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Title: Negotiating Islamisation and resistance : a study of religions, politics and social change in West Java from the early 20th Century to the present

Issue Date: 2015-09-09

CHAPTER TWO

ISLAMIC MODERNISM AND ANTI-ISLAMIC SENTIMENT (1920s-1980s)

Since the early twentieth century Modernists emerged in Java and their presence contributed to enhancing Islam as an ideology and identity. In West Java, Muslim activists from Sumatra established Persatuan Islam (PERSIS, Islamic Union) in 1923. In Java, Sarekat Islam (SI) and Muhammadiyah were established in 1912. The Modernists' rise posed a challenge to Sundanese society's socio-political and religious setting. PERSIS promoted Islamic Modernism and questioned the Islamic practices combined with *adat* local leaders and Traditionalists commonly upheld. PERSIS sought to achieve social change through the work of its cadres rather than through the development of a popular following. PERSIS failed to change the religious visions and practices of the Sundanese which were rich, plural and mystical. In what follows, we shall see how the Modernist's rise contributed to promoting Islam as a political identification and helped pose a challenge to the established religious and cultural visions of the Sundanese.

Embracing Islam as an Ideology

Persatuan Islam (PERSIS)

PERSIS emerged, and its vision and political orientation were shaped within a socio-political context of intense competition in a society where groups promoted divergent visions regarding the right and proper foundations for the nation.¹ PERSIS' outlook was largely shaped by fundamental notions of Islamic doctrine and ideology. It was led entirely by intellectuals of the Modernist persuasion. These included Haji

¹ Federspiel, *Islam and Ideology*, p. 182.

Zamzam and Haji Muhammad Junus, both of whom hailed from Padang.² It is worth noting that Padang had had encounters with the Modernist movement in the Middle East since early 20th century. The first Islamic Modernist journal *Al-Munir* was published in Padang in 1911 by several *hajis* upon their return from Mecca.³ The movement flourished and some of its followers left Padang and went to West Java including Haji Zamzam and Haji Muhammad Junus. Zamzam studied religion in Mecca for three years, which of course influenced his way of thinking. He also had connections with the Modernist Muslim network across Sumatra, Batavia, Surabaya and Bandung. In Bandung, Zamzam and Muhammad Junus held religious gatherings and organised discussions, which later extended to conceiving cogent arguments for selecting the valid bases from which to formulate fundamental Islamic principles and to form PERSIS.⁴

The stated goal of PERSIS in its statute was “to achieve the ultimate goal of religious life according to Islamic doctrine.”⁵ PERSIS propagated a school of thought based on the Quran and the *Sunnah*. Its major concern was the reconstruction of religious thought in the Indonesian context and it did not actively seek to increase its following. As such, PERSIS did not encourage the opening of new chapters unless there was a real need.⁶ Genuine need was measured against PERSIS’ mission, as posited in the 1950s by its chairman M. Isa Anshary, which was to carry out *Ishlah al-Aqidah* (theological reform) and *Ishlahal-‘ibada* (worship reform).⁷ Aside from this internal mission, PERSIS was committed to challenging any movement hostile to Islam.⁸ Like other Modernist movements, it embraced a rationalist theology which

² Deliar Noer, *Gerakan Modern Islam di Indonesia, 1900-1942* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1990), p. 96.

³ Taufik Abdullah, *Indonesia Towards Democracy* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2009), p. 12.

⁴ Federspiel, *Islam and Ideology*, pp. 182-188.

⁵ G.F. Pijper, *Beberapa Studi tentang Sejarah Islam di Indonesia 1900-1950*, translated by Tadjimah and Yessy Agusdin from *Studiën over de geschiedenis van de Islam in Indonesia 1900-1950* (Jakarta: UI Press, 1985), p. 127.

⁶ Dadan Wildan, *Sejarah Perjuangan Persis 1923-1983* (Bandung: Puslitbang PP Pemuda Persis and Gema Syahida, 1995), pp. 30-31.

⁷ M. Isa Anshary, *Manifes Perjuangan Persatuan Islam* (Bandung: PP Persatuan Islam, 1958), pp. 24-25.

⁸ Wildan, *Sejarah Perjuangan Persis*, p. 31.

underpinned its understanding of Islam according to the Quran and *Sunnah* and its implementation accordingly. As such, it condemned superstition, mysticism and the cults that were common across Java at the time. PERSIS' doctrine was founded on a scripturalist interpretation of Islam stressing the absolute unity of God, strict observance of the *shari'ah*, commitment to purify Islam from any unlawful innovations (*bid'a*) and the responsibility of defending Islam from its antagonists.⁹

It would be wrong to think that PERSIS' leaders did not know how to mould their ideology into a practical organisation. They thought that their religious ideology should be maintained through the application of certain recruitment criteria and by following specific procedures. To ensure the quality of its members, PERSIS used stringent membership recruitment criteria and procedures. To be admitted, one had to meet the following requirements: He/she should be at least 18 years old and live in the East Indies; by 'Muslim' the statute implied the observance of Islamic obligations including daily prayers, fasting, and alms giving, and at the same time of adhering to prohibitions such as gambling, consuming alcohol, adultery and *bid'a*.¹⁰

From a socio-political perspective, to achieve its goal, PERSIS sought a sound Islamic ideology, particularly in responding to Nationalists' charges that Muslim leaders failed to offer an ideal model for an independent Indonesia. PERSIS endeavoured to neutralise the Dutch-trained Nationalists' proposals for a secular nation state. As noted by Howard M. Federspiel, Nationalist leaders contended that "the best way to achieve independence and build a strong Indonesian state was to follow the secular trend of the West and confine religion to the areas of individual belief and worship."¹¹ PERSIS' role in promoting *dakwah* as well as its search for a sound Islamic ideology was probably incomparable. Similarly, its leadership, especially under Ahmad Hassan and Mohammad Natsir, excelled over other Muslim leaders in challenging the Nationalists' promotion of a secular nation-state and Christian missionaryism.¹² Concluding the third chapter of his book on PERSIS, Federspiel discusses the formative period of PERSIS' doctrine during which Hassan, along with Natsir and Sabirin, played central

⁹ Federspiel, *Islam and Ideology*, p. 122.

¹⁰ Pijper, *Beberapa Studi*, p. 129.

¹¹ Federspiel, *Islam and Ideology*, p. 45.

¹² *Idem*, pp. 45-51 and pp. 154-157.

roles.¹³ Hassan's thoughts, in particular, considerably shaped the organisation's character and attitude.

Hassan was born in Singapore in 1887 to a Tamil father, who was a scholar, and a Javanese mother.¹⁴ Hassan received his religious training in Singapore. In 1921 he moved to Surabaya where he met Kyai Haji Abdul Wahab, who later inspired him to study Islam further.¹⁵ In 1924, he moved to Bandung where he met Zamzam and Muhammad Junus who also were very enthusiastic about spreading Islam. They formed a group and subsequently Hassan acted as the most important religious leader in the newly established organisation.¹⁶

A talented propagandist, Hassan wrote extensively. His works cover many subjects including theology, law, jurisprudence, Quranic exegesis, history, language, governance and politics. Among the major works he published during the 1930s-40s are *Al-Boerhan* (The Evidence [1933]), *Pengadjaran Sholat* (Prayer Instruction [1935-1937]), *At-Tauhid* (The Unity of God [1937]), *Annubuwwah* (The Prophecy [1941]), *Ketoehanan Jesoes menoeroet Bijbel* [Jesus' Divinity according to the Bible [1940]], and *Islam dan Kebangsaan* (Islam and Nationalism [1941]). Hassan translated into Indonesian the *Bulughul Maram* of Ibnu Hajar al-Asqalani, a standard work on *fiqh* widely used in *pesantrens*.¹⁷ Through these publications, Hassan not only demonstrated that he was PERSIS' most prolific author but also its ideological architect. Aside Hassan's works, PERSIS also regularly published the magazines *Pembela Islam* (Defender of Islam), *Al-Lisan* (The Tongue), *Sual Jawab* (Questions and Answers), *Al-Fatwa* (The Legal Opinion), and *Al-Taqwa* (Piety).¹⁸ These publications helped tremendously in circulating PERSIS' messages across the country, particularly among Muhammadiyah and Al-Irsyad members.

Mohammad Natsir was perhaps the most important PERSIS leader. He was born to Idris Sutan Saripado and Khalida on the 17th of July 1908, in the small town of Alahan Panjang in West Sumatra, home to

¹³ *Idem*, pp. 121-195.

¹⁴ See a must read political biography of Mohammad Natsir authored by Audrey R. Kahin, *Islam, Nationalism and Democracy: A Political Biography of Mohammad Natsir* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2012), p. 10.

¹⁵ Pijper, *Beberapa Studi*, p. 127.

¹⁶ *Idem*, p. 127.

¹⁷ Federspiel, *Islam and Ideology*, pp. 347-348.

¹⁸ Noer, *Gerakan Modern Islam di Indonesia*, pp. 103-104.

the Minangkabau people.¹⁹ Because of economic constraints, Natsir's father could not afford to send him to the Hollandsch Inlandsche School (HIS, the Dutch Native School), the seven-year primary school that used Dutch as language of instruction.²⁰ However, Natsir was lucky to be able to attend the school because the head teacher of the local HIS allowed it provided that he hide himself whenever a school inspector showed up.²¹

Natsir used this opportunity to demonstrate to the people that by becoming the best student in his class he showed that he was not just anybody and in 1923 he won a scholarship to continue his study to the MULO (Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs), the advanced elementary school in Padang where he sat in the same class with the Dutch children²² and after a few years Natsir graduated satisfactorily. Being aware that Natsir was quite smart, his father encouraged him to continue his studies at the next level. Natsir did not want to disappoint his father, so he applied for a place at the General Secondary School (AMS, Algemene Middelbare School) in Bandung and he was admitted there in July 1927 when he turned nineteenth.

