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| **Kartodikromo, Mas Marco (1890-1932)** |
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| Mas Marco Kartodikromo (Cepu, Java, 1890 – Boven Digul, Indonesia, 1932) was a prominent writer and activist in the early days of the nationalist movement in the Dutch East Indies. Born and raised in a colonial environment, he presented himself as the mouthpiece of the common Javanese, loudly and emphatically inviting readers of every nation and race, including Dutch administrators, to engage in discussions about inequalities and injustices on the island of Java, caught in the process of colonial modernization. He was the editor of various short-lived newspapers in central Java; working with the slogan *sama rata sama rasa* (‘equal standards, equal emotions’), his writings and speeches challenged the competence of the colonial authorities as well as the sagacity of the Javanese aristocracy. |
| Mas Marco Kartodikromo (Cepu, Java, 1890 – Boven Digul, Indonesia, 1932) was a prominent writer and activist in the early days of the nationalist movement in the Dutch East Indies. Born and raised in a colonial environment, he presented himself as the mouthpiece of the common Javanese, loudly and emphatically inviting readers of every nation and race, including Dutch administrators, to engage in discussions about inequalities and injustices on the island of Java, caught in the process of colonial modernization. He was the editor of various short-lived newspapers in central Java; working with the slogan *sama rata sama rasa* (‘equal standards, equal emotions’), his writings and speeches challenged the competence of the colonial authorities as well as the sagacity of the Javanese aristocracy. Mas Marco considered himself a warrior, *ksatria*, who by definition, gives expression to what is true, willing to sacrifice himself, ‘bone and marrow’, for the good of the world of Java: ‘brave in the true, afraid in the wrong’. His journalistic work Mas Marco combined with novels and poetry of which only parts have been preserved; trying to operate in three languages at once—Javanese, Dutch, and Malay—he experimented with a novel kind of Malay which still echoes in the vernaculars of the cities of Java and is still as vibrant and fluid as the anger and wonder it expresses. His vibrant stammer—manifestation of an as yet unknown language—was hard to emulate, and before long it drowned in the welter of Malay voices that spread over the Dutch Indies in the wake of the ‘movement’ and ‘motion’ it helped to create.  Mas Marco’s actions and writings made him suspicious in the eyes and ears of the colonial authorities: he spent several periods of time in jail, first accused of sowing hatred and later of having communist sympathies. He died in the prison camp of Boven Digul, his work forgotten, his name silenced by the next generation of Indonesian nationalists. Fragments of his publications did not resurface in new editions until the fall of the Suharto regime, seventy years after his death.  Conceptually as well as linguistically, *Student Hidjo* (*Student Green*, 1919) is Mas Marco Kartodikromo’s literary masterpiece. Written in prison and composed with numerous references to Dutch and Javanese phrases and words, *Student Green* was first published as a serial in one of his own Malay newspapers. It is the fragmentary tale of a well-educated Javanese man, Green, who travels to Holland, has a love affair with a Dutch woman in the country of the oppressors, tries to study and visits the opera, and then decides to return to Java where he marries a Javanese woman and takes up work in the colonial system, working together with Dutch colleagues who make as little sense of ‘Java’ as he does of ‘Holland’. List of Works *Mata Gelap* (Bandung: Insulinde, 1914)  *Sair Sair Rempah* (Semarang: Sinar Djawa, 1918)  *Student Hidjo* (Semarang: Masman and Stroink, 1919)  *Tjermin Boieah Kerojalan* (1924). |
| Further reading:  (Maier)  (Siegel) |