



Words and (After) Lives: Reflections on Researching the Minangkabau Women's Newspaper *Soenting Melajoe* (1912-1921)

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Outside Kartini's classroom



Museum Kebangkitan Nasional, Jakarta, 24
January 2018

Anthropological and Historical Genealogies

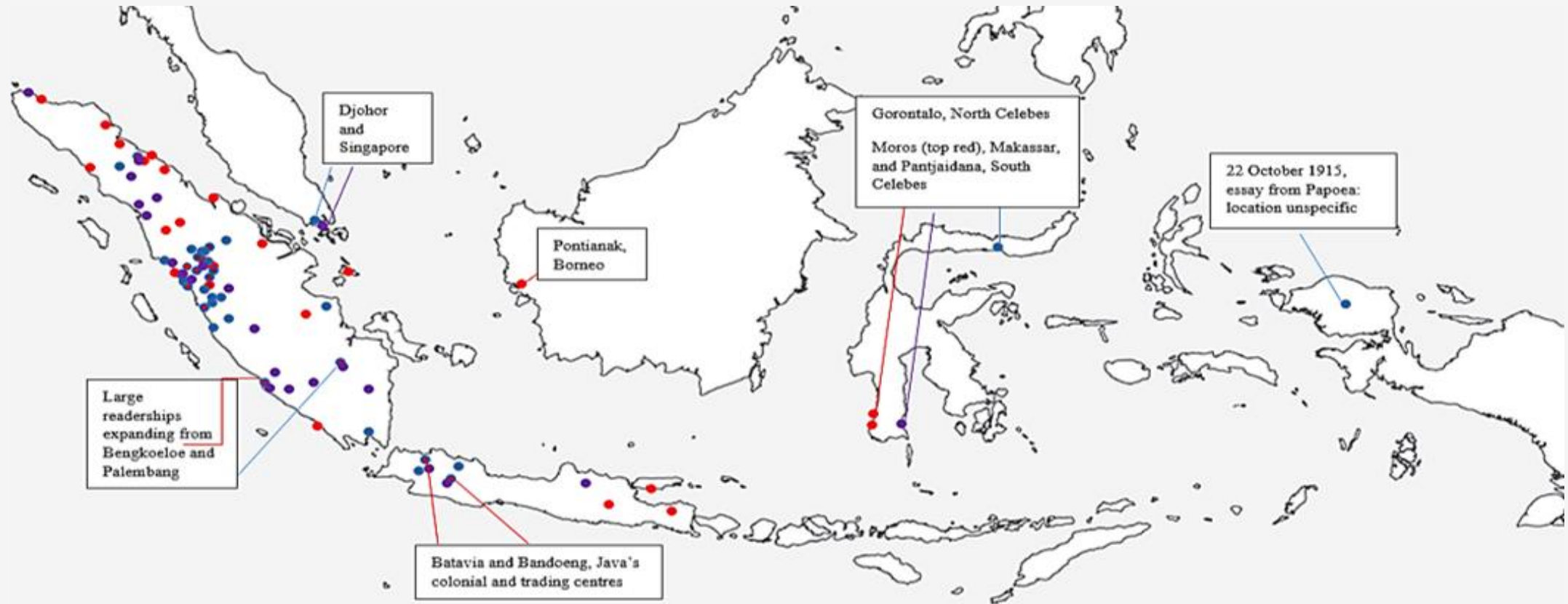


C. Nieuwenhuis, "Bruid en bruidmeisje (Pojakoembo),
Sumatra's Westkust", 1914, Leiden University,
<<http://hdl.handle.net/1887.1/item:854855> >.



'Prentbriefkaarten van mevrouw M.L. van Vollenhoven-Rochussen en H.E. Kastelijn-Beijerinck aan mevrouw Lievegoed naar aanleiding van de tentoonstelling. 1913' [Postcards of Mrs. M.L. van Vollenhoven-Rochussen and H.E. Kastelijn-Beijerinck to Mrs Lievegoed following the exhibition. 1913], Lievegoed-van Buren Schele Collection, Leiden University Library Special Collections, 974–27.

