

About the Author

Ahmad Syafii Maarif was born in Sumpur Kudus, West Sumatra, on May 31, 1935. He majored in history at Northern Illinois University (1973) and received his MA in history from the University of Ohio in 1980. He was awarded his PhD in Islamic thinking from the University of Chicago in 1983 with his dissertation “Islam as the Basis of State: A Study of the Islamic Political Ideas as Reflected in the Constituent Assembly Debates in Indonesia.” He has been a professor of history at Institut Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan (Institute for Teacher Training and Education; IKIP), now Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta; Institut Agama Negeri (State Institute of Religion), now Universitas Islam Negeri (State Institute of Islam); and Universitas Islam Indonesia (Islamic University of Indonesia). At present, he is Professor Emeritus at Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta (Yogyakarta State University). He has been a guest lecturer at the Universitas Kebangsaan Malaysia (National University of Malaysia) and McGill University, Montreal.

Maarif has been active in the social organization Muhammadiyah, established by the renowned Indonesian Muslim reformer Ahmad Dahlan in 1912. Maarif was the Deputy Chairman of Muhammadiyah's Central Executive Committee (1995–1999) and held the position of Acting Chairman of Muhammadiyah's Central Executive Committee (2000), replacing Amien Rais, who had entered the world of politics. At the Muhammadiyah Congress in 2000, he was elected Chairman for the period 2000–2005. In spite of the many calls on all sides for him to serve again, he decided to resign and become Adviser to the Central Executive Committee (2005–2010). To promote democratization and an inclusive, tolerant, and pluralist social order, he, together with several leading figures of Muhammadiyah, established the Maarif Institute for Culture and Humanity in 2003.

He has received national and international awards recognizing his work as an activist intellectual and his dedication to humanity. In 2008, he received the Ramon Magsaysay Award in the category of Peace and International Understanding. In addition, he also received the Hamengkubuwono IX Award in the category of Multiculturalism (2000), the Mpu Pradah Award in the category of Pluralism (2009), the Habibie Award (2010), the IBF Award in the category of Islamic Book Figure (2011), the Nabil Award (2013), and the UMM Award (2014). He was named Dedicated Intellectual by the daily newspaper *Kompas* (2013).

In the international arena, Maarif is President of the World Conference on Religion for Peace (WCFP), based in the United States. After serving as chairman of the Central Executive Committee of Muhammadiyah, he focused on national issues. His writings have appeared in various forums, seminars, and media. They include *Gerakan Komunis di Vietnam* (The Communist movement in Vietnam); *Mengapa Vietnam Jatuk Seluruhnya ke Tangan Komunis?* (Why did Vietnam fall completely into the hands of the Communists?); *Aspirasi Umat Islam Indonesia* (The aspirations of the Indonesian Muslim *umat*), co-authored; *Percik-Percik Pemikiran Iqbal* (Shards of Iqbal's thinking), with Mohammad Diponegoro; *Dinamika Islam: Potret Perkembangan Islam di Indonesia* (The dynamics of Islam: Portrait of the development of Islam in Indonesia); *Duta Islam untuk Dunia Modern* (The envoy of Islam for the modern world), with Mohammad Diponegoro; *Islam, Kenapa Tidak!* (Islam, Why not?) and *Orientalisme dan Humanisme Sekuler* (Orientalism and secular humanism), with Dr. M. Amien Rais; *Masa Depan dalam Taruhan* (The future at risk), 2000; *Mencari Autentisitas dalam Kegalauan* (Finding authenticity in uproar); *Meluruskan Makna Jihad* (Rectifying the meaning of jihad), 2005; *Menerobos Kemelut* (Breaking through the crisis), 2005; *Menggugah Nurani Bangsa* (Arousing the conscience of the nation), 2005; *Titik-Titik Kisar di Perjalananku* (Turning points in my journey), 2006, republished in 2009; *Tuhan Menyapa Kita* (God addresses us), 2006; *Islam dalam Bingkai Keindonesiaan dan Kemanusiaan*, 2009 (published in English as *Islam, Humanity, and Indonesian Identity*); *Gilad Atzmon: Catatan Kritis tentang Palestina dan Masa Depan Zionis* (Gilad Atzmon: Critical notes on Palestine and the Zionist future), 2012; and *Memoar Seorang Anak Kampung* (Memoir of a kampung kid), 2013.