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Chief Editor:

Sariyatun, Johan Richard Weintr  , et.al



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Sariyatun, Johan Richard Weintré, et. al

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Exploring Inter-Regional and International Cooperation in Indonesia
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Women's Revolutioner Agency And The Politics of Indonesia

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Abstract: *This essay analyzes historical data compiled in Indonesia postcolonial and post Soekarno era. The author examine how Indonesia woman showed a powerful position in both the Soekarno government and the local community, connects her ideal virtues to her social and political practices and how this dynamic contributes to develop. A more articulated, critical, and creative from agency. Although the practice of revolutioner agency not developed in post Soekarno government. This essay does not claim to deconstruct discursive gender norms, it resignifies the norms from the political structural domain, which women's movement, to liberate themselves from the control of the discursive gender norms.*

Key Word: *Women's, Revolutioner Agency, The Politics*

INTRODUCTION

There were differences between women who lived in national movements and those who lived after Soekarno's era. It is visible from the systematic pressure of women role. Those differences was not only to diminish radical movement, but for the legitimation power. Then women as the revolutioner agent it just clearly on the physical struggle era, and in early 21st century the politic role got respond.

There were a lot of pioner women in 19th century who contributed opinions to make a change. In this case, having perspective and mission were needed for organizations, so it could change the people way of seeing towards the women marriage tradition without getting education as what men got. This suppression should have wiped out by

learning, reading, and collecting Indonesian women. R.A Kartini and Dewi Sartika were the first pioner of women movement.³⁷

Struggling to adapt to isolation, Kartini wrote letters to Ovink-Soer and her Dutch schoolmates, protesting the gender inequality of Javanese traditions such as forced marriages at a young age, which denied women the freedom to pursue an education.

Ironically, in her eagerness to escape her isolation, Kartini was quick to accept a marriage proposal arranged by her father. On November 8, 1903, she wed the regent of Rembang, Raden Adipati Joyodiningrat. Joyodiningrat was 26 years older than Kartini, and already had three wives and

³⁷ Sukanti Sueyochondro, *Potret Pergerakan Wanita Indonesia*, Rajawali, Jakarta, 1984, hlm 68-69



12 children. Kartini had recently been offered a scholarship to study abroad, and the marriage dashed her hopes of accepting it. According to Javanese tradition, at 24 she was too old to expect to marry well.

Intent on spreading her feminist message, with her new husband's approval, Kartini soon set about planning to start her own school for Javanese girls. With help from the Dutch government, in 1903 she opened the first Indonesian primary school for native girls that did not discriminate on the basis of their social status. The school was set up inside her father's home, and taught girls a progressive, Western-based curriculum. To Kartini, the ideal education for a young woman encouraged empowerment and enlightenment. She also promoted their lifelong pursuit of education. To that end, Kartini regularly corresponded with feminist Stella Zeehandelaar as well as numerous Dutch officials with the authority to further the cause of Javanese women's emancipation from oppressive laws and traditions. Her letters also expressed her Javanese nationalist sentiments.

In the direction of developing many of national actions were showed actively, in Japanese era, new women movement appeared against the Japanese women movement called Fujinkai. They felt depressed by Japanese army and they were not noticed by the government. Walking along each other this women movement having dream to liberate Indonesia much better from colonialism.³⁸

In 20th century, women movement gathered together and created a new movement to wipe out every suppression from time to time. Srikandi and Kartini were two persons whom inspired them. Based on their stories, they started to reach their hopes, such as women emancipation, and they struggle for the Indonesian prosperity.

