

Launching *The Dawn* in Revolutionary Guangzhou: Tan Malaka and the ‘Canton Conference’ of the Transport Workers of the Pacific (June 1924)

GEOFFREY C. GUNN*

ABSTRACT: Arriving in Guangzhou from Russia in December 1923 as the Indonesian representative of the Red International of Trade Unions (Profintern) in the Far East as well as Communist International (Comintern) delegate for Southeast Asia — Tan Malaka, also participated in the Transport Workers of the Pacific Conference held in the southern Chinese city in June 1924. Drawing in an assembly of delegates from China, Indonesia, and the Philippines, the Conference assigned Malaka as editor of a proposed multilingual bulletin, *The Dawn*. With both the ‘Canton Conference’ and *The Dawn* largely neglected in the literature, this article seeks to advance research on this subject with reference to hitherto neglected Comintern archives, especially addressing the Profintern-in-Asia theme as well as Tan Malaka’s special role prior to and just subsequent to his exit to the Philippines where he carried on with the support of local labour leaders.

KEYWORDS: Tan Malaka; Pan-Pacific Transport Workers Conference; Guangzhou; Manila; *The Dawn*.

INTRODUCTION

Tan Malaka arrived in Guangzhou from Russia in December 1923 as the Comintern representative for Southeast Asia and the Indonesian representative of the Red International of Trade Unions (RILU) or Profintern in the Far East, which was established in July 1921. Tan Malaka thus arrived more than a year before the Soviet Embassy group led by Mikhail Markovich Gruzenberg (Borodin), along with Ho Chi

Minh, in the southern Chinese city. The Sun–Joffe Manifesto between Sun Yat-sen and Adolph Joffe, head of mission of the Soviet government in China, had been signed in Shanghai on 26 January 1923. By that year ‘revolutionary’ Guangzhou had already emerged as the Comintern’s chosen base, attracting Indonesian, Korean, and Vietnamese nationalists and revolutionaries alike.¹

With Ho Chi Minh charged by the Comintern to

* Geoffrey C. Gunn, adjunct professor of the University of Macau and emeritus professor of Nagasaki University. He is the author of a series of works on the theme of Macao history.

Geoffrey C. Gunn, professor adjunto da Universidade de Macau, professor emérito da Universidade de Nagasaki. Autor de várias obras sobre história de Macau.

devote his attention to peasant affairs, on his part, Tan Malaka emerged as a key figure in organising the Pan-Pacific Conference of Transport Workers convened by the Profintern in June 1924, and held in Guangzhou, in turn bringing together visiting delegates from across China, Indonesia, the Philippines and elsewhere.² Tan Malaka was also assigned by the Conference to edit a monthly newsmagazine, titled *The Dawn* with the intention to reach out to the working masses in Asia with appropriate edited articles.

Allowing that Tan Malaka departed Guangzhou in mid-1925 before moving on to Manila, this article seeks, first, to give the background of the little-studied role of the Profintern in staging the Transport Workers of the Pacific Conference of June 1924. Second, it seeks to expose the difficulties that Tan Malaka encountered in bringing the publication of *The Dawn* to fruition as charged by the Conference. Third, insofar as no extant edition of *The Dawn* has ever been located, it seeks with reference to Comintern archives to reveal for the first time a selection of articles earmarked for *The Dawn*, even allowing that some of the Guangzhou writings were recycled in Manila newspapers following his relocation to the Philippines with the assistance of individual members of the local delegation of the Canton Conference.

1. THE 1924 CONFERENCE OF THE TRANSPORT WORKERS OF THE PACIFIC

While the Profintern has been the subject of a number of studies, especially that by E. H. Carr in his *History of Soviet Russia* (1950–1978), far less has been written on the Profintern in Asia. To a certain extent this subject has been addressed by Fowler, with her analysis on how Pan-Pacific Revolutionary Trade Union's internationalism led to the establishment of the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat (PPTUS) in Hankow in May 1927 which was then still under Kuomintang (KMT) control. As Fowler has demonstrated, the Pan-Pacific Revolutionary Trade Union movement

organised by the RILU went through several stages between 1923 and its dissolution in 1934.³ As she argues, in the latter stages, the sustaining elements were the Chinese and Japanese maritime unions, although she concedes an important trans-continental role for the Indonesian and Philippine maritime workers in the radical Guangzhou phase. Fowler also draws attention to the Profintern's decision in 1923 to create Port Bureaus in Rotterdam and Vladivostok, with Chinese, Japanese and Indonesian seamen the most active ones. It was at this juncture that Guangzhou came to be selected as the venue for a six-day conference in June 1924, noting as well that during the 1922 mass strike in the port of Hong Kong and then in the eighteen-month-long Canton–Hong Kong Strike (1925–1926), Chinese seamen had proved to be among the most militant.⁴

What is missing from standard histories, namely the pioneering stage in Profintern operation in the Far East leading up to the Canton Conference, is revealed in the Comintern archives, today the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (RGASPI). Of special interest are the reports filed by the Polish-born Joseph Fineberg signing himself as the Representative of the Eastern Department of the Communist International in Vladivostok, also heading the local Port Bureau as representative for the Profintern in the Far East, answering to the Russian — Leo Heller (L. Geller) — in his capacity as the Far Eastern Representative of RILU, as well as to Grigori Voitinsky, the founding head of the Comintern Far Eastern Bureau in China. A figure associated with the founding of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), Voitinsky returned to Moscow, temporarily leaving local Comintern responsibility in China to the Dutch communist Sneevliet/Maring (1921–1923). From my survey of the Profintern correspondence even the advent of a labour conference in Guangzhou appeared unlikely. First, as Fineberg explained, it took Voitinsky five months to even make connections with the

HISTORIOGRAFIA

CCP and the Chinese labour movement in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou, and with a first letter only received from the CCP on 12 December 1923. This was a great relief as another of his concerns was that the Shanghai unions would affiliate with the rival 'Amsterdam International' and not the Profintern. Second, Voitinsky was frequently perplexed as to his own role, noting as well that the arrival of Borodin in Shanghai merely added confusion as to his mandate over the Profintern. As Fineberg advised, Borodin should be given full responsibility for China and Manchuria leaving himself to take control of Profintern activities in Japan, Korea, and the Soviet Far East. Prior to offering his resignation, citing illness, he did report some minor success in printing Japanese, English, and Chinese propaganda bulletins.⁵ By way of clarification, as Tosstorff confirms, although formally separate, the RILU was always subordinate to the Comintern until its dissolution.⁶

1.1 THE PROGRAMME

According to Poeze, biographer of Tan Malaka, who reproduces the report on the Conference published in the *Philippine Free Press* on 27 August 1927, the Canton Conference was opened on 18 June 1924 by the high-ranking CCP leader Tan Pingshan.⁷ Following the election of a presidium, Tan Malaka and Domingo Ponce, the leaders of the Philippine delegation and the head of the Filipino labor union *Legionarios del Trabajo* (Workers' Legion) were both appointed. This was followed by a report delivered by a Profintern delegate (Oastoost?). At this opening, only representatives from North and South China and the Philippines were present, while the Indonesian three, composed of Tan Malaka, Boedisoejtjtro, and Alimin, arrived at a later time. Their presence brought the number of congress participants to twenty-five but minus invitees from India and Japan blocked by their home governments from attending. On the second day, the congress was addressed by a representative

of the Comintern (Zarkin?) and then followed by an Indonesian delegation report delivered by Malaka (as comrade Hassan), a report by the Philippine delegation delivered by Ponce, and an address by Liao Chung-kai (Liao Zhongkai), Governor of Guangdong (known as the architect of the first KMT–CCP United Front, and with himself assassinated in Guangzhou in August 1925). Although Sun Yat-sen was expected to attend, yet he did not. With the convention lasting until 23 June, among other matters, Malaka was vested with leadership of the Canton Bureau. Citing an interview with Alimin, Poeze adds that the Indonesians stayed with Liao Zhongkai for about fourteen days meeting leading KMT people like Hu Hanmin and Lin Biao.⁸ Together, Ponce, Alimin, and Malaka visited Sun Yat-sen. According to Alimin, who would spend the war years in Yan'an with Mao Zedong prior to returning to Java as the senior-most pro-Moscow Indonesian communist leader, Sun expressed the wish that China and the Philippines should cooperate against Great Britain, whom he considered a great enemy.

