

# INDONESIAN NATION BUILDING DISCOURSES IN JAPANESE NEWSFILMS, 1942-1945

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## ABSTRACT

As an important chapter in Indonesia's modern history, Japanese occupation had profound impacts on every aspect of the nation's culture and society. It was at this time that Japan started to develop and manage Indonesian film industry which was crucial in providing the idealized and positive role models needed to strengthen and reaffirm Indonesian nationalism. Considering the importance of this industry, this paper aims to investigate how the concepts of nationalism and national characters unique to Indonesia are defined and reinforced in wartime newsreels used as social communication tools under Japanese imperial control. The method used in this study is discourse analysis to observe the ideological messages inside the newsreels important for nation building. The result of this study shows that the main elements in films of this period are systemically designed to construct narrative in line with Indonesia's nation building despite its nature as media of Japanese propaganda. Through the use of cinematic discourses, newsreels tend to visualize images of an emerging nation having successfully developed a sense of identity and national belonging. This analysis is further contextualized with the propaganda reports of the time to identify how the Japanese inspired nationalism is still embodied in modern texts.

## INTRODUCTION

During their occupation period in Indonesia, the Japanese empire used various media to spread ideological messages, ranging from posters, literary works, films, newspapers, and radio broadcasts. Among these media, films were considered as having more significant effects. Despite being vehicles of Japanese government propaganda, films mirror Indonesian national identity and the process of gaining it, which also becomes Japan's primary concern toward Indonesia, which is to help Indonesian realize their identity. Some studies suggest that Japanese

occupation has brought various changes in Indonesian society, including the awakening of Indonesian nationalistic spirit. Based on a report by Allied Forces issued in 1943, since the arrival of Japanese army, Indonesians in general gradually increased their racial consciousness and their participation in politics also enlarged.

Despite the significant role films played during the Japanese colonial period, little has been written about the cinema industry of its time (Deocampo, 2016, p. 24). Although few have discussed Japanese propaganda films in Indonesia, study on the cinematic language of the films has been

overlooked. In fact, an analysis on film narratives is an important tool to examine Indonesia's history as a nation. By identifying the textual and visual discourses on Indonesian nation founding that are present inside the Japanese newsreels, this article will explain how a sense of Indonesian national identity and nationalism was developed during the wartime, as well as how Indonesia arrives at the state of a nation. Therefore, this study aims to explore how newsreels serve as a negotiating space between Japanese imperial government and Indonesian government to propagate the concept of nationalism developed in war period and the construction of Indonesia as emerging nation seeking for its independence. This type of film was chosen for analysis because it can provide clear pictures of Indonesian history and to some extent documents the progress of the nation toward independence and aspiration for nation building. The questions about what becomes news in the first place, who appears in the news and becomes the source of information, as well as how the story is framed are important to discuss as well.

To be able to explain the discourses of nation founding in the newsreels, this article borrows the theory of propaganda newsreels and its link to nation building. It is always said that such media like news are official productions commissioned by state authorities to advance their nationhood messaging...that illuminate which historical and cultural elements the state wished to emphasize in its national construction (Laruelle, 2021) that can raise their patriotic feelings. The contents allow viewers to familiarize themselves with national history in a more playful way, and to identify more directly and personally with their own country (Laruelle, 2021). Japanese propaganda media in the colonized areas satisfy these characteristics as nation building projects because rather than overtly glorifying Japanese empire, it prioritizes the mobilization and moral

building of the colonies. As mentioned in previous study, propaganda for total war during WWII had to present society as a national community unified in purpose, identity, and desire (Workman, 2014). Despite the lighthearted stories and entertaining features, newsreels still address serious topics that affect the lives of the citizens (Althaus et al., 2018). Performing close readings on the narratives and visual elements of the newsreels will help to discuss the development of Indonesian nationalism and identity. The main discussion will be divided into three parts. The first section of this paper will describe how the concept of nation was given shape through films. In this section, some filmic discourses pertaining to the images of an independent nation are examined. The second section explains how discourse of nationalism becomes present in newsfilms. The discussion will mainly focus on the expectation of citizens to serve as national bodies. The last section illustrates how films still accompany progress to nationalism founding effort even when Japan's imperial power was no longer present in Indonesia. The discussion will help to fill some gaps in studies pertaining Japan's colonial efforts in Indonesia and how it would influence Indonesia's becoming an as independent nation-state. Although the period of occupation has ended, the impact on society remains and assists the development of national film.

