Journal of Southeast Asian Studies, 55(2), pp 267–291 June 2024.
 doi:10.1017/S002246342400047X

Islamic parties and the allure of socialism: The case of Indonesia's Masjumi

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Until recently, scholars have generally neglected to examine the socialist inspirations of the Republic of Indonesia's most influential Islamic party, Masjumi (Partai Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia, 1943–60) during Indonesia's parliamentary democracy period (1950–59). Drawing on books published by Masjumi politicians as well as an Indonesian translation of the Syrian Islamic socialist Mustafa al-Siba'i's Islamic Socialism (1949), this article explores how two prominent Masjumi members, Zainal Abidin Ahmad and Isa Anshary, drew on socialist ideas in forming their political visions for Indonesia, as part of a broader ongoing debate in the wider Muslim world. In contrast to popular perceptions of Indonesian political Islam today, as well as Cold War-centric characterisations of Islamic political parties, this article shows how Muslim democrats in 1950s Indonesia emphasised socio-economic justice and compassion in their articulations of political Islam.

Harry Verhoeven, in his introduction to a recent special issue of *Third World Quarterly*, makes an important observation about socialism in formerly colonised societies:

> From Nehru in India to Nyerere in Tanzania, the founding fathers of new republics believed socialism could transform their societies following the retreat of European colonialism. Yet what socialism meant and still means in theory and in practice in Africa and Asia has always been highly heterogeneous and differed markedly from the European experience (itself very diverse too). African and Asian movements have not simply mimicked the ideas and institutions of Soviet or European Marxists, but have endeavoured to define their own in a postcolonial setting, experimenting with a variety of interpretations and in the process adapting doctrines and templates to their unique political and social contexts.[1]

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1 Harry Verhoeven, 'What is to be done? Rethinking socialism(s) and socialist legacies in a postcolonial world', *Third World Quarterly* 42, 3 (2021): 450.

This observation is pertinent to Indonesia, because socialism resonated across the political spectrum and was interpreted with different inflections by various political actors. Not without cause did Sutan Sjahrir, the erstwhile prime minister of Indonesia (1945–47), assert that 'among the many political parties in present day Indonesia, there is not one party that does not express its sympathies for a socialist and collectivist society, nor is there any party today that advocates unlimited free economic enterprise or free competition. We in Indonesia are all socialists, or at least, socialistically inclined and such is also the spirit of our constitution.'[2]

However, there has been a distinct lack of scholarship on what Indonesian socialism meant in both theory and practice. Until Pradipto Niwandhono's 2021 PhD thesis, there was no comprehensive study of Sjahrir's Partai Sosialis Indonesia (PSI, Socialist Party of Indonesia).[3] Soekarno's invocation of *Sosialisme à la Indonesia* under his Guided Democracy (1959–65) has largely been dismissed by scholars — not without cause — as a fig leaf for his authoritarian tendencies, more rhetorical than programmatic.[4] While Rémy Madinier and Kevin Fogg have begun the process of studying Indonesian Muslims' engagement with socialism, much work remains to be done to uncover the contents of specifically Indonesian articulations of socialism, smothered as they were by three decades of autocratic rule under Soeharto (1966–98).[5] This article advances this ongoing conversation by exploring how Muslim intellectuals associated with Masjumi, the dominant Islamic political party of the 1950s, engaged with socialist ideas.

Masjumi was the dominant Islamic political party in Indonesia from 1945 to 1960, although it was somewhat weakened by defections by the Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia (PSII, Indonesia Islamic League Party) and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU, Revival of the Ulama) in 1947 and 1952, respectively. Until the 1955 general election, it occupied 50 seats in parliament, and 57 (out of 257) seats thereafter. Socialism exerted a gravitational pull on Indonesian political thinking from at least the 1920s until the 1960s, and its enduring appeal influenced Masjumi politicians as well.[6] The international and domestic climate of Indonesia during the parliamentary democracy period facilitated Muslim engagement with socialist ideas in new ways, engagements which went beyond the optimistic Islamic communism of Haji Misbach or Haji Datuk Batuah during the 1920s. The Muslim modernists that formed the intellectual backbone of Masjumi were already predisposed by their training in Mohammad Abduh's modernist jurisprudence (*fiqh*) to be open to socialist ideas emanating from Europe and other parts of the Muslim world, although they were never uncritical

2 Sutan Sjahrir, *Indonesian socialism* (Rangoon: Asian Socialist Publishing House, 1956), pp. 30–31.
3 Pradipto Niwandhono, 'The making of modern Indonesian intellectuals: The Indonesian Socialist Party (PSI) and democratic socialist ideas, 1930s to mid-1970s' (Ph.D. diss., University of Sydney, 2021).
4 Herbert Feith, *The decline of constitutional democracy in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1962), pp. 594–5; Benedict R.O.G. Anderson, 'The languages of Indonesian politics', *Indonesia* 1 (1966): 114.
5 Rémy Madinier, *Islam and politics in Indonesia: The Masjumi Party between democracy and integralism*, trans. Jeremy Desmond (Singapore: NUS Press, 2015), pp. 76, 103; Kevin Fogg, *Indonesia's Islamic revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), pp. 178–83; Kevin Fogg, 'Indonesian socialism of the 1950s: From ideology to rhetoric', *Third World Quarterly* 42 (2020): 465–82.
6 See Lin Hongxuan, *Ummah yet proletariat: Islam, Marxism, and the making of the Indonesian Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2023).

observers.[7] Within Masjumi, Mohammed Natsir (1908–93) and his associates, primarily Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, Zainal Abidin Ahmad, Abu Hanifah, Kasman Singodimedjo, Jusuf Wibisono, Mohammed Sardjan, and Mohammed Roem constituted the backbone of Masjumi's modernist wing and were described by George Kahin as 'religious socialists'.[8]

From 1950 onward, these modernists became increasingly dominant in Masjumi, successfully competing with the older and more conservative wing of the party led by Soekiman for party leadership and ministerial roles.[9] Mostly Dutch-educated and fluent in several European languages (usually Dutch, English and German), these Masjumi intellectuals were well-read and familiar with European Marxist ideas. Their writings evince a strong acquaintance with Dutch communist literature rather than Soviet propaganda, though none of them appear to have read Marx's or Engels' major works rigorously. Several of them even seemed ignorant of Marx's own bourgeois background and assumptions, aggrandising him as a working-class champion in ways reminiscent of the panegyrics associated with Sufi saints. As their references will show, their analyses of Marxism's relevance for Indonesia drew primarily on Western European Marxist and Anarchist literature, from Pierre-Joseph Proudhon to Henriette Roland Holst, rather than Comintern publications. Marx's historical materialism was clearly transgressive for them, but they perceived in Marx's critique of Capital important lessons for Indonesia, and resonances with Islamic goals. Accordingly, they sought to synthesise Marxist ideas in a way that would positively shape Indonesia's socio-economic structures, rather than to justify alignment with the USSR or the PRC. The discursive output of these Muslim modernists demonstrates their receptivity to socialism as well as their adaptations of Marxist ideas within an Islamic framework.[10]

This article focuses on the published works of two Masjumi modernists, Zainal Abidin Ahmad and Isa Anshary. These two parliamentarians stood at opposite ends of the modernists' political spectrum: Ahmad cleaved close to the European social-democratic traditions championed by Sjahrir and Hatta, whereas Anshary tended toward chauvinism and Islamic supremacism, rejecting other political and philosophical traditions as inferior. Taking their writings *in toto*, these two ideologues had divergent interpretations of what making Islam politically incarnate might mean. However, for several years in the late 1940s and early 1950s, their work converged around certain themes: the relevance of Marxist critiques of colonialism and imperialism, the importance of transnational solidarity, and the paramountcy of practical measures to resist or subvert the creeping influence of global Capitalism even while the European imperium was collapsing in Asia. By examining four books produced by these two ideologues, this article seeks to illustrate the powerful allure of socialist ideas for Muslim modernists in Indonesia.

The allure of socialism was so strong during this optimistic, triumphant, moment of (ostensibly) rapid decolonisation that even Isa Anshary could not resist engaging with it. Ahmad and Anshary were both politicians of some influence, and their

7 Madinier, *Islam and politics*, p. 20.
8 George McTurnan Kahin, *Nationalism and revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1952), pp. 309–10.
9 Madinier, *Islam and politics*, p. 46.
10 Zulfikar Ghazali, 'Upaya Masyumi membendung komunisme', *Ilmu dan Budaya* 13, 3 (1990): 181–6.

positions were echoed to varying degrees by a good number of their Masjumi colleagues.[11] The fragmented and contingent character of the republic's politics during the 1940s and 1950s, however, meant that Masjumi was never in power for long or comfortably, and so had little opportunity to pursue a clear 'Islamic socialist' policy platform. It would be premature to characterise Masjumi as an 'Islamic socialist' party, but it would be fair to say that several of Masjumi's prominent parliamentarians were deeply intrigued by socialism and wrestled with the possibility of incorporating what they saw as socialism's useful aspects into their own articulation of Islamic governance. Ahmad or Anshary's ideas may have had only minimal expression in policy, but their aspirations are nevertheless striking and intriguing in a country where Islamic politics has often meant ostentatious forms of intolerant conservatism or acquiescence to an authoritarian regime.[12]

One important catalyst for these Masjumi politicians' engagement with socialism was the institutional hollowness of 'Socialism' in Indonesia during the 1950s. Broadly popular, it was used by parties across the political spectrum to mobilise support, but it remained a slogan to many voters and was only rarely enshrined in legislation (how to enforce said legislation was another challenge), let alone in concrete policies or institutional arrangements.[13] The strongest case for Indonesian socialism incarnate was in Indonesia's thriving labour unions, almost all of which were affiliated with national political parties. These regularly went on strike and often won concessions from sympathetic state-appointed arbitrators during the 1950s.[14] This was not entirely surprising, given Indonesia's long history of union activism — after all, it was the unions of port cities such as Batavia, Surabaya, and Semarang that had incubated Indonesia's Communist movement during the 1910s.

