

The *Tanah-Air* Concept and Indonesia's Maritime Nation Aspiration

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Abstract

This article analyses the *Tanah-Air* (Unity of Land-Water) concept conceived by Indonesian founding fathers during its independence period and its centrality in shaping the nation's maritime outlook. Specifically, using descriptive historical analytical approach, it would like to emphasize the role of intersection of Indonesia's political culture of national unity (*Persatuan Nasional*), strategic culture of turning of the ages of *Nusantara* (*Cakra Manggilingan*), and geopolitical outlook of archipelago's heart seas (*Segara Nusantara*) as the three forming pillars of the *Tanah-Air* concept. Based on these intersections, it underlines unique contradictions within the *Tanah-Air* concept between need for unity and oneness of land-sea elements of the Indonesian archipelago and the concentric Javanese philosophy on the sea and its maritime power aspirations. Based on these contradictions and insight of the 'Tanah-Air' concept, the article provides a pragmatic view on Indonesia's current aspiration of moving beyond archipelagic to maritime nation as stipulated in the 2014 Global Maritime Fulcrum Doctrine and 2017 Sea Policy Whitepaper.

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Introduction

Discussion and debates on the possible form of the national political culture of the new nation had begun among the nationalist's movement since the period of 1930's. These debates revolve around the path that should be taken for the construction of the shared cultural identity of the new nation of Indonesia encompassing different entities from Sabang to Merauke. Specifically, the central theme was whether it is best to look to the past to pre-Indonesian cultures such as Majapahit and Sriwijaya as a cultural model for the new nation, or on the other hand develop a new model of culture based on the West. These debates on the ideal national culture among the nationalist's movement of the new nation were accommodated in the literature journal of *Pujangga Baru* between the middle 1930's until 1942. Since its inception, the objective of the journal was the formation, organization and promotion of a new culture, the culture of unity (Jones 2013, 50). Thus, the ensuing debates on the ideal foundation of the national culture centred on how the political culture of unity could be best pursued either based on past polities of *Nusantara* or establishing a new basis of national culture without necessarily neglecting the Western culture. One group of nationalists led by Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana believed that 'Indonesianness' is the product of the twentieth century and should be differentiated from the cultures that preceded it or 'pre-Indonesian' considered as impediments to cultural development of the new nation in waiting (Mihardja 1977). Meanwhile, others such as Sanusi Pane, emphasized their disagreement with Alisjahbana position, underlining in his article 'Indonesian unity' that the future was dependent on the past because common cultural characteristics had already existed in *adat* (local custom) before the development of consciousness of their shared identity (Jones 2013, 53).

In his writing, Sanusi underlines the significance of ‘Asian values’ of harmony in contrast with the rationality outlook of western values (Sutherland 1968, 121). In the ensuing years, literature of *Pujangga Baru* suggests the preference for the latter over the former as the basis of the development of the national culture, especially after the 1928 Youth Pledge (*Sumpah Pemuda*). Its writers saw itself as part of a major social transformation and the temptation was to escape from its realities towards the glories of Indonesian’s past age (Sutherland 1968, 121). These debates and preferences among nationalist’s movement about the basis cultural identity of the post-colonial society to support the idea of a single national culture based on unity, had contributed to distinct outlook to develop an indigenous maritime territorial conception based from its past cultural heritage and a rejection of the colonial maritime laws which it considered against the spirit of post colonialism. A clear indication is the unilateral perspective of Indonesian leaders towards international law, including on maritime territories and the 1939 Territorial Maritime Ordinance (Agusman 2015, 1-31). This unilateral outlook on international maritime law is also indicated by discussions on maritime territories among Indonesia’s founding fathers during a meeting of the Preparatory Committee for Indonesia’s Independence (BPPKI) on the national territories of the new nation of Indonesia (Bahar and Hudawati, 1998, 55-57). The meeting underscores the shared consensus on the need to develop a balanced approach between *Mare Liberium* and *Mare Clausum* noting Indonesia has dispersed archipelagic characteristics (Bahar and Hudawati 1998, 55-57).

In the context of this article, this consensus on national unity centred on Javanese cultural nationalism tradition on harmony and unity had impacted on the contradictory nature of the indigenous maritime territorial conception centred on *Tanah-Air* concept. Specifically, the continuum between one wholeness of the land and seas of the Indonesian archipelago and Javanese cultural nationalism outlook on territoriality based on *Mandala* concentric approach to territorial management. Consequently, this article would like to describe and highlight the drivers of such paradoxes in *Tanah-Air*, which emanates from historical contexts and memory on the theme of unity in the intersection between political culture of unity, strategic culture of *Cakra Manggilingan* and the *Nusantara* geopolitical outlook as the forming pillars of the *Tanah-Air* concept. More importantly, how this distinct nature of the *Tanah-Air* concept affects successive maritime policies in Indonesia up to today.

The *Tanah-Air* Concept and the Three Pillars of the Indonesian Nation

The emergence of the *Tanah-Air* concept based on the 1920 poem by Muhammad Yamin was from the intersection of the archipelagic nation’s political culture, strategic culture and its geopolitical context during the formative years of Indonesia as a nation state. The *Tanah-Air* principle, which literally means the unity of land-water elements in the Indonesian archipelago, originated from poet written by one of Indonesia’s founding fathers, Muhammad Yamin, on the 9th of December 1922. The poem was written to commemorate the five years anniversary of ‘Jong-Sumatranen-Bond’ or the Indonesian youth nationalist movement from Sumatra to embed the spirit of patriotism and nationalism among the youth’s independence movement. The poem emphasizes *tanah tumpah darahku* (fatherland) as consisting of the unity of its water and land elements. It was then later adopted from a cultural to a political nationhood concept during the 1928 *Sumpah Pemuda* (Zuhdi 2006, 2-4). The origin of the *Tanah-Air* from a cultural to a political concept indicates the development of national political culture emphasizing on unity on the maritime mental map of the nation, which has continuously influenced the nature of its maritime policy from independence to the present era.

Within these contexts, Indonesia’s founding fathers and youths’ organizations understanding and perceptions of these three pillars had shaped the nature of the *Tanah-Air* concept. The consequence and ramifications of these contradictions in the *Tanah-Air* concept has greatly influenced the maritime orientation in the national political-strategic culture as the driver of the paths and directions of the nation’s maritime policy. Specifically, the paradoxes of the *Tanah-Air* concept have inherited an understanding of the mindset of the function of the seas as ‘unifier of the dispersed islands of the archipelago’ rather than ‘platform for territorial expansion’. As a consequence, the embedment and strengthening of the *Tanah-Air* philosophy in successive national maritime policies

during the 1945-2019 period such as the 'Archipelagic State Concept' (*prinsip Nusantara*) during Old Order Period, the 'Archipelagic Outlook' (*Wawasan Nusantara*) and Indonesia as a Maritime Continent (*Benua Maritim Indonesia*) in the New Order Era to Jokowi's 2014 Global Maritime Fulcrum policies has influenced the inward mental map tendencies of the nation as an archipelagic rather than a maritime power nation, and more importantly on how the sea functions within this contexts.

