim Foundation, i.e. Ibrahim Isa – secretary, Farida Ishaya – member, Jaap Erkelens – member, and Coen Holtzappel – chairman and convener of the Wertheim seminar. The speakers, guests and audience honored the legacy of Professor Doctor Wim Wertheim with this event, the distinguished academic who after World War II founded the Amsterdam school of the historical sociological analysis of modern Asian history and political development. Wertheim also played an important role in the Dutch and international resistance against the murderous war on Indonesian communism, which President Suharto started after the 1 October 1965 Affair, and his destruction of Indonesia's Sukarno legacy. The seminar was opened by Emil Schwidder, research staff member of the IISH, with a special task on the China collection. He reminded the audience of the close professional relationship that Professor Wertheim and IISH maintained during his life, and the fact that Wertheim's children donated their father's correspondence, publications and other documents and tapes to the institute. The IISH was founded in 1935 and has become one of the leading institutes in the world to rescue, conserve and register important archives of socialist social movements. Before the Second World War, archives were rescued from Austria, Germany and Spain, including papers by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. War archives from Eastern Europe, Turkey, the Middle East and Asia followed. The collection of Wertheim's personal and official correspondence, publications, personal and press photographs is now part of the archives.

Coen Holtzappel, convener of the seminar and chairman of the Wertheim Foundation, thanked Emil Schwidder for his kind opening words and welcomed the speakers, the audience, and the special guests. He called to attention the subject of the seminar, i.e. the disturbing role of political and social ignorance, taboos, neglect and denial in the study of historical events and phenomena. They should not be mistaken for "white spots" in our knowledge of the world; i.e. not yet discovered domains of research and phenomena. The real focus is on subjects and domains of knowledge that governments and political elite groups close for research, for example to hide specific aspects of their political behavior, such as crimes, irresponsible wars, blunders, and crimes against humanity. The speakers of the seminar would discuss examples of such disturbances they encountered during their studies of major political crises in and between the Republic Indonesia and the Netherlands during the first two decades of Indonesia's existence. For many Indonesians, the Netherlands is still the former colonizer and occupier. For many Dutch people Indonesia is the former Netherlands East Indies. They call Indonesian food "Indies food." According to Wertheim, such 'blinkers' have a history. In authoritarian states they are the products of carefully maintained systems of political myth formation, created by elites. To cite the closing statement of Ben White's chapter in this book, which stems from Wertheim's Elite and Mass, "The blind and the ignorant, in general, are not busy making themselves or others blind and ignorant. What Wertheim drew our attention to, in contrast, was a process by which elites, and scholars, *choose* to describe societies and history in ways which made both themselves and others blind to social reality." In other words, the sources of blindness and ignorance that we should pay attention to, are the elite groups and scholars that use their power and influence to make people look at the things they want them to see and refrain them from looking at things they want them to ignore or deny.

Although I am convinced that such tyrants also exist in people's personal life, bringing others to crime and suicide, in social and political history we are primarily interested in the political and public social level at which political tyranny occurs. The level where political and religious leaders program people to follow their prejudice and abstain them from using their innate human capacities to study the unknown. In this respect the chapters presented in this book reflect an effort to tackle the problem of how to approach the prejudices in the Dutch-Indonesian discourse about the history of the first decades of Independence War and subsequent decolonization. Instead of the dislikes that burden Dutch and

Indonesian views of each other, we should work on a value free and neutral historiography of the shared process of separating Indonesian and Dutch households and interests, and the development of their own ways of continuance. Central in this effort should be the urgent advice to historians, social and political academics to base restudies of past crises and events on the primary sources and eye witness reports. It is the only way to stay as close to the past as possible.

The subjects covered by the seminar are as follows:
[1] The ignorance in Dutch and Indonesian literature regarding the role of the Republican Pemuda units as protectors of Indo-Europeans after the Japanese capitulation. The findings of Mary van Delden appear to challenge conceptions that still exist on both the Indonesian and the Dutch side,
[2] Coen Holtzappel calls attention to General Nasution's analysis of the roots of the Madiun Affair of 1948 as exposed in Part 8 of his 10 volume *Publication on the Indonesian Independence War*. Instead of delivering a tale about how he crushed the communist Madiun coup, Nasution went back to his notes, and the available Indonesian and Dutch sources. He produced a study of the registered and unregistered events that caused the Indonesian military Madiun uprising of 1948 and the communist support of it.
[3] Pieter Drooglever emphasizes the ignorance regarding the roots and meaning of Papua nationalism during and after the conflict about the international status of Netherlands New Guinea between the Netherlands and Indonesia.
[4] Holtzappel uses the minutes of the first two martial law trials against two leaders of the Thirtieth September Movement of 1965 to show that Western and Indonesian analysts ignore the conflict that ignited the movement. Their focus is too much on the view of "winner" General Suharto and ignores the view of the "losers" which reveals a different story.
[5] Saskia Wieringa turns our attention to the ignorance and denial after the Reformasi of 1999 of the use of sexual slander against the communist women's organization Gerwani by General Suharto. Sexual slander was used to stigmatize communism, and communist women in particular; and to legitimize genocide in order to destroy President Sukarno's political and social legacy. Apparently, Reformasi has not created the clean break with the Suharto past many had hoped for in 1999. There still is no room for reconciliation and truth finding, unlike other countries with a communist past and a dirty war against it.
[6] Ben White points to the conservative roots of a renowned American anthropologist's unwillingness to analyze the massacre, which fitted existing

standards of scientific knowledge and morality. Referring to outsiders in order to explain the massacre as having cultural roots shows elitist escapism. It asks the question but leaves the answer to the anonymous and politically disabled victims and the perpetrators.

Four special guests participated in the seminar. Dr. Ruth McVey, pioneer of international 1965-studies, chaired the afternoon panels, and Mr. Martin Sanders, board member of the Bilateral Dutch-Indonesian Chamber of Commerce, chaired the morning sessions. We also welcomed Jan Breman, one of Wertheim's best-known pupils and intellectually closest to the model of historical sociology as established by Wertheim during his academic career in Amsterdam. Last but not least, we welcomed Benny Setiono, winner of the Wertheim Award 2008 for his interesting evaluation of the long-term history of turmoil experienced by the Chinese communities in the Indonesian archipelago during their stay in that area.

We picked Preoccupation and Blind Spots as a theme for the seminar, better known under the label Ignorance when it emerged in the early 1970s. Although in daily English parlance Ignorant means "behind the times", "rude" and "improper behavior", the methodological Ignorance movement refers to the fact that prejudices and lack of knowledge, as well as lack of the proper concepts and instruments of observation, can blind researchers to features and properties of their subject.

After the 1970s, the Ignorance concept developed into a constant component in the detection of observation errors and mistaken arguments in psychology and social science. At the end of his academic career, Wertheim also dived into the Ignorance hype. He pointed to the fact that Ignorance as a subject of methodological research had a predecessor in the Sociology of Knowledge. Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Lukacs and Karl Mannheim were its founders and main protagonists, and focused on structural societal causes of ignorance, like Ideology, the religious concept of the Chosen People and Class. They studied the societal forms of false consciousness that hamper the development of true knowledge about social phenomena and their causes, in particular the bias caused by the social inequality between researcher and informant. Moreover, the founders identified groups in society like the ruling and middle class, which would structurally be unable to understand what people in lower and/or higher echelons of society feel, see and think. The recent experiences with Dutch movements like the Party for Freedom, and Proud of the Netherlands, the following of which

belongs to the new emerging middle class, expose these features as well. With the exception of some scholars of the Mannheim School who developed techniques for the interviewing and observation of German war criminals, and Post Structuralism, the founders were generally not involved in developing the technical side of observation and concept formation.

In his article, *The State and the Dialectics of Emancipation*, Wertheim took Emancipation as the opposite and only sensible alternative to social inequality and the related ignorance phenomenon. He defined emancipation as follows: "any form of collective struggle of groups that feel themselves to be treated as 'underdogs', fighting against the privileges of the 'upper dogs'. In this sense, emancipation includes a whole range of social groups struggling for recognition as being at least equal to those who thus far exercised political, economic or social power over them. One may think of emancipation of laborers, peasants, middle class, colored nations, racial or ethnic minorities, women, youth and many other categories (Wertheim 1992: 257-281). In *Mass and Elite*, Wertheim devoted two chapters to the Ignorance theme, in which he related Ignorance to the conservative political restoration movement that developed in Europe immediately after the bloody French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars. During the 19th and 20th century this reactionary elitism developed into a structural source of people's ignorance and deception, which fiercely condemned and fought any deviation from the way to restoration of class, status and elitism. Typical for that elitism is that it divides society in worthwhile and worthless subjects and events, in wise and dumb, and strong and weak people, in born leaders and born losers. It blocks any view of the people or what the elite judges to be not worthwhile knowing. It also blocks any efforts of people fighting for emancipation, i.e. to liberate people from social inequality and physical, social and intellectual oppression. It is interesting to note that at the end of his life Wertheim positioned either deliberately or unwittingly the elite-mass distinction as basic of all forms of Social Inequality. Indeed, reading Wertheim's book about Elite and Mass leads to the conclusion that elitism is present in communism, socialism, fascism, Nazism, Stalinism, racism, ethnicity, ideology and religion, i.e. in any social movement, transcendental or inner worldly in nature, that claims to hold the eternal truth about the Chosen People.

Wertheim's last Masters' Course in the academic year 1972/1973 was devoted to the theme of Ignorance and contained a serious warning against the at that time

emerging form of structural ignorance – Neo Liberalism. This movement dismissed the empirical value of Marxism, Structuralism and Historical Sociology as leftist constructions and intellectual fancies, and threatened to refer established empirical knowledge about structures and institutions to the garbage can. However, most of Wertheim's examples regard colonial capitalism in the Netherlands Indies that served the rich in the colony and at home, and forgot to properly reward the serving indigenous part of colonial society. The colonial government's cover up of Rhemrev's 1904 report about the bad labor relations in East Sumatra's plantations is one example of many instances of colonial and Dutch neglect of bad labor relations in Indonesia's plantation areas. In 1992 Jan Breman published a long-term study on these relations in his book "Koelies, planters en koloniale politiek: Het arbeidsregiem op de grootlandbouwondernemingen van Sumatra's Oostkust in het begin van twintigste eeuw (Coollies, Planters and Colonial Politics: The labour regime in the plantations of East Sumatra at the start of the 20th century)." New in this field of interest is Breman's study Kolonial Profijt van Onvrije Arbeid. Het Preanger stelsel van gedwongen koffieteelt op Java, 1720-1870. Amsterdam University Press 2010. [Colonial Profit from unfree labour. The Preanger scheme of enforced coffee culture on Java, 1720-1870].

At the proposal of the late Frans Husken we chose the concept of Ignorance as discussed by Wertheim in his *Elite and Mass* and his last Master Class of the 1973/1974, and looked for colleagues that could provide new Ignorance material. That material is contained in these articles, which also aim to show that research of primary sources, contemporary to the revisited events and crises and preferably produced by them, is a basic requirement in revisiting the past.

The discussions during the seminar showed that these subjects and issues still draw attention. About 50 people participated in the lively discussions between speakers and attendees about the new data, insights and interpretations presented. The discussions whet the appetite for more news about these subjects.

The discussions

As might be expected from a seminar about the effort to search for material and insights that until now remained outside the attention of mainstream analyses about Indonesia's early postwar political and social history, most discussions served to link the audience to the subjects by informative questions and using

related issues to get started on the subjects. Mary van Delden was asked to what extent her study differed from existing camp studies, or complemented them. She explained that the archive material in her study had never been used by other authors, regarding camps that had never been studied before. Pieter Droogleever was questioned about the facts he revealed and the extent to which the Dutch effort to prepare the Papuans of Netherlands New Guinea for independence was immoral in light of the Indonesian Irian war theater. He answered that in his exposition he did not touch upon moral issues. His endeavor was to demonstrate that Papuan nationalism was a direly underestimated force, not only by the Indonesian administration, but by most foreign participants in the dispute as well. There was also discussion about the question to what extent the presentation of Nasution's view ignored the political dimension of the Madiun Affair, i.e. the ideological confrontation it was part of, and the subordination of the military problems to the political struggle that the Indonesian government fought in and outside Indonesia. Coen Holtzappel repeated that General Nasution wrote about the period in which he was chief of staff of Supreme Commander General Sudirman and his efforts to counter the urge the Dutch put on the Indonesian government to demobilize its troops. Nasution focused on the technical military problems he had to solve in contact with the field; on the military preparations for an uprising to force the government into an all-out assault on the Dutch; and on the meetings of the Indonesian parliamentary committee. His story showed how the so-called communist coup attempt exploited from the outside, and for its own interests, violent inter service problems. Of course these were political problems, but the military, and in particular the local militias, viewed them as existential problems. They pragmatically sought support from those sides that promised to serve their interests best. For many of them, ideology was for primarily a support device, not a class station yet. Ruth McVey commented that in the given situation of a young country fighting for its life, the standard differentiations between political and military affairs as we know them in our Western world are irrelevant.

The afternoon discussions did not focus directly on the subjects presented but instead focused on the 1965 massacres and the number of victims and their suffering, the role of the CIA in the massacres, and the option of reconciliation and illumination by national discussions and research. Ruth McVey opened the panel discussion asking if there were questions from academics or activists – for example, why academics tend to be silent about the massacre whereas the activists are not very effective. An Indonesian man stood up and asked if Ben

White could say something about CIA activities during his stay. White answered that he is not an expert on Indonesian communism, the Indonesian killings and Indonesian politics since he is happier counting chickens and coconuts and things like that, and that is what his research is about. He was talking as a non-expert who wanted to see what the experts had to say about the massacre. As to the CIA involvement, he did not know. He knew that someone from the US Embassy who operated on his own account, had handed over a list with names of communists to the Army. No one told him to do that. But it was also known that the embassy gave fifty thousand US dollars to carry out the anti-PKI campaign in Central and East Java and in Bali. This was revealed by a telegram sent to Washington and these telegrams recently became publicly accessible, albeit with some names deleted. Ruth McVey replied that she knew that the CIA's role in events always excites people. She also knew that before 1 October 1965 some generals had contacts with the CIA about money and sources of money, just to ensure themselves of the backing of some Western powers in the future. Suharto had contacts with the CIA, the British and the Japanese. In the period after the coup, it was important to get the Americans on your side. Nasution, who survived the coup, was the highest in rank in the armed forces and officially the man to deal with. Both Nasution and Suharto sent emissaries to the US Embassy saying "I am the man to deal with." The embassy very quickly decided that they were dealing with Suharto. Therefore, Nasution was cut out.

Ruth McVey continued that if we are looking at foreign relations, almost everyone had a finger in the pie. However, that does not necessarily mean that the origins of the massacres rested outside Indonesia. Saskia Wieringa continued that she fully agreed with Ruth McVey. It is very clear that it was very much an Indonesian coup. The CIA intervened afterwards and gave their support to those who surrendered people to the killers and so on. However, it was easy to find them. The PKI operated in the open; they had their signs in the front yard of their offices. Holtzappel remarks that talking about THE army as the agent active in the aftermath of G30S is just too easy. As most of the combat ready troops were either consigned for the Malaysia campaign or stood at the frontiers with Malaysia, Java was more or less short on troops ready for combat. At the time, there were four units that were strike ready. Three of them participated in G30S and one of those chose Suharto's side afterwards. Hence, as to the American decision about whom to deal with, the choice was easy. Suharto could do something; Nasution had no troops, since he was a bureau man. He had nothing

to strike with against the PKI. This automatically disqualified him for a leading position.

Ratna Saptari returned to Ben White's story of a renowned anthropologist who refused to speak out about the foreign, political, military and moral side of the massacre. As for the recent Indonesian discussion about 1965 and the massacre, she had two comments. First, she pointed out that the activist and academic discussion in Indonesia generally takes place outside the universities, and is open to debate. Second, several platforms have been created that feature sharp and good discussions. She teased Ben White about whether he agreed with her that counting chickens and coconuts in a country like Indonesia can also be considered a blind spot. Ben White replied that it was his job to do so.

Ruth McVey ended the seminar with some closing comments. The discussions covered two subjects on two different levels, i.e. the massacres and the question Who Did It. The massacre discussions produced two main points, [1] whether it should be made a principal discussion and head for a judicial procedure or leave the matter to die out, and [2] who did it. As to the last issue, everyone loves a good puzzle, and the best approach might be to allow everyone's story to be told. If there is a lesson to be taught by the seminar, then it is that new ways of research need a constant effort of reporting about it and that we should build on the recently gained insights.

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Professional Blindness And Missing The Mark ~ Internees From The Republic

Introduction

'Blind spots and preoccupation' is the leading theme of our seminar of today. As a basic phenomenon in historiography, it is applicable to nearly every subject, but it springs to the eye more so when one touches upon controversial matters. As such, I want to discuss in the present paper**[1]** the matter of the internment camps for Europeans, mainly Eurasians, installed by the Indonesian Republic during the Bersiap period in the early years of its existence. I will narrow down two closely interrelated questions. My first question is if the Republican leadership intended these camps to intimidate the Eurasians and keep them as hostages in the oncoming struggle with the Dutch, or whether they were meant to protect them from insurgencies by rebelling youths. The second question is, how and by who have these questions already been addressed and, if there are any marked differences, how come?

I will start with a short survey of events that led to the setup of these camps in the second half of 1945. The proclamation of a new state calling itself the Republic of Indonesia – broadcast on August 17, 1945 by Sukarno and Hatta – took the Dutch by surprise. They had been the dominant power in the archipelago for more than three hundred years – and wanted to continue what they considered 'their task' in the Indies. However, that would prove to be no easy task. In 1941/42, they had participated in the war against Japan with the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia, and had made a worthwhile contribution. After the initial Allied defeats, the other Allies had managed to regain strength in order to continue the war, and bring it to a happy end. The Netherlands, however, was no longer in a position to contribute to a considerable degree. After the German invasion of the mother country in Europe in 1940 and the Japanese occupation of the Netherlands East Indies in 1942, they lacked the means to do so. After the

German defeat on 5 May 1945, they had to rebuild military power from scratch. At that time they were very much the junior partner in a war that was running to its end in Asia as well. For the Dutch, the proclamation of the new Indonesian Republic would prove to be a serious threat.