Natsir's intellectual, religious and political activism began here. As observed by Audrey R. Kahin, in the late 1920s Bandung was attractive to educated young people from all over the Netherlands East Indies because the city was turning into the centre of excellent higher education where 'most of the advanced Western-education schools in the archipelago were concentrated.'²³ Bandung's position as a learning centre had political consequences. Kahin noted:

As the result, Bandung became the center of anti-colonial discussion and activity embracing all forms of the new Indonesian nationalism. In the same month Natsir arrived there, July 1927, the foremost leader of the Indonesian Nationalist movement, Soekarno, founded the party "that came to dominate nationalist politics not only in the city but throughout Java and beyond."²⁴ Initially known as the Indonesian National Association, it was soon renamed the Indonesian Nationalist Party (Partai Nasional Indonesia, PNI). Under Dutch

¹⁹ Kahin, *Islam, Nationalism and Democracy*, pp. 1-2.

²⁰ *Idem*, p. 3.

²¹ *Idem*.

²² *Idem*, pp. 4-5.

²³ *Idem*, p. 9.

²⁴ Rudolf Mrazek, *Sjahir: Politics and Exile in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asian Program, 1994), p. 49.

pressure the PNI was dissolved in 1931, but it exerted an enduring influence over all subsequent political parties working for Indonesian independence.²⁵

This political atmosphere certainly influenced Natsir. He frequently attended talks delivered by prominent Indonesian leaders of various political orientations ranging from the Nationalist Tjipto Mangoenkoesoema to the Islamist Haji Agoes Salim.²⁶ During this critical time Natsir met Ahmad Hassan, the most important figure of PERSIS, whom he much admired as the most influential among his early teachers.²⁷ It seemed obvious that Natsir's admiration for Hassan after their frequent encounters and discussions caused him to join PERSIS and bound both him and Hassan in 'the strictest and most uncompromising Muslim group of the time.'²⁸

Like Hassan, Natsir wrote a lot, while he was also actively involved in educational matters. He wrote for *Pembela Islam* under the pen-name, A. Muchlis. In the 1930s, he championed initiatives to promote Islamic education by establishing Islamic schools ranging from kindergarten (1930), HIS (1930), Mulo (1931), teacher-training colleges (1932) and *pasantren* (1936).²⁹ This initiative was in response to the reluctance of many private schools in Bandung to include Islamic instruction in their curricula.³⁰ The absence of religious subjects in some schools caused PERSIS leaders to build their own schools to serve the interests of the *ummat*. Natsir's long service to PERSIS and his connection to Hassan provided him with considerable *dakwah* experience which came in very useful, especially when much later he established the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia, DDII,) in 1967.

In the 1930s PERSIS emerged as one of the most prolific publishing houses. Media thus also became an effective tool for both Hassan and Natsir to communicate their religious thoughts and political ideologies. Hassan and Natsir regularly wrote in journals. Soekarno was proud of Natsir and expressed this in a letter he sent to Hassan from his

²⁵ Kahin, *Islam, Nationalism and Democracy*, p. 9.

²⁶ *Idem*, pp. 9-10.

²⁷ *Idem*, p. 10.

²⁸ *Idem*.

²⁹ Noer, *Gerakan Modern Islam di Indonesia*, pp. 101-102.

³⁰ *Idem*, p. 101.

place of exile in Ende, Flores.³¹

PERSIS' most striking features were its persistence in promoting its ideology and in challenging its opponents. PERSIS held debates with many organisations on many issues. Among the organisations were Ahmadiyah Qadian (1930), Seventh Day Adventists, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in Cirebon, Al-Ittihadul Islamiyah in Sukabumi and Majelis Ahli Sunnah in Bandung. Pijper observed that the debate sessions were organised to discuss sensitive religious issues. Sometimes they were held in response to particularly heated public topics. For example, in April 1933, a series of debate sessions in Bandung and in September 1933 in Jakarta were held in response to Hassan's 1932 article entitled *Risalah Ahmadiyah: Membantah beberapa l'tikad Ahmadiyah* (All about Ahmadiyah: Denying the Ahmadiyah Creed).³²

Unhappy with the article, Ahmadiyah spokesman, Rahmat Ali, challenged PERSIS' leader to a public debate on the issue.³³ During the debate, both spokesmen exchanged questions, answers, agreements and criticism, which showed their understanding of Islam despite their disagreement on some points. Pijper once attended a debate session and was impressed by how the debaters carried themselves despite the fact that the atmosphere was highly charged, especially when both spokesmen exchanged challenges and critical comments.³⁴ The content of the debates was then published in *Pembela Islam*.³⁵ Through promoting education, prolific publication and engaging in religious debates, PERSIS demonstrated its authority as defender of Islam³⁶ despite the insignificant growth in its membership. Pijper states that this identification owes much to PERSIS' most important leader, Hassan.³⁷

³¹ *Idem*, pp. 97-100.

³² Pijper, *Beberapa Studi*, p. 129.

³³ *Pembela Islam* (P.I.) No. 61, pp. 37-42, n.d. and *Pembela Islam* (P.I.) No. 62, pp. 25-30. n.d.

³⁴ Pijper, *Beberapa Studi*, p. 138.

³⁵ *Pembela Islam* (P.I.) No. 61, pp. 37-42, n.d. and *Pembela Islam* (P.I.) No. 62, pp. 25-30. n.d.

³⁶ Noer, *Gerakan Modern Islam di Indonesia*, p. 103.

³⁷ Pijper, *Beberapa Studi*, p. 129.

Confronting Nationalism

We should note that PERSIS was formed in a socio-political context where most Indonesian leaders were seeking independence from Dutch rule for which the question of the nation's ideology was discussed extensively. From 1912 to the 1920s, members of the Indonesian elite championed competing visions in terms of the social, cultural and political foundations of the future independent Indonesia. The contest to envision the best cultural foundations for the nation involved a range of actors of different backgrounds.

Hassan and Natsir paid much attention to this development and they participated in the debates on nationalism in their writings. Both Hassan and Natsir considered the secular ideology as promoted by Nationalist proponents such as Soekarno and Soetomo dangerous for religion in general and Islam in particular.³⁸ For Hassan, nationalism boiled down to the socio-political system in pre-Islamic Arabia called '*asabiyah*'.³⁹ Hassan used the Prophet's warning to Muslims not to wage war for the sake of '*asabiyah*', for such motives were illegitimate.⁴⁰ Hassan also argued that nationalism had alienated Indonesian Muslims from their brothers overseas, despite the fact that all Muslims are brethren as insisted by the Quran.⁴¹ Hassan also made the controversial ruling that joining the nationalist party is sinful because it would never enforce Islamic law. As he understood it, this ruling was justified by the Islamic precept that Muslims who do not judge by Islamic law are considered *fasiq* (morally corrupt).⁴² On this issue, PERSIS periodical, *Pembela Islam*, argued that:

Nationhood in Islam is broad; it is not based on ethnicity, on origin, nor on shared dialects. Nationhood that is limited by ethnicity, origin, dialect, fate, is not only too narrow, but also gives rise to conceit, envy and seeking the downfall of members of other nations. Nationhood understood as such encourages arrogance towards those who have less Islamic nationhood and is far removed from encouraging its followers to be proud of their descent, ethnicity, dialect or origin. On the contrary, it is Islam that is able to tie all skin

³⁸ Hassan, *Islam & Kebangsaan*, p. V.

³⁹ '*Asabiyah* is an Arabic term which means tribalism.

⁴⁰ Hassan, *Islam & Kebangsaan*, p. VI.

⁴¹ *Idem*.

⁴² *Idem*, p. VII.

colours, dialects and lands of origin in a bind of fellow-feeling, of certainty, of worship, of laws, which realises genuine brotherhood which in turn brings genuine harmony and equality. In Islamic politics, this is the basis which equates Dutch Muslims with Indonesian Muslims, French Muslims with Negro Muslims, and so on.⁴³

PERSIS' argument is a classic one and commonly cited by Islamists, Revivalists and to some extent Modernists. It has to be noted that around this time, the Muslim world was influenced by notions of Islamic nationhood or Pan-Islamism as embraced by Muslim scholars such as Jamaluddin al-Afghani, Sayyid Qutb, and Muhammad Abduh. This view of human brotherhood is rooted in the Quran, although it does not specifically refer to Muslims as a political entity or as a nation.

