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**JONG ISLAMIETEN BOND:**  
**A STUDY OF A MUSLIM YOUTH MOVEMENT IN INDONESIA**  
**DURING THE DUTCH COLONIAL ERA, 1924 - 1942**

A thesis  
submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of  
Master of Arts

by  
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## **ABSTRACT**

**Author** : Dardiri Husni  
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This thesis deals with an influential young Muslim intellectual movement, Jong Islamieten Bond (JIB), which had active towards the end of the Dutch Colonial era in Indonesia. It will first investigate the circumstances under which the JIB was founded. Second, it will go on to survey the development of the organization with respect to its leadership between 1924 to 1942. Finally, this thesis will analyze in some detail the ideology and the activities of the movement. It will attempt to shed a light on the JIB's role in defining Islam as both a religion and an ideology in the struggle to form an Indonesian identity for the future Indonesian nation.

## **RÉSUMÉ**

**Auteur** : Dardiri Husni  
**Titre** : Jong Islamieten Bond: L' étude d'un mouvement de jeunes Musulman  
en Indonésie pendant l'ère coloniale hollandaise, 1924-1942  
**Département** : Institut des études islamiques  
**Diplôme** : Maîtrise ès arts (M.A.)

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Cette thèse traite du jeune et influent mouvement intellectuel musulman, le Jong Islamieten Bond, active vers la fin de l'ère coloniale hollandaise en Indonésie. Il nous étudiera d'abord les circonstances qui ont mené à la fondation du JIB. Ensuite, il y aura une examination des développement de l'organisation entre 1924 à 1942. La thèse analysera également en détail son idéologie et ses activités. Elle tachera d' éclairer le rôle du JIB en définissant l'Islam comme une religion et idéologie de lutte ayant pour but la formation d' une identité pour la future nation indonésienne.

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## NOTES

All references in this thesis will be fully quoted the first time used in the footnote, followed by the page number. For example, Benda, Harry J. *The Crescent and the Rising Sun, Indonesian Islam under Japanese Occupation 1942 – 1945*. The Hague, W. Van Hoeve, 1958, 25. After their first mention, all author's name, titles of work, etc. will be shortened, followed by the page number, such as, Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun*, 27. Reference to works in languages other than English will follow the same pattern. For example, in its first mention, reference in *bahasa Indonesia* will be as follow: Rahardjo M. Dawam. *Intellectual Intelegensia dan Perilaku Politik Bangsa: Risalah Cendekiawan Muslim* (Bandung: Mizan, 1993), 61. The translation of the titles of Indonesian works will be supplied in bibliography.

The Arabic transliteration in this thesis will follow the system used by the Institute of Islamic Studies McGill University. The table of this scheme is as follows:

b	=	⬤	dh	=	⤵	t	=	⤵	l	=	↓
t	=	⌚	r	=	⤵	z	=	⤵	m	=	↗
th	=	⌚	z	=	⤵	'	=	⤵	n	=	↘
j	=	⌚	s	=	⤵	gh	=	⤵	h	=	←
ḥ	=	⌚	sh	=	⤵	f	=	⤵	w	=	↖
kh	=	⌚	ṣ	=	⬢	q	=	⤵	y	=	↘
d	=	⤵	ḍ	=	⤵	k	=	→	'	=	↔

Short : a = \_ ; i = \_ ; u = \_  
 Long : ā = ⬤ ; ī = ⤵ ; ū = ↖  
 Diphthong : ay = ⤵⬤ ; aw = ↖⬤

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## INTRODUCTION

Following the inauguration of the Dutch "Ethical Policy"<sup>1</sup> at the turn of this century, perceptible changes occurred in the Dutch attitude towards the indigenous Indonesian population. Among these changes, one may mention the developments in the field of education. Although attendance at government-run schools was somewhat restricted, yet to borrow Feith's words, "the door was opened to the rise of a small but crucially important new group of Indonesians with Western education."<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, this new group of "intellectuals" later formed the nucleus of the religious and nationalist movements that strove for the awakening and empowerment of their people.

The Jong Islamieten Bond, founded in 1925 by secondary and tertiary level students, was a group of young intellectuals who emerged earlier this century. Interestingly, this group identified itself with Islam as the key to an Indonesian reawakening. In so doing, its members became affiliated with modernist Muslim leaders, following in their footsteps in terms of both thought and action.

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<sup>1</sup>As the twentieth century began, the Dutch colonial policy underwent the most significant change of direction in its history. The Ethical policy had roots in both humanitarian concern and economic advantage. In 1902 Alexander W. F. Idenberg became Minister of Colonies (1902-5, 1908-9, 1918-19). In this post, and as Governor General (1909-1916) Idenberg more than any other single individual put Ethical ideas into practice. The Dutch enunciated three principles which were thought of as typifying this new policy: education, irrigation and emigration. For more information see, M.C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c.1300* 2ed. (California: Stanford University Press, 1993), 151-162.

<sup>2</sup>Herbert Feith, "Indonesia" in George McTurnan Kahin, *Government and Politics in Southeast Asia*, 2ed. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), 192.

Much scholarly work has been published dealing with Indonesian Islam in the twentieth century and focusing, to various degrees, on Muslim organizations in the late Dutch colonial era and the early Japanese occupation. On the one hand we have Federspiel's *Persatuan Islam: Islamic Reform in Twentieth Century Indonesia*,<sup>3</sup> Benda's *The Crescent and the Rising Sun*<sup>4</sup> and Nakamura's *The Crescent Arises over the Banyan Tree*. On the other, we find Deliar Noer's *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942*,<sup>5</sup> Alfian's dissertation entitled "Islamic Modernism in Indonesian Politics: The Muhammadiyah Movement during the Dutch Colonial Period 1912-1942,"<sup>6</sup> and Timur Jaylani's thesis on the Sarekat Islam Movement.<sup>7</sup>

All these works are important sources on Indonesian Islam for the period covered by our study. Interestingly, all these scholars speak about the importance of a young Muslim intellectual movement, Jong Islamieten Bond (JIB), as the nucleus of the future Muslim nationalist leaders, who became prominent in the Muslim movements once they grew into adults. However, none of them makes more than passing reference to the Bond. In reality, the Jong Islamieten Bond which recruited members from the Western

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<sup>3</sup>Howard M. Federspiel, *Persatuan Islam, Islamic Reform in Twentieth Century Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1970).

<sup>4</sup>Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam under the Japanese Occupation 1942-1945* (The Hague: W. van Hoeve, 1958).

<sup>5</sup>Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1973).

<sup>6</sup>Published as Alfian, *Muhammadiyah; The Political Behaviour of a Muslim Modernist Organization under Dutch Colonialism* (Yogyakarta: Gajah Mada University Press, 1989).

<sup>7</sup>Anton Timur Jaylani, "The Sarekat Islam Movement: Its Contribution to Indonesian Nationalism." (M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1992).

educated intellectuals, was the vanguard in defining Islam as an ideology amidst rapidly spreading Western ideologies like nationalism and socialism, especially among the young intellectuals.

Therefore, as far as academic studies are concerned, there is no scholarly work that deals adequately with the Jong Islamieten Bond. This is not to say that the organization has not enjoyed any attention from Indonesian writers and researchers. Nevertheless, it has been seen as merely a part of the broader subject, namely, the Muslim youth movement in Indonesia. Among the books that touch on the organization, there is Ridwan Saidi's *Pemuda Islam dalam Dinamika Politik Bangsa 1925-1984*,<sup>8</sup> which offers a descriptive anatomy of Muslim youth movements against a contemporary setting, but gives only a brief explanation of the JIB's establishment. Intended as a refutation of a book written by Indonesian historians and officially published by the Department of Education of the Republic of Indonesia,<sup>9</sup> his treatment of the subject covers the days of the JIB's founding and brief mention of the Ahmadiyah's infiltration of this Muslim youth organization.

A second work, *Organisasi Kaum Muda Islam di Jawa, Pada Masa Akhir Penjajahan Belanda, 1924-1924*,<sup>10</sup> by the Lembaga Research dan Survey of IAIN

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<sup>8</sup>Ridwan Saidi, *Pemuda Islam dalam Dinamika Politik Bangsa 1925-1984* (Jakarta: Rajawali, 1984)

<sup>9</sup> Marwati Joened Pusponogoro and Nugroho Notosusanto, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*, vol. 4 (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1990), 195-196.

<sup>10</sup>H. Syamsudin Abdullah et, al. *Organisasi Kaum Muda Islam di Jawa, pada Akhir Penjajahan Belanda, 1925-1942*, (Yogyakarta: Lembaga Research dan Survey IAIN Yogyakarta, 1986) pp. 53-60.

Yogyakarta, aims at describing and analyzing the factors and the characteristics of Muslim youth movements during the late colonial era. But it contains only a few details about the JIB. Although, it offers more analysis of this organization than does Saidi's, it does not, however, adequately discuss the thinking of the JIB in response to the situation faced in that period.

There are also writings in the form of articles. M. Roem, one of the activists of the JIB, wrote a piece entitled "Jong Islamieten Bond yang Saya Alami," which appeared in *Panji Masyarakat*<sup>11</sup>. This writing is more in the nature of recollections of an activist, and provides only general description of events that are considered important in the history of the JIB. Deliar Noer wrote his own article, "Jong Islamieten Bond,"<sup>12</sup> to commemorate Mohamad Roem's seventieth anniversary; it briefly depicts the development, the characteristics and the role of the JIB as a Muslim youth movement.

All these aforementioned writings do supplement one another, but none of them is an in-depth study of the JIB. In the absence of any such attempt, the present thesis surveys the development of the JIB, its role and position in Muslim community, and among the Muslim and nationalist movements. Basing itself on original sources published by the JIB, particularly in *Het Licht* magazine, this thesis will explore the socio-religious milieu, the intellectual formulation and the political dynamics that led to the increasing

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<sup>11</sup>Mohamad Roem, "Jong Islamieten Bond yang Saya Alami." in *Panji Masyarakat*, (23, No. 348 January 1982).

<sup>12</sup>Deliar Noer, "Jong Islamieten Bond", in Panitia Buku Peringatan Mohammad Natsir/Mohammad Roem 70 Tahun, *Mohammad Roem 70 Tahun, Pejuang Perunding* [Mohammad Roem 70 years old; a diplomatic fighter] (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1978), pp. 240-255.

participation by Muslim youths in contemporary politics at that time. The thesis will give special attention to the circumstances which led to the birth of JIB, as well as the significance of its role in developing the mental awareness of Muslim youths during the years of its existence (1925 - 1942).

This thesis aims at depicting how the intellectuals in the Jong Islamieten Bond, clearly committed to a modernist view of Islam, struggled to bring young intellectual Muslims who studied in the Dutch schools to an appreciation of Islam. It also aims to give an account of the significant role which this organization played in the political struggle between secular nationalists and Muslim nationalists during the period.

Following this introduction, the thesis will consist of three chapters. Chapter One deals with the Islamic and nationalist movements in Indonesia prior to the rise of the JIB. The dichotomous characteristics of nationalist vs. Islamic and modernist vs. traditionalist --normally applied to adult organizations--will be looked for in the youth organizations which emerged during the early twentieth century. This will provide some analytical background to the establishment for the JIB and tell us about the circumstances under which the JIB was founded.

Chapter Two discusses, in the first part, the establishment and the development of the JIB during the late Dutch colonial period (1925-1942). This consists of an analysis of its development with respect to the changing leadership patterns of the day, especially the rise of those with access to Western education to leadership roles in Indonesian society. In the second part, this chapter discusses the ideology of the JIB that determined its



position among other organizations, and analyzes its Islamic activities which helped define its own characteristics. The JIB's views on Islam will be discussed in this part as a logical consequence of the ideology it evolved.

Chapter Three, will survey in depth how the JIB defined Islam as its ideology, by analyzing its response to national issues of religious, social and political concerns. Thus, to give a more complete picture of the JIB's role, we will analyze articles that deal with national issues in the colonial era. Finally, our findings will be summarized in the Conclusion.

## CHAPTER I

# ISLAMIC AND NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS IN INDONESIA AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF JONG ISLAMIETEN BOND (JIB)

### A. The Rise of Parties and Organizations: the Genesis of Indonesian Nationalism

#### 1900 - 1930

The pacification of Aceh in 1903 marked the complete suzerainty of the Dutch over the Indies; as such it marked the high point of Dutch colonial control. The Aceh war, the longest war ever undertaken by the Dutch in the region, was finally concluded through an agreement with the *uleebalangs* (the secular leaders), as well as through hunting down the *teungkus* (*ulama*).<sup>1</sup> Similar measures had been taken by the Dutch against the ulama in Minangkabau and on behalf of the *adat* party, a situation that led to the Padri war (1803-1838).<sup>2</sup> On Java, the most wide-scale Muslim resistance was led by Diponegoro, lasted from 1825 to 1830.<sup>3</sup> This series of wars, including the uprisings led by local rulers in Borneo (1850-54), Celebes (1858-60) and in Sumatra under the Batak priest-king in

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<sup>1</sup>This approach was known as *divide et impera*, a political practice of encouraging the formation of two opposing parties in an enemy camp so that it can be more easily dominated. In the case of case of Aceh, this policy was encouraged by Snouck Hurgronje, the Dutch advisor in Muslim affairs in order to counterbalance Islamic political influences in the region. For a good account of the Aceh War, see Ibrahim Alfian, *Perang di Jalan Allah* (Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1987), especially chapter 6.

<sup>2</sup>See Taufik Abdullah, "The Beginning of the Padri Movement," in *Papers of the Dutch Indonesian Historical Conference* (Jakarta/Leiden: Bureau of Indonesian Studies, 1987), 143-53.

<sup>3</sup>Although the war was probably motivated more by Prince Diponegoro's concern to free the kingdom from Dutch intervention, it nevertheless had the broad support of the people. Van der Kroef mentions that more fundamental to understanding the people's role in the war was the inhuman exploitation of merchants by Dutch toll-keepers. For a more complete discussion see J.M. van der Kroef, "Prince Diponegoro: Progenator of Indonesian Nationalism," *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 8, no. 4 (August 1949): 425-50.

1870, came to an end with the last Dutch campaign in Bali (1906-1908). These encounters, which were characteristic of the colonial situation in the archipelago during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, marked the close of a long, exhausting resistance by the native population against foreign intruders. It is clear however, that, it was due to a lack of unity among the leaders that resistance against Dutch power was repeatedly unsuccessful and that Dutch technological superiority prevailed in all cases. Accordingly, by the end of the nineteenth century the Dutch had taken political control over the native people in almost all regions of the archipelago.

In the twentieth century, however, democratic changes in the Dutch republic were to change very significantly, the Netherlands own view of what colonial control should mean. Many wanted a new approach—a more humane policy toward colonial peoples then under Dutch control. Because of pressure placed on colonial policies by Christian party leaders such as Kuyper, and other liberals, such as E. Douwes Dekker and van Deventer, during the Liberal Era (1870-1900)<sup>4</sup>, the Ethical Policy was born in 1901. This

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<sup>4</sup>The pressure placed on colonial policy by the "ethical" school was probably influenced by the humanitarian strain of nationalism that prevailed towards the end of the nineteenth century. Kuyper, a Christian party leader who had long denounced the policy of exploitation, pleaded for self-government as a moral obligation. See Robert van Neil, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite* (The Hague: W. van Hoeve, 1970), 63. In addition, Multatuli (E. Douwes Dekker's pseudonym) wrote his autobiography called *Max Havelaar*, where he described his experiences as a colonial civil servant. The work was a "devastating exposure of the oppressive and corrupt state of the Dutch rule in Java." See Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1300* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1981), 124. Most important perhaps was C. Th. Van Deventer, a lawyer who spent 17 years living in Indonesia. He wrote an article in *de Gids* (1899) entitled *Een eereschuld* ('A Debt of Honor'). There he argued that the Netherlands was greatly indebted to the Indonesians for all the wealth they had drained from their country. Therefore, the Dutch were morally obliged to repay, not by giving them a sum of money but by giving primacy in colonial policy to the needs of the people of Indonesia. Bernard H.M. Vlekke, *Geschiedenis van den Indischen Archipel* (Roermond-Maaseik: J. J. Romenand Sons, 1947), 390.

policy had its origin in the speech from the throne of that year, which called for welfare programs to be put in place for the native lands and peoples.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, Indonesian reaction to the Dutch began to change from sporadic and diffuse armed struggle to organized resistance on the part of large groups of peoples. This shift was initiated by the birth of organized movements in the first quarter of this century, whether religious or nationalist, which showed a new concern by local leaders for the well-being of the indigenous people.

Interestingly, this Indonesian awakening came as a result of an accumulation of factors both within the country and overseas at the turn of the century. Basic to the rise of the organizations was probably the enactment of the Ethical Policy, which was designed to replace the old policies of 19th century Dutch colonialism. There were two particularly significant changes. First, the educational program was extended. This had been introduced during the Liberal Era, a move that encouraged the emergence of new Indonesian elites alongside the old caste-based elites (*priyayi*).<sup>6</sup> By this policy many Indonesians were exposed to new knowledge, including science, especially those who had

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<sup>5</sup>The speech mentions that "As a Christian empire, the Netherlands are obliged to imbue the whole of the government's policy with the conviction that the Netherlands have to fulfill a moral vocation toward the population of their regions." Cited in Vlekke as quoted by Timur Jaylani, "The Sarekat Islam Movement: Its Contribution to Indonesian Nationalism," (M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1959). 14.

<sup>6</sup>The construction of elementary schools for Indonesians increased more rapidly after 1870. Indonesian pupils in these schools numbered about 8,400 in 1871 (predominantly in the Moluccas and northern Celebes), a figure which had increased to about 15,750 by 1892, with pupils in Java numbering 2,350. Moreover, in 1864, the Europeesche Lagere School (ELS, Dutch Elementary School) was opened to "qualified Indonesians." Indonesian enrolment in these school slowly increased to 1,870 by 1900. See Paul W. van der Veur, *Education and Social Change in Colonial Indonesia* (Athens: Centre for International Studies Ohio University, 1969).

the opportunity to study in the Netherlands through the government merit program. Second, and ironically, given that the policy was designed to reinforce colonialism, the many shortcomings that occurred in the application of the policy allowed young intellectuals to voice the concerns that called colonial intent into question.<sup>7</sup> In short, conflicting social interests between the native population and the colonial authorities grew, and the formation of nationalist organizations was a sign of popular concern and involvement.<sup>8</sup>

Budi Utomo was founded in 1908, initially by upper class students, as a symbol of opposition against the hegemony of the Indonesian nobility and the Dutch administration's power.<sup>9</sup> This was a direct criticism of vested Indonesian authority, which tended to cooperate with the Dutch government. However, after the elder generation of

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For the emergence of a new educated class and its significance for the social change, see Robert van Neil, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite* (The Hague: W. van Hoeve, 1970).

<sup>7</sup>According to Vlekke, the Ethical Policy did not succeed in: 1) abolishing privately owned land; 2) changing the economic system, which still tended to stifle business enterprise among Indonesians, eliminating most of the indigenous merchant class; 3) eliminating entirely the reluctance to allow Indonesians to gain experience in self-government; 4) opening jobs for Indonesians commensurate with their dearly-gained training. Cited by Jaylani, "The Sarekat Islam Movement," 15.

<sup>8</sup>Sartono Kartodirjo, "Some Problems on the Genesis of Nationalism in Indonesia" *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 3, no.1 (March 1962): 74.

<sup>9</sup>In *De Locomotief*, as mentioned by Balfas for example, Tjipto, one of the founders of the organization, criticized the privileges of the nobility and attacked a decree which at the time made the office of *bupati* hereditary. He believed that the system had made the office one of the tools of the colonial government rather than the guardian of the Indonesian people's interests. Therefore, he argued that the decree was certainly contradictory to the principle of the Ethical Policy according to which people should be allowed to govern themselves. He wanted knowledge, skill and ability to be the most important factors, not heredity. M. Balfas, *Tjipto Mangunkusumo, Demokrat Sedjati* (Tjipto Mangunkusumo, a Genuine Democrat) (Jakarta-Amsterdam, 1952) as cited in Bernard Dahm, *History of Indonesia in the Twentieth Century* (London: Praeger Publisher Inc., 1971), 26.

*bupatis* and other higher *priyayi*s joined the organization, the objective inevitably changed. Its new goal was to create a general Javanese union whose duty would be to struggle for the harmonious development of the land and people of the Dutch East Indies through the advancement of education. Gone was any criticism of political alignments. The organization over time came to be considered as nothing more than a Javanese cultural association, although until 1924 it took part in political activities during the nationalist era.<sup>10</sup>

In the meantime, Japan's victory over Czarist Russia in 1905 also played a part as an external factor in this awakening. According to Gungwu, Japan's victory became a source of encouragement for all nationalist movements in Asia. It extended the idea of struggle against a specific Western power to all efforts against Westerners and questioned Western superiority itself.<sup>11</sup> This was followed by other changes; the decline in Manchu rule and the proclamation of a Chinese Republic by Dr. Sun Yat Sen in China; and the end of Spanish colonialism in the Philippines, with the attendant revolution and American occupation at the turn of the century. All of these events, to borrow Benda's words, "did not go unheeded in Indonesia".<sup>12</sup> The dynamic of change encouraged Indonesian nationalists significantly.

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<sup>10</sup>The Javanese identity that attached to the organization and more significantly the latter's co-optation by *priyayi* members had made it difficult for the organization to gain mass support. For a complete account on Budi Utomo, see Akira Nagazumi, "The Origin and the Earlier Years of the Budi Utomo 1908-1918," (PhD. dissertation, Cornell University, 1967).

<sup>11</sup>See Wang Gungwu, "Nationalism in Asia," in *Nationalism: The Nature and Evolution of an Idea*, ed. Eugene Kamenka (London: Edward Arnold, 1976), 88.

<sup>12</sup>Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun, Indonesian Islam under Japanese Occupation 1942 - 1945* (The Hague: W. Van Hoeve, 1958), 35.

In 1911 a political nationalist movement was formed under the name Sarekat Islam, previously known as Sarekat Dagang Islam, led by K. H. Samanhudi in central Java. Samanhudi, who did not belong to the Javanese aristocracy but to the Muslim middle class and its entrepreneurial social structure, articulated the Islamic theme as a common bond to unite the native peoples against Chinese dominance in the batik industry and in retail trade. Soon after its founding, the organization gained a considerable following.<sup>13</sup> The leaders, Samanhudi and Agus Salim, influenced by Islamic reformism, derived the bulk of their support from the urban middle class and white-collar elements, while at the village level leadership was assigned to the *kiyai* and local ulama. Islam was used to create an ideology that in turn was used by the organization to achieve broad-based mass support.<sup>14</sup>

Islam as ideology was again apparent when H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto came to lead the organization in 1912. He diligently combined Islamic and socialist ideas to define the goals of the movement and attracted not only the pious agriculturists, but also the militant workers.<sup>15</sup> Through his ideas and leadership, he shaped and defined the ideology of the

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<sup>13</sup>By 1912 its membership had reached 360,000 and by 1919 there were about two and half million members belonging to its branches in almost every region in the country. George Mc. T. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1955), 65-66. See also A.K Pringgodigdo, *Sedjarah Pergerakan Rakyat Indonesia* (Djakarta: n.p. 1950), 16-18.

<sup>14</sup>In 1919 the organization claimed a membership of two million people. See Pringgodigdo, *Sedjarah Pergerakan Rakyat*, 16-18.

<sup>15</sup>Indeed he was one the most important figures in shaping the ideology of the organization. Sukarno, the proclamer of Indonesian independence, is said to have been greatly influenced by him. The most important of his works relating to the subject was entitled *Islam dan Socialisme* (Islam and Socialism) which was widely read and discussed in the country. As well as writing articles in newspapers, he also produced a book on entitled *The Spirit of Islam*. Complete

Sarekat Islam into something constituting a pragmatic nationalism (expressed in terms of independent nationhood) and reformist-Islamism (expressed in terms of specifically Islamic social and political values).<sup>16</sup> Considering the fact that nothing like this had ever existed in the Indies prior to this, Tjokroaminoto's contribution to the nationalist movement was profound and seminal.

In 1912 a short-lived political party was established in Bandung advocating racial equality, socio-economic justice and ultimate independence, namely the *Nationale Indische Partij* (National Indies Party). Created by Eurasian (Indo-European) and Javanese intellectuals, such as E.F.E. Douwes Dekker, Dr. Tjiptomangun Kusumo and R.M. Suwardi Suryadiningrat, it added a new element which was "political non-racial nationalism,"<sup>17</sup> to the many political phenomena of the period. This "Western type of nationalistic movement" based its activities on the slogan "The country that feeds you should be the fatherland, and you should be its defense." However, because it was openly radical and militant in purpose, the organization was banned by the Dutch administration before it gained any mass support and its leaders were exiled.

Another element of a kind similar to the *Indische Partij* was the ISDV (The *Indische Sociaal Democratische Vereeniging*) which was formed in Semarang in 1914.

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information about his life and his contribution to Indonesian nationalism can be found in Amelz, *H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto, Hidup dan Perjuangannya*, 2 vols. (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1952).

<sup>16</sup>For complete account on Sarekat Islam and Indonesian nationalism see, Timur Jaylani, "The Sarekat Islam Movement."

