

# Renaissance Pedagogy, Dedication of Life, and the School of Life: Soekarno's Thoughts on Education

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**Abstract:** Soekarno was an important figure in Indonesian history whose philosophy had contributed significantly to Indonesian development. Many studies have been carried out on Soekarno's biography and historical narratives that had an impact on a global scale. However, the study of his thoughts and philosophy regarding education requires much more elaboration. The method used in this study is a historical method, done by exploring archival sources from ANRI (National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia) in the form of Soekarno's speeches at various activities. These archives sufficiently describe Soekarno's thoughts on education. The exploration of Soekarno's philosophy and thoughts in this article is focused on more general aspects of education. From exploring various sources, especially Soekarno's speeches, several themes extracted from his thoughts regarding the philosophy of education, national education, Islamic education, the relationship between pure and applied science, as well as the relationship between science, ideology, struggle, and social welfare were obtained.

**Abstrak:** Soekarno adalah tokoh penting dalam sejarah Indonesia yang filsafatnya telah memberikan kontribusi signifikan terhadap pembangunan Indonesia. Banyak kajian yang dilakukan terhadap biografi dan narasi sejarah Sukarno yang berdampak pada skala global. Namun kajian pemikiran dan filosofinya mengenai pendidikan memerlukan penjabaran lebih lanjut. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode sejarah, dilakukan dengan menggali sumber arsip dari ANRI (Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia) berupa pidato-pidato Soekarno di berbagai kegiatan. Arsip-arsip ini cukup menggambarkan pemikiran Bung Karno mengenai pendidikan. Eksplorasi filosofi dan pemikiran Soekarno dalam artikel ini difokuskan pada aspek pendidikan yang lebih umum. Dari penelusuran berbagai sumber, khususnya pidato-pidato Soekarno, tersarikan beberapa tema pemikirannya mengenai filsafat pendidikan, pendidikan nasional, pendidikan Islam, hubungan ilmu murni dan ilmu terapan, serta hubungan ilmu pengetahuan, ideologi, perjuangan, dan kesejahteraan masyarakat. didapatkan.

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## INTRODUCTION

The exploration of educational philosophy and thoughts from Indonesian figures is intended to rethink the direction of Indonesian education today. Apart from that, exploring the thoughts of various national figures regarding education is very important because education is not only a process of knowledge transfer but also a process of value transfer that shapes the character of the nation.

Biographical studies regarding Soekarno had been conducted that highlighted his important roles from the pre and post-Indonesian independence. Soekarno's philosophy and thoughts about colonial society and the picture of Indonesia in the future grew when Soekarno studied at *HBS* (Dutch Senior High School) and stayed



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at the house of a *Syarekat Islam* figure, H.O.S. Cokroaminoto. While living at Cokroaminoto's house, Soekarno often took part in Cokroaminoto's political activities during meetings at his house. Soekarno even often took part in Cokroaminoto's discussions at his home (Dahm, 1987).

It was in Surabaya that Soekarno began to get to know Western thoughts, particularly, its literature, and the touch of technology which were an indulgence at the time. However, it was then he began to realize that his country was not right. He observed the unfair treatment of labor workers in Surabaya, and the tensions between the local Muslim students and the local people who still practiced non-monotheism (Hidayat, 2003). As time went by, Soekarno grew critical towards the Western thoughts which only brought forth elitists' ignorance of the people of the country. According to Soekarno, elitism encourages superiority.

Soekarno's concerns about the Indonesian people under colonialization grew while studying at THS (now Bandung Institute of Technology or ITB). During his studies, Soekarno was active in school politics, by forming student discussion groups which later formed a national organization, namely the Indonesian National Party (PNI) (Ledge, 1985). Apart from being active in practical politics, Soekarno also wrote in newspapers. Soekarno's writings examining colonial society were based on the theories he had studied. He even criticized the policies of the Dutch East Indies government which acted unfairly towards natives or the colonized (Soekarno, 1965).

Soekarno was a Javanese aristocrat born on June 6, 1901. His father was a Javanese aristocrat, and his mother came from Bali. As a person who was born amid Javanese cultural traditions, it was not surprising that since childhood, Soekarno was accustomed to living in the *wayang* tradition. In his future speeches, if he wanted to convey more complicated thoughts to a Javanese audience, he would use *wayang* stories for analogies (Saksono, 2017). Soekarno's thinking was coloured by many spiritual elements in Javanese and Islamic culture. This cannot be separated from his association with Cokroaminoto. During his time as a student of Cokroaminoto, Soekarno was encouraged to understand the condition of Indonesian society which was influenced by spiritual elements (Soekarno, 1965; Kurniawan, 2009a; Setiadi, 2013).

Bernard Dahm (1987) believes that to understand Soekarno's thoughts, people need to understand the Javanese mythology. This mythology is reflected in *wayang* stories, including the beliefs

about *Ratu Adil* (The Justice Queen) and the *Jaya-baya* Prediction. Frustration, hope, and the forthcoming of a saviour are the essence of this concept of belief. Frustration at the time was experienced due to oppression, colonialism, tyranny, and the strong will to change the era. This era of change will come along with the presence of a Justice Queen who will be the saviour from all kinds of misery and suffering due to oppression (Saksono, 2017).