Opposing Christian Missionary

Like many other Modernist organisations, PERSIS was bitterly opposed to Christian missionary activity. Federspiel observes:

The tone of the Persis commentary on Christianity is intense, defensive and retaliatory, and it is apparent in the articles, *fatawa* and major writings that activists saw Christian missionary activity as a serious threat to the existence of Islam in Indonesia. We have already seen in the *Islamic Defender* some very trenchant comments in regard to Christian missionaries and their endeavours in Indonesia. Persis activists stayed alert to Christian propaganda and outreach activity and made responses in the name of the Indonesian Muslim

⁴³ *Pembela Islam*, No. 61, p. 3. n.d.: *Kebangsaan dalam agama Islam itoe loeas; boekan karena persamaan koelit, boekan karena sepoelaoe setanah air, boekan poela karena selagam bahasa jang dipakai. Kebangsaan jang berbatas oleh persamaan koelit, oleh sepoelau setanah air, oleh selagam bahasa jang dipakai, oleh senasib sepertoentoengan, boekan sedja terlaloe sempit, tapi joega mendjadikan terbitnya rasa bangga diri, rasa dengki dan meroegikan manoesia lain tanah. Kebangsaan tjara begini mengadjarkan sifat sombong terhadap golongan manoesia lain jang lebih sedikit Kebangsaan Islam itoe djauh daripada mendjadikan pemeloeknya rasa bangga karena toeroenan darah, karena warna koelit, karena selagam bahasa, karena tanah air. Bahkan Islamlah jang dapat mengikat segala warna koelit, segala lagam bahasa, segala tanah air dengan persatoean perasaan, persatoean kejakinan, persatoean tjara ibadat, persatuan oendang-oendang, jang membawa kepada persaudaraan sedjati jang beroejoed perdamaian sedjati dan persamaan sedjati. Dalam politik tjara Islam, inilah jang jadi asas sampai tidak ada kelebihan Moeslim Belanda dari Moeslim Indonesia, Moeslim Perantjis dengan Moeslim Neger dan lain-lain.*

community.⁴⁴

Christianity was considered the religion of the Dutch, the *kafir* colonialists. Opposition to Christianisation began since the late nineteenth century and galvanised around Muslim institutions since the early twentieth. In West Java, PERSIS along with Sarekat Islam (SI) and the Muhammadiyah challenged the spread of Christianity. PERSIS was a healthy organisation with a sound leadership, ran Islamic schools, promoted *dakwah* and published prolifically. Ever since, through religious and educational programs the Modernists posed a tremendous challenge to Christian evangelism which had gained ground in terms of institution-building and massive conversions across the country.⁴⁵ Modernist leaders such as Natsir's fear of Christianity was because of the point of view commonly upheld by Islamic scholars that 'the Dutch were using Western education to draw Indonesians away from Islam and into the purview of Christianity'.⁴⁶ However, this stance does not necessarily mean that Natsir was anti-Christian inclined. He held the view that Indonesia should become a tolerant nation in which religious freedom is protected and all believers' rights to follow their own faiths is guaranteed.⁴⁷

Criticising Traditionalist Practices

As observed previously, interestingly, Geertz's Javanese *santri-abangan* social dichotomy does not exist in Sundanese society;⁴⁸ it is also true that initially in West Java the dialectical relations between Modernists and Traditionalists were not as bad as those in East and Central Java but

⁴⁴ Federspiel, *Islam and Ideology*, p. 154.

⁴⁵ NZV claimed monopoly in West Java since the nineteenth century but this did not last long as from the early nineteenth century the Episcopal Methodist Church also sought followers in West Java. The Apostolic, Adventist, Pentecostal, and Roman Catholic Churches also provided services in West Java and did not recognise NZV's monopoly. See Van den End, *Sumber-Sumber Zending*, p. 9.

⁴⁶ Kahin, *Islam, Nationalism and Democracy*, po. 11, 25.

⁴⁷ *Idem*, p. 186.

⁴⁸ Steenbrink states that in his study of the Sundanese, R.A. Kern mentioned the word *abangan* only once. R.A. Kern, *Over de Gewoonten en Gebruiken der Soendaneezen*.

as we will see, later on they were.⁴⁹ The Modernist-Traditionalist dichotomy was already latently present in the early decades of the twentieth century, although it had not yet crystallised. The dichotomy became more pronounced due to the intensification of the Modernist campaign against those aspects of the religion the Traditionalists very much embraced, as the Modernists were against local values and the cultural identity of the local people. However, in what follows we will discuss how PERSIS challenged the traditional practices upheld by the Traditionalists.

PERSIS is famous for its stand against unlawful innovations (*bid'a*), including the seeking of saintly intercession and saint worship. For PERSIS, worship must be based solely on the Quran and the *Sunnah*. There are, however, many interpretive disagreements about the reliability of the references to specific religious practices. Muslim leaders hold different views on the reliability of these references and also employ different methodologies in arriving at legal conclusions. Likewise, their understanding and reasoning about aspects of religion differ. This in part contributed to sustained disagreement among them. One example is the disagreement on reciting prayers known as *tahlil* in the house of the deceased, which is usually followed by a meal provided by the family or friends of the deceased. Practiced on the burial day and on several succeeding days, this is observed by many Indonesian Muslims, especially among the Traditionalists.⁵⁰ For them, the prayers recited in the house of mourning by those present generates religious merit (*pahala*), which accrues to the deceased.⁵¹ To the Traditionalists, such practices help to improve the religiosity of the people. PERSIS saw this celebration as *bid'a*, but argued against it on financial rather than religious grounds.⁵² In a *fatwa* entitled "Ritual meal for Pregnancy," as discussed in his *Sual Jawab*, Hassan argued that "This particular type of innovation sometimes ruins people who are not well-to-do, for they even sell or pawn their belongings, or borrow money to hold a feast, and consequently fall into debt and poverty."⁵³

PERSIS is also known for its critical stand against any celebrations

⁴⁹ Steenbrink, 'A Catholic Sadrach', p. 288.

⁵⁰ Federspiel, *Islam and Ideology*, pp. 140-141.

⁵¹ *Idem*.

⁵² *Idem*, p. 140.

⁵³ *Idem*. See also *Sual-Djawab V*, p. 37.

of the Prophet's birthday (*maulud*), commonly held by the majority of the Muslim community. The *maulud* festival, celebrated largely by Hadramis of Ba'alawi descent and Traditionalists, involves a religio-cultural event where the celebrants recite prayers and narrate poetry about the Prophet's life and his virtues.⁵⁴ At one point, members of the congregation are required to rise out of respect for the Prophet who is believed to be invisibly present at such gatherings. For the Modernists, this practice is irrational and unlawful. Despite opposition from organisations like PERSIS, Muslims continued to celebrate the *maulud*. Over time, it was celebrated in even grander fashion. Pijper reports that in 1936, Bandung Muslims celebrated *maulud* with a procession of 2000 Islamic school students. The procession ended in the Regency Hall of Bandung where Islamic leaders and local authorities had been waiting and a religious ceremony was undertaken. As part of the celebrations, the Regent of Bandung and the Head Penghulu delivered speeches. Similarly, representatives of various Muslim organisations delivered speeches as well.⁵⁵ For PERSIS, however, this celebration had no base in Islam and was therefore religiously prohibited.⁵⁶ For this reason, PERSIS did not join the event.

While attacking such practices in order to purify Islam from unlawful innovations in worship, PERSIS condemned intercession (*tawassul*) and saint worship in order to safeguard Muslims' belief from polytheism. PERSIS' basic argument was that prayers must be addressed directly to God without the intercession of the Prophet or holy men by using such formulae as "with the blessing of the Prophet/Abdul Qadir Jailani."⁵⁷ Hassan argued that intercession had been possible during the Prophet's life when he prayed on behalf of his Companions upon their request, but the Companions "did not ever ask his spirit, or at his

⁵⁴ A comprehensive study on the *maulud* in Muslim history is presented in N.J.G. Kaptein, *Muhammad's Birthday Festival: Early History in the Central Muslim Lands and Development in the Muslim West until the 10th/16th Century* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993). See also Nico Kaptein, 'The Berdiri Mawlid issue among Indonesian muslims in the period from circa 1875 to 1930,' *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 149 (1993) pp. 124-153.

⁵⁵ Pijper, *Beberapa Studi*, pp. 136-137.

⁵⁶ *Idem*, p. 126.

⁵⁷ Federspiel, *Islam and Ideology*, p. 145.

grave....”⁵⁸ and thus never sought his intercession after he had died or went to his grave to seek his help. Federspiel noted that PERSIS’ writers pointed to two groups, Muslim mystics and Ba’alawi Arabs whom they regarded as particularly guilty of perpetuating the belief in intercession, leading to the worship at the tombs of “holy men.”⁵⁹

As PERSIS sought to abolish established Traditionalist practices, it brought about polarisation. In Bandung, for example, PERSIS leaders pushed their reform mission and tried to create a break from established culture and customs. Its commitment to break with the past meant PERSIS leaders refused to participate in public religious events organised by various Muslim organisations in celebration of particular Islamic festivals. PERSIS’ refusal to join the Prophet’s Birthday procession in Bandung in 1936, for example, was a stark deviation from the religious order of the day. As a consequence, this alienated PERSIS’ leaders and members from other Muslim organisations.⁶⁰ Due to its campaign inciting divisions and tension within society, various organisations and individuals opposed PERSIS. What was astonishing was the degree of tension it engendered. In a village in Bandung, two brothers severed ties with each other when one of them joined PERSIS. As Pijper related:

In a village in Bandung district, there were two brothers living next to each other. One of them became a member of PERSIS. Ever since, they have been at odds with each other as one did not want to be associated with the other (the member of PERSIS). He then went to partition their shared front yard with a fence. It was said that he even went to saw their shared rice stamping block (*lisung*) into two parts.⁶¹

The Modernist campaign invited similar sentiments across Java. In 1926, Traditionalist leaders, under the leadership of K.H. Hasyim Asyari, founded the Muslim organisation Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in East Java. This initiative was in response to the Modernists’ critical stand against religious discourses and practices embraced in the Traditionalist cultural milieu and environment. The Modernist aim “to return to the

⁵⁸ *Idem*, p. 145. See also A. Hassan, *At-Tauhid* (Bangil: Persatuan Islam, 1937), p. 50.

⁵⁹ Federspiel, *Islam and Ideology*, p. 147.

⁶⁰ Pijper, *Beberapa Studi*, p. 137.

⁶¹ *Idem*.

fundamental truths of Islamic texts and tradition, the Quran and *Sunnah*,"⁶² challenged established culture and the long-held authority and practices of the Traditionalists. PERSIS in Bandung, as noted above, waged war against religious practices commonly observed by the majority of Muslims such as holding *tahlilan*, *tawassul*, and ritual meals and celebrating *maulud*. Opposing traditions which were very much respected by the Traditionalists created a rift within Muslim society.