1.2 MANIFESTOS AND OUTCOMES

Strong on rhetoric, the Canton Conference duly issued a 'Manifesto of the First Working Conference of the Orient' boasting that it was the first time in history that representatives of trade unions from North China, South China, Java, and the Philippines had gathered. Unsigned but addressed to the 'toiling masses of the East, to the proletariat of Europe and America', the proletariat internationalist rhetoric of the manifesto was clear, just at the conference coincided with a radical left (Stalinist) tide. It recalled recent events in China as with the suppression in February 1922 of striking railroad workers of the Peking–Hankow railroad (as it was then known) and police repression of striking railroad workers in Java in May 1923. An attached 'Outline of the Report on the Labour Movement and the Struggle for Independence of the Colonial People to the Conference of the Transport Workers of the

HISTORIOGRAPHY

Orient' adds little more but follows a similar Bolshevik narrative.⁹

Dated 23 September 1924, an 'Organization Resolution' passed by the Commission of the Transport Conference of the Orient goes further in explaining the context in which the Conference was held as well as its rationale. Five points are mentioned. First, the objective was to create a dedicated Canton Bureau of the Transport Workers of the Pacific to forge links and to promote interchange of information. As explained, the Bureau would be composed of five members, one respectively from China, the Philippines, the Dutch Indies, the British Indies, and Japan. Koreans and Vietnamese might wonder why they were not included. The second objective was to set up International Clubs of Seamen in Manila, Hong Kong, and Batavia (Jakarta) to secure the 'class needs' of the maritime workers. The third one was to support the livelihoods and conditions of the transport workers. Fourth, the Canton Bureau was required to 'publish a bulletin or its essential part into respective languages of all the countries and distribute the bulletin among the transport workers'. The goal was 'to prepare their ideology, to disseminate information, to have close contact and to enlighten the workers of the East'. Fifthly, transport workers affiliated with the Canton Bureau were obliged to contribute financial support.¹⁰

A summation of the Canton Conference also entering the Comintern archives was provided by Heller, in his capacity as the Far Eastern Representative of RILU. According to Wilber and How in their study of Soviet advisors in China, both Voitinsky for the Comintern and Heller for the Profintern were present at the Canton Conference.¹¹ From his vantage point as a RILU founder, Heller noted the concern of the Profintern for the colonial and semi-colonial countries. He also noted that the concept of a conference in Guangzhou originated on the proposal of the Australian delegation to the Fourth Comintern Congress which, in turn, decided to

convene a conference of the workers of the Pacific. As noted, a similar decision was also made at the Second Profintern Conference (in November 1922). Looking back on the 'short history' of the Canton Conference, he also drew attention to the difficult conditions in China at the time of its convention. Nevertheless, since the KMT had entered into friendly relations with Soviet Russia, Guangzhou was deemed an optimum choice for the conference. In the conference which lasted over six days from 17 to 23 July, the big surprise was the attendance of the Philippine delegates 'with whom we had until then, never came into contact'. In turn, reports were presented by the Chinese railroad workers, the Javanese railroad workers, a report of the Hong Kong seamen's strike of Spring 1922, and the report by the Philippine delegates (dubbed naïve by Heller for its misguided estimation of the beneficence of American democracy, along with supposed labour reforms). As he explained, language was a problem, citing the difference between Chinese spoken in North China and South China, and the fact that some of the Philippine delegates spoke in Spanish, some in native language and English (although that is not to deny that serious business was also conducted).¹²

2. TAN MALAKA AND THE PAN-PACIFIC REVOLUTIONARY TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Tan Malaka's presence in Guangzhou has not escaped attention on the part of Western (and Indonesian) scholarship, especially as his autobiography, *Dari Penjara ke Penjara* (From Jail to Jail), offers a dedicated chapter, and most accounts have referred back to this body of writing. They include Helen Jarvis who translated this work into English as well as Indonesian bloggers and websites who popularise — and even fictionalise — Tan Malaka episodes. Some, such as McVey researched the question from Moscow, albeit long before the Comintern archives were open for consultation.

HISTORIOGRAFIA

Writing in Dutch and researching in Dutch archives, other authors such as Poeze, have carried on the Tan Malaka narrative to cover the two-year period he spent in the Philippines. Still others, have consulted British police records to closely study Malaka's early activities in Singapore and Malaya.¹³ More recently, Ferdinand Victoria has brought to light the importance of Tan Malaka's Philippine connection as well as his acute sense of 'pan-Malayism' transcending colonial spheres of influence.

Multilingual, speaking fluent Dutch, German and more limited English, besides native Indonesian languages and dialects, the Sumatra-born and Dutch-educated Tan Malaka had narrowly been defeated as a communist candidate in parliamentary elections in Holland.¹⁴ Moving on to Moscow, he addressed the Fourth Comintern Congress (November–December 1922) as a delegate from Java, an event attended by, inter alia, the Indian, M. N. Roy, Ho Chi Minh, and the Japanese Katayama Sen, especially drawing attention to pan-Islamism in the anti-colonial struggle albeit attracting negative opinion.¹⁵ In Moscow Malaka would also meet with the Chinese delegates who supported him at the time when he moved to Guangzhou.

Although Malaka was not yet a Chinese speaker, his international reputation within the Communist International and standing among Chinese comrades in Guangzhou brought him into direct contact with Sun Yat-sen, who was then the leader of the Nationalist government. They met soon in Sun's local riverside residence in December 1923 after Malaka's arrival in Guangzhou (the first of the two meetings if the Canton Conference occasion was another). For the then 27-year-old foreigner, as Malaka related in his autobiography, the meeting bringing together Sun Yat-sen, his son, Sun Ke, Liao Zhongkai, and 'possibly' Hu Hanmin, and Wang Jingwei (each seminal figure down through this period of CCP–KMT cooperation) was obviously a rare privilege.¹⁶

As revealed by the Comintern archives, just prior to his departure from Moscow he drafted in handwriting a Dutch language text entitled *Indonesia: En Zijn Plaats in Het Ontwakende Ooste door Tan Malaka* (Indonesia: Its Place in the Awakening East by Tan Malaka). Dated 1923 and running to some 200 pages its was divided into some dozen chapters ranging over political history and economics of the Dutch colonial system in its eastern colony.¹⁷ Translated into Russian and published in 1924 with a reprint the following year, according to Poeze who offers a short summary, the book received favourable reviews, no doubt adding to Malaka's reputation in Russia.¹⁸

With the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) founded in 1920 by Semaun (Samouan) prior to his moving to Holland and heading up the Indonesian Seaman's Union in cooperation with the Dutch Communist Party, also getting himself elected to the Profintern presidium, the Indonesians were at least a decade ahead of the Vietnamese (and with a unified Vietnamese Communist Party only established by Ho Chi Minh in 1930). Tan Malaka became the second PKI chairman in Java following Semaun's departure for Europe. Whereas Semaun had been active in the union movement in Java with the key members of the Dutch Communist Party, up until his arrest and deportation, Malaka had made his mark in the creation of communist schools in Java and so appeared to neglect the labour arena. In 1923, or shortly prior to Malaka's arrival in China, the PKI had broken from its united front with the mass Islamic organisation *Sareket Islam* (Islamic Union), although still maintaining its links with left-wing Islamic elements via its front organisation *Sareket Rakyat* (People's Union), albeit under the threat of Dutch persecution (and he would expose this in *The Dawn*). At this stage, the PKI as with its newspapers were legal, although that would change dramatically in 1927 with the crushing by the Dutch of a failed communist-led rebellion, an act opposed by Malaka at the time when he was in the Philippines but

HISTORIOGRAPHY

out of direct communication.

The Comintern archives also reveal that months prior to his Profintern appointment to Guangzhou, Tan Malaka had canvassed hosting a conference in Bangkok. This is explained in a paper titled '*Der Entwurf Fuer die Arbeit in Den Orient*' (The Draft for Work in the Orient), issued in Moscow on 21 May 1923. This followed on from the Second Profintern Congress and, as noted, the Third Session of the General Council of the RILU was held in Moscow from 25 June to 2 July 1923. Also, as mentioned, RILU debates then focussed upon establishing Port Bureaus not only in Europe but globally to tap into radical maritime workers, with the Hong Kong maritime strike in January 1922 but one inspiring example.¹⁹ While not neglecting Singapore's strategic location and potential as a site for an 'illegal bureau', Malaka favoured Thailand, noting that the kingdom was out of direct colonial surveillance and Bangkok well placed with respect to delegates or couriers arriving from Indonesia, British India, and China. He then submitted a 'minimum budget' for a Bangkok Conference with costing for his own voyage and that of a comrade from Java and another from China, totalling 8,944 dollars.²⁰ There is no indication that Moscow approved this considerable sum of money.

