

# Ambonsche Studiefonds and Sarekat Ambon as Forums for Moluccan Nationalists to Initiate Indonesian Independence Movement

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## Abstract

This research examines the role of the Ambonsche Studiefonds and Sarekat Ambon in fostering nationalism among Moluccan and in the struggle for Indonesian independence. Using the historical method, this research explores how the Ethical Policy introduced by the Dutch East Indies Government influenced the emergence of pro-independence organizations and how they played a role in mobilizing resistance to colonialism. The Ethical Policy, motivated by the Dutch' debt of honor' towards its colonies, opened up access to education for Bumiputra and indirectly encouraged national consciousness. The results show that the Ambonsche Studiefonds played a role in expanding access to education for Moluccan, thus increasing nationalist awareness among them. In addition, Sarekat Ambon became an essential forum for resistance after the transfer of its headquarters to Surabaya, which contributed to the struggle for Indonesian independence. This research also highlights the existence of the Moluccan nationalist movement despite many of its members being victims of torture by the Japanese occupation army. Their loyalty and fighting spirit ultimately contributed to Indonesia's independence in 1945. Based on the findings in the heuristic process, this research emphasizes the importance of understanding and appreciating the role of Moluccan nationalists in the history of Indonesia's independence struggle. It is hoped that the results of this research can inspire the younger generation to uphold the spirit of nationalism and national unity in facing contemporary challenges.

**Keywords:** Ambonsche Studiefonds; Sarekat Ambon; Moluccan Nationalist; Independence Movement.

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## Introduction

Significant changes in the colonial government of the Dutch East Indies in the 20th century was reflected in the era of "efficiency and prosperity", which marked a comprehensive transformation in politics, economics, education, and society (Shiraishi, 1997; Naimah, 2022). The political upheaval in the Dutch parliament spearheaded by liberalists led to a compromise in the form of Ethical Politics. Ethical

politics, introduced in 1901, became the hallmark of this change, inspired by the principle of the Dutch “debt of honor” to its colonies (van Niel, 2009; Fahmi, 2020). The Debt of Honor was interpreted as an effort to compensate the indigenous Dutch East Indies who throughout the period of colonial rule were discriminated against. Through ethical politics, the Dutch colonial government tried to improve conditions in the Dutch East Indies, including in the field of education (Taylor, 2012). The expansion of Western education aimed to increase the number of indigenous or Bumiputra intellectuals, so they could play a more active role in colonial government and economics (Yapp, 2020; Aung & Aye, 2024). Even though Ethical Politics aimed to improve welfare, there was a hidden intention of the Dutch Colonial government to strengthen control over its colonies (Naufal et al., 2022). In the Dutch East Indies, the colonial government used the Forced Cultivation system, which compelled the Indonesian people to cultivate certain commodities at low selling prices (Notosusanto, 2008; Dell & Olken, 2020). However, the emergence of ethical political ideas in 1901 by Conrad Theodore van Deventer brought the concept of freedom, especially in the formal education (Kroeze, 2021; Syarefa et al., 2024). This era was regarded as the beginning of freedom for Bumiputra, accompanied by enhanced access to education and an improved quality of life (Touwe & Pusparani, 2013; Meer, 2019; Noviningtyas & Rumambo, 2021).

As a consequence of their broader knowledge and skills, as well as their improved social position, Bumiputra became increasingly active in the struggle for independence and in ending Dutch colonial domination (Johannes, 2011; Dewulf, 2011; Kamisuna, 2020; Setiawan & Sergeev, 2023). The endeavor to establish a progressive colonial political system was continued by figures such as Van Kol, Van Deventer, and Brooschooft (Alfarez, 2022). They attempted to change the colonial political view, making Indonesia not only a source of profit for the Dutch, but also a region that needed to improve the welfare of its people (Al & Choiruzzad, 2021). This perspective is reflected in the Ethical Politics slogan “Irrigation, Education, and Emigration” (Kartodirdjo, 2014; Muhasabah et al., 2021). Bumiputra who received western education emerged as the new elite (Bottomore, 2006; Patta, 2023) and played an important role in political dynamics towards the nationalist movement (Chaniago, 2002; Widiyanta & Miftahuddin, 2023).

The concept of nationality was first conceived through the thoughts of the Bumiputra and subsequently transformed in society through various forms of organizations and/ or political parties that began to emerge in the Dutch East Indies (Muhasabah et al., 2021). On the Java island, the establishment of a national movement organization at an early stage was initiated by the establishment of *studiefonds* organization (Cahyani, 2023). The idea of national politics was introduced by Wahidin Sudirohusodo, a senior doctor who came up with the idea of nationality through political discussions within *studiefonds* organization (Ichsan et al., 2023). *Studiefonds* began to instill national ideas among intellectuals which later became a great source of inspiration for the people in the colonial lands, including the educated Moluccan (Nanulaitta, 2009). The reaction of the intellectuals to Wahidin Sudirohusodo’s idea

was very positive because *studiefonds* aimed to raise the status of Indonesian nation, especially the youth, through education (Printina, 2019). *Studiefonds* was an institution or organization that provided financial assistance to young men and women who demonstrated intellectual potential but lacked the financial resources to pursue further education (Naldi, 2006; Santoso et al., 2023).

Before Budi Utomo was founded in 1908, dr. Wahidin Soedirohoesodo had attempted to establish *studiefonds* to expand access to education in Indonesia (Cahyani, 2023). In addition, the establishment of several *studiefonds* was also motivated by the high costs of education, which made it challenging for indigenous people to access quality education (Sabarudin, 2015). *Studiefonds* was a form of educational philanthropy that was useful in providing scholarships or free education. To illustrate, Ambonsch Studiefonds was established with the objective of facilitating the educational advancement of young Moluccan individuals in the Indies or the Netherlands. In 1909, the opening meeting of Ambonsche Studiefonds committee was attended by approximately 200 people. (Tuahuns, 2024). Studiefonds Midden Java in Central Java and Mangkunegoro Studiefonds also showed the diversity of *studiefonds* organizations formed in the Dutch East Indies.

