

Progressive Islam

A Social Study of Tan Malaka's Islamic Thought

By

Reza Adeputra Tohis

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Foreword

This book is a work full of intellectual courage and originality. It is said so because the object of study of this book is the thought of a figure who is seen as controversial in Indonesia. Tan Malaka was a Muslim who embraced Communism. Communism and its variants have been prohibited from spreading in this country since the Provisional People's Consultative Assembly Decree (MPRS) of the Republic of Indonesia number 25 of 1966. Then, for the vast majority of people, Communism is godless. However, through this book, the author shows scientifically that Tan Malaka has progressive Islamic thought, which is very relevant and necessary to answer the socio-religious problems of contemporary Muslim society. This is the intellectual courage of a Reza.

Not only that, in this book, you can see how the theory sociology of knowledge and philosophy of science critical realism operated logically and adequately in analyzing and giving rise to progressive Islamic Thoughts of Tan Malaka, which are intertwined based on the principle of causality in dialectical law, namely, Madilog as a progressive Islamic method that gave birth to the concept of monotheism as the foundation for the existence of social justice which later became the foundation for human rights, gender equality, pluralism, and unity of the ummah. This is the originality of Reza.

So far, Tan Malaka's thought researchers have focused more on social, economic, and political themes. The study of Islamic thought Tan Malaka is still rarely found. So much so that this book is considered unique and New, especially in the discourse of contemporary Islamic thought. This book will be handy. We welcome the presence of this book, especially at the Manado State Islamic Institute.

Prof. Dr. Ahamad Rajafi, M.H.I
Rector of Manado State Islamic Institute
Manado, Indonesia, January 2024

Acknowledgments

May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and all of us. Peace be upon our beloved Prophet Muhammad, as he has given us love and affection for one another.

This book's core is exploring Islam Tan Malaka, later characterized as progressive Islamic thought. To demonstrate this, the author uses the theory sociology of knowledge formulated by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, as well as the philosophy of science of critical realism formulated by Roy Bhaskar, as an approach to analysis. The result is the concept of Madilog as a progressive Islamic method that gave birth to the concept of monotheism as the foundation for the existence of social justice, which later became the foundation for Human Rights (HAM), gender equality, pluralism, and unity of ummah. These concepts are conditionally interconnected based on the principle of causality and the laws of dialectics. This conceptual construction is what the author calls progressive Islam Tan Malaka.

The author realized that the completion and publication of this work could not be separated from the help of many people, both morally and materially. The author is very grateful, without ceasing, to his beloved father (Herry Tohis) and mother (Hesty Manoppo), as well as my dear brothers (Zaputra Tohis and Fahriansyah Tohis). They have struggled to deliver the writer to be like today. The author is grateful to the civitas of Iain Manado, especially the Faculty of Ushuluddin Adab and Da'wah (FUAD), which currently has given academic space to the author to continue working. To the rector of IAIN Manado, Prof. Dr. Ahmad Rajafi, M.H.I., who has been willing to give an introduction to this book. To Dr. Arhanuddin Salim, M.Pd.I., he always supports the author. The author is also very grateful to Ethics International Press, which has been willing to publish this book.

Especially for my wife, *Enci' ku*, Indriyani Rukmana Mokoginta, who is always patient to spend, even let go, time together to publish this work. Also, it is used to write and convey the author's thoughts anytime and

anywhere. Rest assured that what your husband is doing is merely to provide a foundation for our future generations, the generation of the *Lolak* and the generation of the *Bolaang Mongondow Raya. Sukur Moanto!*

Reza Adeputra Tohis
Lolak, Indonesia, January 2024

Chapter 1

Introduction

As a religion and a set of teachings, Islam guides its followers in living in the context of human relations with humans, humans with nature, and humans with their God. Ideality occupies a significant space in the treasury of growth and development of the study of Islam from time to time, as well as a vision and mission that always inspire Islamic thinkers to translate and realize the meaning above.¹ The process does not occur in a space but is always based on a specific social reality² and aims to answer the problems that arise within the reality itself.³

In the contemporary period (20th to 21st century),⁴ the social reality of Muslims is characterized by the dominance of the social system of capitalism.⁵ As a reality, the existence of this system cannot be denied by any individual or group of Muslims, as well as non-Muslims. These conditions force the individual and the group to live based on the mechanisms of that system. The events of September 9, 2001, identified as being carried out by specific Islamic movements, are one of the real products

¹ H. Zuhri, *Islamic Studies in Social Interpretation: Social Studies of Islamic Ideas* Fazlur Rahman and Mohammed Arkoun (Yogyakarta: UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2008), 3.

² The social reality in question refers to the concept of Berger and Luckman's social situation. The social situation is a condition that must exist and continue where the familiar actions of two or more individuals intertwine, forming reality and knowledge. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *Social Interpretation of Reality: A Treatise on The Sociology of Knowledge* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 2013), 78.

³ Hassan Hanafi, *Method of Interpretation and Benefit of The People* (Yogyakarta: Nawesea Press, 2007), 16.

⁴ The contemporary period in this book refers to Hassan Hanafi's mapping that contemporary Islam reveals the third period of the history of Islamic civilization, the 15th century to the 21st century. Hassan Hanafi and Muhammad 'Abid al-Jabiri, *Dialogue of East and West: Towards Methodological Reconstruction, Progressive and Egalitarian Arab Political Thought* (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2015), 58-66. As for the specialization in the contemporary time, ranging from the 20th century to the 21st, the author refers to Mohammed Arkoun, *Arab Thought* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1966) and Issa J. Boullata, *Deconstruction of Tradition: A Beacon of Islamic Arab Thought* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2012).

⁵ David Harvey, *The New Imperialism: The Genealogy and Logic of Contemporary Capitalism* (Yogyakarta: Resist Book, 2010).

of the mechanisms of capitalism, as well as the response of other Islamic movements to Islamism itself.⁶ In other words, the social system of capitalism has situated the dynamics of Islamic movements, both radical,⁷ moderate,⁸ and liberal.⁹ In this dynamic, there is not uncommon tension between Islamic movements. For example, liberal Islamic movements say that radical Islamic movements are rigid and textualist. Likewise, radical Islam says that liberal Islam is Westernized and does not conform to the Sunnah of the Prophet. Meanwhile, the moderate Islamic Movement is busy campaigning for moderation, primarily through political channels. This contestation leads to neglect of the position of the social system of capitalism that has situated their movement.