In West Java, PERSIS' campaign against the Traditionalist offended believers in the nativist-syncretic practices commonly held by the followers of *Aliran Kebatinan*, and thus incited anti-Islam sentiments among them. ADS leader, Pangeran Jatikusuma, told me that his father, Tejabuana, Madrais' son (see Chapter One), was an ardent critic of PERSIS.⁶³ For ADS leaders, any religious practice rooted in nativist traditions and values is legitimate. Conversely, all religious practices that do not share nativist spiritual visions are illegitimate.⁶⁴

Turning Islam into a Political Identity

Sarekat Islam and Muhammadiyah

In addition to PERSIS seeking to build and promote an Islamic ideology through the interpretation of a complex set of Islamic doctrines it also endeavoured to make them relevant in Indonesian politics and culture in general. Sarekat Islam (SI) and the Muhammadiyah had emerged in the preceding years with explicit Islamic agendas that marked the rise of Islam as a form of political and 'ethnic identification' which amplified the distinction between the Indonesian and Dutch camps.⁶⁵ Soon upon its establishment in 1912, the Modernist movement spread and moved towards politics as Islamic identity consolidated, as was the case especially with SI.⁶⁶ M.C. Ricklefs noted:

...while at the beginning the "Islam" of its title was mainly a form of ethnic identification – it proclaimed itself thereby Indonesian and

⁶² James L. Peacock, *Purifying the Faith: The Muhammadiyah Movement in Indonesian Islam* (California: The Benjamin/Cummings Publishing company, 1978), p. 24.

⁶³ Interview, Pangeran Jatikusuma, Cigugur, Kuningan, 5 August 2009.

⁶⁴ *Idem*.

⁶⁵ Ricklefs, *Polarising Javanese Society*, p. 226.

⁶⁶ *Idem*.

not Dutch, Chinese or regionalist as were many other associations – its spread often stimulated increased religious observance and over time it became more self-consciously religious in aspiration. SI thus became the political vehicle of Javanese *putihan*. In many branches, for example, its leadership was in the hands of local *hajis*, many of whom were also traders.⁶⁷

With such Islamic identification with firm support from the grassroots population, SI inspired people to seek change aimed at advancing their socio-economic welfare and political interests. The organisation also used its influence to politically counter the activities of the Christian missionaries which increasingly worried Muslims. With the presence of these organisations, Muslims embraced a new pattern of response toward their socio-political issues, from one resting heavily on the efforts of disorganised collections of individuals to that of an organised movement. By doing so, the Muslim leaders and their followers united and cooperated to seek improved conditions for their religion and for their nation.

The SI was founded by the charismatic Javanese leader, H.O.S Tjokroaminoto (1882-1934), believed by some Javanese peasants to be a *Ratu Adil*.⁶⁸ The peasants believed Tjokroaminoto to be a King who had come to them with the truth and who would lead them to an imagined era of justice.⁶⁹ Crowds of people, especially those from the villages, demonstrated their extraordinary respect for him. They gathered to listen to the speeches he would deliver from the podium and it is said that they also liked to touch his clothes and even kiss his feet.⁷⁰ This is surprising because SI followers imagined that social change would be effected in the framework of a millenarian movement.⁷¹ Sartono Kartodirdjo argues that “Although the Sarekat Islam movement was designed to participate in modern political activity, it was bound to have strong millenarian overtones.” He maintains that “It is not surprising that the hopes that the peasants came to place in Sarekat Islam should find expression in traditional millenarian thinking.”⁷²

⁶⁷ *Idem*.

⁶⁸ *Idem*.

⁶⁹ Robert van Niel, *The Emergence of Modern Indonesian Elite* (Den Haag: van Hoeve, 1960), p. 158.

⁷⁰ *Idem*, p. 158.

⁷¹ Kartodirdjo, *Protest Movements in Rural Java*, p. 18.

⁷² *Idem*.

SI is known for its critical stand against the Chinese. Because of this attitude it was seen as a threat by many Dutch officials and businessmen as well as by the Javanese *priyayi* because of the intermediate position of the Chinese community in the colonial setting. Ricklefs observes that the 1913-14 anti-Chinese riots across Java were linked to this movement.⁷³ He also maintains that the Javanese *priyayi* could not accept the SI's rejection of various established practices such as bowing to the *priyayi* as commonly observed by commoners. For members of the Javanese elite, such criticism of established *priyayi* culture could be a threat to "their authority and status."⁷⁴ SI's opposition to this recognised *adat* had upset the *priyayi* community.

In this regard, SI shared the Muhammadiyah's vision of a return to the Quran and the *Sunnah*, to pursue *ijtihad* and to reject syncretic practices.⁷⁵ The Muhammadiyah was founded in 1912 to seek socio-religious reform and to serve in reforming education and culture.⁷⁶ The movement's initial objective was to implement organised tactical measures to challenge the spread of the Dutch-supported Christian mission across Java.⁷⁷ In his account, G.F. Pijper describes how the Muhammadiyah was established in Yogyakarta by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, the son of the Imam of the Grand Mosque of the Sultanate of Yogyakarta named Kyai Haji Abubakar bin Kyai Suleiman.⁷⁸ Already as a child, Ahmad Dahlan received religious education from his parents. As an adult, he went to Mecca to perform the pilgrimage and to stay there for some years to study Islam.⁷⁹ He returned home but after several years of living in the Dutch East Indies, Ahmad Dahlan made his second trip to Mecca to perform another pilgrimage and to continue studying Islam.

Ahmad Dahlan was a friend of Ahmad Surkati from Sudan, the founder of Al-Irsyad, another reform organisation founded in 1915, and they had made each other's acquaintance some years before the emergence of Islamic Modernism or Reformism in Java. In his interview with Pijper, Surkati said that Ahmad Dahlan had a very good character,

⁷³ Ricklefs, *Polarising Javanese Society*, pp. 226-227.

⁷⁴ *Idem*, p. 226.

⁷⁵ Peacock, *Purifying the Faith*, p. 24.

⁷⁶ *Idem*, p. 23.

⁷⁷ Pijper, *Beberapa Studi*, p. 111.

⁷⁸ The following account rests largely on Pijper, *Beberapa Studi*, pp. 110-133.

⁷⁹ *Idem*, pp. 110-111.

and was a sincere and humble man.⁸⁰ He read works by leading Muslim scholars like Ibn Taymiyya (1263-1328), Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (1292-1350) and Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905). He knew of the reform movement in Egypt but, as Haji Agus Salim told Pijper, he did not devote himself to learning more about it. Rather, Ahmad Dahlan discussed the foundation of the Muhammadiyah with Surkati. The Muhammadiyah's rise, as Pijper himself noted, was actually closely linked to "contemporary Dutch politics that attempted to Christianise the Indonesians."⁸¹ It was a reaction to the missionary activities promoted by the Protestant NZV and the Roman Catholics, he stressed. This concern featured profoundly in the early stages of the development of the Muhammadiyah. Only after some years had elapsed did it slowly and organically evolve, a process that accelerated after Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan's death in 1923.

Within the socio-religious atmosphere of Islamic Modernism and anti-colonial agitation, SI grew fast and spread across and outside Java. In Bandung, the SI was established in 1913 by Suwardi Suryadiningrat, A. Widiadisatra and Abdul Muis.⁸² Suwardi was a journalist who worked for the Bandung-based publication *De Express*. He was unable to keep his job for a long time because of his critical attitude towards the Dutch. One day he wrote an article entitled "If I were Dutch" criticising the colonial administration, for which *De Express* was dissolved and Suwardi was exiled to the Netherlands.⁸³ As Robert van Niel states, A. Widiadisatra and Abdul Muis were also journalists who wrote for *Kaum Muda*, established in 1912 in collaboration with Mohammad Junus, an Arab from Palembang who supported the publication financially. Widiadisatra inspired the establishment of this publishing company. His marriage to one of the daughters of the *penghulu* in Bandung seemed to have religiously inspired him. He played an active role in SI until 1919.⁸⁴

Like Suwardi and Widiadisatra, Abdul Muis had much experience in journalism. For his concern for the welfare of the people, he was

⁸⁰ *Idem*, p. 111.

⁸¹ *Idem*, p. 111.

⁸² Van Niel, *Emergence*, p. 161.

⁸³ *Idem*.

⁸⁴ *Idem*.

promoted to the SI's Central Board.⁸⁵ Like the leaders of the Muhammadiyah, Abdul Muis was critical of the NZV. In the *Volksraad*, he criticised the Dutch Colonial Government's subsidising of *zending* organisations.⁸⁶ For him, it was outrageous that the subsidy which was generated largely from Muslims through their income taxes (*belasting*) was not utilised for the benefit of Muslims but, on the contrary, used to support Christian missionary organisations.⁸⁷ The SI most strongly criticised missionaryism when A.W.F. Idenburg was Governor-General in Batavia (1909-16). The issue of Christian missionaryism, previously the problem of Muslim commoners, soon became the concern of SI leaders. As soon as SI mobilised its members as a community against the Dutch, society polarised along Muslim and Christian lines. The identification of the Dutch with Christianity introduced an association between the Dutch and Indonesian Christians. So, from cultural and socio-political perspectives, while the emergence of Islamic Modernism stepped up pressure on the colonial government in introducing a political distinction between Indonesians and the Dutch, it also caused polarisation along ethnic and religious lines.

In this atmosphere the SI continued to grow. In 1916, an SI Congress was held in Bandung. Many prominent Muslims attended and addressed the congress. Among them were Rd. H.O.S Tjokroaminoto (President), Rd. Hasan Jayadiningrat (Banten), Rd. Wignyodarmoyo (Surabaya), Daeng Kanduruan Ardiwinata (Volkslectuur Editor), Wignyadisastra (SI President, Bandung Chapter), Abdul Muis (SI Vice President, Bandung Chapter), Abdul Manap (Aceh), and Habib Ali bin Abdulrahman Al-Habshi (Arab leader from Batavia).⁸⁸ SI struggled in the face of politics and the ideological competition between Nationalism, Islamism and Communism, to which in the end it succumbed.⁸⁹ In reaction to this division, the Perserikatan Komoenis di Hindia (later

⁸⁵ *Idem.*

⁸⁶ Aritonang, *Sejarah Perjumpaan Islam dan Kristen*, p. 156.

