CHAPTER ONE

The Party’s Infancy: Its Political Genesis and Historical Lineage

The history of the men and organisations behind the creation of Masyumi in November 1945 is clearly marked by a dialectical movement inherent in Indonesian Islam. This dynamic oscillated for four decades between a tendency to assert the different sensibilities which existed within it and a necessity for these different strands to unify. From the opening years of the 20th century, the desire amongst Indonesia’s Islamic modernists to establish organisational structures which would enable them to exist on the political landscape contained the seeds of their split from the country’s traditionalist Muslims. These “pioneers of traditionalism”,¹ in response to the initiatives undertaken by modernists and in an attempt to defend the values which they considered to be under threat from the reformist zeal of Muhammadiyah and Sakerat Islam, set up their own movement in 1926: Nahdlatul Ulama. The two branches of Islam also experienced periods of unity, however, between 1937 and 1943 with the Supreme Islamic Council of Indonesia (Madjelis Islam Ala Indonesia, MIAI) and later from 1945 to 1952 with Masyumi.

The extent of the Muslim community’s contribution to Indonesian politics and society cannot be reduced, however, to the polar opposites of traditionalism and modernism. In the 1920s, for example,

¹ To use the expression employed by Andrée Feillard in Islam et armée dans l’Indonésie contemporaine: Les pionniers de la tradition (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1995).
a movement began to emerge which, while not rejecting Islam, wished to limit it to the sphere of people’s private lives. This nationalist secular current entered the political scene in 1927 with the creation of Sukarno’s Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI). The grassroots of this new party were sociologically very close to the supporters of modernism—they had often attended the same Dutch schools and knew each other from their participation in certain organisations together—and indeed the PNI provided serious competition to Muslim parties and organisations for public support. Finally, it should be noted that within the modernist movement certain cracks had begun to appear which resulted as much from the clash of ambitious personalities as from differences of opinion concerning political strategy (there was a constant debate in particular concerning the attitude to be adopted towards the Dutch colonists). These cracks led to several schisms within the movement, and this break-up of the Muslim body politic during the interwar years was the most significant political legacy inherited by Masyumi. In order to understand such a legacy, it is necessary to examine both the main stages in the formation of this Islamic political movement and the way in which its leaders, in their writings, turned their interpretation of history into a political tool.

**Perspectives on the History of Indonesian Islam—References to the Founding Fathers**

The advent of Islam in Indonesia remains today a very controversial historical topic. There is no clear historical evidence which allows one to point to the existence of Muslim states in the country before the emergence in the 13th century of Samudra-Pasai, a small principality in the region of North Sumatra. Indian Muslims who used the ancient

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2 The first tombstone revealing the presence of a Muslim dynasty in the Malay region dates back to 1297 and belonged to Sultan Malik as-Salih from Samudera Pasai. Marco Polo signalled the existence of the trading kingdoms of Perlak and Samudera Pasai on his way to Sumatra in 1292. For a comprehensive overview of the different studies on the arrival of Islam in Indonesia, see G.W.J. Drewes, “New Light on the Coming of Islam to Indonesia”, *B.K.I.* 124 (1968): 433–59. Drewes contests in particular the hypothesis of an earlier Islamisation based on the discovery of the Leran Tombstone, an Islamic Tombstone in Java carrying the date 1082. The work carried out by Ludvik Kalus and Claude Guillot has confirmed Drewes’s doubts, showing that the Leran Tombstone was no doubt removed from its original cemetery somewhere in the Middle East to be used as ballast on a boat; “La stèle de Leran (Java) datée de 475/1082”, *Archipel* 67 (2004). On the
maritime network running from the Indian Ocean to the China Seas appear to have played an important role in the spread of Islam.\(^3\) Their part in the Islamisation of the region was made easier by the influence of Indian culture in the Indianised kingdoms of Java and Sumatra, but they were not the only ones to contribute to this process. Chinese Muslims, in particular during the great Ming maritime expeditions in the first half of the 15th century, clearly had a role to play as well, though it is somewhat more difficult to know the exact nature of this influence.\(^4\)

It seems certain in any case that after Islam was embedded in the north of Sumatra, there was, from the second half of the 14th century onwards, a tolerant attitude towards the Muslim religion within the Hindu-Buddhist royal court in Majapahit, in East Java. Later in the 15th century, the sultanate of Malacca on the Malay peninsula emerged as the main commercial hub in the region, and Islam spread along the trade routes leading to and from it, notably those concerning the trade of spices, to the northeast towards Brunei, to the southeast in the direction of the northern Javanese coast and further east to the Maluku Islands. When Malacca was seized in 1511 by the Portuguese, this gave a considerable boost to the sultanate of Aceh, located to the north of Pasai, which, along with other sultanates, became the new focal point for Muslim trade in the region.

On the island of Java during the 15th century, the development of sultanates on its north coast, in the area known as Pasisir, meant that it progressively removed itself from the dominion of the Indianised

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\(^3\) Indian influences have been highlighted by several studies in Javanese literature: P.J. Zoetmulder, *Pantheism and Monism in Javanese Suluk Literature: Islamic and Indian Mysticism in an Indonesian Setting* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1995) has shown how certain Javanese texts (suluk) show Islamic influences which have come through India and Hindu-Javanese. The study of *Serat Centhini* led Soebardi to the same conclusion in “Santri-Religious Elements as Reflected in the Book of Tjentini”, *B.K.I.* 127 (1971): 331–49. On the way in which *Serat Centhini* is part of the process of Islamisation, see Marcel Bonneff, “Centhini, servante du Javanisme”, *Archipel* 56 (1998): 483–511.

\(^4\) Concerning these expeditions and the other aspects of the Chinese influence on Indonesian Islam, see Denys Lombard, *Le Carrefour javanais*, vol. 2 (Paris: L’EHESS, 1990), Chapter 1.
Map 1.1 The Spread of Islam across the Indonesian Archipelago.
kingdom of Majapahit, enabling Islam to spread further along the trade routes established by Muslims. The expansion of Islam on the island can be partly explained by the role of Sufism, which seems to have contributed to the acceptance of Islam in certain Hindu-Buddhist royal courts. After the shift in power from the Majapahit kingdom to the sultans of Pasisir in the 16th century, the Islamisation of Java, which up until then had been largely peaceful, became more belligerent. In 1527, the small Muslim coastal kingdom of Demak precipitated the collapse of the last Hindu-Buddhist kingdom in Daya, and by the middle of the 16th century, the entire north coast of Java was governed by Muslims, namely the sultans of Cirebon and Banten. At the end of the 16th century, a successor to the Majapahit kingdom appeared with the rise of the kingdom of Mataram, which had by then been Islamised and whose emergence constituted a significant step in the Islamisation of the inner regions of the island. This expansion of Islam was in large part due to the educational and missionary work of the Koranic schools and the Sufi orders who took on the mantle of the age-old pioneering tradition and combined proselytising with the clearing and cultivation of forestlands.\(^5\)

After three centuries of gradual Islamisation between the 13th and 16th centuries, Islam had become the lodestar which all governments needed to use as their reference point. Is it possible, though, to regard this period as a sort of golden age in Indonesia when a true Islamic state existed? In other words, are the partisans of an Islamic state (Negara Islam) in Indonesia justified in using the pre-colonial period as a sort of model to aspire to? The answer is undoubtedly no, for the simple reason that Islamic law was never used as the exclusive source of law—and this is true also for other parts of Southeast Asia—but had to give way also to local customary law, known as adat, particularly in Java and in the Minangkabau region in Central Sumatra. A majority of the Malay legal codes contained references to sharia law but these references were mainly confined to the domains of commercial and marriage law. In the area of criminal law, for example, the sentence of

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corporal punishment provided for by Koranic penal law (hudud) was generally commuted to a fine.\(^6\)

The expansion of Islam began to slow when European colonists arrived in the region. The Portuguese arrived in the Maluku Islands in 1521 and were later replaced by the Dutch, whose influence, though initially confined to the east of the country, gradually expanded over the course of the 17th and 18th centuries. While it is true that the VOC\(^7\) never really supported either of the two main Christian religions —indeed the Protestant Dutch saw Catholicism as their biggest threat —the monopoly which the Dutch company held over the traditional trade routes from the town of Batavia (founded in 1619) and from Melacca (captured from the Portuguese in 1641), weakened the position of the sultanates on the Indonesian archipelago considerably. In the 19th century, after the VOC went bankrupt, the Dutch crown took over their operations and Christianity prospered in the non-Islamic parts of the country thanks to the loosening of restrictions which had been imposed on missionaries by the previous colonial authorities.\(^8\) This period also saw the weakening of the sultanate “model of government”: in 1825, the Sultanate of Palembang, which had replaced the kingdom of Srivijaya, disappeared, followed in 1860 by the Sultanate of Banjarmasin and in 1903 by the Sultanate of Aceh.

A close examination of the place which this glorious period of Indonesian Islam held in Masyumi’s collective consciousness, through the analysis of the speeches and writings by its main leaders, brings a number of discoveries to light. The first of these is that references to that golden age were, in fact, rare. In the 15 or so treatises written by the party’s main theorists on the political role of Islam, reference to Indonesia’s Islamic past was, at best, minimal and more often than not non-existent. In the case of speeches made by party leaders, the choice to omit references to Indonesia’s Islamic past was not a rhetorical one;


\(^{7}\) Abbreviation of *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, the Dutch East India Company. On the VOC’s religious policy, see Karel Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam: Contacts and Conflicts, 1596–1950* (Amsterdam and Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1993).

they were often abundantly illustrated with other historical examples. Isa Anshary, for example, in his book, *The Philosophy of the Combat of Islam*, refers to Roosevelt, Ernst Renan and Mohammad 'Abduh; he also mentions Hitler and Mussolini, but he says nothing about the history of his own country. The same can be said about most of the books written by a whole range of Masyumi theorists—Zainal Abidin Ahmad, Moenawar Chalil, HAMKA, Prawoto Mangkusasmito, Mohammad Natsir, Jusuf Wibisono and Sjafruddin Prawiranegara—all of whom wrote abundantly over the years on the political philosophy of their party.

The second important discovery concerning references by Masyumi leaders to Indonesia’s Muslim past is that where they did exist they were often brief in nature and rarely developed to any great extent. The sultanates that existed in Indonesia, for example, were

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9 Isa Anshary, *Falsafah Perdjuangan Islam* (Medan: Saiful, 1949 [2nd edition, 1951]), p. 287. We shall return later to the references to Western history and to the founders of Islamic modernism.


11 One of the few exceptions to this general rule is a book by HAMKA, *Antara fakta dan Khayal, “Tuanku Rao”* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1974), p. 364, in which the former Masyumi deputy refutes in great detail the claims made by one of his friends, Mangaradja Onggang Parlingungan, in a book entitled *Tuanku Rao* (80 per cent of which he alleges to be false), devoted to Haji Piobang, one of the instigators of the Padri movement at the beginning of the 19th century (see infra). Beyond HAMKA’s desire to restore the historical truth on Haji Piobang’s life, it is difficult to see what motivated him to undertake such a project, as he never draws any conclusions about Piobang himself.
never presented as a model for political government, and no mention was made either of the Wali Songo, the nine saints who are traditionally thought to have converted Java to Islam. When explaining the development of their religion or elaborating their theories on a Muslim state, Masyumi’s writers systematically preferred to turn to examples taken from the life of the Prophet or from the accounts of the great Arab dynasties.\textsuperscript{12}

The few references to Indonesia’s past which did exist were there to prove that Islam’s part in the Indonesian struggle for independence was a long-established one. The historical figures referred to had often won their place in history thanks to their resistance to colonial rule between 1825 and 1830, as opposed to their part in the spread of Islam. Those most frequently mentioned were Diponegoro, a Javanese prince and hero of the Java War between 1825 and 1830; Sultan Agung, sovereign of Mataram who held out in Batavia when it was besieged by the Dutch in 1825 and again in 1830; and finally Tuanku Imam Bonjol, the spiritual mentor of the resistance movement against the Dutch in Minangkabau. There were also occasional references made to Sultan Hasanuddin of Makassar, who in 1667 repelled a prolonged assault by the VOC before finally surrendering, and also to Cik di Tiro, one of the instigators of the holy war in Aceh against Dutch troops between 1880 and 1903.\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{12} See, for example, Mohammad Natsir’s 1936 article, “Islam and Culture” (“Islam dan Kebudayan”), dealing with the former grandeur of Muslim civilisation in which he makes no reference to Indonesia. Natsir, \textit{Capita Selecta}, pp. 3–6. However, the major states in Islamic history were not considered as models. Cf. infra Chapter 5.

\textsuperscript{13} See, for example, Isa Anshary’s speech in Magelang, \textit{Abadi}, 8 September 1954. See also Soekiman Wirjosandjojo, “Perlu wajah baru di Indonesia”, a text written in 1958 and published in \textit{Wawasan Politik Seorang Muslim Patriot. Kumpulan Karangan} (Jakarta: YP2LPM, 1984), pp. 246 ff. Of the 132 articles contained in the two volumes of Mohammad Natsir’s \textit{Capita Selecta}, only two allude to the history of Indonesian Islam. The first, “Perspectives on Fictional Works” (“Pemandangan tentang buku2 roman”, vol. 1, p. 41) looks at the novel’s cultural role. Natsir explained that he decided to write the article after receiving a copy of the book devoted to Tuanku Imam Bonjol. His article avails of references to Western literature—Cyrano de Bergerac, Voltaire, Zola, Locke and Montesquieu—but no mention is made of the heroes of Indonesian Islam. In the “Indonesian Revolution” (“Revolusi Islam”, vol. 2, p. 124), he merely recalls the spirit of sacrifice (\textit{semangat pengurbanan}) of heroes such as Sultan Hasanuddin, Cik di Tiro, Tuanku Imam Bonjol, Diponegoro and Sultan Hidayat, devoting most of his article to the Muslim organisations of the opening decades of the century.
When referring to these figures, historical details concerning them were never really developed or analysed. As they were national heroes, a simple reference to their name sufficed. Mayumi’s pantheon, then, was also the nation’s pantheon and it was made up entirely of individuals who would later become national heroes in the Republic of Indonesia. By doing this, Masyumi’s theorists wished to draw attention to the prominent role played by religion in motivating those whom the entire nation recognised as being its founding fathers, rather than focussing on figures whose importance was limited only to the Muslim community. This choice was clearly a political one and it gave the party the ammunition it needed to fend off attacks from secular nationalists.

