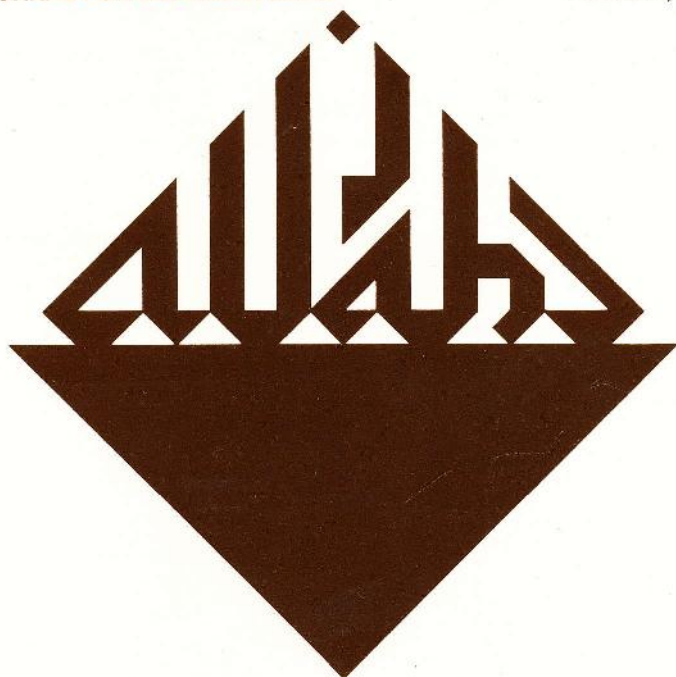


STUDIA ISLAMIKA

INDONESIAN JOURNAL FOR ISLAMIC STUDIES

Volume I, Number 3, 1994



HISTORY, POLITICAL IMAGES AND CULTURAL ENCOUNTER
The Dutch in the Indonesian Archipelago
Taufik Abdullah

BETWEEN MOSQUE AND MARKET
The Muslim Community in Quiapo, Metro Manila
Kuntowijoyo

HAMKA (1908-1981) AND THE INTEGRATION OF THE ISLAMIC
UMMAH OF INDONESIA
Karel Steenbrink

STUDIA ISLAMIKA

Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies

Volume I, No. 3, 1994

EDITORIAL BOARD:

Harun Nasution

Mastubu

M. Quraish Shibab

A. Aziz Dablan

M. Satria Effendi

Nabilah Lubis

M. Yunan Yusuf

Komaruddin Hidayat

Dien Syamsuddin

Muslim Nasution

Wabib Mu`thi

EDITOR IN CHIEF:

Azyumardi Azra

EDITORS:

Saiiful Muzani

Hendro Prasetyo

Johan H. Meuleman

Nurul Fajri

Badri Yatim

ASSISTANTS TO THE EDITOR:

Arif Subhan

Muchlis Ainurrafik

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ADVISOR:

Judith M. Dent

ARABIC LANGUAGE ADVISOR:

Salabuddin An Nadwi

COVER DESIGNER:

S. Pringka

STUDIA ISLAMIKA (ISSN 0215-0492) is a journal published quarterly by the *Institut Agama Islam Negeri* (IAIN, The State Institute for Islamic Studies) Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta, (STT DEPPEN No. 129/SK/DITJEN/PPG/STT/1976) and sponsored by the Department of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. It specializes in Indonesian Islamic studies, and is intended to communicate original researches and current issues on the subject. This journal warmly welcomes contributions from scholars of related disciplines.

All articles published do not necessarily represent the views of the journal, or other institutions to which it is affiliated. They are solely the views of the authors.

Hamka (1908-1981) and the Integration of the Islamic *Ummah* of Indonesia

Abstraksi: *Islam merupakan faktor penyatu sekaligus pemecah dalam sejarah Indonesia. Berdasarkan catatan sejarah, konversi Islam yang terjadi di Indonesia dimulai dari kerajaan-kerajaan yang berlokasi di wilayah pantai. Konversi ini sangat menguntungkan pihak kerajaan, dengan mana mereka dapat mengakses jaringan dagang yang lebih luas yang sudah banyak dikuasai oleh Muslim. Proses konversi ini kemudian dapat menyatukan para pedagang asal Melayu, Jawa, dan pesaing-pesaing mereka lainnya. Namun, dengan masuknya para pedagang pantai ke dalam agama baru, keterkaitan mereka dengan pedagang pedalaman menjadi renggang. Situasi tersebut pada akhirnya dapat memuncak menjadi perselisihan. Di daerah Sumatera, contoh yang cukup banyak dikenal adalah perang Padri dan Islamisasi bagian selatan wilayah Batak.*

Sementara itu, dalam urusan internal kerajaan, Islam juga muncul sebagai faktor penyatu dan penyeimbang. Kasus kesultanan Melayu dan Jawa sangat jelas menunjukkan keberadaan fungsi Islam tersebut. Para pemimpin agama diberi kedudukan khusus di dalam istana dan pada saat yang sama mereka mendukung kekuasaan raja. Contoh yang nyata tentang peran Islam ini adalah keberadaan buku *Tâj al-Salâtîn* yang ditulis sekitar tahun 1600. Buku ini tidak saja menguraikan petunjuk bagi para raja, tetapi juga menghubungkan para raja setempat dengan nabi-nabi Islam. Sebaliknya, literatur yang menyiratkan potensi pemecah Islam juga

tidak sedikit. *Khazanah literatur Jawa*, misalnya, mencatat beberapa literatur, seperti *Serat Jatiswara*, *Chenthini*, *Cabolèk*, cenderung mempertentangkan antara kepentingan Islam dan negara. Pasang surut hubungan antara Islam dan negara ini dirumuskan secara menarik oleh Riaz Hassan, seorang sosiolog asal Pakistan. Menurut Hassan, pemerintah yang lemah cenderung menginginkan para pemimpin Muslim untuk berperan serta dalam politik. Sebaliknya, pemerintah yang kuat lebih cenderung untuk mendepolitisasi agama.

Konflik antara Islam dan negara semakin mencuat pada saat Belanda bercokol di Indonesia. Pihak pemerintah kolonial berusaha sekuat tenaga untuk dapat mengontrol kehidupan kalangan Muslim. K.F. Holle, seorang penasehat pemerintah kolonial, berpendapat bahwa tarekat merupakan sisi Islam yang paling membahayakan. Dia merekomendasikan pihak penguasa untuk waspada pada kelompok tersebut. Namun, penggantinya, C.S. Hurgronje, berpendapat bahwa Islam secara keseluruhan dapat membahayakan pemerintah jika muncul dalam bentuk politik. Maka, pemerintah perlu mempersempit kemungkinan Islam untuk muncul sebagai kekuatan politik.

Untuk melihat fenomena Islam di atas, artikel berikut akan membahasnya melalui riwayat hidup Haji Abdul-Malik ibn Abdulkarim Amrullah atau lebih dikenal dengan sebutan Hamka. Hamka mengalami situasi pemerintahan yang lemah maupun yang kuat; pemikirannya mengekspresikan sifat politik dan a-politik, serta sekaligus bersentuhan kuat dengan persoalan Islam mistik dan Islam legalistik.

Hamka lahir dari keluarga terpelajar. Kakeknya, Syaikh Amrullah, adalah ulama yang disegani. Ayahnya, Abdul Karim ibn Amrullah, juga salah seorang pemimpin agama yang terkenal di Minangkabau. Keduanya pernah belajar di Mekkah setelah mendalami agama di tanah kelahiran mereka. Hamka sendiri juga dididik melalui jalur yang sama: pendidikan dasar di surau dan melanjutkan di Mekkah. Namun, pada saat di Mekkah, Hamka bertemu dengan Haji Agus Salim yang menasehatinya untuk belajar di tanah air. Hamka memutuskan pulang ke Indonesia dan menjadi guru agama serta wartawan.