It was clear that since *studiefonds* had become a driving force for School tot Opleiding van Indische Artsen (STOVIA) students to further expand dr. Wahidin Soedirohoesodo's effort, many intellectuals from various regions were trying to form *studiefonds* in their respective regions (Susilowati, 2005). Through STOVIA, the medical school graduates began to develop national ideas by establishing the first modern Indonesian organization such as Budi Utomo in 1908 (Nagazumi, 1989). Alumnus of STOVIA medical school with *Indlandsch Art* (indigenous doctor) degree generally had national ideas that were influential in Indonesian independence (Atiqoh & Sardiman, 2016). This shows that education plays a crucial role in forming national consciousness among intellectuals (Amelia et al., 2023). *Studiefonds* as an educational and scholarship institution for Bumiputra became one of the driving factors for the development of the national movement in Indonesia (Puspitosari, 2018). In this context, the role of education in promoting unity and the spirit of nationalism becomes increasingly visible.

dr. W. K. Tehupeiori, a young Ambon man, was inspired by the nationalistic ideas of dr. Wahidin Sudirohoesodo during his studies at STOVIA. After continuing his education at the University of Amsterdam, he returned to Batavia in 1909 and, with other Ambon intellectuals, founded the Ambonsche Studiefonds to advance the education and economy of the Moluccan and support the struggle for Indonesian independence. Although the contributions of the Ambonsche Studiefonds and Sarekat Ambon to the nationalist movement are often not well documented, their role was crucial (Chauvel, 2008). This article highlights the need to understand Moluccan history in the context of the national struggle to build an inclusive national identity. The issue that arises is how the younger generation, particularly from Maluku, can understand the history of their region to support national independence and contribution. This research questions how the roles of the two organizations can be

integrated into national history education to strengthen the independence of the younger generation, as well as highlighting the importance of revising the history curriculum to be more inclusive of regional contributions.

## **Method**

The research method used in this study is the historical method. The historical process is a working procedure that starts from the heuristic stage or collecting historical sources, including archives, documents, and books relevant to the research topic. This stage aims to collect primary data supporting analysis and interpretation in historical writing. The sources used in this research include official archives issued by the Dutch East Indies Government, official letters, historical documents, and related literature relevant to the research topic. Sources in the form of documents and archives were obtained from the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia (ANRI) National Library of the Republic of Indonesia, the author's collection obtained from the National Archives in the Netherlands, and the Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal -, Land - en Volkenkunde (KITLV) Library in Jakarta. After collecting the sources, the research proceeded to the verification stage. This verification stage involves source criticism to ensure the validity and reliability of the data obtained. The sources that have been verified are then interpreted to produce an in-depth historical interpretation. This interpretation is based on credible facts and data found in the historical sources that have been collected. The verification process aims to prove the validity of the sources obtained before arriving at the stage of writing historical texts.

The next stage is historiography. Historiography is the final result of historical research realized through writing or articles. In the context of this research, historiography focuses on the role of the Ambonsche Studiefonds and Sarekat Ambon organizations in influencing the spirit of nationalism among Moluccan in the struggle for Indonesian independence. This article will be explanatory, aiming to explain and analyze the role of these organizations in a broader historical context. The research is focussed on the spatial scope, which includes the Maluku Region. The research's temporal scope covers the period from 1909 to 1944. The choice of spatial and temporal scope is based on the importance of the Ambonsche Studiefonds and Sarekat Ambon organizations in the context of Indonesian history during this period.

## **Orientation or purpose of the Ambonsche Studiefonds**

On 14 January 1911, the Dutch East Indies government issued permit to Ambonsche Studiefonds with Decree of Governor General No. 32, with W.K Tehupeiori as the chairman, founder, and honorary chairman (Soeharto & Ihsan, 1981). The Decree of Governor General No. 32 contains articles regarding organization with the following details: Article 1. The name of this association is "Ambonsche Studiefonds". Article 2. The purpose of the establishment and the duration of the establishment is for a period of 29 years, and it aims to raise money to ensure that intelligent young people of Indigenous descent from Ambon Residency are not impeded by a lack of financial resources from obtaining an education, both in the Nederland Indies and in Europe as

well. Article 3. This association conveys its aims as follows: (1 e). Provide all necessary information for members about teaching matters in various schools (2 e). Bear all or part of the teaching expenses and, if necessary, the maintenance expenses of the young people mentioned above.

It is important to note that it was not only national level organizations that play a role in initiatives to cover school costs for underprivileged children. Regional organizations and autonomous bodies also participated in efforts to organize *studiefonds* program. These organizations were spread across various regions in the Dutch East Indies and represented various ethnic groups and regions. They founded *studiefonds* with the main aim to provide wider access to education to indigenous people. Many sources have been found regarding the establishment of *studiefonds* by several regional unions in the Dutch East Indies. In Central Java, Studiefonds Midden Java was established with the objective of providing financial support to academically gifted students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, enabling them to pursue their studies at the highest level of public education institutions in Semarang (Tuahuns, 2024). Next, there was Mangkunegoro Studiefonds established by Mangkunegoro Surakarta officials. The establishment reflected concern for the education and needs of students from Solo region in Central Java, especially for providing financial assistance to the children of Mangkunegaran government employees and Legion officers who wanted to continue their higher education, but encountered financial constraints. (Pringgokusumo, 1989). This showed Pura Mangkunegaran's seriousness in developing aspects of education for Bumiputra at the local level.