Although it has been clearly established that Diponegoro was a Muslim who was devoted to his religion and that within his nationalist spirit, which was set alight by his opposition to the Dutch colonization, lay in fact the soul of a true Muslim, this has been forgotten intentionally by half of our national leaders. Even though this omission may be understandable, as it is in accordance with a desire to conceal the multiple factors which remind us of the merits of Islam and its combat and a preference for emphasizing other nationalist factors, such an attitude constitutes a sort of betrayal of history.

This determination by Masyumi’s leaders to depict Islam as an integral part of the nationalist project was not limited to their historical portrayal of the colonial period but extended also to the revolutionary period. Isa Anshary, for example, mentioned, amongst the heroes of Islam, General Sudirman, the first commander-in-chief of the Indonesian armed forces who was also a devout Muslim and a supporter of Masyumi. Mohammad Natsir even added Bung Tomo (Sutomo), a hero of the war of independence, to this list, claiming that in November 1945, he had launched the rebellion against English troops in

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15 Concerning the celebration by the Republic of the centenary of Diponegoro, see Hikmah, 15 January 1955.
16 Speech by Isa Anshary in Magelang, Abadi, 8 September 1954.
Surabaya to the cry of “Allah is great.” This claim made by Masyumi’s president was designed to include Sutomo’s military feat in a long Muslim tradition embodying an Indonesian nation which pre-existed colonisation and which had struggled “for [the previous] 350 years not using mortars and canons (mortar dan meriam) but using faith and devotion (iman dan takwa).”

By paying homage to the important figures of Indonesia’s past in this way, Masyumi’s leaders were glorifying a more intense vision of Islam rather than one which saw it as a “state institution”. This more intense form of Islam would be able to instil in every believer the revolutionary spirit necessary to transform the world, and it gave a strong pedagogical dimension to the party’s message. A Muslim hero and, by extension, a national hero was somebody who, in the name of religion, never gave up the fight and thus showed the way for the entire umma to follow. Isa Anshary, in one section of his booklet, *The Revolution of Islam*, entitled “the hero of Islam” illustrated clearly how becoming a hero was accessible to all. It was a section of the book which glorified the religious dimension of the struggle carried out by those Indonesian Muslim patriots (*putera-patriot Muslimin Indonesia*) who, despite their involvement in the fight for independence, had remained in the background of history.

Even during Masyumi’s darkest hours, the notion of a Muslim as somebody who, like his illustrious forebears, would be able to use his faith to find the resources of courage and self-sacrifice necessary for his cause remained a constant theme in the rhetoric used by the party’s theorists. This vision is borne out in the following lines written by Kasman Singodimedjo from the confines of his cell shortly after Masyumi was banned:

A Muslim must continue the struggle. Muslim law obliges him to do so. He must struggle throughout his whole life. Life is a struggle. A Muslim today must not be fearful. He must not consider that his previous struggles have failed, merely that they have not

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attained their goals. The struggle led by Tengku Umar, Tuanku Imam Bonjol, Diponegoro, H.O.S. Cokroaminto, H.A. Salim and others has not failed; it has not yet reached its goals. We who are still alive have to continue their struggle.

In the eyes of Masyumi, then, the history of Indonesian Islam never attained the status of a golden age which the contemporary period could draw upon for solutions to its problems. Their historical vision of pre-colonial Indonesia contained no trace of the “fabled past” which Denys Lombard has identified amongst certain groups of Indonesian Muslims. None of the Islamic states which had existed in Indonesia constituted for Masyumi a model to be followed. The reason for this was not so much because of the imperfect nature of their institutions and their application of Islamic law—something which people were largely ignorant of in the 1950s—and more due to a certain interpretation of history which was characteristic of the modernist Islamic movement.

The Legacy of Muslim Reformism

This brief description of the Islamisation of Indonesia does not do justice to the sociological complexity that arose from the haphazard nature of the region’s conversion. The varying degrees of acculturation on Java have long been reflected in the distinction established between two groups of Muslims: the abangan and the santri. The former refers to those village communities who practised a popular religion consisting of “a balanced integration of animist, Hinduistic and Islamic elements, a basic Javanese syncretism which is the island’s true folk tradition, the basic substratum of its civilisation.” The second group, the santri,

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20 Kasman Singodimejo, Renungan dari Tabanan, p. 33.
22 I am using the terms employed by the American anthropologist, Clifford Geertz in The Religion of Java (London: The Free Press of Glencoe, Collier-MacMillan Ltd, 1960), p. 5. Geertz added a third group to the traditional distinction made between santri and abangan: the priyayi, made up of aristocrats and descendants of the Javanese aristocracy. This classification has been contested by numerous Islamicists, as it is based more on social than religious divisions. Other criticisms of Geertz’s classifications as well as the debates it has provoked can be found summarised in Koentjaraningrat, Javanese Culture (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1985).
takes its name from the pupils of Koranic schools, known as pesantren. The santri are sometimes referred to as kaum putihan, meaning the “white group”, a term which takes its meaning from the colour of the garment they wore. The use of the term gradually evolved to refer to the most pious Muslims, often from trading backgrounds, who were partisans of a religious tradition which consisted “not only of a careful and regular execution of the basic rituals of Islam—the prayers, the Fast, the Pilgrimage—but also of a whole complex of social, charitable and political Islamic organizations.”

This distinction is operative so long as one does not assume that it marks out a rigid frontier between the two groups but rather designates two polar extremes which allow for a whole range of variations in-between. It will be an important distinction for our study insofar as it overlaps with the division between Muslims who wished to limit Islam to the private sphere (the “religiously neutral” nationalists, to use the Indonesian expression netra agama) and those who, on the other hand, actively campaigned for its involvement in politics (the Islamists, in the strict sense of the term). Up until the 19th century, then, Islam for a large number of the Muslim faithful in Indonesia amounted to an orthodox Sunnite veil—of the Shafi’i school—discreetly covering a considerable variety of syncretic and heterodox practices. These multiple variations of Islam in the country provided a fertile terrain for the demands made by reformist organisations calling for more orthodox religious practices. In Java and particularly in the heart of the former domains of the kingdom of Mataram—the Islamic successor to the Hindu-Buddhist empire of Majapahit—Muslim belief adopted syncretic religious practices which presented Islam as a simple receptacle (wadah) allowing the believer to cultivate the essential values of Javanese culture, namely spiritual purification and the ultimate experience of unity between the human and the divine. In these regions,
Muslims worshipped the *keramat* (holy places and saints’ tombs), gave offerings to the spirits, held *slametan* or *kenduri* (ceremonial meals for the spirits), and used *azimat* (amulets) to protect themselves from evil spirits. The condemnation of these practices, which was part of the reformist struggle against heresy, superstition and innovation (*bid’ah*), gave rise to a fundamental shift within the *santri* community which, over time, left its mark on the political destiny of Indonesian Islam.\(^{26}\) It led to the emergence of a split between the supporters of a complete reform of these practices, composed mainly of modernists, and the traditionalists who defended a certain religious status quo. Reformism, then, encouraged its members to let their religious faith inspire an active participation in the nationalist movement, but at the same time, it sowed the seeds within the Muslim community of a division which would, to a large extent, be responsible for the failure of political Islam.

During the first decade of the 20th century, the Muslim community in Indonesia was affected by the vast reform movement pervading the entire Muslim world at that time. By the end of the 18th century, in India and in several Middle Eastern countries, voices were speaking out to denounce the paralysis of the Muslim world’s institutions and social structures. As a result of their experience of colonisation, which constantly demonstrated to them the indisputable technical superiority of the West, Muslim thinkers increasingly denounced the excessive rigidity of Islam’s interpretation of the divine message. Its vitality, they felt, had gradually been smothered by the codification attempted by the founders of the four Sunni schools of jurisprudence between the eighth and ninth centuries. Following the tradition of such illustrious theologians as al-Ghazali in the 12th century and Ibn Taimiyya in the 14th century, the reformist movement wanted to reclaim the legacy of the first generation of Muslims, those “devout pioneers” (*Salaf*) who gave their name to the Salafi movement (*Salafyya*).\(^{27}\) This evolution

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\(^{26}\) Among the traditions which reformists were most critical of included the celebration of the Prophet’s birth (*mawlid al-nabi*), recitations of odes to the Prophet such as *Barzanji*, *Qasidat al-Burdah*, *Dibā‘i*. For a complete account these debates, see Fauzan Saleh, *Modern Trends in Islamic Theological Discourses in 20th Century Indonesia: A Critical Survey* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 86–91.

took place almost simultaneously in India and the Middle East. In India, the movement began with Shah Walli Ullah (d. 1762), was carried on by Sayyid Ahmad Khan (d. 1898), founder of the Aligarh Muslim University, and was finally led by Muhammad Iqbal (d. 1938), the spiritual father of the Pakistani nation. In the Middle East, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, having travelled throughout India, Central Asia and Europe, returned home to denounce the region’s European imperialism and the conservatism of feudal Muslim leaders who were opposed to any modernisation in their countries. This reformist movement advocated a return to the Koran, stripped of all the commentaries which had skewed its message, the adoption of European technical progress, the struggle against fatalism and the recognition of freedom and reason. Al-Afghani, the father of modern Pan-Islamism, exercised a considerable influence over the entire Muslim world. His main disciple, the Egyptian Mohammad ‘Abduh (d. 1905), campaigned throughout his life for the reform of the curriculum in Al-Azhar, the Islamic university in Cairo. He maintained that true Islam was not in contradiction with modern science and he campaigned for the introduction of mathematics, history and geography courses. ‘Abduh is considered by a number of writers to be the father of modernism, a branch of the reformist movement which emphasised the need to open up to the West in order to incorporate its model of democratic institutions.

However, within the reformist movement, a fundamentalist wing developed which was much more intransigent towards the West. Following in the footsteps of Mohammad Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab (d. 1791), this branch wished to restore Islamic belief and dogma to their original purity. It idealised primitive Muslim society and its goal was not to elaborate new interpretations of the holy books, but simply to return to the letter of the Koran. Wahhabism was supported by the Ibn Saud dynasty which has come to power twice in Saudi Arabia (once from 1804 to 1818 and again from 1926 to the present day) and its message attracted many followers throughout the Muslim world. In India, it inspired two movements: the Faraizi from Bengal and the Tariqa-i Muhammadiyah led by Syed Ahmad Barelwi. It should be noted that

some of Mohammad ‘Abduh’s followers were attracted by Wahhabi fundamentalism. Led by the Syrian Rashid Rida, they developed ‘Abduh’s analysis of Islam along much narrower lines. Their journal, *Al-Manar* ("the Lighthouse") often became the mouthpiece for the Hanbali School’s rigid interpretations, and was more influenced by the fundamentalism of Ibn Ta’imiyah, the most radical opponent of both the officials in charge of medieval schools of jurisprudence and of Sufi innovations, than by the conciliatory theologian al-Ghazali who inspired ‘Abduh. This neo-fundamentalism gained some success between the two world wars through the foundation of two important groups: the Association of Algerian Muslim Ulema founded by Ben Badis and the Muslim Brotherhood founded by Hassan al-Banna in Egypt. These were followed later in the 1940s with the foundation in India of Jama’at-i Islami, a branch of neo-fundamentalism which paralleled somewhat the Persatuan Islam movement in Indonesia led by Ahmad Hassan. These thinkers distinguished themselves from the modernism of ‘Abduh by their more intransigent attitude towards the West, and this inflexibility no doubt explains their success amongst radical Muslims whose movement began to develop from the 1970s onwards, built on the ruins of a more conciliatory form of modernism.

The revival which took place at the end of the 19th century was not limited to the emergence of reformist ideas. In Indonesia, as elsewhere, some supporters of the schools of Islamic jurisprudence (*madhhab*), who had also noticed the development of practices considered to be heterodox, began to mobilise themselves. Under pressure from the reformists who tarnished with the same brush the rites originating from the principal schools of jurisprudence and certain forms of polytheism (*shirk*), they set out to restore Islam to what they considered to be its purest form: medieval Islam.29 Like the modernists, they adopted Western methods of teaching and developed a vast missionary activity. In Indonesia, some *ulama* but also certain important Sufi orders, such as the *Sammaniyyah*, the *Qadiriyyah wa Naqshbandiyyah* and the *Naqshabandiyyah Khalidddiyah*, attempted to persuade their fellow Muslims who were influenced by customary practices (*adat*) or

29 The same phenomenon took place in India with the Deobandi movement founded in 1867 which assembled the moderate disciples of Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi wishing to remain loyal to the Hanafi School.
by Javanese spirituality movements (aliran kebatinan or kejawen) to adopt a more orthodox form of Islam, which generally meant the form taught by the Shafi‘i school. In reality, numerous religious dignitaries often departed from the teachings preached by the founders of the schools of jurisprudence but preferred instead to adhere to the subsequent teachings of an imam who regularly strayed from the original message. As a result, in a number of regions in the country, Islam had taken on a local flavour and while the partisans of a strict Shafi‘i tradition remained sensitive to some of these religious rites, they endeavoured to correct what they considered to be their most obscurantist aspects.

The traditionalists’ mobilisation can be seen as a combination of their desire for modernity and their need to invoke religious orthodoxy. It was an approach which was not altogether different in nature from that of the reformists, and indeed some traditionalists were active for a time within modernist organisations. However, their historical eras of reference, which were the yardsticks for their respective orthodoxies, differed. While the traditionalists founded their practice on texts largely taken from the speculations on Islam during the medieval period, the reformists set out to use resources taken exclusively from the earliest days of Islam. These resources could be used either as the basis for a new interpretation considered more appropriate for contemporary times—in the case of modernists—or they could be used as a model for contemporary behaviour if one simply took refuge in the craven imitation of the customs and practices of the first Muslims—as was the case with the fundamentalists.