Pada periode ini tampak minat tulis menulis Hamka semakin kentara. Ia mulai memimpin majalah *Khatibul Ummat* dan menulis novel yang diberi judul *Si Sabariah*. Setelah itu, Hamka juga menulis novel lain, *Laila Majnun*, yang inspirasinya berasal dari salah satu karya sastra Arab. Hamka kemudian menjadi editor sekaligus penulis pada mingguan *Pedoman Rakyat* di Medan. Tulisan-tulisan Hamka mencakup cerita

maupun sejarah. Salah satu novelnya, *Merantau ke Deli* merupakan kritik yang cukup keras terhadap sistem waris matrilineal yang berlaku di Minangkabau. Berkaitan dengan persoalan agama, pemikiran Hamka pada periode sebelum kemerdekaan muncul dalam bentuk kompromi dengan pelbagai macam kecenderungan. Dia tidak menyetujui mistik Islam yang berlebihan dan cenderung pada Islam yang lebih legalistik. Namun, pada saat yang sama, Hamka juga sangat simpatik pada aspek moral ajaran sufi. Meskipun Hamka menganggap adat waris di Minangkabau bertentangan dengan prinsip hukum Islam, dia masih mencoba mencari jalan keluar untuk memadukan keduanya. Pemikiran eklektik Hamka diungkapkan melalui cara yang komunikatif, apalagi pada periode ini Hamka tidak banyak bersentuhan dengan politik praktis.

Memasuki periode kemerdekaan, sosok Hamka banyak mengalami perubahan. Sejak awal, Hamka sudah mulai terlibat dalam kegiatan politik praktis. Dia menjadi anggota Masjumi dan pernah duduk di parlemen tahun 1954-1959. Hamka memang bukan seorang politikus ulung, namun posisinya di partai dapat mendatangkan suara dari para pengikutnya. Pada zaman Orde Lama, karena kritiknya terhadap Soekarno, Hamka masuk penjara selama dua tahun. Selama di penjara, Hamka sempat menulis tafsir al-Qur'an yang terdiri dari 30 jilid. Aktivitas politik Hamka terus berlangsung sampai akhir hayatnya. Sikap politiknya yang keras, khususnya selama Orde Baru, ditunjukkan lewat sikapnya menentang Kristenisasi dan pengunduran dirinya selaku ketua Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI), hanya beberapa bulan sebelum dia meninggal.

Hamka merupakan figur yang sangat penting dalam fenomena Islam Indonesia. Dia menulis banyak buku, pamflet, novel, artikel dan lain sebagainya. Sosoknya yang begitu menonjol mengundang pelbagai pihak untuk memberikan penilaian terhadap Hamka. Sebagian kalangan menganggap Hamka sebagai seorang sarjana yang sangat berbakat. Biasanya, kalangan ini menekankan gelar Doktor dan Professor yang diraih oleh Hamka dalam karir hidupnya. Sementara itu, kalangan lain, termasuk penulis sendiri, lebih menganggap Hamka sebagai seorang wartawan dan penulis yang baik. Jika dilihat dari bobot ilmiah, tulisan Hamka tidak mudah untuk diklasifikasikan sebagai karya akademik.

حمكة (١٩٠٨-١٩٨١) وتوحيد الأمة الإسلامية بإندونيسيا

يعتبر الإسلام العنصر الموحد للأمة وفي نفس الوقت كان عاملا أو سببا في تفرقها. بناء على ما سجله التاريخ، بدأ الإسلام يزدهر في المناطق الساحلية. وكان ذلك في صالح الممالك الواقعة على الشواطئ. كما ساعد ذلك على عقد صلات و صفقات تجارية أوسع مع المسلمين. أدت مراحل تطور الإسلام بعد ذلك إلى توحيد التجار من الملايو، وحاوة، مع غيرهم من المنافسين. إلا أنه باعتناق التجار من مدن السواحل للإسلام، قلت علاقتهم بتجار المدن الداخلية. وأدى هذا الموقف إلى ظهور الخلافات. ففي منطقة سومطرة، نلاحظ نموذجا شهيرا وهو قيام ثورة الفادري Paderi وتنشيط أسلمة منطقة تبانولى الجنوبية.

أما بالنسبة للشئون الداخلية، فقد ظهر الإسلام كعنصر موحد، وفي نفس الوقت كعامل تمزق وانحراف. وأن مملكة الملايو والممالك الأخرى بجاوة، إنما هي دليل على وظيفة الإسلام هذه (كموحد وممزق). نال رجال الدين مكانة كبرى وتولوا مناصب في القصور، وفي نفس الوقت كانوا يؤيدون سلطة الملوك. وخير مثال على تصوير دور الإسلام هو وجود كتاب "تاج السلاطين" الذي تم تأليفه في عام ١٦٠٠. لم يكتف هذا الكتاب بتقديم النصح والتوجيهات للملوك، بل كان يربط من وظيفة الملوك والأنبياء المسلمين. وعلى العكس، فإن ما أشارت إليه المراجع من دور الإسلام كعنصر مفرق ليست قليلة العدد.

تذكر كتب الأدب الجاوى القديم، مثلا، كتاب صراط جاتي سوارا Serat

Jatiswara، وحنطينى Centini، وشابوليك Cabolek النزاع بين مصالح الإسلام ومصالح الدولة. هذه العلاقة يصورها لنا بصورة شيقة رياز حسن Riaz Hasan عالم فى علم الاجتماع من الباكستان. ذكر حسن أن الحكومة الضعيفة تميل إلى أن يلعب العلماء دورا إيجابيا فى السياسة. بينما الحكومة القوية على العكس من ذلك، تميل إلى إبعاد الدين عن التدخل فى السياسة.

وكانت قمة التصادم بين الإسلام والدولة عندما لعبت هولندا دورها واحتلت إندونيسيا. كانت حكومة هولندا تسعى بكل جهدها للإشراف على حياة المسلمين. وكما قال ك.ف. هولى K.F. Holle المستشار بحكومة الاحتلال الهولندى، أن الطرق الصوفية تُعدّ من أخطر جوانب الإسلام. لذا، فإنه حذر المسؤولين من الجماعات الصوفية. ولكن، بديله سنوك هورغرونى Snouck Hurgronje رأى أن الإسلام بصفة عامة سوف يشكل خطرا على الحكومة إذا ما لعب دورا فى السياسة. لذا، فعلى الحكومة أن تقلل الفرص أمام الإسلام (القادة المسلمين) حتى لا يظهر فى شكل قوى سياسية.

وللتحقيق من الرؤيا السابقة أعلاه، فالمقالة التالية سوف تبحث فى تاريخ حياة الحاج عبد الملك بن عبد الكريم أمر الله الشهير باسم حمكه. وقد عاصر حمكه فى حياته كلا النوعين من الحكومات الضعيفة والقوية، وتعرّف أفكاره عن آرائه السياسية، وفى نفس الوقت تتعرض بقوة للمسائل الصوفية الإسلامية المشروعية.

وُلد حمكه فى أسرة متعلمة، وكان جدّه الشيخ أمر الله من كبار العلماء الذين لهم مكانة فى المجتمع. وأبوه عبد الكريم بن أمر الله كان أيضا من العلماء المشهورين بمنطقة مينانغكابا Minangkabau بسومطرة الغربية (فادانج) كلاهما نهلا من العلوم الشرعية بحكمة المكرمة. كذلك الأمر بالنسبة لحكمة، فقد أتم تعليمه الإبتدائى فى الكتاب، ثم تابع الدراسة بحكمة المكرمة، ولكن بينما هو بحكمة بعد فترة قصيرة، إذ تقابل مع الحاج أغوس سالم الذى نصحه بالعودة إلى إندونيسيا. فقرر حكمة العودة إلى إندونيسيا وعمل مدرسا وصحفيا.

فى تلك الفترة ظهرت مواهبه فى الكتابة والتأليف. فبدأ برئاسة تحرير مجلة خطيب

الأمة، وكتب قصة طويلة بعنوان سبتي صبرية. بعد ذلك كتب قصصا أخرى مثل مجنون ليلي التي تأثر فيها بالأدب العربي وكانت من وحى قصة قيس و ليلي، ثم عُيِّنَ حمكة محررا بمجلة فدومان رعية Pedoman Rakyat الأسبوعية بميدان Medan. وتشمل كتابات حمكة القصة والتاريخ. ونلاحظ في قصته بعنوان Merantau ke Deli قدرا من النقد الساخر الموجه إلى نظام الوراثة من ناحية الأم المشهور بغرب سومطرة. أما من الناحية الدينية، فإن أفكار حمكة في تلك الفترة كانت تميل إلى التقارب مع مختلف الاتجاهات. ولم يوافق حمكة على التصوف المتطرف بل كان يميل أكثر إلى الشريعة. ولكنه كان يميل في نفس الوقت إلى عنصر الأخلاق في تعاليم التصوف. ورغم أنه كان ضد التقاليد والعادات الموروثة. بمنطقة فادانج خاصة التي تتعارض مع الدين، إلا أنه حاول البحث عن طريقة التوفيق بينهما. وكان يعبر عن آرائه وفكره الشخصي خصوصا في القرة التي كان فيها بعيد عن السياسة.