The term education referred to in this study does not only talk about practical implementation. However, it is more broadly related to the education of Indonesian society. The problem statement in this research is "What is(are) Soekarno's philosophy and thoughts regarding the philosophy of education, national education, Islamic education, as well as the relationship between science, ideology, struggle and social welfare?"

This article attempts to describe and identify the main points of Soekarno's philosophy and thoughts regarding character education, idealism, mentality and fighting spirit, education to serve society, the value of education from history, women and education, education to fight imperialism, and Islamic education.

A complete study about Soekarno was written by Cindy Adams (2014), an American journalist who conducted a direct interview with Soekarno. Adams' writing described Soekarno's life from childhood, when he was at school, active in political movements during the colonial period, during independence until he became President. The description is presented in journalistic language supported with interview data. Benhard Dahm (1987), a German historian, studied Soekarno as a freedom fighter and people's leader. Dahm examines Soekarno's philosophical ideas, both those originating from Javanese beliefs such as *wayang* stories, and Western ideology, especially Marxism.

Rex Mortimer (2011) examines Bung Karno's closeness to the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). The ideology and politics of the PKI were studied from 1959 to 1965. PKI grew fast in the country and played an important role in Indonesian politics until it was disbanded in 1965. To strengthen its political solidarity, PKI began to form the National United Front. The political closeness of PKI and Sukarno led him to detached from other political parties, such as *Masyumi*, which did not approve of Nasakom (Nationalist, Religious and Communist) policies. Van Der Kroef (1971) studied the situation in Indonesia during the Soekarno era. The periodization used is around the 1950s to 1965. The study began with the Gestapu incident which

brought Soekarno's government to an end.

Kahin called Soekarno a nationalist (2000). His writing described Soekarno's political journey with a description of Soekarno's biography. The political experience that Dahm and Kroef (1969) went through in their article called Soekarno an ideologue. The ideology adopted by Soekarno influenced his political attitudes both when he was an activist during the Dutch colonial period and when he became president. The ideology adopted by Soekarno was an ideology from the Javanese tradition. During the colonial period, he wanted to act as The Justice Queen who would lead the country free from colonialism. Wardaya (2012) examined Soekarno's attitude in foreign relations based on Javanese culture. During the Cold War, when two world political powers emerged, namely the United States of America and the Soviet Union, Soekarno carried out a foreign policy based on Javanese cultural power. One of the characteristics of Javanese culture is maintaining balance or harmony. On the one hand, Soekarno, in building foreign political relations, built close and even intimate relations with America as the leader of the Western bloc. On the other hand, Soekarno also built close relations with the communist bloc.

Peter Kasenda (2014a) in his work entitled *Bung Karno Commander of the Revolution* narrated Soekarno's journey from childhood to his death. This book examines Soekarno's journey after he served as President of the Republic of Indonesia. Peter Kasenda narrates the important events that occurred in Soekarno's life, such as the moment of the proclamation of Indonesia and the movement of the G-30-S. Apart from discussing Soekarno's journey as president, he also explained some of the thoughts and views of the young Soekarno, such as Soekarno's views on Capitalism, Marhaenism, Pancasila, and Islam.

## METHOD

Historical methods are used in collecting historical sources effectively. The historical method is a process to critically examine relics from the past (Gottschalk, 2008). Historical methods used by historical researchers include heuristics, criticism or verification, interpretation, and historiography (Ismaun, 2005). The sources used are written sources related to Soekarno's thoughts on education. Collecting sources is also the first step in conducting historical research, then the writing conducts historiography in the form of research writing (Abdurahman, 2007).