Map of *Soenting Melajoe* Contributors:



Red: July 1912 – July 1913

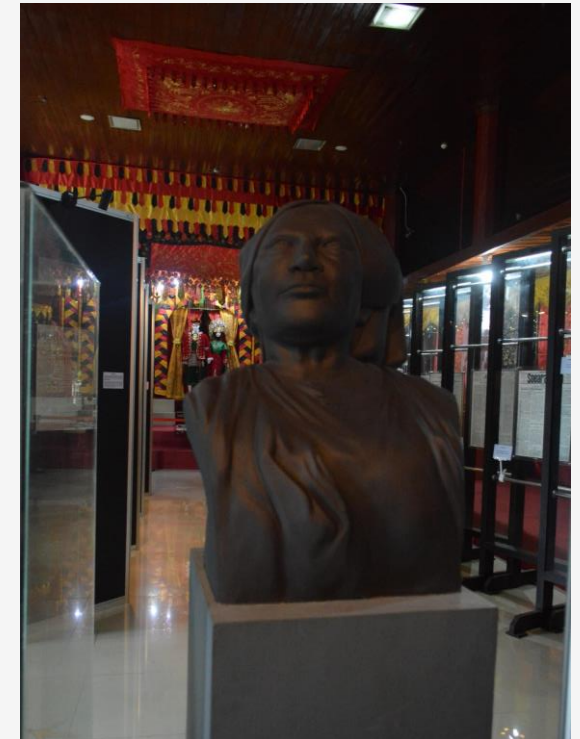
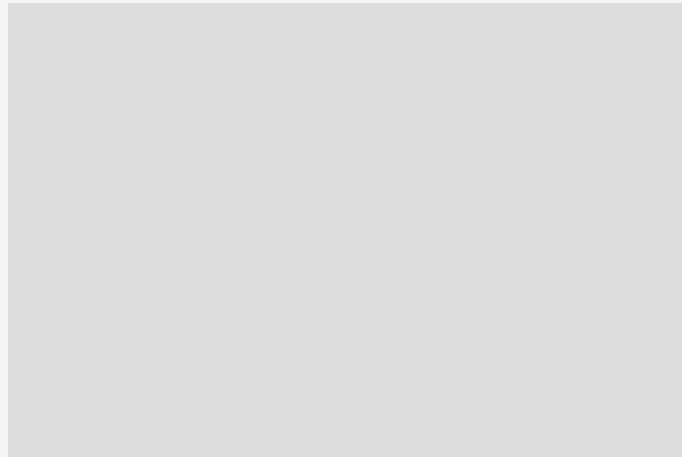
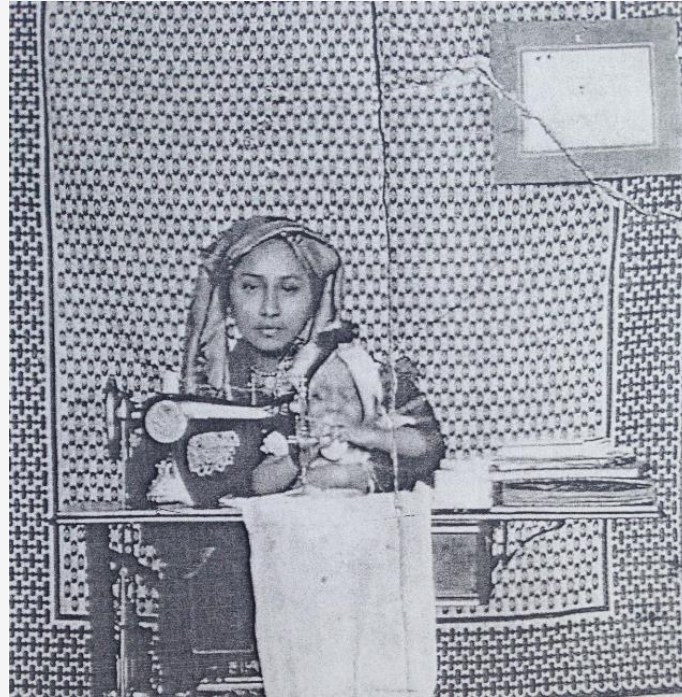
Blue: July 1915 – July 1916, not including a forwarded letter from Amsterdam

Purple: July 1918 – July 1919

Beyond Pahlawan?

I think that although Indonesian women have progressed so quickly – many women now graduate from university and hold important roles in society – there is yet to be a newspaper published like that of Rohana in those four broadsheets.

Tamar Djaja, 'Hari Kebangkitan Nasional dan Srikandi Indonesia', *Panji Masyarakat* (1980):
20



Museum Adityawarman exhibition Hari Pers Nasional January 2018

The “Nation” of Women

Progress illuminated by torches;
Please, Sitis of my *bangsa perempoean*,
Please go to *Soenting*, the garden of
knowledge.

- Siti Dalimah

S. Dalimah, ‘Soenting Melajoe’, *Soenting Melajoe*, 3 December 1914, issue 45, year 3, 2; original Malay: ‘Soeloeh penerangi akan kemadjoean/Silahlah Siti bangsakoe perempoean;/ Silahlah ke Soenting taman pengetahoean.’