In Potsdam (15-17 July 1945), with the defeat of Japan in sight, the Allies agreed that the responsibility for taking over all Southeast Asia, excepting the Philippines, should be entrusted to Lord Louis Mountbatten's South East Asia Command (SEAC).**[ii]** He therefore had to accept the Japanese surrender, rehabilitate the Allied Prisoners of War and Internees (APWI) and restore law and order in Indo-China, Siam, Malaya, Burma and the Netherlands East Indies. As far as the Dutch were concerned, the limited forces available to them operated within the SEAC organization. Meanwhile, Dutch civilians balanced on the edge of starvation in concentration camps, and Prisoners of War (POW) of the Royal Netherlands Indies Army (KNIL) were awaiting evacuation in camps outside the island of Java. Inside the Indonesian archipelago, about 180,000 Eurasians (Dutch nationals of mixed race) were living together with the Indonesians in appalling conditions in impoverished cities and in the countryside. Most Eurasian families had not been interned, as a consequence of the Japanese policy on Java, which considered them to be a distinct group of people. Being the offspring of Asians and Europeans, they were to co-operate with the administration set up by the Japanese 16th army and would be treated like the indigenous inhabitants.**[iii]** However, this policy failed. The Eurasians were proud of their Dutch nationality and resented being placed at the same level as the native population. The Indonesians themselves had no sympathetic feelings towards the Eurasians, who they felt had been sheltered under the colonial umbrella. At the same time, nationalist and anti-Western feelings increasingly found their way to the surface, incited by the Japanese. These contradictions were the uncertain position of the Eurasians at the time the Indonesian revolution started.

Since Mountbatten was initially unaware of the real situation in the Indies and preferred to deploy his troops elsewhere, it was more than a month after the Japanese capitulation before the first British-Indian troops were ordered to move from occupation duties in Malaya to Java. This delay resulted in a power vacuum and an atmosphere of tremendous enthusiasm among the Indonesian youth. Many 'pemuda' joined the newly organized People's Security Organization (Badan Keamanan Rakjat – BKR) or established numerous irregular bands grouped

around older nationalists, religious teachers (*kiyai*) or gangsters (*jago*). Anxious to contribute to '*merdeka*' (freedom) these youngsters raised red and white flags everywhere, organized mass-meetings and demonstrations, and began to look for arms to defend their '*merdeka*' against the returning colonial power. Until then the atmosphere had been rather quiet, but by the end of September 1945, the situation rapidly deteriorated. Chaos, anarchy, lawlessness and violence predominated.

Initially the Netherlands-Indies authorities regarded the resistance as the aftermath of the Japanese occupation and the militant youngsters as hooligans. However, they soon found out this was a severe underestimation of the situation. During the occupation, most of these militant youngsters had received Japanese military training, which had emphasized fighting spirit and physical endurance. Such courses had been given to trainees in the Volunteer Homeland Defense Army, the police and the navy. Crucial for the developments afterwards was the fact that these courses were given in the districts and sub districts, resulting in revolutionary outbursts simultaneously starting all over Java. **[iv]**
The Allied command watched the revolutionary uprising with concern. The last thing it wanted was to get involved in a colonial war. Mountbatten decided to alter his policy drastically. Instead of re-occupying the whole of the Netherlands East Indies, he switched to a key-area strategy. For Java, this initially meant the re-occupation of two major coastal cities: the capital Batavia (Jakarta) and the marine-base Surabaya. On second thought, the re-occupation was extended to Semarang and Bandung, where many APWI were concentrated. Besides, Mountbatten was determined to persuade the Dutch to negotiate with the Indonesians in order to reach an agreement.

The internment into republican camps
The violent developments took the leading figures in the newly formed Indonesian government by surprise as well. They rejected murder and bloodshed and wanted to gain international support for their independence by means of diplomacy, especially from America. They realized that continued looting, kidnapping and murder would not earn them international credit. For them this might have been the reason to take the initiative to set up camps for the safety of Dutch/Eurasian men, women and children who until then had been living amidst the Indonesian population. For this thesis, support can be found in the fact that on October 9, 1945 Sukarno wrote in a letter to the British commander, Lieutenant General

Christison, in which he emphasized that the Indonesians were ideologically opposed to Dutch rule. He reminded him of the fact that a Dutch/Eurasian population of well over 250,000 men, women and children were scattered all over Indonesia, surrounded on all sides by Indonesians. Quite rightly, he wondered who was going to guarantee the safety of these non-combatants when mob psychology would replace ideological arguments. All of them would then also be in danger. Actually, he was able to point out that there was already ample evidence of such fighting – even in that early state – demonstrating all the undesirable features of a race-war. (NIB I, pp. 285 – 290) **[v]**

It was not left at that. Soon after the writing of this letter, that is to say between 11 and 19 October 1945, all over Java and Madura, the internment was set in motion. Though there is no proof that it happened upon the orders of Soekarno himself, the fact that it was initiated by the newly appointed local authorities (KNI-Komite Nasional Indonesia) indicates some central order. The KNI's ordered the local BKR, pemuda-groups or police to pick up the people from their homes or require them to assemble at certain places under the pretext of a registration or meeting. This strongly suggests that the republican leaders had more influence over their following than is commonly assumed. It also proves that one should be careful calling all the Pemuda violent, since many Pemuda-groups brought the Dutch nationals, in a more or less friendly but sometimes frightening way, safely to their camps. The situation however differed from place to place. On several occasions, men lost their lives when large-scale slaughter parties took place such as happened in the Simpang club and Kalisosok prison in Surabaya and Pledang prison in Bogor.

When the internments started, initially only men and older boys were taken into custody in most places, while women and children were left behind for the time being. So one has to wonder if the idea of protection was the one and only motive. From the second half of September on, skirmishes had increasingly taken place between groups of Eurasian boys and men and the Indonesian Pemuda, especially in the larger cities like Batavia and Surabaya. The spirit of the Bersiap was one of attack upon an ill-defined enemy, and these Eurasian boys and men were the first at hand. It has to be added that the latter, too, often acted in a provocative and aggressive way, and that in some places a regrouping of former KNIL-units took place. By isolating these men, they were out of reach and general unrest could be prevented. Put in these terms, internment was a measure of a military or a

policing nature. However, with the Bersiap gaining strength, Dutch and Eurasians, as well as Amboinese and Chinese people, were increasingly under attack. Moreover, the large majority of the Eurasian population lived scattered throughout the country. They formed relatively small, unarmed groups, surrounded on all sides by Indonesians. It has to be noted that in a few residencies where violence ran high, like Ceribon, Pekalongan, Buitenzorg and Banyumas, women and children were interned at once, some in the same camp as the men, and some in different locations. In all these cases, internment clearly served their protection.

According to several interviews, questionnaires and documents, it seems that in most residencies the women were relatively safe. The way they were treated differed from place to place, but the sometimes unfriendly or aggressive attitude of the population didn't necessarily mean their lives were in danger. In places such as Malang, Solo, Yogyakarta and few places near Bandung in West-Java, they were even allowed to bring clothes, mattresses, food and medicines to their imprisoned male relatives. Only in the months November and December 1945, when heavy sustained fighting occurred between the British and Indonesians in Surabaya and Central-Java – which had the potential to incite the Indonesian masses to violence – the majority of women and children were concentrated in republican camps. It is conceivable that the Indonesian leaders decided to intern them as a measure of prevention.
From this limited survey of the internments during the Bersiap one may conclude that motives from the Republican side may vary, but that the element of protection decidedly got the upper hand as time went on. Central guidance may be induced from the scale of the operation and the way it was executed. Within three months, about 46,000 people, most Eurasians and about 4,500 ex-Japanese Prisoners of War and Internees, the so-called APWI, were put up in whatever shelter was available.**[vi]** They often lived squeezed together in schools, prisons, warehouses, hotels, convents, mansions, bungalows, sugar factories or barracks. Scattered all over Java (and Madura) were approximately 400 camps, with the number of internees ranging from ten to seven thousand (Malang-camp De Wijk).**[vii]** However, even when carried out with the best of reasons, for those concerned the internment more often than not was forced upon them against their will, which contributed to a negative opinion. The inhabitants more often than not considered them places where they were kept hostage by the Republic. The Indonesians, from their part, called them 'kamp-kamp perlindungan'

(protection camps), and for good reasons. Some internees as well told me that they were convinced that they were being protected and had chosen to enter the camps voluntarily.

Operation POPDA (Organization for the Evacuation of Japanese and APWI)
These mass internments in the last months of 1945 happened outside the small regions controlled by the British. Most of them took place without their connivance but when detected, they accepted the camps, as a matter of fact. Nevertheless, they had to fulfill their Allied commitments to repatriate the Japanese troops and to recover all APWI, of which according to their estimates ca. 4,500 people were still out of reach in Republican area in Central and East Java. Since the British wanted to leave the Indies as soon as possible, they did not waste any time. As early as the end of 1945 and without informing the Netherlands Indies authorities, they had entered talks with the Republican government to co-operate in transporting the APWI to the British key-areas, and the Japanese army to Galang, an island in the Riau-Archipelago. Indonesian seamen, educated by the Japanese themselves, shipped out the latter. Two formal bipartite meetings were held in Batavia on 9 and 17 January and in the first week of April 1946, the so-called Jogyakarta-Agreement was reached**.[viii]**

In fact, according to their commitments under the Potsdam Agreement, the British military authorities were mainly interested in the APWI that had been interned by Japan. For the British, these were the 'genuine' APWI, but they declared they were willing to receive all the newly interned Eurasians from republican camps wanting to evacuate to the Allied-occupied cities as well. They put pressure on the Indonesians, pointing out the negative effects on world opinion if they refused to cooperate, but they need not have done so. For the Indonesians, it was an interesting proposal. First of all, their political and military leaders were well aware that it offered them an opportunity to show the world that they were not the 'unorganized extremists' the Dutch continuously called them. By restoring order after World War II, they hoped to gain international support for their independence. Second, since the newly established Indonesian republican army (TKR – Tentara Keamanam Rakjat – People's Security Army) would execute both tasks, it implied recognition of this army with the additional advantage that the British would supply them with much needed armaments and means of transport. Third, the Indonesian leaders undoubtedly enjoyed the fact that the British excluded the Dutch from these negotiations, which greatly added

to Indonesia's international status. They strongly insisted on keeping the Dutch out , instead preferring to make the arrangements concerning visiting and supplying camps with the International Red Cross instead of the Netherlands Indies Red Cross. Fourth, the sooner the Japanese and Allied internees could return to their rightful places, the sooner the British troops would leave the island.
However, the Indonesian leaders realized that they faced great risks due to internal problems. In the hinterland, the situation was unstable. The army, which in principle stood behind the government, had just been established. Laskars (local desa militia) went their own way, and army-units and Laskars were fighting each other. Under these unsteady circumstances, the army had to properly uphold the agreement . In November and December 1945, Sukarno and the Sjahrir Cabinet made strong efforts to calm down the mass uprisings that took place in Surabaya and Central Java. Though not without effect, an uneasy calm could only be effectuated after heavy fighting by the British troops, at critical moments assisted by Japanese units, in Semarang and Surabaya.

From March 1946 onwards, things changed. The Dutch troops entered Java on a larger scale and gradually took over from the British. The practical aspects were discussed in a series of talks between the British, Indonesians and the Dutch. By then it was obvious that the Dutch no longer could be kept at the sideline. At the same time, negotiations started up between the Sjahrir Cabinet and the NEI authorities under leadership of the lt-governor general Van Mook. A marking point was the Batavia Concept of 25 March 1946, which contained a first sketch for a political solution of the conflict. Although the discussion about evacuation and political affairs went through different channels, they were interrelated nevertheless. A few weeks afterwards, on 3 April 1946, the Republican minister of Defense Amir Sjarifuddin announced in a press conference the withdrawal of Japanese and internees from the interior under allied British supervision. By then, the matter had been thoroughly discussed between the Dutch and the British mediator Clark Kerr. The evacuation would be carried out by the TRI. It would get technical support, transport facilities and the armament for two battalions from the Allies to protect the internees during their voyage. The whole operation would take two or three months to complete.
And so, in April 1946 the evacuation of the internees from the interior started. The task was entrusted to a special organization, the *Panitia Oeroesan Pengangkoetan Djepang dan APW* (POPDA). The Indonesians promised the British

to deliver the internees in ‘good order’ in the key-areas Batavia and Semarang. The Republican government appealed to large pemoeda-organizations not to interfere with the evacuations, in order to show the world that Indonesia was capable of executing a task in which the British had failed.**[ix]** Pemuda-leaders recognized the importance of ‘Operation POPDA’ and offered their co-operation. The headquarters of the Islamic Hisbullah-organization, ordered its divisions not to be provocative and to follow the orders of the army.**[x]** Even Sutomo, a radical leader in Surabaya, pointed out the importance of a successful evacuation and announced that everybody who disturbed the transports would be punished.**[xi]**

POPDA took no half measures. The strategically situated city of Solo in Central Java was chosen as its headquarters (POPDA I). Malang, as POPDA II, became the center for assembling internees from East Java, while the coastal cities of Tegal, Central Java (POPDA III) and Probolinggo, East Java (POPDA IV) were suitable for shipping out the Japanese army. Because the Indonesians lacked sufficient locomotives and carriages to transport both Japanese and internees at the same time, the evacuation of the internees slowed down soon. A situation made worse by a serious shortage of coal. The British found this system of transport too slow and at a meeting in Solo on May 10, 1946 they proposed the use of aircraft. The 31st Squadron of the Royal Air Force (RAF) flew six days a week from Batavia to the airfield of Panasan (near Solo), the destination for POPDA transported evacuees from different residencies. Between May 20 and July 24, 1946 the RAF succeeded in transporting 19,490 evacuees either to Batavia or to Semarang, using four, later six Dakota’s.

On July 25th, the evacuations suddenly came to a standstill. It appeared that a number of incidents had irritated the Indonesians. A POPDA-boat transporting evacuees from Madura to Probolinggo, was detained by a Dutch destroyer in the Straits of Madura and forced to hand over the evacuees. Another Dutch destroyer stopped POPDA-chief Major General Abdoelkadir at sea for twelve hours, on his way to inspect the republican camps in Madura. However, the Indonesian tolerance ended when the Dutch bombed the city of Banyuwangi (East-Java) and a ferry in the Straits of Madura. In a speech, delivered in Solo on July 27th, Sukarno announced that he had ordered to stop the evacuations.
At the same time, he promised Republican leaders and the Allied Headquarters would do their utmost to come to a solution. On 3 September 1946, the representatives of the parties involved met in Cirebon and on September 12, it

seemed that the deadlock had been solved. By the end of the month, evacuations started again. This time, however, the use of aircraft had not been permitted by the Indonesians, which slowed down the whole process considerably. In the following eight months another 16,000 Eurasian internees were evacuated from the interior, together with some 10,000 Chinese. It may be noted that these were the months in which the Dutch-Republican negotiations on the Linggadjati Agreement and its aftermath took place. Evacuation-matters were discussed in a special Dutch-Indonesian subcommittee on Evacuation and Contact. By the end of May 1947, POPDA closed its activities, – as it turned out – a few weeks before the first military clash. The organisation had successfully completed the evacuation, transporting about 40,000 Japanese and 37,000 Dutch/Eurasian internees in turbulent times, thanks to the determination of many people involved.

Back to the questions: blind spots and preoccupation

In the period 1984-1994 I worked for the Dutch Government in the field of recognition and support for civilian victims of war in the former Netherlands East Indies – including the Bersiap time – and as such I was well aware that many ex-internees from the republican camps still considered themselves hostages. They firmly opposed the word 'protection camps' and often used the word 'hostages'. In October 2007, I published my dissertation on this subject. My book was announced in a newspaper with the headline, 'Sukarno protected Dutch nationals'. This was a shock for many ex-internees. Being protected by Sukarno was not what many of them wanted to hear and consequently I received a lot of mail, suggesting revisions to my research in order to make it more "scientific". Furthermore I was accused of having a one-sided view which was called 'een beetje dom' (a bit stupid). Others told me that hunger and humiliation in their camps had nothing to do with protection by Sukarno and so on. I was also informed that this headline had led to many angry telephone calls to 'Indische' organizations, representing the repatriates from the Netherlands Indies in the Netherlands.

However, headlines do not tell the whole story, and in my dissertation I made it clear that the matter of the evacuations was more complicated than mere transportation. Indeed, as emphasized in this article, protection certainly was the central element in them. In the context of the theme 'blind spots and preoccupation', the first question is why until this day ex-internees deny that the camps were intended for their own protection. Some of the answers have already been given in the preceding pages. Most of them did not enter internment by

their free will, and the memories they have of the time they spent in the camps do not correspond with protection. They remember the way they were taken and sometimes humiliated, locked up in small cells or poor shelter and the lack of clothing and medicine and especially the poor food rations. It took place in an atmosphere of enmity towards the Republic. Since ex-internees do not associate their lives in the camps with protection, most of them will not accept the idea that Sukarno – in order to prevent more murder and bloodshed – organized isolation of this vulnerable group for their own safety. They may have good reasons to consider themselves victims of the Bersiap period, but tend to forget that things might have been worse without the protection offered by the camps.

The second question is internees' own story of being kept hostage. My research, based on extensive interviewing, and search in the archives, reveals that there are no indications of the deliberate use of internees as hostages, either at the time of internment or during the evacuations. Both for political and humanitarian reasons, the Republican rulers had ample reasons to do what they did. However, the installation of the camps in 1945 and the POPDA operation of 1946/47 did not take place in a vacuum but in a political context, and this necessarily influenced the way the operation was carried out. Moreover, the steering power of the Republican government was under attack, especially so in 1945. Both factors tended to disturb the process. After the initial discussions with the British in December 1945 for instance, it cost Sjarifoeddin a lot of time to get the first batches of internees actually on the move. It was no easy task to convince the largest irregular pemuda-groups to give their full cooperation.