Speaking as the delegate from the Dutch East Indies in an undated address titled 'Guiding Principles of the Colonial Question', Malaka further adverted upon the imperative to establish a 'communist centre' in the East itself, citing the long distance from Moscow to the colonial countries of the East. 'Closely linked with Moscow', he argued, such a centre would help to link up the existing communist parties as well as to build up a powerful labour federation or 'union of transport workers and seamen' from India, Indonesia, China, and Japan. As his address concluded, 'The Congress, therefore, decides to convene the affiliated parties of the East to a Conference of the East itself in order to arrive at the formation of a federation of

Eastern Communists and a federation of transport workers and seamen'.²¹ Although Tosstorff is silent on the question, Malaka's authoritative tone suggests that he was addressing a RILU congress (likely, this was the Third Session of the General Council of RILU).²²

This address, at face value, reveals that the concept of creating a 'union of transport workers and seamen' covering the Pacific region was that of Tan Malaka and not the Profintern per se, allowing that he may have been in close communication with Semaun who, as alluded, was far ahead in his knowledge of maritime networks and was also a member of the RILU presidium. Guangzhou was not mentioned in this pitch, although Semaun had his own ideas on China as a base. In fact, Semaun took credit for arranging the dispatch of the two Indonesian delegates (namely Boedisoetjito and Alimin) to the Canton Conference in July 1924.²³ In any case, the decision-making process whereby Tan Malaka was anointed to his double position prior to being dispatched to China is not recorded but we know that his key contact person during his Guangzhou interlude was Grigori Voitinsky. At least we should examine the literature on this broad question.

3. PRINTING *THE DAWN*

Besides confirming Guangzhou as the site for a local Profintern bureau or secretariat, another decision made at the Canton Conference was to launch the propaganda magazine titled *The Dawn* and with Tan Malaka assigned as editor. Whereas Semaun could produce in Amsterdam his newsheet on a sophisticated lithograph press with Dutch communist assistance and Profintern's and Comintern's money, Tan Malaka struggled to launch even one edition of *The Dawn*, as commissioned by the Conference. Having named the bulletin himself, Malaka may well have had in mind *fajar* — a term of Arabic derivation meaning 'dawn', and a fairly common newspaper title even today in Indonesia/Malaysia.

HISTORIOGRAFIA

No such edition of *The Dawn* survives, nor have the leading scholars on Indonesia been able to consult an edition, which is acknowledged by McVey.²⁴ Nevertheless, as exposed by Poeze, a small number of copies of the first edition did circulate in the Philippines.²⁵ Although Poeze was unable to produce a table of contents for *The Dawn*, he nevertheless tracks one or two articles or themes reproduced in Manila newspapers, as for example, the support that *The Dawn* gave to Pan-Asian revolutionary contacts between Indonesia, Malaya, and the Philippines. Nevertheless, the *Philippine Free Press* (25 August 1927) did reproduce a cover image of *The Dawn*, revealing a somewhat naïve representation of a circle of peoples dressed in native attire joined by hands in solidarity and with behatted capitalist bosses looking on with trepidation.

Adding to Malaka's stress in Guangzhou were difficulties encountered in getting competent Chinese translation assistance to help launch his propaganda bulletin with contributions by himself in English, albeit still in need of editing. Besides Chinese language assistance, he was also scouting for good English and Malay translators. The political situation was also fluid. As he wrote in November 1924:

But [still] there is difficulty every day with the merchants and the printing shops in Canton owing to the arms question with the Government. These two days everything is closed again, because now [there is] the general merchants strike against Dr. Sun.

In a turn of phrase which captures British anxieties precisely, he concluded, 'Every merchant in the town and every Englishman considers Sun now as a pure Bolshevik. It can be one of the many reasons that British imperialism hurries the merchants to overthrow Sun's Government'.²⁶ As with Ming K. Chan who termed the events 'a crisis of legitimacy' facing the British, modern



Fig. 1: Cover image of *The Dawn*. Source: *Philippine Free Press*, dated 25 August 1927.

scholarship confirms such facts.²⁷ In fact, in March 1925 Sun Yat-sen would die in a Beijing hospital.

Notwithstanding all these difficulties one small success he had with printing in Guangzhou was to launch his small Dutch language book entitled *Naar de 'Republiek Indonesia'* (Towards the 'Indonesian Republic').²⁸ Dated April 1925 this was printed shortly before his exit to the Philippines, and he took copies with him. Virtually a revolutionary primer, in sequential chapters he explained the world situation, the plight of Indonesians in the Dutch colony, the objectives of the Indonesian Communist Party, tactics and strategy required to overcome Dutch imperialism in a guerrilla war context (which he would lead in the Indonesian war of Independence, 1945–1948). Notably, *Naar de 'Republiek Indonesia'* was the first

work to promote a concept of an Indonesian Republic, also not lost upon the future first president of the Republic of Indonesia, Sukarno.

As the preface to the Canton edition explains, 'When originally published the book was full of printing errors, noting that the book was proofed by a Chinese friend who had no knowledge of Dutch, second, the press lacked Latin typeface, third, after years of travel, his own facility in Dutch was fading'.²⁹ From this we could conclude that the printing of the book fared little better technically than the printing of *The Dawn*, yet the effort and money that he ploughed into the book may also have detracted from his commissioned work on *The Dawn*.

4. TAN MALAKA IN MACAO, SEPTEMBER 1924

Tan Malaka's visit to Macao in September 1924 was neither mentioned in his autobiography, which is surprising given the detail he supplies on Guangzhou, nor in any other writings or secondary literature. The Macao visit is revealed in a crudely-typed letter collected in the Comintern archives, dated 'Canton, 16 September 1924' and simply addressed 'Dear comrade (Voitinsky)'. Signing himself by the code name 'Hassan' as Malaka explained, he was in contact with his compatriots in Java and Singapore via courier at two-week or monthly intervals. This is important as it reveals the success made by Semaun in Holland in successfully organising seaman couriers working on Dutch ships connecting Europe with Singapore and Java and even China. In the same letter he signalled, 'Perhaps after one week I go to Macao for one week for my health'. The only other source on this visit takes the form of a typed letter sent from Guangzhou to Voitinsky upon his return from Macao. As he explained, he made a week-long visit to Macao in late September 1924 ostensibly seeking to escape from Guangzhou's summer heat 'because there is much better *Klimate* [*sic*] than here' and also to recover from illness. In that respect he explained that he was

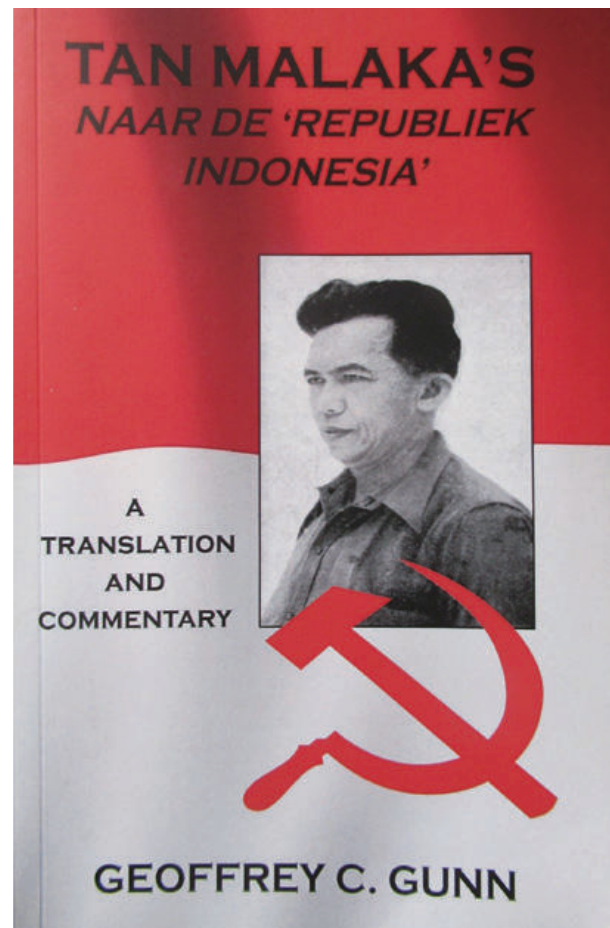


Fig. 2: Cover image of Tan Malaka's *Naar de 'Republiek Indonesia'*, modern edition, Jakarta, 2015.