We women have been destined by God to be a
noble-hearted nation, to become the nation of
mothers, the nation who give milk.

- Zobeidah Ratna Djoewita,

‘Kepandaian kita perempoean’, [The Intelligence of Us Women],
Soenting Melajoe, 3 August 1912, issue 5, year 1, 1; original Malay:
‘kita perempoean soedah ditakdirkan Allah mendjadi bangsa jang
berhati moelia, menjadi bangsa iboe, bangsa jang memberi soesoe.’

Different paths of all forms

Bermatjam djalan segala roepa

According to the European type

Menoeroet model macam Eoeropa

There has not been anything produced,

Soeatupoen tidak hasilnja apa

That was not empty, everything was hollow

Sedikit ta' boneh semoeanja hampa

- Rekna Poeti, 'Sjair Rky. Rekna Poeti', *100 Tahun Kerajinan
Amai Satia*, 93.



circa. 1916, Boekittinggi

Reconstructing Communities

Beladjar bertenoen, boekannah karena
 mengharapakan rodi dari pemerintah;
 melainkan karena maoe hati ni-
 nik mamak; iboe bapa
 dan soemi.
 ?=)—(=?

Learn to weave not because you want to be forced to work for the government, but for the heart of your lineage, your mother, father, and husband.

- Siti Djoes'ah, *Soenting Melajoe*, 10 April 1913, issue 16, year 2, 1.

Name and location	Pupils	Speciality Subjects	Newspaper
"Andeh Setia" Solet Air	150	Weaving Embroidery	27 July 1913 10 August 1912
Sarimalak	-	Weaving	3 August 1912
Boekittinggi	-	Sewing Palembang style embroidery	August 1912
Kota IV	8	Weaving	13 February 1913
Pajakoemboeh	14	Weaving Embroidery	10 April 1913
Piliang	8	Weaving	10 April 1913
Loeboek Sikaping	20	Palembang style embroidery	13 June 1913
"Andeh Seketo nan Gedang" Pajakoemboeh	54	Weaving Bugis, Palembang embroidery, and Palikat style fabric	10 August 1913
Pariaman	6	Fabric craft	30 December 1913
	Total: 260		



Keradjinan Amai Satia Student Crafts (1911–1916)

14 January 2018; Crafts include blue and orange *selendang* (scarves) commonly worn for formal occasions with floral motifs, anecdotally influenced by Chinese traders, and featuring variety of techniques, notably French knots and brocade lace.



Kerajinan Amai Satia school building, constructed with lottery funds 1915, 14 January 2018.

Agency and its limits

Unable to articulate what she sees or feels in her heart, even though those things will destroy her; nothing can be done to push them away [the suffering women face], apart from to remain unchanged like a statue.

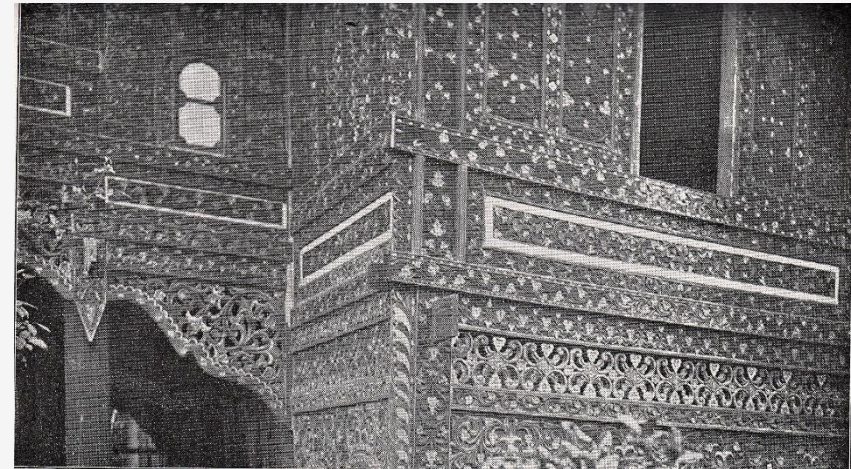
- **Amna Karim**

‘Harap diperhatikan!!’ *Soenting Melajoe*, 16 August 1918; original Malay: ‘tidak pandai menjatakan apa2 jang terkadang dimata dan terasa dihatinja masing2, biarpoen sekali hal2 itoe akan membawa binasa dirinja, tidalah dapat akan ditolakannja, selain dari menoenngoel sebagaimana ta’ obah seperti seboeah patoeng.’



Soenting Melajoe, 12 January, 1917, issue 2, year 6, page 3.

Directions and Reflections



Soenting Melajoe Decorative Ornaments and a Padang
Pandjang *Rumah Gadang*