At any rate, the institutional hollowness of 'Socialism' as well as its positive connotations both allowed and incentivised politicians across the spectrum to invest or invent their own meanings for the concept, whether that was redistributing land, the nationalisation of key industries, the creation of peasant/worker cooperatives, or some unspecific tradition of mutual aid, such as Soekarno's romanticisation of *gotong rojong*.[15] These perhaps sometimes cynical, but genuine efforts to theorise what socialism meant for Indonesia were not uncommon either, since there was no unambiguous state-led socialist policy agenda at the national level.[16] In a narrower sense, there was also a window of opportunity for politicians of all stripes to engage with socialist ideas during the early 1950s; the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) had been decimated in 1948, and did not reconstitute itself as a viable political

11 Notably Jusuf Wibisono and Kasman Singodimedjo. See Madinier, *Islam and politics in Indonesia*, pp. 31–2; Fogg, *Indonesia's Islamic revolution*, pp. 170–84.

12 On Masjumi's partially progressive policy platforms, see B.J. Boland, *The struggle of Islam in modern Indonesia* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1971), p. 44; Madinier, *Islam and politics*, pp. 311–12.

13 Feith, *The decline of constitutional democracy*, p. 35; Fogg, 'Indonesian socialism of the 1950s', pp. 471–3.

14 See John Ingleson, *Workers and democracy: The Indonesian labour movement, 1949–1957* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2022).

15 Daniel S. Lev, *The transition to guided democracy: Indonesian politics, 1957–1959* (Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asian Program Publications, Cornell University, 1966), p. 68. On the symbolic power of invoking 'socialism', see Anderson, 'The languages of Indonesian politics', p. 147.

16 Feith, *The decline of constitutional democracy*, pp. 473, 557.

force until late 1952.[17] Even then, it was much reduced in membership and influence. There was no strong communist party to (attempt to) monopolise Socialism conceptually, creating an intellectual vacuum at a historical moment when the world was bifurcating into a capitalist US-aligned bloc and a nominally socialist USSR-aligned bloc; it was clear that Indonesians would have to figure out what socialism meant to them if they were to avoid entanglement with the Soviet bloc. In such an environment, Masjumi politicians such as Zainal Abidin Ahmad made honest attempts to figure out what Indonesian socialism might look like, refracted through the lens of Islamic values.

The four texts examined here are remarkable because Masjumi is commonly characterised by scholars as ideologically anti-communist, partial to European business interests and Muslim landowners, as well as relatively friendly toward the United States even during the height of the Cold War during the 1950s.[18] There is plenty of substance to these claims: Masjumi's senior leadership was indeed implicated in the CIA-supported anti-Soekarno PRRI rebellions of 1958, and the party likely received significant financial support from the CIA before the 1955 general election as part of putative (and eventually, ultraviolent) US attempts to supplant Soekarno with a more pliable leader, for fear of his partiality to the PKI.[19] Masjumi, however, harboured very different aspects as well. During the late 1940s and early 1950s, several Masjumi ideologues were deeply engaged with formulating models of Islamic governance which embraced socialist aims and methods, as part of a broader debate occurring across the Muslim world.

There are other reasons why this lesser-known aspect of Masjumi is remarkable in the Indonesian context. Indonesian socialism, or *sosialisme à la Indonesia* in Soekarno's formulation, remains strongly associated with Soekarno's authoritarian-flavoured Guided Democracy (1959–65) and Soekarno's reliance on the PKI to balance the military's political influence. Scholars have largely (and not without cause) characterised Indonesian socialism as more rhetoric than reality. An honest attempt by Masjumi parliamentarians to articulate the relevance of socialism to Indonesia is thus noteworthy. Moreover, the confluence of Islamic identity and Marxist ideas examined in monographs by Takashi Shiraishi and Syamsul Bakri does not extend to the 1950s: Shiraishi focuses on the 1920s, while Bakri's study is limited to Surakarta and ends in 1942.[20] Scholarly and popular attention has been focused on self-professed Islamic Communists of the 1920s, such as Haji Misbach, but engagement with Marxist and socialist ideas continued well into the 1950s, albeit in new

17 Donald Hindley, *The Communist Party of Indonesia: 1951–1963* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), p. 17. Arguably, the PKI did not truly emerge as a political powerhouse until the prelude to the 1955 general election.

18 Fogg, *Indonesia's Islamic revolution*, p. 179.

19 Lev, *The transition to guided democracy*, pp. 157–8; Audrey R. Kahin and George McTurnan Kahin, *Subversion as foreign policy: The secret Eisenhower and Dulles debacle in Indonesia* (New York: New Press, 1995), pp. 116–19. For the PRRI rebellion and the United State's involvement, see Ken Conboy and James Morrison, *Feet to the fire: CIA covert operations in Indonesia, 1957–1958* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2018).

20 Takashi Shiraishi, *An age in motion: Popular radicalism in Java, 1912–1926* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990); Syamsul Bakri, *Gerakan Komunisme Islam Surakarta 1914–1942* (Yogyakarta: LKiS Pelangi Askara, 2015).

and more circumspect forms. The work of Masjumi intellectuals examined here was necessarily theoretical rather than practical, since Masjumi was never in power long enough or completely enough to implement programmatic socialist policies informed and circumscribed by Islam. Nevertheless, these writings represent a corpus of Indonesian political thinking that was intellectually substantial, with a fair claim to being a cultivar of Indonesian socialism. This might not have been quite what the romantic Soekarno — always strong on rhetoric and manoeuvring but weak on policy — had in mind, but it was a serious attempt to articulate Islam politically in a way that was influenced by, and convergent with, socialism.

These ideologues had their genesis in two intellectual springs, one long in the making and the other recent, the by-product of the national solidarity and positivism that accompanied the Indonesian Revolution (1945–50). The first was nineteenth-century Islamic reformism, typified by the Egyptian jurists Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905) and Rashid Rida (1865–1935). This took root in the then Netherlands East Indies in the form of the *kaum muda* movement: *kaum muda* is a gloss that describes a loose network of intellectuals who shared a hermeneutical method to varying degrees rather than an organised movement.[21] Theirs was an approach to *fiqh* that prioritised adapting Islamic praxis to contemporary conditions, with direct inference from the Qur'an and *hadith*, eschewing reliance on traditional sources of authority. These Islamic reformists became increasingly numerous and influential during the twentieth century, advocating direct engagement with the textual sources of *fiqh* and theology to provide circumstantially appropriate interpretations of Islamic orthopraxis, as opposed to reliance on traditional sources of jurisprudential legitimacy in the form of the books of classic *fiqh* written by famous jurists.[22] These books were commonly studied in *pondok*, traditional schools that emphasised mastering Arabic, Qur'anic recital, rote learning, and discipleship within the Shafi'i *madhhab* (loosely translatable as guild or school of thought) of jurisprudence.[23] This approach to jurisprudence and exegesis was one pejoratively characterised by the *kaum muda* as *taqlid*, blind obedience to the established legal maxims of past jurists, without concern for whether these maxims were still relevant. The traditionalists who adhered unquestioningly to classical jurists were labelled *kaum tua* by the *kaum muda* and were often castigated as *kolot* (stodgy or archaic). By contrast, the *kaum muda* championed the exercise of *ijtihad* (jurisprudential interpretation) to align Islamic praxis with the changing social, economic, and political conditions created by Dutch imperialism. This modernist approach to *fiqh* facilitated both conservative and progressive interpretations of Islamic praxis. It was within such a tumultuous and febrile intellectual climate that younger Masjumi parliamentarians saw fit to engage with socialist ideas.

21 On the networks of pilgrims, scholars, and students that facilitated the movement of Islamic reformist ideas between the Malay archipelago and the Middle East, see Michael Francis Laffan, *Islamic nationhood and colonial Indonesia: The umma below the winds* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002) and William R. Roff, *Studies on Islam and society in Southeast Asia* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2009).

22 Deliar Noer, *The modernist Muslim movement in Indonesia, 1900–1942* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 71–100.

23 More often than not, these books were concise compendiums of rulings by famous jurists within a particular *madhhab*, known as *mukhtasar*, which provided a summary of legal axioms without necessarily explaining how the jurist had arrived at these judgments.

Second, a younger and Dutch-educated generation of Masjumi leaders had come to dominate the party's leadership by 1951, a cohort centred on Mohammed Natsir (prime minister 1950–51). Kevin Fogg describes these Masjumi thinkers as 'Islamic socialists', while making clear that they rejected 'Marxist Communism' with its baggage of implied allegiance to the USSR or philosophical adherence to Marxist dialectical materialism.[24] Having come to maturity in the late 1920s and 1930s, they were well-inclined to socialism by dint of their European education and association with socialist-inclined Islamic organisations of the 1930s, notably Permi and PSII. Several, such as Natsir, had warm personal ties to PSI politicians, especially Sutan Sjahrir and Muhammad Hatta, and had their political careers launched by inclusion in Sjahrir's wartime cabinet (1945–47).[25] Natsir himself had significant formal education in Islamic jurisprudence and harboured distinctly *kaum muda* sympathies: he engaged deeply with the corpus of classical Islamic exegesis and jurisprudence, drawing on the works of Ibn Sina, Ibn Tufail, and Ibn Rushd (alongside Leibnitz and Kant) to shape Masjumi's policy positions.[26] Naturally, this did not sit well with conservatives within the party, and likely did not reflect the beliefs of their constituents, but it is clear that Masjumi developed a concentration of socialism-inclined Muslim politicians and provided them with a conducive environment to theorise about how Islam and socialism might intersect.[27]