At ANRI, researchers obtained several ar-

chives regarding Soekarno's speeches at various universities in Indonesia, research institutions, and science congresses. It contains many of Soekarno's philosophical thoughts regarding education. These archives include: (1) Soekarno's speech when he was awarded Doctor Honoris Causa title in Law from UGM, Yogyakarta, 19 September 1951; (2) Soekarno's speech at the general meeting against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs 12 June 1958 at the State Palace; (3) The Speech at the VI Congress of the Indonesian Engineers Association at the State Palace, 24 July 1958; (4) The Speech at the 1st Indonesian Science Congress in Malang 8 August 1958, President's Speech at the 1st Indonesian National Science Congress, in Malang, August 8, 1958; (5) The Speech at Pajajaran University 17 November 1958; (6) The Speech at the Inauguration of ITB in Bandung March 2 1959; (7) The Speech at the Opening of the First Congress of National Cultural Institutions 20 May 1959 in Surakarta; (8) The Speech in front of students at Lambung Mangkurat University, Banjarmasin 7 September 1959; (9) The Speech at Sanata Dharma, President's speech at the groundbreaking ceremony for Sanata Dharma Catholic University, Jogjakarta, April 8, 1961; (10) The Speech at UGM, President Sukarno Addressing Gadjah Mada University (UGM) Students, at the Yogyakarta Palace, 18-19 December 1961; (11) The speech when he was awarded the title of Doctor Honoris Causa in Social Sciences from UI, Jakarta, February 2 1962; (12) The Speech when he was awarded the title of Doctor Honoris Causa in Engineering from ITB, 13 September 1962; (13) The Speech when he was awarded the title of Doctor Honoris Causa in legal sciences and social sciences specifically in the field of political science, relations between countries, Hasanuddin University, Ujung Pandang, 29 April 1963; (14) The Speech when he was awarded the title of Doctor Honoris Causa in *Ushuluddin* science majoring in da'wah, the title of honorary professor, and the title of great educator from IAIN, Jakarta, 2 December 1964; (15) The Speech when he was awarded the title of Doctor Honoris Causa in History from Pajajaran University, Bandung, 23 December 1964; (16) The Speech when he was awarded the title of Doctor Honoris Causa in the philosophy of Tauhid Science from Muhammadiyah University, Jakarta, 3 August 1965, at the State Palace; (17) Soekarno's speech at the 1962 Yogyakarta National Science Congress; (18) The speech at President Soekarno's speech at the Bandung Atomic Reactor, President's speech at the inauguration of the atomic reactor in Bandung, February 27, 1965, stencil, 1 sheet.

ANRI sources have gone through both internal and external validation. Thus, the archives used can be trusted. However, some of these archives have been compared with archives of Soekarno's speeches when he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate Degree. There is no difference between the archives at ANRI and Soekarno's recorded speeches. This examination needs to be carried out because before proceeding to the in-depth discussion stage, it is very important for the author to first critically filter the sources found (Abdurahman, 2007; Sjamsuddin, 2007).

At the interpretation stage, the writer interprets the historical sources or research data used. Soekarno's thoughts in various archives are categorized based on several aspects that consistently appear in each of his speeches, namely character education, motivation, community service, the value of education from history, the relationship between women and education, education to fight imperialism, as well as the concepts of Islamic education. After being categorized, the next step is to analyze the factors influencing Soekarno's point of view toward education. These thoughts are linked to the background of Soekarno's life, his interaction with nationalist figures, and the colonial atmosphere in Indonesia. The aim of such an interpretation pattern is to synthesize several facts obtained from historical sources so that it can produce an in-depth and structured study of Soekarno's educational thought (Abdurahman, 2007; Sjamsuddin, 2007).

#### **EDUCATION TO SHAPE CHARACTER, IDEALISM, RESILIENCE AND MOTIVATION**

Soekarno considered education to be a place to sharpen logic and intellectuality. He called it *renaissance pedagogy*, namely, how to educate to be enlightened (Soekarno, 1951; Kurniawan, 2009b). According to Soekarno, education can be used as a process of changing irrational thinking patterns to rational thinking patterns. Education can be used to form the quality of humans who are able to master various scientific disciplines, including religious sciences, economics, medical science, earth sciences, and so on (Soekarno, 1951; Jumhan, 2012).

The concept of awakening a society that is fast asleep is education that reactivates logic and reasoning. Apart from enabling the mind, Soekarno assessed that education must be able to form the character, mentality, and strong will of the students, especially the will to fight (Soekarno, 1951). Strong will and determination are built by first forming a way of thinking. In various speeches in front of students' audiences when he was awarded the title

Doctor Honoris Causa, Soekarno emphasized the importance of having resilience among the younger generation. The spirit to continue fighting must become the mentality of a nation to compete and become a leader among these nations.

For Soekarno (1951), the size of a nation's resilience depends on three things, namely: goals and ideals, awareness of the nation's capabilities, and the actual capital that the nation has. So, according to Soekarno, the success of the Prophet Muhammad SAW in building an Islamic society in Medina cannot be separated from the mental investment that was first built. The preparation referred to is none other than a preparation to shape resilience.

Soekarno thought that science and technology should be used as tools to fight against colonialism and imperialism. Even though Soekarno was thrown into prison many times, his resilience kept him going (Romandhon, 2018). Living in exile did not dampen Soekarno's enthusiasm, on the contrary, he was eager to eradicate colonialism. During his exile, Soekarno secretly monitored the developing socio-political conditions. In fact, Soekarno produced more and more written works (Romandhon, 2018). Soekarno always voiced and fought for the aspirations of third-world countries.

Education must be able to build idealism in society. Soekarno considered that if society is filled with idealism, ideals, then society can be moved and revived and will become one great force with strong unity (Soekarno, 1963a). According to Soekarno, this can be observed from the history of the nations of the world. In this context, Soekarno's vision of building a world of education was very important, of course still in the context of revolution (Soekarno, 1958c). Soekarno dreamed that more and more Indonesian people would be able to receive higher education so that they could match the power of the big countries (Soekarno, 1962c).