ومع بداية دخول مرحلة الاستقلال، عانى حمكة من تغييرات كثيرة. فمنذ البداية، بدأ حمكة يشترك بصفة عملية في النشاط السياسي. وكان عضوا في حزب ماشومي كما كان عضوا بالبرلمان (مجلس الشورى الشعب) عام ١٩٥٤-١٩٥٩. لم يكن حمكة سياسيا محنكا، لكن موقفه في الحزب جذب له العديد من أصوات المؤيدين له. وفي زمن حكومة العهد القديم، دخل حمكة السجن لمدة سنتين بسبب نقده اللاذع للرئيس السابق سوكارنو. تمكن حمكة من كتابة تفسير القرآن الكريم المكون من ٣٠ جزءا. واستمر نشاطه السياسي حتى آخر حياته. وكان صارما حازما في رأيه السياسي، خاصة خلال فترة بداية العهد الجديد (أى بداية حكومة سوهارتو)، وهذا كما ظهر جليا في اصطحابه على عمليات التنصير واعتزاله لمركز رئيس مجلس العلماء الإندونيسي، قبل وفاته بعدة شهور.

In 1292 Marco Polo visited the town of Perlak on the North East coast of Sumatra. His conclusion about the religion of the inhabitants of the area was quite clear: the king and the people of the town were Muslim, but the inhabitants of the mountainous inland areas were (still) heathen. For the king and the traders of the harbor of Samudra Pasai this conversion to the dominant religion of the Indian Ocean meant an introduction to the economic network of Muslim who dominated nearly all the coast lines of this "Muslim mediterranean". Through the new religion integration between Malay and Javanese traders and their colleagues and rivals became easier. At the same time the contrast between the traders of the towns and the inhabitants of the inland area was deepened. This contrast generated conflicts. The best-known conflicts in this area are those during the Padri-wars and the followed Islamization of Southern parts of the Batak region.¹

In the internal affairs of the Malay and Javanese sultanates, Islam has often functioned as a unifying and stabilizing factor. The religious leaders received positions at the court and often gave their support to the ruler. Malay and Javanese literature has many examples of religious symbolism and ideas strengthening this royal power. Aceh *adat* provides us with a number of processions and ceremonies, where the supporting factor of religion is very clear. Another striking examples is the Malay *Tâj al-Salâtîn*, a text written about 1600. In this book not only are reflections for princes and guidelines for the righteous king given, but also identification between the king and the prophets. Adam, Moses, Joseph, David, Solomon and Muhammad are mentioned as prophets and kings, leaders of realm and religion.² The later kings are their heirs and also execute this double function.

A less harmonious picture of the relationship between religion and the state is shown in the Javanese literary tradition, which created the *Serat Jatiswara*, *Serat Chentini*, *Serat Cebolek* and other works. These works usually describe religious officials in the towns, (*kaum*) devoted to the study and implementation of the intricate details of Islamic law, in loyalty to the ruler. These officials are in conflict with the mystical leaders of the rural area (cfr. Day 1993; Behrend 1987).

Malay and Javanese literature, as well as being historical descriptions, give us a dynamic picture of Islam. There were conflicts between scripturalist Islam, emphasizing the details of Islamic law on the one hand and the adherents of mystical teaching on the other

hand. Very often we also see another conflict: the legalist party siding with the ruler and the mystical party fighting the legitimacy of the rulers. In such cases we have to be very careful: religious arguments are also used for political goals and the struggle for power can also use the disguise of a theological debate. The writings of Nuruddin al-Rânîrî denounce Hamzah Fansuri and his followers as heretics, but modern Indonesian and Malay scholars (Ahmad Daudy 1983; al-Attas 1986) have proved that the doctrinal differences between Hamzah Fansuri and al-Rânîrî were marginal and therefore we may accept that the real conflict between the parties was (also) in politics, economics and power, and not only in the field of religious ideas. Whatever may be the true reason for this and other conflicts, in the fields of Islam itself the division between legalist and mythical interest may be accepted as a major division in this religious tradition.

On another variable, important in the analysis of conflicts, we can take the theory of the Pakistani sociologist Riaz Hassan. Hassan³ has formulated the rule that a weak government invites Muslim leadership to play a political role, while strong local or central government leads towards depoliticisation of religion. This is shown in the lifestories of some militant Muslim leaders (Shaykh Yusuf of Makassar, Diponegoro, Imam Bonjol), who played important political roles and were fierce political and military leaders, turning into quietistic and mystical Muslims in their later years.

During the colonial times, Islamic "fanaticism" was considered to be one of the most threatening sources of political unrest. This idea of "fanaticism" was refined by Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1859-1936). As an adviser to the colonial government he disagreed with his older colleague K.F. Holle, who considered the religious brotherhood (*tarekat*) to be one of the most threatening aspects of Islam. Snouck Hurgronje held the opinion that both legalistic and mystical Islam may occur in political or apolitical garb. The politicized manifestation of Islam should be beaten and defeated, while the apolitical, more individual appearance of Islam is to be given freedom of expression. Snouck Hurgronje even considered the mystical variant of Islam as rather syncretic, tolerant and more inclined towards harmony than the legalistic branch of this religion.

So far we have seen two sets of variables within Islam: legalistic versus mystical, political versus apolitical. We have briefly mentioned two variables of the state: weak and powerful. Combining Riaz

Hassan's and Snouck Hurgronje's ideas we should consider a powerful state, in combination with a mystical, apolitical Islam as the best guarantee for *rust en orde*, law and order, a society where conflicts are kept under control. We are conscious that we here continue the approach of the colonial state, and also in part the post-colonial state and the interest of foreign investments (*berita yang baik bagi perusahaan minyak* cfr. Steenbrink 1988:77). This approach has been and is a reality for a long time, with only minor shifts between the "fanatic Muslim" of the V.O.C. archives up to the "militant Muslim" and "fundamentalists" of the 1990's.

In order to examine the interrelation of these elements we want to undertake an analysis of the life and works of Haji Abdul-Malik ibn 'Abdulkarim Amrullah, commonly called Hamka. He experienced strong and weak governments during his life time, has shown political and apolitical periods, and took a firm position in the fields of legalistic and mystical Islam. Therefore he may offer a good starting point for a discussion of the position of Islam as a unifying and/or disintegrative power in modern Indonesia. The study of one person also leads us to another complicating aspect of the problem: personal conviction and choices are related to, but surely not always similar to, group solidarity or group interests. We will see how in Hamka's life Islam functioned as a harmonizing factor between individuals and groups in Indonesian society, but sometimes was also a source of conflict. Sometimes the interests of (a group of) Muslims determined his position, but some choices are more related to his individual Islamic style.

The Naughty Son of a 'Holy Family'

Hamka's grandfather, Syaikh Amrullah, had the usual career of a religious teacher in the Minangkabau area during the 19th century. He spent five years of study in Mecca and then settled as a leader of a religious school, *surau*, as well as functioning as an instructor and a leader in the Naqshabandiyyah-*tarekat*. The family chronicle mentions his 8 wives and 46 children (Hamka 1967b: 50-53). The most famous of these children was Abdul Karim ibn Amrullah (also with "bin" or simply Abdul Karim Amrullah), Hamka's father, who was born in 1879. He also followed a conventional career. He first received religious instruction in several *surau* of the Minangkabau area.

At the age of 16 he went to Mecca and studied for seven years under Achmad Chatib, a fierce fighter against the *tarekat* and also against the matrilineal system of inheritance that still prevails in Minangkabau. Abdul Karim ibn Amrullah adopted these ideas and also Achmad Chatib's fighting spirit, but afterwards he did not follow his teacher's strong obedience (*taqlîd*) towards the Shâfi'î school of law. In 1901 he returned from Mecca and married a much adored girl, Raihanah (Hamka 1967b: 73).

After his first child, a daughter, was born, Abdul Karim was sent to Mecca again. His wife joined him and they accompanied his three younger brothers, who had to perform the *haji* and to study in the holy city. There his wife gave birth to another child, who died soon after, and five months later Raihanah also died. After these sad events Abdul Karim Amrullah returned to Indonesia and married Safiah, a younger sister of his first wife. In 1908 Safiah had her first son, who was named Abdul Malik. After Abdul Malik performed the *haji* he was named Haji Abdul Malik bin Abdul Karim bin Amrullah or, as is often the case in Indonesia for such long names, was otherwise known as Hamka, an acronym of his full name.