The above reality, in turn, forced Omid Safi, Farish A. Noor, and Ebrahim Moosa to form a new Islamic Movement. This movement is called progressive Islam.¹⁰ Progressive Islam positions the dominance of the social system of capitalism as both a problem and their primary opponent. For them, the system has caused social injustice and opposition.¹¹ This movement also positions Islamism, which includes the radical Islamic Movement and the moderate Islamic Movement, as a target for criticism for spreading violence (for radicals) and seeding capitalism (for moderates).¹²

⁶ Tariq Ali, *Clash Between Fundamentalists: Jihad Against American Imperialism* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2009). Deepa Kumar, *Political Islam: A Marxist Analysis* (Yogyakarta: Resist Book and Indo Progress, 2016).

⁷ Radical Islam is a movement of individuals or groups who have an understanding and attitude of religious Emancipation. Abdurrahman Wahid (ed.), *The Illusion of the Islamic State: The Expansion of Transnational Islamic Movements in Indonesia* (Jakarta: the Wahid Institute, 2009), 45-46.

⁸ Moderate Islam is a movement of individuals or groups who understand and accept or appreciate different views and beliefs. Abdurrahman Wahid (ed.), *The Illusion of The Islamic State*, 46-47.

⁹ Liberal Islam is a movement of individuals or groups that attempts to reconcile Islamic traditions with liberal values such as democracy, human rights, equality, and progress. Charles Kurzman (ed.), *Liberal Islamic Discourse: Contemporary Islamic Thought on Global Issues* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2003).

¹⁰ Farish A. Noor, *Progressive Islam: Opportunities, Challenges, and Its Future in South-east Asia* (Yogyakarta: SAMHA, 2006). Omid Safi (ed.), *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender Equality, and Pluralism* (Oxford: One world, 2005).

¹¹ Farish A. Noor, *Progressive Islam*, 42-44.

¹² Farish A. Noor, *Progressive Islam*, 1-9.

Progressive Islam is more concerned with solving empirical problems and real practice than debates in metaphysical matters and interpretations of the Qur'an and Sunnah. That is why this movement carries out agendas, namely formulating reality-based thinking methods, reconceptualizing monotheism, creating social justice, upholding human rights (HAM), gender equality, pluralism, and reviving the unity of the people.¹³ For them, if these agendas are realized correctly, then Muslims will experience changes for the better and progress.¹⁴

The positioning of progressive Islam towards the social system of capitalism as the main problem, then the emphasis on empirical problems, and efforts to create change through the above agendas are the basis for the author to hypothesize that Tan Malaka's Islamic Thought has a progressive Islamic character. Tan Malaka lived during the time of colonialism. Meanwhile, colonialism is a direct implication of the social system of capitalism. Thus, Tan Malaka lived and was situated in that system. Tan Malaka also has a reality-based methodological work, *MADILOG (Materialism, Dialectics, Logic)*.¹⁵ In that work, Tan Malaka also studied Islam, especially the concept of monotheism. Tan Malaka discusses human rights in his work *from Prison to Prison*.¹⁶ There are other works by Tan Malaka related to progressive Islamic agendas. So, it needs to be studied in depth.

The assessment is critical because research on the characteristics of Islamic thought Tan Malaka still needs to be conducted. One might say nothing yet. A literature review can prove this. The most crucial part of the literature review is to show a scientific work's authenticity and novelty level. This is done by tracking previous studies related to the research object, whether in books, journal articles, or academic scientific works (dissertations and theses). The object of research in this book is the Islamic thought of Tan Malaka, where researchers try to show that

¹³ Omid Safi (ed.), *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender Equality, and Pluralism* (Oxford: One world, 2005).

¹⁴ Omid Safi (ed.), *Progressive Muslims*, 6.

¹⁵ Tan Malaka, *MADILOG: Materialism, Dialectics, Logic* (Jakarta: LPPM Tan Malaka, 1974).

¹⁶ Tan Malaka, *from Prison to Prison* (Yogyakarta: Narasi, 2014).

the thought has a progressive Islamic character that is analyzed through the approach of sociology of knowledge and philosophy of science critical realism. For this reason, the authors trace previous studies on Tan Malaka in three categories, namely: *first*, research on Islamic thought Tan Malaka, or at least related to Islam. *Second*, research on Tan Malaka that is not related to Islam. *Third*, the research examines Tan Malaka's thought using the sociology of knowledge and philosophy of science approach of critical realism.

In the first category, the author found a thesis entitled *Tan Malaka's Thoughts on Islam in The Book MADIALOG*, written by Mohammad Edo Sukma Wardhana for the Master's program in Islamic Thought University of Muhammadiyah Surakarta (2014).¹⁷ In this thesis, Wardhana tried to reveal Tan Malaka's thoughts on Islam in the book MADIALOG, the understanding conveyed by Tan Malaka in viewing Islam and Pan-Islamism, and the advantages and disadvantages of Tan Malaka's ideas. Wardhana then concluded that Tan Malaka's understanding of Islam was at odds with the actual teachings of Islam. Despite these conclusions, this thesis differs from the author's research. Because Wardhana only focused on Tan Malaka's thoughts on Islam in MADIALOG. In Tan Malaka's other works, there is his interpretation of Islam, which, if analyzed further, will show the integrity and characteristics of his Islamic ideas.

In addition to the thesis above, the author also found research in the form of a book, *Tan Malaka and God: Towards the Idea of Post-Madilog*, written by Ashad Kusuma Djaya.¹⁸ The book's title can already be captured the author's orientation. It could be said that Djaya tried to surpass Tan Malaka's main work, MADIALOG. It is evident in his other work, namely, *Post-Madilog*.¹⁹ As a first step, Djaya criticized Tan

¹⁷ Muhammad Edo Sukma Wardhana, "Tan Malaka's Thoughts on Islam in The Book MADIALOG", *Thesis* (Surakarta: Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, 2014).