According to Soekarno, education must be carried out openly, freely, and democratically. In an independent country, education in Indonesia must also be independent, meaning that education in Indonesia must be of high quality. Soekarno also added that education carried out in Indonesia must be forward-looking, keeping up with current developments by continuously reforming (Soekarno, 1951; Firdaus, 2016). Soekarno said that the condition of Indonesian society in the future can be seen from the current condition of education. If current education is running well, in the future the lives of Indonesian people will experience better improvement as well (Firdaus, 2016). Soekarno realized that

in modern society, Indonesian people were faced with problematic realities that could not be solved with normative awareness alone, for example those related to modernization and modern progress (Soekarno, 1951).

In connection to character education, there is one element in *wayang* that Soekarno did not follow, namely *wayang* characters with their polite and refined behaviour. It was as if Sukarno deliberately rejected the subtlety of the *wayang* tradition and cast an energetic, rough, and worldly image in his social behaviour. According to this ethic, Soekarno's behaviour was acceptable, because Javanese society could accept rude actions and outward forms, if the rudeness did not come from the inside (Saksono, 2017).

### EDUCATION TO SERVE SOCIETY

Soekarno viewed that science must be devoted to struggle, not science for the sake of science (Soekarno, 1963a). Science works, science for the struggle. Science for the sake of struggle, we use science as a tool for our struggle (Soekarno, 1963b). Soekarno asked all Indonesian youths, Indonesian people, and leaders of Indonesia, to be dedicated to life. Dedication to life means having high ideals. The highest dedication of life is to make Indonesia *gemah ripah loh jinawi*, to make Indonesia a great homeland, to make Indonesia a strong country, to make Indonesian society just and prosper (Soekarno, 1962b).

In Soekarno's perspective, knowledge must be of service, so the main knowledge desired is applied science without neglecting basic science. The most important knowledge to be developed is science for the stakeholders and not just science for science. Soekarno's vision was clearly emphasized in his words, "I am not saying that there is no relationship between basic science and applied science, no, because applied science is only possible on the basis of basic science (Soekarno, 1963b; Mashad, 2008). In this context, for Soekarno, the knowledge that serves, the knowledge that can be a bridge to the realization of meeting people's needs, a knowledge that can be immediately applied (applied research), and knowledge that can directly benefit from fulfilling needs, becomes highly prioritized.

Soekarno emphasized the pragmatic aspect of education, namely the practical usefulness of knowledge and the emphasis on science and engineering (Soekarno, 1964a). This can be understood from his educational background as an engineer who graduated from the *Technische Hogeschool*

(now Bandung Institute of Technology or ITB). During his study at THS, Soekarno became a representative of intelligent and outstanding native students (Romandhon, 2018). Almost all the courses he took got perfect grades. In fact, Soekarno was predicted to be the first native engineer with the highest achievements (Romandhon, 2018). Soekarno's tendency to be closer to the modernist group in Islam, especially in the field of thought, was a logical consequence of the level of education and knowledge he received. He only received "Western" education provided by the Dutch in Indonesia. Western education helped the development of modern Islam in Indonesia (Kurniawan, 2009a).

Soekarno's view that everything must be practically useful can also be traced in his views regarding social piety and Islam as a religion of charity (Soekarno, 1964a; Soekarno, 1965). According to Soekarno, the measures of piety are not only seen from the routine of carrying out religious rituals (prayers, fasting, Hajj, and so on), but also the extent to which ritual worship is able to influence the behaviour of daily social life. Prayer does not only mean how a vertical relationship with God is built, but also what the implications of prayer are for a person's life and society: being able to refrain from evil and evil acts, not ~~being~~ corrupt, not stealing, and so on (Soekarno, 1964a; Kurniawan, 2009). The development of science is to be put into practice, if a doctrine can be put into practice, then the idea or doctrine must be understandable by the people (Soekarno, 1963b).

The education and knowledge that a person has truly benefit the wider community and be directed towards service and this is one of the characters that must be built in education. For Soekarno, the character of his position was higher than mere knowledge (Soekarno, 1958a; Soekarno, 1962b):

Young men and women, students, number one, learn to create, learn to think, search, seek, and emphasize goals clearly and clearly and before the eyes, namely a just and prosperous society, and find out how.

The movement in the world made Soekarno see that science must be truly useful for society, especially for building social welfare. While in exile, Soekarno contributed many services to society. Soekarno founded the Jami' mosque on Jalan Soeprapto and a scientific discussion group called the Smart Debating Club. He also founded the Monte Carlo drama group as a medium for developing strategies to achieve Indonesian independence (Romandhon, 2018). Soekarno considered that science and technology must meet people's demands for three

things, namely food, clothing, and housing. And once it is fulfilled, the people will continue to ask for more in the form of the 5 (five) Ps (stomach, clothing, housing, knowledge, and relationships), and leaders must be able to fulfil the people's demands.

### NATIONAL EDUCATION

Understanding the national education cannot be separated from his interactions with nationalist figures and Soekarno's political activities during the national movement. While he was an educated young man, Soekarno was actively involved in various organizations. One of the organizations that Soekarno participated in was the Tri Koro Darmo youth organization. Intensive interactions with movement figures also influenced his views on education.