Zainal Abidin Ahmad

Zainal Abidin Ahmad (1911–83) engaged deeply with Marx's ideas as part of a broader project of 'translating the world to Indonesia'.[28] Luthfi Assyaukanie has rigorously analysed Ahmad's ideas, and while he rightly identifies the relative progressiveness of Ahmad's political philosophy (often overlapping with Masjumi's leader, Mohammed Natsir) as well as its limitations, Ahmad's attraction to socialism and implicit acceptance of Marxist critiques received little attention.[29] A Minangkabau born in Medan, Ahmad was proud of the fact that he had been educated in the Sumatra Thawalib network of schools, a hotbed of Muslim student radicalism.[30] Coming to political maturity during the 1930s, he had been a member of the Islamic anticolonial organisation Permi from 1931 to 1935. Ahmad was a veteran journalist, having edited the weekly *Pandji Islam* in Medan with Hamka, as well as the monthly *Al-Manaar* in Medan until the Japanese invasion in 1942. By 1950, he was the administrator of *Indonesia Raya*, the independent newspaper founded by

24 Fogg, *Indonesia's Islamic revolution*, pp. 178–84.
25 Ibid., pp. 175, 181.
26 Ibid., p. 174. For detailed analysis of Natsir's political philosophy, see Ahmad Syafii Maarif, 'Islam as the basis of state: A study of the Islamic political ideas as reflected in the Constituent Assembly debates in Indonesia' (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1983), pp. 189–205.
27 Audrey R. Kahin, *Islam, nationalism and democracy: A political biography of Mohammad Natsir* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2012), p. 53.
28 Jennifer Lindsay, 'Heirs to world culture: An introduction', in *Heirs to world culture: Being Indonesian 1950–1965*, ed. Jennifer Lindsay and Maya H.T. Liem (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2012), pp. 4–9.
29 Luthfi Assyaukanie, *Islam and the secular state in Indonesia* (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2009), pp. 14, 60, 72–4, 227.
30 Audrey R. Kahin, *Rebellion to integration: West Sumatra and the Indonesian polity* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1999), pp. 37–8.

Angkatan 45 intellectual Mochtar Lubis in 1949.[31] From 1955 to 1959, he served as a Masjumi parliamentarian and the head of Masjumi's Sumatran branch, although his interests were more academic than political.[32] Drawing on his journalistic background and academic connections at various Islamic universities, he published several political tracts in the 1950s before and during his time in parliament, three of which are examined here.[33]

Like Natsir, Ahmad's intellectual referents were a mix of classical Islamic jurisprudence and Euro-American political philosophy.[34] His books must be understood in the context of the Constitutional Assembly's debates (1955–59), which had the express purpose — ultimately unsuccessful — of drawing up a permanent constitution for the Indonesian republic. The debates were heated, with both Masjumi and the PKI vilifying each other as well as Masjumi politicians clashing repeatedly with every major party on the issue of whether Indonesia ought to abandon its five constitutional principles of *Pancasila* in favour of an explicitly Islamic identity.[35] The books by Ahmad that preceded these debates are thus more optimistic, with a stronger impulse toward inclusivity; the ones that coincide with the debates are manifestly less interested in Western-style parliamentary democracy, though Ahmad's attachment to democratic norms never wavered. The problem was not especially one of disenchantment with Western intellectual products, but rather that Masjumi was increasingly locked into a pattern of fierce conflict with other major parties on the issue of Indonesia's Islamic identity, and how this might be expressed.[36] Ahmad's books, like Isa Anshary's, were thus part of a concerted attempt to shape the national conversation at a time of significant political flux, at least amongst the growing Indonesian reading public sympathetic to Masjumi.

Ahmad's engagement with Marx's ideas emerged most clearly in his attempt to sketch the outlines of an Islamic economy in *Dasar-dasar Ekonomi Islam* (1950). His respect for Marx's critique of capitalism was evident, and he rejected communism as practised in the USSR because 'Lenin and Stalin have strayed from the true teachings of Marx'.[37] Drawing on the work of nineteenth-century European intellectuals such as Friedrich List, Karl Bücher, Bruno Hildebrand, and Gustav Schmoller, as well as the writings of his own contemporaries, such as Emery Reves' *The Anatomy of Peace* (1945), Ahmad sought to formulate an equitable economic system built on Islamic values. Strikingly, he analysed the ideas of these European intellectuals in conjunction with those of classical and medieval Islamic scholars, such as Ibn Khaldun's

31 I.N. Soebagijo, *H. Zainal Abidin Ahmad: Riwayat hidup dan perjuangan* (Jakarta: Pustaka Antara, 1985), pp. 12–15.

32 Assyaukanie, *Islam and the secular state*, p. 60.

33 Zainal Abidin Ahmad published more than 20 books on Islam during his lifetime, and served as the rector of Perguruan Tinggi Ilmu al-Qur'an (PTIQ), a Muhammadiyah-linked Qur'anic studies institute in Jakarta. See Maarif, 'Islam as the basis for the state', pp. 206–16.

34 Kevin Wiliam Fogg, 'The fate of Muslim nationalism in independent Indonesia' (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 2012), p. 371.

35 Maarif, 'Islam as the basis for the state', pp. 140–58. Many Muslim politicians felt betrayed by the omission of the Jakarta Charter in the 1945 Constitution, making the Constitutional Assembly debates about the state's Islamic character especially bitter and Islamic parties especially intractable. See Fogg, 'The fate of Muslim nationalism', pp. 368–9.

36 Feith, *The decline of constitutional democracy*, pp. 284–5.

37 Zainal Abidin Ahmad, *Dasar-dasar ekonomi Islam* (Djakarta: Sinar Ilmu, 1950), p. 67.

Muqqadimah (1377 CE) — which Ahmad claimed was a source of inspiration for Marx's *Das Kapital* — the classical Hanafi jurist Abu Jusuf's *Kitab al-Kharaj* (*c.*780 CE), and Abu Ubaid al-Qasim ibn Salam's *Kitab al-Amwal* (*c.*820 CE) — whose title Ahmad claimed Marx had imitated in *Das Kapital*.[38] Repetitive references to *Das Kapital* aside, Ahmad was clearly widely read in both European and Islamic philosophy as well as jurisprudence, and sought to induce meaningful lessons from both intellectual traditions in formulating his idea of a just and equitable Islamic economy. Moreover, Abu Jusuf's *Kitab al-Kharaj* and Abu Ubaid al-Qasim ibn Salam's *Kitab al-Amwal* are both serious treatises on governance, finance, and taxation from the perspective of *fiqh*. The fact that Ahmad glossed their ideas in his book gives some indication of the intellectual seriousness of his endeavour; his was an earnest attempt to bring two key intellectual referents of Indonesian society into meaningful dialogue with one another.[39] As part of this project, Ahmad inevitably found himself engaging with Marx's ideas.

Ahmad's intellectual starting point for this ambitious endeavour was the distinction between *ibadat* and *mu'amalat*: *ibadat* (عبادة, *'ibādah*) refers to *fiqh* concerned with the rituals of worship, while *muamalat* (معاملات, *mu āmalāt*) refers to *fiqh* concerning matters outside of *ibadat*.[40] *Ibadat* is generally well-defined and not subject to revision, based as it is on the direct injunctions of the Qur'an. *Muamalat*, however, concerns such a broad range of human activity that it is inevitable that room for interpretation and disputation exists. Not all jurists find this distinction particularly meaningful, with some choosing to limit *muamalat* to jurisprudence on civil and commercial transactions, or even specifically to jurisprudence of business and financial dealings, as some contemporary Shafi'i jurists have done.[41]

Ahmad deliberately set up the distinction between *ibadat* and *muamalat* in his introduction, arguing for a broad definition of *muamalat*: '*muamalat* neatly regulates the interactions and transactions of humanity'.[42] Elsewhere, he described *muamalat* as regulating 'inter-human relations' (*pergaulan*), as well as 'social and economic matters'.[43] Ahmad's broad definition of *muamalat* is telling: this was an approach beloved by *kaum muda* jurists who saw most topics outside of *ibadat* as rightfully subject to *ijtihad*, which would allow Islamic societies to formulate appropriate responses to the new challenges presented by nineteenth and twentieth-century conditions. The famous Minangkabau *kaum muda* scholar Hamka had made similar arguments in various articles published in *Pedoman Masyarakat*, an Islamic newspaper that he edited from 1936 to 1941.[44] Ahmad was continuing a fine *kaum muda* tradition of willingness to subject non-*ibadat* matters to jurisprudential reconsideration. It was within such a

38 Ibid., pp. 21–2.

39 See John L. Esposito, *The Oxford dictionary of Islam*, Oxford Reference Online Premium (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 5.

40 Ibid., p. 208. It is worth noting that *muamalat* does not cover all matters of finance and economics, since the compulsory alms (*zakat*) is widely agreed to be the province of *ibadat*.

41 Abdullah Jalil, Asharaf Mohd Ramli and Syahidawati Shahwan, *The four introductory theories of fiqh muamalat* (Nilai: Wisdom, 2014).

42 Ahmad, *Dasar-dasar ekonomi Islam*, p. 7.

43 Ibid.

44 Peter G. Riddell, *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian world: Transmissions and responses* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), p. 217.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S002246342400047X Published online by Cambridge University Press

framework that creative formulations of an 'Islamic economy', drawing on both European philosophers and classical Islamic jurists, could occur.

