

The Nationalism of *Giyugun* Officers in South Sumatra

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Abstract—This article examined the role of *Giyugun* officers in maintaining Indonesia's independence. In this discussion, the focus was on the South Sumatra region which was the basis of the *Giyugun* training, or voluntary army formed by the Japanese military administration in Southern Sumatra. It is interesting to study this period for the first time Sumatran youth had the opportunity to get military training from Japan. Initially, in 1943, Sumatran *Giyugun* was formed by Japan to help fight against the Allied forces. The military training provided by Japan was used by young people to learn war strategies, how to use weapons and various other military skills. The nationalism of the *Giyugun* officers was very high even though they were trained by the Japanese military. The expertise gained by the *Giyugun* soldiers later in the independence period was used to defend Indonesia's independence.

Keywords: *Giyugun*, Japanese military administration, nationalism

I. INTRODUCTION

On August 17, 1945, Indonesia became an independent country proclaimed by Soekarno Hatta. After Indonesia declared itself to be an independent country, Indonesia was not necessarily free from various threats from other countries. The struggle of the Indonesian people to continue to maintain independence continued to be sought. Indonesia, which at that time was a country that had just been born, did not yet have a mature military force, but at that time Indonesia was determined to continue to defend the independence from various threats that came. In Palembang, efforts to maintain independence were spearheaded by former *Giyugun* officers. These former *Giyugun* officers were selected young men who had received military training from Japan. An unprecedented thing for the Sumatran youth in the form of military training specifically. Unlike the areas outside of Sumatra which had received military training in the Dutch colonial period. Areas such as Java, Manado, Madura, Bugis, Timor, Ambon and others during the Dutch colonial period received professional military training through the KNIL, while in Sumatra there was no professional military training such as outside Sumatra. It was only in this period that the Sumatran youth had the opportunity to obtain professional military education through *Giyugun*.

The period of Japanese occupation in Indonesia in terms of the military had an impact on military development. Military training and skills provided by Japan aimed to provide confidence and pride in being Asian. The main purpose of training and education in the military field was to anticipate enemy attacks and win the war. But in fact, the formation of a reserve army formed by Japan had a wider impact than the initial purpose of its formation. The training

then produced a military elite that backfired Japan's position in Indonesia [9].

Japanese imperialism began after the outbreak of the Pacific war in 1941. The Pacific War began with the invasion of the Japanese military to the American military fleet based in Pearl Harbor. To support Japan's goals in World War, various Japanese government policies were carried out. After colonizing areas in Asia, Japan continued to carry out attacks and control over areas that had wealth, mainly in the form of oil mines and plantation areas [8]. The Dutch East Indies was one of the destinations of Japanese imperialism. The focus of the Japanese military target was the area in the Dutch East Indies which has a wealth of oil mines, namely Kalimantan and Sumatra. Japan aimed to find, capture and control natural resources that could support the war. The need for Japan's war was a resource that is mostly produced by regions in Sumatra, namely oil, coal, tin and rubber.

Strategic areas in the Dutch East Indies began to be occupied by Japan in early 1942. After controlling strategic areas in Kalimantan, Japanese military forces continued their attacks on Sumatra. After occupying Singapore the next day on February 16, 1942, Japan succeeded in occupying Palembang. Palembang is the area that became the second target after Kalimantan in Japan's war strategy in East Asia. Palembang was targeted in the conquest of the Japanese military forces because it was the center of the largest oil refinery in the Dutch East Indies located in the Plaju and Sungai Gerong areas. The importance of oil at that time was useful as the main fuel for Japanese war equipment [1].

The strategy made by Japan in conquering areas in the Dutch East Indies was carried out by occupying areas around Java first. In the early 1942 regions outside Java, such as Kalimantan, Sumatra and Ambon, were successfully controlled by Japan. So that it was not difficult for Japanese military forces to make Dutch military forces retreat. Then on March 8, 1942, Japan succeeded in making the Dutch surrender unconditionally. The beginning of Japanese rule began with the signing of the Kalijati Agreement [4].

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This research method uses literature studies. The sources used are sources that are relevant and contain historical facts. The sources used are the sources of the books obtained from the Sriwijaya Kodam II Library, the South Sumatra Regional Library, the Al-Watsiyah Private Library and the Yogyakarta State University Library. The data obtained are then analyzed through the Historical Method and then historiography.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After successfully occupying the area of the former Dutch colonial rule, the Japanese military government divided the occupied territories into 3 command regions. The first command area was Java and Madura, the second command area was Sumatra which was controlled, and it is center in Singapore. The third command area was Eastern Indonesia [7]. For the Sumatra region, the Japanese military government formed ten residences. Each residence was led by a Japanese military leader. For the Southern Sumatra region, it was under the military command of Colonel Matsuki who led 4 army divisions [3].