<sup>17</sup>This term is used by Abdulgani to show the position of the members of the *Indische Partij* who were of mixed blood. In fact, its membership ranged from Indo-Europeans, and people of Indo-Chinese and Indo-Arabian ancestry to those with pure Indonesian aristocratic origins.



Unlike the Indische Partij's activists who were intellectuals with a "capitalistic" spirit, the promoters of the ISDV -- Sneevleit, A. Baars and J.H. Brandstedter -- were followers of socialist-Marxist ideology that was common in the Netherlands. Not surprisingly, they began by promoting the concept of class struggle between ruler and ruled. Among the Indonesians who were interested in the idea and became some of their most militant followers were Semaun, Darsono, and Tan Malaka, of whom the first two were also members of Sarekat Islam's Semarang branch. Then, like the leaders of the IP, the leaders of the ISDV were exiled. Later, after the exile of Sneevleit, the organization became the Indonesian Communist Party.<sup>18</sup>

Thus we may see the first phase of the development of national awakening marked by the development of a cultural approach represented by Budi Utomo, Islamic political nationalism represented by the Sarekat Islam, and the non-racial nationalist movements of the Indische Partij.

The founding of the Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI) in 1920 in Semarang marked the second phase of the Indonesian national movement, one marked by radicalization and reaction. It brought tension and conflict to the SI's Semarang branch, which later resulted in its split into two factions -- the SI *merah* (Red SI, the Communist alliance led by Semaun and Darsono) and the SI *putih* (White SI, the Islamic bloc led by Salim and Abdul Muis). The PKI tried to monopolize the interpretation of "revolutionary political

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<sup>18</sup>For a complete account of the connection between the ISDV and the development of the Indonesian Communist Party, see Ruth T. McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1965).

virtue.”<sup>19</sup> It encouraged a resistance struggle among peasants by forming cadre organizations which subsequently came to its aid when rebellion broke out in 1926. However, the government immediately crushed this rebellion and a schism developed among the nationalist movements.<sup>20</sup>

Possibly because of the radicalism of the PKI, the Sarekat Islam during the early twenties also became politically radical. This is indicated by the speeches delivered to the Second National Congress by Tjokroaminoto on the subject of “self-government”, accompanied by those of Vice-Chairman Abdul Muis on “Nationalism.”<sup>21</sup> Here he invoked militant concepts, and spoke of confrontation and victory over forces of oppression.

The best known secular political party during the period was the Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI) established in 1927. The organization, which was established after the PKI had been crushed in 1926, brought the development of Indonesian nationalism to a

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<sup>19</sup>By this time, more and more socialist-inspired members had joined the SI and had begun accusing the Dutch of practicing “sinful” capitalism. See Roeslan Abdulgani, *Nationalism, Revolution and Guided Democracy in Indonesia* (Clayton, Victoria: Monash University, 1972), 6.

<sup>20</sup>The rebellion was immediately crushed by the government. It was reported that after the rebellion 13,000 people were arrested, and 5,000 more placed in preventive detention, of which 4,500 were sentenced to prison terms after trial. See Ruth T. McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1965), and especially Harry J. Benda and Ruth T. McVey, *The Communist Uprising of 1926-1927 in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1960).

<sup>21</sup>Jaylani, “The Sarekat Islam Movement,” 62.

new phase of radicalism. Through the skillful leadership of Sukarno<sup>22</sup> and the support of Sarekat Islam, it was able to establish a loose federation called the PPKI<sup>23</sup> unifying the nationalist movements beyond what had been possible earlier. By adopting self-reliance and a policy non-cooperation, which meant rejection of Dutch institutions in the country (including a semi-parliamentary body known as the *Volkskraad*), the PNI set for itself the goal of “Indonesia Merdeka Sekarang” (Indonesia Free, Now). This clear-cut goal, combined with the skilled leadership of Sukarno, gained it even greater mass support and earned it the reputation of being the most powerful nationalist organization of the day.<sup>24</sup>

Only three years after coming into existence, the PNI was dissolved by the government, while its leaders, Sukarno, Maskun and Spradiatna were sentenced respectively to prison terms. However, two other organizations were ready to take over nationalist activities in its place, namely the Partai Indonesia (Partindo), which Sukarno joined after his release in 1932, and Pendidikan Nasional Indonesia (PNI) in which Mohammad Hatta played a pivotal role after returning from his studies in the Netherlands.

Early twentieth century Indonesia also saw the rise of the socio-religious Muslim organizations. This is believed to have been due to various influences from the central

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<sup>22</sup>Sukarno was the most prominent figure in the history of nationalism in Indonesia. He was the son-in-law as well as the pupil of Tjokroaminoto, who influenced very much the shaping of his character and ideology as the national leader.

<sup>23</sup>Permufakatan Perhimpunan Politik Kebangsaan Indonesia (Union of Political Associations of Indonesia) had as its members the PNI, Partai Sarekat Islam, Budi Utomo, Sumatran Bond and Surabaya Studie Club.

<sup>24</sup>See, Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution*, 91.

Islamic lands which had made their way to the region. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 had increased shipping and thereby facilitated even closer contacts between Indonesia and the Middle East, while Indonesian Islam received inspiration and guidance from the puritanical Wahhabism of Mecca, Cairo's Al-Azhar University, and to a lesser extent the Indian Muslim centers of Lahore and Qadian. This was later strengthened by the success of the Young Turks' revolt against the Ottoman sultanate in 1908. Returning pilgrims, among whom were a great many *mukims* (Indonesians who had resided in the Hijaz for a period of time), the reformist spirit of Islam was brought to Indonesia, which eventually became the inspiration behind the formation of Islamic reformist organizations in the country. Similarly, traditionalist scholars also studied in the Middle East and were influenced by the anti-European attitudes of Middle Eastern Muslims of the time.

As far as these influences were concerned, the Sarekat Islam was obviously one of these phenomena. Although the political agenda of the SI was stronger, the reformist nature of the organization was also apparent. Among the leaders who devoted themselves to this purpose were H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto and H. Agus Salim, each of whom had received a Western education; together they gained mass support from the urban *santris* who were supportive of modernist ideals.

However, another trend involving a type of Islamic reformism which stayed aloof from politics was represented by the Muhammadiyah, which declared itself a modernist Muslim organization. It was founded by a returning pilgrim, K.H.A. Dahlan, in the center of *priyayi* civilization formerly known as Mataram, Yogyakarta, in 1912. Inspired specifically by the teachings of Muḥammad 'Abduh (d.1905), one of the chief proponents

of the movement in Egypt, Dahlan saw the Muhammadiyah, which held the goal of purifying Islamic teachings of Javanese religious syncretism, as a “*gerakan tajdīd*” (reformist movement) encouraging a return to the Qur’ān and Hadīth and educational reform. Reflecting the views of ‘Abduh and Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (d. 1897), Dahlan believed that *taqlīd* or unquestioning obedience to the interpretations of four classical *madhhabs* was the core of the problem of Muslim stagnation, which had led to the loss of political power to the Europeans. Therefore, new ideas were needed based on interpreting the Qur’ān and Hadīth without being hampered by earlier existing interpretations which had come to bury these sources over the centuries. It is not surprising that the followers of the modernist alliance in Indonesia were called the *Kaum Muda* (young group), a term which indicated the radical change in religious thought, as opposed to the *Kaum Tua* (old group), the defenders of tradition. This, as Benda notes, in a way re-emphasized a centuries old dichotomy between Islam and *adat*<sup>25</sup> and directly re-enforced attacks made on both *abangan*<sup>26</sup> beliefs and the *priyayi* (the Javanese ruling

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<sup>25</sup>One important dispute between Muslim and the followers of *adat* occurred in West Sumatra, a place where many intellectuals and pious Muslim nationalist figures were born. This dispute escalated into the Padri War of 1821-1838. There have been many studies made of the subject of Islam and *adat* in the region. See for example Taufik Abdullah, “Adat and Islam: an Examination of Conflict in Minangkabau,” *Indonesia* 2 (1966): 1-24.

<sup>26</sup>The *abangan* are nominal Muslims, “representing a stress on the animistic aspects of the over-all Javanese syncretism, and broadly related to the peasant elements in the population”. Their beliefs constitute a distinct religious faith called Javanese religion. The term was first popularized by Clifford Geertz, who conducted a field study in Parepare, West Java. The division was made to distinguish the group from the so called *santris* (“representing a stress on the Islamic aspects of the syncretism and generally related to the trading element and to certain elements in the peasantry as well”) and *priyayi* (“stressing Hindu aspects and related to bureaucratic elements”). For this division, see Clifford Geertz, *Modjokuto: Religion in Java* (Boston: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1958). For comparison see, Koentjaraningrat, *Javanese Culture* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1985).

class) way of life by rural *santris*<sup>27</sup> (devote Muslims).<sup>28</sup> While this attack continued, educational reform was having an outstanding success in attracting masses of urban Muslim middle class students because of its combination of religious and the secular subjects within the framework of modern teaching methods.<sup>29</sup>

A similar type of puritanical Islam was advocated by al-Irsyad (1913), an Arab Muslim organization promoted by Syeh Ahmad al-Syurkati.<sup>30</sup> Although this organization attracted mostly Hadrami-Arabs, its contribution to the Indonesian Muslim cause cannot be neglected. The organization was chiefly made up of Arabs of Hadramawt descent whose religiosity was somewhat uncertain on account of their inclination to practice

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<sup>27</sup>*Santri* is originally and commonly used to designate a student in an Islamic boarding school or *pesantren*. The word itself stems from the Indian word "*shastri*," meaning a man who knows the (Hindu) holy book or scripture. C.C. Berg, "Indonesia," in *Whither Islam*, ed. H.A.R. Gibb (London: Victor Gollancz, Ltd., 1932), p. 257. This term had been used interchangeably also to refer to devout Muslims in Indonesia especially those in Java. However, Geertz's use the term to designate a social class distinct from what of the *priyayis* is misleading. This is because *santris* came from all walks of life including those from the *keraton* (court) circles, who were called *abdi dalem pemetakan* (the white officials). Zaini Muchtarom, "Santri and Abangan in Java," MA. thesis, McGill University, (1975), 16-17.

<sup>28</sup>Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun*, 42.

<sup>29</sup>Muhammadiyah schools offered a modern syllabus—including even some courses where Dutch was the medium of instruction— which incorporated a Western style education as well as religious learning based on the study of Arabic and Qur'ānic exegesis. Because of this the organization attracted many urban middle class Muslims - merchants, tradesmen, land owners, small manufacturers, school teachers, etc. Thus, today the organization has millions of members throughout the country. A good treatise on the organization is Alfian, "Islamic Modernism in Indonesian Politics: The Muhammadiyah Movement during the Dutch Colonial Period (1912-1942)," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1969).

<sup>30</sup>Syekh Ahmad al-Syurkati was an ulama who originally came from Sudan. He went to Indonesia at the invitation of the Jami'atul Khair to teach religious subjects in its school. Nevertheless, after several months he decided to leave the organization and establish a new one called Al-Irshad. For more detailed information see Bisri Affandi, "Syekh Ahmad Syurkati: His Role in the al-Irsyad Movement in Java in the Early Twentieth Century," (M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1976).

usury; they were thenceforth to become more Islamic and concern themselves with the struggle of Indonesian Muslims for independence.<sup>31</sup>

In 1923, Persatuan Islam (Persis: Islamic Union) was established in Bandung by H. Zamzam,<sup>32</sup> who had become involved in a series of debates with other religious scholars.<sup>33</sup> Unlike the Muhammadiyah, which expanded its membership throughout the country, Persis placed little emphasis on extending its membership. However, the organization managed to gain popularity mostly because of its religious education program and the record of its leaders. A. Hassan, for example, whose popularity overshadowed that of all the other leaders of Persis, was considered by most Indonesians as the foremost defender of Islam from external attacks.<sup>34</sup>

The spread of reformist ideas were regarded by traditionalists or the *Kaum Tua* as a threat to the status quo. This was even more emphasized by the influx of the missionaries from the Indian Muslim reformist organization called the Ahmadiyah,<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>There took place some time in the first quarter of the nineteenth century a series of debates between al-Irsyad and the Jami'atul Khair (an organization for Arab resident in Indonesia) concerning the status of Arabs among non-Arab Muslims. Howard M. Federspiel, "The Persatuan Islam" (Ph.D. dissertation, McGill University, 1966), 18.

<sup>32</sup>After about three and a half years of study at the Dār al-'Ulūm in Mecca, H. Zamzam returned in about 1910 to become a teacher at the Darul Muta'allimun, a religious school in Bandung. Federspiel, "The Persatuan Islam," 18.

<sup>33</sup>They discussed the contents of *al-Manar* (a publication by modernist Muslims in Cairo), *al-Munir* (published in Singapore) and national issues like the relations between the Communist Party and Sarekat Islam.

<sup>34</sup>For further discussion on Ahmad Hassan, see Akh. Minhaji, "Ahmad Hassan and Islamic Legal Reform in Indonesia 1887-1958," (Ph.D. dissertation, McGill University, 1997).

<sup>35</sup>On the Ahmadiyah movement in India, see Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Modern Islam in India: A Social Analysis* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1946), 298-302. For its role in Indonesian

which was brought to Indonesia early in this century by representatives such as Mirza Wali Ahmad Beig. In 1926 the Nahdlatul Ulama was formed by K. H. Hasyim Asy'ari in East Java. The establishment of the latter organization, can in a way be seen as a response to the spread of the modernist Muslim movement. Comprised mostly of *kyais* and *santris* (religious students studying at religious boarding schools called *pesantrens*),<sup>36</sup> the Nahdlatul Ulama claimed to be the defender of the "Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah." This organization soon gained many followers among the *kyais* in the *pesantrens* and Muslims in rural areas throughout Java, but was less popular in Sumatra.<sup>37</sup>

From 1930 onward, as a result of the arrest of many nationalist leaders, such as Sukarno, Hatta, Supriadinata, and Syahrir,<sup>38</sup> a "cooperative method" of working with the Dutch Colonial Administration was adopted by many nationalist movements. This was shown for example by the Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia or PSII (the new name of Sarekat Islam as of 1929), led by H. Agus Salim, which began to participate in the

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Islamic affairs, see G.F. Pijper, "De Ahmadiyah in Indonesia," in *Bingkisan Budi: Een Bundel opstellen aan Dr. Phillipus Samuel van Ronkel* (Leiden, n.p. 1950), 247-54.

<sup>36</sup>The *kyais* in the *pesantrens* taught students strictly the interpretations of one of the four *madhāhib* (Hanafite, Malikite, Hanbalite and Shafi'te). They believed that these four *madhāhib* had produced perfectly the Islamic law, hence, they view it as unnecessary for Muslims today to engage in *ijtihad*. What have been produce by these four *madhahib* are sufficient to solve current problems. See Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama, *Risalah politik*, No. 3-4. (Jakarta: np., 1954), 17.

<sup>37</sup>For a good account of the Nahdlatul Ulama, see Khairul Anam, *Pertumbuhan dan Perkembangan Nahdlatul Ulama* (Solo: Jatayu, 1982).

<sup>38</sup>Sukarno was again arrested without trial in 1933 and exiled to Flores. Later he was transferred to Benkulín where he remained until his release by the Japanese in 1942. Hatta and Syahrir were also arrested in 1934 and exiled to Tanah Merah at Boven Digul, West New Guinea. See Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, 93-94.



Volksraad (People's Council), a move that earned the movement the name Barisan Penyedat PSII (Movement to Make the PSII Conscious). This approach may also be seen in the activities of Parindra (Partai Indonesia Raya), a moderate organization established in 1935. Under the leadership of M. Husni Thamrin, Dr. Soetomo and Wuryaningrat, this group gained an influential position in the Volksraad.

Consequently, an integrative nationalism was gradually developed. According to Kahin, the development of integrative nationalism in the late period of the Dutch colonial era was encouraged by three important elements that existed in the country. First of all, Islam, which was the religious identification of about 90 percent of the population, was used as a group symbol against the Dutch. Then there was the Malay language, an old lingua franca, which was used by large sections of the population as a language of commerce, and was gradually transformed into a national language. Lastly, the establishment of the Volksraad was viewed from the perspective of this group of nationalists as a representative council for all people living in this territory.<sup>39</sup>

Among the youth, the trends of the spread of modernist thinking and the awakening of a nationalist spirit had results similar to the trends among the adult population. Many youth movements were also established by secondary and tertiary school students, as we will see in the next analysis. This therefore was the kind of environment during the late Colonial era in which the Jong Islamieten Bond came into existence.

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<sup>39</sup>Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, 38-40.

## **B. The Youth Movements during the Early Development of Indonesian Nationalism**

Although educational policy was stimulated more by the demand for lower paid personnel than by ethical ideas, no Indonesian wanted to lose the opportunity to obtain an education. People definitely began to attend school in larger numbers.<sup>40</sup> Indonesian youths stood to benefit the most from the opportunities opened up by the Ethical Policy. The majority who attended schools came from families of indigenous officials of the colonial civil service and, therefore, belonged to the middle and higher strata (*priyayi*) of society. They went to secondary schools (Dutch-Native Schools) and vocational training schools, most of which were located in Java, which was then the heart of the Dutch Colonial system.

Those who were trained in Dutch schools were inculcated with Western thought and learned the Dutch language, history and science. Three groups emerged. One group, a clear minority, adapted easily to a Western culture and life-style. Still others felt trapped between two cultures; they grew distant from their own culture without quite mastering the new one. Ironically, members of the third group mastered Western modes of thought and through it were able to rediscover their own cultural identity. This last group, by

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<sup>40</sup>Wertheim mentions that the demand for trained personnel continued after 1900. Consequently, many Indonesians were needed to perform functions previously done by Europeans. After 1913, the principle of equal salary for equal work was adopted for Indonesians and Europeans alike. W. F. Wertheim, *Indonesian Society in Transition: A Study of Social Change*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (The Hague: W. Van Hoeve, 1969), 148.

“creatively combining traditions and modernity, developed new ideas for improving society and contributed to the process of creating a new nation: Indonesia.”<sup>41</sup>

These students were in their late teens and early twenties, but because of their backgrounds they understood that society's expectation of them was high and this awareness raised their own expectations of themselves. Having received a better education than their fellow countrymen in the new period of national awakening, they felt that they were destined to be leaders. In order to gain the insights and skills necessary to assume a leadership role, they came together in their association, devoted to intellectual exchange.

The development of this young intellectual movement until 1930 may be divided into two phases. The first phase covers the era (1908-1925), when such associations were established among specific ethnic associations. The second era (1925-1930) involved the adoption of an Islamic identity and a national identity, which by supporting Indonesian nationalism meant to transcend regional and ethnic association.

#### i) First Phase: The Adoption of an Ethnic Identity (1908-1925)

When R. Soetomo and Gunawan Mangun Kusumo founded in May 1908 their organization called Budi Utomo, they were still students at the Dokter Jawa School (STOVIA) in Batavia (today Jakarta). In the first year of its existence, this newly

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<sup>41</sup>Hans Van Miert, “‘The Land of The Future’: The Sumatranen Bond (1917 - 1930) and its Image of the Nation,” *Modern Asian Studies* 30 (March 1996): 595.

established organization had only Javanese students. By July 1908, its membership had reached 650, with branches in several major cities in Java.<sup>42</sup> It was only later that the organization ceased to be a student association, its leadership passing to the *priyayi*, already beyond their training years, who then outnumbered the students.<sup>43</sup> This development created dissatisfaction among the students, because the organization began to reflect general *priyayi* interests and no longer accommodated their aspirations. It is not surprising, therefore, that some writers, such as Nurliana and Amstutz, refer to the Budi Utomo as the first Indonesian youth organization;<sup>44</sup> while others such as Nagazumi maintain that it was an adult organization, because student preponderance in the organization was short-lived and its greatest development occurred only after it had become an organization for mature activists. Advocates of this second view therefore insist that the first youth organization was in fact the Tri Koro Dharmo ("Three Noble Objectives"), founded in 1915.<sup>45</sup>

It is also apparent that non-Javanese students attending school generally chose not to join the organization, even though there were many of them at that time.<sup>46</sup> There was a

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<sup>42</sup>Nagazumi, "The Origin and the Earlier Years," 67-68.

<sup>43</sup>Nagazumi, "The Origin and the Earlier Years," 69-70.

<sup>44</sup>Among the writers who express this view are Nana Nurliana, "Peranan Pemuda dalam Gerakan Kebangsaan, 1908-1942," a paper presented as part of "the Seminar Sejarah Nasional II," Yogyakarta, 1970. See James Bruce Amtutz, "The Indonesian Youth Movements 1908-1955," (Ph.D. dissertation, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, 1958).

<sup>45</sup> See Cahyo Budi Utomo, *Dinamika Pergerakan Kebangsaan Indonesia; Dari Kebangkitan Hingga Kemerdekaan* (Semarang: IKIP Semarang Press, 1995), 115.

<sup>46</sup>The attendance of students during the years 1900-1910, expressed as annual totals of students according to their ethnic affiliation, was as follows: Javanese, 90-111; Sumatrans, 10-

tacit sense of exclusivity because the Javanese members were proud of their cultural heritage and did not look beyond it to other groups, while non-Javanese students were simply not interested in joining the organization. This issue, however, lies beyond the scope of this thesis. Our main concern is how Budi Utomo aimed to promote Javanese culture and, therefore, adopted a Javanese ethnic identity.

As discussed earlier, the *priyayi* domination of the Budi Utomo produced dissatisfaction among the younger members, because the older members tended to make the organization less relevant to their interests and incompatible with their aspirations. This is what led the younger members of Budi Utomo to establish *Tri Koro Dharmo* in Jakarta in 1915. Within three years, the new organization had established branches in several cities – Bogor, Serang, Sukabumi, Bandung, Purworejo, and Yogyakarta. However, many members began to question the name of the organization. The name was considered too “Javanese,” since Sundanese and Balinese students were disinclined to join the organization. Seeking to draw in a larger representation of students, the first congress was held in Solo in 1918, and it announced the new name— Jong Java.<sup>47</sup> This had a more neutral ring and non-Javanese did in fact join the organization.

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32; Ambonese, 2-17; and Menadonese, 8-18. See Nagazumi, “The Origin and the Earlier Years,” 96.

<sup>47</sup>This new name was adopted in order to avoid any suggestion of the provincialism detected in the previous name, *Tri Koro Dharmo*, which was in a Javanese dialect spoken in Central Java, East Java and, to a lesser extent, Madura. This change made it more attractive to youth of Sundanese and Balinese origin. See Pitut Suharto and Zaenu Ihsan, *Maju Setapak* (Jakarta: Aksara Jaya Sakti, 1981), 15-23.

Jong Java required that its members pledge not to participate in open politics, and instead stressed intellectual activities and culture – namely, Javanese culture. Pringgodigdo maintains that until its sixth congress the organization had not abandoned its narrow objective of developing “Java Raya” for the people of Java, Madura and Bali. One might therefore say that Jong Java, like Budi Utomo, was a cultural youth movement that maintained a Javanese ethnic identity.

The foundation of Jong Java gave an impulse to efforts to create other cultural organizations based on ethnic identity across the archipelago. The tendency to establish organizations on this basis of ethnic identity must be seen as the students’ way of raising awareness of their own cultural roots. This is what lay behind the refusal of students in STOVIA to consider the idea of a students’ union, suggested by the Dutch Theosophist L. J. Polderman in a speech delivered in September 1917. Polderman advocated the establishment of an *Algemeene Nederlandsch-Indische Bond van Studeerenden* (General Netherlands-Indies Union of Students), which was hotly debated by the students of STOVIA. In the end, beginning with the STOVIA students, later students throughout the archipelago responded by forming their own cultural organizations: Jong Sumatranen Bond (1917), Jong Celebes (1918), Jong Minahasa (1918), and Sekar Rukun of West Java (1919). Timorsch Verbond (Timorese Alliance, 1921) was founded by Rotinese and Savunese to represent the interests of the people of Timor, while Kaum Betawi (1923) promoted the claims of the “original” Indonesian citizens of Batavia.

Ricklefs sees this phenomenon as reflecting not only a new enthusiasm for organization among youth, but also the continuing strength of ethnic and communal

identities. The concept of a pan-Indonesian identity had as yet hardly taken root.<sup>48</sup> Ricklefs is one of many historians of Indonesia who studies the development of Indonesian nationalism by focusing attention mainly on its more striking expressions in the form of Sarekat Islam or Partai Nasional Indonesia. His school of thought is opposed by Miert, who prefers to focus on the Jong Sumatranen Bond. Miert states that "the study of the history of nationalism in Indonesia has led to a teleological tendency: it is chiefly the history of the post-war winners only." He contends further that "the late colonial society comprised many moderate, cooperative organizations in the society which were as interested in *Indonesia merdeka* (a free Indonesia) as the nationalists were. This is often ignored or forgotten."<sup>49</sup>

Compared to Ricklefs, Miert has a closer understanding of the youth movements of this period, but maintains that their vision was of a Sumatran nation, even though he also admits they upheld *Indonesia merdeka*. The refusal of STOVIA students to form a Nederlandsch-Indies student union organization, in my opinion, should be seen as a rejection of any sort of European identity, which some Dutch officials wanted to promote at the time, in favor of a search for self-identity and determination, which involved exploration of their own regional and ethnic identity. While before 1925 the idea of an Indonesian nation was not yet explicit even among adult organizations, ethnicity furnished the most accessible idiom that could distinguish an Indonesian identity from a

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<sup>48</sup>Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, p.168.