Middle-Eastern reformism first manifested itself in Indonesia at the beginning of the 19th century with the Padri movement. This branch of Islam, inspired by Wahhabism, was introduced to West Sumatra by pilgrims who had been very taken by the new rigorist movement they had observed during their stay in Mecca. The reforms which they attempted to impose ran up against a reluctant population who

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31 It was long thought that the term “Padri” came from the port of Pedir from which Muslims set out on their pilgrimage to Mecca. It is now considered more likely to have come from the Portuguese word “padre”, given by the Portuguese explorers to religious figures, including Muslim ones.
were very attached to the syncretism embodied in their customary practices (adat). The leaders of the Padri movement, namely Haji Miskin and Tuanku Nan Rinceh, launched a civil war which ended with their new moral order being imposed across most of the Minangkabau region. It was hereafter forbidden to organise cock-fighting, betting or to consume tobacco, alcohol and opium; in addition, it became obligatory for men to wear beards, for women to wear a veil and for everyone to wear white clothes and pray five times a day. It was finally the intervention of Dutch troops in 1838 that ended this campaign carried out by the Padri, and with it came to a close the first Wahhabi experiment in Indonesia.\(^3\)

The influence of Wahhabism, which symbolised intrasigence and fanaticism, remained limited to this region, and Masyumi never considered it to be an exemplar. By focussing on the resistance of the Tuanku Imam Bonjol during the Padri War, mentioned earlier, they chose to see in it the embodiment of stubborn defiance towards the colonist rather than the symbol of civil strife.\(^3\)

The influence of the modernist branch of Muslim reformism in Indonesia was of an altogether different nature. It spread mainly by means of periodicals controlled by two groups: those of Arab descent and the Minangkabau diaspora in Indonesia. Masyumi's future leaders, who were to participate in this proliferation of intellectual and religious activity from the 1920s onwards, drew many of their beliefs from it. The growth of the reformist movement in the Middle East at the end of the 19th century had coincided with a marked increase in the number of Indonesian pilgrims travelling to the Holy Land, due in no small part to the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, which made the journey easier and cheaper. Between 1850 and 1910, the number of pilgrims soared from 2,000 to 20,000 per year;\(^3\) their journey did not

\(^3\) For further reading on this intervention, see Christine Dobbin, *Islamic Revivalism in a Changing Peasant Economy: Central Sumatra, 1784–1847* (London and Malmö: Curzon Press, 1983), XII: 300. Though they did not openly claim to be part of the Wahhabi movement, two other puritan movements were also present in Java. At the end of the 17th century, in the Banten region, religious leaders, dressed in Arab clothing, outlawed tobacco and opium. At the beginning of the 19th century, the Badiah movement in the north of Java showed similar characteristics.

\(^3\) With the exception of the book, mentioned above, written by HAMKA on Haju Piobang.

\(^3\) Lombard, *Le carrefour javanais*, p. 66.
always come to an end at Mecca either, and some who were attracted by Mohammad ‘Abduh’s ideas travelled on to Cairo to continue their studies at Al-Azhar University. This was the case for Syeikh Muhammad Alkalali, who came from the Minangkabau region and who, after his stay in the Middle East, settled in Singapore. There, in the company of some of his fellow students, he edited, starting from 1905, the periodical Al-Imam which disseminated in Malay the ideas of Rida’s journal Al-Manar. Their example was soon to be followed in Minangkabau, where in 1911 the periodical magazine Al-Munir (in Malay, but written using the Jawi script) was published in Padang under the editorship of H. Abdulrahman Ahmad, H. Abdul Karim Amrullah and Sutan Muhammad Salim. Two more periodical magazines were to follow: Al-Mizan, published in Maninjau, and in Padang Panjang, Al-Munir al-Manar, the successor to Al-Munir, which had stopped publication in 1915. The religious figures of the Minangkabau region clearly played a significant role in the diffusion of reformist ideas, and at the beginning of the 1930s, another generation, which included future Masyumi figures, continued this tradition of publishing. In Medan, one of the

36 The Minangkabau region was at that time in the throes of a debate arising from the dispute over adat. It opposed the traditional leaders, who defended the matrilineal system which was deeply rooted in the region, and the radical ulamas who wished to put an end to it. A movement inspired by the “Young Turks” and led by Datuk Sutan Maharadja even attempted to modernise adat by focusing on, amongst other things, its feminist dimension. Cf. Taufiq Abdullah, Schools and Politics: The Kaum Muda Movement in West Sumatra (1927–1933) (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1971), pp. 8–13. Several Minangkabau religious figures, such as Sjech Ahmad Chatib, who became imam of the Al Haram mosque in Mecca, refused to return to their native region in protest at this modernisation of adat. Noer, The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, p. 19.
37 H. Abdul Karim Amrullah—sometimes known as HAKA or Hadji Rasil—had a son called Hadji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah (HAMKA) who became president of Muhammadiyah and was also a Masyumi deputy in Parliament. Sutan Muhammad Salim was K.H. Agus Salim’s father, one of the most eminent figures in the Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia and one of Masyumi’s founders.
38 Another group, the Hadrami community—composed of Arabs from Hadramont and their descendants—also played an important role. One of their representatives, Hamid Algadri, explained that during the colonial period, most of his friends read periodicals from Egypt which propagated modernist ideas, in particular those belonging to Al-Afghani.
most active publishing centres in the country, Zainal Abidin Ahmad published *Pandji Islam*, while HAMKA and Yunan Nasution published *Pedoman Masjirakat*. These two weekly periodicals were amongst the most prestigious publications in the country and attracted contributions from prominent figures in the nationalist movement, such as Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta. They allowed the Minangkabau who had settled in Java to stay in contact with their home region. Mohammad Natsir, who was living at the time in Bandung, published his first articles in these periodicals under the pseudonym A. Moechlis.  

With the growth of the first reformist organisations, there was quite an unprecedented development in publishing activity, which spread across most of Indonesia. To name but a few examples of these publications, Muhammadiyah published no fewer than six periodicals (*Penyiar Islam*, *Pancaran Amal*, *Suara Muhammadiyah*, *Almanak Muhammadiyah* and *Suara Aisyah*) and Persatuan Islam published four (*Al Lisan*, *Al Fatwaa*, *Pembela* and *Al Taqwa*). Generally, a few thousand copies of each periodical were printed and they constituted the main outlet for relaying reformist ideas in Indonesia. The religious and political ideas of Masyumi’s future leaders were forged through reading these publications, and for many of them also through participating in them. As in the Middle East, few books were in circulation, with the exception of collections of articles. These periodicals, then, in their sections containing letters to the editor, allowed a prompt and precise response to be given to the questions which intrigued readers, and their pages were often full of heated debates. By getting around the control which the colonial authorities exercised over public life, and by allowing people to exchange ideas across the country, these publications constituted a veritable sounding board for the future Masyumi leaders’ political ideas.

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From their earliest writings, the party’s future leaders identified themselves clearly with the ideas of this reformist movement. References to the movement’s principal theorists crop up regularly throughout their articles, speeches and lectures. Al-Ghazali, for example, who is considered a forerunner of the movement, was referred to in glowing terms by Mohammad Natsir in an article published in 1937 in Pedoman Masjarakat. Natsir, who compared his work to that of Thomas à Kempis, the author of The Imitation of Christ, explained that “700 years before David Hume”, al-Ghazali had managed to solve the thorny question of causality.42

The theorists most often mentioned were the founders of modern reformism, Al-Afghani and Mohammad ‘Abduh. For Masyumi members, Al-Afghani was generally considered to be the father of Pan-Islamism who made it possible for the Muslim world, downtrodden by colonialism, to rediscover its dignity.43 Mohammad ‘Abduh, on the other hand, embodied a spirit of tolerance and opposition to all forms of religious extremism, and his memory was evoked in a speech given in Medan by Mohammad Natsir in December 1953, during which he warned his fellow Muslims against the dangers of the radical solutions proposed by the separatist movement Darul Islam.44

It is in Masyumi’s adherence to the central points of the reformist doctrine, however, rather than in mere references to the movement’s founding fathers, that the party’s reformist identity is most clearly visible. Direct references by Masyumi leaders to ijtihad, the right to interpret holy texts, were nonetheless relatively few and initially, in fact, references to it only appeared implicitly. These could be found in the arguments condemning the passivity of taqlid, which was considered to be the practice of faith without any personal discernment.

Islam clearly forbids any blind belief in the theories and criticisms which are not founded on divine revelation, that is to say, which only carry over the old interpretations from generation to generation without verifying their sacred nature.

43 See, for example, the short analysis provided by Anshary, Falsafah Perjuangan Islam, p. 62 and by Jusuf Wibisono, Hikmah, 3 April 1954.
44 Abadi, 2 December 1953. See. infra, Chapter 3.
'And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart—about all those [one] will be questioned’ (Koran, 17:39)

After the split from Masyumi by the traditionalist Nahdlatul Ulama branch in 1952, the importance of *ijtihad* was asserted more clearly. A few months after this split, which undermined Masyumi considerably, Isa Anshary took advantage of some time he had to spend in hospital to launch an appeal to the Muslim community which, according to him, needed to accomplish a genuine internal revolution, the cornerstone of which would be *ijtihad*. It would of course be carried out according to strict guidelines and could only be performed by the religious authorities who were qualified to do so. It should also go hand in hand with a critical mindset and spirit of contradiction (*ruh intikad*) on the part of the entire *umma*. Only if these two conditions were fulfilled could the “struggle in the way of God” (*jihad*) progress:

How can we fulfil the commandments of the Koran if our minds and our thoughts are bound by the chains of *taqlid*?... How can we turn fanaticism into conviction if we do not free our minds from this archaic submission to the domination of *taqlid*? The door leading to *ijtihad* is open to *ulama* and jurists who possess the ability to perform it. *Ijtihad* purifies our thoughts and our interpretations which are still erroneous and fallacious, and it confirms those thoughts and convictions which are in keeping with the principles of the true religion.... The struggle will not achieve its goal if we are satisfied with an audience which is great in number but which is composed of corpses who obey orders without question and are devoted but lacking in conviction. It is the ‘discipline of corpses’ like that seen in fascist and communist countries.... Blessed is the Muslim community which has *ulamas* capable of carrying out *ijtihad*, the basis of any *jihad*. Blessed is the Islamic struggle which possesses an *umma* endowed with critical faculties. The revolution of Islam will be quick and fresh if it is carried out by *ulama* who are able to carry out *ijtihad* and by an *umma* that possesses critical faculties.

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It is nonetheless quite difficult to discern in any precise way what the leaders of Masyumi meant by *ijtihad*.\(^{47}\) The exercise of this right to interpret sacred texts was never accompanied by any preliminary declaration. As we will examine later, Masyumi’s unique position on the political landscape—in particular its almost visceral attachment to the principles of democracy—did not stem from their exegesis of religious texts. Whenever religious texts were referred to, it was invariably in order to settle a contentious debate which was at the centre of a dispute with other branches of Islam. To take an example from 1958, Moenwar Chalil, one of the most influential *ulamas* within Masyumi, published a booklet devoted to the notion of *Ulil-Amri*. This title, meaning “those who hold the command”, had been at the centre of a bitter controversy a few years earlier in 1954 when at a meeting of *ulamas* belonging to Nahdlatul Ulama, the term had been used to refer to President Sukarno, thus making him a sort of religious leader whom all Muslims had to obey. In response, Moenwar Chalil, along with the rest of Masyumi, raised objections to this interpretation and he outlined them in his short 60-page book where he engaged in an in-depth analysis of verse 59 of *Sura An-Nisa* (The Women) which is the basis for the notion of *Ulil-Amri*.\(^{48}\) Basing his ideas on the analysis of Mohammad ‘Abduh and Rashid Rida, he showed how, in his opinion, the use of the term to refer to Sukarno constituted a corruption of the sacred text.\(^{49}\) Did Moenwar Chalil consider, when writing this disquisition, that he was exercising his right to perform *ijtihad*? It is difficult to say with any certainty that he did, not only because we have no clear indication on his part,\(^{50}\) but also because it was not particularly unusual to engage in this sort of analysis—as the *ulamas* of Nahdlatul Ulama had just demonstrated in their controversial interpretation of the Koran.

Although the references by Masyumi to the thinkers and doctrine of the reformist movement show that the party clearly identified itself

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\(^{47}\) Before the 1960s, the theological debates within Indonesian Islam, though they were often virulent, were not generally very detailed. The main reasons for this can be found in Saleh, *Modern Trends in Islamic Theological Discourses in 20th Century Indonesia*, pp. 6 ff.

\(^{48}\) Koran (IV, 59).


with this movement, it was never completely comfortable with this identification. Masyumi leaders seemed loath to define themselves as representatives of a modernist movement—*kaum muda*—in opposition to a traditionalist movement—*kaum tua*. This was not a sign of hypocrisy or a rejection of the modernist movement but rather a consequence of one of the fundamental contradictions of the party. Although Masyumi was founded mainly on modernist principles and was dominated by representatives of modernism from its outset in 1945, and even more so after Nahdlatul Ulama broke away from the party in 1952, it always saw itself as the mouthpiece for all Indonesian Muslims. Indeed it should be noted that after the breakaway of NU, a few small traditionalist organisations remained within the party’s ranks. If Masyumi were to display too close an adherence to the modernist movement, it would risk cutting itself off from millions of Muslims who were attached to the Shafi’i tradition. During the general election campaign of 1955, the leaders of the party did their utmost to adopt a very broad-minded approach to questions of religion, so, for example, the religious council of the party (*Madjelis Sjuro*) adopted a fatwa at the time recognising the validity of schools of jurisprudence (*madhhab)*.