After successfully occupying various regions, the next strategy carried out by the Japanese military government was by holding military training to support Japan in the war against allies. The army to be made by Japan is included in the master plan (Tairikhushi) issued by Supreme Army Headquarters in Tokyo. In early 1943, Japanese military forces suffered a setback. Japan's position in the occupied area experienced various threats. So that the plan for the formation of a reserve army cannot be delayed anymore. Japan then recruited military and semi-military personnel who were indigenous people who would help Japan in the war against allies [8].

Japan then recruited thousands of indigenous youth to become semi-military soldiers. The first military force was formed, *heiho* (auxiliary soldier), which began in mid-May 1943. The young man who was a member of *Heiho* was a single young man from the ages of 16 to 20 years. Another Japanese military army formation project is *Giyugun* which means, *giyu* = voluntary, *gun* = army corps. *Giyugun* is a Voluntary Army Corps. In Java, the term used is Defender of the Motherland (PETA). *Giyugun* in Sumatra and PETA in Java, although they are the same military command but have no organizational links at all. In some residencies in Sumatra almost had their military training centre [9].

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A. Formation of Sumatran Giyugun

Headquarters in Tokyo. In charge of the *Giyugun* program, General Inada Masazumi was the deputy head of the staff of the Japanese military forces. For the Sumatran residential area, the person responsible for this program was the Commander of the 25th Army, General Moritake Tanabe. The following are the military command and the *Giyugun* Sumatra training centre (renseitai):

TABLE I. MILITARY COMMAND AND THE *GIYUGUN* SUMATERA TRAINING CENTER

Residential Area	Military Unit	Training Center
Aceh	Second Division Kono-e (Miya)	Kutaraja (1943)
East Sumatra (Medan and Tapanuli)	25th Army Mixed Brigade	Medan (1943) Sibolga (1943)
Central Sumatra (West Sumatra, Riau, and Kerinci)	4th division (Yodo) and the 25th Army Headquarters	Padang (1943) Bukit Tinggi (1944)
South Sumatra (Palembang, Jambi, Lampung, and Bangka Belitung)	26th Army Mixed Brigade	Lahat (1943) Karang Endah and Palembang (1944)

The formation of the Sumatran *Giyugun* was announced through the *Shimbun* newspaper with the aim that all indigenous people know the news [2]. News about the admission of prospective *Giyugun* members received a good response by the people of South Sumatra. The youth then joined to register to become prospective members of *Giyugun*. The interest of the youth of South Sumatra towards the acceptance of the candidates for *Giyugun* members was due to the suggestion from Wedana Muara Enim Abdul Rozak and Bay Salim who were community leaders in Lahat. This figure encouraged to take part in the selection of candidates for *Giyugun* members because they believed that Indonesia would be independent so that it persistently encouraged the youth to become members of *Giyugun* [6].

In South Sumatra, *Giyugun* training was in three places, namely; Pagaralam, Karang Dalo, and Palembang (capital of South Sumatra). The training center was founded by the Mixed Brigade based in Lahat. This *Giyugun* member was a member from five residencies in Southern Sumatra, namely; Palembang, Bengkulu, Jambi, Lampung and Bangka Belitung. This *Giyugun* training center has a different training program. For training in Pagaralam, prospective members who were accepted were educated to strengthen the army infantry. As for training at the Karang Dalo and Palembang training center as flight training and Intelligence [9].

The *Giyugun* training center in South Sumatra was in the Pagaram area about 300 KM from the center of Palembang. Pagaram was chosen because geographically it is a cool and fertile area under the foot of Mount Dempo and has adequate food availability. Besides, the Pagaram area was difficult to reach by the enemy, so it is very suitable to become the center of military education in *Giyugun*. In Pagaram, the *Giyugun* were trained together at the elementary level. The military duties provided consisted of several military fields such as; defense on the coast, air defense, transportation, health and intelligence. Of the total military duty given in principle having an infantry duty as an army unit [5].

The announcement of the prospective *Giyugun* member admission through the newspaper was welcomed by the youth. The youth were interested in becoming members of *Giyugun* in preparation for the formation of an army unit when Indonesia became an independent country later. The members who registered to become members of *Giyugun* must take various tests given by Japanese soldiers. Tests were given in the form of physical tests, health and general knowledge. The conditions given by Japan in screening young people who will join as members of *Giyugun* were quite high. The conditions given by Japan were that they completed Sekolah Rakyat (elementary school), a child from *pesirah* or even the *pesirah* itself. Besides, some young people from outside the region work as teachers, civil servant, or employees who work in oil mining in Plaju and Sungai Gerong [8].