¹⁸ Ahmad Kusuma Djaya, *Tan Malaka and God: Towards the Idea of Post-Madilog* (Bantul: Kreasi Wacana, 2015).

¹⁹ Ahmad Kusuma Djaya, *Pos-Madilog: A Study of The Philosophy of Science to Build Indonesian Human Way of Thinking* (Bantul: Kreasi Wacana, 2017).

Malaka for his views on Islam. For example, Tan Malaka's statement that he was born into a family that was obedient to the teachings of Islam.²⁰ For Djaya, this statement cannot be justified because it has no supporting evidence. According to the author, If what Djaya means by supporting evidence is scientific facts, then Tan Malaka's statement is scientific evidence itself. It only needs to be understood using the sociology of knowledge tool, where Tan Malaka's statement shows the success of primary socialization in his family environment. This is one of the points of difference between Djaya's work and the research in this book.

Another difference lies in the characteristics of Tan Malaka's Islamic ideas. Djaya departs from the divine understanding of Tan Malaka. According to him, Tan Malaka's understanding is similar to that of Prophet Ibrahim, which is based on the symbols of the universe. However, according to the author, Djaya understands the symbolism as a material form. In contrast, symbols are just representations of matter itself. As a result, Djaya 'slipped' in his conclusion because he equated the understanding of Tan Malaka's materialism with the materialism of the Soviet Union and China. Djaya may have forgotten that in MADIALOG, dialectics and logic are also a pair of materialism, where all three are unity. It is this unity that allows the birth of dynamic thinking. For example, in the context of divinity, as indicated by Tan Malaka in his book, *"Life View"*,²¹ there is a line of divine unity (Tawheed) between Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad. Uniquely, the exploration of Tan Malaka did not release empirical aspects as understood by the progressive Islamic Movement. Where the divine spirits are embodied in real Praxis, especially against the social system of capitalism, that is one example of divine understanding (Islamic) Tan Malaka, which, according to the author, has the characteristics of progressive Islam.

The author finds only the two works mentioned above in the first category. This does not consider the possibility of other works with the same theme. However, works about Tan Malaka related to Islam are

²⁰ Tan Malaka, *MADIALOG*, 432.

²¹ Tan Malaka, *Life View* (Jakarta: Yayasan Massa, 2000).

still rarely found. In the second category, it is undeniable that many have reviewed Tan Malaka from various perspectives. For example, in Frans Magnis Suseno book, *In The Shadow Of Lenin, Six Marxist Thinkers, from Lenin to Tan Malaka*, are featured.²² Here, Suseno comments on Tan Malaka's thoughts from Lenin's perspective. In other words, Suseno wanted to show that Tan Malaka's thoughts could not be separated from Lenin's influence. Nevertheless, for Suseno, Tan Malaka retained his originality, as reflected in his main work, *MADILOG*. In this context, Suseno then parses the advantages and disadvantages of *MADILOG* so that the originality of Tan Malaka's thinking is visible.

In contrast to Suseno, Hary Prabowo wrote Tan Malaka's thoughts from the perspective of Marxism, which was elaborated based on Tan Malaka's life struggle, as illustrated in his book entitled *Tan Malaka's Marxist Perspective: Theory and Praxis Towards the Republic*.²³ Furthermore, other research with different perspectives can be seen from the titles of *Tan Malaka: A Short Biography from 1897 to 1949* written by Susilo Adi Taufiq.²⁴ *Tan Malaka's Political Thought: A Study of The Struggle of The Nationalist Left*, written by Safrizal Rambe.²⁵ *Tan Malaka: Revolutionary Fighters or Apostate Fighters?* Written by Helen Jarvis.²⁶

The next book, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle for the Republic 1897-1949*, was written by Harry A. Poeze.²⁷ This book is Poeze's dissertation for the Universiteit Amsterdam. In it, Poeze elaborates on Tan Malaka's life history comprehensively. As a historian, Poeze deployed all kinds of references he found in Tan Malacca's stopovers. Interested in Tan

²² Frans Magnis Suseno, *In the Shadow of Lenin: Six Marxist Thinkers, from Lenin to Tan Malaka* (Jakarta: Gramedia Jakarta Pustaka, 2003).

²³ Hary Prabowo, *Tan Malaka's Marxist Perspective: Theory and Praxis Towards the Republic* (Yogyakarta: Jendela, 2002).

²⁴ Susilo Adi Taufiq, *Tan Malaka: A Short Biography from 1897 to 1949* (Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media, 2008).

²⁵ Safrizal Rambe, *Tan Malaka's Political Thought: A Study of The Struggle of The Nationalist Left* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2003).

²⁶ Helen Jarvis, *Tan Malaka: Revolutionary Fighters or Apostate Fighters?* (Jakarta: Yayasan Massa, 1987).

²⁷ Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1949*, 2 Volume (Jakarta: Pustaka Utama Grafiti, 1999).

Malaka, Poeze continued his research and gave birth to his next book, *Tan Malaka: The Left Movement and the Indonesian Revolution (1945-1949)*.²⁸ In this second work, Poeze uses a historical approach and a multidimensional one, focusing on domestic political developments in Indonesia. Therefore, as Poeze himself emphasized, the work is not just a biographical description of Tan Malaka but also the history of the Indonesian Revolution itself.

One of Poeze's significant contributions was his search for the mysterious causes of Tan Malaka's death. It is an excellent contribution because it can change the view of history and the political constellation of Indonesia if found. So far, Tan Malaka is still positioned as a controversial figure because, in addition to his involvement in Communism, he also opposed the policies of the founding figures of the country at that time. As a result, in every recording of Indonesian history, Tan Malaka is sometimes not shown. Even if it is shown, it can be ascertained by a controversial face. Indonesian researchers then continued efforts to uncover Tan Malaka's death. For example, the work *Tan Malaka Killed* was written by Junior Hafidh Hery.²⁹ Hery departed from Tan Malaka's life history and explored the political constellation (1945-1949). Finally, Hery drew a surprising conclusion that Tan Malaka's death could not be separated from the involvement of the great leaders of the Indonesian nation itself.