<sup>49</sup>Miert, "The Land of The Future," 594.

European one. It is clear that ethnic identity was preferred to a Nederlandsch-Indies identity, which always signified Dutch patronage.

Thus, the general notion of cultural identity implied pride in one's own people and land; this is basic to any sense of self-awareness. The Javanese were proud of their history and culture. They discovered that historical sites like Borobudur and Prambanan were greatly admired even by Western scholars. Although the *keratons* of Yogyakarta and Surakarta had lost their power under Dutch rule, they still symbolized something which was revered by the indigenous population. The Sumatrans harbored similar feelings. For example, in order to foster awareness and reawakening, the Jong Sumatranen Bond called on its members to be proud through *Tanah Air* ("Fatherland"),<sup>50</sup> as its official song. In addition to their land, the Sumatran youth were proud of their Malay language, which had once been widely spoken, because of its democratic nature and the ease with which it could be learned; it was also the language of trade in the archipelago. Discovering all these things, they gained confidence in the presence of the Dutch, and recognized their differences vis-à-vis the latter.

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<sup>50</sup>The song was composed by Mohammad Yamin, who was a student of the Agricultural School of Buitensorg [nowadays Bogor], to honour the beauty of Sumatra:

Upon the rim of the Barisan range,  
There I watch, gazing down  
Over forests and valleys  
Fair rivers and paddies  
And also I see  
How the sky flickers green  
Through the coconut trees  
This is my country, my own native country  
Land of Sumatra, land of my birth.....

The full translation of the song is given in Miert, "The Land of The Future," 601.



Only within this framework can cultural youth organizations be considered as relevant to the early development of Indonesian nationalism. Nationalism has the specific meaning of "nation building" in Indonesia. It has developed through a long process in which youth organizations have played a dynamic part. Where it was politically inactive, the reason is likely to have been government suppression, which was sometimes very harsh and at best only tolerant of local aspirations without real understanding.

ii) The Second Phase: The Adoption of Islamic Identity and National Identity in the Development of Indonesian Nationalism (1925-1930)

Some students were more interested in stressing their religious identification than their ethnic identity. In 1925, a new organization with a religious character came into being called Jong Islamieten Bond (JIB), which in fact attracted members from various ethnic and family backgrounds. Some of these intellectuals, who had studied in Dutch schools, were influenced by Western attitudes and had only nominal contact with the general Indonesian population. Others were concerned about the views that educated youth had of Islam, which was depicted negatively in the Dutch classrooms. Mohammad Roem, one of the JIB activists, noted that:

At school pupils were taught Dutch, German, French and English literature. When there was anything related to Islam, either now or in history as Western people saw it, they viewed Islam in a manner that would not promote understanding or appreciation. This may not be really due to any ill on the part of the Western world, but only due to their own ignorance. However, sometimes there also existed the deliberate intent to present an unfavorable image of Islam ...<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup>Mohammad Roem, "The Genesis of an Islamic Youth Movement: JIB," *Mizan* 2, no.3 (1983): 20-21.

He continues by describing the way this literature depicts Islam, quoting some of its biases:

In Islam, women have a very inferior position. The harem still exists in the Muslim world, as does slavery. Moslems are discouraged to have any initiative, as their destiny has been predetermined. Muhammad was an epileptic, and every time he had an attack he spoke, and people wrote down his sayings during such attacks ... As his country was poor, Muhammad told every Moslem to make a pilgrimage to Mecca, at least once in their life, so his country may have some earnings.<sup>52</sup>

Muslim students who were religiously sensitive tried to counter this picture of Islam, which students were learning in schools. Samsurizal, one of the leaders of Jong Java, proposed offering the Jong Java congress members a study course on Islam, the religion to which most adhered.<sup>53</sup> He apparently wanted students to be aware of their own religious heritage free of European interpretations, especially those featuring biased interpretation from Muslim point of view. However, his proposal that Islamic courses be developed was accepted by only half of those attending the congress.<sup>54</sup> This division

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<sup>52</sup>Roem, "The Genesis," 21.

<sup>53</sup>The year that Samsurizal (best known as "R. Sam") proposed the idea at the congress, many members of Jong Java were being educated in Christianity by Hendrik Kraemer, a priest and missionary, and in theosophy from a variety of Dutch and indigenous theosophists. H. Syamsuddin Abdullah, et al., *Organisasi Kaum Muda Islam di Jawa, Pada Masa Akhir Penjajahan Belanda 1925 - 1942* (Yogyakarta: Lembaga Research dan Survey, 1986), 40.

<sup>54</sup>The rejection was also accompanied by the accusation that Sam was playing "politics" and wanted to lead the Jong Java astray. It was because he also proposed that Jong Java should give permission to its members to become involved in other political organizations if they wanted to. See Deliar Noer, "Jong Islamieten Bond," in *Mohammad Roem: Pejuang Perunding* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1978), 241-242.

eventually led to one receding to establish a new organization, the Jong Islamieten Bond (JIB), in which Islam would serve as the primary identification of its members.

The adoption of Islam as the primary criterion for membership earned the JIB the reputation of being the first youth organization to abolish geographical or ethnic identity as defining its aims.<sup>55</sup> As a common religious identity prevailed, this was not difficult for the JIB to unite students in a larger scale in terms of ethnic background. Thus Islam was used for the sake of Indonesian unity, but it had the more profound side effect of becoming one step in the development of a national awareness among students of different ethnic backgrounds. However, building one national identity for Indonesia at that time was not an easy task to accomplish. A prominent member of the JIB, Roem, points out that as the organization introduced a new, Indonesian nationalism, opposition arose even from some of the leaders of organizations.<sup>56</sup>

Thus, in its early development the JIB continued to concentrate on its main program of educating young intellectuals in Islamic subjects and propagating the idea of tolerance among followers of different religious faiths. To assist in its task, it began to publish a magazine entitled *al-Nur* (in Dutch, *Het Licht*) as their vehicle. Further, the activists of the organization such as Kasman Singodimejo, Roem, Syafruddin Prawira

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<sup>55</sup>It is said that within several months, branches were established in such major cities as Bandung, Semarang, Solo, Yogyakarta, Surabaya, Malang, Bogor, as well as in many of the outer islands.

<sup>56</sup>However, Roem does not mention specifically who were opposed to the idea. Roem, "The Genesis," 25.

Negara and Mohammad Natsir developed close contacts with modernist movements and their leaders like those in the Muhammadiyah and Persis.<sup>57</sup>

The JIB's foundation was followed by the establishment of Pemuda Muslimin Indonesia (Muslim Youth of Indonesia) in 1929.<sup>58</sup> The latter was a cadre organization under the umbrella of the Sarekat Islam designed to train young men who had leadership potential. However, it was not very popular. It was probably overshadowed by Sarekat Islam itself and the JIB, which were enjoying much success at that time.<sup>59</sup> A similar fate also awaited other Islamic reformist organizations like the Hisbul Wathan of the Muhammadiyah (1918). None of them achieved the organizational success the JIB enjoyed.

In due course the JIB brought up the idea of national unity, but the responses from the regional-based organizations were, in fact, largely negative. It was only later when some students returning from the Netherlands brought home ideology of nationalism and introduced it to students in Indonesia that these organizations responded positively. Historically, the idea that Indonesians comprised a separate entity from the Dutch, which ran counter to the belief implicit in the term Netherlands-Indies, gained impetus among

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<sup>57</sup>Natsir, who then resided in Bandung, was the student of Ahmad Hassan, who influenced his thoughts on Islam. Kasman was also a member of the Muhammadiyah. Samsurizal was later active in PSII.

<sup>58</sup>A brief history of the founding of the PMI may be found in Ahmad Daenuri Tjokroaminoto, *Sejarah Singkat Syarikat Islam Pemuda Muslimin Indonesia* (n.p., n.p., n.d.), 16.

<sup>59</sup>Many writers on nationalism mention that the JIB was very often viewed by society as being the cadre organization of Sarekat Islam. This is probably because H. Agus Salim, the leader of the PSI (Partai Sarekat Islam), was adviser to the JIB. He also advised and became the chief contributor to *al-Nur*. Abdullah, et al., *Organisasi Kaum Muda Islam di Jawa*, 52.

youth in the Netherlands between 1924 and 1925. This was indicated in March 1924 when the Indonesian student organization *Indische Vereeniging*<sup>60</sup> changed its name to *Indonesische Vereeniging* (IV). At the same time the title of the organization's publication *Hindia Putra* ("Son of the Indies") became *Indonesia Merdeka* ("Free Indonesia"), which openly reflected its political goal.

The influence of student newcomers who previously had been active in student organizations in Indonesia – students like Mohammad Hatta, Iwa Kusuma Sumantri, Iskak, Ali Sastro Amijoyo and others who dominated the board of IV<sup>61</sup> – transformed the latter organization from a social club to an active political organization. Building on their experience in Indonesian youth organizations, these new students were far more politically aware than the students of the previous generation and were eager to plunge into the political currents of the Netherlands.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, their enthusiasm for politics

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<sup>60</sup>The *Indische Vereeniging*, a precursor of *Perhimpunan Indonesia*, was founded at the same time as was *Budi Utomo* i.e. in 1908. Before it changed its name, it was merely a social club where students could relax together and keep informed about news from home. Its membership comprised mostly the sons of the higher *priyayi* class, and until the end of World War I, the organization was always moderate and associationist. Under the influence of *Indische Partij* activists Tjipto Mangunkusumo, Douwes Dekker and Suwardi Suryaningrat, who were exiled by the Dutch government, the organization established a journal called *Hindia Putra* ("Young Indies"). Several joint ventures were also undertaken with *Chung Hwa Hui* (a Chinese Indonesian students organization) and the *Indonesische Verbond van Studeerenden* (an association of Eurasian and Dutch students intending to work in Indonesia). But the political sense of Indonesian-ness had not yet developed among its members. John E. Ingelson, *Perhimpunan Indonesia and the Indonesian Nationalist Movement 1923 - 1928* (Victoria: Monash University, 1975), 1-2. See also Amstutz, "The Indonesian Youth Movement," 44-46.

<sup>61</sup>Before coming to the Netherlands in 1923, Mohammad Hatta, for example, was an active member of *Jong Sumatranen Bond*. The others were active in several other regional organizations.

<sup>62</sup>Ingelson, *Perhimpunan Indonesia*, 4.

became apparent after the visit of some well-known political leaders like Semaun, Darsono and Tan Malaka – all exiled by the Indies government.<sup>63</sup>

The adoption of “Indonesia” as part of the IV’s name by its members was not without cause. This at least can be discerned in connection with two factors. Firstly, their study of the history of the Dutch nation familiarized them with stories of the heroic Dutch resistance to Spanish rule. This inspired them to draw an analogy with their country, Indonesia, which was under Dutch colonial rule. Therefore, they no longer wanted to use the term “Netherlands-Indies.” This is clear from the following statement taken from *Indonesia Merdeka*:

By “Merdeka” we are giving expression to our aim and aspiration, and “Indonesia Merdeka” is from now on the slogan with which Young Indonesia marches to battle. Merdeka is an ideal common to all humanity; in every nation the desire for freedom is strongly alive. “Freedom is a human and not a Western ideal; the whole earth is a temple of freedom.”<sup>64</sup>

Secondly, the Indonesian students were familiar with the word because Dutch scholars, especially those at the Indology faculty of the University of Leiden, had, since the middle of the nineteenth century, been using the word “Indonesia” in a geographical and ethnological sense.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>Ingelson, *Perhimpunan Indonesia*, 5.

<sup>64</sup>*Indonesia Merdeka* (March 1924), I, as cited in John E. Ingelson, *Perhimpunan Indonesia*, 4.

<sup>65</sup>It is generally accepted that the name of Indonesia was first used around 1850 by British scholars who proposed it as a geographical designation. The name appeared in the title of a five-volume work on the archipelago published in 1884 by the German ethnologist Adolf Bastian. Later, Bastian was regarded as the one who coined the word “Indonesia.” However, there is some possibility that he was influenced either by G. W. Earl, who had already considered using ‘Indonesians’ but rejected it in favor of “Melayunesians”; or by J. R. Logan who in his article in *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia*. IV (1850): 254, wrote: “I prefer the

In February 1925, an Indonesian name, *Perhimpunan Indonesia* was formally adopted as the new name of the organization. But this was not merely a new name: it was followed by the adoption of a new ideology which, according to Ingelson, was absorbed from the intellectual currents of the 1920s in Europe – where Marxist-Leninist and socialist ideas were gaining strength. Ingelson insists, nevertheless, that the PI members, who were mostly of *priyayi* background, did not analyze their society in terms of class struggle. Instead, they endorsed the idea of racial struggle – the “brown” Indonesian against the “white” European. Thus, the PI ideology consisted of four principles: national unity, solidarity, non-cooperation and self-help, all seen in racial struggle.<sup>66</sup>

It seems that “Indonesia” for them had not only political overtones but also a strongly emotive sense that stirred nationalist feelings. This became apparent when it was accompanied by the PI’s slogan, “Indonesia Merdeka Sekarang” (freedom now), which demanded that Indonesia’s immediate independence. From that moment on, “Indonesia” was continually disseminated in the home country through PI publications and agents (the returned-home graduates). It was later popularized by these and other locally-educated students who formed study-clubs.

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purely geographical term Indonesia, which is merely a shorter synonym for the Indian islands or the Indian archipelago. We thus get Indonesian or Indian archipelagians or Indian islanders.” See Dahm, *History of Indonesia*, 26.

<sup>66</sup>National unity implied setting aside all particularism and forming a united front against the Dutch for an independent Indonesia. The focus of solidarity was the difference between the colonizers and the colonized; non-cooperation meant relying on one’s own strength and power and, therefore, ignoring the colonial councils (*Volskraad*). And self-help meant that everything must be deeply rooted in the indigenous society. John E. Ingelson, *Perhimpunan Indonesia* 10-12.

Thus, Perhimpunan Indonesia appeared to secular nationalists to contain some Western influences due to its direct link with Western-style education. It was Hatta, one of the most important figures in the organization, who shaped the ideology of the organization according to an Indonesian national unity free of every constraint –whether of ethnicity, Islam or communism. In other words, the PI had by then become the vanguard of Indonesian nationalism. In 1927, this ideology gained momentum when Sukarno formed the Partai National Indonesia, adopting the name Indonesia and the slogan “Indonesia Merdeka Sekarang.”

Meanwhile in Indonesia, the years 1924 to 1925 marked, besides the rise of Islamic ideology, a positive response to the idea of nationalism. Many study clubs were founded by college students – such as the Algemene Studieclub (“General Study Club”) founded in Bandung by Sukarno, a student of the Technische Hoogeschool (later known as ITB), and the Indonesische Studie Club, founded in Surabaya by Sutomo, a former PI president. At these study clubs current politics and the PI’s ideas were discussed.

One year later, a new organization, the Perhimpunan Pelajar Pelajar Indonesia (PPPI), was formed by a group of Batavian college students. The organization enjoyed great prestige because not only was the number of university students small<sup>67</sup> – a testimony to their abilities – but many members of the PPPI were also former leaders of other youth organizations. By then, the PPPI had attempted to unite all existing organizations and this was followed by an initiative to hold the first Indonesian youth

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<sup>67</sup>In 1928, there were 75 Indonesian students at the RHS, 20 at the THS and 17 at the GHS. See, van der Veur, *Education and social Change*, 20-22.



congress in April 1926. At that congress, the PPPI proposed forming *Perhimpunan Massa Moeda Indonesia* (Indonesian Youth Mass Association) with a view to uniting all the youth associations.<sup>68</sup>

This first attempt was unsuccessful due to differences of opinion among the participants. Some groups agreed with the PPPI's idea, but others hoped for the formation of a national youth association alongside existing organizations. Abu Hanifah explains that the latter opinion arose because the non-Javanese organizations feared Javanese domination and because the JIB was also not very enthusiastic about being absorbed into a secular organization.<sup>69</sup> But some changes in orientation were made by the many ethnic organizations following the first congress, indicating the growing consciousness of nationalism. *Jong Java*, for example, no longer spoke about establishing "Great Java," but, rather broadened its scope to an "Independent Great Indonesia"; while *Jong Sumatranen Bond* changed its name to *Pemuda Sumatra*. In Bandung, a new organization named *Jong Indonesia* was also established.<sup>70</sup>

Driven by the desire for a broad-based Indonesian unity, the PPPI sponsored another congress, the famous Second Youth Congress of October 1928. This congress was attended by representatives from various ethnic and regional organizations. It clearly

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<sup>68</sup>A committee was formed before the congress consisting of leaders of ethnic youth organizations such as Moh. Tabrani (Minangkabau), Bahder Johan (Sumatran), Soemarto (Javanese), Jan Toule Soulehuwij (Ambonese), and Paul Penontoan (Menadonese). Leo Suryadinata, "Indonesian Nationalism and the Pre-war Youth Movement: Reexamination," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 9, no.1 (March 1978): 106.

<sup>69</sup>Abu Hanifah, "Beberapa Momen Dalam Sejarah Gerakan Pemuda Sebelum Perang," *Budaja Djaja* 41 (October, 1971): 584.

<sup>70</sup>Suryadinata, "Indonesian Nationalism," 107.

demonstrated a desire to unite all the youth organizations and manifested Indonesian nationalism. This was indicated by the formulation, on 28 October 1928, of a resolution better known as the Sumpah Pemuda (the Youth Oath):

We, the sons and daughters of Indonesia, acknowledge one motherland-Indonesia;

We, the sons and daughters of Indonesia, acknowledge one nation - the Indonesian nation;

We, the sons and daughters of Indonesia, hold in high esteem a unifying language (bahasa persatuan) - Bahasa Indonesia.<sup>71</sup>

*Indonesia Raya* was played for the first time set to music by the composer W.R. Soepratman. The people at the congress gave an enthusiastic reception to the song; later it was to become the national anthem of independent Indonesia. Only later was this song adopted by the PNI as the national anthem.<sup>72</sup>

Two years after the youth oath was created, a committee called Komisi Besar (Great Committee) was set up to form an association of all existing youth organizations. Finally, on 31 December 1930, the birth of Indonesia Muda ("Young Indonesia") was announced as a merger of associations; a red and white with the wing of the *garuda* (a mythical bird) and *keris* in the middle was accepted as its banner.<sup>73</sup> However, Indonesia Muda did not wish to engage in politics and even prohibited its members from doing so –

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<sup>71</sup>This resolution was drafted by Mohammad Yamin of Jong Sumatranen Bond. The translation cited in Suryadinata, "Indonesian Nationalism," 109.

<sup>72</sup> See Hanifah "Beberapa Momen," 587-88. *Indonesia Raya* is now the national anthem of the Republic of Indonesia.

<sup>73</sup>Suryadinata, "Indonesian Nationalism," 109. The red-white flag was inspired by the colors of sugar and coconut, which were used symbolically by Indonesian leaders during the war against the Dutch at that time. See A.G. Pringgogidgo, "Dari Gula-Kelapa Jawa Menjadi Merah Putih Indonesia," *Berita LIPI* 15, no. 3 (1971). The red-white flag and the *garuda* now form the banner of the Republic of Indonesia, but without the *keris*.

probably because it was established after the arrest of many nationalist leaders like Sukarno and Syahrir.

Thus, we may conclude that the development of youth organizations in the late Dutch colonial era was similar to that of the adult organizations. The division continued to exist between the cultural organizations represented by Jong Java, Jong Sumatra and; the religious organizations, especially the Islamic ones such as Jong Islamieten Bond; and the secular nationalists such as Indonesia Muda.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **JONG ISLAMIETEN BOND DURING THE LATE OF THE DUTCH COLONIALISM (1924-1942)**

#### **A. THE ESTABLISHMENT AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF JIB**

As discussed earlier, as a result of the Ethical Policy in accordance with which education was vigorously pushed, the colonial education system reflected the secular approach found in the Netherlands. Consequently, many students were attracted by the image of western culture and saw it as the modern way of life that they wanted to achieve for themselves. Indifference towards religion was common among the young intelligentsia. In general, they were estranged from the other groups in society that had not received a Western style of education. It was a phenomenon that had been successfully depicted by the outstanding Sumatran novelist, Abdul Muis, in his novel entitled *Salah Asuhan*.<sup>1</sup> The novel is an expose of the cultural shock occurring among Indonesian youth who were educated according to Western traditions and educational values.<sup>2</sup> These youth not only regarded the Western way of life as desirable, but at the same time they down-graded their own religion and traditions. The Muslim leader Agus Salim once observed that feelings of inferiority were limited not only to religious tradition but extended to almost all aspects of indigenous life. For instance, the students

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<sup>1</sup>See Abdul Muis, *Salah Asuhan* (Jakarta: Perpustakaan Perguruan Kementerian P dan K, 1956).

<sup>2</sup>Muis, *Salah Asuhan*, 1-10.

had begun to abandon their own national dress and they even considered themselves to be superior when they dressed like members of the ruling race.<sup>3</sup>

This situation became one of great concern to some Muslim students. Therefore, Samsurizal,<sup>4</sup> the chairman of the Jong Java congress of 1924, proposed to those attending that courses on Islam be offered within the program of Jong Java for anyone interested in the subject as a means of addressing such attitudes. This attention to religious intellectual concerns on the part of Jong Java members was actually not a new one. At that time, courses on Christianity and Theosophy<sup>5</sup> were already among those sponsored by the

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<sup>3</sup>Mohamad Roem, "The Genesis of an Islamic Youth Movement: JIB," *Mizan* 2, no.3 (1983): 29. Salim's observation was probably accurate because he himself was among a few native Indonesians who experienced studying in the Netherlands. It is interesting to note here that Salim was able to study in the Netherlands because of the support of R. A. Kartini; without it would have been financially impossible. As a daughter of Bupati Jepara, Kartini who also had good relations with J.H. Abendanon, an official in the Department of Education, proposed to the latter that the opportunity to study abroad that would have been given to her, to be given to Salim instead. This to happened because she saw Salim as a rare youth who had the same ideals that she had, who wanted to work for the betterment of the people in the country. Her letter to J.H. Abendanon has been translated into Indonesian and is cited in *Seratus Tahun Haji Agus Salim* (Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1984), 24.

<sup>4</sup>Samsurizal, also known as Raden Sam, the founder of the Jong Islamieten Bond, was the son of a penghulu (Muslim Civil Registration Officer) in Karanganyar - Solo. Because of his father's position in the government, he had the opportunity to study at the ELS, HBS, MULO, and at the RHS in Jakarta. In 1917 he enrolled himself in Jong Java, in which he was the Ketua Pedoman Besar (chairman of the central body) for the period 1923-24. See *Het Licht* 1-2 (January-February 1929): 229-233.

<sup>5</sup>Theosophy encourages a comparative study of religion, philosophy and science. It was established in New York in 1875. The center of the organization was in Adyar, India and was led by Dr Annie Besant. In the second decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the theosophy organization had recruited about 50,000 members spread in 46 countries. A theosophy organization was officially formed in Indonesia in 1905 as a branch of the organization in the Netherlands. In 1912 it had 2100 members throughout the country, of which 40 % were Europeans, 10% Chinese, and the rest Indonesians. See Deliar Noer, "Jong Islamieten Bond," in *Mohamad Roem 70 Tahun: Pejuang Perunding*, ed. Panitya Buku "Peringatan Mohammad Natsir/Mohamad Roem" (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1978), 242. For more information on theosophy in Indonesia, see Iskandar, "Perhimpunan Theosofi di Indonesia" (Undergraduate thesis, Universitas Indonesia, 1986).

organization. Samsurizal had at least two particular reasons in mind when he suggested the idea. First, as cadres of future leaders in the society, Jong Java members would have to understand the society that they were going to lead, which they could only do by acquiring an understanding of the attitudes, the inclinations and the beliefs of the masses. Second, this would only work, according to him, if the members of Jong Java had a better understanding of the common religion of the archipelago, i.e. Islam.<sup>6</sup>

His proposal, however, was rejected by half of those attending the congress.<sup>7</sup> Although disappointed, according to Noer, he withdrew his own proposal in order to give a semblance of unity among the members of Jong Java.<sup>8</sup> Noer also mentions that the role of Agus Salim was significant here. Apparently, he was the only adult attending who could understand Samsurizal's disappointment; later he offered to help him to achieve his goal. With his friends, Samsurizal then organized a meeting of his own to discuss the idea, which took place at the end of December 1924 in Yogyakarta, reportedly in a Muhammadiyah school classroom. He asked for advice from three prominent Muslim leaders—H. Agus Salim, Tjokroaminoto and K.H. A. Ahmad Dahlan—all of whom were

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<sup>6</sup>See "Pergerakan Pemoeda-pemoeda Indonesia dan Natipij," *Het Licht* 11-12 (January-February 1929): 280-281. See also Deliar Noer, "Jong Islamieten Bond," 241-242.

<sup>7</sup>The Jong Java Congress is better known as "7e Congres J.J." in which Sam served as chairman. See "Pergerakan Pemoeda-pemoeda Indonesia," 281. Not only did some of the participants not agree to his proposal, some of them also stated that Sam would lead the organization astray and that he was playing politics. See Roem, "The Genesis," 22-23.