⁸⁷ *Idem.* See also Aritonang, *Sejarah Pendidikan Kristen di Tanah Batak* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1988), p. 330.

⁸⁸ Tini Kartini and Ningrum Djulaeha (eds.), *Biografi dan Karya Pujangga Haji Hasan Mustafa* (Jakarta: Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1985), p. 11.

⁸⁹ Continuing division in SI's leadership is explained in Taufik Abdullah, *Indonesia Towards Democracy*, p. 21.

named Partai Komunis Indonesia) was formed in 1921.⁹⁰ The division had a negative impact at the grassroots level. Some Muslim leaders and activists in Bandung questioned the support lent by the Bandung SI chapter to the leftists during the SI Congress. To counter this socio-political fragmentation inside the SI, which might have important negative impact on the Islamic community, various Modernist leaders in Bandung started to promote Islam as a purified identity and as a political ideology.

The Rise of Anti-Islamic Sentiment

Anti-Islamic Opposition: Seeking an 'Authentic' Faith

The Modernist intensive campaign to promote Islam as a purified religious identity and a political ideology destabilised Sundanese social-religious and political life. In religious life, the leaders of *sufi* orders were alert to the spreading of a what seemed to them to be a Wahhabi-inspired movement in the country.⁹¹ This puritanical religious movement had swept over West Java during the 1920s. Pijper suggests that the movement was met with formidable opposition by the established *sufi* orders.⁹² From the early to the late-1920s friction between *sufi* orders saw various orders labelling the others as 'Wahabi'. In short, the Wahabis became the number one enemies of Islamic mystical as well as of nativist syncretic movements. Against this backdrop, I presume that the locally and native-inspired syncretic movements such as AKP and ADS came to exist as attempts to reduce the influence of or even to displace such puritanical religious orientations deemed extraneous to local spiritual needs.

It is possible that the need to counter Modernist religious orientations contributed to inspiring the Dutch administration to respond amicably to native-syncretic movements such as the one that arose in Kuningan, West Java. In 1925, the Dutch Administration officially recognised one native-syncretic movement it termed Agama

⁹⁰ Abdullah, *Indonesia Towards Democracy*, p. 21.

⁹¹ Wahhabism is a Saudi-based religious movement that emerged in the late eighteenth century and was led by Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab. The movement called to return to a pristine Islam by purifying religious practices from superstition and unlawful innovation (*bid'a*).

⁹² Pijper, *Fragmenta Islamica*, p. 85.

Djawa Sunda (ADS), as mentioned in the first chapter.⁹³ ADS was led by Madrais, who led his movement from Kuningan, Cirebon. Mei Kartawinata, the leader of Aliran Kebatinan Perjalanan (AKP) was inspired by Madrais' religious movement. According to Madrais' grandson, Pangeran Jatikusuma from Kuningan, Mei met Madrais several times and they discussed various issues especially regarding the social movement needed for the nation's independence.⁹⁴

The AKP came up in 1927 and flourished in the 1950s and 1960s.⁹⁵ During this time the AKP following grew to comprise thousands of people. The enthusiasm among the West Javanese to join this native-syncretic belief was probably due to the interests they shared with the Javanese. As described by Mulder, "They participate because they may look for inner tranquillity, for escape from oppressive social ties, for consolation in disappointment, for magical powers, for mystical expression, for an esoteric milieu of initiated friends, but nowadays they probably join most often for reasons of dissatisfaction with organised religion and in search for a valid emotional form of personal cultural expression."⁹⁶ This is a real example of an experiment initiated by local leaders' initiatives to promote native religion as relevant to indigenous identity and culture in contradistinction to the Modernists' intensive campaign for purification.

AKP and ADS's emergence saw its leaders put in efforts to express their vision to their followers. The defenders of the AKP and ADS were of the opinion that Islam's fundamental doctrines contradict *Aliran Kebatinan* principles. Muslims believe in one God and the Prophet Muhammad as His last Messenger. Muhammad represents the Seal of Prophethood, which absolutely denies any further claim to Prophethood. The *Aliran Kebatinan* proponents perceived Islamic norms, as mediated through Arabic culture, as contradictory to their Sundanese culture and identity, especially in matters pertaining to *adat*. The Classical Arabic language, which is the language of the Quran and *hadith* and used by Muslims in rituals but rarely in communication, is alien.⁹⁷ The AKP leader, Mei Kartawinata, stated that "Islam is the

⁹³ Steenbrink, 'A Catholic Sadrach', p. 292.

⁹⁴ Interview, Pangeran Jatikusuma, Cigugur, Kuningan, 5 August 2009.

⁹⁵ Interview, Mimin Sukandar, Subang, 14 July 2010.

⁹⁶ Mulder, 'Aliran Kebatinan', p. 108.

⁹⁷ Interview, Asep Hari, Bandung, 07 October 2009.

religion of the Arabs and (the Arabs) came to colonise the Sundanese.”⁹⁸ For Mei, there was nothing sacred about the Quran, and to symbolise this he once publicly stuffed a copy into his pants, exclaiming to observers: “Look, it is simply paper!”⁹⁹ By doing so, Mei tried to desecrate the Muslims’ authoritative text and sought to reveal as baseless the Sundanese people’s respect for it. Not all *Aliran Kebatinan* proponents, however, would go to such extremes. Especially in the era of reform after 1998, the leaders of the AKP do not seem to have displayed such an extreme anti-Islamic stand.

Mei’s doctrine urged followers to seek authentic faith, as rooted in Sundanese history and to respect Sundanese dignity. The Sundanese had inherited this and transmitted it from one generation to the other. The followers of the AKP believe that everybody must respect their origin in terms of their place of birth, ethnicity, languages, race and nation.¹⁰⁰ An *Aliran Kebatinan* active member, Asep Setia, stated that “As a Sundanese, I have been bestowed with my own tradition, language, custom and land; I therefore owe God gratitude and show belief in Him in my own manner.” He added: “I wonder why nowadays many Sundanese people would prefer the use of Arabic greetings such as *assalamu ‘alaikum* (peace be upon you) or *alhamdulillah* (Praise be to Allah) instead of *sampurasun, rahayu* or *puji Gusti* (Praise be to Gusti).”¹⁰¹ The ‘doctrine’ of the supremacy of local symbols and values is central to the AKP movement and for AKP’s followers this reactive attitude toward Islam has almost become ‘theological’. By considering Islam, Arabic, and the Quran foreign, Mei and his followers identified Islam as ‘the other’ distinct from established local Sundanese society and culture.

Anti-Islam Sentiment’s Slowdown

The anti-Islamic tone propagated by the defenders of *Aliran Kebatinan* weakened during the 1940s due to the changing political context. In 1943, Japanese forces occupied Java and forced the Dutch Colonial Government to relinquish its authority. Under the Japanese occupation

⁹⁸ Razak, *Teologi Kebatinan Sunda*, p. 145.

⁹⁹ In a talk with Martin van Bruinessen, Singapore, 14 October 2009.

¹⁰⁰ Interview, Andre Hernandi, Bandung, 07 July 2011.

¹⁰¹ Interview, Asep Setia, Bandung, 08 June 2009.

national politics changed in favour of Muslims.¹⁰² Some Muslim leaders used this shifting political constellation to pressurise the native-syncretic movements.¹⁰³ During this time opposition to AKP and ADS from the Muslim community increased. As Steenbrink noted, Muslims accused the ADS leadership of supporting the Dutch Colonial Government which, in return, granted them recognition independent from Muslim authority.¹⁰⁴ In 1944, the ADS was banned and, moreover, before this date there was a Japanese attempt at returning the ADS community to the Islamic tradition by telling Tedjabuana to promote circumcision among his followers. Unwilling to bow to Japanese rule he temporarily dissolved the movement and moved to Bandung.¹⁰⁵ In the meantime, AKP was suppressed after its leader, Mei Kartawinata, was arrested in 1943 for his political activism.¹⁰⁶ As a consequence, AKP followers kept a low profile or went underground.

As the political context was in favour of Muslims, the Japanese occupation galvanised the Muslim community by recognising them as an important political force. W.F. Wertheim maintained that “the recognition of Moslems as an important political factor was a bold deviation from the former colonial practice, which denied Islam any latitude as a political creed.”¹⁰⁷ During the Japanese occupation, PERSIS, NU, Muhammadiyah and PERTI joined in MIAI (Majelis Islam A'laa Indonesia/Madlisul Islamil A'la Indonesia, Indonesian High Islamic Council). The Modernists and Traditionalists had never before united as a socio-political force.¹⁰⁸ In 1943, MIAI transformed itself into an Islamic party named Masyumi (Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia, Indonesian Muslim Consultative Council). As Wertheim has noted, Soekarno

¹⁰² W.F. Wertheim, ‘Indonesian Moslems under Sukarno and Suharto: Majority with Minority Mentality’, in *Indonesian Politics: A Reader*, Christine Doran (ed.) (Centre for South-east Asian Politics: James Cook University of North Queensland, 1987), p. 115.

¹⁰³ Jan Sihar Aritonang and Karel Steenbrink (eds.), *A History of Christianity in Indonesia* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), p. 660.

¹⁰⁴ Steenbrink, ‘A Catholic Sadrach’, p. 293.

¹⁰⁵ Steenbrink, ‘A Catholic Sadrach’, p. 293.

¹⁰⁶ Interview, Engkus Ruswana, Bandung, 27 July 2010.

