

DEBATES ON
**ISLAM &
SOCIETY**

ISLAM, HUMANITY AND THE INDONESIAN IDENTITY

Reflections on History

Ahmad Syafii Maarif



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Islam, Humanity, and Indonesian Identity

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Ahmad Syafii Maarif

Translated by George A. Fowler

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*Dedicated to those who sacrificed
themselves for social justice and humanity*

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Foreword

On the morning of February 11, 2018 at 6.30 AM, a young man wielding a sword assaulted several churchgoers near St. Lidwina Church in Sleman, Yogyakarta. He then burst into the church, attacked the pastor, who was leading the choir, and slashed statues of Jesus and Mary. He had already wounded four people when a policeman, unsuccessful in his attempt to negotiate with him, fired a warning shot. When the young man did not respond, the policeman shot him in the leg. The news of what was feared to be another attack by an Islamic extremist went viral across the globe.

What did not reach international media was the reaction of Ahmad Syafi'i Maarif, one of Indonesia's most prominent Muslim public intellectuals and author of this book. When "Buya" Maarif, as he is affectionately called, learned what had happened, he immediately went to the church and then visited the young man in hospital. There he spoke with him for some time, exchanging ideas about Islam. A few days later, Buya spoke in public about the incident, commenting that, "This young man is a victim of stupidity ... he uses religious ideas and sentences to practice his ideology of death ... I have spoken to him, to Suliyono ... it seems he already regrets it he is one of many Indonesians who have fallen victim to this ideological trash that is imported from the Middle East, and which unfortunately many people buy even worse, it is already considered trash over there, but here it is valued And, ironically, politicians deliberately make use of it."

Soon afterwards, Bishop Robertus Rubiyatmoko visited Buya Maarif at his home to thank him, and said "Buya's visit helped to calm us down. What emerged after the incident was instead a strong sense of brotherhood". Maarif, happy to welcome the bishop to his home, said "I'm only a small cog that is striving to promote logic and healthy thinking in this country."

Unfortunately, attacks by organized groups of extremists, or by 'lone wolves' – as Suliyono turned out to be – have become common worldwide. Maarif argues in this book that Indonesian Islam is affected by international forces in a troubled world. Yet, to fulfil the promise its founding fathers believed in, Indonesia needs to reconnect to what he argues is the essential spirit of Islam, that is, its advocacy of justice, equality, welfare, freedom and moderation.

As professor Herman Beck aptly puts it in his Introduction to this book, Maarif has for decades been one of Indonesia's foremost Muslim

scholars. The breadth and depth of his ideas, however, are hardly known to the outside world since he has written almost exclusively in Indonesian. We should therefore be grateful to the translator, George Fowler, and those who made this publication possible.

In this book Buya Maarif calmly makes important arguments about contested theological, social and political issues, drawing upon a wide range of religious texts, scholars and academic sources. Some of these arguments concern the past and future role of Islam in Indonesia, while others relate to the Muslim world as a whole. For example, he argues on religious grounds that Islam is perfectly reconcilable with democracy, and states that “Indonesia is one of the fortunate nations, because from the start the majority of its people chose a democratic system to govern their new born state.” And, indeed, today Indonesia is one of the world’s big democracies, although, as he comments, for “four decades (1959–1998), democracy was consciously murdered.”

Maarif has apologized for not having sufficiently emphasized in the first edition of this book that woman and man have equal rights. He thanks one of his critics, the scholar K.H. Husein Muhammad, for pointing out this mistake. After explaining Verse 97 of *Surah Al-Nahl* (“The Bees”) “Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female ...,” the author concludes that “the discriminatory treatment meted out against women is no different from opposing the commands of the Quran.”

Buya Maarif is famed for his views on tolerance and pluralism. Global Islam in his view simply cannot be monopolized by any one group, one culture, or one current of thought. In the end, religion is primarily about sincerity. He shares his experience that the ‘heart-to-heart contact’ with adherents of other religions is “a very close one” when he feels that “sincerity (*ketulusan*) is there, and honesty.” In this book’s title ‘Humanity’ comes between ‘Islam’ and ‘Indonesian Identity’. The central message is a wonderfully heartfelt balanced merger of the three.

Leiden University has long been a center for the study of Indonesia, of Islam in general, and Indonesian Islam in particular. This publication aims to provide an international platform for the voice of Ahmad Syafi’i Maarif, an Indonesian Muslim scholar whose vision and humanity have inspired many inside Indonesia. He may have referred to himself with characteristic modesty as but a “small cog,” but his views and practices have been vital to the political and spiritual welfare of today’s Indonesia, and may well have a role to play in our troubled world.