<sup>8</sup>At the congress, voting for the proposal was done twice. However, the vote always resulted in a deadlock. According to the rules of the session, Samsurizal, as the chairman of the congress was allowed to accept or to reject the proposal. Not wanting to be accused of being a troublemaker, he decided that the proposal should be rejected. See Noer, "Jong Islamieten Bond," 242.

invited to the meeting with the students. The meeting that night resulted in the formation of an organization based on Islam which took the name Jong Islamieten Bond (Young Muslims Ligue). However, it was not until March 1, 1925 that the JIB was formally and officially founded in Jakarta, and its headquarters (Hoofdbestuur) remained in Jakarta.<sup>9</sup>

There has been some dispute on the history of the genesis of JIB among historians and Muslim intellectuals, especially concerning the motives of Samsurizal in proposing a course on Islam within the program of Jong Java. Sartono Kartodirjo, in a book entitled *Sejarah Perjuangan Pemuda Indonesia* published by Biro Pemuda P&K writes; "The Moslem youth, who had originally joined Jong Java, felt it more suitable to found their own organization. This segregation resulted from another proposal by Syamsurizal, who by then was President of Jong Java, to split the membership into two categories (i.e. junior membership and full membership) as was actually done afterwards, but which, as we explained earlier, was rejected. Then those whose proposals had been rejected founded an Islamic organization (JIB)."<sup>10</sup> Moreover, a five volume book entitled *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia* authored by, among others, Nugroho Notosusanto, mentions that;

there was a proposal that Jong Java should not be turned into political party, but should permit its adult members freedom for political action. This attitude was supported by H. Agus Salim, who tried to introduce the Islamic faith into Jong Java, with the argument that religion plays an important role in the

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<sup>9</sup>It should be mentioned here that according to Roem, Yogyakarta was considered to be the matter geographically favorable location for holding congress and conventions since, situated as it is in central Java, it can be easily reached from any other areas. He also mentions that at that time the youth conventions were enthusiastically followed by the elder generation. Roem, "The Genesis," 22-23.

<sup>10</sup>Sartono Kartodirjo et. al., *Sejarah Perjuangan Pemuda Indonesia* (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1989), 47.

achievement of aspiration. This proposal however was rejected and those in favor of political action then founded the JIB, with Islamic faith as its basis of political action.<sup>11</sup>

These statements have been countered by Ridwan Saidi, a writer and Muslim activist. In response to the first opinion, he contends that Samsurizal's decision to establish the new Islamic organization was not a response to the rejection of his proposal on the classification of membership, for the latter was in no way related to the Islamic faith. He argues further that many Muslim students who subsequently joined the JIB still retained their membership in Jong Java.<sup>12</sup> To the second opinion, Ridwan replies that it contains three basic misconceptions. First, he points out that Samsurizal's proposal to the congress was not made in order to establish two categories of membership, but to have Islamic instruction provided by Jong Java. Secondly, given the ethnic basis on which Jong Java was built, Agus Salim should not have attended the congress because Salim was Minangkabauan (West Sumatran). Lastly, the JIB was in fact not a political organization and hence did not engage in any political activities.<sup>13</sup>

However, I would argue that while the statements made in *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia* are misleading, neither are Ridwan's arguments totally correct. He is right to say that the reason behind the establishment of the JIB was not political, since those who

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<sup>11</sup>Marwati Joened Pusponegoro and Nugroho Notosusanto, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*, vol. 4 (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1990), 195-196.

<sup>12</sup>Ridwan claims that his sources for this evaluation include magazines from the 1930s and interviews with surviving JIB personalities. See Ridwan Saidi, "The Organization of Young Moslem Intellectuals Past and Present," *Mizan* 2, no. 1 (1985): 32.

<sup>13</sup>Saidi, "The Organization of Young Moslem Intellectuals," 33.



initiated it, such as Samsurizal, never spoke of the students becoming involved in practical politics. There is proof enough that the JIB was not a political organization. Nevertheless, on other matters he has not paid close enough attention to his sources. His argument about the presence, or lack of it, of Agus Salim in the Jong Java congress, for example, was based only on logical deduction, not on fact. Roem, an important figure in the JIB, has pointed out that it was common at the time for older people, especially those in government service positions and priests or ulama who served as social leaders, to pay attention to youth activities.<sup>14</sup> Deliar Noer, who wrote an article about the JIB in honour of Roem's 70th anniversary, states that among the adults who attended the Jong Java meeting were van Andel from the Protestant Church, van Rijkevoorstel from the Catholic Church, Ir. Fournier from the Theosophy organization and Agus Salim. It is to be noted that none of the above were Javanese, but were rather government representatives and social leaders, a fact confirmed by Roem.<sup>15</sup> Nonetheless, Agus Salim still had no direct involvement with Samsurizal's intention to develop courses on Islam or to found a new Islamic organization. It can probably be said however that the establishment of the JIB was in line with what Salim was hoping for at that time, and in any case did not extend beyond providing moral support to a fellow Muslim.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Mohamad Roem, "Jong Islamieten Bond yang Saya Alami," *Panji Masyarakat* 348 (Januari 1982): 21.

<sup>15</sup>Noer, "Jong Islamieten Bond," 243.

<sup>16</sup>*Het Licht* I (1925). See also Agus Salim, "Hasrat Manusia kepada Agama," in *Seratus Tahun Haji Agus Salim*, ed. Panitia Buku Peringatan (Jakarta, Sinar Harapan, 1984), 281.

I would furthermore argue that the establishment of the JIB involved three important factors. First, ideologically speaking, some Muslim students regarded Islam as their own religion as well as the religion of most Indonesians, and therefore regarded an understanding of it as vital for young Indonesian intellectuals.<sup>17</sup> Secondly, politically speaking, the idea proposed by Sam was opposed by some students in Jong Java, probably for a wide number of reasons. Some belonged to other religions, others did not want to introduce an element into society that was in itself a volatile issue and some may have found it offensive to their sense of belonging to a secular organization.<sup>18</sup> Lastly, in socio-historical terms, the students of the 1920s were living in an intellectual climate of emerging new ideologies (Islamic, socialist and nationalist) and new directions in political developments, such as refusing to identify with their Dutch overlords or finding their own identity.<sup>19</sup> More important to this case, as Benda notes, is the fact that the era fell within a period of renaissance for Islam, which had far reaching religious and also political significance.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>See "Pergerakan Pemoeda-pemoeda Indonesia," 280-281; and Noer, "Jong Islamieten Bond," 241-242.

<sup>18</sup>That Indonesians who were able to have access to secondary education were those children of the native elite or the *priyayi* whose orientation was directed more to power and authority than religion is supporting for my statement.

<sup>19</sup>See chapter I of this thesis.

<sup>20</sup>Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam under the Japanese Occupation 1942-1945* (The Hague and Bandung: W. van Hoeve, 1958), 196.

Thus, the JIB was a movement of young Muslim intellectuals in search of an identity at a time of struggle against Western colonial dominance. It is not surprising therefore that the aims and purposes of the JIB, set down in Dutch, were as follows:

1. The study and promotion of the observation of Islam.
2. The cultivation and promotion of the sympathy for Islam and its followers, while giving positive tolerance with regard to those who think otherwise.
3. The cultivation and promotion of contacts among intellectuals and with the people through Islam.
4. The promotion of physical and spiritual development of its members through self-training (education) and self-activity.<sup>21</sup>

As far as the development of the JIB was concerned, this may be divided into four historical phases, in each of which the organization showed different emphases, responded to different problems related to socio-political issues, and displayed different characteristics in accordance with its changing leadership.

### **1. The Period of Establishment and Struggle for Existence (1925)**

On the very day of its establishment (March 1 1925), the JIB was able to recruit 250 members. This considerable initial support may have been due to several factors. First of all, in making Islam its primary criterion for membership, it seems to have

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<sup>21</sup>See Department van Kolonien: Mailrapport 198/25, "Jong Java Jong Islamieten Bond," written by R. Kern (13 February 1925), as cited by Alfian, *Muhammadiyah: The Political Behavior of a Muslim Modernist Organization Under Dutch Colonialism* (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1989), 124. See also *Het Licht* 1 (March 1925) as cited by Roem, "Jong Islamieten Bond yang Saya Alami," 24.

abolished the geographical barriers that might have stood in the way of students joining the organization. Thus, the followers of the JIB were not only Javanese but also Sumatrans and Makasarese. Secondly, unlike other student organizations which limited their membership only to students, the JIB's only criterion was one of age, in that it welcomed all youth between the ages of fourteen and thirty. This more open membership policy enabled it to recruit high school students, tertiary-level students as well as many graduates who were already established in particular occupations. Thirdly, it stayed aloof from political activity, but it gave freedom to its members, aged eighteen and older, to participate in politics through other organizations if they wanted to do so.<sup>22</sup>

Following the establishment of the organization, the first phase of the development saw much stress on expanding membership and consolidating the organization. Under the leadership of Samsurizal the organization was able to establish branches in several major cities in Java such as Jakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta, Magelang, Solo, Madiun, and Surabaya, while the headquarters (Hoofdbstuur) was in Yogyakarta.<sup>23</sup> The JIB's first congress was held in Yogyakarta from 25 to 27 December 1925. It is reported that by that time the organization's membership had reached a total of 1004, spread throughout 7 branches. During the congress, many papers and speeches on Islam were presented in Dutch and Bahasa Indonesia, and these were discussed analytically. Among the papers was one presented by Kwaja Kamaludin entitled "Wereldbroederschap

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<sup>22</sup>Noer, "Jong Islamieten Bond", 241-242. For comparison see A.K. Pringgodigdo, *Sejarah Pergerakan Rakyat Indonesia* (Jakarta: Dian Rakyat, 1994), 120.

<sup>23</sup>*Het Licht* 2 (May 1925): 66.

en Islam” (World Brotherhood in Islam), Agus Salim’s “Dezuilen en plichtenleer” (The Pillar and the Duty) and a speech and discussion on the subject of Christianity and missionary made by Domine A. Pos, an invited guest from the Protestant Church of Yogyakarta.<sup>24</sup> After the congress, Samsurizal was succeeded by Wiwoho Purbohadidjoyo, choosing himself to sit instead on an advisory board with H. Agus Salim.

Following the announcement of its formal establishment, the JIB started publishing in the same month its own magazine called *al-Nur*, also famous under its Dutch title *Het Licht* (the Light). *Het Licht*, published in Dutch, began to feature Bahasa Indonesia’ articles as well after 1928. It was at first published monthly, although irregularly, with each issue sometimes reaching more than one hundred pages.<sup>25</sup> In terms of the contributors to the periodical, *Het Licht* received articles from the insider activists of the of the organization such as Sam, Kasman, Haji Hasyim, Kusban, Sugeng, and Ramli. H. Agus Salim also contributed in his capacity as adviser to the editorial board. A member of outsiders as well, who often contributed very original work, such as Ahmad Sarida, a missionary of the Ahmadiyah Lahore, Maulavi Muhammad, Snouck Hurgronje

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<sup>24</sup>R. Kern, the Vice Advisor of East Indian Affairs, reported that the congress was attended by 200 delegates representing seven branches, 42 delegates of other organizations and adult guests from government and adult organizations such as Tjokroaminoto of Sarekat Islam, Fakhruddin of the Muhammadiyah, Mirza Wali Ahmad Beig of Ahmadiyah and Suryopranoto. He noted that the congress showed much better performance and more sophistication than the Sarekat Islam congress held in the same city that same year. See, H. Syamsuddin Abdullah et.al. *Organisasi Kaum Muda Islam di Jawa, pada Akhir Penjajahan Belanda, 1925-1942* (Yogyakarta: Lembaga Research dan Survey IAIN Yogyakarta, 1986), 53-60.

<sup>25</sup>Often two numbers were published and distributed at the same time, such as 3-4 for May-June 1928, and even three numbers (5, 6, 7) for July, August and September 1928. This was already a concern of the central body when Kasman Singodimedjo was sitting as the chairman. See, *Het Licht* 9 (November 1930): 222-224.

and Tjokroaminoto.<sup>26</sup> Its motto, always printed on the front cover, was the Qur'anic verse al-Taubah : 32 ; "Faint would they extinguish Allah's Light with their mouth, but Allah will not allow. But that His Light should be perfected, even though the unbelievers may detest (it)."<sup>27</sup>

JIB actually served as an umbrella organization under which there were two organizations; one the organization for Muslim women and the other the Boy Scouts. In May 1925 the JIB established in Jakarta JIB Dames Afdeling (acr. JIBDA = JIB Ladies Division), reflecting a concern about the voice and participation of women in society. The purpose of JIBDA was to promote Islamic awareness among women concerning their position with respect to men. The activists of the league believed that women were equal in status with men and had to set a good example, especially without feeling inferior vis-à-vis their European counterparts. However, until the first congress only two JIB branches, those in Jakarta and Bandung, could boast this women's division.<sup>28</sup>

The JIB, like other organizations at that time, also established a Boy Scout organization called Natipij (Nationaal Indonesische Padvinderij) quite soon after its founding in March 1925, again in its Jakarta branch. The Natipij was open to boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 13 years. The students in Natipij were not only taught

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<sup>26</sup>See, *Het Licht* 5 (July 1925): 217-228.

<sup>27</sup>Al-Qur'ān IX: 32, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'ān*, trans. Abdullah Yusuf Ali (Maryland: Amana, 1994), 446.

<sup>28</sup>For the organizational structure of the JIBDA, see *Het Licht* (May 1925): 68. See also, Abdullah, *Organisasi Kaum Muda Islam di Jawa*, 51; Saidi, "The Organization of Young Moslem Intellectuals," 34.

practical skills but also courses on Islam. Actually, it was also a feeder group which brought new recruits to the Jong Islamieten Bond; indeed the Natipij was seen as a means of training future cadres.

As far as the Natipij was concerned, it played a significant role in the nationalist struggle because it helped plant the seeds of patriotism and nationalism among the very young. Pringgodigdo notes that the Dutch government began to be suspicious of the spread of boy scout organizations because it feared the intentions behind the sentiment "*Indonesia bersatu*" (Indonesian unity) contained an Indonesian nationalist identity without any special allegiance to the Dutch that could easily prevail among them. Therefore, as a colonial administrative reaction the Dutch tried in 1928 to unite all scout movements within the Nationale Indische Padvinderij (NIPV), a nation-wide movement which downplayed nationalist sentiment and stressed good citizenship in a Dutch colonial state. However, this effort was not very successful in that it failed to attract the participation of most scout movements. Indonesians even responded by creating their own federative body for Boy Scout organizations called Perstauan Antar Pandu Indonesia (PAPI).<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Pringgodigdo, *Sejarah Pergerakan*, 122-123.

## 2. The Period of Expansion and Confirmation (1926-1929).

The election of Wiwoho Purbohadijoyo,<sup>30</sup> editor in chief of *Het Licht* during the Samsurizal presidency, at the first congress in 1925, marked a considerable growth for the JIB. The membership campaign was expanded to other cities in Java and outside Java and the outer islands. It is reported that by the time the fourth congress was held in Bandung in 1929, several branches had been established, such as in Tegal (November 1928), Semarang (April 1928), Pekalongan, Jatinegara, Probolinggo and Malang. Outside Java, new branches were opened in Medan, Palembang, Bengkulu, Padang and Makasar. In short, by the end of 1928 there were 18 branches, up from fifteen in the previous year, with membership numbering no fewer than 2800 persons throughout the archipelago.<sup>31</sup>

Apart from the use of *Het Licht* as its official journal and chief means of disseminating its ideas, the JIB also established in 1927 a body called *Kernlichaam* which was responsible for organizing lectures, courses and other events so that Islam could be discussed and studied among its members. The lectures were delivered by those in the organization who were considered to have a good knowledge of Islam, such as Mohammad Natsir, who at that time was the pupil of Ahmad Hassan in Bandung. In other

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<sup>30</sup>Wiwoho Purbohadijoyo was born in August 31, 1900 in Bejen Temanggung - Central Java. He was educated at the HBS (Hoogere Burger School) in Jakarta until 1919. Later he worked at the central office of the Nationaal Indische Spoor (Railway National Company) in Semarang until 1927.

<sup>31</sup>See, Report of the JIB treasurer in *Het Licht* 11-12 (January-February 1929): 206. See also Abdullah, *Organisasi Kaum Muda Islam di Jawa*, 51. Saidi, "The Organization of Young Moslem Intellectuals," 66-68.



places, lectures were mostly given by ulama residing in the area where branches of the JIB were active.<sup>32</sup>

Another success of Wiwoho was the establishment of Studie Informatie Commissie (SIC-Commission for Study Information) in 1927. This commission was aimed at helping people whose children wanted to continue to study, especially those who had no knowledge of the Western education, either in the Western schools or Islamic schools. The JIB saw the SIC as being useful to non-Western educated parents in giving information about the advantages and the disadvantages of both the Western and Eastern educational systems since most people were ignorant in these matters. Thus, the duty of the commission as stated in the third congress was to provide information about Western and the Eastern (Islamic and indigenous) education both in the country and abroad, such as at al-Azhar in Cairo and universities in the Netherlands. In addition the SIC also helped new students from outside the cities settle into their new environment in order that they not be overwhelmed by the negative impact of Western culture as they moved to new cities. Moreover, through this commission, the organization also sometimes helped students in financial need, especially in coping with the cost of living.<sup>33</sup> These activities were set up to attract new adult and students members.

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<sup>32</sup>Most of the ulama and religious teachers who taught in the JIB courses were Modernist Muslims. To mention only a few, these included Mirza Wali Ahmad Beig of the Ahmadiyah and Fakhrudin of the Muhammadiyah.

<sup>33</sup>See, "Verslag van de Studie Informatie Commissie van de JIB," *Het Licht* 11-12 (January-February 1929): 237-241.

The period 1926-1929 during which Wiwoho was the head of the organization, saw the JIB have some success in establishing mutually beneficial relations with other organizations, particularly with Jong Java which had been hostile during Samsurizal's period of leadership, since he was seen as a dissident from Jong Java. The rapprochement was indicated by the presence of Jong Java's leader at the second congress of the JIB, where he gave a warm speech to the delegates.<sup>34</sup> Among other organizations, the JIB had, of course, a close connection with modernist Muslim organizations such as Sarekat Islam, the Muhammadiyah, and Persatuan Islam. These ties were forged both organizationally and through personal involvement, in the JIB, of some leaders of the reformist organizations such as Agus Salim (Sarekat Islam), Mirza Wali Ahmad Beig (Ahmadiyah) and Fakhruddin of the Muhammadiyah. For example, many activities of the JIB were conducted using facilities of the Muhammadiyah. More importantly many religious teachers were provided by these modernist organizations.<sup>35</sup> It is not surprising that the JIB in some instances reflected the views of this group.

However, during this same period the JIB also faced some difficult moments, particularly in connection with other youth organizations. As we saw earlier, during this period Indonesian nationalism as overall ideology had begun to spread among the youth movements in Indonesia where it was received enthusiastically by many. Going where no

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<sup>34</sup>This indicates an attempt at reconciliation between the two organizations, especially since some of the members no longer trusted Sam's intentions in the Jong Java Congress. The *Ketua Pedoman Besar* (the chairman of the central body) of Jong Java at the time, Jaksadipura, said in the speech that he was happy because finally he had realized that the JIB was no different from Jong Java; both in fact sought Indonesian unity. He also mentioned that he was pleased that the JIB allowed the members of Jong Java to join and vice versa. See, the speech of Jaksadipura on the second congress of the JIB in *Het Licht* 11-12 (1927).

adult organization had ventured, till then, youth groups held the first youth congress in 1926, in which all existing youth organizations participated with the idea of unifying all groups into one large association based on nationalism. The JIB, which had used Islam as the basis of its organization, had to cope with the situation of whether or not it should include itself in this umbrella organization which was not especially affiliated with Islam. Finally, the JIB took the decision not to merge itself with the organization. Therefore, this period is also seen as a time of "confirmation," during which period the JIB decided to remain committed to its initial character as an intellectual movement based on Islam.

When it decided not to join in the new group, the JIB was heavily criticized by many secular nationalist exponents as being "anti nationalist," and in some cases the feelings were so strong that violent language was used in attacks on the JIB.<sup>35</sup> Nonetheless, the JIB stood its ground and defended its principles; while it supported Indonesian nationalism, it was to be based on Islam. Despite this decision to remain outside the group, the JIB leadership continued to support the nationalist goals of the union. In fact, when the famous second youth congress was held in 1928, the JIB participated once again by sending Johan Mahmud Caya and Ma'mun al-Rasyid as its representatives attending proceedings. Later, the JIB published in *Het Licht* the Youth Oath formulated at the congress as a part of the campaign to spread this statement among youth in Indonesia. Thus, Wiwoho, who sat as chairman until 1929, was able to preserve

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<sup>35</sup>Abdullah, *Organisasi Kaum Muda Islam di Jawa*, 79.

<sup>36</sup>For the first National Youth Congress, see chapter 1 of this thesis. To cite but one example, there was an article which accused the JIB of stupidity and in which the writer described the JIB's acronym as standing for Jong Idioten Bond (a League of Idiot Youth).

the JIB identification with Islam, while still keeping informal, yet real, ties with the leading youth organization promoting Indonesian nationalism.<sup>37</sup>

In the mean time, although the Dutch did not take any negative actions against the JIB because it was seen by them as useful in countering the influence of the communists, which they saw as a much greater threat. R. A. Kern, the government official who was Adviseur voor Inlandshe Zaken, noted that:

Attention must be drawn to the fact that both the Communist and Islam by now seem to give an effort to recruit intellectuals for their purposes. In the Communist congress in Yogyakarta, the help from the intellectuals was needed desperately and as how to get their support, therefore, was discussed intensively including the possibility to find the support from intellectuals in the foreign countries.....Among the Muslims we found that the effort to attract the intellectuals in the country was met quite well. .... In the case of the JIB, we have to give it a chance to work before we put any measure on the organization. The JIB can play an important factor in the native movement. Therefore, we have to give careful attention to the organization.<sup>38</sup>

This attitude toward the movement in general was maintained by the Governor General Andries C.D. de Graeff, who by that time was reluctant to repress movements, but expressed concern about the potent danger of the native intellectual movements to Dutch authority. He stated that "the new generation receiving Western education, is, without any doubt, fervently nationalist, and the number increases year by year."<sup>39</sup> This

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<sup>37</sup>For more detailed analysis on the JIB and nationalism see chapter III of this thesis.

<sup>38</sup>Mailrapporten (mail report) no.198x/1925, cited in Abdullah, *Organisasi Kaum Muda Islam di Jawa*, 79.

<sup>39</sup>Edward J. M. Schmustzer, *Dutch Colonial Policy and the Search for Identity in Indonesia 1920-1931* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977), 107.

finally led him to arrest, exile and imprison many nationalist leaders during the 1929-1935 period. For the most part JIB members escaped these security sweeps.

### 3. The Period of Challenge and Trial (1930 - 1935)

At the fifth congress of the organization in December 1929, Wiwoho was succeeded by Kasman Singodimedjo<sup>40</sup> who was to lead the JIB until the convening of the tenth congress in 1935. Kasman, as he was usually called by his colleagues, had been active in the organization ever since the JIB was established. During his tenure the "tour de Sumatra" was undertaken, a journey made by him and Mohamad Roem to garner support for the JIB on that island. The outcome was the establishment of branches in a number of West Sumatran cities as Bukit Tinggi, Padang Panjang, Sawah Lunto and Payakumbuh. In North Sumatra, they founded branches in Sibolga and Padang Sidempuan, as well as in Sigli and Lokh Semawe in Aceh.<sup>41</sup> In addition, those at the headquarters were able to reawaken the less active branches. In short, it is reported that by

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<sup>40</sup>Kasman was born in Kalirejo Purworejo central Java, in February 1908. He was the son of a *modin* (an official who dealt with religious matters) in that region. After graduating from the HIS in 1922 he studied at STOVIA but finished his degree in the Rechts Hoge School (RHS - Law school). For more information about Kasman Singodimedjo, see Panitia Peringatan 75 Tahun Kasman, *Hidup Itu Berjuang: Kasman Singodimedjo 75 Tahun* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1982).

<sup>41</sup>See "Sedikit Pemandangan dari pada Perjalanan H.B JIB untuk Keprluan Islam dan JIB ke Tanah Andalas-Raya," *Het Licht* 10 (December (1930): 237-39.

the end of 1930 there were 39 branches in operation throughout the country.<sup>42</sup> By 1933 the number had risen again to 55, with membership numbered at 4,000.<sup>43</sup>

From that time onwards, some concerns also began to be expressed regarding problems at the international level, which previously had only been given slight attention. For example, the JIB committed itself to working together with the Jami'at al Khair of the Egypt Jawiyah (branch for Indonesian community in Egypt) to support the struggle of the Palestinian Arabs in their struggle against the establishment of a Jewish national state there and in opposing Jewish rites at the Wailing Wall which were seen as a threat to the al-Aqshā mosque, a famous Islamic structure in Jerusalem.<sup>44</sup> During this same time frame, through the JIBDA, the JIB paid a great attention to the Women's Congress held in Lahore in January 1931. Its concerns for Muslims in other parts of the world can also be seen from the contents of *Het Licht*, which devoted articles to the development of Islam in other countries, particularly those on the periphery of the Muslim world. To cite only a few cases, for example, there was an article entitled "Islam in Europe" which

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<sup>42</sup>See Kasman's speech at the 6<sup>th</sup> congress of JIB in *Het Licht* (January-February 1931): 271.