¹⁰⁷ Wertheim, *Indonesian Moslems under Sukarno and Suharto*, p. 115.

¹⁰⁸ See the definition of the Modernist in Analytical Terms and Definition in the Glossary.

recognised Islam as an official religion but rejected to give it a dominant position within the state structure.¹⁰⁹

After independence, the *Aliran Kebatinan* regained its feet, capitalising on the new dynamics resulting from the changing political context. The 1945 Constitution (article 29) officially recognised the right of each citizen to believe in their '*agama*' and '*kepercayaan*' (religion and belief).¹¹⁰ According to *Aliran Kebatinan* followers, the term '*kepercayaan*' referred to their faith. Contrarily, Muslims contended that the term is synonymous with 'religion'.¹¹¹ Each group in society continued to make claims about the meaning of the word according to their interpretation of that article. This polarising debate divides them to the present day. The changing political context, however, offered a chance for the ADS to revive and prosper. ADS' leader Tedjabuana, for example, returned to Cigugur in 1946 and revived the ADS with the construction the Paseban Tri Panca Tunggal, 'Madrails Grand Mansion'.¹¹²

Anti-Islam sentiment continued and culminated in 1950s and 1960s. I presume that in West Java it was most likely induced by national post-independence political developments and the outcome of the Madiun affair in East Java¹¹³ that pitted *abangan* against *santri* in

¹⁰⁹ Wertheim, *Indonesian Moslems under Sukarno and Suharto*, p. 115.

¹¹⁰ Letter of the Minister of Justice dated 6 June 1979, *Himpunan Peraturan Perundang-Undangan yang Berkaitan dengan Kepercayaan terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa* (Jakarta: Direktorat Jenderal Nilai Budaya Seni dan Film, Direktorat Kepercayaan Terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, 2006), pp. 302, 313.

¹¹¹ Anas Saidi (ed.), *Menekuk Agama, Membangun Tahta: Kebijakan Agama Orde Baru* (Jakarta: Desantara, 2004), p. 61, Interview with Engkus Ruswana, the Chairman of Budidaya, Bandung, 15 August 2009. Also interview with Sulisty Hadisaputro, former Director of Kepercayaan terhadap Tuhan YME at the Department of Culture and Tourism, Jakarta, 31 May 2010. Mr. Wongsonegoro, who once held a high ranking position during Soekarno's time, is said to have endorsed the insertion of the word 'Kepercayaan' into the aforesaid article. Interview with Andri Hernandi, the chairman of AKP, Bandung, 7 July 2010.

¹¹² Steenbrink, 'A Catholic Sadrach', p. 293.

¹¹³ The Madiun Affair was a communist uprising in 1948 against the leaders of the newly-declared Indonesian Republic of Soekarno and Hatta in the town of Madiun, East Java. Led by the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), the uprising declared the establishment of an 'Indonesian Soviet Republic' and killed the governor of East Java, R.M. Suryo, several Muslim leaders and

retaliatory bloodshed.¹¹⁴ As Hefner has noted, the polarisation between Javanists and orthodox Muslims later became the basis for political organisation in rural Java.¹¹⁵ This political division and ideological rivalry very much intensified following the development of local religious tension between Javanists and orthodox Muslims.¹¹⁶ This fostered an anti-Islamic mentality among the followers of Javanism or *Aliran Kebatinan*.

I would like to remind readers that there is no evidence to show how this development in East Java reached West Java. However, I believe that this political tension and the division it caused had a negative impact on other areas and spread outside East Java to the west. In West Java, tensions occurred in various places including Ciparay, Lembang, Subang, Sumedang and Cianjur. In Ciparay, for example, in 1954, Darul Islam rebels¹¹⁷ attacked AKP followers and killed twenty

police officers. The insurgency was exterminated by Republican forces and its leader, Musso, was killed.

¹¹⁴ Hefner, 'Islamizing Java?', p. 535. See also Jamie Mackie, 'Indonesia since 1945: Problem of Interpretation', in Benedict Anderson and Audrey Kahin (eds.), *Interpreting Indonesian Politics: Thirteen Contributions to the Debate* (Interim Report Series, Modern Indonesian Project, Southeast Asia Program, Ithaca, Cornell University, 2011), pp. 117-130.

¹¹⁵ Hefner, 'Islamizing Java?', p. 535. See also William Liddle, 'Power, participation and the political parties in Indonesia', in Karl D. Jackson and Lucian W. Pye (1978), *Political Power and Communication in Indonesia* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press), pp. 171-195.

¹¹⁶ Hefner, 'Islamizing Java?', p. 535.

¹¹⁷ Darul Islam literally means the House of Islam. It is known as DI/TII (Indonesian: *Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia*, means *Darul Islam/Islamic Army of Indonesia*). On August 7, 1949, Sekarmadji Maridjan Kartosoewirjo proclaimed the birth of DI/TII in West Java. Its major goal was to establish the Islamic State of Indonesia. Its birth was to protest against the Renville Agreement the Indonesian government had signed in 1948, which ceded West Java to the Dutch. This rebellion under the banner of Islam continued its movement and did not disband itself even after the transfer of sovereignty from the Dutch administration to the Indonesian government in 1949. This unyielding attitude provoked a clash between DI/TII rebels and the armed forces of the Republic of Indonesia. After some years, the DI/TII movement mainly developed in West Java, South Sulawesi, Aceh, and South Kalimantan. These movements promoted the implementation of the *Shari'ah* as the only valid source of law. Until 1962, the movement produced splinters and offshoots that ranged from the well-known violent Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) to non-violent religious groups. The

four persons.¹¹⁸ At the time of the attack, the victims were busy making preparations for an arts performance to celebrate their Saka Year. In the Lembang region, tension between Muslims and *Aliran Kebatinan* followers occurred from the late 1950s until the 1970s. Muslim *dakwah* was often mocked by *Aliran Kebatinan* followers; the Muslim call to prayer was met with derisive comments such as, "Listen, that is dog's barking."¹¹⁹ This situation, however, illustrates the degree of hostility between people of different faiths born out of a complex mix of ideological and cultural conflicts.

Let me return to the MIAI transformation into Masyumi, which initially seemed to be a significant step towards consolidating a single Islamic party but proved false after only a few years. The unity between the Traditionalists and the Modernists ended in 1952 after the NU Conference in Palembang yielded a separation from Masyumi. Nevertheless, Masyumi remained in existence with major support from PERSIS and the Muhammadiyah. The leading Muslim politician, M. Natsir, was appointed the chairman of Masyumi. In the 1955 election, the party won West Java, leaving other big parties in their wake. Masyumi gained 26.46 per cent of the votes, slightly more than its Jakarta branch (26.13 per cent). The Indonesian Nationalist Party (Partai Nasional Indonesia, PNI) came in second with 23.63 per cent, before the Indonesian Communist Party (Partai Komunis Indonesia, PKI) with 10.84 per cent.¹²⁰ The other Islamic parties including Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah (PERTI) and Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia (PSII) shared 15.73 per cent. In total, the 1955 election gave 41.49 per cent to all Islamic parties in West Java.¹²¹ The Non-Islamic parties including PNI, PKI, IPKI (Ikatan Pendukung Kemerdekaan Indonesia, the Association of Indonesian Independence

best study on the movement to date is C. van Dijk, *Rebellion under the banner of Islam: The Darul Islam in Indonesia* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1981).

¹¹⁸ Interview with Iyus Jusuf, Ciparay, 20 July 2010.

¹¹⁹ Interview, Haji Tajuddin, Cikole, Lembang, 28 July 2010.

¹²⁰ An outstanding study of Indonesian Communism is Ruth T. McVey's *The Rise of Indonesian Communism* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1965).

¹²¹ A. van Marle, 'Indonesian Electoral Geography under Orla and Orba', in Oey Hong Lee (ed.), *Indonesia: After the 1971 Election*, pp. 52-53: The NU gained 9.66%, below its achievement in Jakarta (15.73%), PSII and PERTI had 5.64% and 0.06% respectively.

Supporters), Partai Katolik (Catholic Party), Parkindo (Partai Kristen Indonesia, the Indonesian Christian Party) and Murba (Musyawarah Rakyat Banyak, Many People Deliberation) gained 42.83 per cent of the total vote. Total participation in the election was 88.65 per cent.¹²² These figures also show that in terms of political participation, the Sundanese aspirations were divided into Islamic and non-Islamic ones.

The considerable gain in the 1955 election demonstrates the social and political influence of Islamic parties. Although they failed to achieve a dominant majority, Islam remained significant. The majority of the Sundanese embraced Islam even if they did not vote for an Islamic party. One's belief in Islam does not automatically 'Islamise' one's political orientation. Wertheim – writing in the early 1970s - argued that Islam as a faith does not necessarily resemble Islam as politics.¹²³ He contends that “although Islam is the religion of a large majority of the Indonesian people, the attitudes of those who confess Islam as their faith and as an ideology often resemble those of a minority group.”¹²⁴ This echoes Dutch colonial policy, which confined Islam to personal observance for fear of it becoming a “rallying symbol for anti-colonial resistance.”¹²⁵

PERMAI: A Political Resistance against Islam

During the 1950s, the *Aliran Kebatinan* organisations were considered religious sects. They achieved resurgence due to social and political contexts favourable to them. Aritonang observes that: “Notwithstanding protest by Muslim clerics, especially during Japanese rule, ADS was able to develop and even claim some 100,000 adherents in the early 1950s.”¹²⁶ By 1953, for instance, there were 360 organisations, a massive increase from 29 in 1952, according to a Department of Religious Affairs report.¹²⁷ By 1954, the increasing presence of the

¹²² Van Marle, 'Indonesian Electoral Geography', pp. 52-53.