Given this desire for inclusiveness which pervaded the party, the article written by Jusuf Wibisono, one of the party’s leaders, in April 1954, in which he outlined his personal convictions concerning the role of Islam, stands out as something of an anomaly. In this article, he was responding to three criticisms commonly made of the party’s ideology, one of which consisted in claiming that religion could not be the basis on which to build a state. In his response to this point, Wibisono clearly aligned himself with modernist organisations:

> The public probably knows that there are today in the Muslim world two branches: the orthodox one and the modernist one. The difference between these two branches hangs on the fact that the orthodox branch maintains that contemporary generations are not entitled to carry out new interpretations of the Koran. Traditionalists think, in fact, that we have become too removed from the great *ulama* who lived in the first three centuries following the Hijra, that is to say about ten centuries ago. They consider that contemporary generations can only obey the principles defined by those great *ulama*.

If the Muslim world is led by a group of Muslims like the traditionalists, I do not think it will be possible to establish a modern
state based on the principles of Islam. Obliging Muslims to submit to the teachings of ulama from the past, no matter how great those ulama were, amounts to denying their freedom and closing their minds. However, a few years ago, there appeared an important thinker, Jamal al-Din Al-Afghani, who founded a reform movement (a renaissance movement) in Islam. He held that in order to move forward one had to return to the Koran. This reformist branch gradually spread, moving on to India and eventually to Indonesia.

In my opinion, it is this modernist branch that allows us to hope that Islam will be capable of becoming the cornerstone of a state which is not opposed to but rather in tune with the progress of our times. Masyumi is a part of this movement which the West has named ‘modernist’, and it unites Muslim leaders who consider that each generation is entitled to interpret the Koran directly according to the needs of the day. If this approach is not followed, then it will undoubtedly be impossible for Islam to be the basis on which a modern state can be established.\(^51\)

Although this article summarises many of the arguments familiar to the leaders of the party, it constitutes nonetheless a singular exception. For reasons mentioned earlier, no official party document or, to the best of our knowledge, no speech given by a high-ranking party official stated so explicitly the importance of the modernist legacy to Masyumi. The reluctance to recognise this obvious link adds no doubt to the originality of the Masyumi position within Muslim reformism and, as we will see later, allows us to shed light on some of the political stances it adopted.

### Learning from the West

As with other parts of the world, the emergence of Indonesian reformism was largely a reaction to the challenges which arose from Western colonisation. The responsibility of the Dutch in this emergence of a desire for change was quite complex, however, and they were far more than simply an anti-model which jolted national pride awake. By participating in what Robert Van Nie called “the general tendency of the development of an Indonesian elite”, that is to say the transformation “from a traditional, cosmologically oriented hereditary

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elite to a modern welfare-state oriented education-based elite”, the colonial authorities contributed significantly to the formation of an ideal breeding ground for the inception of Islamic nationalism.52

This contradiction, which is inherent in all forms of modern colonisation and which contrasts with the Colbertist mercantilism practised by the French East-India Company, was of course not specific to Indonesia. By promoting progress throughout the colonised world, Westerners willingly sowed the seeds for the destruction of a system which they had hoped to perpetuate. Masyumi was indebted to the West in two significant respects which are intimately linked, namely for the education received by its leaders and the importance of references to the West in their writings.

The Ethical Policy Generation

The senior members of Masyumi, those who developed and defended the party’s policies within the party’s executive committee and in parliament, were for the most part the products of an educational system which had been put in place by the Dutch colonial power as part of its “ethical policy”. After the abuses of power carried out during the “system of forced cultivation”, which were denounced by Multatuli in his novel, Max Havelaar, the government of the Netherlands recognised that its duty as a colonial power was not only to promote the infrastructural improvement and economic development of their territories, but also to better indigenous people’s lives socially and culturally.

Between the beginning of the century and the 1930s, the colonial government progressively put in place a complete educational programme, going from primary school to third-level education, which was open to the indigenous population. However, Indonesians only progressively entered this educational system. In the early years of the century, a little less than 3,000 of them were attending primary schools (Holland Inlander School, HIS) and only 25 were attending secondary school (Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs, MULO, the lower half of secondary school; and Algemene Middelbare School, AMS, the upper half). In 1928, there were 75,000 indigenous children enrolled in the primary system and 6,500 in the secondary; on the eve of the Japanese

invasion, nearly 90,000 were attending a HIS, 8,000 were enrolled in a MULO and 1,800 were going to an AMS, as against 5,700 Europeans. Access to Dutch higher education in Indonesia, which consisted mainly of law schools, medical schools and institutes of technology, was even more restrictive for Indonesians. In 1920, only 20 managed to obtain a university diploma, and in 1930 there were barely 160; by the beginning of the Second World War, their number had risen to 200.

The future leaders of Masyumi made up a fair proportion of the happy few who benefitted from a Western education. Of the 57 party representatives elected to parliament in 1955, which is the largest statistical sample available to us, 32, that is to say more than half, had received at the very least their primary education in the Dutch system (HIS). Of these 32, 26 had continued their studies in the Dutch system up until secondary school (MULO and AMS) and 12 of them had received third-level diplomas from Dutch institutions. Six of them had pursued legal studies, three had been to medical school, two had obtained diplomas from the School of Public Administration and one had graduated from veterinary school. Of these 12 third-level graduates, only one, Soekiman, had pursued his studies in the Netherlands.

The Dutch curriculum was in fact not the only one in Indonesia which allowed students access to a “Western-style” education. Most of the 25 deputies who had not been educated in the Dutch system had attended schools run by reformist associations (Al Irshad, Muhammadiyah and Persatuan Islam), whose programmes were not entirely dedicated to religion but devoted a significant amount of time to the teaching of classical subjects. This openness to the Western system of education was, of course, typical of modernist organisations. Modernist schools did not have a monopoly over the education received by Masyumi leaders, however. When Anwar Haryono, for example, after having attended both Dutch schools and an institution run by Muhammadiyah, decided to become a santri, he chose to prepare himself

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53 George McTurnan Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1952), p. 31. In 1939, the Indonesian population represented 60 million inhabitants of which 240,000 were Europeans.
54 Ibid., p. 32.
for this in the famous _pesantren_ of Tebuireng, birthplace of the traditionalist movement, Nahdlatul Ulama. At that time, the school had a reputation even in modernist circles, for being intellectually open-minded. Wahid Hasjim, son of the school’s founder, had even carried out some reforms which meant that 70% of teaching time was devoted to general (i.e. non-religious) subjects. It can safely be said, then, that the 22 Masyumist deputies who were trained in the Islamic secondary level educational institutions also received their fair share of Western ideas and values (the three others make no mention of any schooling). Indeed, it should be pointed out that the two curriculums were by no means mutually exclusive, as almost half of the deputies who had come out of the Dutch education system had at one stage or another in their schooling attended a religious institution. The other deputies owed their knowledge of Islam to evening classes which they were given from an _ulama_, although, generally, only those who had attended the most prestigious _kiyai_ mentioned it in their official biography.

If we move on to look at the upper echelons of the party, we see that the imprint of the Dutch education system is even more significant on them. Of the 15 members of the party’s executive committee elected in 1954, only two (Taufiqurrahman and Fakih Usman) had received their education exclusively from religious schools. Five of them had received secondary school diplomas from Dutch schools (Mohammad Natsir, Prawoto Mangkusasmito, Mohammad Sardjan, Nj. Sunarjo Mangunpuspito and Nj. Zahra Hafni Abuhanifah), while the remaining eight had received third-level education. Of the latter, five had graduated from the Rechts-Hogeschool, where as well as courses in law it was also possible to study economics and sociology (Kasman Singodimedjo, Mohamad Roem, Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, Jusuf Wibisono and Boerhanoeddin Harahap), two had been to medical school, known as STOVIA (Soekiman and Abu Hanifah) while Isa Anshary indicated in his biography that he had studied economics and political science in Bandung though he never really specified which institution he had attended.

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57 A deputy from Central Sumatra, Dr. H. Ali Akbar, indicated, for example, that he had followed the teachings of Sjech Muhammad Djamil Djambek, one of the most renowned reformist _ulamas_ of the Minang region.
As public opinion regarded this type of education as very prestigious, the leaders of Masyumi often drew attention to it, sometimes to the detriment of the religious education they may have received, either from schools run by Islamic organisations or informally from ulamas. In the biographies of Masyumi leaders published by Abadi in the months running up to the 1955 general election, only four of them (Isa Anshary, Nj Sunarjo Mangunpuspito, K.H. Taufiqurrahman and Fakih Usman) mentioned it, despite the fact that all of them had received a religious education of some description. For their generation, an Islamic education had become less important, not just because less time was devoted to it in schools, but also because it held less weight in public perception. It seemed to the party’s candidates that it was more beneficial in the eyes of the voter to be a past-pupil of a Dutch secondary school or university than to have followed courses in a Muhammadiyah school or in a pesantren in the Minangkabau region.

In order to understand the importance of a Western-style education for those who took over the leadership of the party at the end of the 1940s, it needs to be examined in the context of the broader transformation of a social category which was the crucible of Indonesian nationalism: the middle class. George McTurnan Kahin has shown how the business community became a minority within the middle class in the last decades of Dutch colonialism, compared with civil servants, private sector employees and teachers. The latter two categories owed their success to a Western-style education, whereas Islamic education still figured prominently for those amongst the business community.58 The men who came to occupy the highest echelons of the party during the 1950s were typical, then, of the sociological transformation which the Muslim reformist movement had undergone. Where the reformist leaders of Sarekat Islam and Muhammadiyah in the previous generation had come mainly from the business community and had received, for the most part, an exclusively religious education, Masyumi’s leaders, thanks to their education in the Dutch system, worked in the intellectual professions until their election to parliament at least. Looking at the 57 Masyumi parliamentarians, we can see that 21 of them were civil servants, 17 were teachers, five of them were journalists and four were members of one of the liberal professions. Only nine of them were members of the business community, i.e. slightly more than 15

58 Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia, p. 29.
per cent (one of the deputies, a woman, did not give a profession). Amongst the leadership of the party, only Jusuf Wibisono and Kasman Singodimedjo had experience in the business world as employees of Dutch firms.

The Western culture with which the future Masyumi leadership were imbued, left a profound influence on them, and this is evidenced in the system of references that they gradually established in their writings.

**References to the West**

The intellectual influence of Western culture appears in various forms in the Masyumi leaders’ ideas. First of all, they were intellectually drawn to the issues raised by European history and American history and often referred to them in their writings. Second, and perhaps most strikingly, Western thinkers, in the eyes of Masyumi writers, were seen to lend more credibility to their arguments. References to the West were not, then, simply negative ones used to score political points by attacking the representatives of western culture. Although it should be said that there were occurrences of this during the formative years of the nationalist movement, such as when Mohammad Natsir crossed swords in the 1930s with a Dutch pastor in the AIT newspaper. In this heated exchange, Natsir, naturally, adopted a position contrary to his opponent’s system of references; but after the struggle for independence, we begin to see in these references the signs of the intellectual debt owed to the West by Masyumi’s theorists.

The political considerations elaborated by Masyumi’s theorists belonged, for the most part, to the tradition of Western thought. Indeed, their writings and speeches leave a European historian with the uncanny feeling of being on very familiar ground. Allusions to the West, whether to its culture or to its important historical figures, are far more frequent than references to Islam or Indonesia’s past. If we look at classical antiquity to begin with, little mention is made of Ancient Greece and Rome, and although the early Greek philosophers were highly

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respected—Kasman said that “Socrates, even for Muslim philosophers, will remain famous until the end of time”—their writings were only rarely analysed. Moving on to the Christian era, two periods were seen by the party’s thinkers as examples to be avoided when establishing an Islamic state: first, the Middle Ages which were seen as a period of total political domination by the Catholic church but also the 17th and 18th centuries, described as a period of absolute monarchy in Europe. Isa Anshary, for example, did not want “a state led by a supreme leader who embodied both political and religious authority, like what we saw in the Middle Ages when the Catholic Church commanded and oppressed mankind (both physically and morally) with a philosophy known as Universalism.”

Logically enough, Enlightenment ideas were celebrated by Masyumi writers, such as Soedjino Hardjosoediro, who offered readers of the *Hikmah* newspaper a detailed analysis of the “*trias politica*” theory. In it, he underlined the importance of contributions made to this theory by Montesquieu and John Locke, and explained why a strict separation of powers was vital in a democracy. However, if the party’s theorists joined with the philosophers of the 18th century in condemning absolutism and the concentration of power in one branch of government, part of the Enlightenment legacy was nonetheless rejected. This is where the difference between Masyumi and nationalists, who were religiously neutral, became apparent:

> We need to understand that as the colonial mindset shaped and left its mark on half of our intellectuals, there has appeared in the struggle for independence a principle which holds that religion and politics must be separated. [This doctrine can be explained by] the spirit of individualism which was advocated enthusiastically by some seventeenth and eighteenth century experts in social sciences, the most famous of whom is J.J. Rousseau.

