



## **Padvinders, Pandu, Pramuka: Youth and State in the 20th Century Indonesia<sup>1</sup>**

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### **Abstract**

This article explores the significance of the large and very influential scouting movement in Indonesia, just before and after independence up till the present time. Here again, the emphasis is on the transmission of a very specific set of values and behavioral patterns that not only the scouting movement itself found important, but which became also very much supported by the Indonesian regime. These values entailed a disciplining of youth, a political ensnarement in the preparation of youth for good Indonesian citizenship, an acceptance of the role of the military as well as a civilization mission that embraced many bourgeois middle class values concerning dress, style, comportment, the body, responsibility and so on. Above all, patriotism was greatly valued; and as such, the scouting movement was capable of taking away much of the critical, if not revolutionary, power that in colonial times was kept by Islamic youth movements opposing colonial authority.

### **Résumé**

Cet article explore le sens du grand et influent mouvement du scoutisme en Indonésie de la période juste avant et après l'indépendance jusqu'à nos jours. Ici encore, l'accent est mis sur la transmission d'un ensemble de valeurs spécifiques et d'un comportement qui étaient très importants pour le mouvement, mais qui étaient aussi encouragés par le régime indonésien. Pour ces valeurs, les jeunes étaient soumis à une discipline, à la politisation de leur préparation pour une bonne citoyenneté indonésienne, à l'acceptation du rôle des militaires aussi bien qu'à la mission civilisatrice dont a été sujet une bonne partie du monde bourgeois par rapport à l'habillement, le style, le comportement, le corps, le sens de la responsabilité, etc. Le patriotisme, avant tout, avait beaucoup d'importance. Par conséquent, le mouvement du scoutisme avait repris l'important pouvoir, quelque part révolutionnaire, qui du temps colonial était détenu par les mouvements de la jeunesse islamique contre les colons.

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My curiosity with Indonesian scouts is triggered by the simple fact that since they were introduced in Indonesia in 1912, scouting organisations have come to belong to the most important and biggest youth organisations in the country. Scouting organisations were introduced just a few years after the inception of what was then known as Netherlands India, by the hero of the Mafeking siege, Lord Baden-Powell. From year to year, loads of Indonesian youth have joined the scouts until they reached early adulthood. Some stay on as scoutmasters until or after their retirement age. It is not an exaggeration to say that what Indonesians of any profession, rank and social status – from heroes of the Independence War to executive officers of the country's top private companies, from university presidents to simple vegetable and fruit farmers in remote rural areas – have in common, is that they were or are scouts. The latest reports tell us that by 2002 there were around 16 million Indonesian youth registered as scouts. Members ranged from the third grade of primary school to university.<sup>22</sup> By any standard participation, some would say that the mobilisation of Indonesian youth in scout movement is enormous (Salam 1988:118).

Only a few studies have been addressed to scout movement, especially in Southeast Asia. Katherine Bowie (1997), who works on the Thailand Village Scout – which is actually more of a para-military organisation rather than a scout movement – is among those few. She concentrates her attention mainly on the five days initiation programme of the Village Scouts and comes to the conclusion that the programme is not more than a state ritual through which participants do not gain anything else but euphoria which, 'over the time ... dissipated into apathy' (Bowie 1997:282). Perhaps Bowie is right about the initiation programme, but an organisation will not last long and attract huge memberships if all it can offer is merely a feeling of euphoria, resulting from the initiation rite. The fact that the Indonesian scouts are still very much alive, and continues to develop after almost a century of existence, implies that there must be a force strong enough to keep the movement active.

The popularity of scouts among contemporary Indonesians is partly explained by their role as 'character factory', the third ring of education. This ring comes after family and school, and is the time at which youth can learn and develop good character, trustworthiness, discipline, intelligence, skill, handicraft, physical health, and self-care for the good of the community (Baden-Powell 2004:44-6; Rosenthal 1986:4-6; Pramuka 1969:10). Partly, the scouts' popularity is explained by their attachment to larger institutions, be they royal courts, nationalistic movement organisations, religious organisations, political parties, armed forces or government. In return for lavish political support, funding and facilities, the scouts serve their mother

institutions by functioning as seedbeds for raising loyal national cadres and winning popular support (Muecke 1980:408).

Scouting was generally known as an apolitical movement, with the motive behind its inception being mostly social. Closer observation, however, will show us that since its very beginning, scouting could not be separated from politics. Its inception was proposed as an answer to the erosion of the British Empire's power in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century which, in Baden-Powell's eyes, stemmed from the social decay of the British youth:

... great waste of human life now going on in our city slums where so many thousand of our fellow humans are living in a misery through being 'unemployable' ... simply because they have never been given a chance (Warren 1986:376; cf. Baden-Powell 1930:226).