All forms of *studiefonds* associations aim to provide support to the underprivileged in their studies at primary school and beyond. The existence of *studiefonds* branches such as: Soerabajasch Schoolfonds (rechtspers. Ind. Stb. 1881 No. 78); Vereeniging "Kernfonds" in Batavia (legal press. Gouv. Decree April 27, 1904 No. 19), Studiefonds "Djokja" in Djokjakarta (legal press. Government Decree May 12, 1904 No. 1); Vereeniging "Schoolfonds" in Kediri (legal press. Gouv. Decree December 7, 1907 No. 17), Perkumpulan "Buitenzorgsch Studiefonds" in Kediri (legal press. Gouv. Decree December 7, 1907 No. 17). 17), Perkumpulan "Buitenzorgsch Studiefonds" in Buitenzorg (legal press. Government Decree. October I, 1909 No. 37); Perkumpulan "Studiefonds Kota Gedang" in Kota Gedang (Padangsche Bovenlanden) (legal press. Government Decree January 27, 1910 No. 19), show the role of Bumiputra associations that were established to advance the education of youth, some of whom had the opportunity to attend school in the Netherlands. One of them was the "Ambonsche-Studiefonds" which was formed in September 1909. As a result of the meeting, the Ambonsche Studiefonds association was established to provide opportunities for talented young Ambonese to attend higher education. The composition of the management of the newly formed Ambonsche Studiefonds was as follows: Chairman: J. A. Soselisa, Vice Chairman: H. Pesulima, Secretary: P. Kuhuwael, Treasurer: H. Pesulima, Advisors: dr. J. D. Syahaya and J. M. M. Hetharia. The management of Ambonsche Studiefonds was elected every three years to maintain harmony in the

work and performance of the management and to avoid misappropriation of organizational funds (Leirissa, 1975). This organization aimed to promote education among Bumiputra, especially Ambonese/ Moluccan, by providing scholarships to those who demonstrated intellectual aptitude and academic aspiration but faced financial constraints in pursuing their studies. One of its important missions apart from providing scholarships was establishing schools for the benefit of Moluccan. In 1911, the management of Ambonsche Studiefonds organization received legal recognition from the Dutch East Indies Government. This recognition constituted the inaugural step in the expansion of the the establishment of Ambonsche Studiefonds branches, both on the islands of Java and Maluku.

The recognition from the Dutch East Indies Government was utilized effectively by the leaders of the states in Maluku until in 1911, when the Ambonsche Studiefonds branch on Nusalaut Island (Lease Islands) led by J. Manusama succeeded in establishing a school on the island. The funds for establishing the school were obtained from many sources, such as lottery, charity market (*bazaar*), and donation from the Dutch East Indies Government. These endeavors have facilitated the pursuit of higher education by numerous Ambonese youth, particularly in the Netherlands, where scholarships have been obtained from the Ambonsche Studiefonds organization (Leirissa, 1975); Touwe & Pusparani, 2013). The center of this organization remained located in Batavia, but the branches established in Maluku were showing quite rapid development and following the organizational regulations in force at that time.

Ambon Studiefonds branch in 1915 held federation with other loyalist (conservative) organizations. The federation was named Sou Maloeka consisting of the Dutch East Indies Teachers Association (Inlandsleerars-Bond), Pastor's Association (Noesa Ina), Retired Royal Netherlands East Indies Army (KNIL) (Panji Nederland), and Retired Kings (Regentenbond) (Chauvel, 2008). The objective of this federation was to coordinate the interests of various social groups that emerged during the early 20th century. By uniting these groups, the federation sought to enhance the prosperity of Moluccan, particularly in the economic realm (Leirissa, 1975). The development of Ambonsche Studiefonds led to positive movements in the following years. In 1917, this organization had 84 branches with activities outside the field of education (Manusama, 1919; Leirissa, 1975).

### **Establishment of Sarekat Ambon in 1920 in Semarang**

The rise of national awareness among Moluccan was not limited to the Maluku region. It also occurred among Moluccan living elsewhere, especially on the island of Java. In Semarang, A. Y. Patty, an Ambonese nationalist figure, published *Pedoman* Newspaper on 1 April 1919. This newspaper mainly circulated among the Ambonese military and intellectuals. Through this newspaper, the spirit of nationalism and criticism of the Dutch government spread widely. A.Y. Patty deemed the establishment of Sarekat Ambon in Semarang to be of significant importance due to the lack of robust nationalist movements in Ternate and Ambon at the time, which were under pressure from the Dutch government.

Sarekat Ambon organization was formed at a meeting held on 9 May 1920. The meeting was led by A.Y. Patty and attended by 300 Ambonese people, most of whom were Koninklijk Nederlandsche Leger (KNIL) members. The leaders of Sarekat Ambon were A.Y. Patty, Mohamad Kassan, Pikal, and Najoan. The administrators and members of Sarekat Ambon mostly had Western education backgrounds and were Indigenous Dutch East Indies government civil servants and KNIL soldiers. The intellectuals of Sarekat Ambon included dr. J. Kayadu, dr. J. D. Siahaya, dr. Westplat, dr. J. D. Samallo, dr. J. M. Leimena, dr. K. Tehupeiry, and J.A Soselissa. Some of them came from government employees, such as P.R. de Quelyoe, J. M. M. Hetharia, and A.E. Kayadu (Chauvel, 2008).

Sarekat Ambon was founded to “endavor in ways that do not violate applicable laws, and advance the prosperity of Ambon Residentie spiritually and physically.” Moreover, it aimed to unite people of the Ambonese ethnicity, regardless of their religious beliefs, in order to advance their political agenda and achieve national liberation (Leirissa, 1975). Ambon Residentie meant here refers to the population in Ambon and its surroundings, which at that time was one of the residencies in the Maluku Region. After establishing Sarekat Ambon on 9 May 1920, A.Y. Patty published *Soeara Ambon* Magazine as a propaganda mouthpiece for the spirit of nationalism for the Bumiputra, especially the Ambonese people in Semarang (Leirissa, 1975). One of A.Y. Patty’s articles criticizing the Dutch East Indies stated that “The coral reef is the perfect foundation for freedom and the formation of a great homeland!”