Jan Michiel Otto

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An Introduction to Ahmad Syafii Maarif: The Man and This Book

by Herman L. Beck

Ahmad Syafii Maarif is a highly respected and influential Indonesian intellectual and moral leader. At the beginning of the twenty-first century he was one of three Indonesians given the honorary title *guru bangsa*, “teacher of the nation,” by his Muslim compatriots.¹ The other two, Nurcholish Madjid (1939–2005) and Abdurrahman Wahid (1940–2009), have passed away, leaving Syafii Maarif as the surviving “teacher of the nation.” One of the other honorific titles reserved for him is *muazin bangsa*, “muezzin of the nation,” an allusion to the fact that Syafii Maarif throughout his life admonished his fellow citizens to comply with the ethical principles and moral rules of their religion just as the muezzin calls believers to prayer five times a day. This honorific title was used as the title of a book dedicated to him in 2015 by friends and colleagues to celebrate his outstanding contributions to his country and religion.² The Maarif Institute for Culture and Humanity was founded in 2003 to safeguard and promote Syafii Maarif’s ideas and ideals.³

Held in high esteem not only by fellow Muslims, Syafii Maarif is also respected by followers of other religions in his country. Franz Magnis-Suseno, a Jesuit priest and prominent Indonesian philosopher of German origin, for example, considers him to be “one of the most open-minded, inclusive, and on principle, nonviolent people within Indonesian Islam.”⁴ Syafii Maarif has also won praise abroad from both individuals and institutions. The well-known Dutch anthropologist Martin van Bruinessen declares him “Indonesia’s last remaining public wise old man and a unique paragon of moral leadership.”⁵ In 2008 he was presented with the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Peace and International Understanding – sometimes called the Asian Nobel Peace Prize. According to the jury, Syafii Maarif “promoted the country’s pluralistic society and nonsectarian principles of Pancasila amidst the call for Islamic fundamentalism.”⁶

The author of the book the reader is holding needs no introduction to Indonesians, but non-Indonesian readers are probably not familiar with his work. This book provides an excellent introduction to his ideas and ideals – a legacy for future generations in Indonesia. It is a translation of

the second and revised edition of *Islam dalam Bingkai Keindonesiaan dan Kemanusiaan: Sebuah Refleksi Sejarah* (Islam, Humanity, and Indonesian Identity: Reflections on History), published in 2009 in Bandung and Jakarta. The main title of the book reveals the three pivotal themes that throughout Syafii Maarif's life have played a central role in his thinking, writing, and actions: being Muslim, being Indonesian, and being human, and their interconnection. The subtitle stresses the importance of reflecting on history as an essential tool for understanding and tackling contemporary social and moral evils such as poverty, injustice, corruption. Syafii Maarif takes as a premise that the "real nature" of being Muslim, being Indonesian, and being human can only be appreciated through education. Therefore, he engages these topics – be it separately or jointly – in most of his post-1985 speeches, lectures, articles, and books.⁷ Here, they are collected in one volume.

Ahmad Syafii Maarif started to write this book after his retirement in 2005 as general chair of the Muhammadiyah, the highest position within this organization and one he had held since 1998. As he was turning seventy in 2005, he decided not to stand for reelection during the 45th Muktamar, the Congress of the Muhammadiyah, held in the city of Malang that year. He had also been working on an autobiography during this time.⁸ Published in 2009, his autobiography often sheds light on views held and positions taken by Syafii Maarif in this book, the more so because he repeatedly stresses that everything should be understood in its social and historical context. By reading this book and the autobiography together, I was able to gain insight into both Syafii Maarif's intellectual heritage and his life story. This introduction aims to offer an understanding of the man and this book, without claiming to be complete. The main themes as mentioned above will be singled out and highlighted in order to show the importance of his contributions to Islamic thinking in general and Indonesian Islamic thinking in particular.