The emancipation was to fight for women positions in their marriage life, heighten the understanding being a mother to their family. All above was showed by adding some schools, and heighten the understanding of being women, and it was the principal for women movement.³⁹

Finally, women movement in Indonesia was supported by the past events. In this case, women organization indicated to women emancipation in Indonesia that league in women movement, consist of women organizations as in Kongres Perempuan Pertama Indonesia (22 December 1928).⁴⁰

National independence and democratization give women important new opportunities to act citizens of a democratic polity. For Indonesian women, this opportunity came in 1950 when the newly independent republic began a process of post-colonial national-building and democratic transition. Indonesian women had to define their roles, citizenship and participation in the new state, tasks largely met through their vigorous social-movement activism. One Indonesian woman proudly introduced her new nation foreign audience by claiming:

³⁹ A.K. Pringgodani. *Sejarah Pergerakan Rakyat Indonesia*, (Jakarta: Dian Rakyat, 1970), hlm.20-21

⁴⁰ Nani Soewondo-Soerasno, *Kedudukan Wanita Indonesia dalam Hukum dan Masyarakat*, Timun Mas, Djakarta, 1955, hlm 128; atau Depdikbud national historical documents Jakarta, *Biografi Tokoh Kongres Perempuan Indonesia Pertama*, Depdikbud, Jakarta, 1991, cetakan 1, hlm x; atau Sucanti Suryochondro, *Potret Pergerakan Wanita Indonesia*, Rajawali, Jakarta, 1984; atau A. Nunuk Prasetyo, *Gerakan Anti-Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan*, Kanisius, Yogyakarta, 1998, hlm 17; atau Saskia Wieringa, *Kuntilanak Wangi: Organisasi-organisasi Perempuan Indonesia Sesudah 1950*, Kalyanamitra, Jakarta, 1988, hlm 12 (to examine more deeply, the authors conducted in-home interviews of former women activists or members of the IEC, she is Nunuk Prasetyo confirmed the existence of depoliticization against women and women's use of the word in the organization since Kongres Female Indonesia I held)

³⁸ *Ibid*, hlm 67



Indonesia can pride itself with a women's movement, which is considered to be one of the most dynamic and advanced in the less developed countries and even more advanced than in some industrialized countries. (Ismail 1959: 304)

METHOD

The theory used in the study of history should be based on research and findings are supported by data and arguments. In the end, the theory provides convenience menganalisis facts collected in this study.

The theory used in this research are structure, agency and feminism

Structure is the recurrent patterned arrangements which influence or limit the choices and opportunities available.⁴¹ Agency is the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own free choices. The structure versus agency debate may be understood as an issue of socialization against autonomy in determining whether an individual acts as a free agent or in a manner dictated by social structure.

Structural functionalists such as Émile Durkheim see structure and hierarchy as essential in establishing the very existence of society. Theorists such as Karl Marx, by contrast, emphasize that the social structure can act to the detriment of the majority of individuals in a society. In both these instances "structure" may refer to something both material (or "economic") and cultural (i.e. related to norms, customs, traditions and ideologies).

Some theorists put forward that what we know as our social existence is largely determined by the overall structure of society. The perceived agency of individuals can also mostly be explained by the operation of this structure.

Lastly, a third option, taken by many modern social theorists (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990), attempts to find a point of balance between the two previous positions. They see structure and agency as complementary forces - structure influences human behaviour, and humans are capable of changing the social structures they inhabit. Structuration is one prominent example of this view.

Feminism has altered predominant perspectives in a wide range of areas within Western society, ranging from culture to law. Feminist activists have campaigned for women's legal rights (rights of contract, property rights, voting rights); for women's right to bodily integrity and autonomy, for abortion rights, and for reproductive rights (including access to contraception and quality prenatal care); for protection of women and girls from domestic violence, sexual harassment and rape; for workplace rights, including maternity leave and equal pay; against misogyny; and against other forms of gender-specific discrimination against women.⁴²

During much of its history, most feminist movements and theories had leaders who were predominantly middle-class white women from Western Europe and North America. However, at least since Sojourner Truth's 1851 speech to American feminists, women of other races have proposed alternative feminisms. This trend accelerated in the 1960s with the Civil Rights movement in the United States and the collapse of European colonialism in Africa, the Caribbean, parts of Latin America and Southeast Asia. Since that time, women in former European colonies and the Third World have proposed "Post-colonial" and "Third World" feminisms. Some Postcolonial Feminists, such as Chandra Talpade Mohanty, are critical of Western feminism

⁴¹ Barker, Chris. 2005. *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice*. London: Sage

⁴² Chodorow, Nancy J., *Feminism and Psychoanalytic Theory* (Yale University Press: 1989, 1991).



for being ethnocentric. Black feminists, such as Angela Davis and Alice Walker, share this view.