Subsequently, A.Y. Patty and dr. Kayadu submitted a request to the Dutch East Indies government for Sarekat Ambon to receive legal approval. However, the Dutch Indies government did not respond, stating that Sarekat Ambon organization lacked a clear direction, and that its leaders consistently engaged anti-Dutch government propaganda. At first, some Ambonese were suspicious of this organization because A. Y. Patty’s actions conflicted with the Dutch government policies, but on various occasions A.Y. Patty explained this organization’s objectives, leading to many intellectuals joining Sarekat Ambon organization. One of the intellectuals who was suspicious of Sarekat Ambon as an oderbour organization of PKI was dr. Tehupiory Ambonsche Studiefonds figure (Chauvel, 2008).

As the nationalist movement, spearheaded by Sarekat Ambon, intensified and garnered the attention of the Ambon elite, who began to espouse national political ideals, a regulation emerged in March 1921 from the Dutch government’s military salary commission. This directive instructed Ambon soldiers to refrain from attending meetings organized by Sarekat Ambon and to prevent and isolate any political movements that espoused national ideas. This warning also affected the activities of the Sarekat Ambon organization, so since mid-1921, those activities had decreased drastically. Therefore A.Y. Patty, who at that time worked as a private employee belonging to the Dutch government and held the position of secretary at the Jacob van den Berg firm, suddenly resigned for no definite reason. To obtain daily needs, he returned to work as a journalist, while consolidating among Ambonese to continue the

struggle to spread national ideas (Leirissa, 1975).

In August, A. Y. Patty received support from several senior members of Sarekat Ambon to reconsolidate the continuation of Sarekat Ambon. They suggested that A.Y. Patty should leave Semarang and stay in Batavia as the center of the movement. In Batavia, many Ambonese settled, making it easier to consolidate the interests and activities of Sarekat Ambon (Chauvel, 2008). Before leaving Semarang to settle in Batavia, in mid-1921 A.Y. Patty featured various articles in NIP organ *De Beweging* Newspaper regarding the formation of an independent nation (Chauvel, 2008). Since 8 February 1922, he and his fellow editors from the NIP organ had worked as journalists for *de Express* Newspaper, which subsequently changed its name to *de Indie*.

In August 1922, A.Y. Patty left with his family to Batavia. He often had contact with her colleague, Najoan in Batavia, who had just returned from abroad and was suspected by the Dutch East Indies Government of being a communist figure. The consolidation efforts spearheaded by A.Y. Patty signaled a nascent revival of Sarekat Ambon. This was evidenced by a closed meeting held on 12 November 1922, in Weltevreden, where A.Y. Patty, dr. Kayadoe, and Najoan were in attendance. A.Y. Patty presided over the general meeting at Weltevreden, which was attended by 60 members of Sarekat Ambon. In that meeting he explained that Sarekat Ambon was a pure nationalist organization like Perserikatan Minahasa which some time ago held a general meeting in Weltevreden. He also waged political struggle and proposed a spiritual revolution, and launched political action against the Dutch East Indies Government.

The circumstances surrounding this meeting led the military commander at that time to issue instructions to the local KNIL military division commanders in Java, directing them to inform the military members from Ambon and Manado about the revolutionary actions outlined in the speech delivered by A.Y. Patty. The Sarekat Ambon organization demonstrated a markedly uncooperative stance and a radical attitude, indicating a lack of willingness to collaborate with the Dutch East Indies Government. A.Y. Patty in various political speeches always give an example of the struggle of Mahatma Gandhi in India who carried out non-cooperative struggles and actions against the British Colonial Government.

In 1922, A.Y. Patty firmly decided to involve the Sarekat Ambon in the world of practical politics. This decision was caused by the widespread political activities of Bumiputra intellectuals in the Dutch East Indies during that period. In almost all regions of the Dutch East Indies around 1922, a revolutionary movement emerged, spearheaded by the socialist group from Indische Sociaal Democratissche Vereeniging (ISDV). Since 1918, the Dutch Colonial Government had actually established a Volksraad intended to accommodate ideologies in society, but the ISDV group considered that the structure and rights of this body did not provide them with much flexibility in politics (Chauvel, 2008).

To fight for the expansion of this organization, a merger was held between political parties in the Dutch East Indies which also had revolutionary thought. This



merger was named *Radicale Concentratie* and consisted of *Sarekat Islam*, *Boedi Oetomo*, and *National Indische Partij* (continuation of *Indische Partij*) that had representatives in *Volksraad*. *Radicale Concentratie* did not advocate for Indonesian independence, rather they sought to establish a constitutional structure within the Dutch kingdom that would empower the Indonesian people to assume full responsibility and authority over the administration of the Dutch East Indie (Chauvel, 2008). In 1922, *Radicale Concentratie* also invited other organizations that did not have representatives in *Volksraad* such as labor and regional organizations to join.

The chairman of *Sarekat Ambon* at the time sought to join *Radicale Concentratie* in order to facilitate the infiltration of the national movement through the organization's established channels. Since then, the meetings from *Radicale Concentratie* were always attended by a representative from *Sarekat Ambon*. This condition constituted a significant political advancement for the Moluccan in their ongoing struggle, which subsequently led to the formation of a national movement (Chauvel, 2008). As a concrete example, I. O. Nanulaitta explained that *Sarekat Ambon* has been engaged in *Radicale Concentratie* from its inception. It was a collaborative body comprising several parties that advocated for a parliamentary government for Indonesia based on general elections. At its first meeting on 3 December 1922, *Sarekat Ambon* daily management was present along with *Centrale Sarekat Islam*, *Boedi Utomo*, and *Nationaal Indische Partij*. Furthermore, *Sarekat Ambon* was actively involved in *Radical Concentratie* (Nanulaitta, 2009).