Ahmad Syafii Maarif lived through turbulent times, from the Dutch colonial period to the Japanese occupation, and the Indonesian war of independence. He experienced the so-called Old Order of Sukarno, the New Order of Soeharto, and finally the Reformation and post-Reformation era in Indonesia. Syafii Maarif was born on May 31, 1935 in Sumpur Kudus, a rural hamlet in the Minangkabau highlands of West Sumatra. The Minangkabau people are overwhelmingly Muslim, with traditional (*adat*) belief systems surviving as well. Polygamy was still quite common in Syafii Maarif's youth, and his father had several wives. At the same time, the region is famous for its strong matrilineal system. Also typical of the Minangkabau is that many men live and work outside the region for long periods. Minangkabau people are widely considered

dynamic and egalitarian in nature, which is one of the reasons that they are well represented in intellectual, government, and business circles all over the Indonesian archipelago, and in Malaysia and Singapore as well.

Since his youth, education and specifically religious education played an important role in Syafii Maarif's life. In his autobiography he describes how he entered primary school in the morning and received religious education at the *surau*, a small prayer house and communal building, after school in the afternoon or early evening. His father, who belonged to the local village elite, was also involved in the religious instruction Syafii Maarif received in his early years. He especially stresses the influence of the Muhammadiyah on his education from the moment this reformist movement established itself in Sumpur Kudus in 1944, when he was nine. This solid religious foundation helped to form his character and would become the basis on which he could build and elaborate his own structure of ideas and ideals. Islam and the Quran would be his touchstone throughout his life.

In pursuit of further education Ahmad Syafii Maarif left Minangkabau for Yogyakarta in central Java. Yogyakarta is the city where Ahmad Dahlan (1868–1923) founded the Muhammadiyah movement in 1912. He endorsed the “modernist” principles of Muhammad ‘Abduh (1849–1905)⁹ and intended to realize the ideas and ideals of this Egyptian reformer in Yogyakarta. The so-called modernists such as Muhammad Abduh and, in his footsteps, Ahmad Dahlan, sought to understand why the Muslim world in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was so far behind the West. In their eyes this backwardness had allowed Western colonial powers to dominate large parts of the Muslim world. They came to believe that only by overcoming this backwardness would the Muslim world shake off the yoke of colonialism and Western hegemony. Purifying Islam and educating Muslims were seen as the way to overcome this backwardness. Ahmad Dahlan's initiatives in educating Muslims led to the founding of the Muhammadiyah movement; nowadays this organization is one of the biggest non-governmental players in the field of education in Indonesia and, perhaps, even worldwide. It should come as no surprise that Ahmad Syafii Maarif continued his education at one of Muhammadiyah's schools in Yogyakarta.

In his early twenties Syafii Maarif became a member of the Muhammadiyah movement. After graduating he entered the service of the Muhammadiyah as a primary school teacher, working in different regions of Indonesia, and meanwhile diligently devoting himself to intellectual and spiritual growth. Throughout his life he would voice the belief of the founder of the Muhammadiyah movement that ignorance leads to poverty, backwardness, corruption, and injustice and that, therefore,

ignorance should be overcome by education. Syafii Maarif's own pursuit of lifelong education is the most convincing evidence that he acted upon his constant appeal to his fellow citizens to seek out education. His efforts were rewarded with scholarships to study in the United States. He was a graduate student in the history of education at Northern Illinois University in 1973, and completed his MA in history at Ohio University in 1980. Just three years later he completed his PhD in Islamic Thought at the University of Chicago. Syafii Maarif's study at the University of Chicago is of particular importance, because the influence of his PhD supervisor, Fazlur Rahman (1919–1988), brought about a fundamental revolution in his own way of thinking.

In his autobiography Syafii Maarif recounts that before he became acquainted with the ideas of Fazlur Rahman, he belonged to those members of the Muhammadiyah movement who nowadays, in retrospect, would be considered fundamentalist. Their interpretation of the goal of the purification of Islam implied not only a return to pristine Islam but also the establishment of an Islamic State of Indonesia. He sympathized with Indonesian intellectuals, politicians, and activists who adhered to the same kind of ideology, men like Mohammad Natsir (1908–1993), with whom Syafii Maarif shared his Minangkabau descent, and he supported organizations and political parties that tried to realize that ideal, like the Masyumi in which Natsir played a prominent role.¹⁰ When the Masyumi was banned by Sukarno and later when Mohammad Natsir was prevented from taking a role in another political party by President Soeharto, he founded the Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia (DDII), the Indonesian Council for Islamic Propagation, in 1967 to realize his ideal in a grassroots movement. The DDII contributed substantially to the introduction and spread of the Salafi and Wahhabi body of ideas in Indonesia.