This problem was to be solved by instilling the value of duty and discipline among the youth so that they would grow up as responsible and patriotic citizens willing to defend their society (Warren 1986:380). In most of the modern 20th century, society referred to a nation which in turn was materialised in the form of institutions. These institutions either ran the state or aspired to gain political power to run the state. It was mainly to these types of institutions that scout movements were attaching themselves. Scouting can be seen as a child of nationalism (cf. MacDonald 1993). Although scout movements often claimed to be apolitical, their everyday practices were caught in thick national political webs. This article is going to explore the role of government and other kinds of organisations which aspired to gain political power in Indonesia along the course of the 20th century in the creation and promotion of scout movements in Indonesia. To what extent were they capable of utilising scout movements as instrument to achieve their political goals and how did the dynamics in Indonesian politics affect the fate of scouting, which according to its founding father, was supposed to be apolitical?

### **A Political Instrument**

Brought to Indonesia by P. J. Smith and Major de Jager a year or so prior to the outbreak of the First World War, the scout movement aimed to mold the 12 to 18-year-old youth of Netherlands-India into good citizens. Good citizens are those loyal to the Queen, those who owe the Fatherlands, obey and respect the legitimate authority, are responsible to one's duty, gentle mannered, benevolent and helpful, and who love nature. This movement, which P.J. Smith and Major de Jager naively addressed, was supposed to be 'free from any religious denomination and political orientation'.<sup>3</sup> Some years later, on 4 September 1917, with the blessing of the headquarters of the *Nederlandsche Padvinders Organisatie* in the Hague, the Netherlands-India

scout established their organisation called the *Nederlandsch-Indische Padvindersvereniging* (NIPV)(Abdulmuchi 1951:57).

Somehow, unlike their European progenitor, Indonesian scouts were not born into and raised within a social condition in which the constant threat of war and the poor quality of youths were considered as problems (Baden-Powell 2004:197; Springhall 1987:938). Instead, they underwent their early development in an atmosphere of national awakening, where the air was thick with political antagonism between the natives and their colonial master (Lombard 1990:161).<sup>4</sup> Unlike their colonised contemporaries, such as in Africa, where social life was deeply scarred with racism to the extent that 'Scouting being open to all regardless of class, creed, or colour was found to be impossible in practice' (Baden-Powell 1936:368; Parsons 2001:62), Indonesian scouts were more plagued by acute political fractionalisation. As a result, it was impossible to establish united bodies of scouts open to any youth regardless of their descent, ethnic, political aspiration and religion. The NIPV itself was quite Dutch-oriented. Their members were mostly Dutch youths. Communication, both verbal and literal, was carried out in Dutch, and while they were patriotic they gave their allegiance to the Dutch nation. Although they perhaps tried not to be so, NIPV members were also colonialistic, as reflected in the illustration for the administrative column in their monthly bulletin, *het Indische Padvinders*. It depicts two smart, self-confident Dutch scouts discussing intently the administrative papers laid out on a working desk, while behind them a native in servant attire approaches to serve them with cups of tea.<sup>5</sup>

It did not take long for the nationalistic movements' leaders to find out the scouts' great potential for their own organisation and political struggle. First of all, the scouts' patriotic credo 'Country first, self second' (Baden-Powell 2004:28) fit nicely into the spirit of the national movements. Scouting was an excellent way to cast loyal cadres, because it would allow the movements to educate youths from their late childhood onwards. As Dr Sukiman of the militant *Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia* PSII executive committee said: '*Bidji jang baik dan koewat betoel itoe ditanem moelai misi ketjil*', a good and strong seedling must be nurtured since they were small (Poeze 1982c:152). Scout membership was open to youth from 12 to 18-year-olds and later on was expanded to the ages 8 to 12 for cubs (Hoofdbestuur Muhammadiyah 1927a:12; 1927b:8).<sup>6</sup> The scouts' code of conduct to respect and obey their scoutmasters as well as the scouting's socio-psychological setting, which places scoutmasters as role models for their troops, are a sure guarantee for the successful transmission of the mother organisation's values, mission and strategy to their scouts cum cadres (Rosenthal 1986:110; Macleod 2001:5).

Scouts also functioned as a great public relations act to win popular support. Healthy and energetic youth with exemplary characters and smart uniforms were certainly a very promising view. This especially appealed to the natives of a colony which had been treated as third class citizen, simply because there was no fourth. '*In de jeugd ligt de toekomst*', in the youth lies the future, thus leaders of SIAP in the 1930s wrote.<sup>7</sup> Establishing scout troops was a sure way to let people know what kind of future the national movement offered them. Last but not least, as scouting quickly spread all over the world and developed into international organisations, the nationalistic movements' involvement in scouting would certainly have opened up the possibility of international recognition.