only making a slow recovery. He also complained of 'irritation' and 'nervousness'.³⁰

Unfortunately, Tan Malaka left no description of Macao, leaving us to wonder as to what kind of travel document he held to enter the Portuguese-administered territory especially as he lacked a passport. Rodrigo José Rodrigues, himself a central figure in the Portuguese First Republic, was then the Governor of Macao although by this date he had been withdrawn to Lisbon. The Portuguese Consul in Guangzhou, Felix Horta, in close contact with the revolutionary government may have been informed of the visit. The silence also raises the question as to

HISTORIOGRAFIA

whom Malaka wished to contact in Macao, as for example, old Chinese contacts from Singapore or Indonesia? Or could he have been seeking assistance from Macao's English-speaking printers — and they included Macanese — to help overcome his primary problem in Guangzhou, namely Latin typeface necessary to produce his bulletin and forthcoming book. It is perhaps coincidental that at the height of the Hong Kong–Canton general strike in mid-1925 entailing a work stoppage by 500,000 men and with its population reduced by one third, the French author-turned newspaper owner André Malraux (and wife) arrived in Hong Kong also in the quest for typeface to relaunch his anti-colonial Saigon newspaper *L'Indochine Enchaînée*.³¹ Shadowed in Hong Kong at the height of the strike action by police officials, and also briefly entering Macao, Malraux was well connected with left-wing Chinese nationalist circles and was the head of the pro-communist *Jeune Annam* party in Vietnam. Tan Malaka was not safe in Macao. More than once, the Dutch sought information from the Portuguese authorities as to his possible presence, although no answer is recorded.³²

5.1 LAUNCHING *THE DAWN*

With Issue No. 1 of *The Dawn* crudely printed in Guangzhou in early 1925 and with No. 2 ready for printing and with no known copy coming to light, it would be salutatory to examine the contents. Besides a prefatory piece explaining the rationale of the new publication, the Comintern archives reveal a small clutch of articles all typed. As with Ho Chi Minh when he set up in Guangzhou, Tan Malaka was privileged to own a typewriter and the archives offers typewritten versions of his compositions exclusively, suggesting at least one layer of editing if they were originally handwritten. Yet each of the articles is uneven in composition and standard of English and even interest and relevance to a readership which is never truly defined. Besides the short preface which I paraphrase,

out of this group of articles I have selected three for further exposure and analysis, namely 'Transport Workers of the Orient: Be on Guard' with a China-Indochina theme; 'Indonesia (Dutch Indies)', with an Indonesia theme, and 'Singapore Naval Base and the Next War', at least addressing a global audience.

Signed off by the editor, namely Tan Malaka, as the prefatory piece explains, that as a result of the 'Conference of Transportation Workers of the Orient' held in Canton between 18 and 23 June, a permanent body or secretariat was established. As explained, 'This fact is unique in the history of the East. Never yet has the oppressed Oriental nations realised their solidarity in the struggle against world imperialism as they do now'. As envisaged the Secretariat would be the body to coordinate the 'Oriental forces' with the revolutionary working classes in Europe, America and Japan. As further explained, the Secretariat had decided to publish a monthly bulletin in English titled *The Dawn*, allowing that it would also be published in some other languages of the 'Orient'. In a word, *The Dawn* would become a real 'battle organ for the independence of the Oriental countries', provided that it represented 'the voice of the oppressed nations'. Ending with an appeal for contributions to be sent to the Secretariat in Canton, such would help to break the united front of 'world imperialism'.³³

5.2 'TRANSPORT WORKERS OF THE ORIENT: BE ON GUARD'

Notwithstanding the call for contributions, with the exception of editorial assistance from the English speaking 'Huang' and another American-educated Chinese editor, Tan Malaka remained the sole contributor to *The Dawn*. One of the contributions bearing the title *Transport Workers of the Orient: Be on Guard* focused upon the 'imperialist' island enclave of Shamian in Guangzhou which he must have known about, but a place to be avoided, especially owing to its extraterritorial status, colonial police and consular

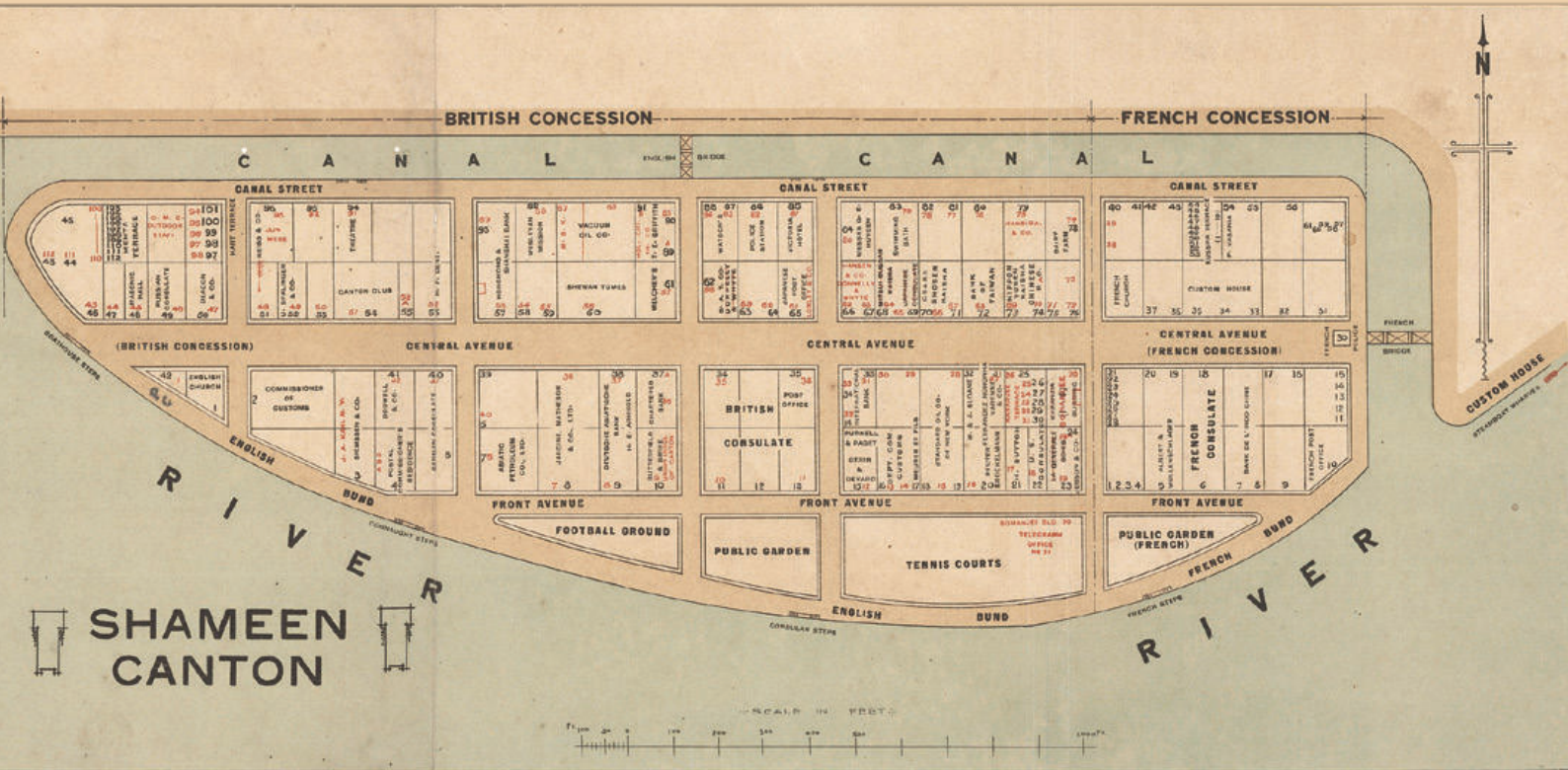


Fig. 3: 'Shameen' in the 1920s, showing the location of the British and French concessions. Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shamian#/media/File:Shameen_Canton.jpg