These inherent contradictions within the *Tanah-Air* concept emphasizing on the one united wholeness of the land-sea element of the Indonesian archipelago was driven by this urgency for commonality between the needs to build a national political culture of unity (*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*) and the realities of its archipelagic geography, whereas its maritime environment must be redefined to function as the unifying rather than separator element. More significantly, the centrality of the unity themes was also due to the fact of the existence of the different strands of political ideology (secular nationalism, communism and Islam) that existed before and during the revolutionary years of independence. This reality necessitates that unity based on the *Tanah-Air* concept on territoriality must be built upon the rationale of the unitary state. Muhammad Yamin the formulator of the *Tanah-Air* narrative underlined the preference of a unitary state based on the 1928 Youth Pledge as follows.

The unitary foundation of nationhood adopted since the Youth Pledge on the 28 of October 1928 the federalism nature of islands insularism and provincialism and embedded a sense of national unity based national integration, the unity of 'Tanah-Air' territories, and language under one united red and white flag (Yamin 1953, 51).

The unitary state rationale preferred by Indonesian elites during the revolutionary period of independence were embedded in the national constitution of the Republic Indonesia (*Undang-Undang Dasar 1945*) which stipulates in article 1 paragraph 1 stated that Indonesia is a unitary state in the form of a Republic (Asshiddique 2006, 213). This rationale meant that as an archipelagic state, Indonesia sees its territorial sovereignty based upon the archipelagic state one wholeness territorial principle announced during the Djuanda declaration on 13 December 1957 (Lapian 2009, 2). Consequently, the territories of the Indonesian archipelago including the management of the sea between its dispersed islands must be managed in line with such rationality. Within this context, the sea is seen in the narrative of the Indonesian society as the medium for national unity and connectivity for the largest archipelagic nation. Specifically, the sea as a medium for national unity through its integration of the different territories as one political, economic, culture and defence entity. Meanwhile, it is also seen as a medium for connectivity between islands to support equality in national development and prosperity (Marsetio 2018, 37-39). Within this context, the acceptance of territoriality and concentric management style of imperium Javanese kingdom of Majapahit considered as the second *Nusantara* as the foundation of the *Tanah-Air* concept was in order to meet such requirements for the new nation. In retrospect, the continuity of such mental map transcending generations of political leaders and systems has maintained the longevity of an inward oriented maritime orientation in the national political-strategic culture centered on the persistence of national unity idealism.

The *Tanah-Air* Concept and its Contradictions: The Political Culture of Unity (*Persatoean*) and the Nationalist Discourse of Indonesian Youths

The inter-relationship between the emergences of the 'Tanah-Air' concept with the theme of unity as an integral element of the nationalism discourse of Indonesian youths must start with an understanding of the political outlook and tradition, which influence Muhammad Yamin as the formulator of the concept through his seminal 1920 poem *Tanah-Air*, first published on the 4th edition of the 'Jong Sumatra' magazine on July 1920 (Rosidi 1985, 2-3). In line with such argument, a scrutiny of Yamin's concept in this research indicates connectivity between the meaning of the sea for nationalists' Sumatran youths known as 'Jong Sumatrananen' (*The League of Young Sumatrans*).

The significance of the maritime environment in the Sumatran nationalism discourse for *Jong Sumatranen* was evident in the numerous glorifications of the maritime achievement of the Sriwijaya kingdom and the centrality of the Sumatra island for maritime trade in various edition of 'Jong Sumatra: Organ Van den Jong Sumatranen Bond' magazine as a way to foster the frail sense of common identity (van Miert 1996, 608-609). In building this common identity due to the heterogeneity of ethnicity in the island, the unique history of the Sriwijaya maritime kingdoms was integrated into literature discourse such as 'Jong Sumatra' magazine as part of the shared image of Sumatran nationalism identity (Manguin 2008, 9). More importantly, the maritime discourse of the Jong Sumatranen Bond (hereinafter abbreviated as JSB) was related to the necessity to counterbalance the increasing dominance of the Javanese cultural nationalism outlook as the basis of national identity of the imagined nation (Manguin 2008, 9). This balanced idealism of the youths of JSB would later be reflected in the balanced (*keseimbangan*) nature of the unity of land-water element as the essence of the *Tanah-Air* concept.

A further insight into the maritime narratives of JSB indicate the influence of its landscape and economic activities towards its maritime culture, especially how its internal waters (rivers) acts as a connector/linkage between the social, economic and political activities between the coastal areas (*kawasan pesisir*) and the hinterland areas (*kawasan pedalaman*). This 'linkage' function conception of waters was based on the fact that since the 16th century the eastern coastline of the island of Sumatra has long been a maritime trade area due to its location next to the Malacca Straits, Bangka Straits and Karimata Straits. As a result, the rivers on the eastern seaboard of the Sumatra Island up until early 20th century had become the highway for the movement of people and goods between the hinterland and the coastal regions (Asnan 2018, 12). The significance of the inter-relationship and oneness between the coastal and hinterland areas as the fatherland (*Tanah Tumpah Darahku*) was in fact had been tacitly mentioned in the original 1920 'Tanah-Air' poem written by Muhammad Yamin.

A deeper insight of the original 1920 Tanah-Air poem indicates that Muhammad Yamin as the formulator of the concept has hinted the one united wholeness and linkage between the hinterland and coastal areas of the Sumatra island. In the poem, Yamin indirectly and implicitly described the whole borders and boundaries of the Sumatra island as '*pada batasan, Bukit Barisan*' (within the boundaries of the Barisan hills). Related to the previous sentence, Yamin elaborates on the second and third verse using indirect connotation of the mountainous areas (second paragraph) and coastal areas (third paragraph) as one united entity within the boundaries of the island (*Pada batasan, Bukit Barisan*). Within this context, it is presumed that rivers of the Sumatra Island which are based on 1982 UNCLOS are part of internal waters, are seen as the connector/linkage between both regions of the island of Sumatra as reflected in the last verse of the poem, '*Harumkan nama, selatan utara*' (blessed south and north). However, despite the existence of such maritime discourse within the 'Sumatran nationalism' discourse of JSB youths was developed, there was also issue of disunity as in their Jong Java counterparts, albeit of a different kind which elevated the *Tanah-Air* concept from a cultural nationalism concept to political-nationhood concept.