Ahmad was deeply influenced by *Islam dan Sosialisme* (1924), authored by Sarekat Islam's founder, Haji Omar Said Tjokroaminoto.[45] He characterised the Prophet Muhammad and the Rashidun Caliphs' organisation of early Muslim societies as 'the first form of religious socialism', much as Tjokroaminoto had.[46] Inspired by mechanisms of *zakat* (compulsory alms) collection under the early caliphate, he suggested that *zakat* should take the form of a tax, the proceeds of which would be distributed to all needy members of society — not only Muslims — up to the level of *nishab* (*niṣāb*, نِصاب), effectively repurposing *nishab* as a minimum income floor.[47] His discussion of *zakat* was extended and comprehensive, drawing on various *hadith* as well as quoting at length from Rashid Rida's *Tafsir al-Manar* to propose that *zakat* take the form of a 2.5 per cent wealth tax administered directly by a democratically elected government so as to minimise the inevitable temptation for the misuse of such funds.[48]

More pointedly, Ahmad argued that Islam was deeply opposed to capitalism: the struggle against capitalism was a '*jihad*' which had begun during the Prophet Muhammad's time, and Ahmad cited Surah al-Humazah of the Qur'an as evidence of Islam's opposition to capitalism.[49] Ahmad interpreted Surah al-Humazah to mean that the Qur'an warned Muslims against the 'concentration of capital', defined as 'expanding the minimum amount of effort and expense in order to secure maximum profit', and 'the monopolization of business opportunities', all of which Ahmad perceived to be the hallmarks of capitalism.[50] He also identified one of the earliest converts to Islam and a revered transmitter of *hadith*, Abu Dhar al-Ghifari, as an 'Islamic socialist', an opinion that would later be shared by the Shi'a Iranian Muslim communist Ali Shariati.[51] According to Ahmad, the ethos of the Islamic economy was informed and structured by kinship, faithfulness, loyalty, and brotherhood, all animated by a religious spirit; 'in modern terms, the Islamic economy is based on the collective and cooperative [*kollektief dan cooperatief*], mutual friendship and *takaful*'.[52]

45 For more on Tjokroaminoto and the ideas that inspired this book, see Kevin W. Fogg, 'Indonesian Islamic socialism and its South Asian roots', *Modern Asian Studies* 53, 6 (2019): 1736–61.

46 Ahmad, *Dasar-dasar ekonomi Islam*, pp. 45–7.

47 Ibid., p. 47. In formal *fiqh* concerning *zakat*, *niṣāb* is the minimum amount of income a Muslim should possess before he or she is obliged to contribute *zakat*.

48 Ibid., pp. 48–51. This was a bold suggestion: *zakat* in the Netherlands East Indies and Indonesia had been occasional, desultory, and decentralised; by one estimate, only 14 per cent of the Muslims resident in Yogyakarta paid *zakat* even in 1967. See M.C. Ricklefs, *Islamisation and its opponents in Java: A political, social, cultural, and religious history c.1930 to the present* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2012), pp. 81–3.

49 Ibid., pp. 40, 42. Surah al-Humazah, verses 1–4, reads: 'Woe to every slanderer and backbiter. Who has gathered wealth and counted it. He thinks his wealth will make him last forever! Nay, verily, he will be thrown into the crushing Fire.' *The Noble Qur'an*, ed. and trans. Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din al-Hilali and Muhammad Muhsin Khan (Madinah: King Fahd Glorious Qur'an Printing Complex, 2012), p. 853.

50 Ahmad, *Dasar-dasar ekonomi Islam*, p. 42.

51 Ibid., p. 40. See Sami A. Hanna and George H. Gardner, *Arab socialism: A documentary survey* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1969), pp. 273–4.

52 Ibid., p. 41. *Takaful* refers to the cooperative pooling of resources, to be disbursed to individuals in their times of need, without recourse to usury or excessive risk. Contemporary Islamic finance has

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These principles of collective good and mutual trust, in conjunction with the prohibition on usury (*riba*) and minimisation of speculation and risk (*gharar*), were the foundation of an Islamic economy antithetical to capitalism. Ahmad argued that the earliest Islamic community around the Prophet Muhammad in Medina had displayed these features: they transcended their tribal norms, 'embracing a spirit of voluntarism and mutual kinship which extended even to the *muhajirin* (emigres from Mecca), thus forming a new Islamic economy built on new principles'.[53] It bears repeating that Ahmad was not arguing for a return to the social structures of seventh-century Medina, but rather inducing the broad principles which governed the Islamic community of Medina. He hoped that the intelligent application of these principles in twentieth-century Indonesia would constitute the basis of an equitable Islamic economy, freeing it from the constraints of capitalism.

Ahmad took a broad historical view in his critique of capitalism, sometimes anachronistically embedding Marxist analytical categories within an Islamic framework. He argued that the 'dangers of unrestrained capital' had repeatedly resulted in three kinds of 'disasters' throughout the history of Islam: first, unrestrained capital facilitated hypocrisy (*sifat munafiq*) among people by making them obsess over material wealth. Second, it encouraged 'despotism, cruelty, and even violence' against one's fellow man, making people 'unafraid to revile God, and unashamed to torment the proletariat [*kaum proletar*], violently infringing on the rights of others'. Third, it made people sick at heart for material things (*penjakit harta*), until 'coveting property and fearing the loss of profits become more important than their obligations to God'.[54] With a turn of phrase that might have resonated with contemporary Soviet propaganda, Ahmad concluded that Islam was fundamentally incompatible with capitalism:

> Since we already understand the dangers of capitalism and the disasters that come from it, it is no wonder that God has commanded all people of faith to wage holy war [*memerangi dan berdjihad*] to the death to eradicate the roots of capitalism. We must wage jihad with our property, with our thoughts, with our physical strength, and the full arsenal of our weaponry, even with our souls. In all fields, jihad must be waged against capitalism plus imperialism: in the realms of science and culture, politics and ideology, even in the social and economic fields.[55]

Ahmad reminded readers that capitalism was not merely a historic danger from the West, but also a threat from within Indonesian society itself: according to him, 'homegrown capitalism' was also subject to *jihad*.[56] Not every Masjumi thinker took things quite as far as Ahmad did. The point, however, was not that Ahmad was a Muslim communist; rather, his vehement critique of capitalism and its imperial connections drew simultaneously on his Islamic moral values as well as the Marxist analytical lenses which were prevalent at the time.

adapted the concept to create *shari'a*-compliant financial instruments which serve a function similar to that of conventional insurance.

53 Ibid., p. 41.

54 Ibid., p. 42.

55 Ibid., p. 43.

56 Ibid., p. 43.

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The breadth of Ahmad's historically-minded critique also revealed the degree to which Ahmad was steeped in the European canon of knowledge — a testament to the fine Dutch education that elite Indonesians of his generation had generally received — as well as his willingness to draw deeply from the historical experiences of both Europe and the Islamic world in formulating a blueprint for the Indonesian economy. Writing of the Caliph Uthman's increasing difficulty in imposing an equitable Islamic economic system in territories recently wrested from the Byzantine and Sassanid empires, Ahmad argued that these territories in the Levant were subject to two competing impulses: first, the hierarchical and exploitative nature of the vast Roman estates known as *latifundia*, and second, the mendicant relinquishing of material possessions championed by Christian philosophers such as Augustine in his *City of God* (*De civitate Dei contra paganos*, *c.*400 CE).[57]

On the one hand, the *latifundia* had created a hierarchical social system of immensely rich landowning elites (including high clergy and Christian institutions such as monasteries) ruling over masses of submissive sharecroppers, slaves, and landless labourers. On the other, the culture of the communities that sustained the *latifundia* system was at least theoretically beholden to the Christian ethos of renunciation of property. According to Ahmad, these contradictory impulses could not be easily reconciled by their new Muslim governor, Muawiyah (later the first Ummayad Caliph, d. 680 CE), who ended up compromising by siding with the landowners and suspending the obligation for *zakat*. In Ahmad's opinion, this was a horrible mistake that diluted the egalitarian ethos of Islam, eventually spreading throughout the Caliphate.[58] This fit comfortably within a narrative of Islam's ethical contamination by non-Islamic civilisations and their unjust social norms, which was an impulse common to many Masjumi writers.[59] However, Ahmad's narrative also expressed an easy admiration for Christian ethics, celebrating the writings of Tertullian (d. 240 CE) and Aurelius Ambrosius (d. 397 CE) alongside those of Augustine (d. 430 CE).[60] He even devoted a significant amount of attention to European writers who argued that socialism was an expression of Christian teachings, examining the arguments put forward by Adolf Held, Isaac Arend Diepenhorst, Louis Reybaud, Alexandre Vinet, and Robert Owen.[61]

According to Ahmad, Muawiyah's capitulation to the landowning elites was so odious to both pious Muslims and the local population that it gave birth to the first 'religious socialist movement', which was 'even more comprehensive than modern socialism'.[62] In Ahmad's eyes, Abu Dhar al-Ghifari led a popular rebellion against Muawiyah and his 'liberal economy'; this was justified in terms of opposing the

57 Ibid., p. 52. Ahmad's extended discussion of the first religious socialists and Abu Dhar al-Ghifari was drawn from Rashid Rida's *Tafsir al-Manar*, vol. 10.

58 Ibid., p. 53.

59 See for example, Jusuf Wibisono, *Islam dan sosialisme* (Djakarta: Patriot, 1950). This is not an implausible argument, as excellent scholarship on the spread of the practice of veiling women, by Fadwa el Guindi, has shown. See Fadwa el Guindi, *Veil: Modesty, privacy, resistance* (New York: Berg, 1999).

60 Ahmad, *Dasar-dasar ekonomi Islam*, p. 52.

61 Ibid., pp. 61–2.

62 Ibid., pp. 55, 61.

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'hoarding of wealth' forbidden by Islam.[63] This serves as an excellent example of the diverse lineages of Masjumi's political and economic ideas: for many Masjumi intellectuals such as Ahmad, European knowledge derived from Christian ethics or Marxist analytical categories — Ahmad liberally applied terms such as 'bourgeoisie' and 'capitalists' in describing the supporters of Muawiyah's regime — was highly valued, but not more so than the knowledge acquired from Islamic history or *fiqh*. Ahmad Shafii Maarif justifiably characterises this historical sketch as Muslim apologetics, but even if Ahmad's scholarly rigour is lacking, this *weltanschauung* still evinces an autodidactic willingness to combine diverse cultural products.[64]

Putting aside the veracity of Ahmad's historical claims, the broader point remains: rather than a dichotomy between modern and traditional, or the essentialism of West versus East, Masjumi thinkers like Ahmad embraced an eclectic intellectual pedigree, asserting their right to be 'heirs to world culture'.[65] This was the exact opposite of what the Iranian philosopher Jalal Al-e-Ahmed would later describe as 'occidentosis' (*gharbzadegi*, غربزدگی), the worship of all things Western, an idea which itself drew productively on Marx and Frantz Fanon.[66] Rather than simply repudiating the legacy of Dutch education, Ahmad and his associates would actively appropriate and adapt ideas on a global scale, whether that involved synthesising Marx's ideas or innovative *ijtihad* which drew on the experiences of the first Islamic Caliphate.