Abdul Karim ibn Amrullah founded a religious school, a *surau*, on the banks of Lake Maninjau and was active, together with several colleagues from his Mecca period, in promoting the new ideas that they had absorbed from the writings of Muhammad 'Abduh and the magazine *al-Manâr*. He was the Minangkabau distributor of the modernist magazine *al-Imâm*, which was published in Singapore by a Minangkabau teacher, from 1906 to 1910. In 1911, a friend of Abdul Karim ibn Amrullah, Haji Abdullah Ahmad founded a new magazine in Minangkabau, *al-Munîr* and invited him to write contributions.

From 1911 to 1915 *al-Munîr* was the most important disseminator of modernist ideas. It was published in Padang, the largest town of West Sumatra and was somewhat free from the influence of the strong traditions of the Minangkabau area. In this magazine, as well as in his teachings Abdul Karim ibn Amrullah was a strong fighter against the practices of *tarekat*, *taqlîd* and the matrilineal system of inheritance. In order to contribute to the magazine more regularly, Abdul Karim moved to Padang where he lived from 1911 to 1913, together with his wife and his daughter. The young Hamka was left at the family-home of his mother at Maninjau. In 1913 his father returned to Maninjau briefly, but later that year he moved to Padang Panjang and became a

dominant teacher in the religious school of his friend Haji Abdullah, the Surau Jembatan Besi. Haji Abdullah remained in Padang.

Abdul Karim ibn Amrullah married and divorced several times during his life. As Hamka complained in his autobiography:

His [my] father was a famous religious teacher. To be married again and again, then divorce, than marry again, that is the glorious way of living that has to be followed by all people of importance, both in terms of *adat*, as well as religion (Hamka 1974: I,63).

In his memoir Hamka depicts his father as generally absent and, when present, as a furious and angry man. In 1922 Hamka's father divorced Safiah, his mother. Both remarried and although divorce was quite common between Minangkabau people, the young Hamka suffered from it. Later he complained: "It was a hard time for the children of my father. If we went to the house of my father, we met a stepmother. If we went to the house of our mother, there was a stepfather" (Rusydi Hamka 1981: 19).

From 1916 onwards, Hamka spent most of his time in the house of his father at Padang Panjang, where he received some elementary religious education. At the higher level this education was given by the Syaikh himself. The younger teachers were not able to control this naughty boy, that Hamka admits to being. He learned some Arabic, but he used it only to read romantic novels from the library of Zainuddin Labai el-Junusy, one of his father's most gifted pupils. For a few years he was also sent to a secular government school, but he did not finish the formal program there either.

In 1922, at the age of 14, Hamka was sent to the religious school at Parabek, but most of his interest was devoted not to the school's religious instruction, but to the famous storytellers of the neighborhood. In 1923 he fled from Parabek in the direction of Java. His reasons are not quite clear and may have been complicated. Some unhappy love affairs may have been the main cause. He admits that he received a good deal of fanmail from girls and that he replied to many letters, being inclined to fall in love too quickly. He did not reach Java, as he fell ill while still traveling in South Sumatra. He suffered smallpox and stayed for two months in the house of a Minangkabau teacher in the province of Bengkulu. After that he was sent back to Padang Panjang.

One year later his father sent him to Java, to Pekalongan, where

his daughter lived with her husband. This son-in-law of Abdul Karim ibn Amrullah was a Minangkabau religious teacher, A.R. Sutan Mansur, who was the local leader of the modernist organization Muhammadiyah. A.R. Sutan Mansur became Hamka's personal tutor during his half year stay in Pekalongan. There Hamka also observed the daily activities of the organization. Muhammadiyah reformism was not only less rigid and less militant than the group around his father in the Minangkabau, it also stressed social and welfare activities and effective solidarity among Muslims. Many members of the Muhammadiyah considered these social and educational activities as even more important than the reformist dogmatism taught by his father.

In July 1925 Hamka returned to Padang Panjang, shortly to be followed by his sister and brother-in-law. A.R. Sutan Mansur continued to function as Hamka's tutor. The situation at Padang Panjang was uneasy at that time. One of Abdul Karim Amrullah's students had introduced communist doctrines after a visit to Java in 1923. This caused a loss of interest in the teaching of the head of the school, the Syaikh Abdul Karim Amrullah until he finally retired and left the *surau* to the older student. At that time Abdul Karim Amrullah had already visited Java and observed the activities of the Muhammadiyah organization. He planned to open the Muhammadiyah branch in Minangkabau, with A.R. Sutan Mansur as its leader. From then on this grand old man of reformism and Islamic modernism in Minangkabau devoted his time to just writing and incidental speeches.

At the beginning of 1929 Hamka, then 19 years old, left for Mecca. He was planning to stay there for many years in order to receive a better organized and more complete religious education, as was common practice and following in the footsteps of his grandfather and father. He arrived in Arabia somewhat early, worked several months in a printing office in Mecca, performed the *haji* and had a good opportunity to practice Arabic. At the time he was not able to read the difficult and complicated works on Islamic law, but his conversational Arabic was pretty good. As his fluency in Arabic was better than that of the average Indonesian pilgrim, he was appointed as head of an Indonesian delegation to King Faisal, the Wahhabi ruler, who had conquered Mecca in 1925-6. This delegation asked for freedom to continue the Shâfi'î traditions, because the majority of Indonesian Muslims belonged to the Shâfi'î school of law of Islam. Haji Agus Salim,

the Minangkabau political leader with a western education and experience in Arabia as assistant to the Dutch consul in Jeddah, advised him not to stay any longer in Mecca: "This country is suited for worship, but you should not look for science or even wisdom here. You should instead look for education and develop yourself in your own country" (Hamka 1974b: I, 146).

Hamka went back to Indonesia but he did not immediately return to his father's house. After arriving in the harbour of Medan, he found a poorly paid job as religious teacher and journalist. In 1928 he returned to Padang Panjang and became active as a preacher and journalist for the Muhammadiyah organization. That year he went once again to Java in order to attend the Muhammadiyah Congress in Surakarta. In 1929 he married Siti Raham. She was 15 years old; Hamka was only 21. This marriage was to be a happy affair, lasting for 42 years until Siti Raham died in 1972. Hamka did not take a second wife.

A Prolific Writer

Between 1831 and 1933 Hamka was sent to Makassar, Sulawesi, as an assistant for the consolidation and expansion of the local Muhammadiyah branch. He was involved in organization and lessons at a new training college. He also traveled to many places as a propagandist and preacher to promote the ideals of Muhammadiyah. His main activities and interest, however, become more and more concentrated on writing.

By 1925 he Already led a magazine, *Khatibul Ummat*. It had a limited circulation of 500 copies and was spread by friends. In 1929 he wrote his first novel, had it printed privately and sold it himself to cover the expenses for his marriage. It was called *Si Sabariah* (cfr. Rusydi Hamka 1981:39). This was a quite a surprising activity in these surroundings. In his autobiography he writes:

At the time of the first edition I presented copies of this book to the tree outstanding modernist religious leaders, who had brought about a renewal of Islam in this century, my father, Dr. Syaikh Abdul Karim Amrullah, Dr. Syaikh Abdullah Ahmad and Syaikh Jamil Jambek. These three distinguished and learned men were in the *surau* of Syaikh Jambek after lunch and the *zuhur*-prayer, ready to take a nap. I sat at their feet, ready to massage them. Then my father said: "What is the name of the book that you have written?" "It is called *Si Sabariah*, father". "Well, read it, I will listen." Then I started reading it aloud

and even partly sang it with a nice traditional melody, as parts of it could be sung. At the beginning my father looked as if he was taking a nap, afterwards he sat upright in his chair. Also Dr. Abdullah sat upright and both listened. None of the three insulted me, perhaps because they already had wide experience of Arabic literature. They were not angry that they could not sleep between the *zubr* and *asar* prayers as they usually did (Hamka 1974b:11,74-76. A summary of the romantic and even melodramatic story of *Si Sabariah* can be found on pp. 68-73).

Hamka experienced severe criticism from more conservative religious leaders and they even nicknamed him Kiyahi Cabul, which can be translated as 'dirty scholar' or 'pornopriest'. In 1932 he had a new novel printed by the publishing house of the colonial government. This novel *Laila Majnun*, was modelled after an Arabic story and combined romantic and more outspoken Islamic themes.