Research in the second category above differs from the research the author did. The author focuses more on Tan Malaka's Islamic ideas than his political thoughts. Although the author will enter the political discourse at certain limits, that does not mean it should be the orientation of this book. In the third category, research that uses the sociology of knowledge and philosophy of science critical realism in revealing the ideas of Islam Tan Malaka has yet to be found by the author or can be said to be non-existent. Even to reveal Tan Malaka's thoughts on politics, law, state, and revolution, using the sociology of knowledge or

²⁸ Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Left Movement and the Indonesian Revolution (1945-1949)*, 4 Volume (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2008).

²⁹ Yuniur Hafidh Hery, *Tan Malaka Killed* (Yogyakarta: Resist Book, 2007).

the philosophy of science critical realism also does not exist. The author only found research that uses an anthropological-political approach, for example, a thesis entitled *The Genealogy of Tan Malaka's Political Thought*, written by Sayyidah Aslamah for The Graduate Study Program of the Islamic State University (UIN) Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta.³⁰ Then, an article in an Indonesian Journal entitled *Tan Malaka: A Political Personality's Structure of Experience* by Rudolf Mrazek.³¹

Based on the above literature review, both in terms of themes and analytical approaches, the research conducted by the author can be said to be very new. This is also concrete evidence that research on the characteristics of Islamic thought Tan Malaka is essential. On the other hand, another essential meaning lies not only in the uniqueness or attractiveness of this study. Nor does it lie in refreshing the religious discourses that are being dominated by the themes of Islamism and its competing topics. Instead, it lies in the real life of Muslims who are currently 'besieged' by the social system of capitalism. At least with the thought of Tan Malaka, which in this book is to be characterized through progressive Islamic concepts which are then analyzed using the theory of sociology of knowledge formulated by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckman³² and the philosophy of critical realism formulated by Roy Bhaskar,³³ Muslims can find clues as to what to do in contemporary social situations.

³⁰ Sayyidah Aslamah, "The Genealogy of Tan Malaka's Political Thought", *Thesis* (Yogyakarta: UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2011).

³¹ Rudolf Mrazek, "Tan Malaka: A Political Personality's Structure of Experience". *Indonesia*, No. 14 (1972), 1-48.

³² Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *Social Interpretation of Reality: A Treatise on the Sociology of Knowledge* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 2013). For writings using sociological analysis of knowledge, see Reza Adeputra Tohis, "Political Philosophy of Illumination: An Analysis of Political Dimensions in Suhrawardi's Thought," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization*, Vol. 12 (2), 2022. Aris Soleman and Reza Adeputra Tohis, "Science Feminist: A Study of the Sociology of Knowledge," *Spectrum: Journal of Gender and Children Studies*, Vol. 1 (2), 2021. Reza Adeputra Tohis, "Review of Seyyed Khalil Toussi, The Political Philosophy of Mulla Sadra," *Sophia: International Journal of Philosophy and Traditions*, Vol. 62 (2), 2023.

³³ Roy Bhaskar, *A Realist Theory of Science* (London & New York: Routledge, 2008). See also, Reza Adeputra Tohis, "Aristotle's Economic Philosophy: A Study of the Ontology of Critical Realism", *Maqrizi: Journal of Economics and Islamic Economics*, Vol. 1 (2), 2021.

Chapter 2

Analysis Framework

The writing of this book uses Progressive Islamic theory, Sociology of Knowledge, and Philosophy of Science Critical Realism as a framework or approach to analysis. All three functioned in certain aspects. The first theory is used to target or identify the ideas of Islam Tan Malaka. The second theory analyzes the formation process of Islamic ideas in social reality. The third theory, in particular, is used to analyze the methodology of Tan Malaka's thought in his main work, MADILOG. Next, the components of the three theories will be explained.

It starts with The Theory of progressive Islam. In the dynamics of Islamic movements, progressive Islam is a relatively new movement whose emergence was marked by the publication of Omid Safi's work in 2013. The work is *Progressive Muslim on Gender, Justice, And Pluralism*.³⁴ As Safi stated, this work results from conversations, dialogues, and debates among its 15 contributors for almost a year.³⁵ Despite its historicity, it is clear that progressive Islam is already part of the dynamics of contemporary Islamic movements.

Of the many progressive Islamic figures, the author will only use specific ideas from Faris A. Noor, Ebrahim Moosa, and Omid Safi. The ideas of these three figures are then formulated into one theoretical building that the author calls progressive Islamic theory. One of the main problems that these figures want to overcome or fight is the dominance of the social system of capitalism. This system must be fought for Noor because it has caused injustice and social opposition.³⁶ He went so far as to assert that this system is a *Kufr* economic structure.³⁷

³⁴ Omid Safi (ed.), *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender Equality, and Pluralism* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2005).

³⁵ Omid Safi (ed.), *Progressive Muslims*, 18.

³⁶ Farish A. Noor, *Progressive Islam: Opportunities, Challenges, and Its Future in South-east Asia* (Yogyakarta: SAMHA, 2006), 42-44.

³⁷ Farish A. Noor, *Progressive Islam*, 39.

However, Noor also stated that the system is a concrete structure. In other words, the capitalist system exists and is dominating. The same thing was confirmed by Safi but with a different tension.³⁸ From this, it can be asserted that the social system of capitalism is one of the social problems faced by progressive Islam.

The next problem is the dynamics of political Islam. The dynamics of political Islam in question are fundamentalism movements, both in moderate and radical forms, and the response of other Islamic movements to these movements. Here, progressive Islam criticizes the violent practices of fundamentalism on the one hand. Then, on the other hand, the response of other Islamic movements to the movement is not a solution and, this is very important, forget the dominance of the capitalist system. In the fundamentalist aspect of the movement, Moosa said that the movement's violent tendencies only showed the mentality of the ancient empire, like to be hostile.³⁹ In other aspects of the response of Islamic movements, exceptionally liberal Islam to the movement, Safi said that the response only led to the abandonment of the dominance of imperialism (capitalism).⁴⁰ From this, it can be asserted that the second social problem of progressive Islam is the dynamics of political Islam.