A major step towards a nationalist current was clearly visible in the writings of A.Y. Patty and dr. Kayadoe in the party journal, *Mena Moeria*. At each meeting they both used the concept of "oppression and the oppressed" to make their supporters aware of the colonial nature and system as colonialists. dr. Kayadoe in his article criticized the sacrifices shown by Ambonese to maintain Dutch power throughout the Dutch East Indies, so he said that why should Ambonese participate in preserving the power of the Dutch government in their own land?

The satirical words written by dr. Kayadoe is "Ambonese should reflect on as an indigenous nation facing similar challenges to other oppressed nations" (Chauvel, 2008). On the opposing side, the argument was directed towards fellow Ambonese who were willing to accept the additional "gifts" provided by the Dutch, whether intentionally or unintentionally, and who consequently accepted less than their fair share (Chauvel, 1990, p. 78). The continuation of the plan of Moluccan nationalist figures at that time to form the central management of *Sarekat Ambon* in Batavia was implemented in December 1922 in Batavia (Soeharto & Ihsan, 1981). Regarding the formation of *Sarekat Ambon* in Batavia, this process received support from Moluccan nationalist, and European figures who were pro indigenous struggles in the colonies. The call for support at the formation meeting took place as follows.

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Subsequently, a new central management was formed, led by J. M. M. Hetharia, who was considered careful and able to please Ambonsche Studiefonds group. The deputy was J. Tupamahu and the treasurer was Uitenbroek. dr. Tehupeiry, dr. J. Kayadoe, dr. J. Westplat, and, dr. J. D. Samallo became the advisors. Other members of the management were: R. B. Soumokil, A. Pattinasarany, G. J. Kneefel, dr. J. M. Leimena, J. A. Risakotta, B. W. Leleuly, and S. Thijsen (*Mena Moeria*, March-April 1923).

Hetharia initially refused to join Sarekat Ambon because he considered it too revolutionary. He was persuaded by the general detective service, A.E van der Lely, to reconsider his position, if he would join Sarekat Ambon in a more moderate and loyal orientation. He also consulted with van Sandick and attended at least one meeting with Patty and Kayadoe. Van Sandick was indifferent as to whether Hetharia would join Sarekat Ambon. With official support, Hetharia offered to join Sarekat Ambon committee with the following two conditions: First, Sarekat Ambon had to withdraw from Radicale Concentratie. Second, Sarekat Ambon acted moderately and did not carry out revolutionary propaganda. After going through tough debates, finally A. Y. Patty and dr. Kayadoe agreed to these two conditions as political strategic steps, but in practice they continued to carry out a revolutionary stance against the policies of the Dutch East Indies Government. After organizational consolidation was carried out between the management, it was decided to send A.Y. Patty went to Ambon in April 1923, but before leaving he handed over leadership of Sarekat Ambon to dr. Kayadoe and Hetharia (Chauvel, 2008).

### **A Y. Patty Continued Sarekat Ambon's Struggle in Maluku**

On 15 April 1923, A.Y. Patty undertook a planned trip to Ambon. He made a stop Surabaya to attend a meeting of the Surabaya branch of Sarekat Ambon. During the meeting, he revealed that Sarekat Ambon had the same goal as the National Indische Partij which wanted to achieve independence. A few days later, he went to Ambon to do national movement activities, so in a letter dated on 9 March 1923 Number 49/X in Batavia, the Dutch East Indies government asked Governor van Sandick in Ambon to monitor the activities of A.Y. Patty who was in Ambon. The cautious attitude of the Dutch East Indies government in Batavia was conveyed to Governor van Sandick, so he refused to issue a permit for the drafting of articles of association of Sarekat Ambon requested by A.Y. Patty.

In a letter dated April 1923, A.Y. Patty requested that van Sandick facilitate collaboration with the Dutch East Indies government to enhance the wellbeing of the population. However, at a meeting on 16 May 1923, attended by 200 individuals, including former NIP members and administrators, A.Y. Patty leveled various criticisms of the Dutch East Indies Government. Additionally, he pledged at the meeting that significant reforms would be implemented in the Maluku. Based on these

several incidents, van Sandick did not give permission to prepare the articles of association for Sarekat Ambon.

After several days in Ambon, A.Y. Patty went to Saparua to meet a former NIP leader, J. Tupamahu. In Surabaya, he attempted to disseminate nationalist ideas to Sarekat Ambon members through political discourse. His political activities, conducted during his tenure in Ambon, were indicative of the revolutionary potential of Sarekat Ambon. Consequently, van Sandick believed that this organization should be avoided by the broader society, particularly the Ambonese intelligentsia and its immediate surroundings.

Furthermore, the Ambon Council deliberated with the Attorney General regarding the necessity of issuing a letter declaring Sarekat Ambon to be a prohibited organization and closing the Sarekat Ambon school in Saparua. Although van Sandick initially lacked a compelling rationale to fulfill the Ambon Council's request, mounting pressure ultimately compelled him to take action. In a letter to the Attorney General in Batavia, he asserted that there was insufficient evidence to justify the arrest of A.Y. Patty. At the urging of the central government in Batavia, Ambon Governor van Sandick, in his secret letter addressed to Attorney General dated 29 February Number 112, showed various evidence written in the article "Political Needs" published in *Mena Moeria* Number 6, with the editor-in-chief being A.Y. Patty.