As far as non-Indonesian Muslim thinkers are concerned, Syafii Maarif admired people like Sayyid Abu 'l-A'la Mawdudi (1903–1979) and Maryam Jameelah (1934–2012) for the same reasons. Mawdudi was an influential contemporary revivalist ideologue and politician; he tirelessly labored for the establishment of the Islamic State of Pakistan. He was convinced that in modern times the realization of *din* (the perfect religious system), the formation of *umat* (the true community of the faithful), and the full application of sharia (Islamic law) were only possible in an Islamic State. Maryam Jameelah was a follower of Mawdudi for a long time. Originally a non-practicing Jewish-American woman of German descent, she converted to Islam in her early twenties, went to Pakistan, and married a close companion of Mawdudi. She became known as a passionate defender of pure Islam and a keen critic of the corruption and materialism of the Western world.¹¹

It was under the influence of Fazlur Rahman that Syafii Maarif's thinking moved in a different direction. Rahman was born in what is now Pakistan, under British rule. He held a PhD from Oxford and had taught in the UK, Canada, and the United States before being appointed in 1963 to head the Central Institute of Islamic Research in Karachi. Five years later he felt forced to leave Pakistan because the liberal, reformist Islam that he represented was being attacked by the orthodox *ulama* (religious scholars). He returned to the United States, becoming Professor of Islamic Thought at the University of Chicago in 1969. In that capacity he earned quite some fame and attracted students from all over the world who wanted to study with him, Ahmad Syafii Maarif being one of them. Syafii Maarif must have felt drawn to many of the ideas and insights Fazlur Rahman presented in his lectures and books. To mention only a few examples:¹² Rahman's urgent call for a correct understanding of Quranic teachings and, in view of this, his emphasis on the importance of education and studying the Quran; his stress on morality and ethics based on a careful reading of the Quran and on the ability to differentiate "between Quranic ethics and law"; his promotion of the Quran's defense of humanity and humanism as one of the central messages of the Revelation; his conviction that democracy, human rights, and women's rights are Islamic; his plea to develop one's capability to make a distinction between "historical" Islam and "normative" Islam; his opinion that the establishment of an Islamic State is not a Quranic requirement. All these themes are found in Syafii Maarif's publications after he returned to Indonesia.

Perhaps Syafii Maarif's graduate studies in the United States contributed to his openness to Fazlur Rahman's ideas. His MA thesis, written under the supervision of Prof. William H. Frederick at Ohio University, was devoted to the study of the relationship between Islam and politics during the period of so-called Guided Democracy (1959–1965) under President Sukarno in Indonesia. His PhD dissertation for the University of Chicago was titled "Islam as the Basis of the State: A Study of the Islamic Political Ideas as Reflected in the Constituent Assembly Debates in Indonesia."¹³ Both were translated and published in Indonesian. In these early works, Syafii Maarif deals with the role of Islam during the formative period of independent Indonesia. He is interested in the meaning of Islam for and in national politics and governmental policy or, to quote Bahtiar Effendy, "the political relationship between Islam and the state."¹⁴ Although he is still focused on the Islamization of Indonesia, he no longer champions this idea from a top-down perspective by way of the establishment of an Islamic State. Instead, he favors a bottom-up process of Islamization, by way of education and democratization.

After his return to Indonesia, the shift in Syafii Maarif's thinking made it easier for him to understand Muhammadiyah's acceptance in 1985 of the Soeharto government policy "that all organizations must adopt Pancasila as their sole ideological foundation."¹⁵ Pancasila is the official philosophy on which the Indonesian state is founded. It consists of five principles: "1. Belief in the One Almighty God; 2. Just and civilized humanity; 3. The unity of Indonesia; 4. Democracy guided by inner wisdom in unanimity arising from deliberation amongst representatives; and 5. Social justice for all of the people of Indonesia."¹⁶ Pancasila was accepted by the Muhammadiyah only after long and heated deliberations because, according to the statutes of the organization, its first and only ideological foundation is Islam.

Syafii Maarif has defended Pancasila ever since. He did not see Pancasila as a rival of religion in general or of Islam in particular. Rather, he considered it a gift to the Indonesian people by the country's founders in order to overcome all the threats the newborn state faced after its war of independence. He also praised the wisdom of the founding fathers for their choice of Bahasa Indonesia, the Indonesian language based on the Malay language, as the national language instead of favoring one of the regional languages, like Javanese. In this way the equality of all the ethnic groups and cultures in Indonesia was stressed, which in turn contributed to the viability of Indonesia as a unified nation. In Syafii Maarif's interpretation of Pancasila this philosophy also implied a guarantee of humanism, humanitarianism, justice, and democracy. In the post-1985 writings and speeches of Syafii Maarif all these topics would play a salient role. He dedicated himself to the task of convincing his audience that all these topics are compatible with Islam and in fact are rooted in the Quran.