<sup>43</sup>The number shows a great deal of enthusiasm among Muslim students studying at schools offering Dutch instruction to become members of the organizations. In 1930, for example, the native student enrollment, regardless of their religion, in secondary schools numbered 213 in the HBS, 7.555 in MULO and the AMS. The total number of the enrollment was less than double the member of the JIB. This number even decreased in 1935 to only 6.506 pupils. See, "Table of Enrollment in Elementary and Secondary Schools with instruction in Dutch (Public and Private), 1900-1940," provided in Paul W. van der Veur, *Education and Social Change in Colonial Indonesia*, vol. 1 (Athens: Ohio University Center for International Studies Southeast Asia Program, 1969), 11.

<sup>44</sup>See *Het Licht* 2-3 (June 1930): 101.

discussed the size and conditions of the Muslim communities in Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Greece and (by extension) America.

Since the idea of tolerance had long been one of its chief concerns, the JIB even took a critical attitude towards issues dealing with Muslim - Christian relations. For example, the JIB added a cautionary note to an article (probably taken from a pamphlet circulating at that time) entitled "Seroean Kepada Raja-raja Islam dan Oemat Islam di Seloeroeh Doenia" (An Appeal to the Kings of Islamic Kingdoms and Muslims in the World).<sup>45</sup> The article discussed the harassment of Muslims, Islam and Muslim rulers in the Maghrib (particularly in Tunisia) by French colonial agents, and spoke of the people who were converted to Christianity by force as a result of the conquest by this European power. The note stated that the article exaggerated issues. It stated further that based on a report from *Wadi Nil* (probably an Egyptian newspaper), the story of forced Muslim conversion to Christianity was not entirely correct. In fact, Muslims had proposed to the French government that changes be made to some of the old traditions (not religious one) in order that they be able to adapt to the modern world. Therefore, the JIB called upon Muslims throughout the world to seek further information about such matters in order to ascertain the truth.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>It is hard to discover whether the article was taken from a brochure (pamphlet) or article from another magazine or newspaper. However, the article mentioned some important people such as Mahmūd Shākir (Vice President of al-Azhar of Cairo), Muhammad Rāshid Ridā (the editor of al-Manar), Khafīl al-Khalīdī (of the Supreme Court in Palestine) and other Azhar and Indian trained ulama, including Mahmud Yunus from Indonesia. See *Het Licht* 9 (November 1930): 200-204.

<sup>46</sup>See *Het Licht*, no. 9 (November 1930): 204-206.

This third period of the JIB's history generally marked the highest development of the organization, as well as a turning point in its direction. Historically speaking, after passing through the trials during the second period and those again in the early years of this third period (consisting in confrontation over the nationalist secular basis), from 1931 onward the JIB showed itself to be the largest organization representing the Muslim nationalist faction alongside the secular camp. This was parallel to the position of the Sarekat Islam, which was comparable to the Partai Nasional Indonesia in its membership and its contribution to the formation of nationalism in the country. Roem mentions that being a member of the JIB at that time was no less prestigious than having membership in Indonesia Muda. Moreover, as Roem says, the activists of the JIB were becoming acquainted with Muslim leaders of national caliber such as Agus Salim, Ahmad Hassan and Fakhruddin, and when the time came they followed their footsteps and the activities of their elders.

In the meantime, the organization was responding to new challenges. Kasman and Mohammad Natsir, who at the time were also members of the Muhammadiyah and Persis respectively, wanted to transform the JIB into a social organization like the Muhammadiyah, which would have involved it in establishing hospitals, schools and orphanages. Other members were against such a new direction. At its seventh congress in Madiun, Kasman and M. Natsir, who supported the schools already being operated by the JIB in Tegal, Semarang and Surabaya, debated the issue with Muhammad Roem who



supported by Yusuf Wibisono,<sup>47</sup> objected to the JIB becoming a social organization.<sup>48</sup> The latter faction insisted that the organization should remain faithful to its aims and ideals as a “kritische zin” or a center for youth to study Islam critically. Ultimately, the congress agreed with the second opinion.

However, this debate was reopened at the eighth congress because Kasman was still anxious to extend the activities of the organization into social concerns.<sup>49</sup> Immediately, Samsurizal, Roem and Kismo reminded Kasman about the statute of the organization referring to it as a *studi lichaam* (a place of study). They also reminded him of the danger of government legislation concerning a social organization, which was needed to change the status and which, in addition to financial reasons, posed the greatest danger to the independence of the organization. In addition, Roem also differed with others concerning the structure of the organization of Natipij within the JIB, which according to him suffered too much interference from JIB headquarters. This situation

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<sup>47</sup>From 1933 to 1935 Yusuf Wibisono had played an important role as the editor in chief of *Het Licht*. During this period of time he was able to enlarge the proportion of articles written in Bahasa Indonesia. Abdurrahman, a lecturer at IAIN Yogyakarta who interviewed some of the ex-JIB members, stated to the present writer that after that date the number did increase and post-1937 they constituted about 80 to 90 percent of the total. However, it is not easy to find issues of *Het Licht* published between 1937 and 1942 because some of the ex-JIB members who are still alive in the 1990s have withheld the magazine and are reluctant to give them to any academics or libraries. This data was taken from an interview by telephone 12 December 1997.

<sup>48</sup>According to Natsir the debate lasted three days. He states that this debate left him with a wonderful memory of being a young Muslim and a member of the JIB who trained themselves to be consistent in what they believed, while at the same time appreciating the opinions of others. Mohammad Natsir, “Insyah Allah Roem Tetap Roem,” in *Mohammad Roem 70 Tahun: Pejuang Perunding*, 211.

<sup>49</sup>Apart from schools in Tegal and Semarang as mentioned before, there were also printing activities in Medan.

lead to the dismissal of Roem from JIB; Apparently, his strong stands against policy was seen as too divisive.

Finally, as a consequence of the dispute, Roem and Wibisono established another organization in 1933 called Studenten Islam Studieclub (SIS or Students Islamic Study Club). According to Ridwan Saidi and Dawam Rahadjo,<sup>50</sup> the idea behind the establishment of SIS was the ever growing understanding of public affairs on the part of many members and JIB activists who had reached the age of 30 or older, ages that went beyond the limit stated in the statutes of the organization. Several JIB activists became members of the Volksraad.<sup>51</sup> Accordingly, Yusuf Wibisono claimed that undergraduate students and youth at that level needed their own organization.<sup>52</sup> Thus, the formation of the SIS, in one way, can be seen as corrective to Kasman's policies in the JIB, especially since both Roem and Wibisono had since the early period played an important role in the

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<sup>50</sup>Ridwan Saidi is one of Indonesian Muslim activists and intellectuals who concerned himself with the Muslim Youth movements in Indonesia. He was also one of prominent HMI (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam) activists during the 1960s and early 1970s. Among his writings – none of them very detailed – on the subject, some may be found in *Pemuda Islam dalam Dinamika Politik Bangsa 1985-1984* (Jakarta: Yayasan Fajar Shadiq, 1975). M. Dawam Rahardjo is a well known as Young Indonesian Muslim economist who was also an HMI activist. He is now one of the prominent activists of Indonesian Muslim Intellectual Association (ICMI) and an editor in chief of many Islamic Journals in Indonesia. He is a prolific writer and may be considered as a Muslim intellectual—focused on Islam from a sociological perspective. One of his writings related to the development of Islamic thought in the country is *Intellectual Intelegensia dan Perilaku Politik Bangsa: Risalah Cendekiawan Muslim* (Bandung: Mizan, 1993).

<sup>51</sup>On the involvement of JIB members, see Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun*, 91. The appointment of JIB members to the Volskraad showed acknowledgement of its importance in the national sphere. It indicated the maturity of the members, which from the view of some members, a reflection that they were no longer seen as the members of a youth movement.

<sup>52</sup>See Saidi, "The Organization of Young Moslem Intellectuals," 36-37, and Rahardjo, *Intellectual Intelegensia dan Perilaku Politik Bangsa*, 49.

organization. In another sense, this also can also be seen as an expression of commitment of and efforts by young intellectuals to study Islam critically and scientifically. This was a new tradition that developed among Indonesian Muslims, especially among those who were educated in Western schools, and was initially created by JIB members. Although, Kasman still remained in control of the organization until its 10<sup>th</sup> congress in 1935, he certainly lost his most militant partners, such as Roem.<sup>53</sup>

In short, this period saw two different trends emerge in the development of the JIB. In the first place, it marked the culmination of the JIB's attempts at making the organization more meaningful to Indonesian Muslim in general and to its members in particular, as indicated by the establishment of schools and printing activities. In the second place, dissension and a reexamination of its goals, which inevitably had an effect on the strength of the JIB, also marked this period.

#### **4. The period of Continuation of Traditions and the Decline of the JIB (1936-1942)**

Little can be said about this period except that the tradition of offering courses on Islam continued in some branches. Congresses were no longer held annually, but instead took place only every two years. *Het Licht* was no longer published regularly because of financial problems as well as a shortage of articles. Many activists from the earlier

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<sup>53</sup>However, it should be kept in mind that Kasman was not in fact completely abandoned by those activists because of the establishment of the SIS. Yusuf Wibisono, for example, was still active on the *Het Licht* editorial board until 1937.

generation had become active in other organizations and paid less attention to the JIB.<sup>54</sup> It also appears that the debates during the last years of the Kasman era had a great effect on the organization. Moreover, as G.F. Pijper notes, Agus Salim, who by that time had left Yogyakarta and moved to Bandung was less active and hence less influential.<sup>55</sup>

During this fourth period, the JIB had two leaders, i.e. Muhammad Abu Arifaini and Sunaryo Mangunpuspito. These two figures had similar attitudes and approaches, without however making much of a mark on the organization. Neither was really of the caliber of the JIB leaders of the earlier generation. Muhammad Abu Arifaini for example, who succeeded Kasman just after the tenth congress (from 1935 to 1937), only established one new branch of the JIB in Tasik Malaya (West Java) on February 1936. Sunaryo Mangunpuspito, on the other hand, was only able to maintain the traditions of JIB such as studying Islam and initiating the establishment of the Badan Persaudaraan Kependuan (Body of Boy Scout Brotherhood). In spite of these efforts, and his attempt at reinvigorating the membership, Sunaryo was unable to halt the decline of the JIB. There were relatively weak responses which indicated that the heyday of the organization was past.

An important event in this period was the inclusion of the JIB as a member of the Majlisul Islam Ala Indonesia (MIAI or Great Islamic Council of Indonesia) which was set

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<sup>54</sup> Natsir, who was a member of the Volksraad beginning in 1931, left it after Roem and Wibisono created their organization, and joined the Partai Islam Indonesia in Bandung, which he headed later. Kasman was later active in the Muhammadiyah and Samsurizal in the PSII.

<sup>55</sup> Mailrapporten no 84/B-14/G/1938, 1-3 as cited by Abdullah, *Organisasi Kaum Muda Islam di Jawa*, 107.

up at Surabaya in 1937<sup>56</sup>. Although this does not mean that the JIB was seen as having an equal position to that of the adult-oriented Muslim organizations, such as the Muhammadiyah and the Nahdlatul Ulama, it does indicate the recognition of its importance among the Indonesian Muslim organizations, particularly among Muslim youth organizations at the time. Noer has pointed out that this involvement brought disadvantages to the JIB as well, since it reduced the role of the JIB among the youth.<sup>57</sup>

## **B. THE JIB's IDEOLOGY AND ITS ISLAMIC ACTIVITIES**

As shown earlier, the formation of JIB was inspired by a perceived need to offer Islamic instructions to students studying in Dutch secular schools. Hence, it is easy to understand that from its inception the JIB was directed by its founders to spread Islamic ideology among its members. In the beginning, this ideal was only expressed in terms of, to borrow Noer's words, a "pragmatic goal," i.e. "to be acquainted with and to study Islam," and an "apologetic aim," i.e. "to reinforce sympathy toward Islam and its adherence."<sup>58</sup> By "pragmatic" was meant a stress laid on the obligation of cadres of future

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<sup>56</sup>The MIAI was an umbrella organization designed to unite both the modernist and the traditionalist factions. This federation was meant to counter-balance the secular nationalist factions in Indonesian politics and to react against the Dutch administration which at that time, between 1929 and 1937, introduced and implemented ordinances which were upsetting to Muslims, such as that of the Marriage Ordinance. For more information about the MIAI, see Siti Hadiroh Wardan, "Dari MIAI Menjadi MASYUMI," (Undergraduate thesis, Gajah Mada University, 1968).

<sup>57</sup>Noer, "Jong Islamieten Bond," 253.

<sup>58</sup>Noer, "Jong Islamieten Bond," 244. For the goals of the JIB, see page 48 of this thesis.

leaders to study Islam because they needed to understand the people's inclinations and aspirations (in a long term, this was destined that they can continually be leaders). By "apologetic" was meant the inculcation of a deep loyalty to Islam among its adherents.

Later, this loyalty was defined as developing a deep conviction towards Islam. This was seen a year later in the formulation of the statutes of the organization in the first congress in the late of 1925, where it was stated that the JIB "requires members of the organization to study and to obey the teachings of Islam."<sup>59</sup> This implies that JIB, in later development, believed that only by practicing Islam in the correct manner could a society rightly be formed according to the teachings of Islam. To achieve this, the JIB members thought that they had to begin by practicing the Islamic teachings in all aspect of life.

### 1. The JIB and the Modernist

The modernist school of Islamic thinking in Indonesia, better known as the Kaum Muda, generally followed the religious thinking of Muhammad 'Abduh<sup>60</sup> of Egypt, which was developed and spread by the al-Manar school. His school of thought rendered the pursuit of logic obligatory for one's moral life and urged a use of the Qur'ān and Hadīth. Abduh himself constantly upheld the principal of *ijtihād*, which meant the right of

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<sup>59</sup>*Het Licht* 1 (March 1925) as cited in Noer, "Jong Islamieten Bond," 244.

<sup>60</sup>An account of Muhammad 'Abduh in English may be found in Charles Clarence Adams, "Mohammad 'Abduh: The Reformer," *Moslem World* 19 no. 1 (January 1929): 264-273. A study of his movement by the same author can be found in *Islam and Modernism in Egypt: A Study of the Modern Reform Movement Inaugurated by Muhammad 'Abduh* (New York: Russel & Russel, 1968). See also Mahmudul Haq, *Muhammad 'Abduh: a Study of a Modern Thinker of Egypt* (Calcutta: Aligarh Muslim University Press, 1970).

unencumbered personal inquiry, and promoted the intellectual battle against *taqlīd*, or the passive acceptance of dogmas of past religious authorities without any questioning proof and elucidation.<sup>61</sup> In this way Abduh sought to liberate Islam from previous historical interpretations and allow interpretation compatible with the actual circumstances of the present.<sup>62</sup>

Historically speaking, the appearance of Muslim modernist in Indonesia traces its roots back to Sheikh Ahmad Khatib of Minangkabau, who became an *imam* and teacher in the Masjid al-Haram (the sacred enclosure) in Mecca.<sup>63</sup> His stand against the practices of the sufi *tariqahs*,<sup>64</sup> most notably the Naqshabandiyah, and those of the Minangkabau *adat*, seem to have been the starting point of the modernist attack on traditionalist (Kaum Tua) throughout Southeast Asia, i.e., those in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore. This position was later maintained by his students, especially Sheikh Muhammad Djamil Djambek (1860-1947), Hadji Abdul Karim Amrullah (1875-1945)

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<sup>61</sup>M.M. Syarif, ed., *History of Muslim Philosophy, with Short Accounts of Other Disciplines and the Modern Renaissance in Muslim Lands* (Wiesbaden, Pakistan: Otto Harrasowitz, Pakistan Philosophical Congress, 1966), 1496.

<sup>62</sup>His Islamic modernism was a form of religious liberalism, see Alfian, *Muhammadiyah: The Political Behavior*, 100. Moreover, 'Abduh's ideas are in fact seen by many as having helped to form the intellectual origins of Egyptian nationalism in the early of this century. See A.H. Hourani, "Preface" in Jamal Muhammed Ahmed, *The Intellectual Origins of Egyptian Nationalism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), vii-x.

<sup>63</sup>See Deliar Noer, *The Rise and the Development of the Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia During the Dutch Colonial Period 1900-1942*. 47-50.

<sup>64</sup>Although Ahmad Khatib himself was known to have been a *sufi*, he rejected the beliefs and the practices in the Naqshabandiyah *tariqah*. See Hamka, *Ayahku* (Jakarta: Wijaya, 1958), 44-54. Therefore, his sufism was probably closer to that of al-Ghazali. See Alfian, *Muhammadiyah: The Political Behavior*, 102.

and Hadji Abdullah Ahmad (1878-1933). At the same time, Sheikh Ahmad Taher Djalaludin al Azhari (1869-1956), another student of Khatib from Minangkabau, and three other friends, Sayyid Sheikh bin Ahmad al-Hadi (a Malaccan born of Malay-Arab parents), Hadji Abbas Muhammad Taha (a Singaporean of Minangkabau parentage), and Sheikh Muhammad Salim al-Kalali (an Acehnese merchant) issued a periodical called *al-Imam* (The Leader), which resembled *al-Manar*, founded by Abduh's student, Rashīd Ridhā.<sup>65</sup> This periodical is considered to have been the first Islamic modernist periodical ever disseminated in Malaya and Indonesia. Despite its failure in Malaya,<sup>66</sup> its influence in the development of Islamic modernism in Indonesia can not be doubted. Noer points out that *al-Imām* was read by Malay-speaking Indonesians in Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan and Sulawesi.<sup>67</sup>

Unlike Sumatra, the modernists in Java came from different backgrounds and were mostly attached to organizations, beginning with the Jami'at al-Khair<sup>68</sup> in 1905,

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<sup>65</sup>See William R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism* (New Heaven and London: Yale University Press, 1967), 56-67.

<sup>66</sup>Roff mentions that although *al-Imām* attracted many readers from the intellectually and socially sophisticated elements of the towns, while its innovative and potentially disruptive teaching nevertheless brought it into conflict with other groups in Malay society—the official religious hierarchy, the traditional Malay elite, and the rural ulama. *Al-Imām* and the modernists failed to penetrate deeply into the Malay society to become a significant social and political force in the development of Malay nationalism. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, 56-90.

<sup>67</sup>In Java, for example, its agents were to be found in Jakarta, Surabaya, Cianjur, and Semarang, while in Kalimantan, they were in Pontianak and Samarinda. Noer, *The Rise and the Development*, 52

<sup>68</sup>Al-Jamiat al-Khairiyah was founded in July 1905 in Jakarta. The two main activities of the organization were the establishment and maintenance of elementary schools and sending several youth to Turkey to pursue advance study. However, Noer mentions that these activities were soon hampered by a lack of funds as well as the decline of the caliphate. None of the



which established schools of modern kind. Among the modernists who joined the organization was Ahmad Syurkati (a Sudanese) and Ahmad Dahlan (Javanese) and Hasan Jayadiningrat, brother to the well known Pangeran Ario Jayadiningrat (Sundanese origin); nevertheless the majority of those who joined were of Arab origin. However, as a result of a split between "sayyid"<sup>69</sup> and non-"sayyid" members, the organization split into two factions. The non-Sayyids established their own organization called al-Irsyad, in which Ahmad Syurkati played an important role. Ahmad Dahlan for his part later founded the Muhammadiyah, which became the largest modernist Muslim organization in the country. Among other modernists there were, of course (as has been discussed in chapter I of this thesis) Ahmad Hassan (born in Singapore of Tamil-Javanese blood) of Persis, Agus Salim (Minangkabauan) of Sarekat Islam and an important figure in JIB, Tjokroaminoto (a Javanese *priyayi*) of Sarekat Islam and Fakhruddin (Javanese) of the Muhammadiyah.

As far as JIB members were concerned, these included many Muslims who were studying at Dutch schools. None of the members was from the *pesantren*<sup>70</sup> (Islamic

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trainees played a significant role in religious and nationalist movement when they returned to Indonesia. See Noer, *The Rise and the Development*, 90-95.

<sup>69</sup>Sayyid is a term used by Arabs who claim to be directly descended from the Prophet Muhammad through his daughter Fatimah. Accordingly, they enjoyed "an exalted position among Muslim society particularly vis-à-vis Indonesians and claimed to occupy a preferred position in religion in spite of the fact that their mothers were some times non-Sayyid or even non-Arabs." See Noer, *The Rise and the Development*, 89.

<sup>70</sup>In the *pesantren* students are taught only religious subjects such as *aqidah* (belief), and *syari'ah* (law) by *kyais* who own and manage the institution. See Zamakhsari Dhofier, "The Pesantren Tradition: A Study of the Role of The Kyai in the Maintenance of the Traditional Ideology in Java," (Ph.D dissertation, Monash University, 1980). This work has been published in Indonesian as *Tradisi Pesantren, Studi tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1985).

boarding schools) system, however. These young Muslims of the non-*pesantren* circle usually received religious instructions in the home from their parents or in the mosque or *langgar*.<sup>71</sup> A much smaller proportion may have studied at a *madrasah*<sup>72</sup> at an early age, and then went on to enroll in schools where they were taught secular subjects. For this reason, they were more open to a scientific approach in scrutinizing Islamic teachings, an approach that belonged primarily to the modernist school of thought, rather than to the products of the *pesantren*. For at that time the *pesantren* did not teach scientific subjects. Indeed, according to Abdurrahman Wahid, the head of the *pesantren* (*kyai*) was usually regarded as the only acknowledged authority. The *santris* were bound to their *kyai* for the length of their lives.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, *kyais* were very often considered *ma'sūm* (free from error).<sup>74</sup> The most probable effect to the *santris* under this system generally was that their independent and critical thought, especially in matters of religion, were hardly developed,

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<sup>71</sup>A small mosque made from bamboo or any other semi-permanent building materials, managed by small society and used for daily prayer and to teach the Qur'ān and basic teachings of Islam to the children in the neighborhood.

<sup>72</sup>A *madrasah* is an Islamic school which provides teaching on religious subjects. This school usually operates in the afternoon. In this way, many students in Dutch schools or other schools could still study Islamic teachings that were not taught in the secular schools.

<sup>73</sup>Abdurrahman Wahid, "Pesantren sebagai Subkultur," in *Pesantren dan Pembaharuan*, ed. Dawam Raharjo (Jakarta:LP3ES, 1974), 42-43.

<sup>74</sup>For the Sunnites, the quality of *ma'sūm* is only attached to the Prophet. Among the Shi'ites, the concept of *'isma* is considered only as relevant to the Imams (the religious leaders). A logical consequence of this connection is that the understanding of Islamic teachings is to be determined by teachers or syeikhs, not students. See, Deliar Noer, *Hubungan Tiga Golongan*, paper presented as part of Seminar Sejarah Nasional II, Yogyakarta 1970, 4. For more information on the concept of Imams in Shi'ite Islam, see Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism* (New Heaven and London: Yale University Press, 1985).

because the *kyais* were regarded as free from error and hence, could not be challenged by students. These are qualities that were not favored by the modernist school.

Moreover, in the second and the third decades of the twentieth century, secondary schools were only available in provincial capitals or residency cities, where social and modernist leaders were dominant in the society. This situation had rendered the Muslim students of non-pesantren background more inclined to follow modernist Muslim leaders such as Agus Salim, Ahmad Hassan, and Fakhruddin. Consequently, the JIB won considerable support from these modernist leaders and their organizations. The most important support of this nature came as a result of the direct involvement of Agus Salim, whose writings and advisory work very much influenced JIB activists.<sup>75</sup>

It is not surprising that the JIB was motivated to study Islam critically, especially given the fact that the Dutch education its members had received enabled the latter to develop independent thinking. Hence, not only was it the case that the members of the JIB learned religious subjects in religious courses, they were also encouraged to learn from various publications available in libraries. Moreover, benefiting from their close contacts with Agus Salim, they were often exposed to discussions on the religious, social and political problems occurring in the country. The publication of *Het Licht* was very much devoted to this purpose.

Indeed, as the JIB developed, Alfian notes, it was to provide the Muslim modernists with their own Western-educated intellectuals, who were able to speak and

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<sup>75</sup>See *Seratus Tahun Haji Agus Salim*, (Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1984), and Panitia Peringatan Haji Agus Salim 70 Tahun, *Jejak Langkah Haji Agus Salim: Pilihan Karangan, Ucapan dan Pendapat Beliau dari Dulu sampai Sekarang* (Jakarta: Tintamas, 1954).

write in defense of their own religion in the modern terminologies of the intellectual world.<sup>76</sup> Mohammad Natsir,<sup>77</sup> for example, who was very much influenced by his teachers, Ahmad Hassan, and Agus Salim, wrote a number of articles, while he was active in the JIB's Bandung branch. His first major work appeared in Dutch in 1929 entitled *Muhammad als Profeet* (Muhammad as Prophet),<sup>78</sup> which was then followed by *Komt tot Het Gebed* (Come to Prayer).<sup>79</sup> Later, as his teacher had done, he wrote many works in defense of Islam against those he regarded as its opponents, and continued to do so until his death in 1993. Among his writings most are included in the anthologies *Capita Selecta I*, published in 1954, and *Capita Selecta II*, which appeared three years later in 1957.<sup>80</sup> These books are a compilation of more than 50 articles from various publications. It is not an exaggeration to say that Natsir was really the leading

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<sup>76</sup>Alfian, *Muhammadiyah, The Political Behavior*, 125.