Still in the nuances of the dynamics of political Islam, Noor said that Muslims today must let go of hostile tendencies and immediately open themselves to accept all kinds of differences.⁴¹ This, for Safi, is only possible when Muslims have an attitude of openness in accepting sources of knowledge and wisdom. Living in the 21st century, a Muslim should not be self-sufficient just by learning the Qur'an and Sunnah.⁴² Here, Safi and Noor want to emphasize the openness of Muslims to

³⁸ Omid Safi, "What is Progressive Islam?" *ISIM Newsletter*, Issue 13, December 2003, 48. Fazlur Rahman, *Key Themes of the Qur'an*, (Bandung: Pustaka, 1996), 55.

³⁹ Ebrahim Moosa in Farish A. Noor, *Progressive Islam*, 32.

⁴⁰ Omid Safi, "Modernism: Islamic Modernism", in Lindsay Jones (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Religion*, Second Edition (Farmington Hills: McMillan, 2005).

⁴¹ Farish A. Noor, "What Is the Victory of Islam? Towards a Different Understanding of The Ummah and Political Success in the Contemporary World" in Omid Safi (ed.), *Progressive Muslims*, 325-332.

⁴² Omid Safi (ed.), *Progressive Muslims*, 14-15.

traditions from outside Islam to the extent that the tradition can bring progressiveness. This is the third social problem of progressive Islam.

These three problems are the basis for progressive Islam to formulate the following agendas: creating a reality-based method of thinking. Ebrahim Moosa strongly emphasizes that we need new intellectual devices in this new century.⁴³ That is why Safi carries the method of Multiple Criticism (double criticism).⁴⁴ It is this method that will be used to conceptualize monotheism. Because with that, said Noor, from the point of view of Divinity, humanity is equal in position. No human being is more significant than another human being. No human being is inferior, despised, or inferior to another. There is only one human being.⁴⁵

Based on the concept of monotheism, the agenda of creating social justice is formulated. Safi said the task of progressive Muslims is to translate the teachings of Islam into a well-understood by anyone involved in the enforcement of social justice. From there, Safi emphasized that upholding justice means fighting anyone who continues to spread hatred labeled as Islam while criticizing the social system of capitalism that seeks profit at the expense of the local population.⁴⁶ This justice agenda became the basis for enforcing Human Rights, Gender Equality, and Pluralism. Ebrahim Moosa stated that the three agendas mentioned above are the conditions for building unity of the people, namely, a just global world order.⁴⁷

Based on the above explanation, the main ideas of progressive Islamic theory are: in the aspect of social reality, it consists of resistance to the social system of capitalism, the dynamics of political Islam, and openness to traditions outside of Islam. Then, the reality aspect of

⁴³ Farish A. Noor, *New Voice of Islam* (Leiden: ISIM, 2002), 23-28.

⁴⁴ Omid Safi (ed.), *Progressive Muslims*, 2.

⁴⁵ Farish A. Noor, *Progressive Islam*, 28-29.

⁴⁶ Omid Safi (ed.), *Progressive Muslims*, 9-10.

⁴⁷ Ebrahim Moosa, "Transitions in the Progress of Civilization: Theorizing History, Practice, and Tradition", in Vincent J. Cornell dan Omid Safi (ed.), *Voices of Change* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2007), 115-129.

progressive Islamic knowledge consists of formulating reality-based thinking methods, reconceptualizing monotheism (Tawheed), creating social justice, upholding human rights, gender equality, pluralism, and building unity of the Ummah. These are the main components of progressive Islamic theory.

Next, the sociological theory of knowledge will be briefly described. The main statement of Berger and Luckmann's sociological theory of knowledge is that reality is socially constructed and that the sociology of knowledge must analyze the process by which it occurs. The key terms in the statement are 'reality' and 'knowledge'. 'Reality' is a quality inherent in existing phenomena, independent of our own will. Whereas 'knowledge' is the certainty that phenomena are natural and have specific characteristics.⁴⁸ The sociology of knowledge describes the relationship between social conditions and the reality of knowledge.

The relationship proceeds through dialectical momentum: externalization, objectification, and internalization. Externalization Momentum continuously outpours the individual self into the world through physical and mental activities. Here, the main components are the languages used and the form of knowledge of the reality to which its external space belongs.⁴⁹ The momentum of objectification is the process of bearing the products of that activity, a reality that confronts the original producer in the form of a facticity external to, and other than, the producers themselves. Here, the components are the institutions (especially the institutional discourse), roles, identities, and alternations.⁵⁰ The Momentum of internalization is the re-absorption of reality by the individual and the transformation of the structures of the objective world into the structures of subjective consciousness. Here, the main component is understanding reality and disclosing creative

⁴⁸ Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *Social Interpretation of Reality: A Treatise on The Sociology of Knowledge* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 2013), 1.

⁴⁹ Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *Social Interpretation of Reality*, 27-62. See also Hanneman Samuel, *Peter Berger: A Brief Introduction* (Depok: Kepik, 2012), 16-26.

⁵⁰ Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *Social Interpretation of Reality*, 63-175. Hanneman Samuel, *Peter Berger*, 27-34.

forces and social interests in reality itself.⁵¹ Overall, all three moments take place dialectically. Through externalization, society is a human product. Through objectification, society becomes sui generis, unique. Through internalization, man is a product of society.⁵²

Then, the philosophy of science critical realism was formulated by Roy Bhaskar.⁵³ Critical realism in contemporary philosophical discourse can be seen as a resistance to two mutually negating extreme positions, positivism and postmodernism. Positivism reduces objective reality to observed reality (as empirical facts). On the other hand, postmodernism reduces objective reality to areas constitutively correlated with the human being in the form of language, the unconscious, the body, intentional consciousness, and factual-existential experience. Both equally reduce reality into a reality in which man's existence is central. In other words, neither understands reality without assuming man's existence. Both illustrate the general trend of contemporary epistemology, namely, anti-realism. Any anti-realism, in the final analysis, will fall on solipsism. As a result, science becomes impossible.⁵⁴ Bhaskar begins with a fundamental question: What are the possible conditions for science?⁵⁵ In answering this question, Bhaskar formulated the strata ontology and epistemology concepts. Ontology and stratified epistemology are the main components of critical realism theory that will be used to analyze MADILOG, Tan Malaka's thought methodology.