Although the relationship between politics and Popda was evident, the subject was discussed apart from the political negotiations as much as possible, to prevent it becoming a factor in the *do ut des* of the negotiations. Yet, it was inevitable that mutual irritations hampered a smooth continuation of the process. Such was the case in July 1946 when Soekarno brought POPDA to a standstill because of Dutch bombardments of a ferry and the harbor of Banyuwangi, and a few other matters that in Soekarno's opinion violated the Jogyakarta-Agreement. One may also ask why the Indonesians made such a fuss about air transport, with the help of which the evacuations could have been carried out much faster than was the case. They must have had good reasons for doing so, but at the same time, the Dutch had good reasons to be annoyed as well. Moreover – although positive information on this subject is lacking – according to Dutch reports

demand for more coal, transport and medicines was an ever returning matter in the ensuing discussions between the parties involved. ’Keeping hostages’ is not the right phrase, and it was never used during the high-level negotiations between the Indonesians and the Dutch. Nevertheless, evacuation matters were certainly discussed on the lower level of the special subcommittee, and the mutual irritations can be read from the reports. It is worthwhile to note that in the final report of the chairman of the Dutch section of the subcommittee, Van den Wall Bake, these irritations were not only explicitly summed up, but the chief negotiators were explicitly advised to make them public too.**[xii]**

With this advice, we touch upon the subject of propaganda and public opinion, which necessarily has its effects on history writing as well. After all, the evacuation issue was only one part of a much larger conflict, in which serious issues were involved at both sides. It was serious enough to wage a war for it, which implied propaganda as well. It was in this context that the terms ‘internment’ and ‘hostages’ came in use. For the Dutch authorities, the sentiment of Dutch internees, held captive by the Republic as long as two years after the end of the second world war, certainly was too convincing an argument not to use. This is normal behaviour in cases of political conflict and war. The Dutch were fighting with the republic, and in those circumstances, it did not make sense to praise the enemy. They continued to do so up to 1949 in order to achieve two goals. Their first aim was to put the Republic in a bad light internationally; the second aim was to influence public opinion in the Netherlands. Sending soldiers to the Netherlands East Indies was widely opposed and with propaganda like: ‘Save the hostages in Indonesian hands’, or, ‘Still thousands of hostages under the heel of the Indonesians,’ the authorities tried to manipulate Dutch public opinion.
However, there was a third and largely unintended side effect. The continuous use of the word ‘hostages’ in the media convinced the ex-internees , that they were indeed hostages. That is how they entered history. Moreover, in the following decades, historians adopted the idea of hostages from the archives, thereby ‘confirming’ the image of internees as victims of the republic, and giving rise to the blind spot, as far as Indonesian intentions were concerned.

I will finish this article with an example of disavowal on Indonesian side; not entirely representative, but nonetheless remarkable. I sent 18 books to my Indonesian host. After some time went by I phoned him to ask his opinion about my book. I could immediately hear from his voice that something was wrong and

after some urging, he told me that he disagreed – not with the contents – but with the subtitle, 'A method in the madness' – or as we say in Dutch – 'Orde in de chaos', because he said, there was no madness. I can probably explain to some former ex-internees that Sukarno was trying to protect them, but I could never explain that there was order in the madness during the Bersiap period.

NOTES

[i] The following is a revised edition of the original paper. I wish to thank Pieter Drooglever for his sound advice, which resulted in a better situating of *Popda* within the wider context of the British-Dutch-Indonesian relations.

[ii] Until Potsdam only Sumatra had been part of SEAC. The other Netherlands East Indies islands had been the responsibility of SWPA (South West Pacific Command) under the command of General MacArthur. The sudden change caused many problems for Mountbatten, since he lacked troops, ships and materials.

[iii] E.Touwen-Bouwsma, Japanese minority policy: The Eurasians on Java and the dilemma of ethnic loyalty. Unpublished paper presented at the Workshop on 'The legacy of Dutch and Japanese rule in Indonesia: Myths and Realities'. Amsterdam/Leiden, 7-10 November 1994, p. 2.

[iv] Interviews with Indonesian veterans, among others: Army: Purbo S. Suwondo. Oetarjo, G.P.H. Djatikoesoemo, Imam Soepomo, Iwan Stamboel, A. Kosasih. Navy: Rachmat Sumengar, Haryono Nimpuno. Police: Hoegeng Imam Santosa, Moehammad Jasin, Mohammed Subekti.

[v] Despite Mountbatten's order to stay in their ex-Japanese concentration camps, many people left for their former houses in the country (republican area). Next, they were interned anew; this time by the Indonesians.

[vi] During my research, I found approximately 400 camps, but they did not all exist at the same time. The number of camps constantly fluctuated, because people were transported to other locations, or camps were split up, joined or closed down because of the evacuation. Sometimes the internees had to make room for Japanese troops on their way home or for Indonesian troops.

[vii] *NIB* III, no 84 en no 123. Nationaal Archief, archief Algemene Secretarie, inv. no 2808, Recapitulatie evacuatie binnenland, 13 maart 1947.

[viii] NIB III, no 349; IV no 17.

[ix] Centraal Archieven Depôt van het Ministerie van Defensie. (CAD), archief NEFIS 1946. FY5/27345, 16-04-1946, inv.nr. 29, AA11.

[x] CAD, archief NEFIS 1946. FY5/28707, 26-04-1946, inv.nr. 29, AA11.

[xi] CAD, archief NEFIS 1946. FY5/28707, 26-04-1946, inv.nr. 29, AA11.

[xii] *NIB* IX, no 193.

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Professional Blindness And Missing The Mark ~ The Year 1948 And The Madiun Affairs – A Year Of Cheat And Rumors

"The Reorganisation-Rationalization (Re-Ra) was the detonator of the explosion that struck the TNI and Indonesia and was abused by the Dutch and the PKI for their own aims" (Nasution II a: 5).

The year 1948 and the *Madiun Affair* were of decisive importance for both the existence of the young Republic of Indonesia, and the military career of

Lieutenant General Abdul Haris Nasution. He devoted several publications to the major events of that year, among them *Book IIa* of his *Memoirs*. I will use that book to present his view of the events, since he had a pivotal role in both their genesis as well as their aftermath. My interest in Nasution developed during my work in Indonesia, where my Chinese bookseller Liem regularly provided me with books that stemmed from libraries of former regional government officials and military who spent their retirement in Malang, East Java. Among these books were Mahmillub court martial notes and books that Nasution wrote during and about his military career, and the events he encountered. Back in the Netherlands, I began reading Nasution's books, as well as books about him. His history fascinated me, since he was a man who continuously had trouble with authorities and interest groups, but always managed to come back stronger than before, until his companion and opponent President Sukarno finally had to leave the political scene mid-1960s. In discussions with Wertheim, he objected to my fascination with the man, since he saw him as a liar and a cheat. In August 1993, I interviewed Nasution for a biography about him and met a charming and inspiring man who, just like Wertheim, had a photographic memory for people, events and books. Again, Wertheim condemned the effort and predicted a tremendous task in separating fact from fiction. I never had any inclination to adhere to his point of view, and started working on the biography. Gradually, and by checking Nasution's data and insights with existing and authoritative literature on the events he participated in, I realized that he had something important to say. His memories are relevant and his insights worthwhile to report to a larger public. In this chapter, I will use his memories of the year 1948; one of Indonesia's many Years of Living Dangerously. They are taken from Volume IIA of his *Memoirs*, called *Memenuhi Panggilan Tugas*, i.e. "*Doing My Duty*". Despite Wertheim's objections against my work on Nasution, he nevertheless remained interested in my work and supported me when and wherever feasible; for which I am grateful.

Appeasement and its political problems

In the preceding chapter we have seen that Sukarno's policy of appeasement vis-à-vis the Allied Forces was intended to be positive for the former Eurasian prisoners of Japanese camps, and was even facilitated by *pemoeda* support. It served Sukarno's goal of appeasing the Western Allies by showing his good intentions regarding victims of the Japanese occupation. However, the political history of the year 1948 shows the growing dissatisfaction within the Indonesian

army, among the village militia and the political parties with the other facets of the appeasement policy. It is probably this history of dissatisfaction and mistrust, and its dramatic end in civil war and coup accusations, which has blinded subsequent Indonesian and foreign historiographers to the two sides of Sukarno's appeasement policies. In essence Sukarno was a Jacobin, which means that he changed camp whenever it served his interests. Before the Second World War Sukarno took the non-cooperative side of Indonesian nationalism, and continued that line during the Japanese occupation when he chose to side with Japan. After the Independence Declaration of 17 August 1945 he chose, for tactical reasons, to co-operate with the Allied Forces, whose support he needed in the Independence war against the Dutch. After the Republic and the Netherlands parted ways for good in 1956 after fruitless negotiations about the division of mutual interests in the archipelago and repayment of war damage caused by Indonesian military, Sukarno used the Western Allies once again in a campaign aimed at making the Netherlands stick to its 1949 promise of handing over New Guinea to the Republic of Indonesia. Without any clear reasons from the Dutch for doing so, that issue had been excluded from the Round Table Agreement. From 1964 on, and forced by Indonesia's miserable international financial debt, Sukarno relied heavily on support from Communist China. After October 1965, appeasement was not as important, and was replaced by Suharto's balancing act of looking inward and outward.

An independent analysis of the 1948 affairs

For an interesting Indonesian analysis of the 1948 events, I will use Part 8 of Nasutions 10 volume Publication on the Indonesian Independence War. The analysis is based on Nasution's personal memories and notes about his stay in Yogyakarta in 1948. At that time he was chief of staff of Commander in Chief General Sudirman and worked with him on an encompassing strategy plan that served two goals. On the one hand, a proper solution was needed for the relentless Dutch effort to destroy the Indonesian army after its infamous defeat against the first Dutch Aggression of July and August 1947. On the other hand, they were in search of a way to covertly rebuild a new and combat ready Indonesian army that would be able to conduct mobile strike operations at the regional and national level, and guerilla war at the local level. Nasution's analysis of the Madiun Affairs regard this effort and its complicated political context.

Nasution's memoirs were first published in 1983 by CV Haji Masagung in Jakarta.

I use the second, 1989 edition in which the original Volume II has been split up in two separate volumes, i.e. Volume II a, and Volume II b. Volume II provides Nasution's analysis of the preparations for guerrilla warfare against the expected second Dutch aggression. Chapter 2 contains the PKI Insurrection. It is a mixture of ideas, notes, and other materials from 1948, as well as personal memories, and as such it is still relevant to revisiting the 1948 crisis. Nasution sharply separates his military analysis of the 1948 events from his conclusions, in which he ventilates his anti-communist sentiments. Where necessary, I will augment his analysis with facts, documents and analyses from McTurnan Kahin's thesis on Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia. This thesis is based on Kahin's experiences as journalist and member of the Indonesian Ministry of Information during Independence War. Although his exposition has some odd misses regarding the dates and order of events, it makes some interesting points. It focuses on the political side of the 1948 events, in particular the emergence of a strong leftist protest against President Sukarno's "sloppy" way of negotiating about peace and independence with the Dutch from February 1948 on. But it also builds on Siliwangi Intelligence which dominated the marshes of rumors circulating in and around the Ministry of Information in 1948. Solely for that reason, and despite the fact that so many years after the event it is a difficult to check these sources, as a contemporary of Nasution Kahin's study is helpful for a historical analysis of 1948 with two starting points: the objectifying analysis of Nasution and the left leaning analysis of Kahin based on Siliwangi dominated information. Since this piquant confrontation deserves a much larger and broader analysis than this chapter permits, I will primarily use Kahin's English translations of Indonesian speeches and proclamations.

Contrary to the personal success story that Dutch and foreign studies ascribe to Nasution, and the bad image cultivated by contemporary left wing 'hate literature' in and outside Indonesia, he presents a nuanced and often troubled and grim story in his memories of 1948. They cover his bumpy career at the time, including his continuing and sharp discussions about strategy and tactics with his partners in battle, i.e. representatives of the village militias, called Laskar, as well as territorial commanders and rebelling army units, and last but not least his Commander in Chief General Sudirman. Each of these parties had their professional and existential interests and perspectives, which divided them so much they could not reach a compromise. Nasution's report also relentlessly shows his failure to adequately handle the task he was given by Sudirman, namely

to massage away the fears the Laskar village militias had of the policies of the much hated Hatta cabinet, and convince them to participate in a plan he conceived in 1948 while Chief of Staff. He opted for a combined attack on the enemy, whereas General Sudirman preferred an all-out guerilla war against the Dutch. Nasution's plan included the covert build-up of a small core of combat ready mobile troops and a large amount of stationary village militias. For Nasution, finding a way across all the obstacles was a painful experience but he describes his blunders and failures, as well as his final success, with candor. Despite his personal charm Nasution failed to get in contact with the Java based Laskar commanders, who revered General Sudirman. As a military man with a Western military education, he had no understanding of the emotive side of the Laskar motivation for entering the war against the Dutch, i.e. *semangat revolusi* (revolutionary fire). In the end, these failures as well as those of Sudirman, who had extensive connections with the rebelling troops and political parties, contributed to the final explosion, which in Western terms became known as "The Madiun Affair". The misunderstanding between the two commanders moreover enlarged the risk of what Hatta in August 1948 explicitly stated was to be prevented at all cost, i.e. a discussion about social revolution, which would not only trigger a struggle between ideologies and classes but also escalate it. For Hatta, on the eve of an expected second Dutch Aggression, national unity and strength had absolute priority over social revolution, which could only split the ranks; dissent had to be denied, and eventually suppressed. On the other hand, the PKI Musso as well as independent activist Tan Malaka, pushed the idea of class thinking. It found a willing ear with the village based Laskar units who felt confronted by Nasution who treated them, as they said, as *kelas kambing*, i.e. as peasants. Again, Nasution was quite honest about his failures and successes.

Nasution's analysis shows that the so-called communist Madiun coup was an accident in a long-standing loyalty conflict between army units and village militias, lumped together in the inlands of Central Java, and the government and the president. For the protesters the subject of the conflict was the expected impact of the policy of appeasement with the Dutch and the Allied Forces on their professional and family life. Kahin uses the same framework but is more oriented on the side of the National Front, the PKI and other political parties. For the Laskar commanders, the price of independence paid by the government was too high, i.e. submitting to Dutch and Western imperialist powers which condemned them to a marginal position in a federated Indonesia. Nasution's analysis shows

the military side of the Independence War and approaches that as the essence of the struggle. For the military, Nasution included, the war contribution was indispensable. Without it, the government had no legs to stand on. Whereas for the Central and East Java based units that conception was the reason to resist the government and push for a policy and personnel change; for Nasution and Siliwangi it was the reason to support the government. Moreover, in Nasution's opinion, fighting an independence war without unity of command and political leadership could never bring independence, only heroic and deadly defeat. For Sukarno, submission was the only way to get support for independence from the Allied Forces, which in its turn was the only way to reach Independence. For Nasution, the ideological difference regarding the loyalty issue between the nationalist PNI and the modernist Muslim Masyumi party which divided the KNIP parliament, and the protests from the Left Wing (*Sayap Kiri*) and the National Front of Amir Sjarifuddin, were serious mishaps. According to Nasution, the politicians involved missed any understanding of the disastrous impact that political dissent would have on the military defense against the forthcoming second Dutch aggression. The commanders that understood the backgrounds of the dissent, drew their lessons for the next two decades, i.e. do not let politics get a hold on military affairs. Local people are the army's only and basic ally, not the government. However, for tactical reasons Nasution maintained the connections with the government since they were needed to keep his Siliwangi Division upright and combat ready. The government had the money he needed to achieve that goal. The Central and East Javanese units were left behind in poverty, working with untrained and unqualified troops, because they did not have that link. They stigmatized Nasution as a traitor, a party pooper who sucked up to the government for his own private and Western interests.

Sukarno's accusation and the name of the event

The name "Madiun Affairs" was born when President Sukarno gave his 19 September 1948 speech of about the battle between loyal and disloyal troops in Solo Central Java and the presumed coup attempt in Madiun East Java, one day earlier. He opened his speech by stating:

"Yesterday morning the Communist Party of Musso staged a coup in Madiun and formed a Soviet government there under the leadership of Musso. They consider this seizure of power by force as a preliminary step in the seizure of the entire government of the Republic of Indonesia. From this fact, it is obvious that the Solo and Madiun incidents are not isolated events but are constituent parts of an

over-all pattern of action designed to overthrow the government of the Republic of Indonesia. To achieve this end, the rebels have used units of the Twenty Ninth Brigade, the former irregular force commanded by Lt. Col. Dahlan. By so doing, Dahlan has betrayed the country and has violated the oath of the army. Therefore I hereby dismiss Dahlan from the army." (McTurnan Kahin 1970: 292).

The event he is referring to is the message that the Pesindo garrison commander Soemarsono of Madiun broadcasted in the night of 18 September with the headline "In Madiun starts the victory." One hour and a half after Sukarno's speech PKI leader Musso replied with a speech that was born out of despair, since according to McTurnan Kahin the events of September 18th had completely surprised Musso and had neither been planned and prepared by him, nor been ordered. Musso started his speech with the sentence:
"On September 18, 1948, the citizens of Madiun seized the authority of state in their own hands. With that the citizens of Madiun have done their duty in our national revolution, which as a matter of fact must be led by the people and not by any other class!" (McTurnan Kahin 1970: 293).

Musso continued by accusing those people in government and army who during the Japanese occupation had manned Japanese organizations (Sudirman) or had been Romusha slave dealers (Sukarno and Hatta), of selling out the country to the former colonizer; and so on and so forth. He talked about how the middle class nature of the cabinet and government was not very different from the bourgeois rule of the colonial time, and commented that only the labor class could wage an effective war against the aggressors. Musso ended his speech with a call on the Indonesian people to follow the example of the Madiun citizens and take their fate in their own hands.

Already on that first day, dissent arose over the question of what had happened in Madiun, which still continues today. Was it a coup? In the night of 18 September a local Pesindo commander named Sumarsono did broadcast a message titled "From Madiun victory starts". According to the papers and Antara, the message called for a change of government by the people. In 2002, Sumarsono denied Sukarno's accusation in an interview with Radio Netherlands. He denied having performed a coup but admitted to having taken measures against eventualities. These measures included the creation of a regional branch of the National Front (Front Nasional Daerah/PNI) that appointed him military governor of Madiun.

Contrary to what newspapers in Yogyakarta stated, there were no pro-PKI mass demonstrations in Madiun and no red flags. The Indonesian flag was not removed from government buildings. No commanders and town officials had been arrested or killed.