The members who were accepted were educated in the first deployment at the basic level. All candidates received were given the Jotohei (main soldier) award. In the training, the candidates were observed, regarding the ability to lead, proficiency in military training and so on. Based on these observations, the position of the subordinate and the officer becomes determined. Furthermore, to become an officer, it must take vocational training which continuation of basic training [4].

B. Instilling Nationalism On Giyugun Officer

The *Giyugun* training process that took place very shortly because of war conditions. So the need for auxiliaries in the war against the Allies was very urgent. Japanese feared of a sudden attack from allies made military training very hard. Physical exercise in the field was performed regularly. For three months the members were armed with knowledge about war tactics ranging from platoon and company, defence theory, troop changes, the introduction of various weapons, shooting exercises and how the army worked. *Giyugun* officers who had been trained were then assigned along with the coastline and inland areas. With the training to become a member of *Giyugun*, this makes it an opportunity for Sumatran youth to get military training. Practically during the previous period, the Sumatran indigenous people did not receive professional military training as provided by the Dutch Colonial Government on Java, Ambon, Sulawesi and others outside from Sumatra.

The opportunity given to obtain military training was certainly well utilized by young Sumatran people, especially in the area of South Sumatra. *Giyugun* members who were trained by the Japanese with high discipline which affected their character and formed a character called military

weltanschauung. This character can be defined as a summary of the live view of the military. Some important characters that must be possessed are courage, discipline, and coercive action which is a control action against violence, protection, professionalism and exclusivism.

The most important thing that Indonesian youth received during the training to become a *Giyugun* officer was not only physical but also mental training that was forged. *Giyugun* officers were educated with the high discipline to become a brave soldier. The value implanted is the bushido tradition, which means "path of warriors", this tradition is a code of ethics for the Japanese samurai who has the courage and willingness to associate with the country. This is the same as bushido which is held for *Giyugun* members. Values that are grown are brave attitude, not easy to give up, obedience and feeling of love for the country or nationalism [9]. In the end, a *Giyugun* warrior must be prepared not to be killed at any time and vice versa. The training required awareness, quick action, and ready to combat. With various standards, the *Giyugun* officers equipped with various skills using weapons.

The inculcation of the value of nationalism for the *Giyugun* members also became the attention of various figures in Sumatra. The *Giyugun* members who received military training from Japan gained a military outlook on life that was Japanese-style. This raised concerns from nationalist figures. To instill the values of nationalism in the *Giyugun* members' various figures in Sumatra contribute to various *Giyugun* activities. Luckily the Japanese military government at that time permitted nationalist figures to participate in selecting *Giyugun* candidates and could visit the *Giyugun* members in barracks regularly. One nationalist figure, Chatib Soelaeman, in his opportunity to visit military barracks secretly also instilled the values of nationalism and patriotism in every *Giyugun* officer candidate. Chatib Soelaeman since the first generation of prospective *Giyugun* members to receive values obtained from Japan critically. In the selection process for the *Giyugun* candidates, a sense of love for the Indonesian homeland has been instilled. These young men who want to participate in Japanese military training must aim to prepare themselves for the independence that has been lost for Indonesia. Efforts to instil a sense of love for the motherland are also done through a song created by Chatib Soelaeman composed by M. Joenoes Kotjek in 1943. The song has an element of awakening a sense of nationalism in the Indonesian people

GIYUGUN LASKAR RAKYAT

*In ancient times the blood of knights
Never flow destroys enemies
Thousands of young people lost their lives
So that the country does not collapse
Refrein: Giyugun Laskar Rakyat
Homeland Warriors
Willing always with blood and lives
Destroy enemies until they are liquid
The final victory is definitely on our side
In bitter dark times the experience
Locked knight's blood was pressed
Each overflowing cruel oppression
History sad do not repeat it
The Age of Daitoa changes everything
Asian nations shoulder to shoulder
We struggle, meeting brothers,
Prosperous*

After undergoing the education process that was taken for three months the candidates for *Giyugun* officers were appointed by the Japanese military based in Lahat. The inauguration of the *Giyugun* officers was welcomed by the public. The families of the *Giyugun* members were invited directly by the Japanese and the inauguration ceremony was witnessed directly by the general public. *Giyugun* members were appointed members of the Japanese military officer, the Japanese soldiers then paid homage to the appointed *Giyugun* officers [2].

The inauguration day of the *Giyugun* members received a rousing welcome from the community. The *Giyugun* members inaugurated wore almost the same clothes as the Japanese soldiers. This joy was conveyed by the Resident at that time as an expression of pride in the inauguration of the members of *Giyugun*. The existence of this indigenous military army is a new thing for the people of Sumatra because previously the Sumatran people were not touched by professional military training and the like. After being appointed by the *Giyugun* members, they were dispatched to various regions with their respective field assignment.