¹²³ W.F. Wertheim, 'Islam Before and After the Elections' in Oey Hong Lee (ed.), *Indonesia: After the 1971 Election* (London-Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press), p. 88.

¹²⁴ *Idem.*

¹²⁵ *Idem.*

¹²⁶ Aritonang and Steenbrink, *History of Christianity*, p. 660.

¹²⁷ Samuel Agustinus Patty, "Aliran Kepercayaan" A Socio Religious Movement in Indonesia, PhD Dissertation, Washington State University, 1986, p. 69.

Aliran Kebatinan as well as of other sects and groups forced the Ministry of Religious Affairs to establish a Coordinating Body for the Surveillance of Currents of Belief in Society (Badan Koordinasi Pengawasan Aliran dan Kepercayaan Masyarakat, BAKOR PAKEM) to monitor their development and activities. BAKOR PAKEM was tasked with keeping these religious movements in check and ensuring that charismatic leaders would not mobilise the movements against the state or cause social unrest.¹²⁸ The rapid spread of the religious sects was an important phenomenon across West Java at that time.

Prior to the 1955 General Election, *Aliran Kebatinan* elites attempted to consolidate and unite themselves in a national body named All-Indonesia Kebatinan Congress Body (Badan Kongres Kebatinan Seluruh Indonesia, BKKI), resulting from the first *Aliran Kebatinan* Congress in Semarang in 1955. For his own political gain, President Soekarno backed the attempt and endorsed the BKKI's establishment. He even attended the third BKKI Congress in 1957, in which he delivered a speech and praised the movement for its commitment to Pancasila.¹²⁹ Wongsonegoro requested Soekarno to recognise the *Aliran Kebatinan* as an official religion.¹³⁰

Under this socio-political setting, the *Aliran Kebatinan* grew into a socio-religious and political force. In Lembang, for example, the significance of the *Aliran Kebatinan* tradition overshadowed Islam at the time. Throughout the course of the 1950s to the 1970s, for example, Islamic practices such as *salat*, *puasa*, *haji*, *zakat* and *tahlilan* and so on were not widely-observed in Lembang.¹³¹ Only a few mosques were available throughout Lembang. And it was not easy during the 1950s to the 1970s to find Islamic institutions such as Islamic religious study groups (*majlis taklim*), Islamic schools (*madrasah*) and Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) or Quranic Kindergarten (Taman Pengajian Anak, TPA), and so forth.¹³² Haji Otong from Tasikmalaya, who arrived in

¹²⁸ Mulder, 'Aliran Kebatinan', p. 108.

¹²⁹ *Pancasila* is the official political philosophy for Indonesian state. It has five pillars: 1. Belief in One God; 2. Just and Civilized Humanity; 3. The Unity of Indonesia; 4. Democracy; 5. Social Justice.

¹³⁰ Zezen Zaenal Mutaqin, 'Penghayat, Orthodoxy and the legal Politics of the State: The Survival of Agama Djawa Sunda (Madraism) in Indonesia, *Indonesia and Malay World*, Vol. 42, No. 122, p. 14.

¹³¹ Interview, Haji Tatang Haidar, Lembang, 28 July 2010.

¹³² *Idem*.

Nyalindung, Lembang, in the late 1950s established a mosque and an Islamic school in this village to neutralise the influence of *Aliran Kebatinan* and anti-Islam sentiments there.¹³³

During the 1950s and early 1960s, tension between *Aliran Kebatinan* movements and Muslims came up because many of them opposed Islamic parties.¹³⁴ The *Aliran Kebatinan*'s struggle against Islam was politically manifested in the establishment of a party, named Indonesian Marhaen Association (Persatuan Marhaen Indonesia, PERMAI). In 1955, Mei and his friends, including J.B. Asa and Iwa Kusumasumantri, declared the establishment of the PERMAI party prior to the general election.¹³⁵ PERMAI was a nation-wide party even if it did not play a prominent role at the national level. The party, however, failed to make the electoral threshold in the 1955 election, having won only two seats in the Konstituante.¹³⁶ This result forced the Party's

¹³³ Interview, Haji Tajuddin, Cikole, Lembang, 28 July 2010

¹³⁴ Martin van Bruinessen, 'Saints, Politics and Sufi Bureaucrats: Mysticism and Politics in Indonesia's New Order', in Martin van Bruinessen and Julia Day Howell (eds.), *Sufism and the 'Modern' in Islam* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), p. 98.

¹³⁵ Clifford Geertz argues that PERMAI is an effort to seek relevance for Abangan beliefs. On one hand it depends on esoteric and ritual techniques; on the other hand it functions as "an-anti Islam social organisation" which strives against it. Its membership contains "urban labourers, unemployed and employed radical urban people, and those who worked on plantation lands." See Niels Mulder. *Mistisisme Jaw: Ideologi di Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2001), p. 65. Geertz argued that "those members believe PERMAI/Perjalanan was revealed as 'authentic knowledge' instead of Islamic or even Hindu beliefs seeking Pancasila as national ideology by means of ancient Javanese pattern. By doing so, PERMAI tried to exist as a way of adjustment to a changing social context. PERMAI is therefore a belief system created for those farmers who come to the city." PERMAI's anti-Islam sentiment can be seen in Mei's statement that "Islam is the religion of the Arabs that came to colonise Pasundan land." See Razak. *Teologi Kebatinan AKP*. p. 145.

¹³⁶ Konstituante was the state body which was set up to formulate the permanent Constitution for the Republic of Indonesia to replace the provisional one of 1950. It served from 10th of November 1956 to 2nd of July, 1959. On the 5th of July 1959, President Soekarno issued a decree that dissolved this body and he reimposed the 1945 Constitution. A valuable study on the Konstituante is Adnan Buyung Nasution's *The Aspiration for constitutional government in Indonesia: a socio-legal study of the Indonesian Konstituante, 1956-1959* (Jakarta: Pustaka Sinar Harapan, 1992).

dissolution, marking Mei's failure to consolidate his political position in the Konstituante through which he had hoped to politically promote the Pancasila and the native-syncretic creeds. Mei returned to the grassroots and re-united with former PERMAI members, officially reorganising his movement under the banner of AKP.

Turning Away from Islam

Pressure against *Aliran Kebatinan*

Since independence, Muslim leaders paid much attention to their missionary (*dakwah*) activities aiming to promote Islamisation and to challenge anti-Islam tendencies among *Aliran Kebatinan* followers. Social mobilisation for economic, social and political reasons brought about social change. Migration from areas such as Tasikmalaya and Garut, where Islamic culture was strong, to other places where Islamic influence was less pronounced, such as Lembang, gradually caused socio-religious and cultural changes that forced the decline of anti-Islamic sentiment and the decline of native-syncretic culture commonly embraced by *Aliran Kebatinan* followers. These changes pressurised the *Aliran* and caused tension.

As said above, during the 1950s and early 1960s the *Aliran Kebatinan* movement reached its culmination. AKP had a considerable growth and was well-institutionalised. AKP and ADS movements were two of the most prominent religious movements in the region. This golden era ended in the mid-1960s. The AKP failed to keep the pace of its considerable growth due to leadership crises and socio-political pressure. In the meantime, in 1964, the Kuningan Court, supported by the army and the national government, banned the ADS. Popular accounts claimed that the ADS was not banned; rather, Tedjabuana dissolved it.¹³⁷ The ADS and AKP leaders failed to understand why the government refused to recognise their beliefs amidst its support for the interests of the people of other religions and faiths.¹³⁸

¹³⁷ Interview, Ira Indrawardana, Bandung, 14 August 2009.

¹³⁸ *Idem*.

Disappointment and Dissolution

ADS undoing began with the discrimination ADS followers faced.¹³⁹ One day in March 1964, Sakim, a male nurse who was an ADS follower, failed to get a health subsidy for his wife's stay in a government hospital in Kuningan after she had given birth. Sakim was a government civil servant eligible to receive subsidy for stays at government hospitals. The hospital, however, refused to give Sakim a subsidy because he failed to show his marriage certificate to prove that the woman giving birth was his wife. According to contemporary Indonesian law, a marriage was recognised if it was registered either with the Civil Registry Office for non-Muslims or with the Office of Religious Affairs for Muslims. Sakim's marriage, however, was conducted according to ADS custom, which was recognised by neither office.¹⁴⁰ This case soon came to the attention of BAKOR PAKEM, the Coordinating Body for the Surveillance of Currents of Belief in Society. Tedjabuana tried to help Sakim with the assistance of A. Hidayat Sasmita, a parish priest from Cirebon, and Sie Tjie Djie, the President of the Cirebon chapter of the Catholic Party, at the Kuningan Court. The ADS leader, however, failed. On 9 July 1964, the Kuningan Court prosecutor through BAKOR PAKEM decided that since the ADS marriage was unrecognised according to law, Sakim's marriage was considered unlawful.¹⁴¹ His application for medical subsidisation for his wife was therefore rejected. For ADS leaders, this rejection was a symbolic denial to recognise the ADS's existence, its vision and its mission.¹⁴²

There was also, of course, a political complication because inter-marriage between ADS followers and Muslims was rampant and provoked tension in society. In many respects, Muslims, as well as the authorities, wanted to conduct marriages according to Law number 22/1946, which obliged every citizen to marry "under the auspices of government religious officials in order to obtain a formal

¹³⁹ The following account rests largely on interview with Jatikusuma, Cigugur, 5 August 2009; Interview with Ira Indrawardana, Bandung, 14 August 2009, and Interview with Romo Abu Kasman, chief pastor of the Cigugur Church, Cigugur, Kuningan, 6 August 2009.

¹⁴⁰ Steenbrink, 'A Catholic Sadrach', p. 294.

¹⁴¹ *Idem*.