The debate regarding A. Y. Patty's activities at Ambon Council meeting with the specific agenda of expelling him from the area had caused such fierce conflict that the session secretary left the meeting and many things were not recorded during the session. Finally, an agreement was reached in which twenty members of the council voted in favour of Patty's expulsion. However, the radical left group of teachers declined to participate in the agreement, resulting in Sarekat Ambon and the intellectual group only got four votes. The Ambon Council's decision made based on the election became a strong reason for Ambon Governor to expel Patty from Ambon Residency area. The evidence that could be used as a strong reason to call A.Y. Patty as an agitator and propagation expert from Sarekat Ambon organization was delivered directly by Governor van Sandick.

With various evidence above, Governor van Sandick hoped that there was no opportunity for A.Y. Patty to stay in Ambon, because he was considered to be disturbing the security and order in the area. Van Sandick asked Governor General Fock to give him the authority to punish A.Y. Patty with internere punishment in article 47 of government regulation, and if necessary preventive measures were taken after the regulation was applied to A.Y. Patty. Finally, on 17 January 1925, A.Y. Patty was apprehended and charged with criminal activity for inciting people in Ambon to oppose police officers who prohibited the sale of alcoholic beverages with high alcohol content, such as a traditional Maluku drink (*Sopi*) (Habiboe, 1990). After Patty was detained, van Sandick also requested that the place of detention and exile of A.Y. Patty should be a place outside Ambon. Prosecutor Wolterbeek Muller's letter to Governor General Fock dated 21 October 1924 further strengthened Governor van Sandick's report, so the detention process for A.Y. Patty and the action of expulsion from Ambon

was sped up.

Based on evidence collected by Ambon Governor, it was proven that A.Y. Patty had carried out political activities by agitating the population, especially Sarekat Ambon members, against the Dutch government. Apart from the report from Ambon Governor, there was other written evidence from the army commander in his secret letter submitted to the government on 19 July 1923. In a secret letter with an attachment dated 26 September Number 520, Ambon Governor submitted a proposal to detain A.Y. Patty with a number of pieces of evidence presented as follows.

The contents of the secret letter elucidate that the results of investigations conducted by the army revealed evidence of a network of cooperation between political parties. This evidence could be substantiated by several significant incidents that incited the people to engage in armed conflict against the Dutch East Indies Government in Semarang and in various locations within the residency area. The suppression of the Sarekat Ambon movement in Semarang by the Dutch East Indies Government was justified by the following robust evidence: *First*, on 1 April 1919 under the editorship of P. E. Najoan and A.Y. Patty in Semarang, such as *Pedoman*, *Suara Anak Militer*, *Marine*, and *de Polici* were published and the first edition was distributed in barracks and military infrastructure, containing invitation to oppose the Dutch government; *Second*, at a meeting to establish Sarekat Ambon attended by 300 Ambonese with most of them being military members on 9 May 1920 in Semarang, A.Y. Patty emphasized that “the establishment of Sarekat Ambon is intended to accommodate all individuals belonging to the Ambonese race, regardless of religious affiliation. Given the influence of current conditions on organizational dynamics, the political imperative is to form a nation based on economic and freedom principles;” *Third*, on 22 May, an article entitled “Sarekat Ambon” was published, containing A. Y. Patty’s speech delivered before a large assembly of colleagues. The article reiterated Patty’s assertion that “The coral reef is the perfect foundation for freedom and the formation of a great homeland!”. The content of the meeting, as conveyed by Patty, Najoan, and Mohamad Kassar, was also reflected in the first edition published in *Pedoman*. This led the Army leader to suspect a connection between the riots that occurred in Jatingaleh incident, which occurred between 8 and 10 May 1920, involved the Semarang garrison of the Ambonese army company from the fifth infantry battalion. This was in opposition to the leader’s policy, which prohibited them from attending the founding meeting of the Sarekat Ambon management branch. After this incident, unit and brigade commanders from military areas for all garrisons were prohibited from attending meetings held by A.Y. Patty, Najoan, and Pikal as the leaders and speakers at every Sarekat Ambon meeting. Various accusations from the military, especially the army, regarding the political activities of A.Y. Patty and his friends also stated in Prosecutor Wolterbeek

Muller's report that since 1918 and 1919 A.Y. Patty, Najooan, Pikal, and Mohamat Kasan had established close relationships with Nasional Indische Partij members and organizations in Semarang.

In light of the evidence presented in A.Y. Patty's activity report, it can be reasonably inferred that Attorney General H.G.P Duyfhes was becoming increasingly convinced of the necessity to issue a detention order to A.Y. Patty. On 11 November 1924, the government apprehended him following the conclusion of his probationary sentence. Sulawesi Governor A. J. L. Couvreur received a list of inquiries intended to interrogate Patty with sixty questions regarding his entire political career. In his responses, he denied that his movement's activities were subversive as accused by the Dutch government against him. For eight days, he was given the opportunity to submit a statement of objection, but the prosecutor's defense could not be accepted. On 9 January 1925, the Governor General decided to detain A.Y. Patty for further exile in Bengkulu, West Sumatra (Habiboe, 1990).

During his exile in Bengkulu, it turned out that A.Y. Patty was still establishing a political organization called "Menoedjoe Keadjikan". In fact, in his various activities in Bengkulu, he criticized the Dutch East Indies Government, especially Bengkulu Governor P.A. Telling because of the policy of buying planes for 8,000,000 guilders. Because of this protest, in December 1927, A.Y. Patty was transferred to Palembang under the pretext of a new job assigned to him in the budget adjustment office as commission aide. He received a salary of f 175 per month from the office, then received an increase to f225. His good work performance during his tenure made him to be appointed as Head of Billing Office. Even though he worked in a Dutch government office, he remained affiliated with nationalist movement organizations in Palembang area, so in July 1929, he became a member of PNI in Palembang branch (Habiboe, 1990).