From the very beginning, the 'Sumatran nationalism' common identity sought by JSB youths including Muhammad Yamin was fragile. This is because the people of the island of Sumatra, which composed of different ethnic groups, has historically never been one cultural entity (Asnan 2018, 12). Thus, during his first speech as chair of JSB after it was founded in December 1917, Tengku Mansur underlined that Sumatran would continue to be disregarded until they are united (Reid 1987, 31). However, this call for unity as pillar of Sumatran nationalism was short-lived, in 1926 'Jong Bataks' separated from the organization which it considered as a 'Minangkabau' dominated organization (Reid 1987, 31). The theme of 'unity' remains within the intellectual currents among JSB youths even after the organization idealism shifted towards mainstream 'Indonesian nationalism' rather than 'Sumatran nationalism' cause, with its amalgamation into Pemuda Indonesia in 1931. More significantly, the continuity of the unity and common identity narrative and the integral 'linkage role of internal waters' in fostering such cause, remained within JSB youths who became members of Pemuda Indonesia or Indonesia Moeda, but on a larger geographical scale. The waters of the

Indonesian archipelago rather than merely internal waters of the Sumatran islands are now seen as the linkage between islands of the archipelago and the main pillar of Indonesian unity. The longevity of Yamin's *Tanah-Air* concept signifies its successful transfer from a Sumatran cultural nationalism to political nationhood concept, indicated by its inclusion in the first verse of the 1928 Youth Pledge (*Sumpah Pemuda*). Additionally, the necessity to foster the political culture of unity by Indonesian nationalist movement for the imagined nation has contributed greatly not only for the acceptance and embedment of the Tanah-Air concept, but also its contradictions which influence the nature of the nation maritime orientation, in order to fulfil such national unity ambition and needs.

Javanese Youth Nationalism and Centralized *Nusantara* for National Unity: Historical Memory of Disunity of the Kingdoms

Although the roots of the sea as the unifying features of the Indonesian archipelago philosophy within the *Tanah-Air* concept are path dependent from the JSB outlook on the internal waters linkage function between its coastal and hinterland region, an understanding of its contradictions requires further scrutiny of the political outlook and tradition of the Javanese youth nationalist movement (Jong Java). The first political outlook of Jong Java which is derived from the intersection of two of its ideal norms and values on governance as a cultural tradition, *manunggaling kawula-gusti* (unity and oneness between ruler and the ruled) and *tata tentrem kerta raharja* (safe and orderly system) is the centrality of the 'unity' theme. Thus, the achievement of such ideal governance of *manunggaling kawula-gusti* and *tata tentrem kerta raharja* according to Javanese cultural philosophy is very much dependent on the extent and nature of unity that is achieved and maintained. The preoccupation of Javanese political outlook on the theme of unity is the product of the Javanese myths about its picture of its past, specifically disunity in the island of Java (Berg 1965, 89-209). Specifically, the primacy on unity was driven by the transfer of myths through generations on the division of the Airlangga kingdom on the island of Java in the 11th century into two kingdoms, namely 'Janggala' and 'Panjalu' (Kediri) and the divisive nature of the waters (Nihom 1986, 79-100). This traumatic experience of disunity was reflected in verse 1-3 in Paragraph 68 (canto 68) in the old Javanese bible 'Nagarakertagama' (Robson 1995, 74-75).

This understanding of the Javanese picture of disunity in the past as mentioned in *Nagarakertagama* is an important starting point in understanding the centrality of the unity theme narrative within the Jong Java youth organization during the formative years of the nation. More significantly, the division of the Airlangga kingdom into Janggala and Panjalu provided a better picture although implicitly of the ramification of the seas as divider of land or the land-girt-by sea nature of the Java Island for the Javanese, illustrated by the last alinea of verse 3 of Canto 68 of *Nagarakertagama* as stipulated above. The embedment of collective memory of disunity in Javanese political culture evident were based on youth nationalist movements are combined with the need to ensure 'Javanese nationalism' rooted on the centrality of the unity theme, as the dominant political culture in the Indonesian nationalist movement. The vigour to ensure the forefront of Javanese nationalism idealism as the main seeds of the Indonesian nationalism movement had drawn its inspiration from the resolutions of the "Congress for the development of Javanese Culture" (*Congres voor Javaansche Cultuurontwikkeling*) by the Boedi Oetomo in 1910 which emphasize the need for the nationalism ideal to be based on an indigenous cultural form based on the belief of the glorious past and the need to counteract further embedment of the culture of the West on the local population (Kartodirdjo 1962, 77-78). The primacy of this distinctive Javanese nationalism consciousness of unity based on adherence to norms and values of the Sriwijaya and Majapahit kingdom as the first and second *Nusantara* is considered a necessity to counter the Ethical policy of the East Indies administration which are a threat to the consolidation of unity among the native population to support the prolonged dream of Indonesian nationalist movement of establishing imagined nation of Indonesia.

Related to the previous sentence, the basic tenets of the 'Ethical Policy' was based on the premise of association that views the colonizer and the colonized as friends or in other words the inclusion of

the Indonesian people into the cultural realm of the ruler and owning western civilization (Kartodirdjo 1962, 77-78). Naturally, the prolonged needs of unity discourse on the part of successive Javanese nationalist youth organization from Boedi Utomo to Jong Java derived from both factors has not only shaped an outlook of hostility and unilateralism among the Indonesian nationalist movement but also contributes to the continuing relevance and adherence of the *Tanah-Air* concept and its acceptance from a cultural nationalism towards a political-nationhood concept. Indeed, this fusion of Javanese cultural nationalism strategic mindset of achievement of unity based on the Majapahit imperium to the political philosophy and idealism of the national independence movement as a reference for the third *Nusantara* of Indonesia had become the seeds of the contradictions of the *Tanah-Air* concept.

From Cultural Nationalism to Political Nationhood Nationalism: The *Tanah-Air* Concept

The longevity of the *Tanah-Air* concept discourse among the Indonesian nationalist movement gained greater impetus after the fusion of different youth organizations, including Jong Java and Jong Sumatranen (JSB) into a single organization 'Indonesia Moeda' in December 1930. The high acceptance and support for Muhammad Yamin's concept was mostly attributed to its compatibility and linearity with the political culture of national unity as the central discourse of the Indonesian nationalism movement. Related to the political culture of unity, the national political culture that the nation of Indonesia wishes to develop is the political culture of unity and integration in line with the specific archipelagic nature of its environment (Parapat 1982, 8). Indonesia's geography presents a major weakness due to its large archipelagic nature and unequal location of population and natural resources, which presents a problem for the fostering of 'natural' unity (Parapat 1982, 8). The centrality of developing and maintaining a national political culture of unity had existed since the first national youth congress (*Kongres Pemuda Indonesia Pertama*) held in Batavia from 30th of April – second of May 1926. During the congress, Muhammad Yamin as head of JSB delegation reaffirmed that the idea of Indonesia's unity is the political idea of nationhood or (*The Indonesian idea of Unity as the first and foremost political idealism*) as the main objective for the fusion of the different youth's organizations (Darmansyah 2010, 48).