This interpretation of the early Islamic empires as a democratic and socio-economically just entities was repeated in Ahmad's other writings from the 1950s. In his foreword to *Islam dan Parlementarisme* (1950), Ahmad pointed out that Soekarno had previously published articles in the Islamic newspaper *Pandji Islam* on the steady decline of Islam since the Rashidun period, arguing that Muslims had to forge a new future for themselves instead of hoping to return to a classical golden age.[67] Ahmad agreed with Soekarno on this, stating that 'we must build our own Golden Age in our time, in accordance with the organisational and modernising forms available to us at present'.[68] This forward-looking tendency coexisted alongside a strong impulse to interpret the governmental institutions of the Rashidun Caliphate in the best possible light. Drawing heavily from Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida's *Tafsir al-Manar*, Ahmad argued that democratic values were intrinsic to Islam, so the Indonesian state should develop its own democratic institutions which would go beyond the limitations of Euro-American parliamentary democracy. Ahmad did not see this as reconciling Western values with Islamic ones, but rather an updating of Islamic institutions to help Indonesian society respond better to the needs of the present. Nevertheless, it would be foolish to deny that this was partially the product of his engagement with Western intellectual currents.

63 Ibid., p. 55.
64 Maarif, 'Islam as the basis for the state', p. 209.
65 Lindsay and Liem, *Heirs to world culture*, p. 5.
66 Jalal al-e-Aḥmad, *Occidentosis: A plague from the West*, trans. R. Campbell and Hamid Algar (Berkelea: Mizan, 1983).
67 Soekarno, 'Rejuvenating our concepts of Islam', in *Under the banner of revolution* (Djakarta: Publication Committee, 1966), pp. 353–85. Zainal Abidin Ahmad had been editor of *Pandji Islam* when these articles were published.
68 Zainal Abidin Ahmad, *Islam dan parlementarisme* (Bandung: Aliran Islam, 1950), pp. 2–3.

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According to Ahmad, (Sunni) Islam championed the principle of democratic representation, since Caliphs had been elected, rather than reserving leadership for descendants of the Prophet. Consequently, there should not be any restrictions on who the parliamentary representatives or heads of state were as long as they 'followed the guidelines of the holy Qur'an and the *hadith* of the prophet'.[69] This fell far short of protecting minority political rights, but it did at least refrain from reserving political leadership for Sunni Muslims only, as some conservatives had argued for.[70] The only other conditions that Ahmad stipulated for holding political office were candidates' independence from foreign rulers and institutions. Exceptionally for a Muslim politician of the time, Ahmad explicitly argued that women were perfectly qualified to be part of the *Ulil Amri* (*Uli al-Amr*, اولی الامر آیه, the holders of legitimate authority),[71] that is, parliamentary representatives or civil servants. He argued that their mental faculties were in no way inferior to men, and they were therefore perfectly qualified to represent the interests of the people.[72]

Ahmad supported these positions by arguing that he was merely extrapolating from democratic traditions and injunctions established by the Prophet and the Rashidun Caliphs, not adapting Islam to fit with Western democratic ideals.[73] For example, Ahmad argued that Islamic norms of governance placed a premium on debate and consensus (*musjawarah*), which could not be equated with the 'defective [*kepintjanagan*] democratic principles of the West, which do not allow the development of democracy in the social and economic realms'.[74] In a similar vein, he approvingly quoted Soekarno on how *Pancasila* differed from Western democratic norms:

> America has a house of representatives, but is capitalism not rampant [*meradjalela*]? Is capitalism not rampant throughout the West? Even though there are representative institutions! The cause is no other than the fact that when these institutions were established, they followed the formula established by the French Revolution. Their democracy is political democracy only; it excludes social justice; it excludes economic democracy.[75]

Despite his rejection of Western democratic norms, Ahmad drew on Western socialist critiques of parliamentary democracy to support his arguments. He approvingly quoted Jean Juarès (d. 1914), leader of the social democratic French Socialist Party during the early twentieth century:

69 Ibid., pp. 4–5.

70 This formulation is clearly meant to favour Muslims, but also leaves some interpretative leeway. Assyaukanie rightly points out that Zainal Abidin Ahmad and Natsir were committed to the position that Indonesia's head of state had to be a Muslim, but Ahmad differed from Natsir in arguing that the head of government need not be a Muslim. They remained stuck in a classical Islamic paradigm on this matter because of entrenched Muslim anxieties about Christian and Chinese prominence under Dutch rule, and the legacy of these arrangements. See Assyaukanie, *Islam and the secular state*, pp. 83–4, 96.

71 See Surah an-Nisa, p. 59.

72 Ahmad, *Islam dan parlementarisme*, p. 21.

73 Ahmad's political philosophy did differ from Natsir's and Isa Anshary's in some important ways, placing him closer to Euro-American democratic ideals. He explicitly accepted the sovereignty of the people in a democracy, drawing on both Rosseau and the Qur'an to justify this. See Maarif, 'Islam as the basis for the state', pp. 208–9.

74 Ahmad, *Islam dan parlementarisme*, p. 21.

75 Ibid., p. 21. Ahmad does not provide his source.

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> In a parliamentary democracy, any person may enter parliament. However, is there social justice? Is there actual prosperity amongst the masses [*kesedjaterahan ra'jat*]? The representatives of the working class who possess political rights in parliament have the power to unseat ministers. There, they are like kings! But in their workplaces, in the factories? Today they unseat ministers, and tomorrow they are thrown out into the streets, deprived of their wages, unable to feed themselves.[76]

Ahmad's point was that the democratic norms and institutions that had evolved in Europe and America were insufficiently comprehensive to be considered just by Islamic standards. While the stated point of *Islam dan Parlementarisme* was to articulate an Islamic alternative that was superior to Western models, there existed an undeniable engagement with, and adaptation of, Western ideas in Ahmad's writing. This is not to say that the attempt to formulate an Islamic alternative was not a genuine one. Ahmad's engagement with Juarès was just one example of the many engagements with socialist thinkers undertaken by Masjumi intellectuals.

In a similar vein, Ahmad's *Membentuk Negara Islam* (1956) was a 'fusion' work which outlined in detail his vision for a democratically elected Caliph in a Caliphate to replace the Indonesian republic.[77] After six years of chronic political instability and short-lived cabinets, this book marked Ahmad's deepening disillusionment with the republic, but also showcased his enduring attachment to democratic ideals and socio-economic justice. Disillusionment with parliament led him not to authoritarianism, but to a reconceptualisation of the Caliphate-as-government. The 'Caliphate' Ahmad advocated shared many recognisably Euro-American democratic features with the Indonesian republic. His references were highly historical, and the question Ahmad sought to answer seemed to be 'how can Indonesian Muslims constitute the state in such a way as to remain faithful to the principles animating the Rashidun Caliphate, while also retaining modern democratic features?'

One of his core arguments was the contention that a neo-Caliphate could deliver socio-economic justice in a way that parliamentary democracy could not. In a section titled 'Justice in the Economic Field', Ahmad argued that the 'equal rights to livelihood, and just economic structures demanded by socialism' were already present in early Islamic teachings, an argument which was clearly beholden to Tjokroaminoto's *Islam dan Sosialisme* (1924).[78] According to Ahmad, 'economic justice animates the structure of Islamic society, in which no one is neglected or left to waste'.[79] He went on to cite Surah an-Nisa, 135, noting the verse's emphasis on upholding justice even if an injustice is committed by one's own kin, and how God values both the rich and poor equally.[80] With some rhetorical flourish, Ahmad argued that the pillars of economic justice were mutual love (*hubb*) and the unconditional

76 Ibid., p. 21. Ahmad does not provide his source.

77 Zainal Abidin Ahmad, *Membentuk negara Islam* (Djakarta: Widjaya, 1956). An earlier incarnation of this book was published as a series of articles in Masjumi magazines such as *Abadi*, in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

78 Ibid., p. 49.

79 Ibid.

80 Ibid. The verse reads 'Oh you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, be he rich or poor, Allah is a better protector to both (than you). So follow not the lusts of your hearts [which Ahmad renders *hawa nafsu*], lest you

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willingness to share (*infaq*). These, according to him, gave rise to a 'collective and cooperative spirit in economic affairs' in an Islamic Caliphate. This was more rhetorical than substantive, with no discussion of laws, institutions, and policies, or even *fiqh*. Nevertheless, *Membentuk Negara Islam*'s repeated emphasis on socio-economic justice was a testament to the effect that sustained contact with socialist ideas had on Muslim intellectuals in Indonesia.

Ahmad did not understand 'Islamic socialism' as categorically distinct from 'Western socialism', but as an early iteration of socialism in general. Ahmad recognised a plurality of valid 'socialisms', including Marx's interpretation of it. He thought of this plurality as 'the product of human ingenuity and will multiply in number until one iteration might reach perfection in the future'.[81] Ahmad explicitly argued that socialists of the present ought to recognise and celebrate Abu Dhar al-Ghifari's socialism of the seventh century:

> Without diminishing the merit of socialist heroes who came after [Abu Dhar al-Ghifari], the world in general and socialists in particular should admit that an organised socialist movement had already manifested in the sixth and seventh centuries under the Muslim Abu Dhar al-Ghifari, from whom this famous prayer originates: 'O those who are able, help the proletariat [*kaum proletar*] who have nothing!'[82]

Clearly, the insertion of the term 'proletariat' is anachronistic, and says more about Ahmad's desire to highlight Islam's emphasis on socio-economic justice than it does about Abu Dhar al-Ghifari's socialist credentials. Ahmad was primarily concerned with championing the idea that Islam was a competitive alternative to socialism because it contained all of socialism's benefits, and then some. This was evident in his immediate qualification of his statement that socialists needed to honour Abu Dhar al-Ghifari as the first socialist: 'This should not be taken to mean that socialism is in accordance with the teachings of Islam, but this is just a historical truth that should be admitted.'[83]

Membentuk Negara Islam was not especially rigorous, an indication perhaps of his disappointment in parliamentary governance and the angst it engendered. Nevertheless, it demonstrates his continued attachment to socialist models and ideas. Contradictions abound: Ahmad was willing to absorb European 'socialist heroes' such as Jean Juarès into the same pantheon as Abu Dhar al-Ghifari, but he studiously avoided implying that Islam and socialism were compatible.[84] Similarly, despite his call for *jihad* against both domestic and international capitalism, he also claimed that Islam rejected class war and promoted an ethos of mutual aid instead of turning the poor against the rich.[85] This was intellectually inconsistent, but it belied the gravitational pull of socialism on Ahmad's thinking about Islamic governance. That gravitational pull was also evident in the list of recommended readings

avoid justice; and if you distort your witness or refuse to give it, Allah is ever well-acquainted with what you do.' See *The Noble Qur'an*, p. 131.