After his return from Makassar to Minangkabau, Hamka was active as a wandering preacher and writer. In 1935 he accepted the position of director of a Muhammadiyah school in Padang Panjang for a short period. The salary was very low, as private organization in those years of recession did not give high salaries to religious teachers. At the end of 1935 Hamka gave up this position to become the editor of an Islamic weekly in Medan. The most important reason for this change (after having been director for only four months) was his difficult financial position. In addition his father and other were urging him to take a second wife. But Hamka follow his own heart and the advice of A.R. Sutan Mansur, his brother-in-law (14 years older, who married three women), that his emotion, energy and time should not be spoilt by dividing them between too many matters (Hamka 1974: II, 37).

In Medan he was not only editor but also author of most of the articles in the weekly *Pedoman Masyarakat* (Guidance for the People). By way of feuilleton he wrote several novels in a romantic, sometimes very sentimental style, introducing many characters with deep religious feelings. He filled his novel with severe criticism of Minangkabau *adat*, especially the effects of matrilineal system of inheritance. In his novel *Merantau ke Deli* (1939) he tells the story of a poor Minangkabau boy who emigrated to the rich Medan area and there found his livelihood as a peddler. While still in very simple circumstances he met a Javanese girl, fell in love and married her. This marriage was very happy. Their economic position improved, and they moved to a shop in a larger town. After some time he wanted to visit his original region, this time as a successful trader. There, however, he had no

proper place to sleep, except the yard of the mosque, because he had not married a woman of his own region, the Minangkabau. Against his own feelings and against the feelings of his wife, he followed the urgent advice of his family and married a second wife from a Minangkabau family. The relationship between the two wives from the beginning was bad and resulted in an impossible situation. Eventually he divorced his first wife. His commerce then collapsed and he returned to Minangkabau a broken man.⁴

These romantic novels are sometimes quite strange, from the viewpoint of literature, as Hamka had to deliver several pages each week for his magazine. One sometimes has the feeling that while writing he did not remember what had been written the week before! Although continuing his father's struggle for the reform of Islam and fighting the Minangkabau system of inheritance as something deviating from strict Islamic laws, he used quite different methods. He did not utter the fierce insults and harsh excommunications of his father. He clearly was not well enough versed in legal subtleties to quote many authorities of *fiqh*, or Islamic law, so he chose an indirect way to promote his ideas.

Besides novels he wrote many historical articles in his weekly, mostly dealing with the life of Muhammad, Abu Bakar and 'Umar. In particular, the life of second Caliph, 'Umar was quite popular at that time, as many of Hamka's own social and political ideals could be illustrated with episodes from 'Umar's life. As a Muhammadiyah member and leader he was not involved in practical politics.

The social environment of the city of Medan was quite different from that of the Minangkabau area. Medan, still a very small town at the middle of the 19th century, grew rapidly during the economic boom after World War I and experienced immigration of many different groups. About one third of the town was Chinese, much of its population was Batak, partly 'heathen', partly Christian and Muslim. The Muslim community of the town was made up of Malay, Javanese, Batak and Minangkabau people, the latter three groups being immigrants as well. Reid (1979: 38-83) has called the complexity of its population an 'ethnic web'. This change in social conditions may also explain why Hamka's approach as a Muslim leader was so different from that of his father. In his autobiography he stresses the difference between

Islam as it is in Minangkabau and in Java, especially Yogyakarta. In the Minangkabau are all the people are Muslims and there are no confrontations

with other faiths or beliefs. Therefore Minangkabau people and especially its religious leader do not receive any stimuli to do research in the field of religion in order to defend it against Christian missions or against the Javanese religion that is known as *klenik* (sorcery). In fact there (in Yogyakarta) you can observe Islam only in the neighborhood of the mosque (*kauman*). At that time the Minangkabau religious leaders only fought among themselves and they discussed many aspects of the Islamic law, that have no serious meaning altogether (Hamka 1974b: I, 102).

Modern Sufism

In Medan Hamka had close friends among Chinese converts to Islam. At the request of one of them, Oei Tjeng Hien, in 1937 he started a series of articles, that were later published as his book *Tasawuf Modern* (Modern Piety). In the preface to the first edition, Hamka mentions the opinion of an Acehnese Muslim, Abdullah Faqih: "I first held the opinion that such a deep doctrine about perfections of one's self (*kesucian batin*) could only be found with people of the theosophical organization" (Hamka 1970: 8).

In the field of mystical doctrine Hamka rejected the system of the *tarekat* organization, as did his father, but he did not give it too much attention and did not start a polemic. His attitude towards the speculative and classical mysticism of writers such as Ibn 'Arâbî and al-Hallâj is somewhat ambiguous: he gives a lively and sympathetic description of their ideas, but in the end he rejects all forms of mysticism that try to eliminate the boundaries between man and his Creator. Mysticism that is in search of the unity of man and his Lord exceeds these boundaries, in the same way as the science of *fiqh* or Islamic law often exceeds its boundaries, when it wants too much certainty about unimportant details: "Such specialists in the field of Islamic law discuss the ritual cleansing of a woman who has a moustache. Is she only clean when the water has reached her skin or is she already clean when her moustache is wet? The mystics finally also tried to go too far..." (Hamka 1970: 20).

The general trend indicated by this book reveals a type of mysticism, as practiced in the first centuries of Islam, during which the idea of *zuhd* or ascetism was stressed. Hamka elaborates this theme in a rather eclectic way. According to a close assistant he generally worked with a quotation book besides his typewriter and mixed old sayings by Muslim mystics such as Hassan al-Basrî and Abû Yazîd al-Bustâmî with modern stories, such as one about the old Rockefeller, who at

the age of 97 had only one wish: that God should give him a full 100 years. But he died in 1937 aged 97: "All his millions could not give him those three years!" (Hamka 1970: 34 cfr. Yunan Nasution in Salam 1978: 25-28, Badruzzaman 1985: 97-106). The book was not written to elaborate an academic summary of Islamic mysticism, but only to receive as much meaningful and reasonable wisdom from this history as possible. In this sense of eclectic acceptance and as a supreme example of harmonizing, he wrote about the origins of the word *tasawwuf* or mysticism:

The meaning and origin of the word *tasawwuf* is still discussed among scholars. Some say that it originates from *sifā'*, pure or clean. Others say that it originates from *suf*, woolen, reflecting people who entered a mystical life and used rough, woolen clothes, not the fine and the beautiful clothes of the people of 'this world'. Others again say that it originates from *suffa*, people who are on one line (*saff*) with the companions of the prophet. Others state, that it originates from *sufanā'*, a dry thicket at the edge of Arabian deserts. Some philologists or historians, especially during recent years, consider its origin to be from the Greek language in an Arabicized form. Then it would originate from 'theo-sophy' or knowledge about divine things. [...] Whatever may be its origins, from the Arabic or the Greek language, this etymology makes it quite clear what *sufism* really means: people who stick together in a group in order to cleanse their hearts, to be pure for their Lord; people who wear simple clothes, different from those of worldly men. They want to live in a way which resembles the thicket at the edge of the desert, meager and emaciated; and besides that they want to receive deeper knowledge about the relationship between man and his Creator (Hamka 1970: 17).

Hamka does not explore these several possible origins, instead he accepts them all and gives them some sense in an exhortational way. So his mystical writing as this period promoted a rather individualistic and a-political piety.

While reading his books one cannot see any influence of the political changes of these years. In 1937 the new Governor General, Tjarda van Starkenborgh, gave more freedom of political organization than his predecessor was inclined to give, but the only Dutch political figure in Hamka's work is Queen Wilhelmina. "She taught her daughter Juliana how to cook her own food, to sew, to clean a house, because in this life fortune can never be trusted" (Hamka 1970:197). Between 1939, the year of the first edition of *Tasauf Modern* as a book and 1970 (when I bought a copy), there were 11 reprints and since then the book has remained popular. During this period there was a Japanese

occupation, a struggle for independence and many political conflicts in Indonesia, and Hamka was involved in these conflicts as well. He was even imprisoned for a period of two years, as we shall discuss below, but his 'mystical' writings seem to be quite far from this daily struggle. Besides *Tasauf Modern*, his most important writings in this field are *Falsafat Hidup* (1939), *Lembaga Budi* (1940), *Perkembangan Tasauf dari Abad ke Abad* (1952) and *Dari Perbendaharaan Lama* (published as a book in 1963, on the basis of earlier articles).