The common understanding and consensus to foster a political culture of unity and naturally the existence and embedment of the *Tanah-Air* concept was in part because the theme of unity exists among the different youth's organizations cultural nationalism discourse during the revolutionary period for independence. Various publications written by members of these organizations indicate the significance of the theme of unity not only for JSB and Jong Java, but also for other organizations. A text by R.C.L Senduk, a member of Jong Celebes, underlines this uniformity of emphasis on unity. In his article, 'Sepuluh Tahun Perkembangan', Senduk underlines the dream of 'Sulawesi yang bersatu' (unity of the Sulawesi people) (Satiman et al. 1981, 149-150). In retrospect, the recognition of the *Tanah-Air* concept is based on the common understanding of the relevance of the concept as the geo-political conception for the continuity of the political culture of national unity envisioned by these founding fathers of the Republic. This is reflected by the use the 'Tanah-Air' discourse in the publications of members of these different youth organizations, such as '*Pengorbanan terhadap Tanah-Air*' by Koentjoro Poerbopanoto (Satiman et al. 1981, 23-38), and '*Tanah-Air*' by Pen Klaar (Satiman et al. 1981, 292-300).

Based on these publications, the *Tanah-Air* concept represents the foundation physical elements for the distinct unity based national culture to persist for the ethnically and geographically diverse and dispersed nation. This emphasis on unity built upon the one wholeness of the land-water of the Indonesian archipelago were exemplified by the inclusion of the 'Tanah-Air' concept on the first alinea of the 1928 *Sumpah Pemuda* as a result of the second youth congress (*Kongres Pemuda Indonesia kedua*) held from the 26-28 October 1928 (Fajriuddin 2015, 17-18). Consequently, in general the birth of the distinct *Tanah-Air* concept stems from the intersection of Indonesia's archipelagic geography and the necessity to develop and foster the political culture of unity known as 'Bhinneka Tunggal Ika' stemming from such geographical nature. Thus, there is a need to view the

waters and seas as not only connector or unifier of the archipelago but also as one united sea from the integration of heart-seas into the hinter-seas as sea systems. In relation to the previous argument, it is worth considering further the *Tanah-Air* concept not only from the intersection between its political culture of unity and the dispersed archipelagic geography, but also the existence of a distinct Indonesian strategic culture and geopolitical concept emanating from such considerations.

The *Tanah-Air* Concept and the Strategic Culture of ‘*Cakra Manggilingan*’: Indonesia as *Third Nationale Staat* and the Sea in the Evolution from Dark to Golden Ages

The inter-relationship between need to develop and maintain a political culture of unity or *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* based on the one wholeness of the land-water of the Indonesian archipelago (*Tanah-Air* concept) were also related to the existence of a distinct inherent strategic culture. This strategic culture of *Cakra Manggilingan* (turning of the wheel) which derives from the Javanese word ‘Cokro’ (wheel) and ‘Manggilingan (turning). The birth of this distinctive strategic culture was based on the belief among the Indonesian nationalism movement and founding fathers that Indonesia is a *third nationale staat* after Sriwijaya and Majapahit kingdoms. According to Indonesian founding fathers, the Indonesian nation as a third *Nusantara* must view the meaning of its territoriality including the maritime environment as an evolution from the dark ages (colonialism and the islands by islands policy) to the golden ages (return of the imperium Majapahit era and centralized unity *Nusantara*). The existence of the *Cakra Manggilingan* strategic culture on time temporal evolution of the nation from the dark past, present condition and the return to the golden period was evident from the statement of Soekarno regarding the the golden past, the dark present and the promising future (Adam 2010, 167). Muhammad Yamin has hinted the existence of such distinctive national style in nation building based upon the Majapahit conception on territoriality and the connectivity characteristics of the seas within the Indonesian archipelago. In his article, ‘Sumpah Indonesia Raja’ (*The Pledge of the Indonesian Nation*), Yamin has underlined that the first oath of the Indonesian nation or ‘Nusantara’ was first announced on the foothills of ‘Bukit Siguntang’ by the Sriwijaya kingdom in 683 century, the second by Gadjah Mada Majapahit on the foothills of the Penanggungan mountain in 1331 and finally the 1928 Youth Pledge (Yamin 2000, 40-41). Within this context, Yamin underlines the first and second as the referral for the development of the ideal third *Nusantara* based on the 1928 Youth Pledge known as Indonesia.

The strategic culture of *Cakra Manggilingan* (turning of the wheel) is derived from a Javanese philosophical value on mysticism on the evolution of times, otherwise known as *Triwikrama* or the three seasons – the past, present and the future (Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan 1985, 42). More significantly, an inherent meaning of *Cakra Manggilingan* according to Javanese beliefs is the fact naturally in the process of turning the wheel from the dark ages to the golden ages, an event that has occurred in the past is believed to reoccur again sometime in the future (Rohman 2019, 2). The embedment of *Cakra Manggilingan* as lasting sets of beliefs is rooted in the dominance of the Javanese tradition of centralized unity in the nation’s political culture. This notion of centralized unity based on Javanese beliefs and values were best exemplified by the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for Indonesia’s Independence on the foundation of the new state on the 29th of May 1945. Yamin underlined this emphasizing that the philosophy and goals of the Indonesian nation is *persatuan hidup* (unity in life), the unity between the ruler and the ruled (*kawula-gusti*) based on the principles of an integralistic state (Bahar and Kusuma 1995, 35).

Furthermore, this suggests the successfulness of the intent of the Javanese nationalists of not only to instill the preconceptions within the *Indonesia Moeda* organization that unity is only achievable through Javanese values and beliefs, but more importantly ‘turning the wheel’ are dependent upon its successful implementation. The Javanese nationalisms essentially based upon the long-lasting beliefs and wisdom that within the period of the evolution, it has been the centre, the axle of the turning of the wheel (*cakra-penggilingan*) of the past, present, and necessarily the future (Reid 1979, 288). In retrospect, the triangular correlation between the need to foster and maintain a national political culture of unity, the ‘Tanah-Air’ concept and the strategic culture of ‘Cakra

Manggilingan' is the belief among the nationalist movement that successful shifts to the golden ages are very much dependent on the existence of unity among the dispersed peoples of the archipelago.