### **NEWSFILMS REPRESENTING INDONESIA**

As mentioned by Hikari Hori, with the limited existence of primary records of historical events at that time, documentary filmmaking in wartime Japan reveals the complexity of an era most effectively (2018, p. 114). Therefore, nonfiction films like newsfilms can be used as documentaries or visual artefacts to identify sociocultural conditions as well as the ideology and policy of Japan domestically or abroad. This type of analytical study will benefit from Japan's active documentation and reporting of its military activities and the lives of the

people in its occupied areas, including Indonesia. One example of the films produced in Indonesia during Japanese occupation are a series of newsfilms named *Nanpo Hodo*. The newsfilms took place in various areas in Indonesia including Solo, Celebes, and Borneo, while the contents range from political to military reports. Through the films, Japanese military government attempted to spread messages that raised a nationalistic spirit of the people in Indonesia.

*Nanpo Hodo* was usually played as an opening to feature film in cinemas. The storylines were mainly more ceremonial and festive, for example celebrations and the marching of a voluntary army. This was to create stronger nuance about Japan's power in driving away the enemies of the West from Indonesia, rejuvenate Indonesian people, and at the same time to raise their nationalistic spirit. There is also one scene showing the figures of Western leaders; Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Charles van der Plas were burnt. The contents also feature speeches of key leaders representative of the struggle for independence, such as Soekarno and Oto Iskandardinata. Before the Japanese occupation, similar non-feature films had been made by the Dutch empire in Indonesia. The Dutch government established their film studio, *NV Nederlandsch Indische Film Maatschapij*, in Indonesia on April 17, 1925, to manage the production of documentary films about the Dutch East Indies for people in the Netherlands. By contrast, their film contents would present images about Indonesia's natural beauty and resources.

Based on historical records, *Nanpo Hodo* was initially named *Djawa Baroe* (New Java) and *Berita Djawa* (Java News) before it was officially changed in December 1943. There were five editions of *Nanpo Hodo* which were successfully restored and made available for the public by the Netherland Institute for Sound and Vision. The first one was *Nanpo Hodo* number 7 published September 1, 1943, showing

regular exercise and training of Japanese navy and army in the south. *Nanpo Hodo* number 20 published in January 1, 1944, features a speech given by Oto Iskandardinata to ignite the fighting spirit of Indonesian people, a parade of voluntary army of Indonesia led by Soekarno and Hatta, and the difficult physical labor of Indonesian youths when building a local military base. *Nanpo Hodo* number 26 published on November 17, 1944, features the fourth meeting session of *Chu ò Sangi In* (Central Advisory Council) in Jakarta, a Japanese Language competition, and the training session of *Heiho* in Celebes and South Borneo. *Nanpo Hodo* number 37 published on January 7, 1944 shows a traditional dance and soldier training at Surakarta Palace, farmers planting crops and cotton in vacant or unused lands, instructions and tutorials on how to plant cotton, and the distribution of *mujair* fish to every household for preventing malaria and adding nutritional foods, war simulation and training for villagers, and mock fight with knives. Finally, *Nanpo Hodo* number 43 published on July 1, 1945, showcases organizational meetings with Japanese leaders in Makassar, the crowning ceremony of the new *Susuhunan* (King) of Solo, and the construction of a dam coordinated by Japanese to irrigate paddy fields.

The main function of these newsfilms were to provide information about Indonesia for a local audience, but in some occasions the message might have been directed to a Japanese audience as well, as the news were narrated in both Indonesian and Japanese like in number 7 and 34. The style adopts rather the form of soft news feature because it puts forward narrations and quotations from people and often focuses prominently on the topics of human interests. Although it is not entirely clear whether these kind of newsfilms consciously contributed to the Indonesian independence movement, as Report to APM Audretsch quotes, the news department nevertheless forwarded progress and

materials towards the independence movement. The themes and choices of words were carefully selected to effectively propagate national consciousness and aspiration for independence. Therefore, discussing the contents of these newsfilms will be crucial to identify Japan's views toward Indonesia and the ideology that was disseminated to the people.

## METHOD

The study was done by analyzing cinematic discourse in the five episodes of *Nanpo Hodo*. Short films like newsreels can be academically studied as communication media because film scholars including Metz, describe film as *langage* or 'system' of possibilities with capacity of expression and communication (Tröhler, 2018, p. 41). Two main elements, speech or narration and image are commonly used for the analysis to find the ideological messages that the film try to communicate. To understand film as propaganda media, it is necessary to observe the language in practice, and in this context, the textual function of the words. It is also necessary to investigate how the narrative is carefully planned, and the choice made depends on both the communicative goal being pursued and the sociocultural values that are assumed to be shared with the audience (Fatihi, 2023, p. 41). In the development of politically motivated news as well, people make lexical and grammatical choices, both consciously and unconsciously, that reflect their ideology (Fatihi, 2023, p.45). One method to analyze the film language is by establishing codes which belong to certain means of expressions and classify each part of the film text based on particular code.