Hamka loved poetry and wrote many poems himself, but he never quoted any stanzas from the writings of one of the most famous Islamic poets of Indonesia, Hamzah Fansuri, who was active in Aceh, ca. 1550-1590. In his lengthy work on the history of Islam, written as a series of articles in 1939 and published as a book in 1949, Hamka presents a very negative opinion of Hamzah Fansuri:

His [Hamzah Fansuri's] sufism went too far. He was an adherent of the doctrine of Al-Hallâj with his *anâ al-haqq* [I Am the ultimate Reality]. His sufism, the *wujûdiyyah* teaches the unity between Creator and creature. The advocates of this doctrine did not have the mental power to start an action against foreign domination and colonialism. This was in contrast with the spirit of *jihâd* as a doctrine taught by Islam and that was badly needed in Aceh. At the time of Sultan Iskandar Tsani the struggle between Hamzah and Syamsuddin reached its highest point [...] In the end Hamzah was killed because his doctrine was very dangerous (Hamka 1961:899).

The mystic Hamzah Fansûrî probably died before 1590. His pupil Shamsuddîn held an influential position at the time of Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636). After the death of this Sultan a Hadramaut divine, usually called Nûruddîn al-Rânîrî after his place of birth, arrived in Aceh and managed to obtain an influential position in the Acehnese sultanate. Al-Rânîrî denounced many of the works of Hamzah and Shamsuddîn as heretic, but his career was to be short. Starting in 1637 it had an unexpected end in 1643, when he was expelled. Sultan Iskandar Tsânî (1636-1641) still supported al-Rânîrî, but his successor, the first female Sultanah, Tâjul 'Alam (1641-1675) shifted her allegiance to another party and al-Rânîrî was banned (Ito 1978). Hamka could not read Dutch sources and studies, and probably also had no or at least difficult access to the Indonesian texts published in these studies. So he probably only knew the book of al-Rânîrî about *fiqh*, that was widely available in printed editions, as was the Qur'ân commentary of Abdurra'ûf, the last of the great Acehnese scholars. No works of

the two earlier mystics were printed in Indonesia before 1950. Therefore Hamka's opinion was not solidly founded on sources and his chronology seems to be rather disturbed.

This example reveals the strengths and weaknesses of his writings on history: he very seldom mentions his sources and does not show any critical attitude towards conventional ideas in this field. On the other hand his writing of history is very lively and always has the practical goal of edifying. It is another genre, but written with the same scope as his *Tasauf Modern*.

The Japanese Interregnum, 1942-1945 and the Revolution of 1945-1949

After the Japanese conquered Indonesia, the publication of Hamka's magazine could not be continued. At the end of 1943 Hamka became the chairman of the semi-official local organization of the Muslim '*ulamâ*'. While his father came into open conflict with the Japanese, refusing to bow his head in the direction of Japan at the beginning of an official meeting (cfr. Hamka 1967b:190-204). Hamka himself had a good relationship with the Japanese in the town of Medan and its surroundings (Hamka 1974b:II145-236). A few weeks before the declaration of independence, 17 August 1945, Hamka was summoned to Jakarta by Soekarno, in order to participate in the committee preparing for independence and the new constitution. Hamka was still on his way in South Sumatra, when he heard the news of the proclamation. He immediately returned to Medan, but there he was viewed as a traitor by the leading group of nationalists, because he had left his people alone at the decisive moment. In a meeting full of emotion, he was dismissed as the Medan leader of the Muhammadiyah. He moved to his area of origin and stayed there five years jobless, rewriting his many articles and also giving some support to the fight against the return of colonialism. During these years he wrote his history of Islam (about 1,000 pages) and his autobiography (about 500 pages), that was first published in 1950 when he was aged 42 years.

During this period he also wrote a pamphlet about the system of matrilineal heritage in the Minangkabau. He defended a compromise between Islamic law and *adat* that has since become widely accepted: the traditional collective possessions of a family (especially land and houses) are to be inherited according to traditional matrilineal lines, but all goods that are acquired during the marriage of the parents are

to be divided according to Islamic law. Although this theory still deviates from the strict rules and the majority of interpretations of Islamic law, herewith the practical problems were solved. This was sufficient for Hamka, who was not overtly dogmatic in these discussions (Hamka 1946; cfr. Amir Syarifuddin 1984).

Jakarta: 1950-1981

In 1950 Hamka moved to Jakarta, the capital of the new Indonesian Republic. There he became the central figure in the Al-Azhar Mosque, named after the Egyptian Institute of Islamic Studies, that delivered Ph.D. honoris causa both to him and his father.⁵ The mosque is situated in a new middle-class area and besides being a place of worship, it contains a general library, a medical center, the office of an Islamic publishing organization and rooms where lectures are held for the Jakarta Muhammadiyah University. In one of the rooms courses for martial arts (*pencak silat, judo*, etc.) are also given. The central idea for these activities may be summarized with the title of a book by Sidi Gazalba, one of Hamka's assistant during the 1950's at Al-Azhar: *Masjid Pusat Ibadat dan Kebudayaan*, the mosque as a centre for worship and culture (Gazalba 1962). Although Hamka became a prominent member of the militant Muslim party, the Masjumi, and was a member of parliament from 1954 until 1959, he did not play an important role in practical politics. The main reason for his position in the party's delegation to the parliament was his power as a vote getter. Through his writings, both his articles in the magazine *Pedoman Masyarakat* as well as his books, he became extremely popular.

The move from Medan and Minangkabau to Jakarta did not lead him to a more lenient attitude towards other religions. Medan was a city where many religious convictions could live together under the formal leadership of a Malay and Islamic sultan. Jakarta was the centre of political and ideological debate and even conflicts between various groups. This atmosphere fostered strong group solidarity and stressed differences with other groups. This may have been the reason why his writings about sufism, were from this time onwards, more polemic towards Western and Christian authors. He stopped quoting short stories from Western countries. In an article about the history of sufism which he wrote for the Islamic journal *Abadi* between 1955 and 1962, and that was published again in a book in 1963, he wrote: "Sometimes

scientific research, that has to be carried out seriously, is nourished by political sentiments. Western Christians like to humiliate Islam by saying that the religion of Muhammad is only plagiarism of the Christian doctrine" (Hamka 1963:52).

After 1960 the political party of the Masjumi was banished, while president Soekarno made himself more and more the centre of the government and became the object of a form of hero worship. At that time the communist sponsored organization of artists started a campaign against Hamka, alleging that his most famous books were the result of plagiarism. As we have seen, Hamka was deeply influenced by Arabic novelists, especially by al-Manfalûtî. This latter author wrote many popular novels in Egypt. It is clear that Hamka took several ideas and even sometimes whole lines from al-Manfalûtî. But it is also evident that the context of all his novels is wholly Indonesian and even to some degree autobiographical. In 1964 disputes about freedom of expression for artists, the function of the parliament and about President Soekarno ended with Hamka (among many other members of the Masjumi) in prison, where he remained until 1966. It was a 'time of grace' for him: there he wrote a first draft of his voluminous Qur'ân-commentary, about 10,000 pages in thirty volumes. The first edition gives us the dates of this draft: volumes of 300 pages and more were written in just two to three weeks! It is not necessary to state, that in such a period a scholarly work cannot be written: Hamka himself did not intend to write such a scholarly or academic work. He once compared himself with the two other Indonesians who have accomplished 30 volume Qur'ân-commentaries: Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy, from Aceh, a Professor at the State Institute of Islamic Studies in Yogyakarta, who was a specialist in the field of Islamic law and Zainal Arifin Abbas, his friend in Medan, who paid scholarly attention to the history of Islam and the life of Muhammad. Hamka pays attention to *'aqîdah*, fundamental beliefs. Therefore his books seem like philosophical treatises. But he does not offer Islam in a philosophical disguise, as he says. From time to time he uses philosophy in order to make stronger arguments for his propagation of the feelings of religion and Islam (Hamka 1967a:9).

Philosophy in his case is more the use of an evocative and striking story than intellectual argument and has to be distinguished from the use of arguments taken from the texts of the Qur'ân and *hadîth*. The ultimate goal of his writings is not the acceptance of truth, but the

birth and fostering of feelings.

From 1966 onwards Hamka was again leader of the Al-Azhar mosque in Jakarta, professor at several Islamic universities, chairman of the Muhammadiyah, but most of his energy was devoted to the last magazine that he started and directed, *Panji Masyarakat*. By the time of his death it had 40.000 subscribers all over Indonesia!

Two major themes that dominated his religio-political discourse in these years were the efforts of Christian missions to Christianize (parts of) Indonesia and the endeavors for the (re)organization of the so-called *Kepercayaan*, new or old religious movements, often based on the vague concept of 'original Javanese mysticism'.