Dewi Sartika was known as the pioneer of education for women.⁴⁶

WOMEN REVOLUTIONER IN 19th Century

In 19th century, Indonesia had had women whom got passion in showing their roles to clean the oppression of colonial chief. The national warrior that spur the spirit of Indonesian women were Martha Christina Tiahahu (died in 1818) from Maluku, Cut Nyak Dien (died in 1908), and Cut Nyak Meutia (died in 1910) from Aceh.⁴³

The next pioneer of Indonesian woman was Raden Ajeng Kartini (21 April 1879-17 September 1904). Her biggest dream was to drive the Indonesian women community listed on her letters, so that it was booked and now it is known as "Habis Gelap Terbitlah Terang" or Out of Darkness to Light. She expressed about what Indonesian women faced in their era, such as, necessity marriage, polygamy. Kartini knew the consequences of polygamy, because her father had done it and got miserable fate, then Kartini married with a regent of Rembang named RMAA Djojodhiningrat whom did polygamy too, divorced, and less education for women.⁴⁴

Besides R.A Kartini, Raden Dewi Sartika (December 4th 1884- September 11th 1947) was the leading figure and pioneer for the education for women in Indonesia. Dewi Sartika established a school for ladies in 1904 based on her knowledge. She founded a school named Sekolah Isteri which changed to Sekolah Keutamaan Isteri. There had been 9 ladies schools until 1912 in every regencies.⁴⁵

REVOLUTIONER OF WOMEN AFTER COLONIAL

When Japanese had their era (1942-1945), there was a prohibition for every organizations. Then, Japan made new organizations for the propaganda to importance and the prosperity of East Asia. Women movement were built by the wives of the local employees, and the leader was the wife from each local chief, it was Fujinkai. Fujinkai was only made for women's stuff in increasing the domestic creativity, besides to amuse the army and held a course for those who had illiterate. For those whom had a lot of knowledges, this boundary was worried by those whom did not join Fujinkai.⁴⁷ National movement that consist of anti-colonialism women was GWS (Gerakan Wanita Sosial). Nationalists, including women, were arrested and murdered.⁴⁸

NATIONAL ACTIONS

National actions had done in early 20th century by the women movement, such as education for women, underage marriage, the marriage rules in Islam, the importance to build a self-worth for women, and observing bad effect caused by the marriage. A campaign against the underage marriage was held too.

In Japanese era, one of the women observer was led by Ny. Sujatin. She went to Lasem to investigate about the laborers condition in fact they become the hostage laborers. This community was doing a

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Nani Soewondo Soerasno, *Kedudukan Wanita Indonesia dalam Hukum dan Masyarakat*, Timun Mas, Jakarta, 1955, hlm 126

⁴⁵ Menyusul pendirian sekolah-sekolah di Tasik Malaya (1913), Sumedang (1916), Cianjur (1916).

Ciamis (1917), Cicurung (1918), Kuningan (1922), dan Sukabumi (1926)... dalam *Dinamika Wanita Indonesia: Seri 01; Multidimensional*, oleh Pusat Pengembangan Sumberdaya Wanita, Cetakan 1, Pusat Pengembangan Sumberdaya Wanita, Jakarta, Mei 1990, hlm 118

⁴⁶ Ibid, hlm 127

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Saskia Weirenga, *On air*, hlm 12



protest about the condition of women workers, but it also talked about mistress whom men the owner of batik had.⁴⁹

In 1935, the first election of women members in congress. It was done because the colonial opened up a chance for women without voting.⁵⁰ Therefore, a campaign was held and it was used for women so that they could be in Volksraad. The first woman who studied in Dutch as a lawyer was Maria Ulfa, and a vote for woman was official opened. Therefore, a campaign was held and it was used for women so that they could be in Volksraad. The first woman who studied in Dutch as a lawyer was Maria Ulfa, and a vote for woman was official opened.⁵¹