Almost without delay, Indonesian national movements of any ideological background established their scouts, and the Baden-Powell's scout law of being 'loyal to the King, and to his officers, and to his country' was soon subjected to a very liberal interpretation (Abdulmuchi 1951:31; Pryke 1998:323).<sup>8</sup> The fire was started by Prince Mangkunegara VII who in September 1916 established his principality Javaansche *Padvinders Organisatie* (JPO) (Suharini 2000:18). Just as their name suggested and their oath stated, JPO scouts were 'loyal to the Prince and the beloved Motherlands'. The movement was exclusively opened to citizens of the Principality. Every Sunday, under the fluttering JPO's *Pare Anom* (Golden Green) flag, the scouts gathered at the Mangkunegaran palace front yard to practice marching drills, first aid, map reading, knot tying and other basic scouting skills. It must have been a great view for the Indonesians to see indigenous youth, looking healthy and energetic in their smart uniforms, throwing salute in the way of Roman soldiers – which unfortunately years later was known as a Nazi salute – playing drum band, and marching briskly back and fro at the scoutmaster's command (Pandurakjat Indonesia 1951:134). One afternoon on his way back from lecturing, Ahmad Dahlan, the founder of the Muhammadiyah Movement, happened to be among the bystanders. He was deeply impressed by what he saw and decided to bring scouting to his organisation. Ahmad Dahlan was not the only one, leaders of Boedi Oetomo, the first nationalistic political movement, were also impressed by the Mangkunegaran scouts.

Soon, Muhammadiyah and Boedi Oetomo sent their representatives to the principality court to learn the nook and cranny of running scouts troop. Returned to their home base in Jogjakarta, Somodirdjo and Sjarbini initiated *Padvinder Muhammadiyah* in 1918. Two years later, the name was changed into *Hizbul Wathan*, HW (Army of Motherlands) after an Egyptian anti-colonial freedom fighter troop (Raharjendra 1990:28). Boedi Oetomo created their

own *Nationale Padvinderij* in 1921 (Suharini 2000:43). A few months later, the Jogjakarta branch of *Jong Java* (the Javanese Youth) established their *Jong Java Padvinderij*.<sup>9</sup>

Although drawing their inspiration from and bearing clear marks of scouts, from their very beginning HW were not to mix themselves with other scouts, especially those sponsored by the colonial government. HW's goal was to promote education and learning among youth, based on Islamic teaching, in order to make good people out of them with fine characters and healthy physiques (Hoofdbestuur Muhammadiyah 1927a:8; 1927b:6; Djoemairi nd.: 9). This, the HW leaders argued, was not in conformity with the NIPV whose ideology was based on Christianity – as reflected in the scouts' three-finger salute – and it was not HW's business to spread Christian teaching, however subtle it was. HW also refused to join NIPV's rank because the NIPV oath implied that the legitimate authority was the colonial government and NIPV scout loyalty was to the Dutch Queen. This was clearly against the HW's aspiration of national freedom (Raharjendra 1990:31-32).<sup>10</sup>

In April 1927 *Komite Persatuan Indonesia*, where Ir. Soekarno sat as first secretary, established the *Nationale Padvindersorganisatie* (NPO). Elected as leader of these scouts was Mr. Sartono while Muwardi sat as secretary and Ir. Soekarno as treasurer. A year later, the NPO was transformed into the *Indonesische Nationale Padvindersorganisatie* (INPO) and declared their aim to be the struggle for Indonesian independence. Also in 1927, during the national congress held from 8 -11 April in Jogjakarta, the militant PSII declared their *Sarekat Islam Afdeling Padvinderij* (SIAP). Moeridan, who was appointed as the scouts' chief leader, stated bluntly that the goal of SIAP was to prepare the youth with a healthy physique and strong character to fight against the enemy of Islam, while Reksodipuro of the PSII executive committee added that the aims of SIAP were to prepare leaders for the independence struggle. Side by side with *Pemoeda Sarekat Islam* (Sarekat Islam Youth), the SIAP were placed under the PSII Youth Department, and SIAP scouts of 18 years old were obliged to take PSII membership (Poeze 1982c, pp.34-7, p. 495).

The use of scouts to prepare cadres loyal to the political struggle of achieving Indonesian independence sometimes proceeded to border on militarisation. In their regular weekly gathering, Hizbul Wathan scouts always spent considerable time on the marching drill. They were so disciplined in the drill that they were known as '*pandoe militer*', militaristic scout (Raharjendra 1990:40). To earn income and strengthen their organisation in 1929, SIAP planned to publish a monthly internal magazine entitled '*Sendjata Pandoe*', 'Scouts' Weapon' (Poeze 1983:15). SIAP also decided to send

branch leaders to Banjarnegara, Central Java, for a three-month camping trip involving a martial arts course (*pencak silat*). Some of SIAP's members in Pacet, West Java, had practised *pati geni* fasting to make them invincible to blades and bullets (Poeze 1983:232, p. 363). Occasionally, this fierce loyalty to the nationalistic goal went against the basic scouting value of humanity. In his closing speech at the Pemoeda Moeslimin Indonesia Conference in Surakarta, 18 April 1929, Ramelan, the leader of SIAP, reportedly said:

SIAP are not really scouts but helpers of our own people, we should not help the whites (Dutch) like what other scouts do. SIAP would not give any help if the European is struck by problems, let them die. But we have to give our hands to our own people, if necessary we must [be] willing to spend our money for them (Poeze 1983:98).