In the years after 1985 Syafii Maarif's star gradually rose within the Muhammadiyah. He passed through all its echelons from the lowest to the highest and held several offices before serving as general chair from 1998 to 2005. In 1998 he was vice-chair under the leadership of Amien Rais (b. 1944), who was elected at the 43rd Muktamar held in Banda Aceh to become its general chair from 1995 through 2000. However, Amien Rais preferred a political career with the Partai Amanat Nasional (National Mandate Party), which he had founded after the fall of President Soeharto in 1998. According to Muhammadiyah statutes, those who hold high office within the organization cannot pursue an active political career; therefore, Amien Rais had to renounce his position as general chair. However, Syafii Maarif was held in such high esteem by the members of the Muhammadiyah that he was elected as its general chair for the period from 2000 through 2005 during the 44th Muktamar of the organization in Jakarta in 2000.

Under the leadership of Syafii Maarif the Muhammadiyah pursued quite progressive policies, although “liberal” and “progressive” in an Indonesian context are more or less synonymous with “moderate” in the West.¹⁷ As chair of an organization with an estimated 25 to 30 million members, Syafii Maarif was even better equipped to struggle against what he considered the social and moral evils of contemporary Indonesia: poverty, injustice, corruption, radicalism, and friction between the different communities. These evils were the biggest threat to social harmony and peaceful living together of all the peoples coexisting in a unified Indonesian state. With the support of the Muhammadiyah, Syafii Maarif intended to beat these evils by stimulating and defending “the ideas of democracy, pluralism, and the spirit of interfaith dialogue” and thus promoting peace.¹⁸

It is important to note that Syafii Maarif did not consider democracy an exclusively Western idea. He points to the Quranic concept of *shura* (mutual consultation) in surah 3:159 and surah 42:38 as proof that democracy is inherent to Islam. He also mentions the fact that since the death of Ahmad Dahlan, elections played a crucial role within the Muhammadiyah. Finally, he refers to Mohammad Hatta (1902–1980), Indonesia’s first vice president, who as a fellow Minangkabau countryman has always been one of his role models. Hatta once stated: “... democracy in Indonesia has three main sources: the Western idea of socialism advocating the principles of humanism, the Islamic teachings on God’s justice and the need to establish universal brotherhood, and the knowledge that Indonesian society is based on collectivism.”¹⁹

During his period as general chair of the Muhammadiyah, Syafii Maarif was also closely associated with the World Conference on Religion for Peace (WCRFP), a global organization of adherents of different religions and religious groups aimed at furthering world peace. His commitment to this organization shows his dedication to the issues of tolerance and pluralism, a commitment that is not only theoretical and on a global level. He also devoted himself to these ideals in day-to-day life by promoting tolerance and trying to solve inter- and intra-religious tensions. A few examples will suffice. First, Syafii Maarif has exerted himself to bridge the differences between the “modernist” Muhammadiyah to which he belonged and the “traditionalist” Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), with its 45 million members – by far the biggest Muslim social organization in the world. When there were troubles for political or other reasons he often managed to bring about reconciliation between the two organizations by personally visiting one or more NU leaders. Secondly, Syafii Maarif has been involved in many interreligious and interfaith initiatives, including national and international dialogue meetings and other activities. Thirdly,

Syafii Maarif has defended the right to adhere to religion other than one of Indonesia's six "official" ones and even to be an atheist. Officially – at least until recently – the policy of the Indonesian government with regard to religion was that every Indonesian citizen should adhere to one of the six "recognized" religions: Islam, Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, or Confucianism. Fourthly, Syafii Maarif has been one of the few prominent public figures who has spoken out for Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, a Christian of Chinese background, politician, administrator, and the governor of Jakarta from 2014 through 2017. He is better known as Ahok. He was accused of blasphemy by radical Muslim groups, sentenced to two years' imprisonment and, thus, lost his high position.