Gerwani as a new-born organization in March 1954, it showed a lot of national actions as it was showed in women movements. This movement helped a mass of political party with passion, and willing to help people in suppression. The examples of this actions were against DI-TII in 1951, extinguish RMS in 1956 by helping government and coordinate the chiefs, helping TNI to destroy PRRI-Permesta (1957-1958) being members of Palang Merah, and helping local movements from PRRI-Permesta, especially Sumatera and Celebes.

Yet there are few images of Indonesian women as political actors, especially for the first decade of independence, and the 1950s Indonesian women's movement has received little attention in scholarship on Indonesian politics and history. It's the importance of the 1950's in Indonesian political history and the fundamental questions this period raises about gender, nationalism,

revolutioner agency, and women's citizenship. Basu (1995:2) notes that comparative literature on women's movements mainly ignores post-colonial societies. Studies of the Third World fail to consider women as agents and activists in their own right. There are ongoing calls to make visible and intelligible (to the West) the organizational practices and writings of Third World women (Alexander and Mohanty 1997:xix), thereby broadening understandings of other women and diversity of experiences and lives often generalized under the monolithic label "Third World women".

Yet simply recovering women's history and 'adding in' their stories is no longer enough. Feminists contend that 'such a process of recovery must take place alongside further theoretical developments and co-exist with them while noting that 'the very process of recovery can yield important theoretical insights (Offen et al, 1991: xxx). Women are not outside history and politics. Recovering images of women as political and historical processes women act within. This makes the 1950s an interesting period within which to study Indonesian women. It was the first period of national independence, and women participated both in the development of a new state and in democratic political system. Their participation raises important theoretical questions about women's engagement with these gendered political processes.

Women's agency revolutioner and the politics movement national independence women are rarely analysed for their impact on women or for the extent to which such political transitions meet women's interests, even though these political processes are critical to women's activism.

Besides revolutioner actions, women movements doing national actions related to safety of people such as, a struggle against economic crisis in 1958 by sending their delegations to the government so that there would be lowering price in

⁴⁹ Rambe, *Sijantin Kartowijono: Mencari Makna Hidupku*, Sinar Harpaan, Jakarta, 1983, hlm 43-44

⁵⁰ Vreede-de Stuers, *Op.cit*; hlm 95

⁵¹ Locher-Scholten, *Women and the Colonial State: Essays on Gender and Modernity in the Netherlands Indies 1900-1942*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam, 2000.. (dalam *Penghancuran Gerakan Perempuan oleh Saskia F.W.*)



September 1958. In spite of government did not do,⁵² the struggle against economic crisis in 1960 by Gerwani, SOBSI, Kowani also kind of organizations was responed by Soekarno, for lowering price to standart level in two or three years, this struggle in 1961 was done by Gerwani.⁵³

In the next year, Indonesia was really apprehensive by taking back West Irian in 1962, many of women movements such as Gerwani and Perwari sent a volunteer to liberate West Irian and also increasing the members.⁵⁴ Next the role in Dwikora (IN 1964-1965) was done by Gerwani and SOBSI. They supported nasionalisation of Caltex the oil company from England by doing a boycott, maids against their boss, that action spread all over restaurants and shops that prevent to serve strangers.⁵⁵ In the same year in September, they did a practice fot those who volunteered themselves to wipe out Malaysia.⁵⁶

It was done by the women organization and women whom against US in 1965.⁵⁷ This movements walked together in revocationing IGO/B, against corruption, against toward Imperialism in America,⁵⁸ including to oppose and

boycott US production films that could destroy Indonesian youngsters.⁵⁹

In new order era there were some depoliticizations that could influence development process, for example the development cabinet, fusion, voting that always win by certain parties, people corporations when every members was placed being Kopri (Korps Pegawai Republik Indonesia), ABRI had role with some reasons as stabilitator system and dinamic functions of nations, it had P4 (Pedoman, Penghayatan, dan Pengalaman Pancasila) to reach supports along new order era. All of these, it become a big power against every kind of cristization system from every organizations.