*Surja Wirawan*, for instance, who were widely known as scouts of the Greater Indonesia Party, in fact labelled their own Wirawans of 12 to 18 years old as *Jeugdstorm*, Youth Storm, who would serve as working troops as they passed 18 (Poeze 1994a, p. LV, p. 239).

Indeed, not all scouts were as militant as SIAP and Hizbul Wathan. There were some, such as *Pandoe Kasoeltanan* (PK) of Jogjakarta Sultanate, *Kepandoean Azas Katholiek Indonesia* (KAKI), *Pandoe Tri Darma* of the Protestant Church, *Kepandoean Masehi Indonesia* (KMI) of the Saviour Church, *Pandoe Anshor* of the traditionalist Moslem Nahdhatul Ulama, *Pandu Organisatie Pasundan*, who were hardly ever mentioned in the reports of the colonial government Political Intelligence Service (PID) – suggesting that they were not considered as a blatant threat to the government (Poeze 1994b:239). Yet, in general, there was a tendency of scout radicalisation during the course of the 1930s of which one would certainly find difficult to judge whether the native scouts were really scouts or youth members of political parties. Most scouting organisations were anti-colonial, which explains why most of them declined the invitation to join NIPV rank in the late 1920s. Doing so would have earned them government blessing and official membership to the World Scout Association. NIPV was the sole scouting body in the Netherlands-India acknowledged by the World Scout Association (Poeze 1982a:LXXXIII). G.J. Ranneft, the chief leader of NIPV replied to the negative response by officially forbidding the native scouts to use 'padvinders' in their organisation's name. In turn, Haj Agus Salim, leader of the board of PSII, responded to the ban lightly and coined a new term 'Pandu', after a hero figure in Mahabarata epic, to replace padvinder. From then on, many native scouts substituted their name from padvinders to pandu.<sup>11</sup>

As the number of scouting organisations grew, an attempt was made to consolidate them into a single body. The first effort occurred in early 1928 in

Bandung where *Pemuda Indonesia Padvinderij* and NPO of the National Party were to unite into the *Indonesische Nationale Padvinders Organisatie* (INPO). Not long after that in Surabaya, INPO, SIAP and National-Islamietischepadvinderij (Natipy) came up with the idea of forming an all-Indonesian scouts federation. It took almost two years for this idea to come close to materialising. On 15 December 1929, INPO, Natipy, SIAP, Jong Java Padvinderij (JJP), Pandu Kebangsaan, Pandu Pemuda Sumatera (PPS), Jong-Indische Padvinders Organisatie (JIPO) held a conference in Jakarta. JPO of Mangkunegaran Principality and HW were invited but did not show up. In spite of this, the conference discussed the establishment of an all-Indonesian scout's federation. They came to the conclusion that if there was a federation, it should be based on nationalism, national unity and Islam which in practice was hard for every scout to accept. INPO, JJP, Pandu Kebangsaan and PPS stuck with nationalism, proclaiming that every scout, regardless of their religious affiliation, might join the federation as long as they carried the flag of nationalism. In turn, SIAP and Natipy stuck with Islam, stating that the federation was open to any scouts as long as they were Muslim. At the end, all the participants could agree on was that the time to establish a true all-Indonesian scout's federation was yet to come. The nationalist scouts, however, were unwilling to step back. Right after the conference they established *Persaudaraan Antar Pandu Indonesia* (PAPI), Brotherhood of Indonesian Scouts (Poeze 1982c, p. 254, p. 277; 1983, p. 273). Apparently, not a single scouting troop was interested in joining the Brotherhood and eventually, in 1930, the Brotherhood transformed themselves into an ordinary scouting troop called *Kepanduan Bangsa Indonesia* (KBI), Indonesian Scouts (Poeze 1983:XXXIII).

The scouts federation was finally established in 1938 and named itself *Badan Pusat Persaudaraan Kepanduan Indonesia* (BPPKI), Central Body of Indonesian Scouts Brotherhood. Around four years later, from 19-23 July 1941, the Brotherhood succeeded in staging the first All-Indonesian Scouts Jamboree, in Jogjakarta.<sup>12</sup> It seems that the willingness of the native scouts to establish the federation was related to the growing pressures from the NIPV. In 1934, the world's chief scout Lord Baden-Powell and his wife visited Jakarta, but NIPV had banned non-NIPV scouts from attending the ceremony. Non-NIPV scouts were also forbidden from joining the Netherlands India contingent to the 5th World Jamboree in Vogelenzang, the Netherlands in 1937. The pressure of these bans in effect blocked the native scouts from international contacts, a cost which the scouts' mother organisations basically could not afford, as one among other important reasons for their investment in establishing scouting organisations was to gain international recognition.<sup>13</sup>



Another form of pressure originated during the 1930s economic malaise which threw the native scouts into difficulty in financing their activities (Setyantoro 2006:91; Suharini 2000:25). Reluctantly, a number of native scouts, including JPO of the Mangkunegaran Principality, bowed to this pressure and joined NIPV, thus allowing them to send members to the international jamboree. Out of 70 scouts who went to the World Jamboree, 29 were Dutch, 14 Chinese and 27 were Natives.<sup>14</sup> In the meantime, native scouts who were determined enough to stand on their own feet had no other choice but to forget some of their differences and tighten their ranks to form a federation.