<sup>77</sup>Natsir, Minangkabau in origin, was born on July 17, 1908 in Alahan Panjang, West Sumatra, the son of a grade-school teacher. He received a western education from elementary school up through Senior High School, the latter obtained in Bandung, where he was active in the JIB, from 1927 to 1930. His religious teachers were Haji Rasul, Engku Mudo Amin, and informally Haji Abdullah Ahmad. Later, in Bandung he met and became the student of Ahmad Hassan of Persis. Later, he became one of the most prominent figures at the time of Indonesia's independence. His biography may be found in Yusril Ihza, "Combining Activism and Intellectualism: The Biography of Mohammad Natsir," *Studia Islamika* 2. no. 1 (1995): 111-147.

<sup>78</sup>This work had been intended as a reply to criticism of Islam voiced by a Protestant priest, Domingo Christoffel. Mohammad Natsir, *Kebudayaan Islam dalam Perspektif Sejarah*, (Jakarta: Girimukti Pusaka, 1988), 3-32.

<sup>79</sup>This article was later translated into Indonesian by D.P. Sati Alimin entitled, *Marilah Shalat* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1956).

<sup>80</sup>See Mohammad Natsir, *Capita Selecta*, vol I, ed. D. P. Sati Alimin (Bandung: W. van Hoeve, 1954). See also Mohammad Natsir, *Capita Selecta*, vol. 2. (Jakarta: Pustaka Pendidikan Islam, 1957).

“intellectual ulama” ever produced by the JIB. But there were others who were created as well such as Samsurizal, Wiwoho, Kasman, Roem, Syafrudin Prawiranegara and Yusuf Wibisono. Although, these intellectuals were not as prominent in the field of religious thought as was Natsir, they were nonetheless, in the opinion of Rahardjo, sharp thinkers in their own fields including economic and social affairs, and Islamic principles were an important part of their presentation.<sup>81</sup>

## **2. The Islamic activities and the Islamic views of JIB.**

It has to be allowed that the membership of the JIB came from different backgrounds in terms of religiosity. In 1931, Titi Marsutji categorized members of JIB into six categories:

1. Those who had been influenced by the West and wanted to understand Islam correctly.
2. Those who received Western education in the Western schools but had received also religious instructions in their homes, and they joined JIB to fulfill their religious devotion.
3. Those who convinced and consistent in Islam.
4. Those who felt pity for other people from the other beliefs and wanted to introduced Islam to them.
5. Those who believed that Indonesian nationalism would not be firm without Islam.
6. Those who wanted to learn about Islam and politics.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup>Dawam Raharjo, *Intelektual, Intelegensia, dan Perilaku Politik Bangsa*, 48.

<sup>82</sup> This analysis reflected conditions when the article was written. Unfortunately, however, It is hard to trace the information about the personality of the author. For the article see, *Het Licht* no. 7 (1931). See also Deliar Noer, “Jong Islamieten Bond,” p. 27.

This analysis, according to Noer, is flimsy, because the analysis is not well drawn, there the categories are not exclusive enough for a good starting and the criteria are not well formulated.<sup>83</sup> Nevertheless, this analysis still shows the concerns of the JIB members and fits well with the activities and concerns of the JIB. If we analyze the situation further, with reference to the contents of *Het Licht*, we find that the JIB must have given Islamic courses at different levels of ability. The basic teachings of Islam were provided for the members falling into the first and the second categories, where very basic teachings were taught and explained. At the same time more advanced and sophisticated studies must have been offered as well. This is also apparent from the contents of *Het Licht*, which disseminated information on Islam ranging from the basic teachings about *salāh* (prayer), *zakāt* (alms giving), and other primary teachings of Islam, to discussions and debates on other more complicated issues of faith, such as the position of the Ahmadiyah and the relationship of Islam and nationalism; the latter were after all couched in very ideological and philosophical terms. The organization also attempted to establish its own library, provide courses on Islam to Natipij members, and pursue intensive study of the role of women in Islam, which was a hot topic among intellectuals at that time. The JIB also held artistic performances to raise funds in support of social welfare projects.

The modernist learning of the JIB can be deduced from the sources of Islamic reference that they employed—modernist journals such as *al-Manar*, *al-Imām* and *al-Munir* were very common. In the area of *tafsīr*, other than modernist *tafsīr* such as those of Rashīd Ridā, Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Qayyim al-Jauzī, they also favored “The Holy

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<sup>83</sup>Noer, “Jong Islamietend Bond,” 27.

Qur'ān" by Muhammad Ali, as well as his book "The Religion of Islam," which were highly regarded by Sarekat Islam leaders. While Ali might have been suspect because of alienation of the Ahmadiyah from Sunni Muslim, his books provided a model rendition of Islamic modernism. Since most members of the JIB were able to read sources written in Western languages, they also had become familiar with the works of certain Western scholars then popular, who wrote about the East and Islam, such as those of Thomas Carlyle, Leo Tolstoy, Lothrop Stoddard, G.B. Shaw, H.A.R. Gibb, J.W. Soethe and several European intellectuals who converted to Islam such as Ameen J. Whyman and Lord Headly.<sup>84</sup> These views added considerably to understandings and insight of those members who studied these sources.

In addition, the JIB took a modernist, even "secularist," attitude toward the role of women in Islam. For example, in 1927, when most Muslim still believed that women should "hide themselves from the sinful looks of men," especially in public gathering, the JIB came up with a revolutionary new outlook. At its third congress Agus Salim tore down a white screen that was used to shield the females from males, an action that shocked the audience including the Chairman. In his report, a Dutch representative said, "we are witnessing here an important evolutionary—if not revolutionary development—in the thinking of the members of this Islamic youth organization."<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup>See Rahardjo, *Intelektual, Intelegensia dan Perilaku Politik Bangsa*, 50-51.

<sup>85</sup>Christian L.M. Penders, *Indonesia: Selected Documents on Colonialism and Nationalism, 1830-1942* (Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1977) 267.

Like other Muslim reformist organizations, JIB charged that traditionalist *kyais* and ulama were trying to maintain the status quo in religious thinking, certain questionable beliefs and practice for their own privileges. Dasoeki,<sup>86</sup> a prominent member accused *kyais* of hypocrisy for using their religious knowledge to earn their living in dubious ways. Such practices as receiving an amount of money or certain goods when *kyais* performed prayer (do'a) at a *slametan*<sup>87</sup> ceremony or burial were seen by JIB as selling *pahala* (reward from Allah) and therefore, hypocritical in nature. The JIB asserted further if such practices were still continued, Islam in Indonesia would never develop properly. Therefore, "hypocrisy, orthodoxy and conservatism had to be eliminated from the country."<sup>88</sup>

Another criticism toward the traditionalist attitude prevailing among *kyais* made by the JIB is found in an article "Dalam Masjid Orang Berjongkok dan Menyembah

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<sup>86</sup>Dasoeki was known as the chairman of Medan branch; however his life and later career remain in obscurity.

<sup>87</sup>*Slametan* is a communal feast given in almost every occasion, with ritual significance for the Javanese, such as pregnancy, birth, circumcision, marriage, and death. At a *slametan*, after the guests are gathered, the host makes a formal speech in highly styled Javanese stating the reason why he is giving the feast, and asks God that evil spirits not bother him and his family. The kyai of the village then chants some verses of the Qur'ān and recites *do'a* (prayer) in Arabic, while the assembled guests raise their hands upward saying "amen" at appropriate points. Zaini Muchtarom, "Santri and Abangan in Java" (M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1975), 55-57. See Clifford Geertz, "Religious Beliefs and Economic Behavior in Central Javanese Town: Some Preliminary Consideration," in *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, (Massachusetts: MIT, 1956), 7-10.

<sup>88</sup>According to Dasoeki many *kyais* in his day told Muslims in the villages whose relatives did not perform their daily prayers during their life to pay a certain amount of money or rice when that person died. Accordingly, the kyai would make *do'a* in order that these people would be forgiven by Allah. See the speech made by Dasoeki at the inauguration of the JIB Medan branch entitled "Keperluan Choetbah bagi Oemat Islam," *Het Licht* 11-12 (Januari-February 1930): 255.



Kepada Tuan Bupati” (In the Mosque Someone Bowed His Knees and Pay Homage Toward the Bupati),<sup>89</sup> where the attitude of a local ulama in Indramayu, West Java, was criticized for bowing his knees for performing *sembah* (an ancient Javanese way of expressing gratitude toward some one in power or as a sign of submission) in front of the local regent before performing *khutbah* in the mosque. The JIB viewed this practice as of mixing tradition and religion as questionable for Muslims. The critique stated that in the mosque Muslim should regard themselves as equals before Allah. Obviously then personal niceties due an official elsewhere, would not be appropriate in the mosque, especially during worship. In undertaking *ibādah* in the mosque, there exist only two divisions; imam (the person leading of *ṣhalāh*) and the *ma'mūm* (people who following behind the *imam*). Thus, the JIB called for the elimination of such practices that were irrelevant to Islamic teachings.

Concerning the Qur'ān, Dasoeki asserts that the Qur'ān is holy scripture, and accordingly beside it must only be recited in the correct manner according to the rules *tajwīd* (rule) or in an aesthetically pleasing voice, more importantly it must also be understood, so it could be applied in daily life. The Qur'ān after all is a book of law that contains important information on how to act, which, if ignored, will lead to punishment by Allah. Reciting the Qur'ān without understanding the meaning of the verses will not help a Muslim to escape from the punishment of Allah on the Day of Judgement.<sup>90</sup> This viewpoint, of course is a common attitude of Islamic modernism; it is not only the

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<sup>89</sup>See “Dari Sana Sini,” *Het Licht* 1 (March 1930): 41.

<sup>90</sup>Dasoeki, “Keperluan Choetbah,” 254.

scripture that is important, but also the understanding and appreciation of the meaning of the scripture.

Another matter that inspired the JIB to criticize traditionalist *kyais* was the tradition of maintaining the practice of pronouncing the *khutbah* (Friday sermon) in Arabic. According to Dasoeki, despite its status as a part of '*ibādāh jum'āt*', the sermon of the *khatib* should contain *nasīhah* (advice) and express the teachings of Islam so as to give some counsel to the audience. Hence, these statements must be understood by the audience, without which the *khutbah* will be useless.<sup>91</sup> Dasoeki asserts, therefore, that the *khutbah* in Arabic was not, as had been believed by many orthodox ulama, an obligatory (*wājib*) task. Hence, making such messages comprehensible to the audience should be the primary consideration, meaning that it must be delivered in the vernacular, i.e., the language of the audience. In addition, he states that *khatib* (the speaker) must also equip himself with scientific knowledge. He says that, for example, if the *khatib* wants to give a sermon on the danger of *khamr* (alcoholic beverages), the *khatib* has to make himself fully understood [the body chemistry and other matters, involved] in order to confront the danger that it poses.<sup>92</sup>

These attitudes and views of the JIB developed during its existence had certainly strengthened the position of modernism in Indonesia and helped Muslims themselves to cope with the challenges of modern life.

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<sup>91</sup>Dasoeki, "Keperluan Choetbah," 254.

<sup>92</sup>Dasoeki, "Keperluan Choetbah," 259.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **DEFINING ISLAM:**

### **JIB'S RESPONSES TO RELIGIOUS, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES**

Historically, the Muslims of Indonesia have often found themselves in the position of responding to issues first raised by others. The heated debate on the position of the Ahmadiyah in Sunni Islam, the question of the status of women, and the question of nationalism and Islam, are cases in point.

The late 1920s in Indonesia marked a time when many ideologies openly competed for attention. So intense was their rivalry that competition between the supporters of different ideologies touched almost every aspect of life in Indonesia. The JIB, as a Muslim youth movement, was involved in this process and, therefore, struggled to define its own identity in the arenas of religion, social reform and politics.

This chapter will discuss some issues related to religion, society and the body politic in terms of the process of searching for an Indonesian identity as the JIB saw it. The discussion of the issues is limited to three important topics to which the JIB and other Muslim organizations in general paid considerable attention during the late 1920s and 1930s. These topics include the response to the Christian missionary and the Ahmadiyah movements, the response to calls for women's empowerment; and, the response to the spread of nationalist ideologies. All these issues were of concern to Indonesian Muslims, and particularly JIB members, during the late colonial era, when activists from this youth organization received a practical education in how to deal with

issues they would face when they became the real leaders of society when reaching adulthood.

#### **A. The JIB's Response to Christian Missionaries and the Ahmadiyah Movement**

Between the first and the second World Wars, Indonesian Muslims displayed considerable concern over the appearance of the Ahmadiyah movement and the intensification of Christian missionary activity. Muslim intellectuals, whether from the modernist or traditionalist factions, regarded these religious trends as a threat to the position of Islam in Indonesia.<sup>1</sup> They replied with polemical and apologetic propaganda in an attempt to check their proselytization activities. The JIB shared in this effort as well. An outstanding example of this polemic was Ahmad Hassan's article entitled "Nabi yang Masih Hidup,"<sup>2</sup> and other writings on the subject in *Pembela Islam* (Defender of Islam).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Howard M. Federspiel, *Persatuan Islam, Islamic Reform in Twentieth Century Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1970), 99.

<sup>2</sup>Ahmad Hassan, "Nabi yang Masih Hidup," *Sual-Djawab* 12: 80-86.

<sup>3</sup>*Pembela Islam* (Defense of Islam) was an organ of Persatuan Islam (Persis). This periodical which reflected the viewpoints of Persis, initially appeared in 1929 and was able to circulate about 2,000 copies fully licensed by the government. This figure and the following periodicals of Persis are provided in Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942* (London, New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 91. This periodical contained many articles on the attack on the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan as given in Federspiel, *Persatuan Islam*, 99-108.

In evaluating the JIB's response to Christianity, Steenbrink provocatively argues that the organization was certainly never absolutely anti-Dutch or anti-Christian missionary. He bases his conclusion on the fact that the first volume of *Het Licht* contained a short article by Snouck Hurgronje, which was included with approval.<sup>4</sup> Steenbrink's observation regarding the JIB's attitude is probably generally correct. However, an argument based solely on the JIB's acceptance of Hurgronje's article [entitled "Het een en ander over de mystiek en den wijsgeer Ghazali"]<sup>5</sup> is insufficient to explain the JIB's attitude towards the Dutch colonial administration or the Christian missionaries. As a matter of fact, the inclusion of this article can be seen as a reflection of the JIB's open-minded character, it was, after all, a youthful Muslim intellectual movement whose members wished to study Islam critically and analytically. Hurgronje's article attests to the fact that the JIB was willing to accept the truth wherever and from whomever it might come. More importantly, it is known that this article, by Steenbrink's admission, was probably written especially for the JIB, only later being accepted as a worthwhile contribution to the study of Islam. It should also be noted that in studying Islam the JIB did not restrict itself to Muslim sources, such as 'Abduh, Jamāl al-Din al-Afghāni, or Rashīd Ridā, whose works were popular among the modernists at that time, but also learned from many Western

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<sup>4</sup>See Karel A. Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam; Contacts and Conflicts 1596-1950* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1993), 137.

<sup>5</sup>This article was published in *Het Licht* 1 (July 1925): 217-228.

scholars concerned with Islam.<sup>6</sup> Thus, their acceptance of Hurgronje's article does not necessarily imply that the JIB was uncritical of the Dutch. It is best characterized as a reflection of their openness towards information, no matter its source. This attitude is, in fact, in line with Aqib Suminto's<sup>7</sup> observation that during the colonial period the majority of Islamic "societies" [modernist Muslim organizations] acted with an open mind towards the West. Their political opposition to the colonial system, therefore, was accompanied by a pronounced openness to the many achievements of Western society.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, Snouck Hurgronje, despite his position as an adviser to the Dutch colonial administration on Islamic policies, was an Islamicist whose work was later scrutinized by many scholars in Indonesia.

Compared to other modernist organizations, there is little to be said for the JIB's response to Christian beliefs and missionary activities. This subject, in fact, is barely addressed in the *Het Licht's* polemics. Within this context, we note two articles by

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<sup>6</sup>See chapter two of this thesis especially page 33-34. Steenbrink must be criticized for not clarifying who and what he refers to by as "anti-Dutch." In my understanding, this term can be interpreted misleadingly and easily leads to over simplification of the problem. The JIB was certainly not anti-Dutch people, but it certainly was anti-Dutch Colonial Administration. In fact, on one occasion, the JIB harshly criticized the attitude of two Dutch officers who used their position to force a native regent to provide young Muslim women to dance in front of them on a night before *Ied al-fitri* in Baturaja - Lampung. The attitude of these officers was seen by the JIB as an abuse of the right of these Muslim women to perform their religious obligation. It's criticism was directed not only against the two officers but also the authority which allowed this abuse to happened without sanction. Hence, even though the JIB was certainly anti- colonial, it did not blindly attack on the grounds of nation, personal, or race.

<sup>7</sup>Aqib Suminto is an Indonesian scholar who wrote a book entitled *Politik Islam Hindia Belanda* (Jakarta: LP3ES 1985)

<sup>8</sup>Aqib Suminto, "Forward" in Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam*, 8.

Mohammad Natsir entitled “Qur’ān en Evangelie” (The Qur’ān and the Preaching) and “Muhammad Las Profit” (Muhammad the Last Prophet) (1930) published in a Dutch newspaper. These articles were written in reply to Domingo Christoffel, a Protestant Minister who criticized Islam and the biography of the Prophet Muhammad.<sup>9</sup> However, neither of these were contained in *Het Licht*. Thus, we may safely argue that the JIB led no organized mission to fight Christianity, or any other beliefs. This attests to JIB’s consistency with regard to its goals, identified earlier as the cultivation of sympathy for Islam and its followers, and the promotion of positive tolerance toward those who think otherwise.<sup>10</sup> Having said this, however, a critical study of the JIB’s foundation must admit that the JIB, to a certain degree, was inevitably swept along in the tide of the general polemics of the era, at least in terms of the discussion on the practices of Christian missionaries in Indonesia. For example, when Rev. Pos delivered a speech at the JIB’s first congress entitled “De Roeping van Zending in Indie” (The Vocation of Protestant Mission in the Indies), the discussion that followed included criticism of the Protestant Missionary policy, but remained unemotional in manner.<sup>11</sup> Needless to add, the JIB was not interested in a pamphlet alleging a Christian attack on Muslims in Tunisia,

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<sup>9</sup>Natsir’s writings about Christian missionaries and Islamic da’wah were later published as a book entitled *Islam dan Kristen di Indonesia* (Islam and Christianity in Indonesia), which was reprinted several times and widely distributed. Muhammad Natsir, *Islam dan Kristen di Indonesia*, ed. Endang Saefudin Anshary (Jakarta: Media Dakwah, 1988). This book, according to the editor, is actually a compilation of Natsir’s articles on the subject previously published in *Pembela Islam* and *Panji Islam* between 1930 and 1969.

<sup>10</sup>About the aims and the purposes of the JIB, see page 7 chapter two of this thesis.

<sup>11</sup>A report on the congress may be found in *Het Licht* 2 (January-February, 1926)

which seems to have been an attempt at hate-mongering. The JIB, in fact, encouraged others to seek correct information on the matter.<sup>12</sup> Thus, it can be said, that for the JIB, although its mission was to love Islam and embrace its teachings in daily life, it wanted open tolerance of religion itself.

The same can not be said in the case of an article on the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan<sup>13</sup> published in the JIB periodical, which featured a thorough discussion of the group's belief, albeit in a sarcastic tone. This sentiment may be explained by the fact that the Ahmadiyah, which claimed to be part of Islam, was viewed as an attack from within, endangering the unity of the Muslim *ummah*. As well, the Ahmadiyah proselytized their beliefs more actively than Christian missionaries among members of the Muslim youth organizations.

Historically, Ahmadiyah teachings are believed to have first been introduced in Indonesia in 1925, when several students returned from their studies in the Punjab. These students, most of whom were of Minangkabau origin, returned with Muhammad Ali, a representative of the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan in the Punjab. Afterwards, the group began to proselytize its beliefs in the vicinity of Minangkabau region, only later reaching several cities on Java.<sup>14</sup> Other studies on the activities of the Ahmadiyah Lahore in Indonesia

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<sup>12</sup>See chapter two, page 19 of this thesis.

<sup>13</sup>The Ahmadiyah has two sects. One is the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan, who believe that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet. The other is the Ahmadiyah Lahore, who regard Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a *mujadid* (reformer). For a summary of Ahmadiyah beliefs, see, Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "Ahmadiyya," *Encyclopedia of Islam*.

<sup>14</sup>See Hamka, *Ayahku* (Jakarta: Widjaya, 1958), 109-113. See also Federspiel, *Persatuan Islam*, 101.



however suggest that the Ahmadiyah first entered the country in 1924 when Maulana Ahmad and Mirza Wali Ahmad Baig, missionaries from South Asia, arrived in Yogyakarta. These missionaries came to Indonesia because they had been informed that Christian missionary activities in the country were meeting with success, particularly in Java. Thus they were at first welcomed by the Muhammadiyah, and began to introduce the ideology of the Ahmadiyah Lahore. Soon, Muhammadiyah members reacted, few with sympathy. The headquarters of the Muhammadiyah itself, in fact, rejected the ideology of the Ahmadiyah as contrary to Islam.<sup>15</sup>

The JIB, reputed to be an open-minded Muslim intellectual movement, was inevitably seen by the Ahmadiyah as fertile ground in which to spread its ideology and possibly even recruit converts. Thus, initial contacts with the organization were made by Mirza Wali Ahmad Baig, showing similar intentions as those made with the Muhammadiyah. Fortunately for Baig, his intentions were viewed as congruent with the needs of modernist teachers in the JIB. Thus, Baig was soon accepted as a teacher in the Malang and Solo branches.

From then on, the JIB was looked upon by many with suspicion, being thought of having been influenced by Mirza Wali Ahmad Baig. Consequently, the JIB was often accused of being a cadre of the Ahmadiyah. This view was strengthened when Muhammad Kusban, one of the JIB's leading personalities, declared himself a follower

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<sup>15</sup>It is reported that Joyo Sugito and Muhammad Husni were two personalities who became the proponents of the Ahmadiyah, recruited from the Muhammadiyah. See, Departemen Agama RI, "Potensi Organisasi Keagamaan I (Ahmadiyah Lahore)," *Research Report* (1984/1985): 6.

of Joyosugito and Muhammad Husni; individuals expelled from the Muhammadiyah who had formed their own organization, the Gerakan Ahmadiyah Indonesia Centrum Lahore (GAI or Ahmadiyah Movement in Indonesia) in 1928.<sup>16</sup>

Despite the accusation, this view of the JIB is not necessarily accurate. Many prominent members of the JIB were active in adult organizations other than the Ahmadiyah. Kasman, Wiwoho and Natsir, for example, were active members of, successively, the Muhammadiyah, Sarekat Islam and Persis. Although it is true that at the time the JIB was not attacking the Ahmadiyah Lahore, and its headquarters did not, unlike the Muhammadiyah, declare itself anti-Ahmadiyah, a special session was held in January 1929, in which those attending discussed its identification with the Ahmadiyah. The meeting agreed that the JIB would remain consistent to its ideal; i.e. that of being an organization bound to develop critical studies of Islam. Hence, the JIB did not confront the Ahmadiyah Lahore as an organization, rather they approached it in a critical manner by examining the relationship of Ahmadiyah doctrines to those of historical Islam. Those attending, who were representatives of all branches of the JIB, trusted that headquarters

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<sup>16</sup>For the involvement of Muhammad Kusban and the foundation of the organization see, "Potensi Organisasi Keagamaan", 7. According to this report by 1937 this organization was only able to recruit 466 members, a move that can be viewed as less than successful. This report actually mentions that Samsurizal was also a sympathizer of the organization. However, the statement is made without sufficient data. In fact, from 1930 onward, his activities revolved about the Barisan Penyedar PSI which kept him in touch with Agus Salim.

would handle the issues properly and even reelected Kasman as chairman for the next period.<sup>17</sup>

Despite their tolerance toward the Ahmadiyah Lahore (which still exists, at least in Yogyakarta), the JIB treated the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan as an internal attack on Islam. Its attitude toward this Ahmadiyah sect was not, in fact, very different from that of other modernist organizations, particularly Persis. Polemics inevitably occurred when the article about the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan first appeared in *Het Licht*. The JIB's most famous polemic against the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan appeared in response to Ahmad Sarida's "De Wereldleraar" (The Teacher or the Master of the World) published upon his return from Punjab.<sup>18</sup> In his article, Sarida attempted to prove that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet and the true messiah. By quoting statements about messianism from various holy books, including those of Christianity, Buddhism and many other traditions, including his interpretation of certain Qur'ānic verses, Sarida argued that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was the one who had long been awaited by many people. Thus, Sarida wanted the people to believe that Mirza was the true prophet.

This article was severely attacked by a JIB member, A. Kamil, who immediately produced an article entitled, "Stop!!! Hendak Kemana Lagi?" (Stop!!! Should You Go Anywhere Else?).<sup>19</sup> The article, which appeared in the next issue of the *Het Licht*, was

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<sup>17</sup>See *Het Licht* 11-12 (January-February 1929): 217-218. The editor of the *Het Licht*, however, attached a footnote proposing the members of the JIB remain consistent with a statute which requiring that the member should give critical study to any issue.

<sup>18</sup>See Ahmad Sarida, "De Wereldleraar," *Het Licht* 3-4 (May-June 1928): 34-40.