Next, many of depoliticization became a belief to limit the women movement. Therefore, women organizations in new order era had experience of domestication with implications of moderation, segregartion, and depoliticization. Women movement itself worked by it own and become sporadic. Government in this era, made a limitations for social and women movements by diminishing the victims of PKI. In the end, many of social movements including women organizations which preserving, militant and active to fight for NKRI from Neo-colonialism and imperialism should have stopped.

Women movement was radical by the government, because they usually di any revolutiner activities, it was like "ganyang Malaysia", to help West Irian freedom, and to help farmers also the workers with development principle of new order era. Except, domesticastion of Indonesian women in Panca Dharma Wanita appeared.

In the new order era, women organizations became functional organizations. In this case, the old organization should adapt, and it should consist of workers' wife. Wanita Demokrat

⁵² Harian Rakyat, 17 September 1958, hlm. 2

⁵³ Harian Rakyat, 30 Januari 1960, hlm. 2

⁵⁴ Saskia Eleonora Weiringa, *Op.cit*; hlm 258

⁵⁵ Vrouwengroep Komite Indonesie (tanpa tahun), *Indonesische Vrouwen in Beweging 1949-1965*, Amsterdam: Vrouwengroep Komite Indonesie.

⁵⁶ Latihan yang dilakukan ialah baris-berbaris dan latihan kemiliteran, termasuk juga pelajaran tentang pidato Presiden berjudul Tavip, Marxisme, masalah yang berhubungan dengan produksi. Ny. Subandrio memberikan pelajaran tentang gerakan perempuan kepada para kader yang akan memperkuat barisan progresif revolusioner. Ny. Subandrio mengatakan bahwa saat itu negara kita diancam komplotan neo-kolonial Malaysia. Dari situ gerakan perempuan berdislipin karan pengalaman pahit kolonialisme dan latihan kaum buruh wanita tidak akan tertinggal.

⁵⁷ Harian Rakjat, 15 dan 29 Januari, 30 September 1965

⁵⁸ Saskia Eleonora Weiringa, *Op.cit*; hlm. 269

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⁵⁹ Hikmah Diniah, *Op.cit*; hlm 145



that that have a mass line as before and connected with PNI showed the similar conditions after PNI to PDI.

It has reduced the women roles in to three things, "Isti, Ibu, dan Ibu Rumah Tangga" or "Mother, Wife, and Housewife". This is so noble, but it makes a place for women decrease as "the liberated people who expressed their thought to the betterment women"

Women organizations in new order era, they had to follow the rules. In this era, there are no more revolutioner women whom spirit had ever showed of Dewi Sartika, R.A Kartini, and S.K. Trimurti. Besides those above, Kongres Perempuan Indonesia that walk as well, it become not as good as before in new order era.⁶⁰ So, there were some active women organizations without support from government. They created many organizations, non-government, that helped women instances in addition to decrease discriminations and exploitation of women still work, so they could get a support from government.