Sumarsono said that Commander in Chief Sudirman sent Lieutenant Colonel Suharto to Madiun to have a look and discuss the rumors. He arrived at night and accompanied Sumarsono on a tour through the town the next morning. After that tour, Sumarsono asked Suharto for his opinion and, when he agreed with Sumarsono about the real state of affairs, asked Suharto to write a letter to the president about his findings. It was important that the president should know what really happened, and not believe the Siliwangi controlled newspapers in Jogyakarta. Suharto replied that he indeed had seen nothing to worry about and Sumarsono should write the letter and he would sign it. Sumarsono wrote the letter, which Suharto indeed signed. Sumarsono also talked about a letter from Amir Sjarifuddin to the president, regarding the same issue. The Radio Netherlands reporter did not ask him about which letter Suharto took with him. Anyway, Suharto took a letter home, and later replied that on his way back he had been arrested by Siliwangi troops; the letter never reached the president who consequently went with the news as reported in the Jogyakarta newspapers (Kolom Ibrahim Isa in Milis Nasional).

Although Sumarsono did not specify the precise reason for his seizing power in Madiun, his actions come across as a local martial law proclamation in order to defend the town against the Siliwangi's hunt for disloyal troops and FDR and PKI officials. McTurnan Kahin did not commit himself fully to what he had heard about the coup message broadcasted by Sumarsono in Madiun on September 18th, because he could not find an authorized copy of the radio message, only a second hand version (Kahin p. 291 note 66). Hence, just like the public in 1948, we still depend on hearsay, and do not know for sure if there was a coup attempt. It looks as if Sukarno, in view of the rumors about risks and threats, and the Siliwangi Intelligence reports, decided to make a pre-emptive strike against the PKI Musso in order to prevent the man from exploiting the opportunity, and damage the defense against the expected second Dutch aggression by creating civil war. Whatever the case; in the 1950s and after, Sukarno refused to call 1948 the year of the PKI coup. He always referred to "the Madiun affairs", since he needed the PKI as his personal apparatus for spreading the message of Indonesian socialism to the peasants and laborers.

Nasution on the prologue

Survivors of the Madiun affairs who were part of the rebelling troops, still accuse Siliwangi and Nasution of having been traitors of the military and leftist resistance against the scandalous demobilization and reorganization of the Indonesian troops ordered and implemented by the Hatta cabinet. Within that framework, it is important to also get the view from the other side of the hill, i.e. Nasution's report about 1948. What was his view of the events, then and afterwards?

From Nasution's description of the events of 1948, it is quite clear that the source of all the fuzz was not the threat of a communist coup. During the preceding Amir Sjarifuddin cabinet, the PKI had supported the reorganization. But the Hatta cabinet triggered a change of course in the PKI. Hence, Nasution's focus is the serious dissent in the army about the government's demobilization and reorganization policies, because that was the problem with which he wrestled. He shows that the route to the Madiun explosion was much longer than the tensions of August and September 1948 between Siliwangi units present in Central Java and local and East Javanese units that had gathered in Central Java after the demobilization. Dutch and American studies usually focus on these tensions. However, Nasution shows that the Madiun explosion was the result of structural issues. The events in Solo were only the powder barrel of a fire that subsequently spread fast to other towns. The threat of disappearance as a result of the implementation of the first Hatta cabinet's plans, was cause for dissent among the militias. An important intensifying factor of dissent was the Siliwangi stand, which was loyal to the president, but also strived to move up in the ranks as an elite unit. This division was rewarded when Sukarno created a mobile strategic reserve brigade in 1948, which became the president's security force for the time being, and included Siliwangi. One outcome of this policy was that Siliwangi was spared a reduction of its manpower. The effort raised suspicion and jealousy among the Central and East Javanese units that apparently were not favorites of the president and Hatta.

The ReRa plans implemented the lessons learned by the General Defense Staff from the republican defeat against the first Dutch Aggression in August 1947, and the Dutch exigencies presented by the strangling Renville Agreement. Nasution had good relations with that staff, thanks to the former Chief of the General Staff Lieutenant General Oerip Soemohardjo. Both had a common KNIL background

and when in private, enjoyed common memories of their pre-war time in Bandung. However, both were also completely dedicated to the ideal of a professional, non-ideological oriented and combat ready Indonesian army. Though Oerip resigned after the defeat in 1947, he had accepted Sukarno's offer of becoming his military adviser. Unfortunately, Oerip died in November 1948, leaving Nasution in despair over how to close the gap to the president.

The Renville agreement which finalized the first Dutch aggression of July 1947 stipulated, just like the earlier Linggadjati Agreement did, a complete disarmament and demobilization of the Indonesian armed forces in the territories occupied by the Dutch. However, this time the Dutch forces would execute and guide the demobilization themselves. Second, the territory of the Republic was reduced to the inlands of Central Java and Sumatra. In its turn, the Indonesian defense staff reflected on the chances that the defeat offered for a new approach, for example abandoning the enormous but rather unorganized mass of lightly armed combat units that served before August 1947. It had proved to be only effective in some places and only at the *desa*-village level; as an army, it did not work. Within this framework, Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Amir Sjarifuddin had already made preparations for a plan of reorganization and rationalization of the armed forces in October and November 1947. It would make use of Dutch finances intended for the disarmament and demobilization operation, in particular pensions and social insurance, as well as Indonesian sources such as the textile industry and agriculture. Sjarifuddin thought that the design and implementation of these ideas should take place with the full support of the political parties in the appointed KNIP parliament, which since Proclamation had direct relations with armed units. His Biro Perdjuangan would play a prominent coordinating role in these relations. In their turn, the army commanders regrouped their forces in Central Java, including Nasution who ordered the members of his Siliwangi Division to find their way individually and in small groups via the southern mountain areas of West and Central Java to Yogyakarta. He called it Siliwangi *hidjrah* (evacuation, reference to Mohammed's departure from Mecca).

When the KNIP parliament subsequently sent Amir's cabinet home in December, the Indonesian government had accepted the Renville Agreement, which reduced the republic to the inland areas of Sumatra and Central Java, cutting off the seaports. The constitution of a new cabinet that would implement the Renville

Agreement appeared to be difficult and as a result Sukarno appointed a presidential cabinet. Vice President Mohammad Hatta became Prime Minister and Minister of Defense. This new cabinet started work on February 22nd 1948. As for the reorganization, it was executed through the Defense or Baharuddin Law, based on the Baharuddin motion accepted by the KNIP parliament in December 1947, which was a call for government action. Based on that law, the reorganization pertained to a coup de frappe by the government, which gave operational and administrative command of the army to the government in order to fully control the military budget. Hatta based his policy on the plans of the preceding Amir Sjarifuddin cabinet but dropped the role of the political parties in the operational command designed by his predecessor. Regarding the military side of the reorganization, Hatta's concept used Nasution's design, created after the 1947 defeat and pertaining to the creation of a small core unit of well-trained and educated professional soldiers paid from Dutch and Indonesian sources, and the abandonment of the mass of unarmed or badly armed non-regular units. The core unit could function as the start of republican and federal armies, whereas the village militias would be functional in both. For Hatta, the rather chaotic collection of Laskar peasant militias and the multitude of other non-regular units which emerged since the Bersiap Time (1945-1946) was on the list for rationalization. Hatta's ReRa plans rendered Sukarno's 1947 Law on the TNI useless. That law regulated the creation of the concept of Tentara Negara Indonesia and the terms of TNI membership, and included the Laskar as regular part of the TNI. However, Renville stipulated that the TNI be disarmed and demobilized. Hence, the Hatta government took the Renville terms as an opportunity to get rid of all the non-professional units, which according to the defense staff had to take place anyway. This move was the main reason for the mistrust and disloyalty which haunted the Hatta cabinet. The implementation of Renville and the abolition of direct party political influence in the combat units made the ReRa effort a highly abject affair. It robbed the remnants of the TNI, and other combat units like the Laskar peasant militias, of the opportunity to seek support from parliament which until then had been an option for all Indonesian armed forces.

The start of the Siliwangi hidjrah from West Java, (in Pierre Heijboer: 105).

After the fall of his cabinet, former Minister Amir Sjarifuddin constituted in response to the emerging fear, anger and unrest among the troops and the militias, an additional parliamentary lobby of mostly Left Wing parties in parliament plus other organizations like his own Biro Perjuangan. This lobby was called Front Demokrasi Rakyat (FDR, People's Democratic Front). It had the explicit aim to support individual military and groups, and to put continued political pressure on the Hatta cabinet under to stop its ReRa policies. Hatta's scrapping of party political control of the reorganization as well as his creation of a support lobby split the parliament in a left wing of PKI, PSI, Murba and other groups, and a right wing consisting of PNI and the modernist Muslim Masyumi party. Whereas before Renville these wings cooperated on legislation and motions, from then on they went separate and increasingly opposite ways. According to Nasution, it created the climate for agitation against him and Hatta, which triggered the escalation that resulted in the Solo and Madiun affairs.

A further escalating factor was the cabinets trouble with creating the financial and fiscal frame needed for the planned massive demobilization and pensioning of soldiers and officers. The Dutch mobilization funds were too small to cover all the expenses. Moreover, government had to create or find new jobs for the demobilized military, which in most cases failed. Disarmament became a very controversial affair. Paying for it from Dutch funds aroused anger and made the cabinet look even worse.

In July 1948, when it became clear that Hatta would not give in to pressure to stop the ReRa operation, Amir made a plan B that provided for the mobilization of

military pressure against the government plans in case further political pressure would fail. It remained unclear for a long time what he meant by that. Moreover, the idea of mobilizing military pressure appeared dangerous and might trigger civil war. This was not in the interest of the Independence war and many commanders were suspicious of the idea, in particular Siliwangi and Police units.

Sjarifuddin made a list of units and commanders that might support military pressure. It was Amir's Plan B that caused Moscow to send pre-war PKI leader Musso to Java with the instruction to take over the FDR, bring it under the roof of the PKI and develop PKI into a people's party that would be able to attract mass popular support and take the lead in republican politics and military. Musso arrived in August 1948 and immediately took action by performing a coup within the party organization, with internal support from the Polit Bureaus younger generation. Aidit, Lukman and Sudisman constituted the new PKI top. The PKI had to be rebuilt from a small and old-fashioned Stalinist urban elite party to a large and popular party with a significant role in bourgeois democracy and the ability to solve Amir's dilemma regarding Plan B, namely the danger of civil war.
Hatta's acceleration of the ReRa operation irritated Commander in Chief General Sudirman immensely. The policy ignored his design of a total popular war against the Dutch. Following long consultations with his commanders, Sudirman was ready for his famous STOP Order No 1 of June 6th 1948. The order was designed and edited by his Chief of Staff Nasution, and redressed all Hatta's schedules and implementations. It solidified Sudirman's position as Commander in Chief, by also making him Chief of the General Defense Staff of the ministry of Defense. It put him in charge of both the army and the ministry of defense. The order was a cunning Coup de Frappe with Sukarno's silent support.
Even though Sudirman's move came late, perhaps too late to be of any political impact, it was a definite signal to politicians that in wartime the army was essentially the people's and military affair, instead of a matter of fooling around with abstract economic calculations and political schedules (Nasution II a: Lampiran II). This fact would be driven home in the prologue and epilogue of the Thirty September Movement in 1965, which had a macabre and disastrous end in the murders of tens of thousands of helpless peasants.

It is important to note that in 1948 yet another dangerous situation surfaced. One very similar in motivation to the Madiun Affair, but that got quite a different response from the government. It took place in West Java, where Muslim militias

were just as angry about the government's ReRa operation and its dismissal of constitutional values and interests as their colleagues in Central and East Java were. They united in the Darul Islam movement and proclaimed Darul Islam, i.e. the Indonesian Islam state. This movement intended to replace the rotten Republic of Indonesia with a decent Indonesian Islam State. Whereas the so-called communist coup of Madiun got all the national and international attention, Indonesian and foreign parliaments as well as authors either ignored the D.I. event or treated it as a second hand affair.

In the 1950s the Darul Islam movement blocked communications with Jakarta and the surrounding areas in Java, as well as with the export areas in Celebes, and thus constituted a much larger and more sustained threat to the country's existence than the presumed coup attempt of Musso's PKI ever did. One cannot escape the notion that the Cold War climate determined domestic political and security priorities. This odd situation was made possible by the republican government's dependence on support from the Dutch and the Allied Forces, which were part of the Cold War against communism. Even Nasution mentions the Darul Islam emergency only once in his chapter on 1948, and he does not elaborate. His chapter on ReRa gives a clue to his ignorance. After the TNIs failure to successfully stand up against the Dutch army in August 1947, he moved to Yogyakarta. At the time of the emergence of the Darul Islam movement, he was highly involved with the regrouping of his demobilized Siliwangi division in Central Java. Moreover, in 1948, his work as chief of Sudirman's Army staff confronted him with the disastrous impact of Tan Malaka's campaign against him and Hatta, and against Western educated politicians and commanders in general, on his relation with the Laskar units in Central Java. The preparations for the expected second Dutch aggression also absorbed more of his attention than the Darul Islam event did. Nasution did not elaborate on the Darul Islam as a national threat in other publications either, unless its impact on the guerrilla capacity of the army demanded his attention. He never expands on the reasons behind his attitude.

The Sudirman/Nasution dissent

With the arrival of the Hatta cabinet, Hatta took Nasution's earlier plan for an independent Indonesian task force as a lead. It had to be implemented immediately and Hatta sent his orders to the commanders in the field to do the job. However, in view of the expected second Dutch aggression Nasution's plan

had to be redressed. Sudirman and Nasution discussed the nature of the defense strategy. Should supreme command stick to Nasution's scenario after the defeat, constituting a small core of mobile elite troops and a solid base of stationary village militias, or should they opt for a different concept that would allow all troops and militias to have a place in the defense? This last option had Sudirman's preference. The first scenario necessitated the rationalization of all non-regular and regular troops and militias, which did not fit the plan. Sudirman considered it a threat to a unified command structure since the troops in the field rejected the option, which made them unreliable and not combat-ready. The second scenario promised a place in the fight to all troops and thus ensured obedience and rest. Nasution's felt that in the remaining few months before the Dutch aggression, such a mobilization was unfeasible, since it would not have enough military spin off. Without a strong professional military core, Indonesia would not be able to maintain mobility, cooperate with the local militias and constantly strike back from unexpected and reliably defended local edges and angles against the suspected Dutch aggression. What remained was nothing more than an enormous landscape of local trenches and foxholes without a central command and strategy. A dualist approach was unavoidable. The position of the Laskar village militias had a central place in the debate. They had to hold on to their position against all odds, and lacked the possibility to travel around to evade Dutch aggression and strike from behind, a situation they were unhappy with. They felt victimized by Hatta's and Nasution's plans which, in their view, condemned them to exploiting their inferior class position, i.e. *kelas kambing*, the goats cabin in colonial/Indonesian trains where peasants with their livestock were forced to stay on their way to the market. Professionals had the opportunity to hit and run, the Laskar village militias had the freedom to stay behind and be bombed.

A painful period in the first half of 1948 was Nasution's failure to succeed in the task given to him by Sudirman – winning the acceptance of the Laskar units and commanders for his dualist planning of a mobile elite core unit and stationary village militias. The Java based Laskar units rejected the plans. After that defeat, Sudirman took the Laskar under his own wings and pushed further for Sukarno's support of his Total Guerrilla concept. He contacted the representatives of Sjarifuddin's Front Demokrasi Rakyat (FDR) and the Biro Perdjuangan, in an effort to get them behind the concept. That connection, which was Sudirman's personal affair, was an effort to temper the anger among Laskar, FDR and PKI members over the Hatta plans, since they involved the elimination of the political

parties from the reorganization. Sudirman kept his political efforts to himself and left Nasution out. Thus, several scenarios were in the pipeline at the same time, with Hatta's scenario and Nasution's plans under attack and Sudirman's scenarios being discussed with field commanders, the Laskar militias and FDR and PKI oriented troops. It created a climate of indecisiveness and division of command, which led to several deep misunderstandings and clashes between Nasution and Sudirman. The continuing tensions between the two commanders exhausted both, and in Nasution's opinion hampered the establishment a of united command structure. Another complicating factor was that the General Defense Staff at the Ministry of Defense had its own agenda and strived after its realization on its own. The situation as a whole made Sudirman announce his famous Stop Order, created by Nasution, in which he rejected the Hatta schedule and unified supreme command and general defense staff by putting both under his command. It had Nasution's full consent. Whatever scenario would end up coming to fruition, it was clear to both commanders that it needed political support and that they would need the freedom to act. To them, government was instrumental and not the leading branch, since politicians knew nothing about the military craft. Both commanders were also completely loyal to the president, in their eyes the only man who could keep the different interests and interest groups together. They viewed the government as an obstacle between the military and the president. This attitude remained intact until 1 October 1965, when six generals of the army top were killed at the command of Sukarno's security force, under the suspicion of preparing a coup. It meant the final blow to the military's trust in their president.

In hindsight, Nasution regretted his failure to win the Java based Laskar for his plans for a professional army core and a stationary Laskar base. In his opinion, his failure undoubtedly contributed to the clashes that eventually led to the Madiun affairs, in which the Laskar and other units under threat of rationalization considered Nasution to be part of Hatta's camp, which had to be wiped out. Nasution explained that failure as the outcome of being a Dutch educated citizen and military. He lacked an understanding of the emotive *semangat* spirit that reined Laskar militia behavior, as well as an understanding of their resistance against external top down command structures, which was not rooted in their small-scale group dynamics and did not have their approval. Sudirman in his turn understood the Laskar sentiments quite well, and met the Laskar objections appropriately. However, he could not prevent the explosion of anti-Nasution

sentiments and the accusations of being NICA agents against Hatta and Nasution which emerged in August and September 1948. According to Nasution, they focused on his KNIL past, his "Dutch behavior" and his loyalty to the Hatta cabinet. In Hatta's case they focused on his Dutch past, and the arrogance of the disciplined and well-trained Siliwangi soldiers who supported the government's political horse trade with the Dutch. At least that was Nasution's feeling at the time. Hence, in his view, nationalist sentiments split the people in Java along the line of pro and contra Sukarno's dealings with the Dutch, and pro and contra against the colonial Dutch educated legacy in the nationalist movement. The dissent did not hurt Sukarno immediately. He had a colonial education and many Dutch and Western contacts, and was a necessary part of the Independence effort. No one could replace him.