<sup>19</sup>See *Het Licht* 5-7 (July-September 1928): 113.

primarily intended to prevent Muslims from believing Sarida's claims about the prophecy of Ghulam Ahmad. For example, Kamil quoted a Qur'ānic verse stating, "God had created for each apostle opponents, the Satans among men and jinns, who inspire one another with deceitful talks, therefore God commands not to pay attention to them and to what they fabricate."<sup>20</sup> As well, he quotes a verse which warns Muslims to be wary of information gained from the *fasiq* (hypocrite), and to investigate this information thoroughly so that people are not made to suffer by ignorance of it.<sup>21</sup>

According to Kamil, people with special messages like Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, appear in many religions, including Christianity and Judaism. His attitude toward the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan, was furthermore supported with historical evidence in the appearance of the Babi movement,<sup>22</sup> which also claimed to be a Muslim reformist movement. Sunni Islam had nevertheless condemned the Babi movement for having deviated from Islam. In addition, Kamil compared Mirza Ghulam Ahmad with those who had claimed to be the *Mahdi* (the promised messiah). He mentions, for example, Muhammad Ahmad of Sudan, who killed hundred of people and enemy soldiers to assert his claim.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Al-Qur'ān, *sūrah al-An'ām*: 112.

<sup>21</sup> Al-Qur'ān, *sūrah al-Hujurat*: 6.

<sup>22</sup> The citation in this article shows the wide reading of the author which include Western sources.

<sup>23</sup> *Het Licht* 5-7 (July-September 1928): 117.

The counter arguments employed by Kamil to deny the prophecy of the Ghulam Ahmad were drawn from the doctrines and claims of the Ahmadiyah itself. Kamil for instance reminds his readers that in 1912, the followers of Ghulam Ahmad split into two factions: the Ahmadiyah Lahore, which held the belief that “Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, [was] the Promised Messiah and Mahdi and the founder of the Ahmadiyah movement in Islam”; and the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan, which held that “Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, [was] the Promised Messiah and Mahdi; the Holy Reformer of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century of the Muslim Era, the Inspired Interpreter of the Revealed Law, the Christ of the day, the Krishna of the time, the Buddha of the age, addressed by Allah as ‘Prophet – Ahmad’ and the founder of the Ahmadiyah movement.”<sup>24</sup> This citation was obviously quoted by Kamil to show that even within the Ahmadiyah movement itself, two renditions of the status of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad existed with supporters of each view bitterly condemning those holding an opposite idea.

Instead of discussing the position of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad from a Sunni Muslim point of view, Kamil elaborated the principal beliefs of the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan with regard to the *arkān al-imān* (the six beliefs in Islam) and the *arkān al-Islām* (the five pillars of Islam) as mentioned in the hadīth. Kamil suggested that there were additional concepts held by the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan which lay outside Muslim beliefs and the pillars of Islam. These included; “the belief in Ahmad as the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, and the latest expounder of God’s Revelation, and [to] follow the instruction of

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<sup>24</sup>This citation was quoted by Kamil from the author of an article from a quarterly magazine of the Ahmadiyah movement in USA, *The Moslem Sunrise* 3 (January 1922).

the head of the movement in religious and secular questions of the day.”<sup>25</sup> This prompted Kamil to ask the rhetorical question: Would not Muslims (outside the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan) be considered *kafirs* (unbelievers) if they denied the additions created by the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan? As such, would there not be more internal conflict among Muslims as a result of these additions?<sup>26</sup> Here again Kamil focused on the unity of the Muslim ummah, a primary concern of JIB writers.

Kamil accused Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of being naïve. In spite of the fact that the latter claimed to be a prophet, he, according to Kamil, repeatedly stated in his books that “English imperialism is one of ‘the governments of Allah’ (a government that is not contradictory to the teachings of God) and therefore anyone who tries to destroy it commits a big sin.”<sup>27</sup> Thus, judging from the above statement, according to Kamil, the appearance of the Ahmadiyah had to be viewed in relation to the British government policy of promoting discord among Muslims. In other word, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is accused by Kamil of being the henchman of the British government. His charge was

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<sup>25</sup>The principal beliefs of the Ahmadiyah, as mentioned in *The Moslem Sunrise*, are:

(1). Belief -Adore but one God, believe in the Angels of God, honor and respect the Prophets and sacred books of all religions, accept Muhammad as the Master Prophet and Holy Qur'an as the final Book of God, Ahmad as the Promised Messiah, Mahdi and the latest expounder of the Revelation from God, Holy reformer, teacher and the Prophet of the day.

(2). Practice -Say five prayers daily, keep the month of fast, give charity in alms to the needy. Perform your pilgrimage to Mecca Temple of God, and follow the instructions of the Head of the Movement in Religious and Secular questions of the day. See *Het Licht* 5-7 (July-September 1928): 118.

<sup>26</sup>*Het Licht*, 5-7 (July-September 1928): 119.

<sup>27</sup>Unfortunately Kamil does not mention the citation of the statement. See *Het Licht*, 5-7 (July-September 1928): 119.

based on the citations of orientalists such as Houtsma and Schade Leiden, who, in the *Encyclopedie Islam*, wrote that “the Ahmadiyah .....Under all circumstances sincere obedience must be given to the British government.” This statement was, in fact, also confirmed by Mirza Wali Ahmad Baig in answer to similar questions from Dr. Sutomo.<sup>28</sup>

Thus, in general Kamil wanted to demonstrate to Indonesian readers that Ghulam Ahmad cooperated with English imperialism, which was in Kamil’s mind contradictory to the interests of the native people of India. Therefore, in his opinion, Ghulam Ahmad assisted the mission of the English imperialist i.e., to fight against Muslims in South Asia. Insisting that his opinion was true, Kamil recommended to his readers that they consult Ravenstijn’s “De Oostersche Kwestie” (The Oriental Question). Kamil’s overall approach, in addition to his contentions regarding the beliefs of the Ahmadiyah, reflected his opposition against any support for imperialism. This was taken to draw empathy of the Indonesian readers—who were under the control of Dutch imperialism—so that they could relatively easily accept his argument.

Another response to the Ahmadiyah was Hasim’s article entitled “Profeet Ahmad van Qadian” (The Prophet Ahmad of Qadian).<sup>29</sup> Hasim argued in it that there were, like Ahmad Qadiani, many aspirants to the position of the Prophet Muhammad as *weereldleraar* (the Master of the world). The examples he cites include Krishnamurti, a candidate thrust forward by the Theosophical Society, and three “prophets” who appeared

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<sup>28</sup>*Het Licht*, 5-7 (July-September 1928): 120.

<sup>29</sup>This article was published in the next edition after the Saridas and Kamils articles were published in the *Het Licht* 8 (October 1928): 178.

in the Middle East during the era of the Khulafā al-Rāshidīn. Hasim states that those who proclaimed themselves as prophets were finally destroyed by society at large.<sup>30</sup>

Instead of assessing the prophecy of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad from historical and sociological points of view, as Kamil had done, Hasim's refutation relied on Islamic theology. Hasim elucidated the meaning of the Arabic word *nabi* (prophet), to derive the definition of prophethood according to "Islam". In answer to the question of Ghulam Ahmad's prophethood, he cited a few hadīths, without elaboration, assuming that the meanings of the hadīths were clear enough to stand alone. The hadīths quoted include, Tirmidhi's "*al-ladhī laysa ba'diy nabīy* (there will be no prophet after me [Muhammad]), and Ibn Mājah's *wa anā akhirul anbiyā wa antum akhiru al-umam* (And I am the last prophet and you are the last community). As well, the hadith from Bukhari and Muslim as reported by Abū Hurayra, saying, *wa annahu lā nabiyya ba'diy* (Indeed no other prophet after myself). The message of these hadiths is emphasized with a Qur'ānic verse: "Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but a messenger of God, and the seal of the prophets..."<sup>31</sup>

As has been noted, the JIB was not alone in such responses. The Muhammadiyah and Persis held similar attitudes. Hence, the Ahmadiyah was under attack from most Muslim organizations at that time. Considering the article written by Sarida as possibly endangering the position of his organization, Mirza Wali Ahmad Baig, a missionary of

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<sup>30</sup>See, *Het Licht* 8 (October 1928): 178.

<sup>31</sup>Al-Qur'ān, *sūrat al-Ahzāb*: 40.



the Ahmadiyah Lahore, also felt it necessary to become involved in the polemic. For example, in the edition of *Het Licht* immediately following the article by Sarida Qadiani, an article by Baig about the Ahmadiyah Lahore, entitled “De Ahmadiyah Beweging” (The Ahmadiyah Movement), appeared in July 1928.<sup>32</sup> It is necessary to comment on this response article, since, besides the fact that the article was published in *Het Licht*, it was also written to show Indonesian Muslims, particularly JIB members that this organization was against the Ahmadiyah Qadiani. Thus, it may be said to have influenced the inclination of the JIB toward the Ahmadiyah Lahore.

Baig’s article begins by announcing outright that the Ahmadiyah Lahore is a movement within Islam; and that the founder of the organization, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, is “the Mujaddid” (the reformer) of the 14<sup>th</sup> century Hijra.<sup>33</sup> It adds that the Ahmadiyah movement is based on the profession of faith, *lā ilāha illā al-Allāh Muhammadan rasūl al-Allāh* (there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His last messenger). Accordingly, the author insists that the movement is not outside Islam. In fact, the movement’s aim is to liberate people from slavery. Hence, it is said to be based on the principle of “coming back to the Qur’an, coming back to the Prophet and his disciples.”<sup>34</sup> At the same time the author argues that Islam does not recognize priesthood. All Muslims, he insists, are obliged to try to end the rise of priesthood within Islam as found in other religions. The

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<sup>32</sup>Ahmad Sarida, “De Ahmadiyya Beweging,” *Het Licht* 5-7 (July-September 1928): 103.

<sup>33</sup>The author was asserting that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was the reformer, and it’s written in bold. See Sarida, “Ahmadiyya Beweging,” *Het Licht* 5-7 (July-September 1928): 103.

<sup>34</sup>See Sarida, “De Ahmadiyya Beweging,” *Het Licht* 5-7 (July-September 1928): 105.

author comments that Muslims often treat their *kyais* and *ulama* with adoration and as objects of worship.

The article also includes polemical attacks on Christianity, in keeping with Baig's original intent in coming to Indonesia. Moreover, far from attacking democracy, he declares it to be one of the basic pillars of the Ahmadiyah Lahore. Both these stands seem to be designed to appeal to the students to whom Mirza Wali Ahmad Baig had access during his stay in Indonesia.

Finally and most importantly, the author states that the Ahmadiyah movement believes that every sect which recognizes *lā ilāha illā al-Allāh* is still considered Muslim, whether they be Wahabbi, Shi'ite or Sunni. This statement also suggest that the author intended Indonesian readers to consider the Ahmadiyah Lahore as being independent of the Qadiyan branch.<sup>35</sup>

The most moderate response to the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan was Djohan's<sup>36</sup> "Bagaimana Pendirian Kita Terhadap pada Pergerakan Achmadia Qadian" (What Our Position is Against the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan).<sup>37</sup> Interestingly, unlike the aforementioned JIB writers, who severely criticized the position of the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan, Djohan urged readers to remain outside the quarrel, claiming that it could diminish the unity of

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<sup>35</sup>Indeed, until now the only acceptable Ahmadiyah group in the country is the Ahmadiyah Lahore; centered in Yogyakarta. The Ahmadiyah Qadiyan barely show themselves as a living legal organization and, therefore, they remain an underground movement.

<sup>36</sup>Djohan, the writer of the article, was probably Djohan Mahmud Tjay, the JIB representative in the famous Youth Congress II. However, little was known about the personality of these two figures.

<sup>37</sup>See *Het Licht* 2-3 (April-May 1929): 34.

the ummah. He compared the current situation in the Muslim world with the classical era of Islam. Thus, he emphasized that the glory and prosperity gained under the four caliphs was intimately related to the fact that the Muslims of that time were united. Unfortunately, in the present day Muslims suffered from disunity.

Djohan draws attention to the situation that existed in South Asia during Ghulam Ahmad's life time, implying that poverty prompted his people there to expect on a daily basis the coming of a Master of the world who would free them from their situation. Ghulam Ahmad, who loved his religion and the people of that country, believed he was answering their hopes by claiming to be the Krishna of the day, the Buddha, the *mujaddid* and the *Mahdi*.<sup>38</sup> As a result, argues Djohan, Islam in that society was awakened, even, as it was awakening throughout the Muslim world. From this point of view, the author argues that Ghulam Ahmad deserved much appreciation for his effort to reform Islam and South Asian Muslim society.<sup>39</sup>

In the final analysis, therefore, the author concludes that from his vantage point, the account of the prophethood of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad need not become a source of disunity for Muslims. Thus, while he reminds the member who harshly criticized the Ahmadiyah, he insisted that, as a Muslim organization, the JIB should accept the right to

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<sup>38</sup>The author of the article was apparently stating that his argument was purely based on assumption, probably based on very general knowledge of the situation in South Asia. He also mentioned that only Mirza Ghulam Ahmad himself could judge the veracity of his assumption. It is testament to his courage that the author wrote such an assumption while himself disagreeing with the belief of the coming of Messiah. He inserted in his argument, which he based on a Qur'ānic verse, that Muslims should not expect the coming of a Messiah because the destiny of Muslims must rely on themselves. See *Het Licht* 2-3 (April-May 1929): 35-36.

<sup>39</sup>*Het Licht* 2-3 (April-May 1929): 36.

issue a *fatwa* regarding any problems to other Muslims, but that it could not force the other to follow that *fatwa*.<sup>40</sup>

A final response to the Ahmadiyah is represented by Soemitro's article "Moehammad, de Laatste Profeet" (Muhammad the Last Prophet), which appeared in April 1930.<sup>41</sup> This article was punctuated with Qur'anic verses concerning the prophethood of Muhammad, reflecting Sunni belief. It also held the distinction of possibly being the last word in the polemics over Sarida's article on the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan, which had become the prime topic of debate in *Het Licht* during the period of 1928-1930. However, based on the above responses to Ahmad Sarida's article, we may conclude that the JIB remained divided on the issues, even though it did on the whole rejected the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan's beliefs. While it is true that in comparison to its response to Christian missionary activities, the JIB's reaction to the Ahmadiyah Qadiyan was more pronounced in tone, it has to be admitted that the JIB's attitude towards the Ahmadiyah Lahore is very difficult to judge. On one hand, the JIB can be seen as having displayed great tolerance towards the beliefs of the Ahmadiyah Lahore, as well as to the coming of its missionary. Alternatively, the JIB generally remained unreconciled to the Ahmadiyah's position on English imperialism, as may be seen in Kamils' response to Saridas' article.

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<sup>40</sup>The most probable meaning by the word *fatwa* in the article is "advise" in terms of the duty of a Muslim toward another Muslim. Although the word *fatwa* in *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) meant to a certain law on a certain case. Very often in the Malay language this word connotes advise from the well-informed to the ignorant. *Het Licht* 2-3 (April-May 1929): 37.

<sup>41</sup>See *Het Licht* 2-3 (April-May 1930): 33-38.

## B. The JIB and Women's Issues

As indicated in the previous chapter, since its inception the JIB regularly encouraged Muslim women to be active in educating themselves and in the cause of Islam. An example of their resolve was the establishment of JIBDA (the JIB Ladies Division), which was involved in family matters, courses on Islam, discussions on women issues, as well as activities designed to enable women to express their talents and, in turn, develop confidence. In addition, *Het Licht* also instituted the "Dames Rubriek" (a women's column) in recognition of the fact that Muslim women deserved special attention.

As in many parts of the world, women in Indonesia at that time did not possess social equality vis-a-vis men. It is true that 25 years before the founding of the JIB, Kartini (1879-1904)<sup>42</sup> had voiced the importance of women's emancipation, especially in terms of opportunities in education. Until then, however, women had existed in condition with many disadvantages. For instance, the status of women in most Javanese families was largely defined by the term *konco wingking* (a partner for taking care of household matters). The term implied that women were not to have any say over their own interests in the family. The Sundanese also harbored similar conceptions. Arranged marriages

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<sup>42</sup>As a young female of aristocratic lineage, Kartini was always kept in a tradition where teenagers were secluded until arranged marriage was set up by the parents. She thought that one factor which can liberate women from such a situation was education. Therefore, as a daughter of a regent of Jepara, she stood up to challenge the traditional system of her country and the Dutch attitude toward policy of education. In her own time she wrote to her friends in the Netherlands that she already belonged to era of her friends in the West, who were now struggling for the attainment of progress. See R.A. Kartini, *Habis Gelap Terbitlah Terang*, trans. Armijn Pane (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, n.d.), 37. Now she is regarded as a national hero for independent women.

were still practiced by the society at large, which allowed the father arbitrarily to make decisions in this vital area for his children. This situation is confirmed by Achmad Djayadiningrat, Regent of Serang in early 1900s and the member of Inquiry Commission on Welfare, in his memoirs as cited by Cora Vreede De Stuers. He states that child marriages were also practiced to prevent a girl from choosing according to the dictates of her heart rather than her reason. When the children are very young, there is no question of feelings of love. At later age, everything becomes more difficult, and it could happen that the girl might choose someone against the wish of her parents.<sup>43</sup> Thus, at that time women did not have much choice in whom or when they married. Marriage arrangements were, in fact, very often a man's (father's or grand father's) decision. As a result, J. Prins noted, between 1929 and 1931 almost 60 percent of all Islamic marriages in Indonesia were ended with deliberate dissolution at the pleasure of the husband.<sup>44</sup> This occurred because women were not educated and were married in a very young age. As well, polygamy and concubinage remained common practice, especially among the *priyayis*. Such practices persisted despite contact with the Dutch for approximately 300 years. Thus, according to Abdullah, Kartini's voice was an anomaly, and was not representative

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<sup>43</sup> Cora Vreede de Stuers, *The Indonesian Woman: Struggles and Achievements* (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1960):52

<sup>44</sup> J. Prins, "Welt des Islams" as cited in Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam Under the Japanese Occupation 1942-1945* (The Hague: W. van Hoeve, 1958): 226.

of the cultural milieu of the time.<sup>45</sup> It would appear that Kartini's confinement within the wall of the *keraton* prevented her ideas from becoming accepted by the general population.

In fact, Kartinis' ideas would not prevail among the educated until Western feminism penetrated the country.<sup>46</sup> There was however, a strong anti-polygamy sentiment among the non-Islamic parties such as the Budi Utomo, the PNI, the PKI and the Christian Party, and polygamy was often cited as a reason why the Islamic parties were not really modern, since they refused to condemn the institution. Such non-Muslim parties claimed that, besides the humiliating effect of polygamy on women, Islam (the *Shari'ah*) had made divorce easy by placing it fully in the hands of men who could divorce their wives arbitrarily.<sup>47</sup> In other words, they claimed that Islam was too unprogressive to address the needs of modern times. As a counter-point to Islam, when the first congress of Perikatan Perempuan Indonesia (PPI- the Indonesian Women Federation) was held in 1928, the Wanita Katolik (the Catholic Women) claimed that Catholic marriage laws were perfect, as this law pointed out that marriage could only be

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<sup>45</sup>Taufik Abdullah, *Nationalism and Social Structure: Problems in Indonesian Historiography*, paper presented as part of The 8th Conference International association of Historians of Asia, Kuala Lumpur, 1980, 7.

<sup>46</sup>Zaenu'ddin notes that the letters of Kartini were available in the Indies in 1921 only to those who read Dutch. Even the high price of f. 2,50, suggested that it was not designed for the mass market. Alisa G. Thomson Zaenud'ddin, "'What Should a Girl Become?': Further Reflections on the Letters of R.A. Kartini," in *Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Indonesia, Essays in Honor of Professor J.D. Legge*, eds. David P. Chandler and M.C. Ricklefs (Victoria: Center of Southeast Asian Studies Monash University, 1986), 253.

<sup>47</sup>See Tedjaningsih Jaylani, "Islamic Marriage Law in Indonesia," (M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1959), 79.

revoked by death, while an engagement was made necessary to facilitate the couple getting to know each other well. This, they argued, meant that Catholicism endowed women and mothers with a higher status than Islam did.<sup>48</sup>

Considering the manner in which non-Islamic parties characterized the status of women in Islam, i.e. that a woman in Islam had a lower status than a man, and that women were not given the right to determine their own will, it is not surprising that there should be a Muslim reaction against such views. The JIB's contribution often took the form of direct responses to the views of non-Muslims in such areas as marriage, divorce and the status of Muslim women. Some points were raised in discussions held among the members of the JIB itself. As we have already noticed, discussions of love, marriage and sexuality were very popular among the members of the JIB, as evidenced by its publications.

From its response to women's issues, we may detect four motivating factors. First of all, the JIB considered the attack on the Islamic marriage laws as influence of Western culture [sometime mixed with Christianity] and its views of Islam. Therefore, the reactions were very often mixed with condemnation of the Western world and also reaction to the negative impacts of modernization. It is true, therefore, that there was much negative reaction to free social association between the sexes and all "the excesses" in which Westerners were said to take part. The JIB assumed that marriage in Western

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<sup>48</sup>See J. Th. Petrus Blumberger, *De Nationalistische Beweging in Nederlandsch-Indie* (Haarlem: H.D. Tjeenk Willink & Zoon N/V, 1931), 171.



society was not really taken seriously and that free sexual activity was widely countenanced. An article published in 1931, for example, stated:

The Western way of life, especially as regards intercourse between males and females, signifies in almost every respect a moral degeneration for our nation. At festive occasions and seaside resorts immorality is rampant. What goes on behind the scenes sometimes is beyond description. The *nikah* (Islamic marriage) abhors such an unchecked and extravagant life outside the home, since this may have disastrous consequences on the lives of married people.<sup>49</sup>

A similar reaction is found in a speech by Maradja Sayuti Loebis, reported in the *Het Licht*, where he stated that the single-marriage argument adopted in Western society does not lead to purity and harmony in human relationship. Loebis claimed that in New York, in 1929, free sex (*vrije omgang*) had been adopted by society at large as a direct effect of the weakness of Western marriage laws. Further evidence of his thesis included a report from an American newspaper, which claimed that there were 225,000 fatherless babies born, and 1,500,000 abortions prompted in that year. As well, approximately 5,000,000 cases of extramarital sex occurred every day in 32,000 bordellos. No wonder, exclaims Loebis, that the Church Congress in London decided in 1929 that divorce had to be allowed in Christian society. Loebis perceived this decision as not merely a vindication, but a good reason why Islamic laws concerning the status of women in Western society would be beneficial.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>This comment is contained in an anonymous article entitled "Het echtscheidingskwaad, de hoedjan thalaq," *Het Licht* 6 (August 1931): 31.

<sup>50</sup>See "Openbare Vergadering Oemat Islam di Pimpin oleh JIB Bandung, November 2, 1930," *Het Licht* 9 (November, 1930): 252-253. Unfortunately, Loebis did not compare these facts with reality of rest the Islamic world.

Loebis's argument seems to have been logical and even factual at that time. However, he was not careful enough in analyzing the case, and he oversimplified his argument. Even if the facts were true, the cause of the situation in New York was not necessarily the result of the marriage law in effect at that time. New York was a huge metropolis undergoing rapid development at that time, and social disruption had an effect on the inhabitants of the city. Thus, Loebis arguments constitute faulty generalization on the part of the Western culture. This is a typical response among the supporters of one culture when they address shortcomings in a matter society whether in the Western or Eastern tradition. But, considering similar attacks made by non-Muslims about Islam at the time, his response is understandable.

Secondly, the JIB also responded by rejecting any suggestion that Islam was to blame for the low status of women and the epidemic of divorce cases in the country, and instead pointed the finger at women themselves. For example, an article by Dj. M.S.,<sup>51</sup> entitled "Seruan pada Kaoem Isteri" (A Call to Women) discussed the issue of polygamy, reflecting the liberal view of the author. According the author, Islam was not to blame for this practice. Although polygamy is not prohibited by Islam the conditions imposed by the Qur'ān could hardly be fulfilled by everybody. Rather, the author insisted that one factor contributing to the "epidemic" of polygamy in the country was that women did not exercise their right to refuse marriage proposals, even from men who were already married. As well, he criticized many young educated women, who at that time still

accepted proposals from married men, although he does admit that very often these proposals were only accepted after the men divorced their first wives. These practices, the author suggests, besides adding to the number of divorce cases, often resulted in misery on the part of the widows.<sup>52</sup>

As the article squarely placed the blame on women, it did not go unanswered. Rasiah, a JIBDA activist of the Makassar branch, considered it as one-sided and, therefore, unfair. In reply she wrote "Menoedjoe ke Arah Kebenaran"<sup>53</sup> (Toward the Truth), which, according to the writer, was intended to fill the omissions rather than deny the former article. While she agreed with many of the theses in the article, Rasiah added that men also easily fell for young women, thinking nothing of their former wives in the selfish pursuit of their own desires. This attitude, she added, was also un-Islamic as it contradicted the hadīth stating "do marry a woman, but don't you divorce. Because divorce shakes the 'arsh."<sup>54</sup> Thus, these two articles, although representing polemic and differences in the view of male and female members of the JIB, appeared to be an attempt to look at the reality in society as the causal factor in the growing number of divorce cases and the low status of women in the society. The reality in fact, as indicated by Rasiah in her speech in another occasion, was the limited chance of education for women

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<sup>51</sup>It must be stated that many articles had been produced by Dj. M. S. However, it is not easy to ascertain the personality of Dj. M.S. since he always used this pseudonym. However, the article represents dialectic process in the JIB concerning the women issues.