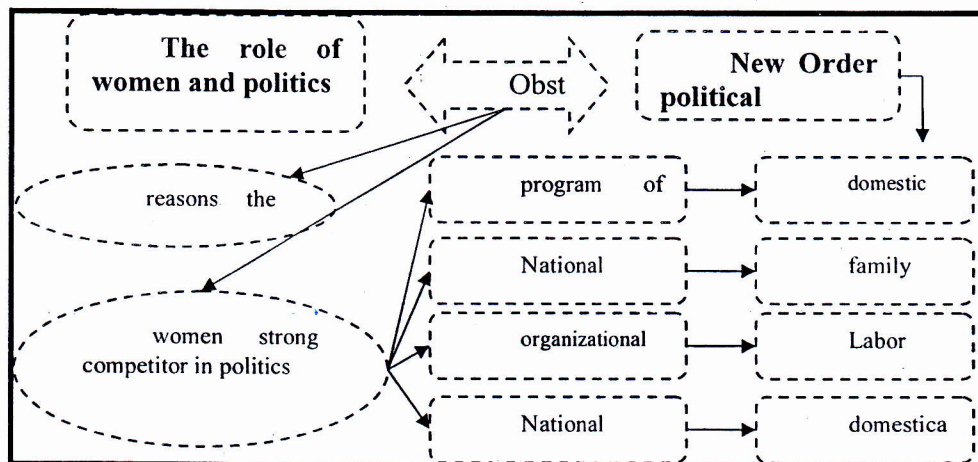


Table 1. Restrictions on women's role

⁶⁰ Wawancara dengan anggota KPI Ibu Nunuk Prasetyo



On the diagram, it explains that women movement works with every politic power before new order era. It became a big problem in the new order stablization. The other problem, new order regime made a reduction of women role for totality in government. So, it can be said that women movement itself being an effort program of domestic duty for Indonesian women. In the end, regime of new order era wants to decrease the opotition including the authority towards the women movement.

WOMEN ORGANIZATIONS EXISTED IN NEW ORDER

- a) *Dharma Wanita*, was a shelter of 19 organizations of civilian employee's wife with many programs and the small organization was born since 1960s. It has automatic members, classified from Ia to VI e.⁶¹
- b) *Dharma Pertiwi*, existed in 1964. This was the combination of Army's wives (Persit Kartika Canda Kirana), Air Force (PIA Ardhyagarini), Navy (Jalasenastri), and Police Force (Bhayangkari). It is similar with Dhatma Wanita, Dharma Pertiwi also has automatic members. The members from ABRI's wives with degree as corporal and general.⁶²
- c) *PKK*, specially for helping government to increase the status program of poor women in city or countryside. This organization is made by Kantor Menteri Negara Urusan Peranan Wanita or other instances, for example Pos Pelayanan Terpadu (Posyandu) or Intregated Service Post, to give nutrisions for mother and child. This component is a part of Keluarga Berencana to expedite the next program, Norma

Keluarga Kecil Bahagia Sejahtera (NKKBS). Out of the program, PKK does not handle about violence of women or any other problems. In a practice, PKK can motivate and organize women in the low level, such as a worker in Pasar Beringharjo that will go home if PKK will be held.⁶³

REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN THE POLITICS

In addition to the 1945 contitution and its amendments (completed in 2002), the policy basis for the functioning of the government was determ ined by the elaboration of the 1945 constitution on that had been developed by the MPR in the Garis-Garis Besar Haluan Negara (GBHN, Broad Guidelines of State Policy). From 1988, these guidelines contained provisions regarding the role of women, and there has in addition been a junior Ministry for Women's Affairs (latterly for Women's Empowerment). In the 1999Broad Guidelines, it was declared that the empowerment of women would be conducted through a twofold strategy.

First, improvements would be made in the position and role of women in the nation and state, through national policies formulated and implemented by institutions responsible for gender equality and justice. Second, improvements would be made in the quality, role and indepence of women's organizations, in continuing efforts to empower women and safeguard the prosperity and well-being of the family and society. These guidelines applied to all state agencies, including the executive (the president), the judiciary (the Supreme Court),the legislature (DPR/MPR) and the state audit agency (Badan Pemeriksa Keuangan, BPK). Under the amended constitution, the Broad Guidelines no longer exist; they been replaced by the president's vision and mission.

⁶¹ Prisma, Mei 1996- Ruth Indiah Rahayu, " *Politik Gender Orde Baru: Tinjauan Organisasi Perempuan sejak 1980-an*", hlm 35

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*
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The several factors influencing the patterns of the recruitment of men and women as legislator.⁶⁴ They include the following, First, the cultural context in Indonesia is still heavily patriarchal. The common perception is that the political arena is for men, and that it is less preferable for women to become members of parliament. Second, the selection of candidates by political parties is usually done by a small group of officials or party leaders, almost always men. In Indonesia awareness of gender equality and justice issues is still low. Male political leaders have a disproportionate influence over party politics and women do not receive much support. Third, the media have yet to effectively mobilize the public regarding the importance of women's representation in parliament. Fourth, the large number of political parties contesting elections and winning seats in parliament can affect the level of representation of women. As political parties receive a limited number of seats in the legislature, these tend to be divided among male candidates who tend to be ranked at the top of the party election list.