The *Tanah-Air* Concept and the *Shatterbelt* Geopolitics: From *Nusantara*, *Indra-Jaya* to *Poros Maritim Dunia*

Various publications on Indonesia's geopolitics and maritime policy have suggested the fragile nature of its national unity and integration since its early days as a sovereign nation, as an output of its dispersed archipelago condition combined with international and domestic threat environment as a major driving force in its strategic culture (Djalal 1996, 18-42). Thus, the main duties of Indonesia's founding fathers and political elites since the independence days has always been to nurture national unity based one shared history in a nation composed of different ethnicity, religion, culture and composed of thousands of dispersed islands. Thus, it is imperative that the sea as one feature of its geography is used as a tool to develop and strengthen that sense of unity and oneness (Yusuf 2010, 3-4). This prism as seeing the sea as the uniting rather than divisive element of the Indonesian archipelago was also based on experience of the use of the sea as a divisive tool by the Dutch colonial administration noting the archipelago condition of Indonesia to contain the spirit of the national revolution through its islands-by-islands occupation strategy which threaten the goals of national unity and integration of the Indonesian nationalism movement.

Integral to this islands-by-islands occupation strategy is the 3-mile rule of the 1939 Territorial and Maritime Ordinance. It defined the Netherlands Indies territorial sea as extending seaward three nautical miles from the low water mark of the islands. The sea outside of the 3-mile radius are then considered as high seas (Djalal 1996, 20). This unfavourable condition meant that the seas between the islands of the Indonesian archipelago contained pockets of waters, which may be used in, contravene against the purpose of national unity and integration of the new nation. An illustration of the usage of these loopholes in Indonesian territorial waters is the passing of Dutch warships Drenthe through the Java Sea towards West Irian and the seizure of guns in Tanjung Priok port from Royal Inter Oceans Lines Ciluwah destined for the rebellion movement (Djalal 2007, 34).

The divisive method of the islands-by-islands strategy of the Dutch colonial administration are not only felt from a legal prism but also in terms of political and economic security ways for the Indonesian independence movement in terms of their aspirations to unite the nation. One such measure is the sea blockade that constrained the capacity of the new Republic of Indonesia to conduct trade and economic activities with other nations, which are designed to ensure any trading activities, must be through Dutch authorities (Suraputra 1991, 153-154). These disintegrative activities of Indonesian national unity and integration through using the Indonesian sea-system as a divisive medium was compounded by the rise of internal local rebellions since early 1950's throughout the provinces within the Indonesian archipelago which made use of the defenceless conditions of Indonesian waters (Arif and Kurniawan 2017, 80).

Noting this reality, soon after it became fully independent on the 29 December 1949, the Indonesian government utilized the transitional nature of the national legislation deriving from the Agreement on Transitional Measures agreed at the Roundtable Conference in 1949 and made amendments which culminated in the Archipelagic State concept in the Djuanda Declaration on the 13 December 1957 (Tangsubkul 1984, 29-31). The existence of the Djuanda Declaration allows Indonesia's founding father to reinvent its national identity based on the 'Nusantara' geopolitical construct, which sees the archipelago's land and water as one political united unit that was a state practice since the Majapahit period (Tangsubkul 1984, 28-29).

The reinvention of Indonesian national identity based from the 'Nusantara' geopolitical construct centred on the sea as the medium for national unity and integration which originate from the maritime kingdoms of Majapahit and Sriwijaya exemplified by the President Soekarno speech which highlighted Indonesia only experience 'Nationale-Staat' during the Sriwijaya and Majapahit kingdoms where the all inhabitants of the different islands make up one entity geopolitically (Elson 2005, 145-160). Separately, according to a noted Indonesian maritime historian, the word *Nusantara* itself is derived from two words, *nusa* which are the Java Island and *antara* which meant the islands other than Java. Both according to Professor AB Lapijan are connected and integrated by the sea

system as the uniting feature in the Indonesian archipelago (Lapian 1992, 1-40). Specifically, the essence of *Nusantara* geopolitics meant the sea system of the Indonesian archipelago functions as the integrative medium of the islands of the archipelago through connectedness of the Indonesian heart-seas such as Java Sea, Banda Sea and Flores Sea (Lapian 1992, 1-40). Thus, in the contexts of Indonesian geopolitics, the uniting functions of the heart-seas illustrates the uniqueness of Indonesian conception of geopolitics as an output of its archipelagic geography, as compared with western geopolitical thought such as Mackinder and Mahan. Indonesia's conception of geopolitics cannot be seen as either maritime or continental school of geopolitics. Rather, the essence of *Nusantara* and the centrality of heart seas which transpire in the 'Tanah-Air' narrative emphasizes a balanced approach to geopolitics as evident by the existence of the *Tanah-Air* discourse and recent maritime discourse such as *Poros Maritim Dunia* (Global Maritime Fulcrum).

Within this context, it is evident the *Nusantara* concept which was taken as the foundation of Indonesia's geopolitical construct was very much influenced by the Javanese conception on territoriality in which the sea system functions as the uniting mechanism for the dispersed islands of the archipelago. Related to the previous argument, during the *Nusantara* days of the Javanese kingdoms, its uniting characteristics functions to expand the territorial area of its kingdoms towards other Non-java Islands, in which its meaning were revised by Indonesian youths during independence periods to mean all territories considered as part of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (Zuhdi 2017, 4-7).

In addition to the ramifications of its archipelago's physical features to its national unity as the basis of the *Nusantara* geopolitical construct, location, especially its world crossroad location became another consideration in Indonesia's geopolitical strategic thought. In its broader meaning, the word *Nusantara* also refers to the strategic location of Indonesia between two continents (Asia and Australia) and two oceans (Pacific and Indian oceans). The crossroad position of *Nusantara* or the Indonesian archipelago, Indonesia realized its responsibility to ensure its crossroad connectivity role is done in line with its national interest and international responsibility. This understanding brings about another conception of Indonesian geopolitics that may be understood as the outward expression/attitude of the nation towards the outside world. This conception of geopolitics known as '*Indonesia-Raya dalam Jalan Silang Dunia*' (Prosperous Indonesia in World-Cross Road location) or 'Indra-Jaya' emphasize the need to utilize its strategic world crossroad location and have a sense of responsibility with such locational endowments (Danusaputro 1978, 17-19). Furthermore, due to its strategic location, from the political, economy, and cultural viewpoint, Indonesia is prone to the acculturation of external influence (Suradinata 2005, 58-59). Related to the previous arguments, the seas of the Indonesian archipelago, which functions as a circulatory system including its sea-lanes of communication has strategic political and economic meanings not only for Indonesia but also for other nations (Suradinata 2005, 40-41).