The Solo affairs

Nasution draws attention to the demographic and catering problems Central Java had to deal with after the regrouping of tens of thousands of demobilized troops in Central Java, which meant a multiplication of people who needed food. The problem was worsened by the fact that family members of the regrouped troops and other fugitives also followed, adding to the number of immigrants. In the rural rice economy of Central Java, which had been ruined by the Japanese demand for small and large cattle meat, Malthusian checks developed, i.e. violent rampage, starvation and civil war. There is no doubt these problems worsened the tensions between the military units.

Nasution reports that on September 14, a number of PKI-oriented Laskar units of the irregular marine Panembahan Senopati division attacked troops of Ali Sadikin's Siliwangi Brigade in the Solo/Surakarta region. Commander in Chief Sudirman immediately ordered the fights to stop and approached Nasution to remove the Siliwangi troops from Central Java, send them to West Java and stop further escalation. Nasution was not prepared to do this. Subsequently, Sudirman went to Solo to meet with the fighting units. However, during the following days the skirmishes severed, revealing deeply rooted sentiments of mutual hatred. According to Kahin, on 17 September Sukarno ordered a first stage Martial Law in the Solo region and Semarang, i.e. the State of Danger (*Keadaan Bahaya*). Ali Sadikin's Siliwangi Brigade remained in control of Solo city, whereas the rebelling units of the marine Panembahan Senopati Division remained in position at the city's precinct. Actually, as Harry Poeze from the KITLV emailed me, Sukarno conceived the order on 16 September, and published and implemented it

on 17 September.
On that last date, Sukarno also appointed Colonel Gatot Subroto, Commander of the Corps Military Police, as military governor of Surakarta and Semarang. In that authority, Subroto issued his Decree No. 1, which mentioned and condemned the skirmishes in Surakarta, and ordered the fighting units to cease their fighting as soon as possible, ultimately at September 20, 12.00 hrs. He ordered all commanders to report to him in the Residency Office, in order to explain their position vis-à-vis the government and receive orders on how to restore order. According to Nasution, it was this decree that triggered the start of the Madiun affair the next day, 18 September 1948 (Nasution II a, 86). The final explosion came on 18 September, just as Siliwangi Intelligence had predicted. On that day, TNI units of Amir Sjarifuddin's Biro Perdjuangan seized power in Madiun and arrested the Chief of the Defense Staff of East Java, as well as staff officers, District Commanders, and the regional commanders of Military Police and others, and killed several of them. They were replaced by FDR officers and administrators (Nasution II a: 81- 85). According to a 2005 interview with PSI commander Soemarsono, no killings had taken place. He had led the seize power of Madiun and it had no communist background, just a local defensive one against Siliwangi.
According to McTurnan Kahin the TNI units were PKI oriented Pesindo units. Nasution does not mention the background of the units. The rebellion showed how dangerous the construction of troops was under party political control and command. It split the army in a TNI part and a party political part, which in light of Amir Sjarifudin's plans to escalate the pressure on the Hatta cabinet by mobilizing the military units under the Biro Perjuangan, increased the danger of local civil war. Musso fed the public's fear of civil war, as well as Nasution's and the government's, by incorporating Amir's Plan B in his own plan of action. McTurnan Kahin reports that almost immediately, the Hatta cabinet started removing FDR and PKI oriented field commanders from their post by moving them to less dangerous positions or retiring them.

At the request of President Sukarno, in the night of 18 September, Nasution conceived a 'plan de campagne' for taking out the rebels and the communist party. In Yogyakarta, Colonel Suharto also did an efficient job. While the whole campaign lasted about two and a half months, in one night, he had abandoned and arrested the local branch of the communist party. Sudirman did what he had to do, and commanded the strike units that crushed the rebelling troops that

allied with FDR and PKI, but God heard him mourn. However, his call for a peoples' war was not heard again until 1 October 1965. Nasution took a breather and then restarted his work on his dualist strategy. In December 1948 the long expected second Dutch Aggression began. The Indonesian troops operated according to Nasution's plan of local flexible assaults, based on village militias and mobile units, cutting enemy lines and attacking from behind. Contrary to the first Aggression, the Indonesian forces operated in a more disciplined manner and according to plan, but they never reached the level of an army with a central command organization.

Conclusion

The Solo and Madiun affairs were immediate outcomes of the ReRa issue raised by the Hatta cabinet policy of bringing army command under total government control. It was the second time a large-scale conflict erupted between army and government; the coup attempt of 1946 which I did not discuss in this chapter, being the first. The 1950s would bring new conflicts, such as 17 October 1952, the 1955 affairs and the 1957 affairs. Whereas Western literature on the early republic focuses on the analysis of the 1948 events and in later years on the competition between army and PKI over political power, Nasution presents a different picture that shows the birth convulsions of the TNI and the inability of the Sukarno government to get permanent grip on those dynamics. He viewed that encounter as more serious than the competition between Army and PKI, because the 1948 situation concerned the rebuilding of a combat ready army as the one and only guarantee of defense against Dutch imperialism and retaliation. The 1 October 1965 affair was the last time army and government openly opposed each other. Under Suharto, any conflicts remained more or less invisible to the public. According to Nasution, quibbling between army and government about military matters was characteristic for the first two decades of the republic, as was the army command's fear of the PKI infiltrating the battleground again, like it did in 1948.

Nasution's reconstruction gives no answer to the question whether 1948 was a political or a military affair. Before 1948, politics and military command were heavily interwoven as far as planning and operations went. The political parties had direct access to the units and vice versa. However, Hatta's coup de frappe of making the military budget a cabinet matter and excluding the political parties from control over any military command, appeared to make army reorganization

an exclusive matter of cabinet and government. On the other hand, Sudirman's Stop Order of 12 July 1948 was another coup de frappe, bringing ministerial planning, financing and operational command under his personal leadership. This made the planning and countering of military action once again a primarily military affair. However, his move came too late to get a grip on both the growing unrest between loyal and disloyal troops, as well as the formation of a left wing front headed by the PKI, set up to support the protest of the disloyal troops against the ReRa plan. As mentioned above, the power struggle between army and government continued during the whole of Nasution's career. In the 1950s, and based on the experiences of the Independence War, army command was of the opinion that the army was the prime people's representative, standing beside and above the government, serving as watchdog. It followed Sudirman's line of taking initiative whenever needed. According to Nasution, the main problems were the birth convulsions of the TNI, which had great difficulty accepting government authority and a central military command. Consisting of a bunch of undisciplined units with bossy commanders, most of them without military academic qualifications, the army lacked the basic characteristics of a real army, and remained stuck in the legacy of the Independence War – a free military enterprise with a direct relation to the president. Nasution considered it his task to overcome the convulsions and build a proper combat ready republican army that could manage any foreign and domestic threat.

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Professional Blindness And Missing The Mark ~ Papuan Nationalism. Another Blind Spot

Stimulated by the closing lectures of professor Wertheim, we are in search of signs of ignorance in and on the Indonesian past this morning. Put in other words, we are looking for blind spots in the history of Indonesia during the first decades of its existence as an independent state. In historiography, it is a well-trodden path, which leads us from 19th century positivism to the peregrinations of post modernism and after.

In their daily practice, historians and social scientists have never fully embraced either one of these philosophies. After all, the first approach would have led us to make ever-expanding lists of facts without offering understanding, the other towards an empty space crowded with ghosts we are unable to define. More often than not, historians have looked for what is relevant for their understanding of past and present, aware of the fact that both things are interrelated. As far as I understand, it is in this spirit that Wim Wertheim presented his farewell lectures here in Amsterdam, and it is in that same spirit that we have to look for blind spots today.

Nationalism in the making

In their contributions, Mary van Delden and Coen Holtzappel have already discussed some of the events of the 1940s. Their focus was on the dispute between the different groups in the centre of the young Indonesian Republic about how to organize their state and wage their struggle for independence. In the afternoon, our attention will shift to the mid-sixties, and mainly to the same kind of questions. To bridge the gap in time and subject, I have decided to focus

on the New Guinea dispute. It enables us to shift our attention to the fifties and early sixties, to international affairs and, above all, to the way both parties handled the crucial matter of Papuan nationalism. I will say something about its origins, the way it popped up in the fifties and survived on the stage of history until the present day. Moreover it will give us a fine opportunity to test how the phenomenon of the blind spot works in policymaking and the process of history writing.

Nationalism, then, can be summarized as the political expression of a sense of collective identity. A special brand of it developed in the early twentieth century in the more progressively administered European colonies in Asia. Its development is aptly described by Dutch civil servant Jan van Baal in his small but penetrating booklet, *Mensen in Verandering* (Van Baal 1967, pp. 90-99). In such colonies, and he meant the Netherlands Indies, modern rule and economic exploitation demanded the creation of effective administrative structures and the accompanying paraphernalia of education, infrastructural works and means of transport. To man the colonial state, promising young men from the native elites received professional training and were put to work in various parts of the vast colonial domains. In doing so they transgressed the boundaries of their previous native lands and got to know the wider colony as their own country. It also meant partial adaptation to the culture of the European colonists. The latter, however, had difficulty accepting them as equals in the colonial enterprise. This confrontation led to the development of a new sense of identity, leading to the sprouting of nationalist movements everywhere. In Indonesia these found their focal point in the Youth Conference of 1928. Here, the new nation was provided with the symbols of a national oath, a flag, a national anthem and the acceptance of a common language. They were the symbols of the new nation on the road to independence in the second half of the forties.

That nationalism, however, did not spread equally over the whole of the archipelago. Its creation had mainly been the work of the Javanese-Minangkabau elites that had delivered the cadres for the colonial state. The people from the Moluccas had played a rather important role in this process as well. However, many local and ethnic groups only followed at a distance, especially in the eastern part of the archipelago. Of these groups, the Papuans had been left out nearly completely. They lived in some of the least developed areas and had hardly participated in the forming of the colonial state. Until well into the 20th century

the Papuans had no sense of having a common identity of their own. In this region, modern colonial development and the accompanying processes of acculturation had started late, and as a consequence the Papuans had missed the nationalist boat. None of them were present at the 1928 youth conference and everything that went with it. Even so, it is questionable they would have participated anyway, given the cultural distance between them and the rest of Indonesia.

In 1945 as well, when Indonesia's independence was declared, no Papuans were present. That is not to say that they were ignored without a word. Their future was rather extensively discussed in the meeting of the preparatory committee for Indonesian independence on July 11th 1945. Prominent nationalists discussed the territorial extent of their new state. Most prominent among them were Hatta and Yamin. The latter pleaded for the greatest possible territory, including the surrounding British possessions on Malaya and Kalimantan. In his opinion, Papua belonged to the Indonesian lands as well. Although the population differed from that of the rest of Indonesia, the Indonesians had dwelt there since immemorial times, which was sufficient to defend its inclusion in the new state. Moreover, the internment camps in Boven Digul had strengthened these ties in recent times. In this respect Yamin was warmly supported by Sukarno, who added that anybody who cared to cast a glance at the map of the archipelago, could see it lying there. So obviously, it was the will of God that New Guinea be a part of the new Indonesia.

One of the other speakers, the Sumatran economist Mohammad Hatta, took an opposite view and warned his audience against all too imperialistic propositions. Partly he did so for financial and organizational reasons. For the first decades to come, Indonesia would not have the means at its disposal to develop the backward lands of the Papuans. But he had a moral argument too, adding he was not convinced by Yamins arguments in support of uniting the population with the rest of Indonesia. In the end, it was left to the Papuans themselves to decide what kind of state they would prefer. It was an argument in favor of the right of self-determination, but Hatta did not find much support among his audience. When it came to voting, only 6 of the 66 members of the committee opted for his proposal to leave out West New Guinea. They obviously accepted another thesis of Yamin, that if the Papuans were no Indonesians yet, they could be made to become so. Thus, the preferences for a greater Indonesia were laid down for the future.

Conflict with the Netherlands

Another central decision of the preparatory committee for Indonesian Independence was that it laid out its preferences for a unitary state under strong presidential rule. It was to become the core of the ensuing conflict between the Indonesian Republic and the Dutch later in the year. After they had sufficiently made up their mind, the Dutch opted for self-determination and federalism as the central values for the making of a new Indonesia. That option served two ends. The first was to restrict the territorial extent of the Republic, the second to do justice to the wide variety of cultures and different stages of development within the archipelago. It led to the agreements of *Linggajati* and *Renville*, which were difficult to swallow for the Indonesian Republic. It resulted in the *Round Table Conference* of 1949, which created a federal Indonesia in which actual power was in hands of the leaders of the former Republic. However, it enabled the Dutch to reconstruct their economic position and left West New Guinea in their hands for the time being.

That RTC-decision marked the beginning of a 12-year conflict about the future of New Guinea. It stimulated the Dutch to begin a series of programs to accelerate development of the country. These were essentially the same development policies as applied in the Indies before 1942, but this time decidedly more based on the principle of self-determination. Thus they left open the possibility of a Papuan option for Indonesia from the beginning, but *within a changing perspective*. During the first few years, the development of New Guinea was seen as a long-term affair. On a practical level, relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands were still effective. Yet these deteriorated systematically, leading to increased pressure on the remaining Dutch interests in Indonesia. These developments were parallel to a decline of the Indonesian parliamentary system. When in the second half of the fifties all other options for putting pressure on the Dutch were exhausted, Jakarta began to mobilize any means at its disposal to remove the Dutch with force from their remaining position in New Guinea. From 1958 on, President Sukarno and his foreign minister Subandrio saw fit to exploit the Cold War to this end. Both the Soviet Union and the United States were incited to provide them with modern armament. They did so successfully. After a few years, Indonesia was in possession of a military might with the capability to beat the Dutch.

This military development was part of a broader phenomenon. The Cold War accelerated the process of decolonization all over the world. The United Nations played a crucial role in this process. In October 1960, the Soviet Union introduced

the General Assembly to a draft declaration declaring all colonialism an evil that had to be swept from the surface of the earth as soon as possible. It was eventually accepted on 14 December. The quality of the administration and the capacities of a population for self-government were no longer acceptable preconditions for independence. In doing so, the UN not only weakened the position of the Dutch, but that of the other European colonial powers as well.

Meanwhile in New Guinea, the Dutch were countering these developments with a flight forwards. Existing development programs were accelerated. More attention was devoted to the training of Papuan elite. Increasing numbers of Papuans entered the lower and middle ranks of the civil service. Moreover, regional councils were erected, giving the population a direct say in the running of its local affairs. On top of all this, a *New Guinea Council* was created in April 1961, partially chosen and provided with advisory powers on a wide range of topics. It was the beginning of an independent political life of the Papuans, which led to a flowering of political parties. To the Papua elite, it offered many opportunities to take initiatives of their own. Later in the year, they established a National Committee that voted for a national flag, an anthem and some other tokens of nationhood. It was a neat repetition of the *Sumpah Pemuda* of 1928. This time, however, not directed towards the formation of an Indonesian nation, but one of the Papuans themselves.

In its international policies, the Netherlands played the cards of the UN, trying to solicit the organization to take a direct say in the administration of the Papuans. It was an endeavour to surpass Indonesia in the fight against colonialism. Apparently, the Dutch were working for the sake of self-determination for the Papuans, while Indonesia stuck stubbornly to the proposition that they were already theirs. It was Indonesia, and not the Dutch that were the colonialists. That Luns-plan might have been a brilliant idea, but in a world divided in political and cultural blocks, it did not work out well. The Dutch minister failed to collect the votes he needed for the acceptance of his plan, not least by the subterraneous but effective opposition from the United States. The result was an invitation from the Secretary General of the United Nations to the disputants to come together and resume their discussions on the fate of the Papuans, this time under supervision of a third party. In light of the Indonesian preconditions, acceptance could only mean acceptance of the Indonesian claims. Grudgingly the Dutch cabinet agreed. The meeting led to new negotiations. These took place under increasingly grim conditions of threatening war and continuing US pressure. On 15 August 1962,

the New York Agreement was signed which provided for the transfer of the administration to the UN as a step to an Indonesian take-over. The only concession to the Dutch was the option of an Act of Free Choice for the Papuans in 1969 under Indonesian administration. It was close to a failure of Dutch policies for self-determination during the previous 12 years.

For most Papuans as well, it was a bitter pill to swallow. At the time, a new future was starting to appear at the horizon as an independent state of their own, possibly linked together with the rest of the Papuan lands in a Melanesian Union. It led to heated discussions among themselves and with the flabbergasted Dutch. For the Papuans, these discussions took place in a spirit of a fervent new nationalism, and the possibility of declaring independence on their own initiative was seriously discussed . However, it was rejected in the end. Upon insistence of the Dutch, the Papuans accepted the agreement and decided to wait for the 1969s Act of Free Choice.

Two nations together

So far the story of rising Papua nationalism in a nutshell. It offered a striking parallel to earlier developments in the rest of Indonesia. Both stemmed from the first generations of Western trained cadres, and both were modeled along the lines of the modern national state that had developed in Europe in the 19th and early twentieth centuries. However, both nationalisms turned out to be detrimental to each other. Papua antagonism towards its western neighbors had its roots in the past. The wanderings of Yamin's ancestors had mainly consisted of slaving raids on their coasts. It was followed by condescending behaviour from Moluccan officials in service of the Dutch. Nevertheless, for many years the door had not been closed completely. Whatever their shortcomings, many Moluccan gurus and administrators had served them well. The developments in Indonesia after 1945 had been followed with interest, and had not been completely rejected. When the option of separation arose in 1949, some of the Papuans had hesitantly accepted it. After all, Indonesia would become the nearest neighbor, and good relations would be necessary for their own survival. Yet, developments in Indonesia soon widened the gap. The dissolution of the federal states and the war in Ambon had taught them that not much freedom for minorities was to be expected in Indonesia. When Yamin, as a member of a combined Dutch Indonesian fact finding committee, visited New Guinea in the summer of 1950, he had great difficulties in finding traces of sympathy for the Indonesian cause. It deteriorated in the following years. Dutch development policies were warmly

accepted by the Papuans, which widened their distance from Indonesia. So did hesitant cooperation with Australia, with its implicit promise of a future all-Papuan or Melanesian state. Still later, the impending war brought them to think of their Indonesian neighbors as foes. It was accelerated by Indonesian propaganda through radio Makassar and Ambon, threatening Papuans who assisted the Dutch.