Soekarno had developed national aspirations. However, perhaps even without Western connections and influence, Soekarno had views that were congruent and a voice that was consonant with Western conscience and thoughts, because what he developed was a universal insight. It can grow anywhere provided that there is fertile soil to grow (Hidayat, 2003). This young man who was persistent and full of big dreams, when he was still in Surabaya, was active as a member of the Surabaya branch of Jong Java. Even though he was only a member, Soekarno's thoughts were very impressive. Soekarno boldly stated that the nature of the Jong Java organization was very Java-centric. That is why, at the annual plenary meeting held by Jong Java Surabaya, he made a speech using rough Javanese language and criticized the organization's attitude of only thinking about cultural issues (Setiadi, 2017). To Nationalist activists, Soekarno emphasized that there was no obstacle for Nationalists to work together with Islamic and Marxist activists, together to fight against capitalism (Saksono, 2017).

In 1916 when he entered high school, Soekarno's father sent him to live with H.O.S Cokroaminoto and continued his studies at the *Hogere Burger School* (Senior High School) in Surabaya. At *Hogere Burger School* (HBS) in Surabaya, he studied for five years. He entered HBS in 1916, and graduated in 1921 (Legge, 1996). After Soekarno officially became Cokroaminoto's son-in-law by marrying his daughter, Oetari, he always followed Cokroaminoto wherever he went. He was the one who always accompanied Cokroaminoto to meetings to make speeches. He seriously paid attention to all the contents of the movement figure's speech. So, it is not surprising that Sukarno said that Cokroaminoto

really influenced his life, in fact, he was the person who changed his whole life. (Kurniawan, 2009b). Soekarno described Cokroaminoto's life as the well-spring of all ideologies (Lubis, 1992).

### THE VALUE OF HISTORY

Soekarno loved to discuss history in his various speeches. When Soekarno was still young, he was impressed by the words of an English Professor, Sir John Seeley. In his book, *The Expansion of England*, Seeley recommends to readers to pay attention to history, to delve into history, to read history, to study history. He said, "*men studeert historie om wijs te worden van te voren*", meaning people study history so that people know first, – *men studeert historie om wijs te worden van te voren*. (Soekarno, 1964b).

The essence that Soekarno took from history was the importance of unity and oneness (Soekarno, 1963b). Soekarno called for the importance of nationalism and (national) unity. For the sake of nationalism and unity, other doctrines must be subordinated. Soekarno's main contribution to this nationalism was the inclusion of a utopic element, a belief that he could be equal to the other fathers of the nation, Washington, Lincoln, etc. (Soekarno, 1963a; Saksono, 2017).

There are interesting things to summarize from his views on the values of education from history, including: First, history should not make society trapped in the utopia of the past but should provide encouragement to continue moving forward. This can be seen from Soekarno's criticism of Muslims when looking at the golden age of the past. Soekarno advised Muslims not to look back, including only admiring and glorifying the glorious era of Islam (Islamic Glory), but to look far ahead. According to Soekarno, the attitude of glorifying the glory of Islam made them anti-western, stagnant in thinking, and ignoring social preaching (Soekarno, 1965). According to him, hating the West is not appropriate because there are aspects that can be taken, one of which is science and technology (Soekarno 1965; Kurniawan, 2009).

Second, history provides important lessons about the values of the struggle against colonialism and imperialism. According to Soekarno, the struggle of the Indonesian nation must go through two phases, the struggle to subdue the mind and the struggle to subdue nature. The struggle of 1908-1950 was a struggle to subdue the mind, while after 1950 it was a struggle to subdue nature. The struggle to subdue the mind is a struggle against the wrong thoughts in the chests and brains of colonial-

ist and imperialist humans. After 1950, when Indonesian independence and sovereignty were recognized, the struggle increased to a higher level. It was no longer just a struggle to subdue human ideas and thoughts but a struggle to control nature for the welfare of the people (Soekarno, 1958b).

Soekarno viewed that the struggle to subdue thought and nature requires science and technology. King Hammurabi, with exact knowledge and natural science, succeeded in making water to bring happiness to humans through irrigation canal management. This irrigation succeeded in controlling the Euphrates and Tigris rivers so that the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, which used to often bring disaster, turned into providing benefits for humans (Soekarno, 1958b). In Indonesia, there is King Airlangga. Airlangga succeeded in controlling the Brantas River, which previously brought many disasters. Airlangga built irrigation channels so that the Brantas River could be controlled (Soekarno, 1958d). In the 1960s, the Brantas River was still the cause of floods in Tulungagung, Kediri, Purwosari, Papar and Minggiran.