presence. The background to the writing of this article is also recorded in his autobiography (*From Jail to Jail*), but primarily in the context of writing in English. In this work, he states, 'I tried to compose a piece in English about the strike in Shameen, a special place for Europeans in the middle of Canton'. As explained, he offered his composition to a returnee from America with a better knowledge of English (and his name is attached as joint contributor). As advised, for the sake of the working classes whose knowledge of English is not so good then it was better to use short sentences and simple words. This conversation led him to think about 'Basic English' or simple English as understood by the working classes in Asia. As he noted, 'Basic English' with around 800 words was then much 'propagandised' in China. Even so, he conceded, he himself could not yet be confident in writing even 'Basic English'. As he continued, having got himself up to speed to the point where he was prepared to publish his articles in *The Dawn*, he confronted another problem, namely the want of Latin typescript in Guangzhou. As he discovered, the first of his articles entering typescript '*masih lenggang lengggok saja seperti gerobak rusak*' (was wobbling like a broken wagon). As he exemplified, the word 'pacific'

appeared as 'PacifiC', because of a lack of lowercase letters and this defect was reproduced throughout, and, as a result, it delayed the publication of the first issue of *The Dawn* by up to three months, and so leaving himself vulnerable to criticism from Moscow as to his negligence.³⁴

As he wrote in his article for *The Dawn*, 'Shameen is the territory of foreign imperialism in Canton. It tends to bring South China into subjection under the world-imperialism, chiefly under British imperialism'. Offering a history lesson, he continued, 'the small English territory in Calcutta of about 200 years ago has finally conquered the whole of India. The same part Hong Kong will play regarding South China. Hong Kong controls already the import and export for South China. And the customs house in China strengthens this control. But this is not all. The British imperialism wants the whole of China. But there is a hindrance to the British plan. In South China there exists a revolutionary government under the leadership of Dr. Sun Yat-sen. This government energetically fought against the military leaders in China, who are in fact the instrument of foreign imperialism. Therefore, away with the revolutionary government and away with Dr. Sun'.

HISTORIOGRAFIA

He then related an event which occurred some six months after he arrived in Guangzhou, namely the failed assassination attempt on 19 June 1924, against the visiting French Governor General of Indochina, Martial Merlin, by an unnamed Vietnamese agent (Phạm H`ông Thái), described by Tan Malaka as a 'member of a secret organization'. The perpetrator who committed suicide was long honoured in Guangzhou with a statue but, with a bomb killing several French officials, the event was also viewed as an anarchist act.³⁵ As Tan Malaka wrote, 'Nobody doubted it. It was sheer coincidence that the attack was a political one, long since prepared in Annam. It was pure accident, that it happened in Shameen [...] the imperialist territory in Canton'. But as he bewailed, under a new security regime, every Chinese person entering the island had to carry a special passport. Deemed highly offensive, the new dispensation led to a worker strike or, rather, 'political strike' which had lessons for all the oppressed in the European colonies. Dated, Canton, 19 July 1924, this was a joint article signed off by Hassan and So Chew Geung (name obscured), likely one of the two America-educated Chinese whom he periodically engaged or consulted.³⁶

5.3 ISLAM IN THE ANTI-COLONIAL MOVEMENT IN INDONESIA

In a separate article with a focus upon Islam in the anti-colonial movement in Indonesia (title obscured), Tan Malaka traces the mass anti-colonial movement back to the establishment of Sareket Islam (SI) in 1913. Well-known in standard histories of Indonesia today, as Tan Malaka explains, in short time SI spread all over Indonesia reaching out to villages and even local government officials, notwithstanding government prohibitions (and it is noteworthy that he uses the newly coined term 'Indonesia' in his writings). It is said that between 1913 and 1918, the SI rallied 1,500,000 members along with between two or three million sympathisers. As he contritely observed, to

lead such a mass movement requires astute leadership based upon a clear concept of the economic, social, and political conditions prevailing in Java, not to mention well thought out aims and tactics, if 300 years of oppression was to be overthrown. However, nothing of that could be found in the leadership (and he goes on to bitterly denounce the leadership of the troika, Tjokroaminoto, Agus Salim and Abdul Muis). While acknowledging that the communists had worked in a united front with SI until a divorce in 1923, pushback by the troika and its 'fanatical Mohammadan followers' was 'dangerous' for the nationalist movement. SI's failure, he asserted, was not only repression, but corruption of its administration. As Malaka summed up, 'the lack of organization, the lack of higher leadership and ideas were the chief reasons why the SI could not achieve the desire of the Javanese masses for independence'. As advised, he would deal with the role of the PKI divested from SI, in a sequential article. With his article signed off *Canton, 20 August 1924, 'to be continued'* unfortunately it does not appear in the Comintern archives.³⁷

5.4 THE 'SINGAPORE NAVAL BASE AND THE NEXT WAR'

Signed off using the pseudonym, Avon Rachimanoff, and dated 11 April 1925, the article titled 'Singapore Naval Base and the New War' partially matches a theme entering Tan Malaka's *Naar de 'Republiek Indonesia'*, namely that intra-imperialist competition in the Asia Pacific was bound to end in world war, the flames out of which the independence movements might emerge but at great cost to the working masses. Typewritten like all the articles in the Comintern collection, and running to four pages, we know that this article was headed for the bulletin because it bears a scrawled message in Dutch, *Bestiment fur The Dawn* (Destined for *The Dawn*). Nevertheless, it still required close copy editing and direct quotation would reveal many odd

HISTORIOGRAPHY

usages, poor sentence constructions, uneven use of commas, and the addition of a few neologisms like 'worldpeace' and 'worldwar'. As he explained, with the British McDonald Government overthrown by the Conservatives under Baldwin, construction of the Singapore Naval Base was resumed with the support of the Empire and America not excepting Hong Kong (meaning money from China) supplying a quarter of a million dollars. In the background was the prospect of world war, the certainties that trade flows would be disrupted, that misery would rule, and that millions would die.

Accordingly, only concerted action on the part of 'Western workers and Oriental people' could prevent 'butchery and misery'. In other words, 'Speaking in diplomatic language, the leaders of British imperialism told the world that the Singapore Base is not for war-purpose but for world-peace'. Yet, he continued, in spite of the Washington Conference, Japan had proceeded with rearmament. With Japan and the US together described as 'young imperialist powers' alongside the old empires, both were drawn into fierce trade competition with China, practically the only market left, and with Japan bereft of raw materials, as with iron, coal, and oil. As he correctly predicted, in an eventual Japanese–American war in the Pacific, 'White' Australia would quickly join with the United States, immediately followed by an 'American English alliance'. As the article concluded, 'The Pacific War cannot be prevented by McDonaldism, but only by organizations and direct action of the masses'.³⁸

6. DEPARTURE FROM GUANGZHOU AND SETTING UP IN MANILA

Still in Guangzhou and alerted as to a crisis in the ranks of the PKI, Malaka sought to move on, but this was easier said than done especially as he lacked a passport (and he also admitted to occasionally stowing away on ships). Having somehow extricated himself from the 'Biro Canton' (meaning having abandoned the

Profintern) and having made his way to Hong Kong, he then put up at a boarding house run by a family with a history of revolutionary activities in the Philippines. In this narrative, the daughter of the proprietor, Nona (Miss) Carmen, coached him in Tagalog (suggesting an extended stay) and, together with a fellow lodger — the Filipino academic and future University of Manila president Mariano de los Santos, they helped him prepare for a new life in the Philippines perhaps also supplying some documentation to match his new alias, Elias Fuentes. While Malaka was shy on just how many days or weeks he remained in Hong Kong during this interlude, from Hong Kong he shipped out to Manila on the President line ship *Empress of Russia* arriving on 20 July. Having bluffed his way through American immigration controls without possession of a passport, for the next two years of intermittent stay in the Philippines, he would be assisted by the labour circle whom he befriended at the Canton Conference also going on to meet senior members of the Manila elite.³⁹ Besides los Santos, his close contacts included José Abad Santos (a future chief justice and war hero, executed by the Japanese), and labour leader Francisco Varona, who also helped him to find some income as a correspondent for the nationalist newspaper *El Debate*, of which he was an editor.⁴⁰

While Tan Malaka does not specifically mention encountering any Vietnamese in Guangzhou, on the other hand, Ho Chi Minh does allude to meeting the Indonesian at a time when he commenced working for ROSTA, the Soviet news agency. (It was not the first time they met and with both attending the Fourth Comintern Congress held in Moscow between November and December 1922). Writing in November 1924, soon after his arrival in Guangzhou, Ho Chi Minh informed Moscow, 'I saw comrade Malaka just once; he was sick and told me he was trying to go back to his country. I think he has gone already because I haven't seen him for a very long time'.⁴¹ It is undoubtedly true, as Ho Chi Minh learnt

HISTORIOGRAFIA

that Tan Malaka did not easily adapt to life in China. The climate was foreign to him, as was the food, and so was the language. Meantime, illness also intervened.