In this sense, the notion of *Indra-Jaya* emphasized the nation's resilience in responding to its strategic world-crossroad location. Within this context, the *Indra-Jaya* conception of geopolitics emphasized that fragility of such world crossroad location towards national security meant that the nation's archipelagic conditions must be maintained as one integrated entity of territories within the *Tanah-Air* form and characteristics (Danusaputro 1982, 401-403). The maintenance of *Nusantara* as one united whole despite its dispersed archipelagic characteristics are done through ensuring the maritime environment of *Indra-Jaya* are maintained based from national interest first and the principle of neutrality in its seas and sea lane of communication (Danusaputro 1982, 403-307). Within this context, the *Indra-Jaya* conception reinforces the nation as an object of external influence due to its location and the significance of ensuring one wholeness of its archipelago territories through maintenance of freedom of movement and navigation throughout its sea-lanes of communication.

A more recent illustration of this 'shatterbelt' *Nusantara* geopolitics is the Global Maritime Fulcrum (*Poros Maritim Dunia*) of President Joko Widodo administration. Under such Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) outlook, President Joko Widodo declared the rebuilding of Indonesia's maritime culture with the objective of emerging as a respectable power between the Pacific and Indian Oceans (Muhibat 2017, 50-61). This objective, which will be pursued through implementation of

the five pillars of GMF including Indonesia as the axis of the two oceans, must reorientation and develop its maritime defence (Marsetio 2013, 14-15). More importantly, during the ninth East Asia Summit on 13th November 2014, in which President Jokowi emphasized that Indonesia has a major role in deciding the environment of the Pacific and Indian Ocean region as a safe and peaceful region for maritime trade and commerce (Marsetio 2018, 16-17). Within this context, President Joko Widodo through GMF sought to strengthen the 'shatterbelt' (between two oceans) geopolitics of the nation through emphasizing that Indonesia's worldview is maritime-centric of its environment. In line with this outlook, the Joko Widodo administration sought to strengthen bureaucratic and regulatory framework to better reflect this world's strategic location. This was illustrated in the Sea Policy Action Plan 2016-2019 documents which were established to centralize maritime priorities across various agencies and ministries as part of integration of maritime policy coordination (Morris and Paoli 2018, 34-35). The release of the Sea Policy Action Plan indicates a genuine aspiration to take advantage of Indonesia's geostrategic strengths and signalling a seriousness to pursue its maritime aspirations (Marzuki 2017, 1-2). Thus, it can be concluded that the GMF policy of President Joko Widodo aims to strengthen its 'between two oceans' outlook to foster the maritime centric national character of the nation through a top-down approach in line with the '*Tanah-Air*' narrative.

Tanah-Air* Concept and *Segara Nusantara

The Maritime Environment and Majapahit as the Ideal Polity for the Third *Nusantara* of Indonesia

In terms of the inter-relationship of the maritime environment with the strategic culture of *Cakra Manggilingan*, the turning of the wheel towards the return of the golden ages reminiscent of the glorious days of the Majapahit kingdoms implies the need to view the seas and waters of the Indonesian waters as one united sea-system comprising of the interconnected heart-seas and the hinter-seas encircling the eight land regions of *Nusantara* (*Daerah Delapan Tumpah-Darah Nusantara*) previously under the suzerainty of Gadjah Mada Majapahit. In relation to these beliefs and values, the Java Sea has a significant meaning as the heart-sea or core sea due to its unique features of unifying the other hinter-sea of the Indonesian archipelago. According to Muhammad Yamin on the elaboration of the 1945 national constitution, with the 12 miles of the maritime territoriality considered as the '*Tanah-Air*' of the Republic of Indonesia, the Java sea (*lautan jawa*) is the heart-sea of the nation (*Segara Nusantara*) circled by the 7 islands of Irian, Moluccas, Nusa Tenggara, Sulawesi, Kalimantan, Jawa and Sumatera (Yamin 1960, 415). The heart-sea perception of the Java Sea for the Indonesian archipelago (*Segara Nusantara*) signifies the foundation of the contradictory nature of the *Tanah-Air* concept, in which despite the one wholeness of the waters-land of the archipelago and the 12-mile extent of the maritime environment, the principle of governance remains concentric with the primacy on the sea closest to the main island of Java. Yamin further underline this preconception about the meaning of the maritime environment inherent in his '*Tanah-Air*' concept, emphasizing that right of passage foreign ships in the Java Sea, as *Segara Nusantara* must be based on the privileged given by the Republic of Indonesia (Yamin 1960, 416).

Such outlook on Indonesia's maritime environment were based on the consideration as an archipelagic nation, the core areas or the heartland is not the island itself, but a certain maritime area within the archipelago that has centralized location (Lapian 1992, 7). The legacy of this concentric style of management outlook of the maritime environment or the water element of the *Tanah-Air* concept are clearly illustrated by the discussion between Chairul Saleh and Mochtar Kusumaatmadja, which provided the impetus for the development of the archipelagic state concept. During the discussion, Chaerul Saleh reminded Prof. Mochtar Kusumaatmadja that Dutch warships are freely roaming the Java Sea, and something had to be done about it (Soewito 1993, 177-232). Thus, since the very beginning, the contradictions of the style of management of the *Tanah-Air* concept has been accepted by Indonesia's founding fathers like Yamin. This acceptance stems from the general assumption that achievement of unity as pre-conditions of 'turning of the wheel' towards the golden ages for the third *Nusantara* of Indonesia are best conducted through the Javanese values and belief

on concentric territorial management, including on the seas of the Indonesian archipelago (as indicated in Figure 1).