As for the steps of using the three theories, progressive Islam, sociology of knowledge, and philosophy of science critical realism, in analyzing, namely: first of all, the author positions progressive Islam as a theory through thematic abstraction of specific ideas from progressive Islamic figures. Then this theory was formulated as a social reality and a reality of knowledge. Progressive Islam as a social reality contains social

⁵¹ Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *Social Interpretation of Reality*, 176-249. Hanneman Samuel, *Peter Berger*, 34-41.

⁵² Peter L. Berger, *The Holy Sky: Religion as Social Reality* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1991), 5.

⁵³ Roy Bhaskar, *A Realist Theory of Science* (London & New York: Routledge, 2008).

⁵⁴ Martin Suryajaya, *The Origins of Wealth: A History of Value Theory in Economics from Aristotle to Amartya Sen* (Yogyakarta: Resist Book, 2013).

⁵⁵ Roy Bhaskar, *A Realist Theory of Science*, 21.

problems that have a specific function for the existence of progressive Islam itself. These problems are understood as factors that encourage progressive Islamic leaders to formulate their agendas, namely, formulating reality-based thinking methods, reconceptualizing monotheism (Tawheed), creating social justice, upholding human rights, gender equality, pluralism, and building unity of the Ummah. These agendas are understood as the content of the reality of progressive Islamic knowledge.

In the social reality of progressive Islam, there are social problems and their functions. Then, in the reality of progressive Islamic knowledge, there are agendas. The way it is used in analyzing Tan Malaka's Islamic ideas is: to the extent that Tan Malaka dealt (or has dealt) with these problems in his life history, it has itself entered the category of progressive Islamic social reality. Consequently, Tan Malaka inevitably had to formulate ideas similar to progressive Islamic agendas. In other words, it automatically falls into the reality of progressive Islamic knowledge. The result is the idea of Islam Tan Malaka. Because these ideas are parallel to the agendas of progressive Islam, the idea of Islam Tan Malaka is characterized by progressive Islam.

How did this process take place in the history of Tan Malaka's life? This is explained using the sociological theory of knowledge as an analytical approach. Sociology of knowledge is used to analyze the process of forming progressive Islamic ideas Tan Malaka. The way it is used is like this: the social reality of progressive Islam is analyzed using the concept of externalization. Tan Malaka's involvement in progressive Islamic social problems will also be analyzed with this externalization concept. To analyze the process of realizing the ideas of progressive Islam Tan Malaka, will use the concepts of objectivation and internalization. Here, the processes of objectification and internalization will be discussed simultaneously since these two aspects are interconnected. There is a discussion section about MADILOG as a progressive Islamic method of internalization. In this discussion, the philosophy of science of critical realism will be used so much so that the philosophy of science of critical realism is only used in the discussion of MADILOG.

Chapter 3

Biography and Work of Tan Malaka

Biography of Tan Malaka

Ibrahim Gelar Datoek Tan Malaka (after this, Tan Malaka) was born on October 14, 1894,⁵⁶ in the small village Padan Gadang, Suliki, Minangkabau (West Sumatra).⁵⁷ Tan Malaka was born into a devout Muslim family. "My mother and father, "said Tan Malaka," obeyed and feared Allah and lived the word of the Prophet Muhammad."⁵⁸ His parents belonged to the local nobility, although they did not differ much from the local villagers in terms of ownership and position.⁵⁹ He also participated in Minangkabau local customs (matriarchy and *rantau*).⁶⁰ That

⁵⁶ There are many opinions about the Year of Birth of Tan Malaka. This is because there was no Population register in Indonesia at that time. Later, the particulars in the population lists of Harlem, Bussum, and Amsterdam differed. In Harlem (1915), he was born in 1894; in Bussum (1919), he was born in 1894; in Amsterdam (1913), born in 1894 and (1922) born in 1896. Furthermore, the perception is diverse from several opinions, 1893 (Mohammad Dimyati, *History of Indonesian Struggle*, Jakarta, 1951), 1894 (Tamar Djaja, *Pusaka Indonesia*, Bandung, 1951), 1895 (Sakti Arga, *Tan Malaka Came III*, Bukit Tinggi, 1946), 1897 (Djamaluddin Tamim, *Twenty-One Years of Tan Malaka's Death*, Jakarta, 1970). In this book, Harry's perception is used. Poeze, who has extensively researched Tan Malaka's life history, said that Tan Malaka was born in 1894, see Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925* (Jakarta: PT Pustaka Utama graffiti, 1988), 12.

⁵⁷ Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 9–12. Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka, The Left Movement and The Indonesian Revolution*, Volume I (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia and KITLV-Jakarta, 2008), xv. Ruth T. McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism* (Jakarta and Singapore: Equinox Publishing, 2006), 117. Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, *Java in A Time of Revolution: Occupation and Resistance 1944-1946* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1972), 270. The location has been changed to Nagari Pandam Gadang, Gunuang Omeh District, Lima Puluh Kota Regency, West Sumatra.

⁵⁸ Tan Malaka, *MADILOG: Materialism, Dialectics, Logic* (Jakarta: LPPM Tan Malaka, 1974), 431-432.

⁵⁹ Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka, The Left Movement and The Indonesian Revolution*, Volume I, xv.

⁶⁰ On *rantau* customs, see Taufik Abdullah, *School and Politics: Youth Movements in West Sumatra 1927-1933* (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Suara Muhammadiyah, 2018). On matriarchy see, Jeffrey Hadler, *The Never-Ending Dispute: Matriarchy, Religious Reformism, and Colonialism in Minangkabau* (Jakarta: Freedom Institute, 2010).

is why Tan Malaka, in his autobiography, stated that “his family only knew Islam and Customs.”⁶¹

Islam and customs are the two main elements of Minangkabau nature. Both are related and form Minangkabau identity, as reflected in the moral rules (borrowing Berger’s terminology)⁶² ‘*adat bersendi syarak, syarak bersendi kitabullah*’.⁶³ This identity also influenced Tan Malaka’s thinking. As Harry A. Poeze said, these origins played an essential role in Tan Malacca’s political journey and thinking.⁶⁴ Rudolf Mrazek wrote this in his book *Tan Malaka: A Political Personality’s Structure of Experience*.⁶⁵

In the sociology of knowledge, this influence shows the success of primary socialization in Tan Malaka’s life.⁶⁶ This is evident in his statement that “although the flood of waves was cool in my heart during the age of transition, as well as being blown away, washed away, and until now continues to be washed away by the events of 1917.”⁶⁷ However, my interest in Islam continued to grow.”⁶⁸ It is through primary socialization that, as Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann explained, society follows its identity into reality in the individual’s subjectivity.⁶⁹ Thus, Tan Malaka’s statements

⁶¹ Tan Malaka, *from Prison to Prison* (Yogyakarta: Penerbit NARASI, 2014), 52.