The going south story also appears in the correspondence to the Comintern signed off by Tan Malaka in two separate messages, both dated 18 February 1925 (counter dated 16 April 1925 in the Comintern file) and with one bearing the initials 'H.K.' (Hong Kong?), misleading to be sure if he was still in Guangzhou, but also suggestive that he made a very early exit from that city. The first message alluded to measures being taken by the Dutch Governor General to close communist schools in Java such as he founded, also reporting arrests and deaths of PKI and SR members. It then closed with the remark, 'Hassan will go south. They are waiting for me there' (a clear allusion to his intended passage to the Philippines and reception by Filipino comrades whom he met at the Canton Conference). A second message indicates that an article he had written and will be published in a Chinese newspaper and in 'our Bulletin'. He then indicates that 'After a few days I start South [...] They are waiting for me there'. But to reassure his Comintern contact, as he continued, 'Everything for the continuance of the Bulletin and other work arranged with C. Huang. This work can be continued here without interruption'.⁴² Thereafter Huang drops out of the thin correspondence, just as *The Dawn* proved to be ephemeral.

7. PRINTING THE DAWN IN MANILA

Somewhat elliptically, Tan Malaka addressed a handwritten letter composed in Dutch language from Singapore, dated 24 April 1925, and sent to a Comintern contact. If he was truly in Singapore then this suggested a quick return trip to Hong Kong/Guangzhou, but he also frequently disguised his correspondence with false names, dates, and places. In any case, the letter reveals something of his attempt to continue with the production of *The Dawn* from

Manila and it would appear that the printing facilities, political support, and English language assistance were not necessary, indeed practically optimum compared to Guangzhou. As he wrote:

In die Philippines fangen wir as an ein wenig Fuss zu fassen. Die erste nummer von The Dawn battan wir schon in die Philippines geschickt. Die Philippine zeitung hatte ein exemplar von The Dawn empfangen und publizierte unserer bericht ueber die Gruendung de Canton.

[Translation by author] *In the Philippines we are beginning to gain a foothold. We already sent the first number of The Dawn to the Philippines. The Philippine newspaper had received a copy of The Dawn and published our account of the founding of the Canton [Secretariat].*

As he further revealed, a friend in Hong Kong had sent him two articles about the Philippines ready to be published and that the *Philippine Herald* had been contacted accordingly. He also mentioned that the *Legionarios del Trabajo* had provided him with copies of 'the most important newspapers', including the PKI's own newspaper *Api* (Fire) published in Java.⁴³ So, if we interpret this paragraph, while he may have had early ambitions to carry on publishing a second edition of *The Dawn*, in reality his comrades in the Philippines labour movement helped him to published the selected articles in Manila newspapers.

It was also in Manila (December 1925) that a second and expanded version of Malaka's *Naar de 'Republiek Indonesia'* was published (albeit bearing a Tokyo place of publication which was false).⁴⁴ Likely, as Jarvis asserts, it was Varona who assisted Malaka in the publication of the second edition of *Naar de 'Republiek Indonesia'*, as well as the publication in 1926 of another work in Indonesian language, *Semangat Moeda* (Young Spirit).⁴⁵ No extant copy of the Canton

edition or the Manila edition of *Naar de 'Republiek Indonesia'* survives (nor for that matter *Semangat Moeda*), although copies of the former were seized by Dutch and American officials. Still, some copies circulated in the underground and with roneoed copies of the Manila reprint of *Naar de 'Republiek Indonesia'* evidently surviving the Japanese occupation. All present editions, stem from a Bahasa Indonesia reprint/translation from 1962 titled *Menuju Republik Indonesia* (Towards the Indonesian Republic).⁴⁶ That would include a Japanese translation and the first translation into English.⁴⁷ *Naar de 'Republiek Indonesia'* was the last book or tract that Tan Malaka wrote in Dutch and, indeed, from conversation with Ho Chi Minh, or just observation, he may have been guided as to the merits of publishing in the vernacular (and with Ho Chi Minh launching his widely circulated and read *Thanh Niên* (Youth) written in *Quốc ngữ* (Vietnamese national language) from Guangzhou at the time they met in China.⁴⁸

8. SEMAUN'S FAILED PKI CANTON CONFERENCE OF 1926

As Semaun wrote to the Executive Committee of the Communist International (ECCI) on 23 March 1926, he wished to have the PKI placed under the ECCI Secretariat for China to help develop the PKI and its relations with the Comintern.⁴⁹ This would entail the creation of a PKI Bureau in Guangzhou. As he asserted, Guangzhou was selected because it was a 'stable red centre in the East' allowing communications between Java and Moscow with the help of Chinese 'connections', and a logical substitute to Holland.⁵⁰ Besides Guangzhou, he also advocated establishing a smaller bureau in Singapore to assist liaison between Java and China.⁵¹

Well over a year later, on 11 June 1927, Semaun wrote another message to ECCI, as he declaimed, 'I am now in China', having arrived by train via Irkutsk and Vladivostok (albeit his wife was



Fig. 4: Cover image of the first Indonesian edition of Tan Malaka's *Naar de 'Republiek Indonesia'*, 1962.

absent as intended). As he explained, even though his plan to set up a PKI bureau in Guangzhou had received approval at the fifth and sixth ECCI plenum meetings, the funds had been appropriated by his Dutch communist counterparts (part of a struggle led by Semaun to entirely release the Indonesian party from Dutch communist control). Profintern money had been sent to the wrong address. Yet he believed that he could go ahead with the project anyway by looking to material support from Indonesian Chinese then residing in southern China. However, because of the destabilisation in southern China at the hands of the militarists, the planned PPTUS Conference was

HISTORIOGRAFIA

obliged to switch its venue to Hankou (then known as Hankow) where it was attended by delegates from China, the Soviet Union, Japan, Indonesia, Korea, France, the United States, and Great Britain. Still frustrated by the non-appearance of his wife, and missing the conference as a result, he turned back to Moscow and arrived there on 5 April.⁵²

This misadventure was not well received in Moscow, and he would be disciplined, in fact, denounced as a 'counter-revolutionary'. On 7 June 1928 he would be formally expelled from the PKI on the orders of the PKI-Moscow group around Alimin, Musso, and Raden Darsono (himself purged not long after), for the primary reason of refusing to carry out preparations for the PPTUS Conference to be held in Hankou. This is more the irony especially as Semaun had been the key networker in Holland making the Profintern Far East project workable, but he also fell afoul of Voitinsky for breaching Comintern policy of working with Indonesian social reformists in Holland. As a ranking member of the ECCI, as his dismissal letter stated, 'he has thus committed an act of conspiracy with the Nationalists against the PKI in Holland'. Finally, he had 'resisted to devote his power to the party's interests and therefore his further remaining in the party is useless'. His continued presence in the party is 'unworthy' and 'undesirable'.⁵³ Though undetected by ECCI, Tan Malaka was likewise then striking out on a heterodox nationalist course as far as Moscow was concerned, leading him to establish his own secret political party at a conference in Bangkok outside of the Comintern, although he would also be brought back into the fold for a time.