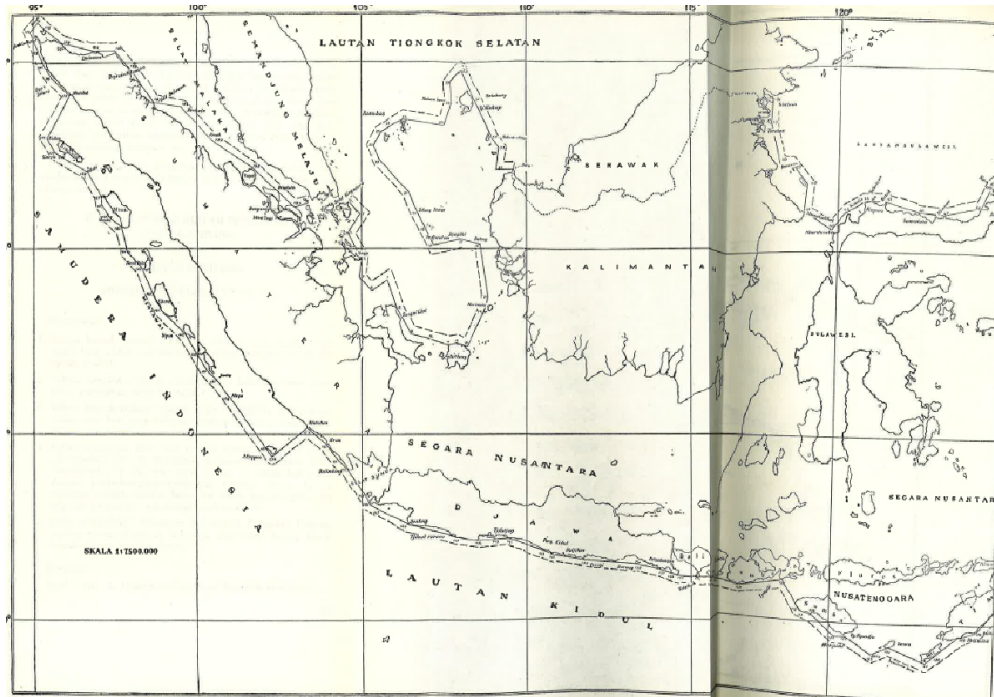


Figure 1. Map of Java Sea as Heart-Sea of the Archipelago
Lautan Djawa Segara Nusantara (Yamin 1960, 404-405)

In line with the conception of Indonesia's founding father that territoriality of Indonesia as third Nusantara should be based on the eight regions of *Nusantara* (*Delapan Daerah Tumpah-Darah Nusantara*) which was previously under the suzerainty of the Majapahit kingdom under leadership of Gadjah Mada, the sea has special meaning and significance in terms of the need for the eradication of enclaves within the archipelago. According to Yamin, the 'Tanah-Air' principle is a balanced concept, which will show the oneness nature both inward and outward of the Republic of Indonesia's territoriality through the eradication of enclaves in between the dispersed islands (Yamin 1960, 11-12). Indeed, the territorial condition during the independence period in which parts of Indonesia's seas between the islands are still considered as high seas does not help the sovereignty of the new nation during that time (Djalal 2018, 4). Thus, the meaning of the seas of the Indonesian archipelago are the unifier rather than divider of the enclaves of the islands as one completely united entity. In retrospect, these uniting prism of Indonesia's founding fathers on viewing the seas of the archipelago implies the understanding it is considered as a sea-system comprising of heart-seas which unites not only the different hinter-seas but also the different enclaves of islands of the archipelago (see map of the Java Sea as *Segara Nusantara*).

In addition to that, seeing the seas of the Indonesian archipelago as a circulatory system is also very important in the context of *Cakra Manggilingan* (turning of the wheels) for the new nation, especially in the development of national unity process of moving from the dark ages of colonialism towards the golden era as has been achieved during the first and second *Nusantara*. The integration of the hinter-seas with the heart-seas of the Indonesian archipelago has been the enduring catalyst to unite and connect the community of coastal peoples, which lived in the dispersed islands of the nation in response to these conditions (Kusumaatmadja 2018). Consequently, the uniting characteristic of the seas of the Indonesian archipelago serves as reinforcing physical features for the *Tanah-Air* narrative. Following from the previous sentence, since the declaration of Independence on the 17th of August 1945 up until the late 1950's period, there was a serious internal national issue of national disunity in Indonesia including rebellion movement, which aims to be separated from the central government. Within this context, the existence of the 1939 Dutch Territorial Maritime Ordinance

limited the authority of the central government to manage and contain these regional grievances (Djajal 2018). These factors had increased the urgency for the national political elites to further develop an indigenous maritime territorial conception building from the *Tanah-Air* concept to support the transition from the colonial to independent era as enunciated in *Cakra Manggilingan*.

Segara Nusantara and the Heart-Sea of the Archipelago

There is very little information on how Indonesian founding fathers and the nationalist view the maritime environment based on the imagined nationhood mental map enunciated in the *Tanah-Air* Mental Map. However, unravelling this mystery must begin with its contradictory nature centred on seeing the 13th -14th century Majapahit kingdom as the ideal polity (second *Nusantara*), especially in the management of its territorial suzerainty for the third *Nusantara* of Indonesia. Related to the previous sentence, the dominant nature of the 'Cakra Manggilingan' strategic culture and mindset of seeing the colonialism and colonial policy of belonging to the dark ages has indirectly contributed to the lack of Mahanism vision on sea power and outlook on its archipelagic maritime environment, which previously existed during the VOC occupation of Dutch East Indies. On the contrary, the connotation towards the Sriwijaya and Majapahit kingdoms as first and second 'Nusantara' meant that the outlook of the Nation's founding fathers is very much influenced by the Majapahit naval tradition on the governance of the seas of the Indonesian archipelago. This outlook for the establishment of reinvented nationalism of the new nation based on the glorification of these kingdoms meant it is very hard to accept the positive element of development during the colonial period. More significantly, it created a national character among the post-independence society to lay the blame on the land-oriented outlook during the colonial period as the main reason for the degradation of the national maritime character (Mulya 2013, 131).

Subsequently, it negates the fact of the possibility of a maritime outlook of the Dutch administration from the VOC period in line with Mahan conception of sea power adjusted to the unique archipelagic characteristics of the Dutch East Indies. An illustration is the prevalence use of the 1939 Territorial Maritime Ordinance (TZMKO 1939), whereas the colonial administration was not burdened by the minimal 3 mile territorial limit economically and politically due to the ability of the '*Koninklijk Paketvaart Maatschappij*' (KPM) to integrate and connect the islands of the Dutch East Indies (Mulya 2013, 132). The existence of such a Mahanism outlook of the Dutch colonial administration on control of the sea are seen in the writings of Dutch historians on the Dutch East Indies. This is clearly highlighted in, "De Compagnie als instrument van den oorlog ter zee 1602-1641 (VOC as a tool of war at sea)", by Dr. F.R.J. Verhoeven published on the 'Koloniaal Tijdschrift' (van Leur and Verhoeven 1974, 43). The article underlines that one of the idea behind the establishment of *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC) is not only as a trading company but also as a tool of sea power to manage the maritime challenges of Spain, Portugal and the United Kingdom in the waters of Indonesian archipelago. According to Verhoeven, the main duties of the VOC was directed towards the objective of ending the trade monopoly of Spain and Portugal in East Asia, in which case defence of the archipelago especially ensuring access to the sea route between the archipelago and the Netherlands are guaranteed are a priority task (van Leur and Verhoeven 1974, 43). Thus, VOC could no longer be identified solely as a Naval power which operates independently against an adversary at a distant distance from its base. It has to take into consideration the maritime defence of the Dutch East Indies as its newly acquired territories, especially the routes to the Netherlands motherland. The VOC actions reflects Mahan views that, "when a control arises of control over distant regions, politically weak- whether they be crumbling empires, anarchical republics, colonies, or islands below a certain size, it must be ultimately decided by naval power, by an organized military force afloat, which represents the communications that form so prominent a feature in all strategy" (Mahan 2013, 146).