81 Ahmad, *Dasar-dasar ekonomi Islam*, p. 66.

82 Ibid., p. 63.

83 Ibid.

84 Ibid.

85 Ibid., p. 132.

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Ahmad appended to *Dasar-dasar Ekonomi Islam* (1950): Marx's *Das Kapital* (1867–83) and Stalin's *Concerning Questions of Leninism* (1926) were prominent, alongside Sjafruddin Prawiranegara's *Politik dan Revolusi Kita* (1950) and Rashid Rida's *Tafsir al-Manar* (1865–1935).

Isa Anshary

Not all Masjumi parliamentarians were so congenial to socialism: Isa Anshary (1916–68/69) stood at the other end of the spectrum, although he maintained personal friendships with Mohammad Natsir and Zainal Abidin Ahmad.[86] Known for his sympathy for Kartusuwirjo's Darul Islam rebellion (1949–62), which aimed to violently overthrow the republic in favour of an explicitly Islamic state, Isa Anshary was an Islamic triumphalist whose rhetoric often turned chauvinistic.[87] A Minangkabau born in Maninjau, West Sumatra, Anshary received a traditional Islamic education in various *pondok* and *surau*. He was an active member of PSII during the early 1930s but moved to Bandung to pursue an Islamic education in 1933. There he joined Ahmad Hassan's conservative Islamic organisation, Persis, and became a member of its governing board in 1940. He eventually became the leader of Persis from 1948 to 1960, which during his tenure unequivocally embraced demands for the state to be explicitly Islamic, for laws to be vetted by Islamic jurists, and for leadership positions to be reserved for Muslims.[88] From 1956 until 1960, he served as a member of the Constitutional Assembly set up in 1955 to draft a permanent constitution to replace the provisional constitution of 1950. The Constitutional Assembly's acrimonious debates thus shaped his political leanings as they did Zainal Abidin Ahmad's, making him increasingly combative and exclusivist.

A fervent anti-communist, he was known for penning screeds such as *Revolusi Islam* (1953), which gave voice to Masjumi's more conservative aspects. In it, Anshary argued that Pancasila was un-Islamic, or at least inferior to Islam as a guiding philosophy.[89] He asserted that Muslims had nothing to learn from Marx, Lenin and Stalin, and even proclaimed that the Indonesian Revolution had nothing to do with the Islamic revolution he was proposing.[90] This text would not be out of place amongst the writings of fundamentalist *salafi* across the Muslim world, saturated as it was with vitriolic proclamations of Islamic superiority, and with virtually no policy recommendations.

However, Masjumi held different impulses in tension with one another, and these competing impulses were visible even in Anshary's own writing. In the later 1950s, he would author increasingly hysterical anti-communist books, such as *P.K.I. Pembela Negara Asing* (1955, *PKI, the Defender of Foreign Interests*), *Islam Menentang Komunisme* (1956, *Islam Against Communism*), and *Bahaya Merah di Indonesia*

86 Boland, *The struggle of Islam*, p. 80.
87 Feith, *The decline of constitutional democracy*, p. 137.
88 Howard M. Federspiel, *Islam and ideology in the emerging Indonesian state: The Persatuan Islam (Persis), 1923 to 1957* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 261–3. Several prominent Masjumi leaders had links to Persis, including Natsir, but Isa Anshary was the most vocal and combative of them, willing to break Masjumi ranks and criticise fellow Muslims for being insufficiently committed to (his vision for) an Islamic state.
89 Isa Anshary, *Revolusi Islam* (Surabaya: Hasan Aidid, 1953), p. 11.
90 Ibid., p. 12.

(1956, *The Red Threat in Indonesia*). In 1949, however, Anshary had written a very different text, one in which the leftward pull of socialist ideas was evident. In *Falsafah Perdjuangan Islam* (1949, *The Philosophy of Islamic Struggle*), a younger Anshary engaged directly with Marx's ideas, even juxtaposing the original German against his analysis in Indonesian.[91] In this text, Anshary was writing in a revolutionary context; with Indonesian independence within the republicans' reach, Anshary was looking forward to the new society that he hoped the revolution would give birth to.

He argued that the political revolution was only sensible if it could produce a new system which ameliorated the hardships engendered by colonialism.[92] Drawing on the writings of H. Mohammad Rasjidi (formerly the republican minister for religious affairs) as well as Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Anshary argued that 'freedom from want' was a prerequisite for any democratic society to function smoothly. To Anshary, 'freedom from want' was a universal value, desirable not only for Indonesians themselves but for all peoples of the world, which Indonesia had a moral duty to support.[93] Anshary went on the argue that various crises of the present and recent past, the suffering of the masses during the Second World War and the Indonesian Revolution, had their roots in specifically material, economic phenomenon. 'The imbalance in the world economy, the unequal division of income, and the absence of social justice in the way human societies are organised are all direct results of the structures of the liberal-capitalist economy, as well as the expansionist politics of neo-Imperialism.'[94] This recognisably Marx-influenced analytical framework was accompanied by his apparent fondness for the ideas of the Dutch Christian Marxist and council communist Henriette Roland Holst (1869–1952). He quoted her writings at length, reproducing them faithfully in Dutch and providing his translation in Indonesian.[95]

> The crisis afflicting the whole capitalist world today is not merely the outcome of an economic phenomenon, but the result of a deadly disease of the socio-cultural organism; it is not only the failure of the system of production, but the dead-end of culture, of a specific life-principle: indeed, of the greed and egoism (whether personal or group egoism) which dominates and directs our lives.[96]

Anshary juxtaposed Holst's ideas against the Qur'an's Surah an-Nur, 39–40, which cautions against taking pride in one's deeds, and the impossibility of escaping

91 Isa Anshary, *Falsafah perdjuangan Islam* (Bandung: Pasifik, 1949), p. 168. Boland has examined this text, but does not explore Anshary's surprising engagement with Marxist critiques. See Boland, *The struggle of Islam*, pp 78–9.
92 Anshary, *Falsafah perdjuangan Islam*, p. 8.
93 Ibid., p. 8.
94 Ibid., p. 17.
95 Ibid., p. 18. Holst's council communism invested decision-making power in the organic workers' councils which controlled the means of production, rather than Lenin's 'democratic centralism' or his theorisation of the party's role as the 'vanguard of the proletariat'. Critical of the autocratic USSR, council communism was strong in Germany and the Netherlands during the 1920s. See Carolien Boon and Ger Harmsen, 'Schalk, Henriette Goverdine Anna van der', *Biografisch Woordenboek van het Socialisme en de Arbeidersbeweging in Nederland* 5 (1992): 241–56.
96 Anshary, *Falsafah perdjuangan Islam*, p. 18.

God's judgement.[97] He argued that the predations of capitalism denounced by Holst were an example of the evils the Qur'an warned against, reminding readers that complicity in capitalist exploitation would not go unpunished; complicity was the result of 'a lack of principles' (*ketiadaan asas hidup*).[98] According to Anshary, 'without the guiding hand of Islamic morality, humanity falls into exploitative behaviour like capitalism, and constructs systems to legitimise and facilitate such exploitation'.[99] Anshary went on to argue that Islam was deeply grounded in the material realities of this world as much as it was concerned with the spiritual realities of the next, contending that injustices in this world had to be fought by pious Muslims. 'Islam does not allow its adherents to acquiesce to or go along with the oppression of others. It does not allow the *ummah* to close its ears to the lament of the weak, of the women and children, who suffer under oppression and injustice.'[100] This was Islam conceived of as a guarantor for social justice, and Anshary even wrote that 'the fight against oppression and injustice is one of several possible forms of *jihad*'.[101]

Anshary framed his criticism of capitalism, and Islam's relationship with capitalism, within the *akal*/*nafsu* dichotomy. He blamed 'egoism, individualism, and egocentrism' for the oppressive forms that human societies have taken on, characterising these aberrant forms as the expression of *hawa nafsu* (worldly desires), in contrast to Islam's elevation of *akal* (rationality).

> Those whose hearts are already controlled by these isms and *nafsu* become people whose behaviour resembles that of animals; humans who live only to run wild and fulfil their own needs, sacrificing the rest of society and *pergaulan bersama* [in this context, meaningful and enriching human relations and the benefits of cooperation] … We are obliged to fight, to oppose this wolfish *nafsu*, by means of *jihad*. This wolfish *nafsu* is not only lodged in people, but also lodged in communities and nations, constituting capitalism, imperialism, expansionism, colonialism, and fascism. Attacking capitalism, imperialism, expansionism, colonialism and fascism, is, in the eyes of Islam, the greatest struggle of all.[102]

Anshary's implicit acceptance of Marxist analytical frameworks for critiquing capitalism is evident, although he places relatively strong emphasis on the spiritual and psychological impact of capitalism. To Anshary, the inequalities and sufferings of the world were not just the result of a moral crisis but were also embedded in structures and institutions.