Later experience was to confirm this trend. After 1962, right from the beginning the intruding Indonesian soldiers, behaved as hostile occupants. Every Papuan nightmare came true, and years of oppression followed. The Indonesian administration was marked by suspicion towards the Papuan elite, which was subsequently replaced by newcomers. All modern facilities crumbled away and they had to learn to live as third rank citizens in an impoverished and badly managed country. Those who dared to speak up for themselves were beaten, jailed and killed. When Indonesian foreign minister Adam Malik visited the country in 1966, he was shocked by the arrogance among the rulers, and the depression he encountered among the ruled. The Act of Free Choice was duly held, but manipulated by Indonesia from beginning to end. There has been continuing repression and exclusion from the rest of the world ever since.

Blind spots everywhere

The story of Papuan nationalism is a story of blind spots everywhere. They can be detected in the behavior of the Dutch, Indonesians, Americans and other participants in the UN. For any of these, explanations may be found. However, that exceeds the scope of this presentation. So let us concentrate on the blind spots of the main players in the field, that is to say: Indonesia, the Dutch and the Americans, and even those we will touch upon just lightly.

First *Indonesia*. We have to go back to the meetings of the preparatory committee for Indonesian independence of 1945. There, a large majority accepted the inclusion of the Papuans in the new state, without giving much attention to their wishes. For most of its members, it was quite evident that the Papuans would accept this without protest. If not, they could rely on the assurance of Yamin that the Indonesian state would be able to educate them in the spirit of its own nationalism. Thus, its leaders simply acted as if Indonesian nationalism was already an accomplished fact, and refused to accept it when this proved not to be the case. During the big campaigns of the fifties in support of the struggle for West Irian, the people of Java were made to believe that the Papuans were

already full-fledged Indonesian citizens, craving their liberation from Dutch rule. So when its soldiers and administrators entered the country in 1962, it came as something of a shock to them that they were not met with a warm welcome, but with suspicion. The Papuans recognized them as their earlier foes. As we have seen earlier, the new rulers did not much to improve that situation and continued to make it worse in the years after. To the Indonesian mind, Papuan nationalism was not an acceptable proposition. It was negated and repressed, as is done to the present day. If there was ever a blind spot for Papuan nationalism, it was here.

Next, there are *the Dutch*, about whom a word must be said. We have seen that they had pushed the cause of Papuan nationalism to the limits of its capacity. They had done so, not because they deemed the time ripe for it, but for political reasons. It was accepted in Papuan circles, though not without misgivings. The cleverest among them felt it was an initial maneuver by the Dutch in order to sneak out and eventually leave them in the dark with the Indonesians. This suspicion proved justified by the facts. Nevertheless, they played the game as best they could. However, chances for Papuan nationalism were over by the time it was born. In the summer of 1962, Dutch policies took their decisive turn. Since that time, Papuan nationalism did not suit them any longer and it was nearly completely forgotten. All attention went to the renewed friendship with Indonesia, but the Dutch never put pressure on this friend in order to make it keep its promise of fair treatment of the Papuans. During the Act of Free Choice, the Dutch kept quiet. On the road towards it, in May 1969, the Dutch and Indonesian ministers Malik, Luns and Udink met in Rome to pacify any remaining doubts. During that meeting they took note of each other's plans: the Indonesians promising a honest plebiscite, the Dutch direct support for the development of the Papuans through independent channels. They made it public in a solemn statement. However, when it came living up to the agreement, Indonesia backtracked. The plebiscite turned out to be a fake and any direct links with New Guinea through third channels were not acceptable to Indonesia. Any support for New Guinea henceforth went through IGGI and Bappenas, where Papuans had no say. Therefore, in the end they were left empty handed. It was accepted without visible protest. Their fate and ambitions have been a conspicuous blind spot in the Dutch-Indonesian relations ever since.

This was true as well for the United Nations and Australia, the most interested foreign countries. In the United States, policies were guided exclusively by the

demands of their Cold War with the Soviet Union; for Australia the wish to retain a Western power in New Guinea proved the underlying need for working relations with its northern Asian neighbor. The fate of the Papuans, let alone their political aspirations, was hardly a matter of relevance to the leading politicians of these states. If any, manifestations of Papuan nationalism in the early sixties were nearly completely dismissed as a result of rather opportunistic moves on the part of the Dutch. The end of the conflict and the transfer of West New Guinea came as a gift from heaven to most of the Western countries and it enabled them to settle their relations with Indonesia on a more stable foundation.

Finally a word about the academic world, especially in the Netherlands. The end of the conflict with Indonesia created new opportunities. A cultural agreement was reached, which was part of the *Program Indonesian Studies*. The program promoted academic cooperation with Indonesia between 1974 and 1992. But in this case as well, it was quite evident that Indonesia was not willing to accept special Papuan-programs that might have political implications. Therefore, the program remained limited to some anthropologist, linguist and bibliographical projects. This was also true for the Iris projects led by Stokhof since 1992 . As far as I can remember, this restriction was accepted as a matter of fact by all academics involved. We were very happy as well with the new opportunities to cooperate with Indonesian institutes, and it was not hard to accept some limitations. After all, not much was heard about Papuan nationalism at that time.

Outside the sphere of direct cooperation, scholarly work on New Guinea concentrated on internal Dutch and international policies. The conflict with Indonesia about the future of New Guinea was studied as being the result of some deviations in the Dutch psyche, or as the outcome of international machinations. You can tell from the titles, running from Lijpharts *Trauma of Decolonization* to *De Nieuw-Guinea kwestie, aspecten van buitenlands beleid en militaire macht*, written in 1984 by the former Secretary of State for Defence De Geus. There were comparable publications from R. Gase and the journalists Van Esterik and Koster. Here the focus is on the behavior of Joseph Luns and his manipulation of American promises. Other works focus on the personal experiences of the Dutch soldiers and administrators in New Guinea. All of them fine works in their genre, but they remain silent on the fate of the Papuans. The only real exception is the work of former civil servant in New Guinea, Kees Lagerberg, who published *West Irian and Jakarta imperialism* in 1979. The role of Indonesia and the fate of the

Papuans were discussed in a factual and critical way in this book. No wonder the Indonesian government disapproved of the book. Lagerberg was called in at the embassy in The Hague, and was censured sternly for his foolish behavior of seeing things different from Indonesian orthodoxy. He was forbidden to enter the country for years. It certainly was no stimulus for others to tread the same path. And so, in Dutch academic circles, the subject of Papuan development, their ambitions and their nationalism remained a blind spot. With some exceptions, the same was true for the English speaking countries. Notable exceptions here were Nonie Sharp, Robin Osborne and Carmen Budiardjo. In Indonesia itself, John Djopari saw fit to place critical notes in his 1993 OPM study.

The surprise of 1998 and after

Under these conditions, the developments in West New Guinea in 1998 came as a big surprise, for Indonesia as well as the rest of the world. In that year, in the closing days of the Suharto regime, out of the blue the Papuans proclaimed themselves loyal to their earlier nationalism, waving the long forbidden flag and collectively singing their never forgotten anthem. They organized mass meetings and formulated their demands to the Indonesian government. They invoked their national rights, and asked for a reprisal of the sadly mismanaged plebiscite of 1969. They wanted to make history right, as the phrase rang. The result was that Indonesian president Abdurrahman Wahid spent the first day of the new millennium among the Papuans, promising them greater freedom and, if it came to that, even the right to secede from Indonesia. Ever since, the wheel of history has been turned back considerably, but not to the point where it all started. Talks about greater autonomy are going on, but pressure will be necessary to bring the Indonesians to real concessions. However it may be, the issue of Papuan nationalism is back on the agenda, and it deserves the attention of policymakers, historians and social scientists alike.

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Professional Blindness And Missing The Mark ~ The Thirtieth September Movement As Seen By The Perpetrators. Between Registered Facts And Authoritative Opinions – Part One

They had their things pretty well organized, but reckoned too much with their success, their being right, and the cooperation of the President – Major General Ibrahim Adjie, Territorial Commander of West Java (IT65: 248).

The assassination of the generals on the morning of 1 October was not really a coup attempt against the government, but the event has been almost universally described as an "abortive coup," so I have continued to use the term – (Crouch 1978: 101, note 7).

To prevent arbitrary policy measures, the prologue, the event and the epilogue of the G30S should be critically studied – Sukarno in:Perkara Njono: 274

The Thirtieth September Movement of September 30 1965 (G30S), though generally accepted as a conspicuous event in the history of Indonesia, has never been fully understood. The sources are few and most of them are rather unreliable. It is also a complicated history, touching upon the internal rivalries within the Indonesian armed forces, as well as those between the armed forces as a whole and politicians from all imaginable dominations. Moreover, it is situated against a background of internal political competition, economic ruin and, internationally, with the rivalries of the Cold War in full blaze. Until recent times, the latter aspect has also to a large degree influenced the positioning of the Cold War historians. Therefore, though revisited every now and then, the history of this movement still holds many blind spots. It certainly is not my intention to solve these in a few lines. Yet I feel sure that much can be won by carefully rereading some of the sources that have not been fully analyzed yet. These include the notes of the military tribunal that was installed in 1966 and carried out its task under the directions of General Suharto, then on the road towards presidency.
Obviously, there is hardly any reason to take his conclusions for granted. However, new light may be shed by analyzing the inconsistencies between the

analyses by renowned analysts of the G30S on the one hand, and on the other hand the reporting brought forward by accused Lieutenant Colonel Untung bin Sjamsuri and CC PKI Politbiro member Njono bin Sastroredjo in the legal court drama that ended in their execution before the show was even fully over.

The 'communist coup' as it generally became known in the wake of the verdicts uttered by Suharto, became a public affair in the early morning of 1 October 1965, when Lt.-Colonel Untung, member of President Sukarno's palace guard, claimed via radio RRI Jakarta to have saved President Sukarno's life by cleansing the so-called Council of Generals of members that planned a coup for Armed Forces Day on 5 October 1965. Six of the seven targeted generals had been killed right away. In the afternoon of the same day, a final message was broadcast by the ringleaders, informing the public of their plan to constitute a Revolutionary Council that would seize power in order to end the legacy of the generals in governance and prepare for general elections. The contrast between the first message, in which Untung told the people that as member of the palace guard Tjakrabirawa he had rescued the president by capturing the guilty generals, and the second one which sounded like a coup d'état, left the people as well as analysts confused about the movement's goal: Was it aimed at saving the president or removing him from his office and changing the system?

So far the events of the 1st October 1965 in a nutshell. President Sukarno, who according to the plotters had been rescued from impending dangers by the hands of the generals, kept silent on the subject. And in the months after, general Suharto claimed the day's victory, by claiming he had rescued the country from a coup engineered by Untung and his fellow conspirators from the PKI. It was the opening shot against the PKI and all others suspected of having communist sympathies, resulting in mass executions all over Java and Bali. Suharto's coup accusations dominate the analyses of the event up until the present time, but the whole affair started with the coup accusations against the Council of Generals, which had no clear origin.

My main motive for the revisit was to gain insight in what the defendants, the *"losers"* in the confrontation with the Council of Generals, said about their activities and intentions in 1966. Only selective bits and pieces show up in literature, not the whole story. The main question was how to go about it. Finding ignored evidence without a preset mindset is like digging in the dark. I decided to

check whether every bit of evidence I found which did not fit the standard story about the G30S and the coup, had been discussed and listed in the analyses of Harold Crouch (1978) and John Roosa (2006). It is rude way of selection but it worked well, unearthing a lot of evidence with clear explanatory value. I only considered evidence as relevant when unknown events and key persons came together in a timeline and when specific forms of coherence turned out to have explanatory value about the emergence and functioning of the G30S.

Both Untung and Njono recalled their initial coup confession and replaced it with a reconstruction of their own role in the G30S. They recalled their confession because they had signed it under pressure of violence and intimidation. The explanations of the defendants showed among other things that during the preparations for the G30S they cooperated with justice authorities that were loyal to President Sukarno and towards the end with the president himself via their reportage to him on October 1st. Moreover they testified they had got their information about the impending coup by generals from military and intelligence instances. Hence, theirs is a different story than the comforting conspiracy theory put forward by the *"winners"*.

Both defendants did not find a willing ear in court. They were ridiculed, and not taken serious by Western analysts either. The enforced coup testimonies of Untung and Njono get full attention, whereas the recalls are still met with doubt and mistrust. The reigning adagio of the coup believers seems to be "Every criminal denies his crime." In the 1966 political climate, Untung was kicked and beaten during his daily tour to the court and people spit on him, because as the ringleader he was held responsible for the murder of his former field commander, General Yani and members of his staff. The prosecution branded him and the second suspect Njono bin Sastroredjo criminals and "worthless men", a stigma against which both men and their lawyers protested in vain. Such judgments had nothing to do with a judicial trial tasked with finding the truth while refraining from prejudice. Not all the evidence provided by the defendants, and read in court by the prosecution, was registered in the minutes. However we know it was presented because the court administration kept record of it. Generally taken, the secretaries did a good job, providing a good picture of what happened in court and what the defendants and witnesses had to say, and what the courts covered up. This conclusion lead me to closely scrutinize the minutes in order to establish with some certainty that the statements included in texts represent what was

actually said. It not only enabled me to organize the evidence contained in the testimonies according to what the suspects and subjects said, it also allowed me to identify links between them.

In this paper I will give the suspects the benefit of the doubt by letting them speak for themselves. I will add material from contemporary sources that regard the 1965 prologue of the G30S and which during my research appeared significant in finding the ties between the G30S and earlier events as well as key persons involved in them. Although Untung stated that he worked alone, the minutes reveal contacts with the authorities and it appears he received security support from the president's legacy. However mid-August 1965 the movement was hacked by PKI leader Aidit, one of the president's most loyal followers, for the benefit of the Revolution and in order to liberate the revolution from the long standing process of militarization and Westernization of governance and military. The hacked operation became the G30S, a name which first popped up in Untung's description of the task given by Aidit to his assistants Sjam and Pono which was to make sure the G30S would take place (Perkara Untung: 35). It indicates Aidit had already taken the initiative. The G30S became the crossroads of several intelligence lines monitoring and mentoring the team formed by Lieutenant Colonel Untung bin Sjamsuri. Four intelligence lines dominated the security check under which the G30S operated: the Subandrio line, the Aidit line, the Omar Dani line and the Kostrad line. The first three key persons involved did everything to prevent the risk of an army coup as part of the suspected large scale Western subversion. The Kostrad line spied on the other three and lured on the opportunity to disturb the counter strike and strike back. All these complications meant that "the military" was under constant guidance and surveillance from the outside. It caused mistrust, tension and division of opinion among the team members, preventing them from acting as one team with a straight line of action and from forming a generally accepted central command. It was the main cause of the failure of the G30S. Suharto used the military for his own interest. He exploited General Nasutions 1 October escape and the communist involvement in the murder of the generals. He attacked the G30S with a coup accusation and subsequently wiped out the traces of his own involvement by eliminating witnesses. At the end of this chapter I will discuss the prologue of the G30S and why PKI leader Aidit suspected the army leadership was planning a coup and left the president uninformed about his plan of action.

The main primary sources I used for this revisit are the publications of the *Proceedings* of the Untung and Njono trials published by the Military Academy of Law -Akademi Hukum Militer (AHM)- in 1966, *The Antara Yearbook of 1965*, Volume I published in 1966; Ibnusubroto's *Fakta2 Persoalan Sekitar Gerakan 30 September*, Pusat Penerangan Angkatan Darat, Djakarta 1965, and the illuminating chapter about the G30S in Subandrio's *Memoirs*. In the appendix a copy of a *CIA Memorandum of December 1965* is presented supporting the data and evidence provided by several Indonesian and American military commanders, as well as by Subandrio himself and PKI member NJONO, about the key role of Minister Subandrio's Intelligence Service in the G30S

What the reader should know about Untung

According to Lieutenant Colonel Untung''s CV as presented by the Army Information Service, he was born on 3 July 1926 in Desa Sruni/Kedungbayul, Kebumen Central Java. At the time of the G30S, he was 40 years old and a Buddhist. He finished primary school and the Retail Trade School (Klein-Handel School) in Solo, Central Java. During the Japanese occupation he entered the Heiho in Salatiga and made it to Soldier First Class. During the Independence War Untung operated on the side of the Laskar Army (village-based troops) that opposed the Hatta government's demobilization and reorganization (ReRa) plans in 1948. According to a still living former member of Tjakrabirawa Suhardi, who has known Untung from infancy, in 1948 Untung belonged to the Sudigdo battalion which according to Military Governor Gatot Subroto had been infiltrated by communists. Gatot ordered Lieutenant Colonel Slamet Rijadi to cleanse the unit, after which Untung fled and joined the Madiun event (J. Pour). This information suggests Untung was a communist infiltrator and picked the so-called communist side of the Madiun coup. The official Army Information Service CV does not mention this move. It only says that Untung fled after the cleanse of his unit. However, during the Second Dutch Military Action in December 1948 Untung joined the republican forces and fought against the Dutch. His opposition against the ReRa and other Renville issues, did not seriously harm his career. He climbed the military ladder to become one of the most decorated Banteng Raider commanders in Indonesia. It appears Untung was not so much an intellectual but loved the daily practice of operational command. According to Suhardi, Untung's original name was Kusman, which he changed to Untung after the Madiun event. It might indicate that he was starting a new life and was happy to have escaped prosecution, like many of the original protesters who chose Sukarno's side after

the start of the 2nd Dutch Police Action. Untung denied to have ever worked with communists or even befriending them in court (Perkara Untung: 37-38).

Banteng Raider was the nick name of three Special Forces units – the West Java Based 328, the Central Java based 454 and the East Java based 530 Para Battalion – all created by late Lieutenant General Ahmad Yani. Yani studied at the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth in Kansas, USA, in 1955 (Wikepedia.id). In 1954 Untung took the Special Course SUS-A in Bandung. In 1958, he operated with Company II of the Banteng Raider II Battalion under Yani's command against units of the PRRI/Permesta separatist movement. In 1963, he participated in three Banteng Raider II companies in operations in the Irian theatre, again under Yani's command, and returned to Java that same year. As his subordinate, Untung's military career largely coincided with Yani's. Untung continued to move up in the military ranks and on January 1 1965 he was appointed Commander of Battalion with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He took his Banteng Raider II battalion from Central Java to Tjakrabirawa (Conboy, K: 131). The president himself had a role in this appointment. As Dale Scott commented, the new post included stiff scrutiny of his political past, which he effortless passed. It is clear that the 454th was definitely not a communist unit. Being General Yani's personal creation and due to his long standing close relation with America, the 454 was one of the main recipients of American military support (Scott 1985).