The native scouts' resistance against unification, even in the face of a common enemy, was mainly rooted in the plurality of the late colonial period of Indonesian society. Far beyond the scouts moral and structural reach, Indonesian society at that time was deeply segmented by different ethnicities, religions, economic activity, local political history and political ideology. A solid middle class, which could socially act as integrator of the society and to whom scouting was basically addressed, simply did not exist. Socially, the native society was polarised into a mass of peasants and coolies and a small group of educated aristocracy, *priyayi* – from amongst whom leaders of national movements originated. As Furnivall (1939:468) has pointed out: 'Nationalism within a plural society is itself a disruptive force, tending to shatter and not to consolidate its social order'. Although they carried a similar goal of achieving Indonesian independence, there was competition among the nationalistic movements, not only on how – once the independence was won the country should be ruled (Ricklefs 1995:268) – but also who would rule her. Of course, every national movement organisation aspired to be the winner of this competition (Kahin 1952:230). The future of post-colonial Indonesia was certainly a fiercely contested pie of which every contestant would like to take the biggest, if not the whole, piece. All of this became evident during the independence revolution of 1945-1949 and its subsequent years.

### Gentle Patriots

During the period of Japanese occupation, scouts were disbanded. Dutch youths and their elders were put into prisons of war by the Japanese (De Nederlandsche Padvinders 1947), while the Indonesian youth were sent to join the Japanese sponsored *Seinendan*, the Youth Legion, the auxiliary police *Keibodan*, the auxiliary army *Heiho* and the Motherlands Defense Army, *PETA*. Many ex-scouts joined the Japanese sponsored militaristic organisation above, for they saw it as the right way to achieve their aspiration of Indonesian independence (Mertoprawiro 1992:26). Mid-1944, the Japanese

sponsored the establishment of *Barisan Pelopor*, Pioneer Legion, a militia that consisted of nationalist youths and *Hizbullah*, Army of God, whose members were mostly youths of PSII. Appointed as commander of Barisan Pelopor was Dr Muwardi, secretary of INPO and PAPI in the 1930s (Anderson 1961:48). In the wake of an independence war, Barisan Pelopor was transformed into *Barisan Banteng*, Buffalo Legion.

In December 1945, some four months after the independence proclamation, around 300 scout leaders held a conference in Surakarta and agreed upon the establishment of a national scouts organisation *Pandu Rakjat Indonesia* (PRI), Scouts of Indonesian People. Dr Muwardi, Commander of *Barisan Banteng*, whose political allegiance went to the National Party – and the Communist Party of Tan Malaka as well – was elected Chief Scout of PRI (Pandu Rakjat Indonesia 1950:77; Kahin 1952:163).<sup>15</sup> The government approved PRI as the only scouting body in the newly born republic through the Ministry of Education Decree No. 39/1947 and the Indonesian President received an honorary position as the organisation's national patron. The independence war (1947-1949), however, halted the PRI's activities. Indonesia lost most of its territory to the Dutch armed forces, so much so that by the end of 1948, they were cornered into the southern part of Central Java and Jogjakarta. Many scouts joined the Student Army in rural areas to wage guerilla warfare against the Dutch while the younger ones remained in the cities to serve as couriers and information gatherers (Pandu Rakjat Indonesia 1950:14, 66; Winarto 1951; Padmodiwiryo 1995:24). Dr Muwardi himself was killed in confusing armed conflict between troops of Pesindo (Socialist Youth of Indonesia) and Indonesian Navy who put their political allegiance with the Communist Party on one side, against Siliwangi Division of the Indonesian Army and Barisan Banteng on the other side in mid September, 1948 Surakarta (Kahin 1952:289). Meanwhile in the occupied areas, the pre-war Dutch and Chinese scouts had revived their activities. Troop bases were opened again and the Dutch and Chinese scouts happily wandered cities' outskirts or secured plantations, running their scouts games (Leembruggen 2001:97-118). To accommodate the development, G.J. Ranneft the pre-war Chief of NIPV, established the *Centraal Padvinders Kantoor* (CPVK), Central Office of Pathfinders, in Bandung.

When the war ended, in 1949, PRI found that their dream of an All-Indonesian Scout Movement was impossible. The Hague Round Table Conference of August-October 1949 made Indonesia to form a federal state in which the Republic of Indonesia would only be a member of the federation. In the other states, created by the Dutch during the war, the scouts were organised under CPVK who then were transformed into *Perserikatan Pandu Pandu* (PPP), Scouts Union. During the independence war, political parties

who had already been active as national movements during the colonial era, now found a legitimate arena to win seats in parliament as well as in field militia to fight the Dutch. They realised the importance of scout movement in this power play to recruit cadres and to create a bonafide public image. Promises that they had solemnly made in the establishment of PRI were soon broken. Every political party and mass organisation was now eager to revive their scouts. Just a week after the PRI second congress in Jakarta, from 20-23 January 1950, was over; HW raised their flag again, as did SIAP, *Pandu Kristen* and other scouts in the federal states.