In the 20th century the system of Muslim brotherhoods or *tarekat* rather quickly lost influence in Indonesia, but, particularly in Java, many new groups of a mystical nature were founded, mostly called *Kebatinan* in the 1950's and 1960's, while in the 1970's the words *Aliran Kepercayaan* were more common. Although Hamka was not originally from Java, he had to cope with this issue several times, as it was a hot topic of discussion between 1965 and 1978. In a book called *Perkembangan Kebatinan di Indonesia* (1970: The development of Kebatinan in Indonesia) he considered this movement as a remainder of the religion that existed in Indonesia before Islam. In this book, an elaboration of a speech on the approach of Islamic preachers towards *Kebatinan*, he showed more of a fighting spirit than in his earlier writings on mysticism. He denounced Western scholars who edited the text of this kind of syncretism. While still mentioning Massignon as a "pious Catholic priest" and acknowledging his knowledge of sufism (as well as that of Nicholson, Tinkes, Drewes and Zoetmulder), he considered this scholarship to be a preparation for Christianization: "If this kind of sufism is already established, there is no need for Islamic law. All Muslims who are versed in sufism may attain unity in the Godhead through the highest *Rûh Idâfi*, that is, the Spirit of 'Isâ al-Masîh or Jesus Christ" (Hamka 1974c:91).

Compared with the approach of Prof. Dr. H.M. Rasjidi at the same seminar, Hamka's attitude is still rather lenient and soft, as Rasjidi reproached these *Kebatinan* groups for using mostly sexual symbolism in an immoral way and therefore having a bad influence on the general morality of the Indonesian people. If compared to the viewpoint of another contributor at this seminar, Prof. H.A. Mukti Ali, Hamka's speech is surely harsher. Prof. Mukti Ali insisted on the

mechanism of growth and the spread of *Kebatinan* and expressed that, in his opinion, Indonesian Islam placed too much emphasis on the aspect of Islamic law, *fiqh*, and did not show the more emotional sides of the religion. This argument was not reiterated by Hamka during that seminar, but in his book *Mengembalikan Tasawuf kepada Pangkalnya* ("In order to bring sufism back to its original inspiration", 1973) he again mentions this issue. Also in an article in the *Indonesia Magazine* of 1977, he mentions formalism in Islam as the main reason for *Kebatinan*.

Hamka did not acknowledge *Kebatinan* or *Aliran Kepercayaan* as a distinct religion. Through a da'wah or preaching, that emphasized mysticism and piety as well as moral teaching, he hoped to bring these 'back' to their original (Islamic) religion.

President of the Majelis Ulama, Watchdog to the Christian Missions

When I was sent to Indonesia in 1889, in order to study the reality of Islam in that area, the minister of Colonial Affairs, Keuchenius, urgently requested me to look for a method to realize the organization of the Islamic community as a church. That statesman hoped in such a way to be free from the obligation to nominate leaders of mosques and Islamic judges. The idea in effect could not be realized (Snouck Hurgronje 1959:II,1073).

This remark of Snouck Hurgronje from 1932 summarizes the problems of the colonial government with regard to Islam. Theoretically there was a separation of religion and the state, but in fact the colonial government was in many ways active in the affairs of the Islamic community.

Indonesia is not a secular state, neither has it declared Islam as an official religion of the state. Belief in God is one of the pillars of the state ideology, and in practice this means that the government supports activities of the recognized religions, Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism. In order to elaborate its relation with Muslims the government would like to realize the idea of minister Keuchenius. In 1975 President Suharto proposed the founding of a *Majlis Ulama* (Council of Islamic Scholars/Leaders): "The Catholic community is already organized through the Conference of Catholic Bishops of Indonesia, while the Protestants have a Council of Churches representing them. Also the Hindu and Buddhist communities have their

representation, while there is a secretariat for the *Aliran Kepercayaan*" (Speech of President Suharto 21.6.1975 at the opening of the first National Conference where the Majelis Ulama was constituted; quoted from U. Hasjim 1980:320).

A Majelis Ulama was then founded with the double task of promoting unity and solidarity among the Muslim community and representing Islam with the government. Hamka was asked to accept the position of General Chairman. He accepted it after consultations with the board of the Muhammadiyah, but he refused to receive a government salary or facilities such as a car and a driver, preferring to remain as independent from the government as possible.

The execution of the task of promoting unity among Muslims will not be considered here as it is difficult to give a final judgment. Surely Hamka was chosen because he was a member of the board of Muhammadiyah who would also be accepted by members of the other great Islamic organization of Indonesia, the Nahdlatul Ulama. Already in 1972 Islam was partly neutralized in the political field through the fusion of the four Islamic political parties into one United Party of National Development (*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*). This fusion had some political problems, but the Majelis Ulama did not interfere with these.

Through the Majelis Ulama the Muslim community was represented in the Council of Consultation between Religious Communities (*Badan Konsultasi antar Umat Beragama*). There Hamka strongly opposed the efforts of one religion (Christians) to make proselytes from another religion (Islam). In 1977 the Majelis Ulama strongly supported the Government's decision to limit the number of foreign missionaries and to regulate foreign aid given through churches.

In 1981 the *fatwa* department of the Majelis Ulama issued a prohibition against Muslims participating in Christmas celebrations. In Protestant environments in particular practice of Christmas celebrations had come into existence and non-Christians were invited to participate. The Majelis Ulama received many complaints about Muslim pupils in Christian schools who were urged to appear in pageants and to act as Joseph or Mary or as angels in Christmas plays. Others complained that they had to sing Christmas songs at school or at Christmas meetings at offices. In response to the people who complained, some Christians replied, that the harmony of religions would be endangered if they refuse to participate. Many pupils at schools dared not complain, for fear of repercussion during their examinations.

The Majelis Ulama's prohibition of participation in Christmas celebrations only entered the newspapers on 5 May 1981, whereas the decision was dated 7 March. On 6 May newspapers reported, that on 23 April a meeting was held between leaders of the Majelis Ulama and the Minister of Religious Affairs, and that on 30 April the Majelis Ulama had taken the decision to withdraw the *fatwa* from circulation. The withdrawal was signed by Hamka and not by K.H. Syukri Ghazali, head of the *fatwa* department, that issued the prohibition. On 7 May 1981 Hamka wrote a letter in his magazine *Panji Masyarakat*, stating that the *fatwa* should not be considered as wrong and invalid; with drawing it from circulation did not diminish the value of the *fatwa* itself, as it was founded on the Qur'ân and the *hadîth* of the Prophet. Hamka added: "Religious scholars are indeed the heirs of the prophets: from these they inherit the obligation to call for the good and to warn against evil. From these too they inherit the slander and contempt that they received. [...] Are religious scholars only teachers that can be ordered or dismissed arbitrarily? And if a meeting must be closed he may be summoned: Hey, nice man, just say a prayer!" In that same declaration Hamka twice made odd mistakes. He mentioned three things that are especially forbidden for Muslims when they assist at Christmas meetings: "lighting a candle, eating the bread that is considered to be the Body of Christ and drinking the water (sic: twice) that is considered to be the Blood of Christ".

In a letter dated 19 May 1981 Hamka resigned as general chairman of the Majelis Ulama. He did not wait for acknowledgment from the Minister of Religious Affairs (chairman of the constitutive council to the Majelis Ulama) as he considered himself to be appointed by his fellow scholars in the Council.

The minister of Religious Affairs, Alamsyah Ratu Prawiranegara, afterwards denied that he could intervene in this affair: "I cannot intervene, as I also cannot intervene in the Council of Catholic Bishops" (Pelita 25.5.1981). At a meeting on 20 August 1981 the Constitutive Council to the Majelis Ulama, under the chairmanship of the Minister of Religious Affairs, chose K.H. Syukri Ghazali, the former head of the *fatwa* department and signer of the *fatwa* under discussion, to be new general chairman of the Majelis Ulama. The Minister issued a letter dated 1 September 1981 in which he made a distinction between ritual and ceremonial aspects in Christmas ceremonies, as well as in the ceremonies of other religions. As for ritual aspects, par-

ticipation should be restricted to adherents of the religions concerned, while attendance and even participation in the ceremonial aspects are allowed for people of other religions.

The Minister of Religious Affairs Alamsyah accused Hamka of acting against the State ideology, Pancasila, while Hamka accused the government of interfering with religion and of attempts to introduce Pancasila as a new religion of the state.

Hamka died on 24 July 1981 at the age of 75 years. According to his wishes he was buried in a very simple manner, just a few hours after he died. The Minister of Religious Affairs assisted at his burial.