After being appointed as a member of *Giyugun*, the military rank is given gradually. The stages of the ranks of the *Giyugun* officers began from corporal, the second sergeant then became sergeant one. Furthermore, the level of *Giyugun* rank is given based on the ability of the officers. Ranks obtained were Soi (Second Lieutenant), Cui (First Lieutenant), Jun-i (Lieutenant Assistant), Soco (Sergeant Major), Gunso (Sergeant), Heicho (Corporal), Joto Hei (Chief Warrior), Itto Hei (Warrior One), or Nitto Hei (Warrior Two). Military education provided by Japan to Sumatran youth provides many benefits, the youth who take part in the training can fight, the ability to use weapons and other military capabilities. Then before the destruction of the Japanese defence, the *Giyugun* officers were placed in military units and received Japanese administrative education.

When Japan suffered defeat in World War II and Indonesia proclaimed Independence did not necessarily make the former *Giyugun* officers lose their role. The young people who have been equipped with abilities in the military field not only have a strong military spirit but also a great love for the country. During education, the soldiers were prepared to become soldiers who could protect the sovereignty of the Indonesian nation. When Indonesia's new independence attack came from outside trying to threaten the sovereignty of the nation and state. The former *Giyugun* officers play an important role in maintaining the sovereignty of the Indonesian nation. Many of these former *Giyugun* officers became leaders of the People's Security Agency. Excellent military capability is needed at that time, these former *Giyugun* officers became important figures in various wars in various regions including in South Sumatra.

After Indonesia's independence, the People's Security Agency was officially formed on August 23, 1945. Information regarding the formation of the People's Security Agency did not easily spread throughout Indonesia. Several areas do not know this information, including in Palembang. In Palembang, the security agency was formed on the initiative of *Giyugun* officers, Heiho, and community leaders under the name of the People's Security Guard Agency

(BPKR). The *Giyugun* officers who were skilled personnel in the military field played a significant role in spearheading military activities. Expertise in the field of weaponry and combat techniques was needed by the Indonesian people at that time as a newly independent country and did not yet have an army. *Giyugun* officers who spearheaded various military activities in Palembang at the time were Dani Effendi, Bambang Utoyo, Rasyad Nawawi, Hasan Kasim and P. Hutagalung.

The role of former *Giyugun* officers can also be seen in the formation of the People's Security Army (TKR) in Sumatra. On October 14, 1945, a meeting was held in Pagaralam to discuss the formation of the TKR. The meeting in the context of forming the TKR was attended by twenty-five former *Giyugun* officers. From this meeting the following results were obtained: (1) establishing Prince Emir Muhammad Noor as commander in chief with the rank of Major General and also concurrently as head of the Lampung division, (2) establishing Muhammad Nuh as chief of staff with the rank of colonel, (3) establishing Hasan Kasim as The Palembang Division Commander Ilir and Bangka Belitung, (4) appointed Malauddin Simbolon as the Palembang Ulu Division Commander with the rank of colonel, (5) appointed Abujani as Commander of the Jambi division with the rank of Colonel.

Two years after the independence of the Indonesian people were faced with an attack from the Dutch who wanted to regain control of their former colonies. Efforts to maintain sovereignty continue to be carried out by the government and the people through negotiations or war. In military aggression 1 and military aggression 2 in Sumatra, the *Giyugun* officers took an important role as leaders of the troops. In Palembang, the peak of the war against the Netherlands occurred in the five days and five nights of war which began on January 1 to January 5, 1947. The *Giyugun* officers who were at the time were Hasan Kasim, M. Simbolon, Bambang Utoyo, Makmun Murod, Harun Sohar, Alamsyah Ratu Prawiranegara, Animan Achyat and Dani Effendi.

IV. CONCLUSION

The role of the *Giyugun* officers in Palembang since the beginning of independence gave an important meaning to the Indonesian people. *Giyugun* members who received military training from Japan did not necessarily lose their identity as Indonesian people. Efforts to instill nationalism continued by various nationalist figures in Sumatra. Officers who received military training by Japan in the previous period contributed to the development of the military world in Indonesia in the early days of independence. Completion of the military organization in Indonesia is inseparable from the role of *Giyugun* officers with their involvement in the People's Security Agency, the People's Security Army Republic Indonesia army until the formation of the Indonesian National Army (TNI). Nationalism which is owned by the members of the *Giyugun* gives the enthusiasm to take a role in maintaining national independence. Loyalty for the state-owned is an asset owned by the Indonesian people.

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