Untung's daily task was to serve and protect the president in the palace, as well as during press conferences, meetings, and ceremonies. As such, he practically functioned as his bodyguard. The armed Siliwangi unit Berlapis Baja, a part of the Tjakrabirawa regiment, served as protection when the President was on the move. In view of the assaults on the president's life that had happened since 1959 and the growing social unrest about increasing inflation and food and cloth shortages, the safety net around the president had been tightened and upgraded, and Untung had a central role in it. During Untung's installation as Tjakrabirawa Battalion Commander, Sukarno highlighted Untung's special responsibility in this respect: "Do your duty without counting the consequences", which he did; he paid for it with his life (Perkara Untung: 238). During his trial, Untung explained he had worked alone during and after his search for information about the Council of Generals and had no contact with his regiment commander or any other commander (Perkara Untung: 36-37). This leaves open the possibility that he

worked for an external agency or agencies. Air Force Major Sujono told the court that Untung had informed his team that the protection of the president and ministers during a visit to Halim on 1 October was a task of Tjakrabirawa (Perkara Untung: 93). As for the abduction of three of the ringleaders of the Council of Generals, namely Yani, S. Parman and Nasution, it was Untung's Tjakrabirawa Battalion I that brought the men in.

During the period between 4 August 1965, when alarm about the president's health and safety emerged, and 1 October 1965 when the action against the Council of Generals known as the military Thirtieth September Movement (G30S) started, Untung worked on the matter of the Council of Generals. During that time Untung formed a command team consisting of himself, Colonel Abdul Latief – commander of the 1st Infantry Brigade of the Jakarta Garrison, and Air Force Base Major Sujono, Commander of the PGT Strike Force of Halim airport. Two informants from the Garrison Intelligence Staff completed the team: Kamarusaman, alias Sjam, and S. Pono. Whereas the military was investigating the intentions and activities of the suspected generals as well as preparing a strike against them, the two communists had a different interest. They had an order from PKI leader Aidit to attend those meetings where the planning of the Gerakan 30 September would take place. The PKI would provide support for mass organizations. Support from other Nasakom denominations was being worked on under responsibility of Sjam and Major Sujono. On September 30th Sjam proposed calling the movement the Thirtieth September Movement (G30S) (Perkara Untung: 35, 38-9, 55). It is interesting that the name of the movement was invalided in the operational order, which suggests PKI leader Aidit already knew that a G30S would take place mid-August 1965.

Untung was not happy with the extension but could not get rid of the two. They were sent by PKI leader Aidit and fell under his authority. In practice Aidit hacked Untung's effort to build a political movement. This fact might explain why Untung is seen to have no jurisdiction regarding the political side of his operation, even when he was appointed commander of the G30S by Latief and Sjam. But Sjam and Pono were also informers of the intelligence service of Colonel Latief 1st Infantry Brigade, which made Latief their intelligence boss. As such, Sjam and S. Pono had a double role in the operation. Although Latief and Sjam operated together, Untung gave no indication Sjam and Pono were under Latief's command. Latief and Sjam only took command of the arrest action in the last three days, when

Untung accompanied the president on his public duties in Jakarta. Both team members changed the purpose of the arrests and turned it into a definitive removal of the top of the Council of Generals by killing them. Untung had been intent on surrendering the generals to the president for interrogation, but did or could not protest (Perkara Untung: 111-2). Sjam, and with Aidit in the background, made the decisions, indicating Aidit knew about the planned killings.

General Supardjo, an applauded general of the West Java based Siliwangi Division and a close friend of the president, was head of Untung's delegation to the president on 1 October. He was not a member of the command team since he had an operational command in Kalimantan. Administratively he belonged to the KOSTRAD command of General Suharto. That command managed the transport of troops between the regions and also had three Banteng Raider battalions at its disposal plus a cavalry and a few infantry units, among them Siliwangi units (Conboy: 132, 134). Summarizing, the permanent military members of the team represented the three cornerstones of the presidential security scene, whereas Supardjo represented Suharto and his West Java based Siliwangi Division, and was a trustee of the president. He was in charge of the delegation because he claimed to be a member of the Council of Generals and claimed to have knowledge and evidence of their coup plan. His antecedents had been checked and approved by Untung's mentor Minister of Foreign Affairs and Intelligence.
Untung was in charge of managing and arranging the troops and the territorial aspects of the action in Jakarta. His team member Colonel Latief managed the troops and territorial matters in Jakarta. Air Force Major Sujono managed the logistics of the operation from and to the base camp at Lubang Buaja (Crocodile Hole).
Pasopati had the task of arresting the generals belonging to the Council of Generals. His unit consisted of one company taken from Untung's own Tjakrabirawa battalion, a platoon from the 1st Infantry Brigade of Colonel Latief, and units from the 454 and 530 battalions. Then there was the Pringgodani unit that according to its name was the place where the generals were to reflect on their sins. It had the task of managing and defending the base camp and receiving the abducted generals. According to its commander Air Force Major Gatot Soekresno, Colonel Latief's standpoint was to kill them, preferably not during the arrest but somewhere else, and leave no traces. In other words "no traces, no crime." And finally there was the Bimasakti unit named after the mighty God Bima, occupying the sectors and the vital objects in and around the palace area in

Jakarta, and managing the broadcasts ordered by Untung on 1 October. When necessary, it also supported the Pasopati unit (Perkara Untung: 39, 72). The best documented and analyzed activities of the Bimasakti unit were the Untung ordered radio messages broadcast on 1 October via radio RRI Jakarta about the arrests and the foundation of the G30S and the plan for a Revolutionary Council.

Untung's first task as team leader was to find information about the suspected Council of Generals and report it to the proper authorities, i.e. the Ministries of Justice and Prosecution, and Minister Subandrio of Foreign Affairs and his BPI Intelligence Board. Unlike what he said in court, this indicates Untung did not operate alone. It is custom in security operations that in case of failure no reference is made to the agency that ordered the action. Untung did not report to the president directly since he feared that the president would stop him. Untung admitted he had no facts or proof of the existence of the Council of Generals, only hearsay (Perkara Untung: 36). In his last public interrogation he forwarded a witness who testified about hard copy evidence that had been given to Untung by four civilians. The man had been Untung's informer in General Nasution's office. The evidence was a tape recording of the founding meeting of the Council of Generals on 21 September. From Subandrio's Testimony it appears that Untung sent the providers of the evidence to Subandrio, who brought the tape to the president and listened to it with him. Consequently, the president invited army chief General Yani for a meeting on 1 October and Yani's intelligence assistant General S. Parman on 3 October. The meetings did not take place because both generals were murdered on 1 October. Subandrio had his doubts about the tape since it seemed odd to him that civilians leaked a highly classified piece of evidence to outsiders (Subandrio: 11).

The evidence problem was solved in September, when General Supardjo, a member of the West Java based Siliwangi Division, told Untung about his membership of the Council of Generals and his knowledge of, and documentation about, the coup plan. Untung in turn asked Supardjo to report his story to the president as soon as the latter was informed of the arrest action. Supardjo agreed and he met with the president on 1 October at Halim, accompanied by Lieutenant Colonel Heru Atmodjo, representative of Air Force Marshall Omar Dani. Dani appeared to be a close friend of Untung, to whom he complained about the dominant communist stock of the civilians trained by Air Force Major Sujono to defend Halim military airport. Shortly afterwards the training was taken from

Sujono and transferred to Latief's Intelligence commander Captain Suradi. However Sujono contacted Njono bin Sastroredjo via Sukatno, head of the Pemuda Rakyat, to see to it that already trained local communist organizations would participate in guarding Jakarta center against assaults. Untung was not informed of this change, but Sjam was.

The reports to Subandrio could have resulted in the action being stopped but it did not. It is conceivable that the addressees did not take the bait because of the lack of solid evidence in Untung's reconnaissance. It caused Untung's effort to trigger early disciplinary measures against the generals to fail. He certainly was not in favor of killing the generals. He wanted a proper processing of the generals by the president himself. Killing the Generals was Colonel Latief's idea, who managed to see it through, together with team member Sjam, in Untung's absence on 29 and 30 September (Perkara Untung:72).

From Subandrio we know that Untung also contacted General Suharto, probably to get his cooperation for the requisition of troop support. Traces of that contact also appear in Untung's testimony when he talks about his visit to Semarang to arrange the support of his 454 Banteng Raiders battalion from Central Java and the 530 Banteng Raiders battalion from East Java for his action against the Council of Generals on 1 October. Both battalions belonged to the Para Brigade 3 that fell under Kostrad administration. The fact that 454 fell under Suharto's administration, indicates that Untung's Honorary Guard battalion in Tjakrabirawa, which in practice belonged to the 454 battalion, also fell under Suharto's administration. The trail to Suharto is supported by the story of witness 1st Lieutenant Ngadimo of the 530 Banteng Raiders battalion, that on 20 September 1965 and in the following days a series of radiograms arrived at the office of the military governor of East Java with the order to prepare 530 for a visit to Jakarta for the celebration of the Armed Forces Day on 5 October. One of these radiograms included an explanation plus instructions. Untung admitted that he gave instructions to Major Sukirno, commander of 454, who forwarded them to the 530 Battalion and finally to Kostrad which reported back to the battalions belonging to Para Brigade 3 (Perkara Untung: 45, 127). The previously mentioned Tjakrabirawa member Suhardi stated in his testimony to J. Pour that Kostrad Command had been ordered by the army to prepare Brigade 3 for participation in the Armed Forces Day celebrations on 5 October 1965. In Latief's Plea, presented during the much later organized Latief trial, he also mentions a visit to General

Suharto a few days before 1 October and on the evening before, a statement to which Suharto replied in an interview. But both testimonies remain vague as to the meetings' content and subject. According to Subandrio, Untung and Latief were informers and representatives of Suharto. We may presume that Untung's team was a crossroad of external intelligence contacts and agencies that covered Subandrio, Aidit and Suharto, with the president as the final beneficiary of the abduction of the generals and the G30S, and thus last in the report chain.

Based on the complaints forwarded by the Dutch educated lawyers of Untung and Njono, the following special features of the military penal courts judging the coup accusations against Untung and Njono are to be mentioned (Perkara Njono: 263). The prosecutors and courts founded their operation on the Dutch penal code and on the revolutionary law created for the occasion. The court martial administration of justice was not intended to contribute to Indonesian law. Other than prescribed by the Dutch penal code the trials were treated as incidents with no precedence value for similar trials, and to be completely forgotten after their closure. There was a right of pardon but no right of appeal. The PKI was treated as a criminal organization, a description that did not exist in the colonial penal law. It declared PKI member Njono a member of a criminal organization who shared his responsibility for his actions with the PKI. Ms. Sunito, Njono's lawyer called this an illegal and primitive way of prosecution that had no place in a proper court martial administration (Perkara Njono: 261, 263). However, the prosecution submitted that the trials were not proper court martial trials but followed a mixture of written and unwritten law, in particular revolutionary law created for the opportunity.

Untung was officially accused of (A1) leading and initiating an action to overthrow the legitimate government on 1 October 1965 (1a) because he ordered the broadcast of a radio message via Radio Republik Indonesia Jakarta about his capture of the generals thereby saving the president, and (1b) signing a Decree No. 1 as Commander of the Thirtieth September Movement (G30S) together with ex Brigadier General Supardjo and ex Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Heru Atmodjo, and sending it to RRI Jakarta to be broadcast to the people. The decree spoke of overthrowing the official government through a seize power by the Revolutionary Council, and the preparation of a new government by organizing general elections. Since it did not mention the president, the decree was viewed as staging a coup. (2) Leading and organizing an armed revolt against the

government, and (3) conspiring against the state to overthrow the official government during August and September 1965, which ended on 29 September 1965 (Perkara Untung: 3-17). The murders, the planning and the gathering of troops for the murders i.e. the mutiny part, were dealt with in part B, which part I will not discuss. The citation Decree No. 1 included in the indictment was actually false. Instead the decree stated that a cleansing operation had taken place against members of the Council of Generals which had planned a coup on Armed Forces Day, 5 October 1965 (Perkara Untung: 4). There was no reference at all to a coup d'état. Every measure mentioned in the decree, including the seize power of a Revolutionary Council, concerns the task of cleaning up the legacy of the Council of Generals in the cabinet and the regions. The accusation is only correct when the army generals involved in the Council of Generals are viewed as representing the state. However, that is not stated in the decree, nor in the indictment.

In court, Untung rejected the coup confession he made during the police interrogation that was at the basis of the indictment against him . He rejected the indictment as "not to the point, i.e. burdening his behavior with things he did not do and did not intend." Untung's court martial trial started on 12 February 1966 and ended on 7 March 1966 in the death sentence (Perkara Untung: 22, 31-32, 317). Untung admitted in court that his operation was indeed illegal, but that the purpose of the operation – safeguarding the president's life – gave him the right to act as he did (Perkara Untung: 59). This statement presents the key concept of both the abduction operation and the G30S: the primacy of the Greater Purpose. It also explains why Untung and Sjam stuck to the same concept and kept the president uninformed, uninvolved and not-committed, and, after the reportage on 1 October, ignored his stop orders regarding Sjam's G30S. It is the behavior of paladins refusing to burden their king with the dirty jobs that need to be done for his safety. It is exactly this behavior that Suharto sold to the public as coup behavior.

Untung's death sentence included the offer of a request for pardon from the president. Untung asked time to reflect on the opportunity but in the end decided to reject it. His lawyer however still sent a request for pardon to the president, which was rejected by the head of the Special Military Penal Court, who confirmed the conclusions of the penal court. In his turn, Untung formulated, in the name of all his fellow defendants, a request to the president to appoint an investigation committee to research the G30S and its activities and find a political

solution for it. That request was rejected by the Prosecutor General on 5 April 1966, because Untung had deliberately undertaken action violating the Pantjasila and was anti-Nasakom, and thus would remain a threat to the unity of the Indonesian people; the accused, as mid-level officer and despite his military oath, had committed activities that were counter revolutionary and thus would remain an element of violence, and had pushed for, managed and planned activities threatening the power of the legal state and the ideals of the Indonesian Socialism (Perkara Untung: 352, 354-6, 357, 358-9, 365). Hence, Untung was a danger to the state, the people and the revolution, and did not deserve any easing of his penalty. In both cases the requests had not reached the president but had been handled by the Jakarta court itself. These and most other facts mentioned in this paragraph are not mentioned in Crouch and Roosa.

What the reader should know about Njono

The second suspect on trial in 1966 was Njono bin Sastroredjo, accused of being the leader of the G30S and the presumed PKI-coup behind it. He was born on 28 August 1925 in Cilacap, on the south coast of Central Java. In 1965, he was a member of the Cooperative Parliament (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Gotong Rojong, DPR) for the PKI and member of the Provisional People's Congress (Majelis Permusjawaratan Rakyat Sementara, MPRS). He was also Great Leader of the National Front (Front Nasional) and member of the National Production Council, as well as permanent member of the CC PKI Politbiro, and First Secretary of the Regional Committee in Jakarta of the communist party PKI. Either way, he was a PKI ace. He was not a part of Untung's command team, did not even know Untung and worked alone. As I mentioned before, this part of his confession may have been intended to cover up his relations with the PKI party. Instead, at the request of Sukatno, Chair of the Pemuda Rakyat office of Jakarta, he agreed to help Air Force Major Sujono by delivering civil auxiliary manpower to guard Halim military airport. On 1 October they were also employed to do guarding work for the G30S in Jakarta (Perkara Njono 1966: 16, 18). Njono's indictment did not refer to the participation of women's union Gerwani in the killings of the generals, as fed to the press by Suharto and his Kostrad staff. It appears that Njono's involvement in the G30S ran via the communist mass organizations which were autonomous.

The Prosecutor General of the penal trials against G30S leaders, General Suharto, accused Njono of (1) planning a coup with PKI chair Aidit and eight members of

the CC PKI, including candidate member of the CC PKI Politbiro Peris Pardede, (2) organizing a military operation and forming a Revolutionary Council to replace the Dwikora cabinet, and (3) being tasked with forming an auxiliary force for the military operation of the G30S. The CC members accused of being involved in the G30S besides chair D.N. Aidit were M.H. Lukman, Njoto, Sudisman, Ir. Sakirman, Anwar Sanusi, Rewang, and Suwandi. Njono's trial took place from 14 February 1966 up to 21 February 1966. Njono's indictment also shows he was accused of the same acts of which Kamarusaman alias Sjam was accused at his trial in 1968, i.e. being the executive leader of the G30S and acting as the representative of PKI chair Aidit. Possibly the Sjam trial was made necessary when the initial statements made by Untung, Njono and Peris Pardede during their police interrogation were recalled and did not provide a solid watertight case against the PKI. Njono's death sentence refused him the right of pardon and was signed on 1 March 1966 (Perkara Njono: 19-24, 31, 261-263 and 336). Shortly after he was executed.

At the start of his trial, Njono decided to recall his initial confession about a PKI coup; he did that for two reasons. The first one was that he had surrendered to pressure and beatings during his initial interrogations. The second reason was that after reading the newspapers in prison, he concluded that the PKI had become the victim of anti-communist propaganda (Perkara Njono: 31, 59). His initial testimony said that in August 1965 he and some key members of the CC PKI Politbiro had decided to plan a coup and organize the G30S. He replaced this confession with a thorough reconstruction of the decision-making process in the CC PKI Politbiro that led to the Politbiro's final decision to abstain from supporting Untung's action, inform the president about the danger of Council of Generals and ask him to handle the affair as an internal military affair, and to do it fast. The Biro would await the president's measures to prevent or fight the coup plan (*pentjegahan*), before deciding on further action. There was no reference to the action of "the military" in the letter. The letter was written and signed on 28 August 1965 and dispatched to the president that same day. On 1 October 1965 the Politbiro had still not received an answer and it was fed up (Perkara Njono: 37, 50, 65, 73-74). John Roosa rejected Njono's reconstruction as nonsense and not worth reading. He gave no reason for his rejection, but one explanation might be that members of the CC PKI Politbiro were also members of the Central Committee of the party, and many of the survivors, if not all of them, had no idea about the G30S, let alone the Politbiro meetings. Hence Njono's reconstruction of

the Politbiro discussions about support of the "military" looks suspicious and thus should be ignored.