Worried that political competition among the scouts' mother organisations would go beyond control and sacrifice the educational function of scouting, some scoutmasters tried to halt the disarray. With the blessing of the Ministry of Agriculture, they conferred in Jakarta, 16 September 1951, to establish *Ikatan Pandu Indonesia* (IPINDO), Indonesian Scouts Association (Muhammad 1952:22). To what extent this federation was capable of accommodating the varied interests and aspirations of its members, is still hard to tell. The fact was that, as years advanced closer to the 1955 general elections, scout troops mushroomed in Indonesia. As if in a race, every political party and mass organisation whose number grew incredibly and who were all fiercely attacking the other to win parliamentary seats (Feith 1962:361-3), established their own scouts. There were *Kepanduan Putra Indonesia* (KPI) of the Communist Party, *Perserikatan Kepanduan Tionghwa* (Perketi) of the Chinese Community, *Kepanduan Angkatan Muslimin Indonesia* (KAMI) of the Muslim Party, *Kepanduan Madjapahit* of a not-so-clear mass organization, and so on and so forth. Even the armed forces did not want to be outpaced. The navy revived the old *Zeeverkenner*, *Pandu Laut*, Sea Scout and the police created their *Pandu Bhayangkara*. By 1954 there were 71 scouting troops, with around 244,000 members officially registered at the Ministry of Education.<sup>16</sup> As the general election day drew nearer, the parties actively staged campaigns, in the form of mass gatherings in city squares or rallies along the city streets, never forgetting to show off their scouts.<sup>17</sup> For big parties who possessed enough funding to buy drums of every size, clarinets and trumpets, the parties' scout troops participating in the campaign played in a marching band. Those who were unable to get expensive musical instruments just lined up their scouts at the head of the rally. Poor parties were to be satisfied with placing their scouts as ceremonial guard in front of the podium on which their party leaders gave speeches.

The deployment of scouts as part of a political machine did not stop with the 1955 general elections. The Communist Party, as third winner of the election after the National Party and Muslim Party, went further to transform Indonesian scouting movements into Pioneers, just like they did in Eastern

European countries (Lembaga Sedjarah P K I 1960:84). The idea was brought up by Dr Prijono the coordinator minister of Education and Culture, 1957-1966, who was allegedly inclined to the Communist Party. For a while, it seemed as if the Communist Party's aspiration had received a green light from President Soekarno. Upon attending scouts jamboree in Ciputat, South Jakarta, in 1959, Soekarno was deeply disappointed. As he saw it, the scouts were acutely disorganised and all they were good at was playing games, singing, dancing and walking in the woods. To the president, and the proponents of the Pioneer idea, Indonesian scouts were thick with Baden-Powellism and unfit to be the spirit of the Indonesian revolution. According to Soekarno, Indonesian scouts should be fitted to the need of Indonesia. They should be active in community development works, such as building small-scale water powered electric stations; they should be engaged in agricultural extension services and so on, just like the party youth the President had met when visiting the socialist countries (Soekarno 1961:191).<sup>18</sup>

Worried about the Communist Party's next move, the nationalist scouts' leaders, led by the Sultan of Jogjakarta, Hamengku Buwono IX, approached Soekarno. They fully agreed with the president's will to organise the country's scouting movements into a single national body, firmly refusing the Communist Party's idea of transforming the Indonesian scouts into Pioneer. To them, the scouts should stay scouts. They should be fitted to the Indonesian societies condition but remain based on Baden-Powell's scouting principle of a semi-formal youth education scheme, including voluntary membership, organisation according to age groups and outdoor living and games. The nationalist scout leaders also tried to consolidate their organisations. On 19 May 1960, leaders of IPINDO conferred with leaders of the Sisterhood of Indonesian Girl Guides, *Persaudaraan Organisasi Pandu Putri Indonesia* (Poppindo) and the Union of Indonesian Girl Guides, *Persatuan Kependuan Putri Indonesia* (PKPI) in Jakarta. There they decided to unite the three organisations into the Union of Indonesian Scouts, *Persatuan Kependuan Indonesia* (Perkindo) with Hamengku Buwono IX as the Chief Scout. To avoid friction with the Communist Party, Perkindo opened their door to *Kependuan Putra Indonesia* – the Communist Party scouts – inviting them to become members. Perkindo, however, did not succeed in carrying out its mission to become the sole national body for Indonesia scouting movement since many refused to join them (Raharjendra 1990:61-63).