<sup>52</sup>*Het Licht* 3-4 (May-June 1928): 61-62.

<sup>53</sup>*Het Licht* 9-10 (November-December 1928): 184-185.

<sup>54</sup>*Het Licht* 9-10 (November-December 1928): 185.

in the country. Therefore, she suggested that if Indonesia wants to have a strong generation it should give a proper education to women, and to do that, she added, women should “escape from the their handcuff” and involve themselves more fully in correcting the situation.<sup>55</sup>

Thirdly, the JIB perceived the opinions of the non-Islamic parties as being attacks against Islamic belief. Hence, these responses were largely theological in nature and were possibly designed to clarify the doctrinal stipulations on the subject. For example, in response to Putri Soewarni -- a representative of a nationalist party, who stated that religion placed women below men -- Natsir asserted that Islam obliged society to provide equal access to education, as stipulated in hadīth. In response to another nationalist opinion, that Islam neglected the rights of women in divorce, Natsir argued that Islam, in fact, gave women the right to propose *talaq* (divorce) by bringing two witnesses to a judge. The judge then decided whether separation or reconciliation was necessary based on the evidence presented.<sup>56</sup> In other words, in representing the “Islamic” point of view, Natsir maintained that a woman had the right to ask for divorce when her own safety and well-being were endangered by marriage.

Along the same lines as Natsir’s article, Billal Zaini’s contribution, entitled “De Islam en de Vrouwen” (Islam and Women), appeared in the *Het Licht* of 1928, and

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<sup>55</sup> *Het Licht* 2-3 (April-May, 1929): 60.

<sup>56</sup> Both Natsir and Putri Soewarni made their speeches at the same occasion at an “openbare vergadering kaum perempuan Bandung” in 1930, as reported in *Het Licht* 10 (December 1930): 254.

focused on the status of women in terms of polygamy, divorce, family relations and inheritance from a purely Islamic theological point of view.<sup>57</sup> Although the content of the article was informative, the narrative nature of the writing prevented it from discussing in any depth Islamic teachings concerning these matters.

Fourth and finally, the JIB's response appeared in the form of an apologetic view of Islam as a whole. One example was an article entitled "Laki Istri" (Husband and Wife), by M.A. Mahfoed. Here the writer uses a comparative method in discussing the issues and linked the case to purification, assuming it to be a universal value existing in the teachings of any religion. By elaborating on the teachings regarding purification in several religions, he argues that every religion taught purification, but that only Islam does so without transgressing the nature of human beings. He describes his understanding of the teaching of purification in Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity. He mentions, for example, that in order to gain purification, Hinduism and Buddhism teach their followers to meditate and stay away from public life including relations with women. Women in these religions are often treated as other worldly figures that should be avoided by men seeking purification. In Catholicism nuns and priests are not allowed to marry in order to completely surrender to God. All these attitudes, he insists, contradict the nature of human beings. Thus, he concludes that unlike other religions which insist that men need

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<sup>57</sup>See Billal Zaini, "De Islam en de Vrouwen," *Het Licht* 5-7 (July-September 1928): 124-125.

to avoid women in order to gain purification, Islam offers marriage as a means of purification for men and women.<sup>58</sup>

Notwithstanding the fact that the JIB responded strongly to polemics against Islam, in the domain of social activism and at a practical level, the JIB made an effort to reduce the frequency of divorce cases in the country. In order to accomplish this, the organization invited other youth organizations to discuss the possibility of all such groups jointly contributing to this project.<sup>59</sup> At this meeting, Mahfoed informed the audience of the high number of divorce cases among Muslim families reported in the statistics conducted by the government. Nonetheless, Mahfoed criticized these government statistics for ignoring the root causes of the problems in ignorance of which it became a simple matter to claim that Islam was at fault. Seeking to address this deficiency, Mahfoed offered four possible contributing factors to divorce and proposed four possible means by which to overcome the problem. First, many Indonesian Muslims were unfamiliar with Islamic Law, particularly relating to marriage and divorce. Thus Mahfoed proposed that the JIB step up their program of *tabligh* (preaching). Secondly, he argued that divorce was most often caused by economic factors. For example, most *penghulus* (religious officials) were paid very low salaries, causing them to avoid reconciling disputing parties, instead allowing them to divorce in order to collect fees for such cases. Mahfoed proposed that the problem might be overcome by informing the government of

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<sup>58</sup> See, Mahfoed, "Laki Istri," *Het Licht* 1 (March 1930): 13-15.

<sup>59</sup> See, The speech of M.A. Mahfoed, "Ichtiar Mengoerangkan Pertjeraan," *Het Licht* 4-5 (June-July, 1930): 77-82.

the problem. Thirdly, the divorce cases in question also required political analysis. Thus, he criticized government interference in the religious life of the people by punishing Muslims who did not marry before the *penghulu* (the official Islamic court), while allowing other ethnic groups such as the Chinese and Europeans to couple unofficially. Mahfoed was referring in this instance to s to the concubinage practices of the Chinese, the priyayi and Dutch officials with Indonesian women.<sup>60</sup>

The seriousness of the issue came to crisis in 1937, when Dutch government officials used anti-polygamy feelings to gain support for the introduction of a new marriage ordinance enshrining monogamy.<sup>61</sup> Although for different reasons, the government and the non-Islamic parties were in agreement on this point. In terms of the government, it has been argued that the possibility of the marriage ordinance was being accepted by the People's council, in a prevailing anti-polygamy climate, represented a political victory. For the non-Islamic parties, marriage ordinance based on monogamy represented success in the elevation of the status of women and the development of nationalist ideology not based on Islam.<sup>62</sup> With so much at stake, Muslim groups, such as

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<sup>60</sup> M.A. Mahfoed, "Ichtiar Mengoerangkan Pertjeraan," 81-82.

<sup>61</sup> According to G.F. Pijper, the draft of monogamous ordinance was also welcomed by the leftist women's group from Priangan (West Java). The draft itself was originally a proposal from one of the women's parties in Bandung. See G.F. Pijper, "De Strijd om de Monogame," *Koloniale Studien* 26 (1937): 480.

<sup>62</sup> For more complete discussion on the marriage law in Indonesia, see Tedjaningsih Jaylani, "Islamic Marriage Law in Indonesia," (M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1959).

the Muhammadiyah, Nahdhatul Ulama and the Persis were quick to react.<sup>63</sup> The JIB also protested strongly, not because they favored polygamy, rather because they viewed the bill as a Christian attack on an Islamic doctrine, which does permit polygamy in certain cases.<sup>64</sup> Among the JIB activists to address these question was Jusuf Wibisono, who took full advantage of European studies on prostitution to infer the decline of Western morality and propose the necessity of the traditional, legal outlet of polygamy.<sup>65</sup> Despite Wibisono's argument, the JIB's overall defense of polygamy should be viewed more as a defense of Islam than a defense of a tradition they considered antiquated and old-fashioned.

### C. The JIB's Response to Nationalism

As explained in chapter one, by the time the JIB was founded, "provincialism" most closely symbolized the aspirations of existing youth organizations and was therefore

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<sup>63</sup>The reaction from the Muslim parties against the draft of the marriage ordinance started when the government carefully and wisely gave notice to religious, social and political organizations of its intention to issue the new monogamous marriage ordinance. The purpose of this notice was to provoke judgement before the draft ordinance was presented as a bill to the People's Council. The Muslim community was alarmed by the far-reaching interference of the government in matters of marriage law. The Association of Religious Chiefs (Penghulu Association) and its staff held a conference. Other Muslim organizations in Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes, and the Moluccas opposed the ordinance. Even from Cairo and Mecca, statements condemning the marriage ordinance were sent to support the Indonesian Muslims. See, Tedjaningsih Jaylani, "Islamic Marriage Law," 80-84. Also G.F. Pijper, "De Strijd om de Monogame," 447; 484-485.

<sup>64</sup>Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam*, 138

<sup>65</sup>His writing was finally published in 1937, and after the Indonesian Parliament had finally accepted a similar arrangement on the marriage regulation in 1974, his book was reprinted



adopted as the basic tenet of these organizations and their identity. Yet, by late 1925, when many students had returned from the Netherlands, a secular nationalist ideology began to spread among the youth, especially those in study clubs where Sukarno and Sutomo had introduced the subject on the basis of their readings,<sup>66</sup> and was adopted as the ideology of these organizations. As a consequence, those provincial-and regional-oriented organizations eventually merged to found organizations that were based on nationalism. This group perceived nationalism as the most suitable ideology to unite people regardless of their ethnic, social and economic status they had, bound by a common history and desire to win freedom from colonialism. Indeed, the Partai Nasional Indonesia appeared to be the most influential organization under the banner of Indonesian nationalism after the crushing of the communist rebellion in 1926 until about 1930.

In defending their ideology, the secular nationalist group very often used arguments that were sometimes seen by the Muslim bloc as attacks against Islamic beliefs. Sukarno, for example, while arguing that Islam, Marxism and nationalism should be united in the cause of independence, he implied that Marxism and Islam should be subordinated to the nationalism. Sutomo stated that Islam detracted from proper a nationalistic sentiment.<sup>67</sup> Nationalists also claimed that the Hajj was a political and economic threat to Indonesia as it "wasted" the pilgrimage locally earned money abroad

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in 1980. Jusuf Wibisono, *Monogamy atau Polygami: Masalah Sepanjang Masa* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1980).

<sup>66</sup> See, Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1300* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1981), 183.

<sup>67</sup> Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 183.

for a purpose that corrupted Indonesian loyalties and led to further "Arabization" of Indonesians.<sup>68</sup>

In the midst of regional and provincial orientations and hence increasing support for nationalism, the JIB in fact, like its predecessor Sarekat Islam, continued to prize Islam as the most suitable ideology for Indonesia. The JIB continuously defended the preposition that nationalism for Indonesians should be based on Islam and claimed that before those nationalist groups had come up with the idea of nationalism it was Islam that promoted the idea of nationalism among youth.<sup>69</sup> Von der Mehden, in trying to explain why this group preferred Islam as its basis, states that there were at least three basic reasons that prevailed: the universality of the faith, its emotional content, and the leadership it provided.<sup>70</sup> Continuing his analysis, Von der Mehden concludes that the debate which arose between the secular nationalist faction and the Islamic nationalist bloc generally centered on three issues: Pan-Islam v.s. nationalism; the adequacy or inadequacy of Islam as a unifying force; the catholicism of the secularist philosophy as opposed to the narrowness of Islamic belief.<sup>71</sup>

In defending an Islamic ideology, the JIB called on the reality lived by the Indonesian people, for it claimed that Islam was in itself "nationalist" because it united

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<sup>68</sup> Fred R. von der Mehden, *Religion and Nationalism in Southeast Asia* (Madison, Milwaukee and London: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1968): 76.

<sup>69</sup> *Het Licht* 11-12 (January-February 1929): 280-281.

<sup>70</sup> Fred R. von der Mehden, *Religion and Nationalism*: 211-212.

<sup>71</sup> Fred R. von der Mehden, *Religion and Nationalism*: 76.

the largest part of the Indonesian people regardless of their ethnic origins. We read, for example:

The difference between the youth movements [ethnic based organizations] that existed in Indonesia until today (1924) and the JIB is that the JIB does not recognize and in fact abolishes islands or parts of the islands where they come from as ethnological boundaries of their groups. The members of the JIB believe that a healthy love for the nation and the motherland (Nationalism of Indonesia) which is strong, tenacious and solid in love, will easily be achieved by means of unity rather than fragmentation, without necessarily ignoring the value of the multicultural properties attached to Indonesian nationalism. In addition, unity among the Indonesian people, historically, was the result of the economic and political goals they held in common.

Based on the above views, the members of the JIB had found one common bond with which to unite the largest part of the Indonesian people, while the Indonesian people who united in many other organizations only did so because they were under a foreign power. **That common bound was Islam.**<sup>72</sup>

Thus, the JIB employed the size of the Muslim population in the country as a logically important consideration in deciding whether to rely on Islam as the basis of the movement and its guide in the struggle for national freedom. Moreover, Islam appeared to the JIB as ideologically, culturally and symbolically distinct from the values of the Dutch. Thus, they further argued that Islam could be useful in stimulating national awareness under the burden of the colonial regime. This view in particular is found in an article entitled "Islam dan Semangat Nasionalisme" (Islam and the Spirit of Nationalism), written by Samsurizal under the pseudonym Samadikun. The author argues therein that

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<sup>72</sup>See Kasman's speech, "Pergerakan Pemoeda-Pemoeda Indonesia dan Natipij," *Het Licht* 11-12 (January-February 1929): 280-281. The speech was a commentary on the history of the establishment of the JIB in front of the members of Natipij.

Islam has always been synonymous with Indonesianness. Unlike who have distinct national identities separate from religion, when an Inlander (native Indonesian) says "I am a Muslim," this connotes, "I am an Indonesian." This hypothesis is supported by the high number of *langgar* (Qur'ānic seminaries) and annual Indonesian pilgrimages to Mecca. Accordingly, the author concludes that the awakening of nationalist sentiment would be best achieved through the spirit of Islam. In support of this statement, Samsurizal cites the example of the southern part of the Netherlands, mostly populated by Catholics, which wished to maintain such ties with Spain at a time when the Protestant north called for separation.<sup>73</sup>

The arguments for Islam were also supported with theological precepts. This line of argumentation was, in fact, in keeping with the JIB's obligation to study Islam. The JIB understood nationalism in the sense of one's love for national unity as a part of the teachings of Islam. Nonetheless, it insisted that Islam as an ideology was not limited to any single nation, but to all people in this world. To quote Kasman, for example, the JIB embraced love of one's country based on the teaching of Qur'ānic verse 49:13,<sup>74</sup> and on the hadīth, *hubbul wathan min al-Imān* (to love the nation is part of the faith). From this verse, Kasman derived the postulate that every Muslim must harbor feelings of

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<sup>73</sup>See *Het Licht* 9 (November 1926). The translation of the article in *Bahasa Indonesia* may be found in Ridwan Saidi, *Islam and Nasionalisme Indonesia* (Jakarta: LSIP, 1995), 7-9.

<sup>74</sup>"O mankind! We created you from single (pair) of a male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise (each other), nor call each other by (offensive) nicknames: Ill-seeming is a name connoting wickedness, (to be used of one) after he has believed: and those who do not desist are indeed doing wrong." See *The Holy Qur'an*, trans. Abdullah Yusuf Ali (Maryland, Amana Corporation, 1994), 1342.

nationalism (that is, love of his own land). However, love of nation in the Islamic sense is only permissible when it brings peace to the entire world. Hence, although Islam admits nationalism, it should be understood in the sense that every nation is responsible for itself, rather than one nation being better than and, therefore, responsible for others.<sup>75</sup> Hence, Kasman did not accept chauvinistic nationalism as the ideology of the Indonesian people, as had been adopted by many Western nations, because this had led to imperialism and colonialism. In fact, he argued that every struggle and sacrifice conducted in the name of nationhood should avoid chauvinism or imperialism, such as that which Germany had adopted, as implied by the motto, *Deutschland Uber Alles* (Germany is Above All Else). Such nationalism was intended for no other purpose than to impose the hegemony of one nation over others and could not foster social good or peace. Nationalism, the author argued, should be intended to create equilibrium within and between nations leading to security and peace for all.

In one sense this argument can be read as a general critique of the Western world, where such concepts of nationalism were formulated and adopted with detrimental (as well as positive) consequences. Another line of argument in favor of Islam as the ideological basis of the organization and the nation, looked at Western society from a different perspective, in pressing its claim. While Western political society generally claimed religious neutrality as the basis of nationalism, Kasman, for example, postulated

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<sup>75</sup>Kasman, "Een ernstig Woordje Tot Mijn Mede-Indonesiers," *Het Licht* 8 (October 1928): 168-171.

that British nationalism was, in fact, supported by Christianity. As Indonesia represented a Muslim majority, therefore, their ideology must necessarily be based on Islam.

Kasman himself acknowledges the consequences of such a thesis. JIB members he states, were often threatened by the “*pihak sana*” (the Dutch) since such ideas represented a danger to the colonial government.<sup>76</sup> Meanwhile, the “*pihak sini*” (the provincialist youth organizations) also perceived the JIB’s arguments as a threat to other active youth organizations, including Jong Java, Jong Ambone, Sekar Roekoen and so on.<sup>77</sup> The JIB, therefore, had not only to cope with the Dutch Colonial government, but also the suspicions of their Indonesian counterparts. These suspicions grew ever stronger when the JIB refused to merge into a new, unified youth organization created by the PPPI in late 1926. However, the JIB remained consistent in its agenda. After the famous second youth congress, held in 1928, it passed up on another opportunity to merge with other youth movements into the Indonesia Muda, to be created in 1931. During this time, therefore, the JIB was accused of being anti-nationalist.

In response to the nationalist block, the JIB published its standpoint extensively. Dj. M.S., for example, wrote “*In Gezond en Stuk: Federatie atau Unificatie*” (Federation or Unification). In this article he divided the existing youth organizations in Indonesia at that time into two groups, the first comprising ethnic organizations, such as Jong Java,

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<sup>76</sup>Kasman probably justified this statement on the basis of the fact that the Dutch Colonial Government, especially after the Communist rebellion in 1927, was always intolerant toward nationalist movements. In fact, the Governor General for the Dutch East Indies at that time still saw the JIB as the possible organization to counter the communist influence among the youth in the country.

<sup>77</sup>Kasman “*Pergerakan Pemoeda-Pemoeda Indonesia dan Natipij*,” 277-284.

Sekar Roekoen, Jong Sumatranen Bond, and so on; the second group was comprised of organizations such as the Jong Islamieten Bond.<sup>78</sup> According to the author, the first group needed to unify in order to achieve a unified Indonesia, because having ethnic orientation obscured the feeling of *ke-Indonesiaan* (Indonesian-ness). The JIB on the other hand, did not need to unify with others as the sense of unity required by nationalism was present in the form of Islam. For the JIB, their Islamic ideology strengthened and guided Indonesian on the path to nationhood. Islam provided the JIB member with the means to interconnect with the general population. Thus, the idea of an Indonesian federation was implicitly agreed upon by the JIB.<sup>79</sup>

Indeed, as we have seen in previous chapters, the JIB maintained its independence from the unified Indonesia Muda, without necessarily intending to rival the secular nationalist organization. However, the differences in views and ideology between the nationalist block and the JIB, placed the latter in opposition to the former, which was a cadre of adult nationalist organizations. Interestingly, the JIB appears to have played a similar role in its group in defending Islam as the preferred ideology of later Islamic factions, represented by Masyumi and the Nahdlatul Ulama, whose goals were the same as those of the JIB. For example, when the Constituent Assembly debates on state philosophy were held in 1957, the discussion echoed the polemics between the Islamic

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<sup>78</sup>In this article, the author mentions no other organization in the second category except the JIB. However, we may assume that this also meant religious organizations such as Pemuda Muslimin, Pemuda Kristen and Pemuda Muhammadiyah.

<sup>79</sup>See *Het Licht* 3-4 (May-June 1928): 130-132.

and nationalist youth organizations made twenty years earlier. In fact, the Islamic factions openly stated their intention to make Islam the ideological basis of the Indonesian state. Natsir, as the spokesman for Masyumi, reaffirmed again the relation between Islam and the state in Indonesia on the basis that Muslims constituted the majority, exactly as the JIB had earlier.<sup>80</sup> Thus, it can be said that the polemics on Islam and nationalism between the JIB and secular nationalist organizations represented an early altercation appear to have been the first conflict between the Islamist and nationalist factions in the history of the Indonesian search for an identity and an ideology to aid in the process of nation-building.

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<sup>80</sup>Mohammad Natsir, *Islam Sebagai Dasar Negara* (Bandung: Pimpinan Fraksi Masyumi dalam Konstituante, 1957). For the complete analysis on the debate, see Endang Saefudin Anshari, *The Jakarta Charter of June 1945* (Kuala Lumpur: ABIM, 1979).



## **CONCLUSION**

### **The significance and role of the JIB in the struggle for Indonesian unity during the late Dutch colonial era**

The Jong Islamieten Bond was significant, first of all, due to the fact that it was the largest Muslim youth organization of the nationalist period. Accordingly, it was able to provide an Islamic framework for youth in an era of intellectual awakening, an era when Indonesians were searching for an identity that differed from that being imposed by their Western rulers. Indeed, Islam was used by the organization to unite students of different ethnic backgrounds and to instill feelings of "Indonesianness." If, for a time before World War I, Sarekat Islam was able to unite Indonesian merchants by using Islam as a symbol against foreign domination in the area of commerce, and eventually relied on the organization as a vehicle for Muslim political aspirations, in the post-War period the JIB was also able to unite young intellectuals through the same ideology but with the aim instead of achieving intellectual awareness, identity, and national unity.

Second, the JIB reacquainted Muslim students who had attended Western-style schools with an awareness of their own Islamic beliefs, expressed through critical study and a commitment to practice them in daily life. In doing so, the JIB played a significant role in preventing youth from becoming trapped in the modern Western lifestyles introduced by the Dutch colonialists. Its efforts to play this role are demonstrated by the establishment of courses on Islam throughout the country, using modernist approaches

that seemed to attract many students whose intellectual curiosity was still developing. When its concerns for Muslims grew stronger, the JIB sometimes went beyond its initial intention of acting merely as *studi lichaam* (a union for study)--i.e., an organization founded primarily for the purpose of studying Islam--to being a fully "social organization" like the Muhammadiyah.

Third, the JIB was certainly an important movement that planted the seeds of self-confidence in young Indonesians who believed they were destined to be leaders in the future. Indeed, the JIB nurtured "love of nation based on Islam" in the midst of youth in their early age by forming Natipij, the Islamic Scout movement. More importantly, in defense of this position the JIB remained an Islamic-based organization at a time when many other movements were embracing "secular nationalist" concepts as their principal ideological tools in pursuit of national awareness. In their defense, the JIB's responses to secular nationalist groups reflected its faithfulness towards Islamic teachings and confidence in its ambition to provide leadership in a future nation according to the teachings of Islam. Its ability to portray this stand through good organization, JIB careful policy and well formulated intellectual essays made its reputation of being the most respectful youth organization at that time. Two important achievements had been made in this respect; one is that it was the only Muslim youth organization that had a member sitting in the Volksraad, and the other is that it was the only Muslim youth organization to be included as the regular member of MIAI in 1937. Both were high accolades from Dutch officials and fellow Muslim activists.

Finally, it should be stated that the role of the JIB in the nationalist movement in the country cannot be underestimated. The most effective proof of its contribution to nationalism may be found in the leadership its activists later gave to the Islamic political came later. In the 1940's when Muslim united under Masyumi in a struggle for defending their nation and Islamic interests, those members previously recruited by the JIB--Natsir, Roem, Kasman and Syafrudin Prawiranegara, to name but a few--had large share of the leadership.

### **The Islamic education within the JIB**

The JIB used a modernist approach in explaining Islam. This approach prevailed not only because the membership comprised non-*pesantren* students—effectively, students who studied at Western school systems--but also because of the close and intense contacts that existed with modernist leaders. This provided the growth of such views in their attitude toward learning. Needless to say, in this role, Agus Salim, a prominent modernist leader active in the Sarekat Islam, became the spiritual teacher for the members of this youth organization. In addition, the influx of the modernist thinking and the incoming challenges of modernity posed by the Western world in Indonesia, at the time when the JIB was founded, attracted the JIB to identify itself with this religious trend.

Interestingly, given that the members of the JIB had access to Western sources, thanks to their knowledge of Western languages and their openness to modern thinking, they developed a mode of thought and attitude which were somewhat different from their

predecessors. For example, instead of using *Het Licht* mainly as a vehicle for voicing their views and political interests, they used the publication also for intellectual expansion and exercise. *Het Licht* accepted articles from variety of individuals and groups outside the JIB thereby gaining by learning about the views of others, even its enemies. In this regard, the JIB is different from the Muhammadiyah and Persis which utilized its publication only to voice their concerns.

It is not surprising therefore that JIB's arguments in response to these three important issues show that the JIB members were, broadly speaking young modernist intellectuals. Its arguments were developed as a result of critical assessment by its membership, rather than relying on the ideas of their leader(s). Hence, the arguments were not merely based on Islamic theological views, as was common with other individuals and groups, but were also derived from the historical and comparative knowledge that JIB members had acquired through their studies. This may explain, for example, why the JIB showed a more moderate attitude toward the Ahmadiyah movement than others did, and also account for why other parties had no difficulty in understanding why the JIB took an Islamic approach to Indonesian nationalism. This in effect encouraged a dialogue which helped to produce mutual understanding between the various movements.

In conclusion, it may be said that the JIB was a representative of a particular trend in Indonesian Islam at the time, which considered Islamicness important in the development of the identity of Indonesianness. Moreover, it marshaled solid arguments on behalf of this view. These arguments, like the members themselves, were in a state of

development. The core beliefs were formed at this time and they were to develop further in the future and to become part of a new Indonesian nation which was eventually to find room to accommodate both nationalism and Islam. The JIB offered one starting point, but it was an important one.

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