The second aspect to observe from film is its visual image. Observing film as a historical document, cultural data manifested in visual images to explain the sociocultural condition of the society can be identified. This data is also significant to differentiate certain layers of society that become the main focus of this nation building project. Thus, the film analysis also

includes categorizing the actors in newsfilms and counting their number of appearances. The last cinematic tool that needs to be studied is the type of shot. Not only to create visually pleasing images, but the way of using camera angles will provide cohesive narratives, show informative visual or intimate emotions, and surrogate the audience (Heiderich, 2021). The analysis will also involve why most of the visual reports were made using medium-shot scale.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Another name for the years 1942 to 1945 is *periode bersiap* or "preparation period" for independence. This period of history is highly valued for its significance because at this time people of Indonesia began to envision what kind of nation they want to achieve and the future of this emerging nation. This study argues that Japan was a driving force behind this advancement, having encouraged individuals to participate in the independence struggle by any means necessary and make sacrifices in order to support the country's founding. In order to mobilize as many layers of society as possible, Japan produced and distributed newsfilms which is considered to be effective for transmitting government messages to the people. This total mobilization of the whole community turned into an influential 'shaper' of nationalism.

### **The Fantasy of a Peaceful Construction of a Nation**

I will begin by discussing how, during a time of war and independence struggle, Japanese propaganda materials can contribute to fortifying a sense of national identity. One of the prominent objectives of Japanese propaganda is also to foster national consciousness and national identity. While Japan once aimed to introduce Japanese as the common language throughout Asia, they also encouraged Indonesians to speak their native language and preserve their cultural

identity. This also clarifies why films from that era tend to use standardized Indonesian language. Additionally, upon identifying the individuals who appear in the news, it is also the Indonesian common public, rather than Japanese, that are mostly featured in the news, and who become the subjects of propaganda. It is through watching newsfilms that Indonesian cultural heritage and identity are reinforced. Likewise, newsfilms construct national unity through the idea of being able to defeat an enemy or future threats.

Most of the narrations in newsfilms present discourses about the construction of a new independent state. According to Harvey, the relation between films and nation building is that the dialogues initiated through a film's spectatorship are emblematic of the formation of national identity (2018, p. 8). In most of the newsfilms, a slogan of *Hiduplah Indonesia!* Or 'Long live Indonesia!' can be heard, which imagines the country's greatness and power after achieving its independence. This discourse also publicly declares Japan's intention to liberate Indonesia from the Dutch and promote the new construction of an independent nation under its rule as a raising force in Asia. Some other expressive discourses on Indonesian independence are *kemenangan di pihak kita* or 'victory is in our side', *kemenangan yang gilang-gemilang* or 'glorious victory' and *musuh binasa* or 'our enemy perish' which are frequently chanted by the narrators or the key sources in the news. The natives of Indonesia are also reported to cheer for the triumphantly marching voluntary soldiers, members of organizations, independence movement leaders working toward Indonesian liberation, while their faces reflect gratitude and joy.



**Figure 1.** Pan-Asianism and Asian brotherhood  
Source: Nampo Hodo 26 (1944)

Still correlated to the discourse of nation building, Japan's move to Indonesia was also to expand their empire through Southeast Asia which is embodied in the principle of *Hakko Ichiu*. The film were made and shown to introduce the purpose of Greater East Asia as the foundation of unity in Asia. The principle of Asian unity is even more reinforced by the slogan of *Asia Bersatoe!* or 'Asia Unite!' that appears in most Nampo Hodo excerpts. This is what the newsfilms tried to promote to the audience about *hidup baru* or new life under the new order with Japan as the leader. Only at this point, Indonesian people began to be aware of their roles and responsibilities in maintaining the unity and peace throughout Asia. Likewise, news number 20 and 26 mention it as one of Indonesian national goals. Still in the same excerpts, this nation is developing Eastern culture and adopting some high-cultures from Japan.