However, despite the existence of Mahanism mindset on the Dutch colonial outlook for the defence of the East Indies archipelago, it was never taken as the basis for consideration as a factor on maritime territorial management by the nationalist's movement during the nation's formative years

due to the collective antipathy towards the Dutch colonial policy and the need to develop an indigenous basis of maritime territoriality of the third Nusantara. This is reflected in the more dominant unilateral views towards international law during that time, shown by Yamin's opinion on the maritime territories of the third 'Nusantara' of Indonesia during a meeting of the Preparatory Committee for Indonesia's Independence (*Badan Penyelidik Usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia*) on the 31st of May 1945 as follows;

“The Indonesian archipelago does not only lie in the intersection of the Indian and Pacific Ocean, but also inland seas and straits which are large and narrow in diameter. In these inland seas and straits, the principle of freedom of the seas cannot be implemented as it will undermine the nation's sovereignty” (Bahar and Hudawati 1998, 54).

Yamin's statement above during the 1945 BPPKI meeting illustrates that not only does the archipelagic character was the consideration for the inapplicability of Grotius Mare Liberum (*freedom of the seas*) in Indonesia's context, but implicitly the significance of achieving sovereignty of the inland seas and straits through control of such waters. This is because pockets of waters considered as high seas will create enclaves of the islands detrimental to the oneness philosophy *Tanah-Air* concept. In retrospect, the preference for the concentric maritime territorial governance model of the *Majapahit* kingdom was not only because it represents the golden age of Nusantara in terms of *Cakra Manggilingan* but also the very fact that the most important inland seas and straits (Malacca and Sunda Straits) during the first and second *Nusantara* (Sriwijaya and Majapahit) in terms of protection of trading and threat perception was located around the two main islands of Java and Sumatra. This notion was reflected as early as the first *Nusantara* of Sriwijaya, whereas the ability of the kingdom to coerce mercantile shipping to harbor at its port indicates the need to mobilize and maintain naval presence at critical points in the Straits of Malacca and East Java Sea, compared to being present only at the Musi and Batang Hari river (Heng 2013, 389). Thus, the unique combination of archipelagic maritime geography and the development of unity based political culture rooted in Majapahit and Sriwijaya tradition on concentric centralized maritime domain management has given birth to a distinct maritime orientation and tradition within the *Tanah-Air* concept known as *laut utama* (heart-sea). This conception sees a certain maritime region of the Indonesian archipelago in proximity of these important straits and seas and around the Java Sea as the heart-sea region known as *Segara Nusantara*.

Although it is generally well-known that the maritime area known as *Segara Nusantara* such as the Malacca Straits and the Java Sea has for centuries been an important trading route for travellers in the history of maritime Southeast Asia (Sutherland 2007, 25-70). Previous studies on the naval policy of the Sriwijaya and Majapahit kingdoms indicate the existence of such heart-sea conception of maritime orientation inherent within the *Tanah-Air* concept, in line with the concentric Kautilya's Arthashastra Mandala statecraft on territoriality. In its original Sanskrit term, 'Mandala' refers to circle or completion, representing a microcosm of the Universe. The geometric circle of Mandala was designed to draw attention to its centre, where power lies – defined in Javanese thinking as the Java Island itself (Laksmana 2011, 103). A starting point in the existence of such Java sea as heart-sea conception can be seen in the Javanese bible '*Negarakertagama*' (Book of Glorious Dynasty) alinea 16 on the roles of 'Mantri Jaladhi' (the naval officer of the Majapahit kingdom), whereas it is emphasized that 'Mantri Jaladhi' main force posture is concentrated on Singhosari (Nugroho 2011, 179). This control of the Java Sea first conception of Majapahit navy is also evident by the largely supportive rather than primary task of the naval fleet of friendly smaller kingdoms under its suzerainty under attack (Nugroho 2011, 215-216).

The unique archipelago geography of Indonesia compounded by the need to foster a culture of national unity emanating from the realities of such physical geography suggests that the *Segara Nusantara* maritime orientation in viewing the 'air' (water) of the *Tanah-Air* concept is a distinctively Indonesian outlook that lies between the Mackinder 'heartland' and Mahan 'control of the sea' sea

power conception. It differs from Mackinder heartland concept centred on Eurasian land mass region as the heart of the world but rather the heart-sea of *Segara Nusantara* centred on the Java Sea region which connects the seven main islands of Indonesia. It also understood the significance of the Mahan notion of control of the maritime environment, but degree of control depends on the relative distance and proximity to *Segara Nusantara* or the Java Sea zone as the heart-sea.

Conclusion

The paradoxes inherent within the ‘Tanah-Air’ concept emanating from the intersection of its three pillars has profound implications for Indonesia’s current aspiration under President Joko Widodo administration to move beyond an archipelagic towards a maritime nation. Indeed, ever since assuming office in 2014, President Jokowi has elevated maritime affairs as a top agenda with the announcement of the Global Maritime Fulcrum consisting of five pillars with the aim of realizing ‘Indonesia as a sovereign, advanced, independent, strong maritime nation that is able to provide a positive contribution of peace and security in the region as well as to the world’. However, as reflected in the follow up 2017 Indonesian Ocean Policy document (IOP), governance of the seas is generally designed as an element to support the nation’s long-established national resilience policy with primacy on internal threats.

This reality provides a hindsight of the continuity prevalence of concern on national unity despite mentions of the nation’s strategic location and maritime ancestry. The ramification of contradictions within the *Tanah-Air* concept as the basis of subsequent Indonesian maritime policies in the subsequent years later, is profoundly seen on programs of the maritime culture policy pillar as one of the main roadmap of the 2017 IOP document. For instance, program on ‘inventorying maritime cultural values and social system’, implies tendencies to base its maritime vision from history-cultural prism of the empires of Sriwijaya and Majapahit kingdoms and its centralized concentric strategic culture on maritime territorial management noting the archipelagic geography of the first and second ‘Nusantara’ during those times. This reflects the acceptance of such contradictions between the need for an indivisible land-water element of archipelago Indonesia on one hand and the belief to manage it through centralized concentric Javanese philosophy on territories.

Consequently, different from the maritime greatness aspirations of past and current maritime nations like the United Kingdom *Britannia Rules the Waves* for instance, which is based on geographical awareness to expand its *lebensraum* (space). Indonesia’s current maritime power nation aspiration is based on a foundation (‘Tanah-Air’ concept) nationhood vision, which emphasizes on the sea as unifier of the dispersed archipelagic islands for the goals of national unity rather than a medium to expand. To sum up, this article concludes the existence of paradoxes between the philosophy of the sea within the *Tanah-Air* concept and the current need for the nation to become a maritime power.

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