The links between women's networks and organizations must be supported and strengthened. The Center for the Political Empowerment of Women is a network of organizations that cuts across party, religious and professional lines and includes approximately 26 organizations. All these networks have significant potential to support increased representation of women in parliament, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, if they and their member organizations work together to synergize their efforts.

CONCLUSION

Women as revolutioner agent had showed their roles especially in organization. Those whom still be memorably : (1) Colonial era of Christina Martha Tiahahu, Cut Nyak Dien and Cut Nyak Meutia, R.A Kartini and Dewi Sartika, (2) masa pergerakan nasional and the first pioneer of social organization S.K Trimurti, (3) Japanese era by Ny. Suyjatin. It was not as the revolutioner agent but women could show their existence in politic, because in the independence fight, it needs people whom truly want to build nation. It is different with after Soekarno's era (new order) that women was marginalized by the government, even those who against the government system will affect for the social life.

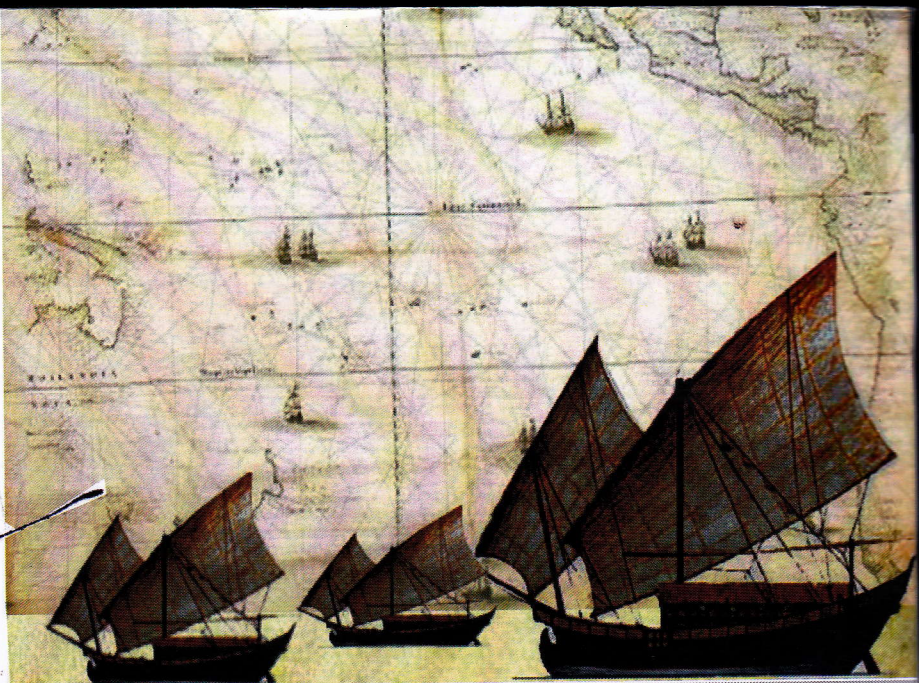
Therefore, we can see the two comparisons between the women's role in revolutioner agent and politics. Thus this era needs a support from the government in order to make the representative women so that it can take in the people's aspiration and implement nation's mission

⁶⁴ For further detail of some of the obstacles, see Matland, Richard E, 2001 "Representation and election system for women: Lessons learned for Indonesia", in *Keterwakilan Perempuan dalam Sistem Pemilihan Umum (Women's representation and the electoral system)*. Jakarta: National Democratic Institute and State Ministry for Women Empowerment, p. 22



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