CONCLUSION


We would have to conclude that without an encore in Manila, *The Dawn* was a failure. From the outset, the editorship of the bulletin was not Tan Malaka's choice. He was simply ordered by Voitinsky to take on the assignment. Granted that Malaka had

the intellectual brilliance to steer the journal, still he had less practical experience in journalism and publishing than Semaun or even some of the Filipinos. Not a speaker of Chinese he was practically incapable of conducting any business in Guangzhou without bilingual support and the Profintern was naïve to believe that he could cope in such an environment. Although obviously a quick learner with respect to English, he was far more comfortable in Dutch or German. But aside from his friend Huang and another temporary Chinese assistant, he was virtually on his own with respect to editing and dealing with printers. As he explained himself, the technical difficulties of working with substandard typeset were insuperable. The notion that *The Dawn* could be produced in multiple languages was no less dubious. For a journal that was expected to reach a broad Pan-Pacific audience, it was also a failure. Besides the few copies reaching the Philippines, *The Dawn* attracted no known readership and certainly not the 800-word English Chinese readership which he profiled. Given the low literacy levels of maritime workers of that age, not to mention the mass of workers in the region, the readership of his terse political-analytical articles would have been miniscule. He did not work out distribution networks either, unless he had lined up loyal and fearless seamen couriers. It may have been a bold play on the part of the Profintern to produce an international news magazine to rival *Time* magazine launched in the same year but, typically, the audiences for such periodicals were subscription-paying middle classes. Still, for Tan Malaka, even as his mental condition took a hit, he could use Profintern's money to print his own book in Guangzhou and to reprint it in Manila. Thanks to the generous support of the Filipino trade unionists and others, he could feed various articles into the Philippine press and likewise connect with the PKI through its journal *Api* to which he also contributed articles in Indonesia/Malay. But being bereft of the Profintern and virtually penniless, he still had half a career ahead

HISTORIOGRAPHY

of him (just as a tradition of Tan Malaka spy thriller novels began to appear in his native Sumatra).

On balance, then, how was the Profintern in Asia experiment in Guangzhou esteemed by Moscow? As Weiss sums up, the RILU must have regarded the 1924 Canton Conference as a major success.⁵⁴ The Conference adopted a resolution that had been prepared in Moscow and declared its commitment to open an office in Guangzhou. Yet the Canton Bureau was never established, at least not in the way it was envisaged, nor were the projected Interclubs in Manila, Hong Kong and Jakarta established as they had been in Europe and Vladivostok. Moreover, as alluded, *The Dawn* venture was more trouble than it was worth. Simply, in the face of reaction Guangzhou was not a ‘stable red centre in the East’ as Semaun and indeed the Comintern naively believed at this juncture. Practically as Semaun wrote, on 20 March 1926, Chiang Kai-shek launched his purge of communist elements from the Nationalist army in Guangzhou in an event known as the Zhongshan or March Twentieth Incident. Neutralising the Soviet mission, arresting members of the Guangzhou–Hong Kong Strike Committee, the

events signalled the end of the KMT–Soviet United Front (although the communists would fight back with their doomed uprising in December 1927 leading to mass executions). I would rather suggest that, for the Profintern, the Canton Conference was but an important first stage in the Pan-Pacific Revolutionary Trade Union movement leading to the establishment of the PPTUS in Hankow in May 1927. For Tan Malaka, the Profintern interlude in revolutionary Guangzhou was but a chapter in his life, and we are fortunate that he bequeathed a three-part autobiography written in prison in Java in 1948. Although his overall role in the Indonesian National Revolution (1945–1949) would become the subject of intense scrutiny on the part of Western scholars,⁵⁵ open discussion on his legacy was only sanctioned inside Indonesia in the wake of the New Order government of General Suharto (1968–1998).⁵⁶ What remains obscure, however, are events surrounding Malaka’s release from detention in September 1948 and subsequent assassination on 21 February 1949 by an Indonesian military unit at the moment he was leading guerrilla forces in armed struggle against advancing Dutch colonial forces.⁵⁷ 

NOTES

- 1 See Charles B. McLane, *Soviet Strategies in Southeast Asia. An Exploration of Eastern Policy Under Lenin and Stalin* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966), 34–35; Anna Belogurova, *The Nanyang Revolution: The Comintern and Chinese Networks in Southeast Asia, 1890–1957* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), chap.2; Tim Harper, *Underground Asia: Global Revolutionaries and the Assault on Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021), chap.1.
- 2 Ruth T. McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1965), 278–279.
- 3 Josephine Fowler, *Japanese and Chinese Immigrant Activists: Organizing in American and International Communist Movements, 1919–1933* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2007); Josephine Fowler, “From East to West and West to East: Ties of Solidarity in the Pan-Pacific Revolutionary Trade Union Movement, 1923–1934,” *International Labor and Working-Class History* 66 (2004): 111.
- 4 Fowler, “From East to West and West to East,” 102–106.
- 5 RGASPI. Ф. 495. ОИ. 154. Д. 202. 01.08.1923–31.12.1923.
- 6 Reiner Tosstorff, “Moscow Versus Amsterdam: Reflections on the History of the Profintern,” *Labour History Review* 68, no. 1 (2003): 79, <https://doi.org/10.3828/lhr.68.1.79>.
- 7 Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: Strijder Voor Indonesië’s Vrijheid: Levensloop van 1897 Tot 1945*, vol. 78 (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 259.
- 8 Poeze, *Tan Malaka: Strijder Voor Indonesië’s Vrijheid*, 259.
- 9 RGASPI. Ф. 495. ОИ. 154. Д. 233 23.06.1924–23.06.1924.
- 10 RGASPI. Ф. 495. ОИ. 154. Д. 233 23.06.1924–23.06.1924.
- 11 C. Martin Wilbur and Julie Lien-ying How, *Missionaries of Revolution: Soviet Advisers and Nationalist China, 1920–1927* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 107.
- 12 RGASPI. Ф. 495. ОИ. 154. Д. 233 23.06.1924–23.06.1924.
- 13 Cheah Boon Kheng, *From PKI to the Comintern, 1924–1941: The Apprenticeship of the Malayan Communist Party* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1992).

HISTORIOGRAFIA

- 14 Poeze, *Tan Malaka: Strijder Voor Indonesië's Vrijheid*, 593.
- 15 Poeze, *Tan Malaka: Strijder Voor Indonesië's Vrijheid*, 593; Harry A. Poeze, *Tan Malaka: Pergulatan Menuju Republik 1897–1925* (Jakarta: Grafiti, 1988), 316–317.
- 16 Tan Malaka, *Dari Penjara ke Penjara, Bagian Satu/Bagian Dua* (Jakarta: Teplok Press, 2000), 198–199.
- 17 RGASPI. Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 733. 01.01.1923–31.11.1923.
- 18 Poeze, *Tan Malaka: Strijder Voor Indonesië's Vrijheid*, 238–239.
- 19 Holger Weiss, *A Global Radical Waterfront: The International Propaganda Committee of Transport Workers and the International of Seamen and Harbour Workers, 1921–1937*, Studies in Global Social History Series, vol. 43 (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 48–49, 62.
- 20 RGASPI. Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 700. 01.05.1923–31.11.1923.
- 21 RGASPI. Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 700. 01.05.1923–30.11.1923.
- 22 Tosstorff, “Moscow Versus Amsterdam,” 79–87; Reiner Tosstorff, *The Red International of Labour Unions (RILU) 1920–1937*, trans. Ben Fowkes (Leiden: Brill, 2016).
- 23 RGASPI. Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 735. 01.01.1924–31.12.1924.
- 24 McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism*, 278.
- 25 Poeze, *Tan Malaka: Strijder Voor Indonesië's Vrijheid*, 271.
- 26 RGASPI. Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 736. 01.02.1924–30.11.1924.
- 27 Ming K. Chan, “Hong Kong in Sino-British Conflict: Mass Mobilization and the Crisis of Legitimacy, 1912–26,” in *Precarious Balance: Hong Kong Between China and Britain, 1842–1992*, ed. Ming K. Chan (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1994), 27–58.
- 28 Tan Malaka, *Naar de ‘Republiek Indonesia’* (Canton: n.p., 1925).
- 29 Geoffrey C. Gunn, *Tan Malaka's Naar de ‘Republiek Indonesia’: A Translation and Commentary* (Jakarta: Badak Merah Semesta, 2015; First published 1995 by Southeast Asia Research Center, Faculty of Economics, Nagasaki University), 1995: iii; 2015:3–4.
- 30 RGASPI. Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 736. 01.02.1924–30.11.1924.
- 31 Axel Madsen, *Mahraux: A Biography* (New York: Morrow, 1976).
- 32 Arquivo Histórico de Macau, Gabinete do Governo, 15, 1926–1928.
- 33 RGASPI. Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 739. 01.02.1925–30.09.1925.
- 34 Tan, *Dari Penjara ke Penjara*, 192–193.
- 35 Pierre Brocheux, *Ho Chi Minh: A Biography*, trans. Claire Duiker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 31.
- 36 RGASPI. Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 739. 01.02.1925–30.09.1925.
- 37 RGASPI. Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 739. 01.02.1925–30.09.1925.
- 38 RGASPI. Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 739. 01.02.1925–30.09.1925.
- 39 Poeze, *Tan Malaka: Strijder Voor Indonesië's Vrijheid*, 294.
- 40 Helen Jarvis, “Tan Malaka: Revolutionary or Renegade?,” *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 19, no. 1 (1987): 46, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14672715.1987.10409868>.
- 41 RGASPI. Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 594. 01.07.1923–31.12.1926.
- 42 RGASPI. Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 739. 01.02.1925–30.09.1925.
- 43 RGASPI. Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 739. 01.02.1925–30.09.1925.
- 44 Tan Malaka, *Naar de ‘Republiek Indonesia’* (Manila [Tokyo]: n.p., 1925).
- 45 Jarvis, “Tan Malaka,” 46.
- 46 Tan Malaka, *Menudju Republik Indonesia* (Jakarta: Yayasan Massa, 1962).
- 47 Gunn, *Tan Malaka's Naar de ‘Republiek Indonesia’*.
- 48 Geoffrey C. Gunn, *Ho Chi Minh in Hong Kong: Anti-Colonial Networks, Extradition and the Rule of Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 98–125.
- 49 RGASPI. Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 743. 01.01.1926–31.12.1926.
- 50 RGASPI. Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 740. 31.12.1925; 752. 30.11.1930.
- 51 RGASPI. Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 745. 01.01.1927–31.12.1927.
- 52 RGASPI. Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 745. 01.01.1927–31.12.1927.
- 53 RGASPI. Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 748. 01.02.1928–31.12.1928.
- 54 Weiss, *A Global Radical Waterfront*, 67.
- 55 See George McTurnan Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1952); Benedict Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution, Occupation and Resistance, 1944–1946* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1972).
- 56 See Yos Rizal Suriaji et al., *Tan Malaka. Forgotten Founding Father* (Jakarta: Tempo Publishing, 2013).
- 57 Gunn, *Tan Malaka's Naar de ‘Republiek Indonesia’*, 1995: 25.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Archival Sources