Rightfully Syafii Maarif can be called an activist in many fields; even when he does not see himself as an activist in a certain area – for example, in the gender debate – the position he takes is often remarkable in the Indonesian context. As always, his touchstone is the Quran. On the basis of his reading of the Quran, Syafii Maarif rejects the inferiority of women and the legitimacy of polygamy, and instead defends the equal rights of men and women. According to him, there is no objection in the Quran to a woman serving as the highest leader. Consequently, a woman could become the president of Indonesia. As far as Syafii Maarif's rejection of polygamy is concerned, his Minangkabau background has perhaps influenced his view; in his autobiography he makes clear that his mother suffered terribly as one of several wives. He considers polygamy a type of injustice.

Whereas Syafii Maarif is still highly appreciated as an adviser and *éminence grise*, his influence seemed to have diminished since his retirement as general chair of the Muhammadiyah in 2005. The result of the election of a new central board of the Muhammadiyah during the 45th Muktamar in Malang has been interpreted by many Muhammadiyah watchers as a "conservative turn," a setback in comparison with the central board under the leadership of Syafii Maarif. Maybe his ideas were too progressive, and he moved too fast for many members of the Muhammadiyah. However, ten years later, during the 47th Muktamar in Makassar in 2015, this conservative turn seems to have been rectified by the election of a new general chair, widely considered to be a moderate progressive.

Time will tell whether Syafii Maarif's ideas and ideals have fallen on fertile ground. For now, the reader should be grateful that, finally, a book by one of Indonesia's most prominent intellectuals has been made available in an English edition to a wider Western public. This is quite exceptional, for works by Indonesian intellectuals and philosophers

are rarely translated into English. It is an even greater shame that the legacy of most Indonesian Muslim thinkers is largely neglected by their co-religionists in other parts of the Muslim world.²⁰ Indonesian Muslim thinkers are strongly inclined to draw on ideas and ideals from around the world, resulting in creative and courageous new perspectives. Although this book presents Syafii Maarif's ideas and ideals with regard to being Muslim, being Indonesian, and being human, with a focus on the Indonesian context, his insights may offer inspiration to Muslims and non-Muslims all over the world.

Preface to the Second Edition

As it turned out, it took some five years for this second edition (revised) to arrive in the hands of readers. The public conveyed a variety of responses to the book, and all of these, whether critical or appreciative, have been equally important to the writer. The second edition contains refinements and even additions, particularly in “The Status of Women in Islam” at the suggestion of K.H. Husein Muhammad of the Fahmina Institute Foundation in Cirebon. Corrections and improvements were also provided by Rev. Dr. Jan S. Aritonang from the Jakarta Theological Seminary. I would like to extend my sincere thanks and gratitude to all, and especially to these two religious figures, who are also my friends. Finally, my heartfelt thanks to Mizan Publishing and the Maarif Institute, both of which supported the publication of this work from the beginning. *Syukuran jazilan* “Thank you very much.” I certainly hope the notes on this revision will be welcomed by readers.

Ahmad Syafii Maarif
Yogyakarta, January 14, 2015

Preface

In May 2006 I first had the idea of writing about Islam within the framework of Indonesian identity – “Indonesianness,” if you will – and humanity. After a year of unavoidable delays, I began to organize my thoughts on the evening of May 7, 2007, at my home on Jalan Halmahera in Yogyakarta. The first draft was finished on February 9, 2009. To get feedback, criticism, and suggestions from experts, I hosted a meeting on March 3, 2009 at the Maarif Institute, moderated by M. Deddy Julianto, with three of the experts who prior to this had acted as readers of the draft of this book.

The three readers were Dr. Anhar Gonggong, a renowned historian; Dr. Luthfi Assyaukanie, a specialist in Islamic studies, both classic and modern; and Dr. Putut Wijanarko, a communications expert from Mizan Publishing. Dr. Shofwan Karim, Rector of the Muhammadiyah University of West Sumatra, was also invited to this meeting. The Maarif Institute contingent included Muhammad Abdullah Darraz and M. Supriadi. I was assisted by Darraz in processing the input, critiques, and suggestions of these experts. He is a young man who had long specialized in classic Islamic studies. It was my hope that some of the weaknesses of the pre-publication draft could be reduced by integrating the suggestions and critiques of these experts. As the author, naturally I bore full responsibility for this book on my shoulders.

Raja Juli Antoni, director of the Maarif Institute, and I wish to extend our deep appreciation to all those named above and everyone who directly or indirectly participated in bringing this work into the light of day. To Mizan Publishing, I say in the Javanese language, *Matur nuwun ingkang sanget*, “I am deeply grateful.”

May this work be of benefit to its readers.

Ahmad Syafii Maarif

Yogyakarta, March 4, 2009