The first two discourses of nation building above constitute the central ideology of pan-Asianism that Japan sought to establish. Utilizing the films, Japan tried to invoke feelings of racial unity in the hearts of all Indonesian. Unity makes an important element of national identity as it is the overarching identity, shared by people from different ethnic, linguistic and religious groups, like a layer or skin that covers or holds together their group identities (Grotenhuis, 2016). Thus some discourses in the extracts advocate racial consciousness, not only as Indonesian but also as parts of Asia in general. To give example, the speeches by Soekarno in

Nampo Hodo number 37 and 43 always reiterate the Indonesian audience as bangsa Asia or 'Asians' as well. Otto Iskandardinata in Nampo Hodo number 37 also asserts that *bangsa Asia diserang bangsa barat* or Asians were attacked by Western colonizers, so it is a true call for all Indonesians to work together with Japan and all other Asians to fight against Western oppression. So, as Sebastian Conrad has said, Japan's political and economic goal of creating Greater East Asia co-Prosperity Sphere's territorial expansion is accompanied by a rhetoric of Asian liberation and anti-imperialism (2014). Japan propagandists likewise in the newsfilms would say that the victory of Japan in the war was also for all Asians to restore peace and prosperity. In other words, the objective of the new order is the well-being of all races in Asia. This peaceful unification has binding power and makes a fundamental element of nationalism to gather all individuals in the archipelago into one single nation and at its broader scope, Asia.

Another common belief is that Japan's propaganda also puts forward the close relations or brotherhood between Japanese and Southeast Asians. The Japanese Empire had promised independence to Southeast Asian countries as future benefits of the so-promoted as 'cooperation' with Japan, and in order to win their trust, they address Indonesian people as brothers and sisters from the same race. In exchange of this, we can also see Indonesian people chorussing *banzai* and marching on the street to express their joy and cheer after being released from the Dutch colonialism by their 'old-brother' Japan. It also seems evident that Japan sought for complete Japanization of Indonesia. Stated in the propaganda policy for Indonesia, the natives should be trained to acquire Japan's spiritual values and bear the same burden. Furthering this indoctrination, framing discourse is in the narratives or in Soekarno's speech as reported in the Nampo Hodo that says the burden that the people of Indonesia bear

now will turn into weapons that will destroy the enemy and lead them to victory in the near future as the end result of their struggle. He also highlights that people are not accustomed to this difficulties and struggles, meaning that this spirit is new and people have only recently acquired it. And those who have acquired the spirit are seen to work relentlessly and perceive it as honor and pleasure. They even sang together *Mari bekerja!* or 'Let's work!' as they are marching along. The propaganda principle also instructs all Japanese to respect and not to challenge native cultures (Ishida, 2023). Encapsulated in this idea of a common bond is also Japan's strategy to reduce the likelihood of conflict arising from Indonesians and protect social order in the area.

### **The Projections of an Ideal Citizen**

The greatest emphasis of Japanese propaganda was also placed on national character development. For its domestic audience, Japan had already established good systems and standards of nation building campaign through national policy films. The issue of national film and its relation with national identity was brought into the concern of the Home Ministry of Japan who commenced the film national policy in 1938 as an instrument of control to encourage the production of healthy entertainment for people. From this period onward, all film studios were constrained to abide by national policies meant to boost Japanese national spirits. The same policies and practices of filmmaking were then used throughout the occupied countries including Indonesia for character-development training and cultural indoctrination. The process of building this character communalities is the result of an imagined construction through the media.

Using Stuart Hall's concept of identity, Sam Harman exerts that how this cinematic representation can be associated with character building is that it serves as a form of representation which is able to constitute *us* as new kinds of subjects, and thereby enable us to discover who *we are*

(2016). In accord with the Constitution of the Movement for the Total Mobilization of the People, propaganda was carried out for the betterment of the temperament of the people. So, the visual and narrative components function to depict righteous attitudes, behavior, and cultural values that can assist people in understanding the concept of new life and model of moral qualities as a modern nation. Modernity in this sense can simply be associated with the ability of the 'backward' society to acquire civilization, but also relate to the ability to adopt some vocational and life skills from Japan. For instance, a number of Nampo Hodo records feature ideal Indonesian citizens who know some basic knowledge and skills on military and defense, tool-making, disease prevention, personal hygiene, and food sustainability. Japan uses these news films to educate the public about the emerging citizenship movement that has started in a few Indonesian regions and calls the remaining to follow.