The West’s political theories and historical experiences at that time inspired and illustrated most of the Masyumi leadership’s political ideas. Isa Anshary’s analysis of the French revolutionary experience led

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63 *Hikmah*, 27 March, 3 and 10 April 1954.
64 Anshary, *Falsafah Perdjuangan Islam*, p. 91.
him to conclude that a political revolution without a social revolution would necessarily be vain.\textsuperscript{65} Such considerations clearly showed the proximity between Masyumi’s theoretical framework. Indeed, one of Masyumi’s dilemmas was how to distance itself from Marxism, an ideology which of course the party had to spurn because of its impiety. Marxism and its Leninist and Stalinist offshoots held a real fascination for the Masyumi leadership, and they undoubtedly knew those political theories better than any other. Jusuf Wibisono, quoting Jules Monnerot, stated that communism was similar to a religion;\textsuperscript{66} Isa Anshary devoted long sections of his book, \textit{Philosophy of Islamic Struggle}, to considerations on \textit{Marxistische Historische materialische Weltanschauung} and \textit{Marxistische Staatsphilosophie}, which he often supplemented with long quotations in German.\textsuperscript{67} Communism was condemned, alongside fascism and Nazism, in a long list of models which were the antithesis of an Islamic state. Anshary denounced regimes

in which all authority is held by one man, who is of a superior race, a supreme leader, before whom the people are answerable instead of the contrary, like the fascism of Mussolini and Hitler who both idolized the Führerprinzip, or a totalitarian government led by one man, a proletariat dictator from the Bolshevik movement, which is founded upon the philosophy of dialectical materialism and implemented through communism or Leninism.\textsuperscript{68}

However, Masyumi’s leaders observed various Marxist movements closely, and also identified more positive models there. At the beginning of the 1960s, Kasman Singidimedjo made an appeal to his supporters from his prison cell to adopt a “progressivist-revolutionary” attitude in line with that exemplified by Rosa Luxemburg:

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{65} “Katja suram dari Revolusi Perantjis”, ibid., pp. 137 ff.
\item \textsuperscript{66} \textit{Hikmah}, 3 April 1954.
\item \textsuperscript{67} Anshary, \textit{Falsafah Perdjuangan Islam}, pp. 90, 198–200. It is legitimate to wonder to what extent Indonesian readers understood these long quotations, whose origin, moreover, was rarely specified. One of the longest of these was an extract from “a book by Marx and Engels”, no further details being given. It was taken from the magazine \textit{Ilmu Masyjarakjat} and illustrates the importance of the role played by periodicals in allowing access to original works which were otherwise difficult to come by.
\item \textsuperscript{68} Anshary, \textit{Falsafah Perdjuangan Islam}, p. 216.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
In the final analysis, we must accomplish the duty which Islam imposes on us to struggle until we manage, in accordance with Rosa Luxemburg’s theory of spontaneous organisation (which is consistent with being a progressivist revolutionary), to overcome more rapidly the previous dispensation which was willingly organized and then purposely neglected by Dutch colonisation and imperialism in Indonesia. We should read the Koran, verse 70 of the Sura Al Baqarah, which forbids us from being conservative.

The recent history of North America and Western bloc countries also gave Masyumi thinkers examples to follow in their policies. The question of the nation-state when it was addressed was almost always preceded by a reminder of Renan’s definition. The author of “What is a nation?” offered a tailor-made conceptual framework for contemporary Indonesia where the interests and aspirations of different ethnic groups posed a potential threat to its stability. The American and European experiences in establishing constitutions were often used to provide a legal framework for the party’s considerations on Indonesia’s future constitution. Moreover, Western states were often used as examples when trying to avoid any demonisation of the question of an Islamic state; those who had founded their institutions on religion were also shown to be paragons of democratic values. Mohammad Natsir, for instance, in a famous speech made in Karachi in April 1952 declared that:

We should be careful to pay attention to a misinterpretation by the West which leads to Islamic states like Pakistan, who are founded on religious principles and recognize Islam as the state religion, being suspected of wanting to become theocratic states. Unfortunately, we do not really know what exactly this term ‘theocracy’ signifies, beyond the fact that it must be rejected.

Many Americans, and by that I mean North Americans, consider their people and their country to be Christian. The late president,

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Franklin Delano Roosevelt, was clearly Christian and rarely forgot to mention the Christian religion in his appeals to the nations of the world during the Second World War. The English too are unmistakably a Christian people with a state religion. They have a king who is the head and the defender of the Anglican faith and numerous national events include religious ceremonies. Likewise, the Dutch are a Christian people whose constitution stipulates that the sovereign has to be a Protestant. All these states, as well as the other Christian countries of Europe, including even France, although it does not clearly recognize the place of religion in the state, have always given their support to Christian missionary activities outside of Europe, whether in Asia, Africa or Australia, particularly in colonised or semi-colonised countries.  

Another striking feature of the West’s influence on the ideas of Masyumi’s leaders is the role played by American and European authors in lending credibility to the party’s message. In this regard, references to the West revealed a mindset which was eager to convince its public but also no doubt somewhat prone to an inferiority complex. Statements about the benefits of Islam for public life, the greatness of Muslim civilisation or the importance of a revered expounder of Islam only seemed to have currency insofar as they had been recognised by a member of the Western intellectual community. Mohammad Natsir, when praising al-Ghazali, referred to the English scholar, Dr. Zwene who, curiously enough, ranked the Muslim philosopher as the “fourth most important person in the history of Islam”. Jusuf Wibisono, who was keen to rid Islam of its image as a misogynistic religion, quoted Gustave Le Bon, a sociologist and psychologist who had said in a book entitled The Civilisation of the Arabs that Islam was the first religion to recognise the status of women. Finally, the writings of the important Islamicists of the day, H.A.R. Gibb, Nothrop Sterling and Lothrop Stoddard, who all taught in prestigious universities in England and America, were often quoted to support an observation or an interpretation.

73 Hikmah, 3 April 1954.
If we were to look, then, only at the education and writings of the party leaders, Masyumi’s Western heritage would seem to be essential. The same could no doubt be said to be true of the intermediary echelons of the party, the local party heads, members of the petite bourgeoisie working in administrative jobs or owners of small businesses. These were the main readers of the periodicals and books published by the national leaders. The same does not hold, however, if we go further down the pyramid and look at the grassroots activists and particularly at the party’s electorate. What resonance could the references which we have just mentioned have for people who were illiterate or had no access to a Western-style education? They no doubt provoked conflicting reactions of fascination and aversion: fascination on the one hand for the technical superiority observed during the colonial period and which continued after decolonisation with the importation of certain consumer goods, but aversion also to a civilisation judged to be corruptive and domineering. Such contradictory sentiments could be reconciled effortlessly by the theorists of the party, but from the beginning of the 1950s, they undoubtedly contributed to the disenchantment with Masyumi amongst the broader Muslim electorate when the promised benefits of a western-style system of government failed to materialise.

A Lasting Tradition of Unity and Discord

When it was founded in 1945, Masyumi saw itself as a political focal point for various strands within the umma. It was also the heir to an age-old dialectical tension between unity and division which had heretofore shaped the troubled history of Indonesian Islam. All those who played a role of any importance in the foundation of the party brought with them, in some way or other, the legacy of existing or defunct organisations which they had been or still were members of.

The birth of an Islamic political movement within Indonesia was intimately linked to the propagation of reformist ideas across the country. The theme of renewal and the adoption of Western methods of organisation, both of which typified modernism, provided the groups which formed at the beginning of the 20th century with the motivation, the critical framework and the organisational structures necessary for their fledgling struggle. For these groups, however, the original impetus of the reformist movement, which had led to an awakening within part of the Muslim community, arose initially from the desire to
protect a certain number of established interests. The reformist movement was limited initially to a few specific social groups—members of the Arab community and *batik* traders—before gradually developing its support base to encompass the whole of Indonesian society. It thus grew from defending the interests of a community to participating in the nationalist struggle. Its first political activity was motivated by its observations of the West’s political and economic hegemony but also by the increasing domination of Western religions. Since the beginning of the 20th century, Christian missionaries had begun to reach out to the *abangan* population on Java with a certain degree of success, and this success was attributed, by some, to the paralysis within Islam and to the subverting of its practices.

The first signs of the reformist movement appeared in the Hadrami community which was composed of Arabs or descendants of Arabs from Hadramout living in Indonesia. This community, which was well-structured and relatively affluent, had maintained close links with its native region and kept itself informed of the various movements which were developing in the Middle East. In 1901, some members of the community founded the Djamiat Chair (“Charitable Society”), which was a conservative association whose goal was to educate the children of the Arab community. The movement remained relatively small-scale until a split in 1915 leading to the emergence of a more progressivist organisation, Al-Irsyad, which played a significant role in the diffusion of modernist ideas throughout Indonesia.\(^{74}\)

The second Muslim organisation to be established took the form of a trade association set up by *batik* traders. At the beginning of the second decade of the 20th century, the Dutch administration progressively loosened the strict control it had maintained up until then over

\(^{74}\) For more on the birth of Al-Irsyad, as well as the religious education in Mecca received by its founder, the Soudanese Ahmad Surkati and the dispute over the *sayyid* which was behind the creation of the new organisation, see Ahmed Ibrahim Abu Shouk, “An Arabic Manuscript on the Life and Career of Ahmad Luhammad Sûrkatî and His Irshâdi Disciples in Java”, in *Transcending Borders: Arabs, Politics, Trade and Islam in Southeast Asia*, ed. Huub de Jonge and Nico Kaptein (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2002), pp. 203–17. For an overall view of how the political mobilisation within the Hadrami community was transformed, see Natalie Mobini-Kesheh, *The Hadrami Awakening: Community and Identity in the Netherlands East Indies, 1900–1942* (Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1999).
Chinese activity in Indonesia. As a result, Peranakan traders, who were of Chinese origin, were entitled to travel, trade and invest much more freely than they had been able to previously. This led to much stiffer competition for the indigenous bourgeoisie around Surakarta and Yogya-
karta, notably in the batik trade.\footnote{In 1911, Muslim traders, in an attempt to defend their interests, founded a mutual assistance association in Solo known as the Rekso Roemekso. This organisation, which had no legal status and had been threatened with a ban by the authorities after its implication in anti-Chinese riots, changed dramatically in 1912 when, upon the initiative of its leader, Hadji Samanhoedi, it registered itself officially as an organisation and changed its name to Sarekat Islam (Muslim Union).\footnote{The reasons for the founding of this new association were more sociological in nature than religious. Sarekat Islam was much more concerned with defending and protecting the interests of Muslims as a social group than with working to restore Islam’s place in Indonesian society, and indeed Oemar Said Tjokroaminoto, who was in charge of running the association for more than 20 years, was not himself a religious figure. For a time, Tjokroaminoto was likened to the Ratu Adil, the just king of Javanese folklore, and he was never presented as a particularly pious Muslim. In fact, he drew his political inspiration more from socialism than from Islam.\footnote{The spectacular development of Sarekat Islam during the first 10 years of its existence relied largely on the Marxist networks which sought to involve the movement in radical and revolutionary activities. At the same time, however, the growing influence of Muhammadiyah within the organisation led to the emergence of a powerful anti-communist branch.}}

The third important pillar of Indonesian reformism, Muhammadiyah, was created in 1912. Its founder, Ahmad Dahlan, was a licensed member of the Islamic clergy who had spent years in Mecca

\footnote{Takashi Siraishi, \textit{An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912–1926} (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 37–9.}

\footnote{It is commonly known as the Sarekat Dagang Islam (Union of Muslim Traders), however, as it appeared, initially, as the local branch of an organisation with the same name founded in Bogor in 1909. Ibid., pp. 42–3.}

\footnote{The place occupied by Islam in the SI’s political programme, defined at its 1917 congress, was very limited. It stipulated that “the state and the government should not be influenced by the interference of one religion, but should place itself above all religions.” Noer, \textit{The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia}, p. 127.}
and whose father was a religious official of the Yogyakarta Kauman. He adopted the reformist philosophy and participated actively in the organisations which were the precursors to the nationalist movement of the 1930s and 40s, namely Djamiat Chair, Boedi Oetomo and Sarekat Islam. Muhammadiyah’s objectives were above all educational and social; it considerably extended the reach of reformism amongst the Indonesian public through its networks of mosques and schools but also thanks to the work of a charitable committee, a women’s organisation and scout groups. It was not involved directly in politics, but many of its members were active within Sarekat Islam (SI) and, in 1920, the link between the two organisations was made official. At that point, Muhammadiyah became the religious arm of SI and strengthened the anti-communist branch within it.

The driving force behind this merger was Agus Salim. He had formerly been a translator in the Dutch East Indies consulate in Jeddah and upon his return to Indonesia, he was charged by the Dutch authorities with the surveillance of Sarekat Islam. He had been a confirmed member of the reformist movement since 1915 and so he quickly abandoned his mission and was soon made second-in-command to Tjokroaminoto. He was respected for his religious knowledge and was opposed to any attempt at organising a revolution. At the 1921 congress, he contributed to SI’s definitive break with its Marxist wing, which meant that the former “red” sections of SI (SI Merah) were left with no other option but to join the newly-created Communist Party.

It is important to mention also the foundation at this time of another organisation which was to play an important role in the history of Indonesian Islam: Persatuan Islam (Unity of Islam, also known

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78 The Kauman was originally the district inhabited by the religious officials of the sultanate. For further examination of Dahlan’s role in the transformation of the Kauman, see Marcel Bonneff, “Le kauman de Yogyakarta. Des fonctionnaires religieux convertis au réformisme et à l’esprit d’entreprise”, Archipel 30 (1985).
79 For concrete examples of the activities organised by this reformist organisation, see Mitsu Nakaruma, The Crescent Arises over the Banyan Tree: A Study of the Muhammadiyah Movement in a Central Javanese Town (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1983).
80 Noer, The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, p. 124.
as Persis), which was created in Bandung in 1923. This organisation was founded in West Java by the descendants of families who had originated from Sumatra—mainly from the Minangkabau region—and had emigrated in search of new trading opportunities. One of the main figures of the movement, Hadji Zamzam, had studied for three years in Mecca and was close to Ahmad Surkati, the founder of the Al Irshad movement, the forerunner of radical reformism in Indonesia. The most prominent member of Persis, however, was Ahmad Hassan (often called Hassan Bandung) who was born in Singapore to a Tamil father and a Javanese mother. He joined the movement in 1924 and rapidly rose to become its leader. Under his leadership, Persis enjoyed a considerable degree of influence within the Indonesian public. The organisation was only composed of a few hundred members, which meant that it did not experience any of the organisational problems and internal crises which hampered Sarekat Islam, Muhammadiyah and Al Irshad (the latter, for example, was involved in a long drawn-out dispute with Djamiat Chair concerning the status of Indonesians of Arab origin). It was therefore able to devote all its time and energy to religious questions. Through the work it carried out in the fields of translation and education, but above all through the influence of its periodical, *Pembela Islam*, Persis played a central role in the religious debates of the 1920s and 1930s.82

The beginning of the 1920s marked the apogee of the Muslim reformist movement. It was freed from its bonds with communism and had set down firm roots throughout the country, both through a religious and social care organisation (Muhammadiyah) and through a political organisation (Sarekat Islam). It had a clear identity and counted hundreds of thousands of Muslims amongst its ranks. The creation in 1925, on the joint initiative of Sarekat Islam and Muhammadiyah, of an organisation of young Muslims, the Jong Islamieten Bond (JIB), confirmed the bright prospects which lay ahead for the reformist movement.83 On this point at least, the collaboration between the two big reformist movements proved to be fruitful. The JIB constituted a veritable breeding ground for the future leadership of Masyumi,

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83 On the birth of this organisation which emerged from the split within Jong Java, see Van Niel, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite*, p. 168.
but as we will see later, the golden age of cooperation between Muhammadiyah and SI was short-lived. This was partly due to the fact that the Dutch, through a series of skilful political manoeuvres, eventually forced Islamic organisations into making painful choices.