Third, Europe's progress and revival emerged because of the scientific revolution. Soekarno, in his several speeches, used historical facts to link science and technology with the birth of the trade revolution, industrial revolution, colonialism and imperialism, and the birth of capitalism. Capitalism according to Soekarno is a socio-economic system that arises from a method of production that separates workers from the means of production. It arises from the method of production which causes the emergence of *meerwaarde*, which does not fall into the hands of the workers but falls into the hands of the employers (owners of capital). Capitalism brought forth capital accumulation and capital concentration, and industrial enterprise. All of this causes suffering for the people, especially the workers (Soekarno, 1964b).

In Western Europe, the struggle for life required Europeans to study natural and exact sciences. Struggle for life Europeans in the 15th century required them to abandon the closed *huishouding* system. At the end of the 15th century, Europeans began to abandon this system of life and started to trade. These explorers included Vasco da Gama, Bartholomeus Diaz, Albuquerque, Cornelis de Houtman, Jan Pietersz Coen, and others (Soekarno, 1958b). The trade revolution was supported by the development of exact sciences, natural sciences, and astronomy. The struggle for life, the struggle to meet the needs of life in Western Europe forced them to understand exact sciences and natural sci-

ences (Soekarno, 1958d; Soekarno, 1964b). Soekarno further said that the impact of the commercial revolution was the emergence of Western exploration into Asia, America and Africa which ultimately gave rise to colonialism and imperialism. The impact of the commercial revolution was the loss of political independence and Indonesia became a target for European explorers because of spices (Soekarno, 1958b). The "Commercial Revolution" (Trade Revolution) made Indonesia, India, and China, visited by traders from Europe and made the people in Europe become very rich people (Soekarno, 1958c; Soekarno, 1959a). The impact of the trade revolution brought great wealth to European nations and this wealth encouraged them to continue to increase their knowledge of natural sciences and techniques so that it became the seed for the emergence of the industrial revolution. Sciences and natural sciences are no longer just studying stars and navigation, but have led to developments in technology, especially after the invention of the steam engine.

Fourth, history teaches us to always act wisely. Soekarno relished the words of Sir John Seeley, in his famous book entitled "The Expansion of England". Sir John Seeley said that we must study history so that we can be wise first so that we know where we should go. Seeley said that people who do not study or learn from history are not wise, people who do not know, people who do not know the direction, and people who do not know the goal (Soekarno, 1963a; Soekarno, 1986). Fifth, history encourages humans to always be optimistic, confident, and think positively. Since he was young, Soekarno loved studying history and taking lessons from history. History teaching and education can build historical visionaries and historical optimists. A visionary is a person who seems to know things that will happen, such as a visionary, and a historical optimist, is a person who sees the future, brightly, and clearly, brightly; light brings optimism (Soekarno, 1964b).

Soekarno considered that the Indonesian nation was fed by a colonial culture so it hated its own culture. The Indonesian nation was indoctrinated with a feeling of inadequacy, a feeling of insecurity (inferiority complex), so in the end we became a nation that felt small (Soekarno, 1959b). The colonialists really tried to eliminate self-confidence, believing in our own abilities, thinking that we were indeed a *témpé* (weak) nation, a nation that could do nothing. On the other hand, Indonesians were amazed by the colonial nation, and white people, and this continues to poison the minds of the Indo-

nesian people.

### **WOMEN AND EDUCATION**

His views about women influenced his thoughts about education for women. Soekarno's concerns about women can clearly be seen from one of his works which specifically discusses women, entitled *Sarinah*, *Obligations of Women in the Fight for the Republic of Indonesia*. *Sarinah*, in Soekarno's eyes, was a person who contributed greatly to the formation of his soul and personality (Soekarno, 1962b; Kurniawan, 2009). *Sarinah* was his family's maid, who played quite an important role in Soekarno's life. From *Sarinah* he learned many valuable lessons about life (Soekarno, 1962b; Nuryanti, 2007). During the Guided Democracy era, his name was immortalized in the "*Sarinah*" monument, a multi-story department store built on Jalan Thamrin, Jakarta (Soekarno, 1962b; Legge, 1996).

Soekarno also touched on the issue of empowering women, especially in the field of education. According to Soekarno, the rights and obligations of men and women were the same. If men take part in social activities, women should also have the same rights and obligations to take part in them. For Soekarno, women's empowerment in all aspects of life, especially in the field of education was crucial. Soekarno mentioned education because he was aware that in this field women were lagging behind men in terms of access to education (Soekarno, 1962b; Kurniawan, 2009).

Soekarno's model of struggle was a middle way: between Western-style liberalism and conservatism rooted in custom (tradition) and religion. Thus, the equality of rights for women that Soekarno fought for was how women still get the opportunity to advance like the opportunities that men have: being able to study properly, to have political rights, to have access to the economic sector and other public affairs. On one note, women still do not leave their nature as women. Soekarno said "Humanity will continue to limp as long as one party oppresses another. Harmony can only be achieved if there is no oppression of others, and one strengthens the position of the other" (Soekarno, 1951; Kurniawan, 2009).