Hamka's personality is still under discussion. Some call him a real scholar and stress his titles of Professor and Doctor (twice *honoris causa*: in Egypt and in Malaysia), while others, in my opinion more correctly, consider him to have been a journalist and prolific writer of good, understandable devotional literature. This was his own opinion too: when a Muhammadiyah leader criticized the scientific standard of several of his seminars on the history of Islam in Indonesia, stating that the participants only fulfilled their desire for nostalgia, Hamka answered: "How can such a narrow-minded man be a leader of the community?" (In Rusydi Hamka 1981:93).

People also differ regarding his attitude towards the government. Some stress that he was not as harsh as his father and was inclined to accept compromises. He was even called the 'chaplain of the presidential palace', as he was a formidable preacher, who could bring his audience to tears, including in the national palace. Some criticized his entry to the Majelis Ulama as a change from a watchdog to the Government into a servant. He was indeed a man who did not consistently follow either a strong or a lenient policy. In 1970, for example, he severely attacked the writer H.B. Jassin, who published a novel that was considered offensive to the Prophet Muhammad, but in 1978 he wrote a praising article about H.B. Jassin's translation of the Qur'ân, a translation severely criticized by many religious scholars. He often moved during his life, not just physically, his opinion switching frequently as well. This was perhaps caused by his method of writing (and dictating) for his magazines. In writing articles such as these one cannot reconsider things as there is the pressure of time. His column in *Panji Masyarakat* was called *Dari Hati ke Hati* (From heart to heart) and such was his writing. He was neither a mystic nor a politician in the usual sense of the word, but played a decisive role in both fields. In

this he was surely the most important and impressive Muslim leader of the largest Islamic community of the world from 1950-1980.

Islam versus *Adat*, Communism, *Aliran Kepercayaan*, Christianity and the Civil Religion of *Pancasila*

From the start of his career as a preacher, journalist and promotor of Islam, Hamka championed an Islamic society rather than an Islamic state. Between 1928 and 1950 he worked in Minangkabau, South Sulawesi and Medan among Muslims who lived in a Muslim society that ought to be renewed and improved. His main 'enemy' was *adat*, a factor not overtly nor directly in contrast or in conflict with Islam, but creating a number of non-Islamic aspects in society. He used a quite different strategy to that of his father and even most of his fellow reformists. He very seldom returned to the textual precepts of orthodox Islam, but in his articles, novels and sermons, he often used an *argumentum ad hominem*, a romantic story, showing how strange and even absurd traditions and customs of *adat* could be. Here he clearly revealed himself as an adherent of the mystical side of Islam. Therefore he did not exaggerate the conflict between Islam and *adat* but stood for a harmonious relationship between the two, given the priority and supremacy of Islam. During this period he was not involved in practical party politics.

After 1950 in his Jakarta period, other challenges arrived for Islam. Apparently Hamka never completely accepted Pancasila as the unifying ideology of Indonesian Republic. As a member of Parliament in the 1950's he defended the ideal of an Islamic State. Until 1965 communism was the great challenge, then *Aliran Kepercayaan* and finally Christian missionaries became the obstacles to the accomplishment of his ideal. In the late 1970's and early 1980's he did not follow the majority of Muslim leaders, who considered Pancasila to be a proper Indonesian formulation of Islamic ideals (Cfr. Steenbrink 1989 and 1990). With a powerful national state, one would expect an accomodationist type of Muslim leadership at that time, as we explained in the introduction to this study. Why did Hamka evoke the biggest conflict of his long career during the last month before his death, knowing that it was a lost cause? Was it the memory of his father, who stood upright in the face of the impossible conflict against the Japanese 36 years earlier? In order to understand these personal

decisions we should not look for sociological answers, but instead refer to his individual livestockory.

Endnotes:

1. A very negative reflection of this forced conversion can be found in Parlindungan ca. 1965. Parlindungan was a Muslim Batak. Defense of the Minangkabau Muslims against the negative judgment of Parlindungan can be found in Hamka 1974.
2. This identification of prophet and king is already present in the Malay version of *Tajus-Salatin*, cfr. Roorda van Eijsinga's edition, p. 48: *Ada pangkat nubuwat dan hukumat itu nyata/ seperti suatu cincin dengan dua permata...*[prophethood and statemanship may be compared with a ring with two diamonds]. The Javanese version of this work provides an even more elaborate discussion of the relationship between the two powers.
3. 1985:65, ..bila pemerintah pusat kuat secara militer dan politik, kaum sufi terutama memusatkan diri pada peranan spiritual mereka, tetapi pada masa pemerintah lemah secara politik mereka biasanya memainkan peranan yang sangat kuat dan penting dalam memelihara stabilitas sosial dan politik...
4. For a literary analysis of these novels, see Teeuw 1979: I, pp. 69-72.
5. Abdul Karim Amrullah received a Doctor Degree from a committee in Cairo during his visit to an Islamic World Congress in 1926; Hamka received his degree from Al-Azhar in 1958.

References:

- Ahmad Daudy, *Allah dan manusia dalam Konsepsi Syaikh Nuruddin ar-Raniri* (Jakarta: Rajawali, 1983).
- Amir Syarifuddin, *Pelaksanaan Hukum Kewarisan dalam Lingkungan Adat Minangkabau* (Jakarta: Gunung Agung, 1984).
- Al-Attas, Syed Muhammad Naquib, *A Commentary on the Hujjat al-Siddiq of Nur al-din al-Raniri* (Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Education, 1986).
- Badruzzaman Busyairi, *Catatan Perjuangan H.M. Yunan Nasution*, (Jakarta: Pustaka Panjimas, 1985).
- Behrend, T., *The Serat Jatiswara: Structure and Change in a Javanese Poem, 1600-1930* (Canberra: Ph.D. Thesis ANU, 1987).
- Day, A., 'Islam and Literature in South-East Asia: some pre-modern, mainly Javanese perspective', in M.B. Hooker (ed.) *Islam in South-East Asia* (Leiden: Brill, 1983), pp. 130-159.
- Gazalba, Sidi, *Masjid Pusat Ibadat dan Kebudayaan* (Djakarta: Bulan Bintang, 2nd ed., 1962).
- Hamka, *Adat Minangkabau Menghadapi Revolusi* (Djakarta: Tekad, second ed., 1963).
- _____, *Sedjarah Umat Islam* (Bukittinggi: Nusantara, 3rd ed., 1961).
- _____, *Dari Perbendaharaan Lama* (Medan: Madju, 1963).
- _____, *Peladjaran Agama Islam* (Djakarta: Bulan Bintang, 4th ed., 1967a).
- _____, *Ajabku* (Jakarta: Djajamurni, 3rd ed., 1967b).

- _____, *Tasauf Modern* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 12th ed., 1970).
- _____, *Antara Fakta dan Khayal: Tuanku Rao* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1974a).
- _____, *Kenang-kenangan Hidup* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 4 vols, 3rd ed., 1974b).
- _____, *Perkembangan Kebatinan di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 2nd ed., 1974c).
- Hassan, Riaz, *Islam, dari Konservatisme sampai Fundamentalisme* (Jakarta: Rajawali, 1985).
- Hasyim, U. , *Ulama Pewaris Nabi* (Surabaya: n.p., 1980).
- Parlindungan, Mangaradja Ongngang, *Pongkinangolngolan Sinambela gelar Tuanku Rao, Terror Agama Islam Mazhab Hambali di Tanah Batak* (1965).
- Ito, Takeshi, "Why did Nuruddin Ar-Raniri leave Aceh in 1054 A.H.?" in *Bijdragen tot de Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde* (134), pp. 489-491.
- Reid, Anthony, *The Blood of the People* (Oxford: Univ. Press, 1979).
- Rusydi Hamka, *Pribadi dan Martabat Buya Prof. Dr. Hamka* (Jakarta: Pustaka Panjimas, 1981).
- Salam, Solichin (ed.), *Kenang-kenangan 70 tahun Buya Hamka* (Jakarta: Nurul Islam, 1978).
- Snouck Hurgronje, C., *Adviezen* ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959).
- Steenbrink, Karel A., "Darul Islam di Asia Tenggara", *Prisma* 17(3) (1988), pp. 76-80.
- _____, "Towards a Pancasila Society: the Indonesian debate on secularization, liberation and development 1969-1989", *Exchange* (54) (1989), pp. 1-18.
- _____, "Pancasila: Entwicklungen innerhalb der Civil Religion Indonesians", *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft* (74) (1990), pp. 124-141.
- Teeuw, A. , *Modern Indonesian Literature* (Leiden: KITLV, 2 vols., 1979).

Karel Steenbrink is a researcher at the Interuniversity Institute for Missiological and Ecumenical Research, Leiden, the Netherlands.