The Netherlands’ policy with regard to Islam was, for almost 40 years, heavily influenced by the analysis of Snouck Hurgronje. Snouck, who was a professor at the University of Leiden and also a consultant for the Office of Indigenous Affairs in the Ministry of the Colonies, managed to ease the fears of his fellow-Dutchmen towards Indonesian Muslims and initiate a new policy towards Islam. On his advice, the colonial administration authorised and even encouraged Muslim initiatives as long as they were limited to social and religious fields. Any political manifestations of Islam, however, were kept on a tight rein. This subtle distinction established by the Dutch colonial authorities helped drive a wedge between Muhammadiyah and SI and put an end to their collaboration. In 1923, Sarekat Islam, which had just changed its name to Partai Sarekat Islam, adopted a policy known as Hijira (*Hijra*), which Agus Salim compared to Gandhi’s policy of non-cooperation. It involved each of the party members refusing any collaboration with the Dutch. Despite the fact that Muhammadiyah disapproved of this policy of opposition to the colonial administration, from whom it received a significant amount of subsidies for its schools, Tjokroaminoto refused to compromise on this issue. Muhammadiyah’s position convinced him of the necessity to persuade his party to adopt a measure forbidding joint membership of the two organisations, which he succeeded in doing in 1927. At the same time as this split began to appear within the reformist movement, the appearance of two formidable rival organisations succeeded in putting an end to the hegemonic position held by Sarekat Islam as the main political representative of Indonesian Muslims.

The first of these two opponents emerged from a desire amongst the representatives of a traditionalist Islam (*kuam tua*) to form their

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84 Certain movements were invited to participate in the Volksraad—the consultative assembly set up by the Dutch—but the most active members were exiled, in particular Muhammadiyah members from the Minangkabau region. Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia*, p. 108.

85 To be understood here in its original meaning of a rupture with the colonial government. Ibid., p. 159.
own movement. Since the beginning of the century, two major points of discord had appeared between reformists and traditionalists. First of all, the reformists, by advocating *ijtihad*, refused to recognise any particular value in the interpretations proposed by the Shafi'i school of jurisprudence; secondly, two religious rites which traditionalists were particularly attached to attracted the ire of reformists, namely prayers for the dead (*tahlilan*) and the cult of saints (*ziarah*). Despite these differences, in the first two decades of the century, there existed a certain amount of collaboration between the two branches of Islam. As we saw earlier, traditionalists who were part of the Shafi‘i schools of jurisprudence in Indonesia had not been spared by the winds of reformism which had swept through Indonesian Islam. The traditionalists who advocated a return to the orthodoxy of the *madhhab* were in reality adopting a similar approach to their reformist opponents, and some traditionalists even joined reformist groups. Several representatives of the traditionalist *kaum tua* branch, for example, participated in the foundation of Persatuan Islam. This, of course, was several years before Persatuan Islam became the defender of *kaum muda*, the modernist branch of Islam.  

Another example is that of Kyai Abdul Wahab Hasbullah, who was one of the linchpins of the traditionalist movement but also participated in the Sarekat Islam group. His work in the traditionalist movement drew him closer to Kyai Hasjim As‘j’ari, the heir of a prestigious family of *ulamas* and the founder of the Tebuireng Pesantren in the East Javanese region of Jombang which became a focal point for the traditionalist revival. These “pioneers of tradition” agreed with modernists on the necessity to reform the curriculum of Koranic schools in order to introduce western subjects. They often read the same newspapers and had the same opinion on the necessity to open up to the modern world.

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86 It was not until 1926 that the traditionalist representatives left Persis to found their own organisation, which was later to be integrated into NU. Federspiel, *Persatuan Islam: Islamic Reform in Twentieth Century Indonesia*, p. 14.

87 On the role played by Kyai Wahab, see Feillard, *Islam et armée dans l’Indonésie contemporaine*, pp. 24 ff.

88 The efforts made in this regard by Kyai Hasjim Asjari, who introduced the teaching of general subjects into his pesantren in 1929 can be likened to Mohammad Natsir’s endeavours at the time within Persatuan Islam.

However, as the years went by and the number of reformist organisations grew, the traditionalists began to feel less and less at home in them. The malaise, which had remained in the background for a long time but finally came to the fore with the question of the Caliphate, was fuelled by two factors: the ongoing transformation of Sarekat Islam into the political branch of Muhammadiyah and the questioning of the authority of traditionalist ulamas by the modernists, who judged them to be too out of date (kolot). The first Al-Islam congress, held in 1922 in Cirebon, was the scene of violent confrontations on this issue between representatives of kaum tua and kaum muda. At the second congress held in Garut in 1924, only the modernist movement was represented, and in January 1926 when it was decided to send two Indonesian representatives to the World Pan-Islamic Congress to be held in Mecca in June of that year, it was again two modernists, Tjokroaminoto and K.H. Mansur, who were chosen. For the traditionalist branch, it was essential to be able to defend its religious practices which had been called into question by the Wahhabi purists. They therefore decided to create a Committee for the Reconquering of Hijaz (Komite Merembuk Hijaz) which was to represent the traditionalist branch before King Ibn Saud. To help in this task, an organisation was set up a few days later, called “the Revival of the Ulama” (Nahdlatul Ulama), which officialised the split between the two branches of Islam.

At the same time as Islam's political unity fell apart, the identification of nationalism with Islam, which Sarekat Islam had managed to embody, also ended, with the establishment of a powerful secular nationalist branch. With the exception of the Marxist movement which had fallen into disarray since the attempted insurrection in 1926, several organisations contributed to the emergence of a political movement no longer bound by references to Islam. The Taman Siswa organisation, for example, founded in Yogyakarta in 1921 by Ki Hadjar

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91 Van Niel, The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite, p. 209.
Dewantoro, developed a network of schools which promoted an education system blending aspects of Javanese and Western culture. These schools became the crucible for many of the Indonesian nationalist leaders. But the organisation which played the biggest part in the birth of this secular movement was Perhimpunan Indonesia (Indonesian Union).

Initially merely a students’ organisation (known as the Indies Association) composed of Indonesians studying in the Netherlands, Perhimpunan Indonesia’s development as a nationalist movement was the unintentional outcome of the colonial government’s ethical policy. The colonial authorities had created a system of scholarships which allowed the brightest Indonesian pupils to pursue their studies in the metropolis; the aim of this project was to create an indigenous elite, which they naturally hoped would be favourable to Dutch interests. However, this generous policy however quickly backfired. Perhimpunan Indonesia, as it became known after its transformation into a nationalist organisation in 1922, was an anti-colonial organisation, and it fully exploited its network of former scholarship pupils, who had now returned to their home country, in an attempt to build a pro-independence party for the Dutch East Indies. These efforts came to fruition in 1927 with the birth of the National Indonesian Party (Partai Nasional Indonesia, PNI). The new party came rapidly under the control of the charismatic personality of a young engineer educated in Bandung: Sukarno. The first version of the PNI had a short and turbulent existence. By 1930, it was outlawed and saw its members disperse into several small parties (Partai Rakyat Indonesia, Partindo and Klub Pendidikan, for example). Despite the break-up of the party, Sukarno already exercised at this time considerable influence over Indonesian political life. In the hope of bringing about a future independent Indonesia made up of non-Muslims as well as Muslims, he wished to limit Islam to the private sphere and so became the mouthpiece for a secular conception of the state and the champion of an Indonesian form of Kemalism, though in a less anti-religious form than the original version. Through the epic debates he held with Ahmad Hassan and Mohammad Natsir (at that time Hassan’s brilliant right-hand man within Persis), he obliged the supporters of a political role

for Islam to clarify their vision for the future.\(^94\) Though he was not able to shake Ahmad Hassan’s belief in his own radicalism, he undoubtedly contributed to Natsir’s conversion to a certain form of realism, the extent of which could be seen later in the 1950s when Natsir became prime minister.

The emergence of new organisations onto the Indonesian political landscape was not the only reason for the reformist movement’s decline in power. During the 1930s, while a new generation of nationalist leaders was forming in the organisations which had sprouted from the PNI after it was banned, political Islam was continuing to splinter, riven by conflicting egos and disagreements on which strategy to follow.\(^95\) In 1933, Soekiman was expelled from Sarekat Islam following a dispute with Tjokroaminto, one of its leaders.\(^96\) Those within SI who disapproved of this decision created a committee called the Persatuan Islam Indonesia and, along with the PSII Merdeka from Yogyakarta, created a new party: the Partai Islam Indonesia (PARTII). Although this new party received a favourable reception in many parts of Java, it eventually waned and disappeared in the years following its foundation. Its leaders, who were close to important figures in Muhammadiyah, notably its president, K.H. Mas Mansur, had suggested that Sarekat Islam should consider changing their \(\textit{hijra}\) policy and no longer view it as an immutable principle which could not be adapted to particular events and circumstances. They also asked SI to limit themselves to politics and to leave social care and educational projects under the responsibility of the organisations which had been created for this purpose. It was as a result of SI’s refusal of these requests that Partai Islam Indonesia (PII) was founded in 1937. While all this was going on, the dispute within SI concerning what attitude to adopt towards

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\(^95\) In the following years, it was the PNI rather than SI which led Indonesian rural unrest. This consolidated its role in the struggle against colonial domination. Harry J. Benda, \textit{The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam under the Japanese Occupation 1942–1945} (The Hague and Bandung: W. Van Hoeve Ltd, 1958), p. 55.

\(^96\) Soekiman publicly denounced the embezzlement carried out by SI leaders within Persatuan Pegawai Pegadaian Hindia (the East Indies Union of Employees of the Pious Mounts). Noer, \textit{The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia}, p. 155. Accusations of financial misdealings had already been made against Tjokroaminto during the first decade of the century.
the colonial authorities had become even more rancorous after Tjokroaminoto’s death, with the new leadership’s opposition to any form of cooperation leading Agus Salim to found a rival organisation, Barisan Penjadar PSII (Awareness Front of the PSII).97

As the 1930s came to a close, the Islamic political movement, led by the reformists, now had to reconcile itself to the fact that it was no longer the only component of the nationalist movement. They were now forced to come to a consensus with traditionalists before being able to speak on behalf of Indonesian Muslims, and so in 1937 they joined with the traditionalists in a Supreme Council of the Muslims of Indonesia (Madjlis Islam A’la Indonesia, MIAI). They also participated alongside nationalists in two organisations created in 1939: the Political Federation of Indonesia (Gabungan Politik Indonesia, GAPI) and the Council of the Indonesian People (Madjlis Rakjat Indonesia, MRI) which was composed of the GAPI, the MIAI and the Federation of Government Workers (the PVPN).

This historic alliance between the different strands of Indonesian nationalism in which the Islamic branch had managed—with some difficulty—to find its place did not survive the debates provoked by the question of how to react to the Japanese threat, however. The fragile alliance fell apart at the beginning of 1942 when the Indonesian nationalists, without consulting the representatives of the Islamic movements, spoke out on behalf of the MRI to support the Dutch in the war against Japan.

Masyumi, which brought together in 1945 all the Islamic organisations in Indonesia, inherited the complex history of these movements which we have just sketched. The party carried with it the umma’s hopes for unity, and it often made reference to the 12 Islamic Congresses (Al-Islam first, and then Konggres Muslimin Indonesia) which had been held in Indonesia between 1921 and 1941. The commemorations of these congresses during the 1950s provided Masyumi’s newspapers and magazines with opportunities to make stirring appeals for unity.98 However, the legacy of the interwar years for the party also included an extraordinary propensity for in-fighting amongst the representatives of the Muslim community. This characteristic of Indonesian Islamic identity was less celebrated, but it was no doubt the one which

97 Ibid., p. 163.
98 See, for example, Suara Partai Masjumi, February 1951.
Political Genesis and Historical Lineage

left the greatest mark on Masyumi. The end of the 1920s saw the appearance within the Muslim community of a culture in which power tended to split into little baronies. This could be the result either of the ambition of a charismatic leader, geographic or social differences within the Muslim community, or sometimes because of differences in worship practices. Masyumi bore the scars of this culture of divisiveness which was responsible for the schisms of 1947 (the revival of the Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia) and 1952 (the departure of Nahdlatul Ulama).

Another legacy of the 1920s and 30s for the party was the organisational networks which had been established at that time. The future Masyumi leaders had, for the most part, earned their political spurs in the 1920s and 30s in the organisations which we have just mentioned. Within the Masyumi party, wings formed which reflected the organisations they had previously belonged to and which they generally remained faithful to. The changes in the composition of the party leadership over the years were an accurate reflection of the evolution in the balance of power between these different groups. At its foundation in 1945, the party executive reflected Masyumi’s aspiration to bring together the different Muslim organisations but also revealed their respective political influences. Composed of a Party Leadership Council (Dewan Pimpian) and of a Religious Council (Madjelis Sjuro, which literally means Consultative Council), the partly leadership was mainly composed of former members of PSII (Abikusno Tjokrosujoso, Harsono Tjokroaminoto and Anwar Tjokroaminoto); and also of those who had joined it after breaking away from both PII (Soekiman, Wali al-Fatah, Mr A. Kasmat and M. Natsir) and from Gerakan Penjadar (H.A. Salim and Mohamad Roem). Behind PSII came Muhammadiyah, which had eight representatives on the committee (Prawoto Mangkusasmito, Mawardi, Faried Ma’ruf, Junus Anis, Faqih Usman, Dr. Sjamsuddin, Ki Bagus Hadikusumo, Kasman Singodimedjo and K.H.A. Wahab), twice as many as Nahdlatul Ulama which only had four seats (K.H.A. Dahlan, K.H. Fathurrahman, Hasjim As’jari and K.H.A. Wahid Hasjim). Three small local organisations accounted for the remaining seats: the Perikatan Umat Islam (PUI) from Majalengka, a small traditionalist organisation represented by K.H. Abdul Halim; the Persatuan Umat Islam Indonesia from Sukabumi, represented by

99 Although the members of the Party’s executive committee were elected by the congress, they were not considered as representatives of their original organisations.
K.H. Sanusi; and the Madjedis Islam Tinggi (MIT) from Sumatra, represented by Sjech M. Djamil Djambek.