### **EDUCATION TO FIGHT IMPERIALISM**

Soekarno assessed that science should empower people to fight against imperialism and colonialism. Our nationalism means unity believing in our own strength and participating in the freedom of all nations in the world. Our work with other Asian nations is to unite against our enemy, that is imperial-

ism (Soekarno, 1964b). The revolutionary background of the struggle against colonialism has directed Indonesia's political attitude as an anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist country which was quite influenced by Soekarno's thoughts as a leader. According to Soekarno, what first needs to be realized is that the main reason why European colonialists came to Asia was not to carry out a certain noble obligation. They came mainly "to fill their rumbling stomachs" (Soekarno, 1965).

The most effective way to build a complete revolutionary spirit with the best way to achieve the goals of the revolution for Soekarno is by learning from life experiences. The reality of life and the reality of challenges are what makes people able to carry out revolutions successfully, both revolution for independence and revolution for public prosperity. Universities just provide materials. but science that is truly science is the science of life, our daily lives (Soekarno, 1951; Mashad, 2008). For Soekarno, the colonial period was a school of life for the Indonesian people. To learn how to survive studying in an academic setting is as important as studying at a university of life.

Soekarno criticized the idea of universalism in science. Soekarno based his opinion on the statement of Professor Hilverdink from *Mina* (In the *Neue Zeitung* magazine Hilverdink) who firmly said that it was nonsense if people said that science is objective since every science serves something (Soekarno, 1951; Mashad, 2008). Knowledge is built from a particular culture, and influenced by a particular culture, so knowledge should be employed in a society with a particular culture as well. However, Soekarno did not criticize natural science, (Soekarno, 1951; Mashad, 2008).

The influence of nationalism, Marxism, and Marhanism thoughts brought Soekarno to the importance of scientists and educators becoming warriors in the corridors of ideology (Kasenda, 2014b). The basics of Soekarno's thoughts were to provide space for the important philosophical traditions in the society to unite into a common denominator. He discarded the materialist philosophy of Marxism and then added God; then the past setbacks of Islam were erased, and the Marxist idea of progress was added (Saksono, 2017).

The influence of Modernist Islam on Soekarno's views on education was strong. The influence of Jamaluddin Al-Afghani in Soekarno's thoughts was especially visible when he was faced with the reality that Islam constituted the majority and some of its adherents suffered from poverty and had to be empowered. This is expressed in every writing or



speech by Soekarno regarding Islam. Soekarno's conception of Islam and nationalism was solely to gather Islamic strength and courage in facing imperialism and colonialism, as was the case with Pan-Islamism built by Jamaluddin Al-Afghani (Soekarno, 1965; Kurniawan, 2009).

### SOEKARNO'S VIEW ON TEACHERS

His experience as a teacher helped to shape Soekarno's views on education. However, Soekarno's experience did not immediately construct specific thoughts about education nor establish some practical thought. In historical records, Soekarno was a teacher at the Ksatria Foundation and Muhammadiyah. While in exile in the Bengkulu region, Soekarno was active as a teacher at Muhammadiyah schools until 1942 after the arrival of Japan to Indonesia. Soekarno paid special attention to teacher professionalism, through his long article entitled, "Becoming a Teacher in the Development Era". In Soekarno's view, the teaching profession was a noble job because it was within the hands of teachers that the future of the nation was determined (Kurniawan, 2009a).

However, Sukarno apparently also realized that not all teachers were good. Not all teachers' actions reflect being a teacher. There are quite a few teachers whose behaviours contradict their role as a teacher. Such a teacher is certainly not worthy of being called a teacher, or not worthy of respect, let alone serving as a role model for students. Therefore, in relation to teacher professionalism, Soekarno classified teacher types into two: good teachers and bad teachers. In his writing entitled, "Islam Sontooloojoo", Soekarno alluded to the teacher's bad behaviours. Soekarno said that there was a teacher who in the name of religion acted "indecently" towards his female students (Kurniawan, 2009a).

In relation to the democratization of education, Soekarno saw it as important for students to learn without being overcome by fear and pressure. They can learn happily, full of joy, and so on (Kurniawan, 2009b; Firdaus, 2016). In Soekarno's view, the way to develop democratic education must start with the teacher. Teachers must set an example for their students. Teachers must set a good example in attitudes and actions. Because it is in the hands of teachers that their souls and hearts are determined. If the teacher sets a good example, the students will imitate their good attitudes and behaviours too. This analysis is also strengthened by Soekarno's statement, that in the teaching and learning process, teachers should not teach in an

indoctrination manner, or in Soekarno's terms, in a dogmatic way (Soekarno, 1958c). Thus, Soekarno rejected "dogmatic" learning models because these patterns tended to position students simply as objects, not living subjects whose rights, and opinions matter. Soekarno really hoped for reciprocal interactions that were creative, critical, prioritized dialogue, and distanced students from an authoritarian culture that would make students depressed (Kurniawan, 2009).