### **Cadres of a Nation**

Having failed with the Perkindo project, the nationalist scouts approached the president again to offer their concept of national scouts, apparently leaving the nationalisation process in the president's hands. On 9 March 1961,

Soekarno summoned leaders of all the scouting organisations to the presidential palace and announced his decision to dissolve all scouts in the country, organising them instead into a national scouting organisation called *Pradja Muda Karana*, abbreviated *Pramuka* (Youth Cadres of the Nation). Soekarno argued that he did this ‘for the nation’s sake’, as hence, the scouts leaders had to willingly merge their troops into Pramuka.<sup>19</sup> On 14 August 1961, in a national ceremony on the presidential palace yard, Soekarno inaugurated Pramuka as the sole national scouts movement by handing the movement’s *Tunas Kelapa* banner – a lightly ornamented white flag with red silhouette of coconut seedling to symbolise Pramuka as the nation’s future generation – to the chief scout Hamengku Buwono IX.

Obviously, Pramuka was the middle way between Soekarno’s wish to turn the youths into state cadres and the country’s scouting leaders’ wish to have the scouts remain as scouts. Literally speaking, *Praja Muda Karana* and Pioneer have the same meaning, cadre of the nation. But as a scouts movement, *Praja Muda Karana* would operate according to the scouting principle of voluntary character building through small group learning. Many were not happy with the presidential decision but no one dared to raise objection. Soekarno, at that time, was just too powerful to be disobeyed. With tears in their eyes, the scouts raised down their old flags. Soekarno’s policy to nationalise the scouts into Pramuka signifies that, finally, the forty decades of competition over cadres, access to public support and international recognition amongst government, political parties and mass organisations had been won by the government. This was very like Soekarno indeed who, from his 1957 Presidential Decree until his downfall in 1966, would behave more as a dictator than a leader of a democratic country. Putting Soekarno and competition factors aside, the establishment of Pramuka also signified a change in the Indonesian scouts’ position. They transformed from being part of political parties and mass organisations who were operated for the advancement of their mother organisations’ interest, political or else, into a means of the ruling government to promote the governments’ interests and whatever the government considered good for the nation and state.

The establishment of Pramuka gave the Indonesian government a very wide access into the country’s youths, allowing them to instill values that they think fit to the country’s need, as well as to mobilise them in implementing these values. Since their very beginning, scouts were already instilled with patriotism. Later on, the national awakening period and independence revolution instilled nationalism in them. Through rites and games, the scouts were taught to love the Motherland and embrace the idea of a nation-state. Both were fine, but not enough, for Soekarno. As his 9 March 1961 speech

indicates, the Indonesian scouts were about to be presented with a new value and role in the development of their country. The scouts were now not only to spend their time playing games, marching to and forth, but were also to be engaged in activities that directly benefited the community. As part of a number of smaller training and community service programmes, for six weeks in July-August 1965, some 2,400 scouts participated in Satya Dharma Camping in Purwakarta Regency, digging a stretch of canal for the Jatiluhur dam irrigation system.<sup>20</sup> Such an activity was not strange to the scouts, many of whom had been busy with illiteracy eradication campaigns in the pre-war era. The difference, however, being that from Soekarno's time onwards, scouts' deployment in community service was organised on a vast scale, from branch quarter to national quarter level.<sup>21</sup> Soekarno's successor, Soeharto, seized the opportunity to exploit the scouts to full extent. From the early days of his presidency in 1966, he started to deploy Pramuka as cadres of development – the sacred credo of his regime. He continued Soekarno's policy of filling the scouts' national headquarters with high-ranking officials. In 1971, he went further by issuing a presidential decree to install cabinet ministers as members of the scouts National Advisory Council. One ladder down, governors were appointed as Head of the Provincial Advisory Council which consisted mainly of a chief of every branch of governmental services and commanders of the regional armed forces. At municipality and regency levels, mayors and regency heads were appointed as Head of the Branch of Advisory Council. This decree had in effect put Pramuka under direct control of the government, as the president, governors, mayors and regency heads possessed direct access into the scouts' organisation in their respective areas.<sup>22</sup>

To boost youth participation in Pramuka at troop base level, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the Scouts National Headquarters issued a decree on 25 September 1965, asking students to join Pramuka and directing school principals to coordinate with one another in facilitating the enrollment of their students in scouting troops based adjacent to the schools. Should a community not have a scouting troop base, the principals would cooperate with community members to establish one. In practice, however, most of the principals took a short cut. Rather than talking and cooperating with other principals and community members, they established scouting troops in their own schools and recruited Pramuka members from among their own students. During the colonial era, many schools had already been used as troop bases, but the troops always belonged to political parties and mass organisations, not the school. These parties and organisations cooperated with the principals because schools normally had all facilities needed for scout training, such as open yards and classrooms, and, more importantly, it was the best place to recruit cubs. Yet, as principals started using their schools

as troop bases and recruiting scouts from among their students, scouts in Indonesia became a mass product and as far as people were concerned, a Pramuka was just a student with a dark and light brown uniform, participating in the extra-curricular school activity of scouting.