⁶² Moral rules are one of the devices of second-level legitimacy in an institution. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *Social Interpretation of Reality: A Treatise on The Sociology of Knowledge* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 2013), 128.

⁶³ Taufik Abdullah, *School and Politics*, 7-8.

⁶⁴ Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 3. Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka, The Left Movement and The Indonesian Revolution*, Volume I, xv.

⁶⁵ Rudolf Mrazek, “Tan Malaka: A Political Personality’s Structure of Experience”, *Indonesia*, No. 14 (1972), 1-48.

⁶⁶ Primary socialization is the first socialization (or internalization) that the individual experiences in childhood, with which he becomes a member of society. It involves more than learning cognitively alone. With this, a higher abstraction is created in the child’s consciousness, from specific roles and attitudes of others to roles and attitudes in general. Anyway, it is in this socialization that the first world of the individual is formed Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *Social Interpretation of Reality*, 178-185.

⁶⁷ The Year 1917 refers to the events of the Bolshevik Revolution that took place in Russia. This event influenced Tan Malaka, especially in his thinking and political orientation. See S. A Smith, *The Russian Revolution: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

⁶⁸ Tan Malaka, *MADILOG*, 432.

⁶⁹ Peter L. Berger dan Thomas Luckmann, *Social Interpretation of Reality*, 181.

about Islam, which simultaneously show his Islamic identity, have an objective basis scientific evidence, in academic vocabulary.

Based on this explanation, Ashad Kusuma Djaya's assertion that Tan Malaka's confession about his Islamic identity had no supporting evidence and was difficult to prove right and wrong became unwarranted and unscientific.⁷⁰ Tan Malaka's Islamic identity can also be proven simply through the existence of Islamic institutions (such as Mosques, *Surau*, and *Madrasahs*) in his environment. According to Berger and Luckman, institutions are essential in constructing a person's thinking, role, and identity.⁷¹ Such institutions are used by Jeffrey Hadler to identify the existence of Islam in Minangkabau culture.⁷² As well as the channels for forming the Ulama Nusantara network, as already written by Azyumardi Azra.⁷³

Language is one of the essential elements in the institution.⁷⁴ In *Surau*, Tan Malaka learned Arabic but did not continue, so the language was not mastered.⁷⁵ However, this did not stop him from studying Islam. As he stated:⁷⁶

When in Europe, everything related to Islam and Arabs took my attention. In Holland, I bought a book on world history, in volumes, a translation from German into Dutch. Because it is the history of Islam and Arabia, which is written more perfectly than ever before. Then, the translated the Qur'an into Dutch. I read it several times and finished it. I have read Snouck Hurgronje's work on Islam. In Singapore, the work of Maulana

⁷⁰ Ashad Kusuma Djaya, *Tan Malaka and God: Towards the Idea of Post-Madilog* (Bandung: Kreasi Wacana, 2015), 2.

⁷¹ Peter L. Berger dan Thomas Luckmann, *Social Interpretation of Reality*, 63-125.

⁷² Jeffrey Hadler, *The Never-Ending Dispute: Matriarchy, Religious Reformism, and Colonialism in Minangkabau* (Jakarta: Freedom Institute, 2010).

⁷³ Azyumardi Azra, *Islam Nusantara: Global and Local Networks* (Bandung: Mizan, 2002).

⁷⁴ Language objectifies shared experiences and makes them available to everyone in the language community, thus becoming the basis and tool for the reserve of collective knowledge. For more on language's function, see Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckman, *Social Interpretation of Reality*, 92-93.

⁷⁵ Tan Malaka, *MADILOG*, 432.

⁷⁶ Tan Malaka, *MADILOG*, 432.

Mohammad Ali was translated into English. I reread it.

Tan Malaka mastered English, German, and Dutch, which in academic contexts are often referred to as scientific languages. In addition, he also mastered the local language, Malay, Chinese, and Tagalog. Mastery of these languages simultaneously allowed him to survive in several territories outside the Dutch East Indies. This is the most important thing, making it easier to access knowledge about Islam and other information. The process of mastering these languages, of course, does not depart from a space. Certain social situations and interests forced him to master these languages.⁷⁷

After graduating from the Dutch East Indies government school, the vocabulary used at that time, Level Two (Primary School) in Suliki,⁷⁸ Tan Malaka, then continued his education at Kweekschool (Teacher's School), Fort de Kock (Bukit Tinggi), in 1908.⁷⁹ This School is the only institution of further education for Indigenous Minangkabau.⁸⁰ Its primary purpose was to produce indigenous teachers to serve the Dutch East Indies colonization interests. However, Kweekschool became one of the sources of the resistance movement against colonization because, as Taufik Abdullah described, many early Minangkabau Reformist figures were graduates of this educational institution.⁸¹

Dutch, not Malay, is a compulsory subject at Kweekschool.⁸² Therefore,

⁷⁷ The social situation is a condition that must exist and continue to take place in which the familiar actions of two or more individuals intertwine, forming reality and knowledge. Therefore, the construction of knowledge and reality is directly related to the specific social situation. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *Social Interpretation of Reality*, 78.

⁷⁸ Tan Malaka entered primary school in 1908 and finished in 1908. Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 15.

⁷⁹ Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 15-23. Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka, The Left Movement and the Indonesian Revolution*, Volume I, xv.

⁸⁰ Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 15.

⁸¹ Taufik Abdullah, *School and Politics*, 7-8, 14. Mrazek stated that Kweekschool is one of the centers movements in Minangkabau. Rudolf Mrazek, "Tan Malaka: A Political Personality's Structure of Experience", 13.