**Figure 2.** The image of a hardworking and obedient nation

Source: Nampo Hodo 20 (1944)

Another quality that the ideal citizen of the modern nation possesses is great obedience and loyalty. Propaganda materials, such as newsreels, were sent to every corner of Indonesia during the pivotal period of the country's independence movement in an effort to control people's attitudes and thoughts as well as fostering their trust toward authority. While reporting on events, the narrators give recommendations about expected actions in order to win the war and achieve independence and people follow the

instructions of the government officials respectively. Therefore, maintaining law and order is also referred to as *hidup baru* and emerging citizenship. From their behaviors as shown by the camera, we can observe that people appear receptive to Japanese type of education and the principles of new life. In several numbers of newsreels like Nampo Hodo number 20 and 37 depict various dramatic scenes about compliance and faith to the government. For instance is when Soekarno yells *Hancurkanlah musuh kita!* or 'Destroy our enemy!' and the crowd vigorously chants and repeats the words or when people were seen to follow the principles of new life like people in Surakarta as presented in Nampo Hodo number 37. People are seen training themselves for the war, planting trees as food source and clothing, and practicing constant hygiene. As stated in numerous propaganda-related documents, Japan sought to forge a solid partnership with Indonesia and turn them into a dependable ally. Hence, trust and obedience became fundamental themes for their propaganda materials. Soekarno in his speech as featured in Nampo Hodo number 26 put forward the statement that Indonesia should stand together with Japan in this war.

Japanese wartime newsreels are unique because rather than the main events, they are more interested in featuring the actions of everyday people in the news. In order to function effectively as instrument of nation building project, newsfilms should also model ideal citizens. Most of verbs are in active forms to describe actions performed by the actors, such as *melatih diri* or 'train themselves', *berjuang* or 'fight', and *menyerang* or 'attack'. Not only to make the message easy to comprehend by Indonesians, but more straightforward manner of using the verb will result in more immediate actions as well. Using medium shot techniques, more exposures will be given to the characters and their behaviors. As the narrators mention, strong and resilient people are a

fundamental component of a powerful nation. The rapid progression of the war in Indonesia had caused suffering for the people, but it should not break their will to fight. The news films consistently convey that as their primary message. Instead they should partake in the struggle until the final victory is achieved. Speaking for the purpose of propaganda, both Soekarno and Otto Iskandardinata had always called for sacrifice to protect our motherland at all cost. And along with this spirit is people's unity. Their national unity is what makes them stronger and enables them to drive the enemy out. From the willingness to participate in the national construction of Indonesia, they gradually cultivate our patriotism. Nanpo Hodo number 20 which features speech from Otto Iskandardinata appeals to our patriotic spirit to fight until our last breath to defend the nation.

As discussed previously, emerging citizenship is also characterized by modernity. Modernity as expressed in the discourse can be very much associated with high moral principles. Japan sees its culture as superior among other countries in Asia and that they carry a task to build national character of the barbaric Asian brothers. Reflecting on the situation in Indonesia, Soekarno in his speech always conveys that "Western imperialism had destroyed *our* culture and weakened it". Under Dutch colonialism, access to education was restricted to upper-class elites, while great number of people remained uneducated, illiterate, and lacking in culture, so they are susceptible to negative traits. And as the films show, the worst negative trait that could destroy the nation is pursuit of own happiness. The situation gradually changed when people began to obtain education from Japan. As part of nation building project, film can serve as powerful weapon against the immoralities (Willems et al., 2021). Therefore, at that era film directors were forbidden to insert scenes showing materialistic behaviors. Individuals are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the ideal citizen's precepts,

and attitudes that are contrary to these will be considered as uncivilized behaviors. Thus Pane as one of Indonesian artists once said that "Japan would enhance *our* culture once again and help *us* return to *our* Eastern culture".

### **The Continuation of a Legacy**

While the era of 1950s is frequently cited as crucial for the flourishing of Indonesian nation building, as far as some studies are concerned, its strong foundation had been laid during the era preceding it. For instance, Alexander Vincent Beck in his study writes that anti-Western and nationalistic attitudes intensified during Japanese occupation which in the process helped unify Indonesians in their commitments to independence (2015). And towards the end of the occupation, Japan still contributed greatly in cementing the pillars to our national ideology. Based on the news footage number 26, it was in *Chuo Sangi In* meeting when the people were firstly introduced to Panca Dharma or the five pillars that served as our national directives; (1) defend justice and truth together with all other members of the Greater East Asia, (2) establish as member of the Greater East Asia co Prosperity Sphere, an independent, prosperous, united, sovereign and just Indonesian nation who paid respect to Japan, (3) maintain and enhance civilization and culture, (4) serve the country and nation with faith to God, (5) strive to build everlasting world peace based on the principle of Hakoo Ichiu (Nanpo Hodo 26) which later became the source of inspiration for our true national identity and ideology, Pancasila, that was declared concurrently with the proclamation of independence and accepted as our national guidelines. According to a report for PM Audretsch, nation founding had been given the most importance, as envisioned in a historical document, higher propaganda scheme was directed at racial spirit and independence movement.