- Arquivo Histórico de Macau (AHM): Gabinete do Governo, 15, 1926–1928.
- Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (RGASPI) Ф. 495. Оп. 154. Д. 202. 01.08.1923–31.12.1923. Letters from the representatives of the Comintern and the Profintern.
233. 23.06.1924–23.06.1924. Information about the first conference of transport workers.
594. 01.07.1923–31.12.1926. Letter in English, 12

November 1924.

700. 01.05.1923–30.11.1923. Instructions and theses of the Eastern Department of the ECCI and Tan Malaka.
733. 01.01.1923–31.11.1923. Articles, references by Tan Malaka, H. Maring and other leaders.
735. 01.01.1924–31.12.1924. Reports, letters from the Dutch Bureau of the Communist Party of Indonesia to the Executive Committee.
736. 01.02.1924–30.11.1924. Report, letters from the members of the leadership of the Communist Party of

Indonesia to the Bureau. Letter to Comrade Petrov, 11 October 1924, Canton.
739. 01.02.1925–30.09.1925. Tan Malaka's letters from Canton to the Eastern Division.
740. 01.04.25–31.12.1925. References, information, letters from Semaun and other leaders.
743. 01.01.1926–31.12.1926. Letters from Semaun, Bergsma and other representatives of the Indonesian Communist Party.
745. 01.01.1927–31.12.1927. To the Indonesian Secretariat, Moscow, 7 January 1927. Reports, letters from representatives of the CP of Indonesia to the ECCI.
748. 01.02.1928–31.12.1928. Letter to the Eastern Department of the Comintern, Alimin, Muso, Darsono, Moscow, 7 June 1928 (in English). References, letters from Musso, Semaun, Tan Malaka, Alimin and others.
752. 01.03.30–30.11.1930. Letters from representatives of the Communist Party of Indonesia Alimin, Musso, Subagio.

Printed Sources

- Anderson, Benedict. *Java in a Time of Revolution, Occupation and Resistance, 1944-1946*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1972.
- Belogurova, Anna. *The Nanyang Revolution: The Comintern and Chinese Networks in Southeast Asia, 1890-1957*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019.
- Brocheux, Pierre. *Ho Chi Minh: A Biography*. Translated by Claire Duiker. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Carr, Edward H. *A History of Soviet Russia*. 14 vols. London: Macmillan, 1950–1978.
- Chan, Ming K. "Hong Kong in Sino-British Conflict: Mass Mobilization and the Crisis of Legitimacy, 1912–26." In *Precarious Balance: Hong Kong Between China and Britain, 1842-1992*, edited by Ming K. Chan, 27–58. New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1994.
- Cheah, Boon Kheng. *From PKI to the Comintern, 1924–1941: The Apprenticeship of the Malayan Communist Party*. New York: Cornell University Press, 1992.
- Fowler, Josephine. "From East to West and West to East: Ties of Solidarity in the Pan-Pacific Revolutionary Trade Union Movement, 1923–1934." *International Labor and Working-Class History* 66 (2004): 99–117. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27672960>.
- _____. *Japanese and Chinese Immigrant Activists: Organizing in American and International Communist Movements, 1919–1933*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2007.
- Gunn, Geoffrey C. *Ho Chi Minh in Hong Kong: Anti-Colonial Networks, Extradition and the Rule of Law*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.
- _____. *Tan Malaka's Naar de 'Republiek Indonesia': A Translation and Commentary*. Jakarta: Badak Merah Semesta, 2015. First published 1995 by Southeast Asia Research Center, Faculty of Economics, Nagasaki University.
- Harper, Tim. *Underground Asia: Global Revolutionaries and the Assault on Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021.
- Jarvis, Helen. "Tan Malaka: Revolutionary or Renegade?" *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 19, no. 1 (1987): 41–54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14672715.1987.10409868>.
- Kahin, George McTurnan. *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1952.
- Madsen, Axel. *Malraux: A Biography*. New York: Morrow, 1976.
- McLane, Charles B. *Soviet Strategies in Southeast Asia. An Exploration of Eastern Policy Under Lenin and Stalin*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966.
- McVey, Ruth T. *The Rise of Indonesian Communism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1965.
- Poeze, Harry A. *Tan Malaka: Pergulatan Menuju Republik 1897–1925*. Jakarta: Grafiti, 1988.
- _____. *Tan Malaka: Strijder Voor Indonesië's Vrijheid: Levensloop van 1897 Tot 1945*, vol. 78. Leiden: Brill, 1976.
- Suriaji, Yos Rizal et al. *Tan Malaka. Forgotten Founding Father*. Jakarta: Tempo Publishing, 2013.
- Tan, Malaka. *Dari Penjara ke Penjara, Bagian Satu/Bagian Dua*. Jakarta: Teplok Press, 2000.
- _____. *From Jail to Jail*. Translated and introduced by Helen Jarvis. Athens, OH: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1991.
- _____. *Menuju Republik Indonesia*. Jakarta: Yayasan Massa, 1962.
- _____. *Naar de 'Republiek Indonesia'*. Canton: n.p., 1925.
- _____. *Naar de 'Republiek Indonesia'*. Manila [Tokyo]: n.p., 1925.
- Tosstorff, Reiner. "Moscow Versus Amsterdam: Reflections on the History of the Profintern." *Labour History Review* 68, no. 1 (2003): 79–87. <https://doi.org/10.3828/lhr.68.1.79>.
- _____. *The Red International of Labour Unions (RILU) 1920–1937*. Translated by Ben Fowkes. Leiden: Brill, 2016.
- Victoria, Ferdinand Philip F. "Notes on Tan Malaka's Pan-Malayan Views in his Letter to Manuel Quezon." *Jurnal Sejarah* 3, no.1 (2020): 63–86.
- Weiss, Holger. *A Global Radical Waterfront: The International Propaganda Committee of Transport Workers and the International of Seamen and Harbour Workers, 1921–1937*. Studies in Global Social History Series, vol. 43. Leiden: Brill, 2021.
- Wilbur, C. Martin, and Julie Lien-ying How. *Missionaries of Revolution: Soviet Advisers and Nationalist China, 1920–1927*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989.