A scouts troop, as Pramuka House Rule states, should consist of a *Perindukan Siaga*, a Den of 7 to 10 years old cubs; a *Pasukan Penggalang*, a Troop of 11-15-year-old scouts; an *Ambalan Penegak*, Crew of 16-20-year-old rovers; a *Racana Pandega*, a Clan of 21-25-year-old rangers, and a corps of scoutmaster (Takijoeddin 1968a, 1968b; Abbas 1990:75-7).<sup>23</sup> This structure, the house rule suggests, would allow a thorough scout training from childhood to adult. School based scouting troops, however, prevented this ideal structure from taking place. Primary schools in Indonesia carry out education programmes from grades 1 to 6, holding pupils from 7 years to 12 years old. Junior high school teaches grades 7 to 9, of students from 13 to 15 years old, and senior high school teaches grades 10 to 12, of students from 16 to 18 years old. Every school level constitutes a separated educational body in the sense that a primary school has no administrative relation whatsoever with a junior high school just next door. The result is that there are almost no scouting troop in Indonesia right now with complete memberships from cubs to rangers and scoutmasters. Primary school troops usually consist of cubs and young *Penggalang*. Junior high school troops consist of *Penggalang*. Senior high school troops consists of *Penegak*, while university troops – if they are willing to establish one – consist of *Pandega*.

Outside school-based troops in 1966, the National Headquarters introduced *Satuan Karya*, popularly abbreviated as *Saka*, akin to the United States Boy Scouts Association's Explorer programme, to provide rovers and rangers with practical and productive skills (cf. Taylor 1995). *Satuan Karya* are implemented at Branch Quarter, or municipality or regency level under the sponsorship of certain offices of government service or branches of armed forces. There is *Saka Taruna Bumi*, sponsored by Office of Agricultural Service, where the scouts can learn agricultural skills.<sup>24</sup>

There is *Saka Bahari* sponsored by the Navy where the scouts can learn seamanship; *Saka Bhayangkara* of public safety servicing, and *Saka Dirgantara* of airmanship. Later on in the mid-1970s, when family planning programmes and forest management gained importance, two more *satuan karya* were introduced. These were those of *Saka Kencana* and *Saka Wanabakti* where rovers learned about family planning extension programmes and forest management. Recently, the Ministry of Health sponsored *Saka Bakti Husada* to teach public health promotion skills.<sup>25</sup> In spite of the nice blue print, a lack of funds, skilled trainers and motivation among the staff of the appointed governmental services at regency level has hindered *Satuan Karya* programmes.

Most of the time, activities in Satuan Karya units are not much different from those of school-based troops, full of rites and games and not as much focused on skill training as they are supposed to be. The rovers come to Satuan Karya more to extend their social network beyond the school's premise and to get closer to the holders of power rather than to learn practical skills.

Until the end of the New Order regime in 1997, the Indonesian scouting movement was very much under the control of government. No single mass organisation or political party dared to challenge the government's domination over the politically potential youth movement by establishing their own brand of scouting like in the pre-1960s. To the New Order, the scouting movement was so precious, if not more as an arena to prepare cadres than as a symbolic asset to tell everybody that they were fully in control of the country. The fall of the New Order was soon followed by the fast growth of political parties. As the government's political grips over the country weakened, leaders of the Muhammadiyah seized it as an opportunity to re-activate Hizbul Wathan in November 1999. Whether this step has something to do with the establishment of the National Mandate Party, which is full of Muhammadiyah functionaries, needs further inquiry. However, when they saw what the Muhammadiyah had done, Nahdhatul Ulama did not want to be left behind, and so reactivated their *Pandu Anshor*. Worried that the development would endanger Pramuka domination in Indonesian scouting, Megawati Sukarnoputri, then the president, issued Presidential Decree No 104/2004 which, among many other things, re-stated Pramuka as the sole Indonesian scouting body. The presidential decree notwithstanding, the Muslim based Justice and Welfare Party established their *Pandu Keadilan*, some environmentalists established *Pandu Lingkungan*, the Association of Islamic Schools established *Pandu SIT (Sekolah Islam Terpadu)*, and the Democratic Party promoted their own *Pandu Demokrat*. The circle seems to be returning to the 1920s era, although certainly with a different story.

### Concluding Remarks

The discussion above pointed out that from time to time, along the course of the 20th century, scouting movements in Indonesia could not be separated from political organisation, whether it was governmental, state agencies or political parties. From time to time, the government kept trying to hold a monopoly power over scout movements by creating a national body of scout movements. Yet, they were not always successful. When the government's political power was weak, political parties and mass organisation would press forward and sponsor their own scouts, which were obviously loyal to their own political causes. Although this fact appears entirely un-scout like, it can be proposed here that it was their involvement in national politics which largely



explains how scout movements were capable of surviving and flourishing in the 20th-century Indonesia. If not for the political institutions, scout movements would not have gained a wide and long enough arena and support to maintain their existence. Certainly this is not the only explanation. Scouting is not just a social institution; it is also based on human experiences which so far have not been discussed in this article. Very likely, another part of explanation on the survival and development of Indonesian scout movement is related to the scouts own interest, experiences and interpretations of scouting.

### Notes

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