However, I decided to summarize Njono's testimony. First of all the court interrogated him repeatedly in two marathon meetings about the decision making process in order to catch him on mistakes. But he remained upright and made no mistakes. Second, as will become clear, his testimony explains a lot about the prologue of the G30S that otherwise would be unexplainable. Third, there is no contradiction between Njono's reconstruction and the fact that Central Committee members did not know about the Politbiro meetings in August 1965. It all depends on the setup of the meetings and the status of the members. If Aidit decided to keep the group small, the meetings confidential and only invited experts from outside the PKI administration, the ignorance of many Politbiro members is understandable. Moreover, it might have been Njono's aim not to name persons, status or numbers of the participants but only use the administrative title under which the meetings took place. One of the Central Committee members and candidate member of the CC PKI Politbiro, Peris Pardede, originally gave a full coup confession and was made crown witness for the prosecution in Njono's trial. However during his witness statement, he recalled his initial confession and publicly confirmed Njono's testimony. Pardede's recall is absent from the analyses of Crouch and Roosa. From Crouch's analysis it appears that CC PKI member Sudisman also did not know of Pardede's recall or kept quiet about it, since he endorsed Pardede's initial confession about the PKI "decision" to support a pre-emptive strike by the "progressive military" during his trial (Crouch 1978: 104, 111). Apparently, Sudisman only knew about the first CC PKI meeting, as will become clear from my paragraph about the three meetings that took place.

Njono's use of the term "*pentjegahan*" in the letter from the Politbiro to the president to qualify the expected response is fascinating. It implied that in case of the expected reply from the president, any action by the military would be cancelled. Yet from Untung's minutes it appears that Sjam used the month of September to prepare for exactly what the letter to the president was meant to prevent – active support for a pre-emptive military strike against the Council of Generals. Since Sjam was apparently in constant contact with Aidit about the preparations and their implementation, it appears that Aidit was betting on two horses. Aidit was at Halim on Action Day 1 October when Untung's team

conferred there about the course of the G30S, the president's orders, and the broadcast of the final text of Decree No. 1, and must have had contact with Sjam about these subjects. The Decree instructed the regional contacts to create regional branches of the Revolutionary Council. This was thought to be essential in preventing the army from implementing April 1965's Tri Ubaja Sakti doctrine. I will come back to this issue in later paragraphs.

In Untung's testimony about the Decree, and in that of witness Ngadimo, the Indonesian word *pembersihan* (clean up) dominates, referring to the removal of sitting governors and commanders and replacing them with trusted and most likely Nasakom oriented ones, or for that matter by communist ones. Hence, with the Politbiro letter to the president, Aidit did indeed bet on two horses – namely, the president either stopping Untung's action, and in case that failed, executing the plans of the military. It appeared to be a sloppy way of fooling around with tactics and it was easily crushed by Suharto. Aidit was not a combat ready man and was perhaps overwhelmed under Sjam's pressure to go ahead and broadcast the decree text in order to mobilize supporters of the G30S. Suharto used the decree to suggest that the term "*pembersihan*" translated to killing opponents in the regions, similar to the Madiun coup story that was told about what happened in Madiun and other regions in 1948.

Crouch appears to be aware of the fact that Njono recalled his initial testimony and forwarded a reconstruction of the final decision by the Politbiro to abstain from supporting Untung's action. However Crouch also refers to the testimony of Peris Pardede which confirmed Aidit's preference for supporting the "progressive officers", indicating he did not read Pardede's recall. Njono's recall also requires special attention because it provides information about the sources from which Aidit and Njono derived their information about the Council of Generals and Untung's action. Their sources were Brigadier General Sutarto, head of Subandrio's BPI Intelligence Bureau and Minister of Prosecution General, as well as Minister of Justice Astrawinata. The information in this paragraph is absent from the analysis by Roosa who rejected Njono's scenario and minutes as total nonsense and advised against reading them. Moreover, this information was also not mentioned by Crouch, since he did not list Aidit and Njono's sources.

How and why Njono entered the G30S
According to Njono, the actual cause of his involvement in the G30S was a request from Untung's team member Air Force Major Sujono in early September

1965. Sujono requested the sending of more members of communist mass organizations to Lubang Buaja (Crocodile Hole). Sujono trained civilians for guarding tasks at Halim airport at Lubang Buaja, located outside Halim airport. The reason for these trainings was President Sukarno's preparation for an all-out assault on the recently installed federal state of Malaysia which bordered Indonesia's north coast. PKI leader Aidit viewed Malaysia as a British "puppet" state and a steady threat of British subversion. Many troops had been evacuated to Sumatra and Kalimantan, among them elite troops. As a consequence, Java had a shortage of strong combat ready troops, and Halim airport lacked guarding units. Starting July 5th 1965, Sujono had developed a training program for civilian guards, mostly from communist stock. He had been training members of the Pemuda Rakyat, Gerwani, BTI and Sobsi, but also from other non-communist mass organizations, and needed new trainees. Gerwani trainees are not mentioned anywhere (Perkara Njono: 82, 92). Sujono had always approached Sukatno directly before September. Njono admitted that before September 1965 he knew about Sujono's trainings at Lubang Buaja, because Sukatno informed him about the trainees there. The question why Sukatno suddenly asked Njono's help in supplying Sujono with more communist trainees was not discussed in court, and Njono did not touch upon the matter either. He only told the court that he had asked Sukatno if Sujono belonged to the group of military that was preparing an action against the Council of Generals. Because Sukatno's answer was affirmative, Njono agreed (Njono: 80). This information indicates Sukatno's visit concerned the use of communist trainees for the G30S action. Njono was not in contact with the military before, and did not know anyone personally. He received information about them and the Council of Generals from the head of Subandrio's BPI staff, Brigade General Sutarto, who also held the position of Minister Prosecutor General.

The witness statement made by Achmad Muhammad bin Jacub, who on 2 September 1965 was ordered by Muladi head of Njono's Sector Organization to join the training of voluntaries at Lubang Buaja, is interesting. On 29 September the sector commanders were called together to be informed about the coup to be launched by the Council of Generals on 5 October, which would include the murder of President Sukarno. The president had to be rescued from this danger. To that aim, the Lubang Buaja trainees were to gather early in the morning of 1 October. Military guides would be present and weapons would be forwarded by the Air Force (Perkara Njono: 158-160). Apparently the trainees were gathered

under a guise and could not escape once they were charged with the rescue task.

Njono decided to join hands with “the military” based on Sukatno’s request to take care of the civil trainees delivered by Major Sujono. He belonged to the group in the Politbiro that supported Aidit’s idea of helping Untung’s action, and disagreed with the final decision of cutting off relations with “the military” and asking the president to handle the danger of the Council of Generals himself and as an intra-military affair. He set up a network of control posts in Jakarta to make sure the guardians would not be used for the wrong things. Sudisman, member of the CC PKI, had kindly warned Njono to be careful with his control posts but he had not forbidden it (Perkara Njono: 65).

The context and prologue of the G30S

There are several lines of development leading up to the events surrounding the G30S. The most important lines regard the economic, political and military problems that haunted Indonesia at the time, plus the handling of those problems by key people in president Sukarno’s entourage in order to ensure his legacy. The G30S became the spearhead of these actions as well as the crossroads of intelligence services monitoring, consulting and supporting the team that built the G30S movement. It resulted in a command team that was split up in factions and suffered from mutual mistrust, obstruction and contradictory greater interests.

In 1965, the Sukarno government faced enormous economic, political and military problems. The early 1965 Surabaya mutiny managed by the Movement of Progressive Revolutionary Officers had shown personnel of the Surabaya navy base in action. After a long march to Jakarta and fruitless discussions with the president about the problems they had with navy commander in chief Admiral Martadinata, they planned to kidnap said commander and bring him to the president for interrogation. However, this plan failed to materialize. Although some of the leaders had communist sympathies, most of the participants were more worried about the state of the fleet since it was neglected by Martadinata (Crouch 1978: 85; Ichtisar Tahunan 1965 I: 29). The kidnap plan may have been a model for Untung’s action and it must have been discussed in Untung’s team, but the court did not ask Untung about it. Synchronous to Untung’s preparations for action, plans for a mutiny arose in the Brawidjaja Division in East Java. On 1 October an action similar to the one in Jakarta and bearing the same name took place in Central Java. The leader of the Java movement, Colonel Saherman, had

recently returned from training at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas USA, and in Okinawa, Japan, meaning he had no problems passing American and Japanese scrutiny (Crouch: 85; Dale Scott 1985). When asked if Untung had a hand in the Central Java based action, Colonel Saherman denied it (Perkara Untung: 51).

The socio-economic context of the prologue was one of raging inflation and stagnating urban salaries, worsened by cloth and food shortages and armed civilian and military rampage. On 25 August 1965 August President Sukarno published his Decision No. 20 which put imprisonment as well as the death penalty on military operating in groups or alone captured in the act of armed rampaging (Ichtisar Tahunan 1965 I: 140). However, the number of critics of Sukarno's economic policies grew by the day. The indictment against Untung as well as the evidence he presented during his second meeting show that initially economic problems were the main discussion point between Untung and his team members. Untung and Sujono testified that the whole team, including the two communist members Sjam and Pono, was critical of the economic situation and the lack of empathy for the suffering of the soldiers from the army administrators in Jakarta. When Untung was asked to explain the arguments, he had to be interrupted because the exchange of arguments with the court got out of hand. Air Force Major Sujono testified that instances of armed conflicts between and within the armed forces, in particular army and air force, had been discussed as well. However, soon after starting these meetings the team became fully involved in the security issue at stake, namely how to protect the president from a coup planned by the Council of Generals, and how to make enough reliable troops available (Perkara Untung: 11, 50, 106).

A second point of concern for the team was the fear of American and British subversion and attacks on the president's life. The social unrest and rumors about the president's ill health that rose early in August 1965 might induce these countries to prepare a strike and urge Indonesian army friends to take their chance and remove the president from his office. The fear among the president's trustees of such a coup could be seen in the setup of an anti-subversion campaign resulting in an Anti-Subversion Command Center in March 1965, and two Subversion Alarms. One alarm had been raised by President Sukarno at the end of May 1965. In his annual address to regional commanders he called on them to support the hunt on Western subversion in their jurisdiction. A second one was raised by Minister Subandrio early in June 1965. He warned the public and the

parties to be aware of Western subversion events in the coming months (Ichtisar Tahunan 1965 Volume 1: 81, 86-7).
The subversion alarms revived the traumatic experiences of 1957 when the start of the first great reform of governance (Law No. 1 1957) had caused the rebellion of military commanders on Sumatra and Sulawesi against this law which benefited the overpopulated island Java as well as the PKI. The American CIA had supported the rebels with money and arms and military actions. Such trauma should not happen again and disturb the implementation of the basic decentralization law No. 18 planned for 1965. General Yani promised Sukarno he would endorse his call on the regional commanders for support.
A suspicious document raised the fear of Western subversion even further. It was a "copy" of a letter that the former British Ambassador in Jakarta had written to his Foreign Office about Western plans for Subversion in Indonesia. One of the plans even mentioned subversion supported by Indonesian army circles. Subandrio made sure the president read the letter, who reacted furiously and used it to stir up the regional commanders and make them aware of the subversion risk during his address.

Yet another process put the relations between the president and army leadership under stress. The unification and centralization of the polity and military and the democratic system was announced in the Bogor Declaration of December 1964. That document had been signed by ten trusted Nasakom parties and regarded the mobilization of the regions for executing government tasks, called decentralization.

Aidit forwarded two options: Either put Nasakom commanders and officers in command, or add Nasakom advisors and consultants to army commands. According to Aidit, this would unite the armed forces and the people as had once been the case during the Independence War. However, General Yani informed the president that these ideas would not work because it burdened the appointees with the problem of creating a balanced Nasakom team, which was not in the interest of bringing together a good command team. The president accepted this standpoint and said so during the yearly briefing of the regional commanders on 27 and 28 April (Crouch 1978: 88-9). Deep in Yani's heart his real objection was that Aidit's plan would re-create the situation of the first two years of the revolution, when army units had direct contact with political parties and vice versa. This had created the unrest which reached a climax in the Madiun seize

power.

Army leadership also objected PKI dreams which included the formation of a true People's Army, in order to form a Fifth Force under direct presidential command. Yani rejected these notions because he had his own ideas about returning to the principles of guerrilla warfare as developed during the Independence War. In the end, Yani reduced Nasakom to a concept to be included in the military's academic curriculum and military practice, as one of the principles that should inspire all branches of the armed forces. However, the Antara clippings about 1965 clearly show that from the beginning of 1965 the so-called Nasakomization of the government bureaucracy and of the political parties and movements was well underway. The Nasakom idea could also be seen in the G30S with the military gathering troops for the abduction of the suspected Council of Generals; and the two communist team members ordered by Aidit to advise and consult the military in organizing Nasakom mass support and push the setup of the G30S and the Revolutionary Council. Untung's minutes show that the process did not work and instead split the team in factions.

Yani's wish for an army plan in reply to the planned centralization of state and in order to get a grip on rising economic and military problems and challenges, was fulfilled in the Tri Ubaja Sakti (Three Holy Promises) doctrine of April 1965. According to Subandrio, this doctrine had been conceived by General Suharto and his Kostrad Command. It was subsequently accorded by the president who probably saw it as a first step to unite army and people. The comment forwarded by the Prosecutor of Njono's trial at the end of the trial is interesting. He stated that the root of the rumor about the Council of Generals was PKI leader Aidit's comment about the doctrine being the setup for a coup. The prosecutor explained what the Tri Ubaya Sakti Doctrine entailed. He explained to the audience that the doctrine had already been accepted by President Sukarno, but called it the source of leftist suspicion against the Council of Generals. The doctrine did not make a political party out of the army as one might suspect. Instead it became a functional group that would participate on all levels of governance. According to the prosecutor the comment about the doctrine transforming the army into a political group – the Council of Generals – planning a coup, originated in the PKI. And, the prosecutor continued, what disastrous results that condemnation had, implicitly referring to the G30S and the murder of the generals (Perkara Njono: 239).

PKI leader Aidit had condemned the doctrine as the setup for a coup, because he saw the real intention behind it. The army doctrine did exactly what Aidit wanted from the revolutionary army, namely bring army and people together, and stimulate cooperation between the two. The doctrine thus robbed the PKI from its own plans for unity. Moreover, the doctrine positioned a fourth doctrine besides the three ideological Nasakom denominations, by creating a Mil-Nasakom pyramid, in which the army was dominant. Instead of obediently walking at the president's side, the army started biting the other dog, the PKI; and the PKI snapped back. According to the prosecutor, shortly after the seminar that discussed the doctrine, the first rumors about the Council of Generals started circulating. This coincidence is interesting since it shows Aidit's understanding that directly attacking the doctrine by mass action would be counterproductive, since the president had already accorded the doctrine. Instead, the Council of Generals became an anonymous enemy accused of high treason. When it would lead to actions resulting in the removal of the generals from office and their replacement by generals that were loyal to the president, the president could easily drop the doctrine.

The final answer of PKI leader Aidit to the Tri Ubaja Sakti doctrine would be the G30S and proclamation of Decree No. 1. Apparently the fruitless struggle of President Sukarno to get Nasakom accepted by the army leadership had convinced Aidit that Nasakomization of the army would be a long term project, that is to say, beyond the president's expiration date. Hence, in early August 1965 Aidit overacted the danger of the president's sickness and called in a Chinese doctor who confirmed Sukarno's weak health. Apparently Aidit wanted to put pressure on key members in the Sukarno legacy to take immediate measures against the Council of Generals.

Judged by its content, the decree broadcast on 1 October 1965 wanted to block the implementation of the army doctrine by stopping the militarization of national and regional governance and replacing the governors and commanders by revolutionary minded people. The revolutionary council, key battle device of the decree, would temporarily claim the position of the not yet existing constitutional People's Congress, not that of the cabinet as the indictment claimed. The decree prospected general elections and the formation of a constitutional and true People's Congress that would support restoration of the 1945 Constitution and its basic principle of People's Sovereignty. This was the only way army and people could grow together under political Nasakom control and representative presidential rule. One must conclude that the decree covered a well devised

operation to restore the Indonesian revolution and the 1945 constitution.

Untung obstructed the G30S from the beginning by rejecting the support of communist consultants and communist mass organizations. It split the team in two sections that operated parallel to each other and only sparingly shared information. Untung informed Subandrio and Air Force Marshall Omar Dani about the problems with Sjam and the communist mass organizations, Sjam reported Untung's obstruction to PKI leader Aidit who informed the CC PKI Politbiro that the military were not cooperative regarding civil support, and Untung and Latief reported to General Suharto who supported Untung's abduction plan.

If we put the findings of this paragraph together, the prologue to the G30S showed three lines. First there is the line of the army TUS doctrine. Aidit's subsequent condemnation of the doctrine as setup for a coup and the launch of rumors about the Council of Generals planning a coup. The second line connects the subversion alarms I mentioned earlier to the Gilchrist document which spread suspicion about the army friends of the Western powers, and to the president's efforts to create a people's army or a Fifth Force of armed civilians. The third line links the security connections of Untung and his team to Subandrio and the Ministers of Justice and General Prosecution mentioned earlier, and the security connections of the PKI and Njono to Subandrio and his BPI staff as well as to the parties of the Bogor Declaration Group. One may conclude that the G30S had a strong institutional and political embedding, which prevented the PKI-Army confrontation Aidit was after from becoming prematurely confrontational. Apparently Aidit did not want a repeat of Madiun 1948. He needed a safe and solid military and political shelter against army attacks.

Part Two: *Professional Blindness And Missing The Mark ~ The Thirtieth September Movement As Seen By The Perpetrators. Between Registered Facts And Authoritative Opinions – Part Two*