10 years later, the political diversity of Masyumi had noticeably diminished. It had become the descendant of a much more coherent political movement made up of activists from Jong Islamieten Bond (JIB), Muhammadiyah and Sarekat Islam’s splinter groups. Of the 57 Masyumi deputies elected to Parliament, only one of them said that he had been a member of Sarekat Islam. However, 15 deputies had come from its splinter groups, namely Gerakan Penjadar and Partai Islam Indonesia, and they were often members of Muhammadiyah as well. 12 deputies stated that they had been members of JIB. The break with PSII in 1947 was essentially along the lines of the divisions which affected PSII’s illustrious forerunner Sarekat Islam in the 1930s. In other words, those who had been loyal during the war to H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto and to his brother, Abikusno Tjokrosujoso, transferred their loyalty to Harsono Tjokroaminoto, the son of Sarekat Islam’s founder. Conversely, those activists who had split from SI and joined breakaway groups such as Gerakan Penjadar (PII) refused to join PSII in 1947 and remained members of Masyumi. The same loyalty could be seen amongst the traditionalists in the party, as only two Masyumi deputies declared that they were members of Nahdlatul Ulama. As for the other organisations mentioned in deputies’ biographies, they attest to the party’s implantation on a local level (Persuatan Islam Cirebon, Persatuan Ulama Seluruh Aceh and Al-Jamiyatul Wasilyah from North Sumatra, for example).100

If we move on to look at the executive committee of the party in the early 1950s, we can identify a small coterie of leaders, united by links that had been created in the 1930s. Jong Islamieten Bond, especially its Bandung branch, had a significant role to play in creating the bonds that existed between this little group of individuals. All of them were born between 1904 and 1910, and took their first steps in the political arena under the benevolent eyes of the elder members of Sarekat Islam and Muhammadiyah.

Mohammad Natsir, who was the most prominent member of the party leadership from 1949 onwards, was born in Alahan Panjang in West Sumatra in 1908. Having completed his first year of studies in Padang in his home province, he settled in Bandung in 1927 to attend

100 Parlaungan, *Hasil Rakjat Memilih, Tokoh-Tokoh Parlemen di republik Indonesia.*
classes given in a Dutch secondary school (AMS). At that time, he joined JIB, and in 1929, became head of its local branch. Thanks to his position in JIB, he came in contact with Haji Agus Salim, who is often considered to be the spiritual mentor to the young generation of modernists which Natsir was part of. More importantly, he also became close, at that time, to other activists within JIB who, 20 years later, were to become his right-hand men within the Masyumi leadership, namely Kasman Singodimedjo, Mohamad Roem and Jusuf Wibisono. These early days earned the future leader of Masyumi a solid reputation as something of an expert on religion. Disconcerted by the lack of interest shown by other students in Islam, he organised a series of classes and lectures to remedy this situation.

Jusuf Wibisono, who was one year younger than Natsir, attended the same school, and he soon joined the Bandung branch of JIB. He subsequently moved to Batavia in order to pursue third-level studies at the Higher School of Law (Rechts Hooge School) and became the leader of JIB’s branch there. In Batavia, he met Mohamad Roem (born in 1908) and Kasman Singodimedjo, who at that time was the national president of JIB. Following a disagreement concerning the best strategy for the organisation to follow, Wibisono and Roem decided in 1934 to create a new organisation, the Studenten Islam Studie-club, whose

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103 Kasman, according to his father, was born in 1904, but most documents relating to him mention 1908 as his date of birth. The explanation for this is rather comical: given the lack of a reliable civil register, it was common at the time to allow a child to register for school when he was able to pass his right hand over his head and touch his left ear. When Kasman was a boy, his younger brother was already at school while he himself was still unable to register. When he was finally accepted, he decided to move his date of birth back four years, so embarrassed was he to be behind his brother. Panitia peringatan 75 tahun, *Kasman, Hidup itu berjuang, Kasman Singodimedjo 75 tahun* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1982), p. 4. Mohammed Roem, Kasman Singodimedjo and Jusuf Wibisono had already become friends a few years previously when attending medical school (STOVIA) together. Wibisono was later obliged to abandon his studies after a medical visit declared him unfit.
objectives were close to JIB’s but who only admitted students, unlike JIB which also admitted secondary school pupils. The new organisation’s newspaper, which was first called *Orgaan van de Studenten Islam Studie-Club* before changing its name to *Moslims Reveil*—though it continued to be written in Dutch—was an efficient means of disseminating the Muslim nationalist movement’s ideas amongst students.\(^{104}\)

The organisation was joined in 1938 by Boerhanoeddin Harahap—born in 1917 and appointed to the Masyumi executive committee in 1952—who became its secretary during his studies in the Rechts Hooge School after having been a JIB activist while studying in Yogyakarta.\(^{105}\)

One of the few Masyumi leaders to have been a member neither of JIB, the *Studie-Club* nor PII was Sjafruddin Prawiranegara. Born in 1911 in the region of Banten, his education followed a very classical path—he attended an AMS in Bandung before entering the BHS in Batavia in 1939—which brought him rapidly into contact with his future political allies. However, the first organisation he joined, the Unitas Studiosorum Indonesiensis (USI), was non-political. It had been set up with the help of the Dutch authorities with the aim of thwarting the influence of student nationalist movements.\(^{106}\)

At the same time, in Medan a second group of modernist intellectuals emerged which, unlike Natsir and Isa Anshary, had not moved to Java. They were led mainly by Z.A. Ahmad, Yunan Nasution and Abu Hanifah, who all later became members of Masyumi’s leadership council in the 1950s, as well as by HAMKA, who was part of the Muhammadiyah leadership and later a Masyumi deputy in 1955. Although this small group of intellectuals came to prominence in particular for their considerable publishing output, which we mentioned earlier, they were also active politically. They were initially members

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of Permi, and when it was outlawed in 1933, most of them joined Soekiman and Natsir in PII, and indeed Z.A. Ahmad became head of PII in Sumatra.

The contacts made before the outbreak of the war by the future Masyumi leadership were not exclusively in Muslim modernist circles. The enthusiasm typical of many young people’s political activism added to the very wide range of organisations that sprang up during the 1920s and 30s, and meant that the wide-ranging nationalist movement contained many different and sometimes tortuous political itineraries. Soekiman Wirjosandjojo, who was president of Masyumi between 1945 and 1951, started out in politics as a secular nationalist. Born in 1898 in Sewu, near Sukarta in Central Java, he came from a family that worked in the retail business and was close to organisations which were the forerunners of the Javanese nationalist movement. His brother Satiman Wirjosandjojo was one of the founding members of Tri Koro Dharmo (Three Noble Goals), the youth organisation within Budi Utomo, which, three years after its foundation, changed its name to Jong Java in 1915. As a young man, Soekiman, who graduated from medical school (STOVIA) in 1922, went on to study in the Netherlands where he became actively involved in Perhimpunan Indonesia. He became president of the organisation in 1925 thanks to the support of Mohammad Hatta, the future vice president of the Republic of Indonesia. Shortly after that, he returned to Indonesia and continued his political activity there in the ranks of PSII. As we do not have a detailed biography of Soekiman, it is unfortunately difficult to explain this change in political orientation, but it shows that there was a certain amount of interplay between the different strands within Indonesian nationalism. Indeed, Soekiman maintained excellent relations

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107 In 1930, the modernist organisation, Sumatra Thawalib, founded by HAMKA’s father, broadened its activities beyond its traditional field of education and became involved in the political domain. It later became Persatuan Muslimin Indonesia (Indonesian Muslim Union, PMI), and in 1932 took the name of Permi.
111 The only book to be published on Soekiman that we are aware of is a collection of his political writings, which contains no biographical details.
with secular nationalists, and in 1932, it was to Mohammad Hatta that he gave the job of editor-in-chief of the daily newspaper which he had just launched, *Utusan Indonesia* (“the Indonesian Messenger”).

Another political career illustrating the ties that were forged outside of Islamic circles is that of Isa Anshary. Isa was head of Masyumi in West Java before becoming a member of the executive committee of the party in 1954. He was considered a radical, and was very hostile to the nationalist secularist movement. From 1953, he repeatedly launched stinging attacks on Sukarno, despite the fact that the president had in fact been Isa’s first political mentor. Isa came from Sungai Batang in Central Sumatra and arrived in Bandung in 1932 at the age of 16. It was at this time that he became fascinated with the ideas put forward by Sukarno and he even went so far as to spend a whole night in a conference hall so as to be able to listen to one of Sukarno’s speeches. This revelation convinced Isa to abandon his initial project, which was to pursue his studies in Yogyakarta, and to take up a political career instead. He signed up for Partindo, lying about his age to do so, and threw himself into political activism. At the same time, he became one of the leaders of the Bandung branch of the Persatuan Pemuda Rakjat Indonesia (Popular Union of Indonesian Youth), a radical revolutionary organisation. Unlike Soekiman, the circumstances of Anshary’s conversion to Islamic nationalism are well-documented. It was a conversion which further demonstrated the links that existed between the different strands within nationalism, although those very strands were later to fall out over various issues. Alongside his involvement in Partindo, Anshary was also taking part in religion classes organised by Perstuan Islam. He gradually became more involved in the Muslim movement and took over the leadership of the Preparatory Committee of Permi’s Bandung Branch (Panitia Persiapan Permi Tjabang Bandung). The Sumatran party at that time considered establishing itself in Java, but it eventually abandoned the idea following an agreement with Partindo’s leadership. The two parties realised that they had common goals and decided not to compete against each other. After the break-up of Partindo in 1934, Anshary restricted his political activity to Islamic

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113 See *infra*, chapter 4.
114 He did so in order to avoid the police stopping him from getting into the conference hall; at that time, political rallies were forbidden for those under 18. Aboebakar, *Sejarah Hidup K.H.A. Wahid Hasjim*, p. 220.
organisations, becoming a member first of Muhammadiyah and then of Perstuan Islam. It was at this time that his political career became linked to Natsir’s, whom he was very close to, and when Natsir later became chairman of the Bandung branch of the Partai Islam Indonesia, Isa became its secretary.\(^{115}\)

The creation of a multi-party system at the end of 1945 as well as subsequent political events meant that political careers, which had up until then evolved in a relatively erratic fashion, became a lot more predictable. After independence, it became a lot rarer for political figures or activists to move from secular nationalism to Islamic nationalism. The pursuit of power and the prospect of elections led the two sides to develop opposing policies despite the fact that their electoral bases often came from more or less the same sociological class. The paths followed over the years by Mohammad Hatta and Soekiman Wirjosandjojo show how fine the boundary was between the two movements. Although the two men were very close and shared the same opinions at university, by 1945 they symbolised two very different visions for society. Their policies were not as far apart as their spirited clashes might lead one to believe however, and indeed, during the 1950s and the first years of the New Order, their paths were to join again.\(^{116}\)

### Masyumi—A Japanese Invention?

Although the Japanese occupation of Indonesia only lasted three years, from March 1942 to August 1945, it constitutes an essential stage in the emergence of Masyumi. During this period, the Japanese military government tried to harness Islam to serve their war policy. This policy was known as “the Asian Co-prosperity Sphere”, but it was not implemented consistently, sometimes carried out in earnest and other times half-heartedly. It gave birth in November 1943 to a first version of Masyumi: the Consultative Counsel of Indonesian Muslims (Madjlis Sjuro Muslimin Indonesia). It is not as easy as it might appear to determine the extent of this organisation’s influence on the Muslim party of the same name founded in November 1945. The composition of the Japanese version of Masyumi can probably explain the way positions

\(^{115}\) Ibid., p. 221.

of responsibility in the new Masyumi were distributed between, on the one hand, ulamas who were at the head of important Muslim organisations (such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama) and on the other, politicians who had come from Sarekat Islam. The former had been in charge of the Japanese Masyumi and so remained somewhat in the background when the party was founded, whereas the latter had been less involved in collaboration with the Japanese and so took over most of the party’s executive positions.

It was in the middle of the 1920s that the Japanese came into contact with Islam, and soon afterwards they chose it to be one of the main pillars of their regional policy. They sent students to Egypt to become trained in the art of Muslim propaganda, and in 1939, Tokyo hosted a pan-Islamic conference in which MIAI participated. In the months leading up to the Japanese invasion, clandestine networks were established in Indonesia, which contributed to the success of the landing of troops in at least two regions of Sumatra. Once these troops had a foothold in the country, they attempted to harness the support of Muslim organisations in order to curry favour with the local population.

The initial measures taken by the occupier, however, indicated a refusal to allow Islam any form of political expression. Only two organisations—PSII and PII—were officially abolished, in March 1942, but the Japanese military authorities also set up at this time their own system for controlling Islam. This was composed essentially of two organisations: a Preparatory Committee for the Unity of the Muslim Community (Persiapan Persatuan Ummat Islam), led by Abikusno Tjokrosujoso, a former president of PSII and a brother of H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto; and an Office of Religious Affairs (Shumubu), which was first of all led by a Japanese official until August 1944, when a traditionalist leader, K. Hasjim As’ari, took over. As the Japanese occupier wanted to be able to avail of a mass movement which would reach all Muslims, they allowed MIAI to be revived in September 1942. The organisation was given an important role to play in the “Triple A Movement”—“Japan leader of Asia, Japan protector of Asia and Japan light of Asia.”