**Fig. 3.** *Gotong royong* or cooperative work in Indonesia

Source: Nampo Hodo 7 (1943)

Not only in the domestic but also in many other occupied areas, another legacy left from the occupation history is the culmination of patriotic spirit and at some points, ultranationalism. The main propaganda shall be exercised to educate the people over the true significance of the war. This is predicated on propaganda policy that Indonesian people should be guided by the military government toward a complete understanding of the true meaning of the Greater East Asia war written in Principles Governing the Military Administration of Java 1943. Both commentaries and speeches in Nampo Hodo recalled it as a holy war intended for colonial liberation, highlighting the true meaning and significance of the war for Indonesians. Therefore, as the consequence of their aspirations for independent nation state, going to the war became inevitable and it calls for their total sacrifice. While our goals are to eradicate all forms of colonial power, build everlasting peace, and contribute to the welfare of all mankind, which make the ideals of the founding of our nation. When it became a challenging task for Indonesian and Japanese government, film could provide easy access to better understanding of the war and independence. Yasuda in his article for *Eiga Hyoron* 1944 wrote that it was difficult for the natives to understand the significance of the war, but through films, they could grasp the spirit correctly. However, independence will not be achieved without our conscience and commitments of all Indonesians. The

newsfilms also emphasize how people always work together or help each other to finish work, which illustrates a culture of *gotong royong* or cooperative work.

Two months after Indonesia declared its independence, on October 6, 1945, the Nippon Eigasha studio was officially turned over to the Indonesian government. Not only the film studio that was inherited from this period, but also the spirit of nationalism. Having learned from his experience in the former Japanese studio, Raden Mas Soetarto continued the same ideological tenets taken from Japan to produce national news which now under different name, *Berita Film Indonesia* or Indonesian Newsfilms. Usmar Ismail, the founding father of Indonesian film, asserted that Japanese intervention impacted the understanding of the function of film, which later became very useful to develop national film during the independence era. Put differently, Japan provided people the media infrastructure to envision their identity and aspirations. In post-colonial era too, integrity and identity are also maintained in Indonesian national broadcasting company. To give example, LPP TVRI strives to provide information for the public interest, be neutral, independent, and non-commercial (Pakpahan, 2023).

## CONCLUSION

People are formed through, in and after nationalism; those that make up the people are products, symbols, and models for national identity (Harvey, 2018, p. 8). Both linguistic and visual discourses in newsfilms circulating during the Japanese occupation represent the models and ideals of nation founding. Modernity, obedience, loyalty, sense of belonging, and patriotism are the attributes that should be actively performed to form Indonesia's national characters and nation founding. Looking at the newsfilms as war-period documentary will provide us with description of how nationalism had been internalized in the heart of every individual in Indonesia and how this movement had grown from village

to village. So as the study suggests, identity is not passively inherited but actively obtained and performed by every individual which can help to grow their consciousness and sense of belongings toward a nation. And media like newsreels were needed in that period to communicate with Indonesian people and provide examples of Indonesian citizenry. What can be learned from this study is that popular media can be effective to spread messages to the citizens of the whole country to remind themselves about their identity and to unite as a solid nation amidst conflicts that prone to happen nowadays.

Japanese occupation period also has a predominant place within Indonesian historical trajectory in cultivating their nationalism. Given some guidance from Japan, people of Indonesia develop their sense of belonging to the country and gradually gain their modernity. Despite the nature of propaganda and being produced using Japanese ideology, the newsfilms appeal to Indonesian nationalism, but is still Japanese inspired. The peak is when Soekarno announced Pancasila in replacement to Panca Dharma which he had mentioned initially at Chuo Sangi In meeting. Both function as the guidelines to the nation, but the later one is in some sense more Indonesian as it does not have any influence from Japan in its formulation. In sum, the year 1942 to 1945 saw notable development in nationalistic principles and this process was energized by Japanese propaganda media. If we connect this study to postmodern society, this study shows that popular media can effectively disseminate messages to the nation's citizens, encouraging them to remember who they are and to stand together as a strong nation in the face of the frequent conflicts that occur in today's society.

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