At various PNI political meetings in Palembang, Patty consistently presented himself as an opponent of the policies of the Dutch East Indies Government. At PNI meeting on 15 September 1929, he criticized the Dutch East Indies Government in front of the meeting participants regarding the appointment of S. de Graaf as Colonial Minister. He regarded de Graaf as an obstacle to progress and saw the appointment as a victory for the conservatives. Due to various political activities, he was considered anti-Dutch Indies government and dismissed on 23 November 1929. Since his dismissal as a financial office employee, he began to launch his political actions, especially after joining Palembang branch of PNI. After considering the potential consequences of A.Y. Patty's actions, the government decided to relocate him to Ruteng on Flores Island.

### **Moving of Sarekat Ambon Secretariat from Batavia to Surabaya**

After the government arrested the leaders of Sarekat Ambon on 17 January 1925, and banned the activities of this organization, the movement weakened in Ambon and other cities, causing many Moluccan to resign. Despite pressure from the colonial Dutch government, Sarekat Ambon remained resilient, and in 1928, efforts to revive

its branch in Surabaya were led by J.F. Tuanakota and J. Latuharhary, who had just returned from his studies in Leiden (Leirissa, 1975). At a meeting in Jakarta, Mr. J. Latuharhary with the central management of Sarekat Ambon, especially dr. Kayadoe, dr. Tehupeiori, and dr. Apituley, agreed to modify the organization's strategy for addressing its challenges. This strategy shift involved a shift from a confrontational approach to a more collaborative and less radical one, a shift that occurred during the tenure of A.Y. Patty as the central leader of Sarekat Ambon (Leirissa, 1975). The meeting covered several key topics, including the relocation of the central management from Batavia to Surabaya, the formulation of articles of association, and the development of a new strategic approach. The task of designing a new concept was handed over to dr. Apituley considered capable of carrying out organizational consolidation. These new responsibilities began with organizational consolidation to hold a general meeting in Surabaya and elect a new Sarekat Ambon management.

The General Meeting in Surabaya elected Mr. J. Latuharhary as general chairman, J. F. Tuanakota (vice-chairman), T. Sahertian (secretary), P. J. van der Klas (treasurer). The Sarekat Ambon advisor was handed over to dr. Tamaela and dr. J.M. Leimena (Leirissa, 1975). The political statement put forth by the general chairman on the opening night of Sarekat Ambon attracted considerable attention. This statement indicated that Indonesian independence has become the principle of Sarekat Ambon's struggle under the leadership of Latuharhary, who brought it from the Netherlands in accordance with the ideals of the Indonesian Association (Nanulaitta, 2009). Since then, Sarekat Ambon had become more fully oriented towards the struggle for Indonesian independence. It had established relationships with many independence movement organizations as marked by the following activities of Sarekat Ambon organization.

### *New Era of Sarekat Ambon Initiated Nationality*

Since the relocation of the center of Sarekat Ambon organization from Batavia to Surabaya, many relationships had been established with other organizations in the national movement, especially during the establishment of Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI) in 1927. This was a new era for Sarekat Ambon in Java because since 1926 and 1927 the nationalist movement had grown in a revolutionary direction against the Dutch government. The promise of van Limburg Stirum in 1918 did not convey definite hopes for political freedom and reform in various fields in accordance with the ethical politics implemented by the Dutch East Indies Government.

The Sarekat Ambon organization became increasingly involved in the political currents of the National Movement, which was becoming more visible in Dutch East Indies society at the time. After consolidating itself with Moluccan elite figures, on 16 March 1930, the Sarekat Ambon organization announced its political manifesto, which included the following objectives: strengthening the sense of unity among the Moluccan, improving the socio-economic sector, improving and expanding education, providing financial support for Moluccan youth who wanted to pursue higher education, opposing racial sentiments, helping to defend the country in danger, and

cooperating with other nationalist organizations that shared the same goals.

Subsequently, Sarekat Ambon organization was granted approval by the Dutch East Indies Government, a goal that had been sought since 1920 by A.Y. Patty when it was initially established. Mr. J. Latuharhary obtained an opportunity to be the general chairman and he started to revive every Sarekat Ambon branch in various places. After A.Y. Patty was detained, the leader of Sarekat Ambon branch, namely J.M.M. Hetharia, who at that time had retired from the travel service office in Batavia returned to Ambon and was elected as a municipal councilor from the indigenous group. He was one of the figures who took part in the reorganization of Sarekat Ambon and drafted the new articles of association in accordance with developments and demands of the times at that time. J.M.M. Hetharia was also a member of Volksraad who had extensive experience regarding organizations and had a nationalist vision, so he tried to reorganize Sarekat Ambon together with the central management (Habiboe, 1990). When Governor van Sandick deemed his efforts to reorganize Sarekat Ambon as anti-Dutch government agitation, particularly given that his speech at the Ambon City Council formation meeting in August 1926 was not transcribed in the meeting minutes, he played a pivotal role in galvanizing the populace to confront the revolution that had been prepared. According to the official Mayor of Ambon A. Baljet, the movement carried out by Hetharia followed A.Y. Patty (Habiboe, 1990). It showed the continuity of the movement initiated by A.Y. Patty and continued by J.M.M. Hetharia in an effort to raise Sarekat Ambon.