⁸² Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 17.

Tan Malaka inevitably had to learn Dutch, although he preferred to study the exact sciences that would become the primary foundation for building his thinking. Tan Malaka met G.H. Horensma, a Dutch teacher, in this educational institution. Horensma and his wife paid much attention to Tan Malaka. They considered him an adopted son and gave him the nickname 'Ipie,' an acronym of Ibrahim.⁸³

Horensma and his wife were quite influential in Tan Malaka's life. It is said enough because, in the end, when the Dutch East Indies government exiled Tan Malaka, their relationship and even communication broke up completely. From the sociology of knowledge perspective, this is one form of secondary socialization in Tan Malaka's life.⁸⁴ Apart from that, Horensma paved the way for Tan Malaka in his teacher studies in the Netherlands after graduating from Kweekschool in 1913.⁸⁵

Tan Malaka left for the Netherlands in 1913. At first, he lived with Horensma and his wife in the Van Bilderbeek family.⁸⁶ After undergoing complicated admission, Tan Malaka was finally accepted as a Kweekeling (teacher candidate) at the Rijkweekschool (Head Teacher School) in Haarlem, The Netherlands.⁸⁷ About the educational institution, Tan Malaka said:⁸⁸

⁸³ Harry A. Poeze, Tan Malaka: *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 21.

⁸⁴ Secondary socialization is the internalization of several institutional or sub-world-based institutions. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *Social Interpretation of Reality*, 188.

⁸⁵ Horensma, through the help of W. Dominicus (control of the Dutch colonial government), set up a kind of foundation to collect some money from its members consisting of teachers in teachers' schools, civil servants, and several people from Suliki. The money will be used to pay for Tan Malaka's education in the Netherlands, which must be returned when he has finished his education. Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 23-24.

⁸⁶ Harry A. Poeze, Tan Malaka: *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 25.

⁸⁷ Tan Malaka's admission process at Rijkweekschool was very complicated, even though Horensma had sent a letter to the school director. This is because certain teachers reject its existence on the grounds of technical and racist excesses directly from the Dutch colonial. Nevertheless, after going through the stages of testing orally and in writing, and with certain conditions of the director, he was finally accepted by decree of the ministry on January 10, 1914. Only one reason behind that acceptance is the potential intelligence it has. Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 25-33.

⁸⁸ Tan Malaka, *from Prison to Prison*, 38.

Rijkweekschool, in terms of goals, is similar to Kweekschool. If Kweekschool prints teachers for native Malay-speaking children, then Rijkweekschool creates teachers for Dutch-speaking Dutch children. Both are aimed at fulfilling the interests of the Dutch government itself.

That is why the Dutch language remains a compulsory subject, in addition to the exact sciences and Educational Sciences.⁸⁹ During the Rijkweekschool, Tan Malaka's mastery of the Dutch language developed gradually and in education. However, in the Exact Sciences, its development looks relatively rapid.⁹⁰ Outside of these educational institutions, Tan Malaka became interested in German philosophy, especially the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche.⁹¹ After struggling because he was disturbed by illness, Tan Malaka got his assistant teacher's Certificate (Diploma) precisely at the end of 1915.⁹² After that, he mainly moved to Bussum to treat his illness.

After recovering from his illness, Tan Malaka tried to obtain a head teacher certificate and attend Malay language courses and state and national studies at one of the institutions in Leiden. The institution is the Nederlandsch Indische Bestuurs Academie (NIBA). This institution was initially named Instituut Voor Het Javaansche Taal (Javanese language institute) and was established in Surakarta. It was later replaced by NIBA di Delf, where in 1911, Hurgronje gave a lecture on his Islamic politics.⁹³ Subsequently, the institution was transferred to Leiden and came into direct contact with the University of Leiden.⁹⁴ He did not obtain the deed of the head, although he had taken the exam many times. However, the Malay Language Act and the science

⁸⁹ Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 33.

⁹⁰ Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 33-34.

⁹¹ Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 45.

⁹² Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 46-48.

⁹³ H. Aqib Suminto, *Political Islam of The Dutch East Indies: Het Kantoor Voor Inlandse Zaken* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1985), 13.

⁹⁴ Takashi Shiraishi, *The Age of Movement: People's Radicalism in Java 1912-1926* (Jakarta: Pustaka Utama Graffiti, 1997), 7.

of the country and the nation were successfully obtained.⁹⁵

The Malay Language Act allowed him to obtain work teaching the language to Dutch people (who were going to the Dutch East Indies) in Amsterdam and Bussum.⁹⁶ In these processes, Tan Malaka became interested in Marxism and the Bolshevik Revolution (1917). Here, Tan Malaka began to read Marxist literature, especially Karl Marx's main work, *Het Kapitaal*, translated by Van der Goes.⁹⁷ In addition, Tan Malaka also became actively involved in the Indische Vereeniging (Indies Association) and the Communist community. In the Indies Association Tan Malaka met with Suwardi Surjaningrat, Cipto Mangunkusumo, and Eduard Douwes Dekker. Suwardi Surjaningrat and Tjipto Mangunkusumo then allowed him to give a speech at the third Student Association Congress in Deventer.⁹⁸

In the Communist community, Tan Malaka met with Sneevliet, a figure involved in forming the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI), and encouraged Tan Malaka to go to Russia. Here, Tan Malaka actively participated in discussions with other members. However, according to some of these members, his understanding of Marxism could not have been more complete. That is why he plays a more listening role, not the main speaker.⁹⁹

Outside the two institutions above, Tan Malaka often discussed with his best friend since at Rijksweekschool, Dick van Wijgaarden.¹⁰⁰ These discussions continued through correspondence, even though Tan Malaka was already in the Dutch East Indies.¹⁰¹ Tan Malaka returned to the Dutch East Indies on 14 December 1919. In the Dutch East Indies, he first worked at Senebah Airlines in Deli as a teacher for the children of contract porters in the school established by the company. In addi-

⁹⁵ Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 69.

⁹⁶ Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 70.

⁹⁷ Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 71.

⁹⁸ Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 79.

⁹⁹ Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 84.

¹⁰⁰ Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 59.

¹⁰¹ Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: The Struggle Towards Republic 1897-1925*, 148.