Moreover, Anshary emphasised the importance of *ijtihad* and described it as the exercise of *akal*. He argued that *jihad* and *ijtihad* were inseparable, and that *jihad* without *ijtihad* would quickly devolve into fundamentalist simplifications.[103] Arguing that the Islamic revolution constituted the triumph of *akal* over *nafsu* in the governing structures of society, not merely a change in political leadership, he

97 Ibid., p. 18.
98 Ibid.
99 Ibid.
100 Ibid., p. 89.
101 Ibid.
102 Ibid., p. 91.
103 Ibid., p. 92.

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even suggested that the 'warriors of God' (he uses both *mujahidin* and *para pejuang*) had to be subordinate to the 'thinking heroes' (he uses both *mujtahidin*, the acclaimed scholars of Islam, and *pahlawan dalam berpikir*, intellectual heroes), who would ensure that *jihad* would always be righteous.[104] This was a telling formulation, a rejection of the romance of the dynamic *pemuda* (youth) which Soekarno had embraced during the Indonesian Revolution.[105] To Anshary, the doers had to be guided by the thinkers, and the thinkers had to be steeped in Islamic ethics. Practical considerations aside, Anshary was expressing an old sentiment in Indonesian Islam discourse: that Islam provided a moral framework for organising a just society, allowing meaningful and enriching human relations, facilitating cooperation over conflict and exploitation. This was Islam as *akal*, and capitalism as *nafsu*; this was why the revolution could not stop at expelling the Dutch, and why the political dynamism of the Indonesian people had to be harnessed by Islamic ethics.

Falsafah Perdjuangan Islam also contained a section entitled 'Progressive Views in Islam', in which Anshary elaborated on his conceptual framework for the translation of Islamic values into political, economic, and social structures. Anshary began with praise for Soekarno, expressing sympathy, though not full agreement, with Soekarno's call for a more dynamic Islam.[106] Anshary lamented that the 'outmoded scholars' (*kaum kuno*) did not have the conceptual tools to engage with Soekarno's well-intentioned statements, and immediately branded him an infidel. However, the *kaum muda*, whom Anshary identified with, had a more nuanced response: he agreed with the need for Islam to be dynamic, but also contended that Soekarno failed to make an important distinction between *ibadat* (matters of ritual and worship) and *muamalat* (non-*ibadat* matters).[107] Matters of *ibadat* were sacrosanct, but *mualamat* were not — Soekarno's call for Islamic dynamism could only apply to matters of *muamalat*, a position which Anshary thought Soekarno should have clarified.

Anshary argued that matters not directly addressed by the Qur'an and *hadith*, such as forms of government and economic organisation, were well within the realm of *muamalat* and were thus subject to innovation.[108] He repeatedly emphasised that this was a matter of exercising one's God-given rational faculties (*menggunakan akal*).[109] In support of this, he cited a famous *hadith* from Sahih Muslim 2363, in which the Prophet Muhammad deferred to a group of farmers on how to plant their trees, since 'you [the farmers] have better knowledge of your worldly affairs than I do' (*kamu lebih tahu kepada soal-soal dunia kamu*).[110] Anshary used this *hadith* to justify innovations in governance, which would allow Islamic ethics to inform new societal structures, ensuring that they would achieve Islamic goals such as justice and prosperity, even if they had no Islamic historical precedents. It was precisely this conceptual framework which made possible Anshary's appropriation of Marxist

104 Ibid.
105 See Benedict Anderson, *Java in a time of revolution* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1972).
106 Isa Anshary, *Falsafah perdjuangan Islam*, p. 67. By 1953, Isa Anshary's break with Soekarno would be complete over Soekarno's refusal to back Masjumi's plan to make Indonesia an Islamic state. See Boland, *The struggle of Islam*, p. 48.
107 Anshary, *Falsafah perdjuangan Islam*, p. 69.
108 Ibid., p. 72.
109 Ibid., p. 70.
110 Ibid. See Sahih Muslim 2363, or Book 43, Hadith 186 (https://sunnah.com/muslim/43/186).

critiques of capitalism, or which allowed him to quote Holst repeatedly without feeling the need to explain why he was referencing a council communist. The secular knowledge of this world was fair game, and Muslims were expected to learn what they could, and use what they could, in the pursuit of Islamic goals.

That said, a significant portion of *Falsafah Perdjuangan Islam* was dedicated to Anshary's refutation of Marxism *in toto*. Anshary devoted several pages to summarising Marx's ideas, ultimately arguing that they were incompatible with an Islamic *weltanschauung* founded on the Sunnah.[111] He gave three reasons for this incompatibility: first, Marxism's dialectical materialism did not respect individual choices and morality, or the role of spirituality, by focusing only on economic conditions; second, Marxism condemned the state as a tool of oppression wielded by capitalists, and looked forward to a nation-less, state-less global society; and third, Marxism promoted class warfare. By contrast, Anshary argued that the state did not have to be a tool of oppression, but could be one of regulation (*alat pengatur*) as well as a protector of the weak.[112] Anshary nit-picked repeatedly on the role of the state in Marx's writings, stressing that his proposed Islamic state was a state that promoted social justice (*keadilan sosial*), and therefore Marxism was at odds with Islam because it did not see the state as a force for good.[113]

For all his repeated rejections of Marxism, Anshary's ideas about an Islamic state possessed an unmistakably socialist ring, as one might expect from an admirer of Holst. His arguments bore the marks of engagement with (and selective translation of) the ideas and rhetoric of various Marxists — not least his appropriation of critiques of capitalism, which he drew freely from Lenin and Marx, even situating the birth of Indonesia within a 'global movement for change, against the slavery of feudalism and capitalism, that is, the current global struggle against capitalism'.[114] This emphasis would fade, over time, as the domestic political animosity between Masjumi and the PKI grew ever deeper, and Isa Anshary ever more committed to anti-communism — even becoming implicated in the PRRI uprising against Soekarno — but for several years in the late 1940s and early 1950s, even he could not resist engaging with socialist ideas.

Conclusion: Transnational debates about socialism

Soekarno's proscription of Masjumi in 1960 limited the platforms that progressive-minded Masjumi thinkers had possessed for disseminating Islamic socialist ideas, but these ideas continued to circulate in Indonesian society regardless. The impulse fuelling the allure of these ideas was partly domestic — Soekarno and his lieutenants were constantly promoting Indonesian socialism in public — but it also had an international dimension. Islamic socialism had strong currency across the Middle East in the 1950s and 1960s, and Islamic socialist ideas emanating from Egypt's al-Azhar University (especially during the tenure of the reformist Grand Imam

111 Ibid., pp. 166–70.
112 Ibid, p. 170.
113 Ibid.
114 Ibid., pp. 168–9.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S002246342400047X Published online by Cambridge University Press

Mahmud Shaltut, 1958–63) as well as Syria would continue finding their way to Indonesia.[115] Masjumi was thus not the only Islamic party wrestling with how to engage productively with socialism — or capitalism — in an increasingly bipolar world which pressured them to choose; the ruminations of Zainal Abidin Ahmad and Isa Anshary were of a kind with the work of Shi'i jurists such as Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr (1935–80), whose *Iqtisaduna* (1982, *Our Economy*) became one of the foundational texts of Islamic economics for Shi'i jurists in Iran and Iraq.[116]

A better understanding of the ideas of Zainal Abidin Ahmad and Isa Anshary can be achieved by situating their writings in the broader context of similar, contemporaneous books being produced in the Middle East and South Asia.[117] For brevity's sake, we will focus on one such book that was translated and disseminated in Indonesia. In 1964, the Masjumi-linked publishing house C.V. Mulja, published an Indonesian translation of the Syrian Mustafa al-Sibai'i's *Ištirākiyyat al-Islām* (1959, *The Socialism of Islam*) under the rather innocuous title of *Sistem Masjarakat Islam* (1964, *The System of Islamic Society*).[118] Mustafa al-Sibai'i was hardly the only one producing such work; Khalid Muhammad Khalid and Muhammad Faraj Salim, Azhar-trained scholars who became prominent authors of popular Islamic tracts, were also promoting forms of socialism adapted to Islamic societies.[119] Their books didn't go unopposed; they were part of an ongoing debate within the Muslim world about the desirability of socialism.[120] Nevertheless, the viability of Islamic socialism was part of mainstream Islamic discourse during the 1950s and 1960s, and Indonesians were unsurprisingly drawn to it. Indeed, Mustafa al-Siba'i's work would continue to resonate, influencing Indonesian intellectuals such as Nurcholish Madjid, who translated *al-Sunna wa-makānatuhā fī l-tashrīʿ al-islāmī* (1961, *The Sunnah and its role in Islamic law*) in 1991.[121]

The 1964 Indonesian translation of Mustafa al-Siba'i's *Ištirākiyyat al-Islām* bears examination, because it reveals the discursive space opened by an ongoing transnational debate across the Muslim world, a space that allowed Masjumi's religious

115 For examples of widely circulated popular works such as Shaltut's on Islam and socialism, see John. J. Donohue and John L. Esposito, eds, *Islam in transition: Muslim perspectives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 78–113.

116 Chibli Mallat, *The renewal of Islamic law: Muhammad Baqer as-Sadr, Najaf, and the Shi'i International* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Al-Sadr, who was executed by Saddam Hussein's Baathist regime for organising a militant Shi'i uprising, argued in *Iqtisaduna* that an Islamic economy was neither socialistic nor capitalistic, but fundamentally committed to socio-economic justice, with many caveats placed on the right to private property. *Iqtisaduna* was originally written in 1961, but only published in 1982 by the Iranian state after the 1979 Revolution.

117 See, for example, Ikram Azam, *Islam and socialism* (Rawalpindi: London Book Co., 1971); Abdul Bari Sarker, *The concept of Islamic socialism* (Dhaka: self-published, 1964).

118 C.V. Mulja was closely associated with *kaum muda* Muhammadiyah and Masjumi intellectuals, having previously published the writings of Natsir, Muhammad Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy, and H.A. Malik Ahmad. Mustafa al-Siba'i was a Syrian Muslim politician and founder of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood (1946) as well as the Islamic Socialist Front (1949), a vehicle for the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood in parliamentary elections.