### ISLAMIC EDUCATION

Soekarno's understanding of Islam was further strengthened by the books he read after leaving prison. Likewise, in his efforts to unite nationalists, Soekarno submitted all his successes or even failures to God's will (Dahm, 1987). Sukarno appeared to strongly support Islamic modernism and emphasized the need for radical reforms in, and new interpretations of, the faith (Van der Kroef, 1968). Islam was seen by Soekarno as a progressive and rational religion, not as practiced in Indonesia. Soekarno made Islam the only rational and dynamic religion (Soekarno, 1965; Hadi, 1991). Soekarno considered that the root of Islam's lack of progress was the *taqlid* mindset (Soekarno, 1965; Fauzi, 2019).

According to Soekarno, the traditional practices of Islam in Indonesia must be overhauled and adapted to the times. Because modern Islam, in Soekarno's interpretation, was considered not against, even encouraged the progress of the times. He argued that this religion should display its true characteristics which did not conflict with the ideas of nationalism and Marxism as he interpreted it (Soekarno, 1965a; Saksono, 2017). One of the characteristics that is considered as a misunderstanding of the religion is the *nerimo* attitude. This attitude was later interpreted by Soekarno as an attitude of resignation. This is of course not only influenced by the beliefs of Javanese society in general, but also by the strong influence of colonialism which accustomed people to obey everything they were told (Lubis, 1992).

Soekarno said that Islamic progress could only be achieved if Muslims could free themselves from the shackles of this dichotomous state and place all knowledge in balanced and in proportional portions. In this case, Soekarno referred general knowledge to western science. One thing that Soekarno criticized was the traditional Islamic boarding school education model, an educational institution known to Muslims at that time, as ancient education and not in accordance with the spirit of the times, since it focused only on a teaching system

that tended to separate religious aspects from other forms of science.

Soekarno's thoughts and vision for Islamic education appear to be in line with the views of supporters of modernism. Soekarno rejected religious dogmatism, such as Fiqh and his strong efforts to apply democratic principles in the field of education. For Soekarno, education was the dismantling of all old cultural boundaries to foster a new cultural awareness. Soekarno's thoughts on Islamic education aims at the effort to construct a more agentive human being, who is aware of their respective habitus, and believes in the possibility of growth and change (Soekarno, 1965; Kurniawan, 2009).

Soekarno's thoughts on modernization and his vision for Islamic education were always oriented towards progress. That Islam is Progress is the main idea that Soekarno had communicated. The term progress, according to his assumption, is understood as "renewal". Because, without renewal, progress is just a figment. The view that Islam is Progress, as expressed by Soekarno, does not rule out the possibility of being inspired by the glory of Islam in the Middle Ages. At that time, Muslims did not only appear as a ritual community, but also as an intellectual community (Soekarno, 1965; Solichin, 2008). Islamic teachings can be explained through a cause-and-effect process and is not something that happens by chance (Lubis, 1992). Soekarno's opinion about Islam's Progress is in line with his mindset which always prioritizes dynamics (Soekarno, 1965; Lubis, 1992).

For Soekarno, education was an arena for sharpening reason and developing intellect. He called it *renaissance pedagogies*, namely, how to educate to be enlightened. Here, Soekarno firmly oriented everything towards logic and reasoning in every step of human life. For him, this is the only way to progress in the fields of science and technology. In turn, this will lead to the rise of Islam. It is no exaggeration if he says that the foundation of Islamic philosophy is the respect for logic and reason, for that with reason the future of humanity should be developed (Soekarno, 1958c; Kurniawan, 2009).

## CONCLUSION

Soekarno's educational thoughts are summarized into three things: *renaissance pedagogies* (how to educate to be enlightened), the dedication to life (how to make Indonesian society just and prosper), and the school of life (how to learn to live). Soekarno's thoughts on education are philosophically ec-

lectic, influenced by elements of perennialism, essentialism, humanism, and social reconstruction. Aspects of essentialism inspired Soekarno's thoughts that education is a place for sharpening reason and developing intellect. Soekarno called it the Renaissance pedagogy, which is how to educate to rise. Essentialism views education as a tool for developing the intellectual abilities of the younger generation. Elements of perennialism can be seen from Soekarno's view that education must be able to build idealism in society. Soekarno assessed that if society is filled with idealism, ideals, then society can be moved and revived and will become one great force with strong unity.

For Soekarno, character is more important than knowledge. A humanistic point of view suggests that understanding history is important for the younger generation. Apart from enabling the mind, Soekarno said that education is important to build strong and resilient character for future generations. One must truly be useful for the wider community. The world of movement made Soekarno see that science must be truly useful for society, especially for establishing social welfare. Soekarno said that science and technology could be taken from the West and the East as long as it was useful for the people. He further said that science should be devoted to improving the quality of human lives. Soekarno wanted science and technology to also be used as tools to support a better quality of life.

Elements of social reconstruction can be seen from his view that anyone should be of useful to others. In Soekarno's perspective, knowledge must be of service, so the main knowledge desired is applied science without forgetting basic science. In his various views on education, Soekarno really emphasized the pragmatic aspect of education, namely the practical usefulness of knowledge and his emphasis on science and engineering. The philosophy of progressivism is the next step of social construction where education should be oriented towards the present and the future. Education must prepare students for a better life.

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