#### *dr. Sitanala Organized Sarekat Ambon in Maluku 1927-1944*

The continuation of Sarekat Ambon after Hetharia's efforts, which were always obstructed by the Dutch East Indies government in Ambon, began to emerge again on 1 June 1927 when dr. Sitanala arrived in the city and began working as a leprosy expert and took part in systematic political activities. As someone who had been involved in education in Netherlands, dr. Sitanala had experience with various political movements in the Dutch East Indies. This condition became stronger after he was in Ambon, where he always kept in touch with his old friend J.M.M Hetharia, who joined the central management of Ambonsche Studiefonds together during 1910-1913. Under the leadership of dr. Sitanala and Hethari, Sarekat Ambon followers were re-organized in August 1927, so they succeeded in establishing Ambon Needs Committee (CKA). On 31 August, this committee held a lecture on health issues. However, the political agenda that was included in the lecture aroused suspicion from the Dutch East Indies Government. This was because the Sarekat Ambon administrator, Ayawaila, was also present at the meeting. Ayawaila had previously been dismissed from his job as a Dutch East Indies Government employee in Batavia because he was suspected of being involved in the national movement in Batavia (Habiboe, 1990).

dr. Sitanala's role in the Ambon Needs Committee was aligned with the nationalist movement, leading Governor van Sandick to view him as an opponent of the Dutch East Indies government and believe he should be relocated from Ambon. In October 1927, dr. Sitanala was moved to Weltevreden without punishment, and later,

at a large meeting in Surabaya, he explained that his relocation was due to his political involvement, which led to the loss of crucial medical services for those in need, provoking criticism from dr. Apitulley and anger from Van Sandick (Habiboe, 1990). Due to pressure from the Dutch East Indies Government in Ambon and Maluku, Sarekat Ambon became more active in Surabaya, where many Ambonese lived and some held municipal positions like J.F. Tuanakota. In Surabaya, Bumiputra leaders from Maluku, including Tuanakota, played a significant role in mobilizing Ambonese support, establishing a weaving school and women's hostel, and influencing Batavia's political scene through figures like dr. H.D.J. Apitulley, who advocated for Sarekat Ambon in the Volksraad with his notable speech on nationalist currents (Habiboe, 1990). The spread of Sarekat Ambon movement in Batavia and Surabaya further strengthened the Dutch East Indies Government's supervision of nationalist figures who joined this organization. Strict supervision was maintained until the Second World War in 1942, when the country was confronted with the Japanese occupying army.

The National Movement became increasingly active in Indonesia from 1942-1944 even though supervision from the Japanese Military Government was stricter. In the biography of dr. Sitanala, Patikaihatsu explained that on the Java Island, there existed Ambonese committees who provided assistance to Ambonese families who were in jeopardy or under threat from by the Japanese Kempetai. One of the committees was Pertolongan Ambon Timor in Jakarta (Pattikayhatu, 1993). The committees consisted of Moluccan who, before the Japanese war against the Allies, had participated in the national movements, they were dr. J. Kayadoe as the former chairman of Sarekat Ambon, Mr. J. Latuharharry as the Chairman of Sarekat Ambon in Surabaya, J. and D. Syaranamual, A.C. Tupamahu, P.A. de Qoeljoe, S.J. Pieter and dr. J.B. Sitanala (Pattikayhatu, 1993; Leirissa, 1975). The majority of these figures were prominent members of Sarekat Ambon during the Dutch Colonial era. During the Japanese occupation, they continued to advocate for nationalist nationalism. Due to their political focus, Moluccan nationalists in Jakarta were labeled as anti-Japanese and arrested by the Kempetai, with some, including dr. Kayadoe and dr. Sitanala, being detained and tortured, resulting in dr. Kayadoe's death and dr. Sitanala's near-fatal injuries before his release in 1945 due to insufficient evidence. The national movement in Jakarta intensified, culminating in the proclamation of the Republic of Indonesia on 17 August 1945, as Japanese forces, weakened by Allied defeats, began to retreat.

## Conclusion

The role of the Ambonsche Studiefonds and Sarekat Ambon organizations as forums for Moluccan nationalists in their efforts to achieve Indonesian independence began after the Dutch East Indies government introduced ethical politics. This ethical policy aimed to improve the lives of colonial society marginalized in the economic, social, and political fields. This policy was further impacted when schools were established to provide education funds for Bumiputra to continue their higher education. Many STOVIA graduates who continued their studies in the Netherlands founded



organizations as forums for the nationalist movement, reflecting their concern for the realities of Indonesian society. Studiefonds and STOVIA became the first institutions to educate individuals who would later become essential figures in building a country free from colonialism.

The most crucial demand of the nationalist movement was the establishment of an independent nation-state. In 1909, the Ambonsche Studiefonds was established by the Ambon community in Java under the leadership of Tehupeiry, which contributed to the establishment of a cadre school for the benefit of the Ambon community and strengthened ties with other political organizations in Java. This relationship then influenced the spirit of nationalism in Maluku, which led to the formation of Sarekat Ambon by A.Y. Patty in Semarang in 1920. The establishment of Sarekat Ambon received enthusiastic support from intellectuals, especially members of the Ambonsche Studiefonds, which revived the spirit of nationalism among Moluccans and intellectuals in Batavia, Semarang, Surabaya, and Maluku.

The Sarekat Ambon played an essential role in the independence movement, especially after establishing its center in Batavia in December 1922 and later moving to Surabaya. Under the leadership of Mr. Latuharhary, Sarekat Ambon transformed into a critical player in the independence movement, maintaining its affiliation with other nationalist organizations in the Dutch East Indies. The organization, which espoused Moluccan nationalism, continued to fight even after the Japanese occupation, although many of its members fell victim to torture. Despite these challenges, Moluccan nationalists, along with nationalists from other regions, continued to fight the Dutch and Japanese colonizers, which eventually led to the establishment of an independent state on 17 August 1945.

The passion of the Moluccan nationalist movement was evident with the formation of the Republic of Indonesia, which included Maluku as one of its eight initial provinces. The unwavering commitment of Moluccan nationalists to defend the indigenous population, who at the time were marginalized socially, economically, politically, and educationally, is a testament to the history of the Indonesian nation's struggle towards development. This legacy is significant for the younger generation, who must learn and understand the nation's history, especially the independence movement, to prevent the state and country from being divided by separatist issues that are increasingly prevalent today. Therefore, it is imperative to make the history of these movements accessible and easily understood by the younger generation, ensuring they are equipped with the necessary knowledge to maintain the unity and progress of the nation.

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