118 The other political parties were not directly banned, but as all political activity was now outlawed, they were effectively muzzled.
This recognition of Islam's prominence in the country did not, however, fulfil the hopes which had initially been raised on both sides. The Indonesians quickly realised that the occupiers' goodwill was nothing more than a carefully planned attempt to use Muslim organisations for their own ends, that is to say the enhancement of Japan's military operation. The ulamas cooperated tentatively at first, but this cooperation was rapidly jeopardised by a series of Japanese blunders. The ceremony of sakeirei imposed by the Japanese was particularly hard for religious dignitaries to accept. This ceremony was a reverence for the emperor performed facing the direction of Tokyo and so was offensive to Muslims because of its similarity with rukun salat, the Muslim prayer performed facing Mecca. Indeed, two members of Nahdlatul Ulama's leadership, Hasjim Asj'ari and Kiai Mahfudz, spent several months in prison for refusing to perform this reverence. In addition to this problem, it seemed that the Japanese authorities were beginning to lose control of MIAI, which was dominated by former members of PSII. The organisation had put in place, since January 1943, a vast programme to help people in need, which was financed by a centralised system of almsgiving (zakat). The system, known as Bait al-Mal, quickly became successful. It soon extended to 35 regencies in Java and was in danger of competing with the Office of Religious Affairs that had been set up by the Japanese to control Islam at a local level. It was for this reason that the military authorities intervened to shut down the operation only a few months after the project had been launched.\(^{119}\)

Realising the failure of their “Muslim operation”, the Japanese authorities then turned their hopes and attention to the nationalist camp which they had, up until then, been marginalised. In March 1943, they created the Putera (Pusat Tenaga Rakjat, meaning Organisation for the People’s Power), which gathered under one umbrella all the political and social care associations of Java and Madura and was charged with the task of preparing Indonesia for independence. The new organisation had a collegial leadership, known as the empat seangkai (four-in-one-bundle), reflecting the new balance of power which the Japanese wanted to impose. Of the four members of the new organisation's leadership, there was only one representative of political Islam, K.H. Mansur, who was one of Muhammadiyah’s leaders, compared to three

nationalist leaders, Sukarno, Mohammad Hatta and Ki Hadjar Dewantoro. A few months later, the Putera was allowed to set up its own militia, the Volunteer Army for the Defence of the Nation (Soekarela Tentara Pembela Tanah Air, PETA).

However, by the end of 1943, the shortcomings of this new dispensation were already beginning to show. Realising that the Putera was achieving more for the nationalist movement than for the Japanese war effort, the military authorities decided to close it down. At the same time, they once again turned to the Muslim community, though this time they looked to the rural Muslim dignitaries to help them thwart the ambitions of both the urban Islamists and the secular nationalists who had let them down in the past. In November 1943, the Japanese founded the Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims (Madjelis Sjuro Muslimin Indonesia, Masyumi) and by so doing rid themselves of MIAI which was dominated by former members of PSII, who had by this time started to adopt an anti-Japanese tone. For the Japanese, then, Masyumi was a fresh attempt to manipulate the Indonesian Muslim community to their own advantage. Two types of members could join the new organisation: firstly, Muslim associations who had been accorded a legal status by the military government, and secondly, authorised kiais and ulamas whose authorisation, naturally enough, had been given by the Office of Religious Affairs. The issue of the voting rights which these religious figures would receive was not clearly dealt with in the organisation’s statutes, however. Two organisations were to dominate Masyumi: Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, which were the only two organisations to obtain the necessary legal status when Masyumi was founded. They were joined later by two smaller traditionalist organisations, Persatoean Oemmat Islam Indonesia (the Union of the Indonesian Ummah) led by K. Ahmad Sanusi, and Perikatan Oemmat Islam (the Association of the Ummah) led by K.H. Abdul Halim in Cirebon. By favouring relations with non-political associations and prominent local figures, the Japanese wanted to defuse

120 It was replaced in March 1944 by Perhimpunan Kebaktian Rakyat (the People’s Loyalty Association), better known under its Japanese name of Djawa Hokokai.
122 Two associations which included in their statutes the goals of the Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere.
any potential local rebellions which Islamic movements could become a focal point for. This unofficial role given to Masyumi became apparent in the early months of 1944 when the occupying authorities increased their requisition of rice from peasants. In February, a rebellion broke out against this decision in the village of Singaparna, near Tasikmalaya in the Priangan regency. It was led by Kiai Zainal Mustapha, a prominent religious leader in the region and a member of Nahdlatul Ulama. Following repression of the uprising by the police force, several Masyumi emissaries were sent to the region to explain to the local population that their former kiai had lost his senses and had strayed from the true path of Islam.\(^{123}\)

Up until February 1945, Masyumi benefitted from the Japanese authorities’ urgent desire to limit the influence of nationalists by promoting a countervailing force within the Islamic community. In January 1944, for example, a new organisation, Djawa Hokokai, was created to replace Putera, which meant that the nationalist organisation was no longer the exclusive representative of the Indonesian people. Djawa Hokokai was a vast movement which included nationalists as well as numerous organisations controlled by the occupier. At the same time, Masyumi was given every means necessary to extend its influence throughout the country. While MIAI had never been able to spread its organisational network beyond its headquarters in Jakarta, the new Muslim organisation received the authorisation to create branches at every administrative level, from regency to village. It was even allowed to establish itself in the neighbourhood associations (tonari gumi) which had been created two years earlier by the Japanese. This enabled local Islamic brigades (barisan pekerja) close to Masyumi to infiltrate these structures, and meant that at least one person in each tonari gumi was a member of these brigades. Finally, in December 1944, in reaction to the creation in September of that year of the Barisan Pelopor (the Pioneer Corps), which was run entirely by nationalist members of the civilian population, the Japanese announced the creation of an army of Muslim volunteers: Hizboellah (the Army of Allah). They were intended to be the reserve army of the PETA but in fact became Masyumi’s army. The organisation was charged with setting up Hizboellah’s central command and regional delegations as well as the provision of equipment for its troops. The militia’s recruits, after three months of

\(^{123}\) Ibid., p. 160.
training, were then supposed to train the students of Koranic schools themselves.\textsuperscript{124}

The promise of Indonesian independence in “the near future”, made during a speech given by the Japanese prime minister, Koiso, on 7 September 1944, marked the end of this subtle policy of manipulating the balance of power between Muslims and nationalists, and also announced a swing in favour of the latter. Six months later in March 1945, the composition of the Investigation Committee for the Independence of Indonesia (Badan Penjelidik Kemerdekaan Indonesia, BPKI), nominated by the Japanese, confirmed this new balance of power. Of the 63 members initially nominated, only 10 could be considered part of the Islamist movement, and most of these lacked the political and administrative skills necessary to be able to contribute meaningfully to the debates.\textsuperscript{125}

Although Masyumi was not in principle supposed to have a political dimension, the role given by the Japanese to some important Muslim figures within the country’s institutions in the months leading up to September 1944, and most importantly the role it played in villages, meant that it had become a highly political organisation. In the space of a little over a year, Masyumi had achieved what no other Muslim organisation had before. It had built a network throughout the country, recruited a militia of considerable size and, above all, it now benefitted from a notoriety which could rival that of the nationalist leaders, Sukarno and Hatta.\textsuperscript{126} This was the part of the Japanese organisation’s legacy which the founding members of the party wished to keep when they decided in November 1945, after a difficult and protracted debate, to retain the name Masyumi.\textsuperscript{127} They took some time to decide the matter at their inaugural congress as they knew that the Japanese legacy was also associated with collaboration with the enemy which, during the first months of the country’s independence, recalled some embarrassing memories for the party. Apart from a few rare

\textsuperscript{124} Ibid., p. 280n27.


\textsuperscript{126} In order to obtain the authorisations necessary to organise any gathering, almost all religious meetings from the end of 1943 took place under the aegis of Masyumi. Abobakar, \textit{Sejarah Hidup K.H.A. Wahid Hasjim}, p. 334.

\textsuperscript{127} See infra Chapter 2.
hostile actions towards the occupier, Mayumi otherwise scrupulously performed the role of propagandist for Japanese imperialism. In October 1944, for example, Masyumi adopted a series of resolutions on the future of Indonesia, the first of which concerned the “recognition of the role played by the commander of the Japanese army in the future independence of Indonesia.” The party called on people, in their resolution, to “mobilise further still the combined forces of the Indonesian umma so as to precipitate final victory and to combat the manoeuvres and offensives carried out by the enemy who wishes to prevent the independence of Indonesia and the liberation of Islam.” It also invited all Muslims to “fight nobly together side by side with the Japanese, in the path ordained by Allah, to destroy the cruel enemy.”

Did this collaboration with the Japanese weigh on the party members’ minds when they came to make their choice for party leadership in November 1945? The answer appears to be no, as there were no real purges within the party after the Japanese occupation. In fact, four of the five most important leaders of Japanese Masyumi—K.H. Hasjim Asj’ari, Ki Bagus Hadikusumo, K.H.A. Wahid Hasjim and K.H. Abdul Wahab—were given positions in the upper echelons of the party. The only one not to appear in the party’s new leadership structure was K.H. Mas Mansur, one of the most collaborationist of the religious dignitaries. He was arrested by the allies at the end of the war and was initially in danger of facing trial before finally being released. His health deteriorated considerably during his time in prison and he died in April 1946, only a few months after his release.

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129 See, for example, Suara Muslimin Indonesia, 21 March 1945.
to the party through their religious knowledge. However, it can legitimate be argued that their place in the new composition of the party leadership was due in part to their involvement with the Japanese. Those who were elected to the executive committee had managed to distance themselves from the occupier, and so were a more suitable choice to represent the party on the political battlefield of the new Republic.\textsuperscript{131} It is true to say that none of them had rebelled openly against the occupier and indeed most of them had been given positions of responsibility by the Japanese authorities. Soekiman, for example, represented Yogyakarta within the Putera, Jusuf Wibisono was a prosecutor for cases concerning commercial law and Natsir was in charge of an education programme in Bandung. However, these positions of responsibility were less important and did not greatly compromise their integrity; in fact, they even allowed them, at times, to disseminate ideas which were hostile to the Japanese. The courses organised by Natsir, for instance, gave him the opportunity to organise, along with Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, a chain of spiritual resistance to Japanese propaganda.\textsuperscript{132} In the case of Isa Anshary, who had been appointed secretary of MIAI for the residency of Priangan, he actually spent a month in prison, no doubt because of his action within Angkatan Muda Indonesia, an organisation which promoted the independence of Indonesia.\textsuperscript{133}

Most members of Masyumi’s new executive committee came from the group of urban Muslims who had headed MIAI and who, as a consequence, had been courted by the Japanese as part of their policy regarding Islam.\textsuperscript{134} However, as we have already seen, the creation of

\textsuperscript{131} It should not be forgotten that the Americans, encouraged by the Dutch government, were wary of Sukarno and Hatta, who were accused of collaborating with the Japanese. This led Sukarno and Hatta to appoint Sjahrir, the main opponent of the Japanese occupation, as prime minister.

\textsuperscript{132} Kahin, \textit{Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia}, p. 113. Kahin, however, does not cite any source to substantiate this affirmation. Deliar Noer, “Masjumi: Its Organization, Ideology, and Political Role in Indonesia”, Master thesis, Cornell University, 1960, p. 28, uses testimony from Persatuan Islam’s leaders in 1956 to explain that the education programmes organised by the \textit{ulama} in Bandung “may have been directed against the Japanese occupation policy, prompted by Mohammad Natsir, who was in charge of the local education programmes.”


\textsuperscript{134} Soekiman, Harsono Tjokroaminoto and Wondoamiseno were members of the MIAI leadership put in place by the Japanese in September 1942. Benda, \textit{The Crescent and the Rising Sun}, p. 113 ff.
Masyumi in November 1943 was precisely what marked the end of Japanese collaboration with MIAI and the beginning of a new policy oriented more towards rural Muslim leaders. With the advent of Indonesian independence, these rural ulamas, took a back seat—perhaps because they were obliged to do so—and it was thus the group linked to MIAI who came to the fore again. Abu Hanifah's career is a perfect illustration of this reversal of fortune. As a member of MIAI who was also involved in the Bait al-Mal project, he was given no official position within the Japanese Masyumi. 135 In May 1945, he launched an appeal in Soeara Muslimin Indonesia inviting the Masyumi leadership to free itself from Japanese control and to create a new organisation which would bring the Muslim community together. 136 In November 1945, his fortunes changed radically when he became a member of the executive committee of the new Masyumi party.

The period of Japanese occupation had, on the whole, two major consequences on the place occupied by Islam in Indonesian society. As a result of the successive policy U-turns by the Japanese occupying force, both the supporters and the opponents of political Islam benefitted from a significant increase in their potential scope for political action. They now had at their disposal nationwide vehicles for their propaganda and, as result, the notoriety of Islamic and nationalist organisations spread throughout the country. However, at the same time, the Japanese manipulation of the balance of power within political Islam, through its control over both Masyumi and the BPKI, benefitted religious dignitaries without much experience of political battle. This was done at the expense of the pre-war leaders of modernist organisations (Sarekat Islam, PII, Permi, Barisan Penjadar and Jong Islamieten Bond) and it led, as a result, to a favourable balance of power for secular nationalists in their post-war struggle with political Islam.

Although Masyumi originated at a time of a radical break with the past—the “Physical Revolution” of the Indonesian people against the return of the Dutch—it nonetheless bore the marks of the colonial period. Its future leaders identified strongly with the vast movement of renewal which, from the end of the 19th century, had spread to

135 Ibid., p. 259n76.
136 Soeara Muslimin Indonesia, 10 May 1945, quoted in Benda, The Crescent and the Rising Sun, p. 287n68.
all corners of the Muslim world, and they looked to Western culture for solutions to their questionings about Muslim identity. Within the Masyumi leadership, a small group of individuals stood out who shared certain common traits. They were products of the education system put in place by the Dutch, often came from Sumatra, and they crossed swords with the previous generation of leaders within Sarekat Islam who were markedly Javanese in origin. They were also part of a tradition which favoured an attitude of openness to the rest of the world, and forged for themselves a political culture which was a mixture of Western references and Muslim values. As members of the Masyumi leadership in the early 1950s, they were the inspiration behind some of the most original pages of its history.