¹⁴² Interview, Pangeran Jatikusuma, Cigugur, Kuningan, 5 August 2009.

acknowledgement from the government.”¹⁴³ ADS followers defied this law and this defiance often provoked animosity. It was not rare that to get their way, ADS leaders and followers converted to Islam for the sake of marriage and afterwards abandoned the religion. Tedjabuana, for example, converted to Islam in February 1951 to be able to be the legal guardian in the marriage of his son, Siti Jenar, but soon after renounced the religion.¹⁴⁴

Muslim leaders tended to be extraordinarily sensitive whenever they were challenged with this kind of problems. They sometimes blew issues out of proportion in a way that suggested they took personal affront.¹⁴⁵ In 1964, the following case was brought before the court and the perpetrator was jailed for several months. One day in 1964, Kamid, a citrus farmer of Cigugur, Kuningan, wanted to express his thanks to God after having had a successful harvest by giving some of his citrus to his neighbours. Unfortunately, a Muslim family fell ill after having eaten the citrus and Kamid was accused of having intended to harm them by poisoning them. Kamid denied the charge. To prove his innocence, Kamid swore that he did not poison his neighbours, and for unknown reasons, he then went on to step on the Quran. This action outraged Muslims and they demanded justice from the public prosecutor for Kamid’s offense of the Muslim Holy Book. Kamid was punished with a jail sentence.¹⁴⁶

Such sustained tension had great impact. Muslim activists and organisations were outraged and demanded the suspension of ADS.¹⁴⁷ In 1964, ADS leaders were accused of breach of trust in the construction of the ADS Tri Mulya School in downtown Cigugur, Kuningan. They were accused of having raised funds by coercion and using them irresponsibly. Muslim demands to suspend the ADS provoked the court to take action. By 1964 hundreds of ADS members were arrested and imprisoned. The ADS leaders, Tedjabuana, and his son, Jatikusuma, were

¹⁴³ Rosidin, *Kebatinan, Islam and the State*, p. 52.

¹⁴⁴ *Idem*.

¹⁴⁵ Interview, Romo Abu Kasman, chief pastor of Cigugur Church, Cigugur, Kuningan, 6 August 2009.

¹⁴⁶ Rosidin, *Kebatinan, Islam and the State*, p. 54.

¹⁴⁷ Interview, Romo Abu Kasman, chief pastor of Cigugur Church, Cigugur, Kuningan, 6 August 2009.

also detained.¹⁴⁸ Tedjabuana recognised that this situation put the lives of the members of his community at risk and that he had to take concrete action. Tedjabuana finally dissolved the ADS in 1964 after having been suffering for decades.

Embracing Roman Catholicism

Frustrated at having been denied recognition for decades, along with exposure to discrimination and other social and political pressures, in the end Tedjabuana embraced Roman Catholicism. Many considered this an act of apostasy although Tedjabuana had never been a real Muslim. His conversion was witnessed by Pastor A. Hidayat Sasmita and soon afterwards thousands of his followers joined him in embracing Catholicism. Only a few of them embraced Protestantism or Islam. Tedjabuana saw many similarities between Catholicism and ADS, especially in their doctrine of love. Neither faith required circumcision, which the ADS saw as a violation of the human body. The palace-sanctuary of Paseban Tri Panca Tunggal, which was previously used to carry out ADS ceremonies, was soon used as a Catholic Church. The 'conversion' of ADS members to Catholicism also facilitated the permeation of Catholic influence in the villages where ADS followers lived, such as in Cisantana in Cigugur, Ciawi in Tasikmalaya, Pasir in Garut and the village of Manggahang near Bandung.¹⁴⁹ After some years, the Catholics built churches in Cisantana and Pasir.¹⁵⁰ On 5 March 1978, Tedjabuana died as a Catholic at the age of 82. Since then, his son Jatikusuma took over full leadership of his community.

Jatikusuma had in fact begun to exercise more authority since 1974. He followed his father in embracing Catholicism.¹⁵¹ He lived in the Grand Mansion of Cigugur and allowed the use of the residence's hall for the Catholic mass.¹⁵² Later, the Catholic community erected a church, parish houses, clinic and school just uphill near the mansion. While church activities, properties and membership significantly increased,

¹⁴⁸ Interview, Pangeran Jatikusuma, Cigugur, Kuningan, 5 August 2009. See also Rosidin, *Kebatinan, Islam and the State*, p. 53.

¹⁴⁹ Steenbrink, 'A Catholic Sadrach', p. 295.

¹⁵⁰ *Idem*.

¹⁵¹ This following account rests largely on my interview with Pangeran Jatikusuma, Cigugur, Kuningan, 5 August 2010.

¹⁵² Steenbrink, 'A Catholic Sadrach', p. 296.

the mansion and its residents, including the Pangeran, were not really saved from economic insecurity. The conversion of the ADS members to Catholicism had also redirected regular and irregular donations away from ADS' coffers to the church treasury. It seems that the ADS leaders did not anticipate the economic consequences of this conversion. Steenbrink argues that "some events and developments in 1964-1981 show that the expectations of Jatikusuma and the Catholic clergy about the conversion to Catholicism were quite different."¹⁵³

There were several consequences the ADS leaders had not foreseen. *First*, Jatikusuma, as well as his father, Tedjabuana, lost their privileged positions as Pangeran (Lord). Social activities were organised with due respect to the Pangeran but the religious hierarchy saw Jatikusuma complain that after having become a Catholic, his position turned into one of a sheep in a flock from previously having been a Lord.¹⁵⁴ This represented the unexpected 'desacralisation' of the ADS leaders. *Second*, as said above, economic and social resources which were previously channelled to the leaders of the ADS were now allocated to the church. The radical shift in the socio-religious and cultural life of the ADS community had tremendous economic consequences, especially for the ADS leadership. *Third*, this radical change also seriously eroded ADS authority. With the adoption of church leadership and organisation, the old ADS authority was challenged and a new pattern of allegiance emerged. The allegiance of the former ADS followers had split in two. Some of them continued being loyal to Pangeran Jatikusuma rather than to the church; but the majority of followers found the church to be the true spiritual place to which they surrendered their allegiance.

Jatikusuma was unhappy that in church he was just a member of the congregation and to assert his influence, he boycotted discussions with church leaders. In this situation, there was clearly tension between Jatikusuma and the church leaders, most of whom were former ADS followers. This illustrates the dynamics and the impact of the radical shift in the religious and organisational orientation of the ADS community, from a native-syncretic current to that of the world religion of Roman Catholicism.

¹⁵³ *Idem*, p. 9.

¹⁵⁴ Interview, Pangeran Jatikusuma, Cigugur, Kuningan, 5 August 2009.

Some of the factors cited above constituted the reasons behind Jatikusuma's disillusionment that caused him to turn away from Catholicism and to return to the teachings of his grandfather. While his sense of disappointment was latent for some time, the trigger came later on, in Bandung in the late 1970s, during the Sundanese Christmas Mass in a church in Kebon Kelapa.¹⁵⁵ Prior to the celebration, Jatikusuma demanded that the attendants of the Sundanese mass celebration should wear Sundanese attire and that the liturgy should be conducted in Sundanese. For some church leaders, this demand was too much. Pastor Abu Kasman said that "In the Catholic Church, hierarchy and authority are strong and exercised carefully; the liturgy must be in Latin like Muslims use Arabic in their prayers. All churches will always maintain uniformity in performing worship. If one church allows the adoption of local culture, the others will come with similar demands."¹⁵⁶ The church, however, did approve of Jatikusuma's dress proposal for the *pelayan misa* (mass assistants) but not for the Pastor. Jatikusuma was upset with the inflexibility of the Church and decided to leave the Sunda Mass.

Abu Kasman argues that the Catholic Church had in fact made many adjustments in order to accommodate local culture, especially the use of Sundanese music and art such as *angklung* (bamboo musical instrument) and *degung* (small gong) in the church, in addition to wearing a *keris* (kris) and a *blankon* (Sundanese headdress, especially for the mass assistants). For the pastor, this kind of adaptation has not yet been allowed by the Catholic Church.¹⁵⁷ Due to this restriction, the relationship between the church leaders and ex-ADS leaders became strained. Misunderstandings continued to occur and polarised the Church and the devoted proponents of Sundanese culture, the ADS followers.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ *Idem.*

¹⁵⁶ Interview, Romo Abu Kasman, chief pastor of Cigugur Church, Cigugur, Kuningan, 6 August 2009.

¹⁵⁷ *Idem.*

¹⁵⁸ In 1977, Jatikusuma declared his breaking with the church and he began to revive the old ADS tradition under a new banner, PACKU (*Paguyuban Adat Cara Karuhun Urang; Adat Association for Ancestors' Way of Life*) in 1980. Under Muslim pressure, the West Java court banned PACKU in 1982, accusing this new organisation of being a reincarnation of ADS. Despite this challenge, Jatikusuma continued his struggle by establishing another organisation named AKUR (*Adat Karuhun Urang, Our Ancestral Adat*).

Conclusion

Islamic Modernists sought a crucial shift in the Islamisation trend. They argued for the superiority of Islam over all other cultural heritages which upset the existing socio-religious setting and the political order among Sundanese society. With their 'purification' agenda, the Modernist leaders questioned the amalgamation of Islamic practices and *adat* and condemned belief in spiritual forces and native-syncretic practices. They believed that *adat* is Hindu and that Christianity is the religion of the Dutch and therefore both are Muslims' opponents. In this context, the pressure put upon the *Aliran Kebatinan* continued. As pressure mounted, the *Aliran Kebatinan* leaders saw that the Islamic vision did not share their worldviews and that these visions could not be reconciled. As a consequence, anti-Islam sentiments emerged. After being disappointed because the state did not recognise them as members of a full-fledged religious organisation and after it failed to meet the civil rights of *Aliran Kebatinan* followers, they turned away from Islam massively and converted to Christianity.