119 S.A. Hanna, 'Al-Takaful al-Iktimi and Islamic Socialism', *The Muslim World* 59, 3–4 (1969): 275–86.

120 Ibid.

121 Muṣṭafá Sibāʿī, *Sunnah dan peranannya dalam penetapan hukum Islam: Sebuah pembelaan kaum Sunni*, trans. Nurcholish Madjid (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 1991).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S002246342400047X Published online by Cambridge University Press

socialists to gain traction in the 1950s. Zainal Abidin Ahmad and Isa Anshary were participating in a transnational conversation of intense interest to many Muslim intellectuals, and *Sistem Masjarakat Islam* provides a sense of the ideas they were drawing on and reacting to. Such ideas were often optimistic and triumphalist in tone, but they were also intellectually sophisticated and policy-oriented. For example, the translator was explicit about how the ideal Islamic society resembled a socialist one, but it made clear that Islam was a superior antecedent:

> In the twentieth century, after constant improvements to mankind, if a person follows one of the streams [*menganut salah satu aliran*]—such as socialism—he can see that there are elements of socialism which are acknowledged to resemble elements of the 'Islamic social system', alongside several differences, whether fundamental or not. If so, we will not dispute it. In fact, this is a reason to be grateful. The development of mankind's thought and experience in the West has gone through numerous sorrows and wounds over centuries, through the systems of slavery, Roman law, feudalism, capitalism, through the French Revolution and Industrial Revolution, and it has finally come closer to the truths that have been obtained by Muhammad's people fourteen centuries ago.[122]

These were not Mustafa al-Siba'i's words, but from the preface penned by translator H.A. Malik Ahmad. Ahmad's acknowledgement of the similarities between an Islamic system and a socialist one revealed the milieu in which Indonesian Muslim politicians operated during the 1950s and 1960s. Both Ahmad and al-Siba'i emphasised inducing rules of social organisation from the Qur'an and Sunnah to eradicate poverty through the building of a welfare state, or 'social guarantee' (*djaminan sosial*) in Ahmad's translation.[123]

In this book, Mustafa Al-Siba'i's insistence on the flexibility of Islam as a system of regulating society was a prominent theme. He asserted that Islam does not get into 'legalistic details except on matters which are constant', and that because it 'provides room for the exercise of *ijtihad*, the actual laws and policies [that will advance Islamic goals such as common prosperity] can be reconstituted and reconceptualised from age to age'.[124] Waxing lyrical about Islam's intrinsic moral superiority to capitalism and communism — because both were fundamentally limited by their materialist perspective — this book was an assertion of Islam's continued intellectual dynamism and social relevance. However, its emphasis was on which Islamic goals were of utmost importance, and how they might be achieved. The eradication of poverty was a point of especial emphasis.

Al-Siba'i argued that communism was discredited because the Soviet Union was not the egalitarian utopia it claimed to be. During a purported visit to Moscow al-Siba'i had observed a massive income discrepancy between the party elite and the working masses, as well as the ubiquity of begging.[125] He did not condemn the

122 Mustafa Assibai'y, *Sistem Masjarakat Islam*, trans. H.A. Malik Ahmad (Djakarta: C.V. Mulja, 1964), p. 25.
123 Ibid., p. 65.
124 Ibid., p. 10.
125 It is not clear when al-Siba'i visited Moscow, if he did at all. He had studied at al-Azhar University in Cairo in 1933 and returned to Syria by 1940 at the latest to teach at Damascus University. It is possible that he could have visited Moscow during the 1930s, but with Muslim 'national communism' quashed by

USSR outright — he characterised it as 'on the extreme left of understanding socialism' — but argued that Islam provided a far better system for eradicating poverty that relied neither on charity nor on the state monopolising the means of production.[126] Through 'legislation and the apparatus of state', al-Siba'i proposed that the state centralise the collection and disbursement of *zakat*, explicitly stating that this was a core function of government, not that of a charitable foundation.[127]

In *Sistem Masjarakat Islam*, resonances with Ahmad's interest in redistributive taxation are difficult to miss. *Zakat* as a mechanism for economic redistribution was highlighted emphatically from the first page of the book, with al-Siba'i displaying three *surah* from the Qur'an which stressed the Muslim obligation to give *zakat*, and reproducing these *surah* in their original Arabic for added emphasis and legitimacy.[128] Al-Siba'i wrote at length about how Muslims were obliged to render 2.5 per cent of commercial assets, 2.5 per cent of the value of their livestock, 10 per cent of crops grown on non-irrigated land, and 5 per cent of the harvests from irrigated or tilled land to a common fund for *zakat*.[129] This could be rendered in specie or in kind, and al-Siba'i specified the minimal value of livestock in grams of gold and silver.[130] These contributions would be supplemented by a 2.5 per cent annual tax on capital, including capital gains.[131] He also made it clear that *zakat* was a right of the poor, a right they could claim regardless of how unwilling the more fortunate might be to part with their wealth, and that those contributing to the common *zakat* fund had no right to hold the beneficiaries of *zakat* in contempt. Zakat, moreover, was to al-Siba'i more than an administrative measure with material implications; it also had moral implications. He wrote that '*zakat* serves the important function of spreading compassion and solidarity in public relations. Such feelings are highly commended by Islam, and can be used as a touchstone for moral values and human character.'[132]

Drawing on *fiqh* from across different schools of jurisprudence, al-Siba'i spent dozens of pages theorising how conventional *zakat* (or *zakat al-amal*, zakat of wealth) could be supplemented by *infaq* (voluntary alms) and *zakat fitrah* (*zakat al-fitr*, a smaller obligatory contribution rendered once a year at the end of Ramadan). He also devoted much attention to the rights of the poor (a jurisprudential category known as *faqih miskin*, including widows, orphans, the disabled, and many others), and to the limitations Islamic jurisprudence set on property rights.[133] *Zakat* even had an international dimension: al-Siba'i argued that excess *zakat* funds could be

Stalin during that period, it is not especially likely that al-Siba'i would have been drawn to the USSR. His observations about Soviet hierarchies stand, of course. See Hanlie Booysen, 'Explaining the moderate platform of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood: Against the inclusion-moderation hypothesis' (Ph.D. diss., University of Wellington, 2018), pp. 16–17.

126 Ibid., p. 23.

127 Ibid., p. 66.

128 Ibid., pp. 27–8. These included Surah al-Baqarah 73:4 and Surah Maryam 55:3.

129 Ibid., p. 65.

130 This bimetallism is not as archaic as it might first appear. Bimetallism (the gold *dinar* and silver *dirham* of the classical Islamic empires) has long been attractive to Muslim scholars and is still used today in formal jurisprudential calculations of how much *zakat* an individual should pay.

131 Mustafa Assibai'y, *Sistem masjarakat Islam*, p. 66.

132 Ibid.

133 Ibid., p. 105.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S002246342400047X Published online by Cambridge University Press

handed over to other nations in need, such as after natural disasters. This was effectively a system of taxation for the exclusive purpose of funding a comprehensive social welfare programme, not simply to support the exchequer. The resonances with contemporary democratic socialist welfare states are not difficult to perceive.[134] This was a huge departure from the jurisprudential rulings (*fatāwā*, فتاوى) issued by Indonesia's largest Islamic organisations, Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama during the 1940s and 1950s: juristic attention was firmly on how *zakat* might be used, who was eligible to pay it, and who could collect it.[135] The repurposing of *zakat* as a wealth tax administered by the state was and remains a bold idea, one likely difficult to implement. In al-Siba'i's and Ahmad's writings we see Islam conceived of as an inspiration for an equitable social system, one which incidentally met socialist goals, though not necessarily inspired by socialism. While al-Siba'i's work is but one example, the circulation of such ideas across the Muslim world and within Indonesia provided fertile ground for Masjumi intellectuals to formulate their own approaches to an Islam-inspired Indonesian socialism.

The leftward pull of socialist ideas was evident in how these Masjumi thinkers chose to interpret Islam: their idea of Islam incarnate in the political realm did not involve requiring women to don the veil, persecuting minority heterodox communities such as the Ahmadiyyah, reserving political leadership for Sunni Muslims, or banning the consumption of pork and alcohol in Indonesia.[136] Instead, their formulation of Islam's presence in the public sphere was one in which Islamic values such as responsible democratic governance, tolerance for racial and religious minorities, and the promotion of social justice informed policymaking. This was a matter of emphasis and priorities, rather than theological rigour: Islam can, and certainly has been, interpreted in deeply intolerant ways that obfuscate social inequality or legitimise autocracy. For this moment in the late 1940s and early 1950s, at least for this coterie of Masjumi ideologues, Islam in politics meant addressing many of the class and geopolitical issues that Marxism had called to their attention. This was politically contingent, and their 'integralist Islam' was one product of the optimistic spirit of political innovation that inflected many formerly colonised societies at this time; it would wane by the time of the Constitutional Assembly debates in the late 1950s.[137] During this period, however, Madinier was entirely right to point out that their political ideas, as elaborated in a 1955 election handbill, constituted 'a manifesto which could have been drawn up by a number of non-religious parties including the PSI [Socialist Party of Indonesia]'.[138]

134 Mustafa al-Siba'i was remarkable for his commitment to a rights-based vision of the ideal Islamic society, with a clear emphasis on socio-economic rights alongside political rights. He, and the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood he led, were also committed to democratic participation, resisting the Sayyid Qutb-inspired radicalisation which overtook the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. See Shahrough Akhavi, 'Egypt's socialism and Marxist thought: Some preliminary observations on social theory and metaphysics', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 17, 2 (1975): 199.

135 M.B. Hooker, *Indonesian Islam: Social change through contemporary fatāwā* (Crows News: Allen & Unwin; Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003), pp. 111–17.

136 Natsir and Zainal Abidin Ahmad even went so far as to argue that the Indonesian Republic had effectively met the criteria for it to be considered an 'Islamic state'. See Madinier, *Islam and politics*, p. 318.

137 Ibid., p. 419.

138 Ibid., p. 302.

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