

PRAGMATISM-ACCOMMODATIVE POLITICAL PATTERNS OF AL-IRSYAD DURING THE REIGN OF PRESIDENT SOEKARNO, 1945-1965

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Abstract: This article examines the roles and political behaviors of Al-Irsyad during the President of Soekarno's reign (1945-1965). This study is part of an effort to complete the history of Al-Irsyad's journey which seems to have not been revealed by academics, the role and political attitude of Al-Irsyad in the era of President Soekarno in particular. Using historical research methods supported by the main primary sources that have not been explored by scholars, such as a collection of writings welcoming the "Musjawarah Besar dan Ulang Tahun ke-25 Pemuda Al-Irsjad, 1964" and a collection of writings to welcome "Muker IV Pemuda Al-Irsjad Tahun 1967, the study has revealed that Al-Irsyad as the organization of a religious social movement that at the beginning of its establishment focused on the development of modern (Islamic) education, then shifted and involved on political movement. Its involvement in politics was pragmatic and accommodative. The proof of its pragmatism showed when it joined the Masyumi Party. Those two parties had similar Islamic views and even Masyumi could support the Al-Irsyad members' political rights. Meanwhile, Al-Irsyad's pragmatic-accommodative attitude was shown when addressing Soekarno's policies during the Guided Democracy. It was performed to obtain protection from Soekarno. Therefore, it is common knowledge that in the era of Guided Democracy, the statements of Al-Irsyad's figures were supported by Soekarno's political policies in many ways.

Keywords: Al-Irsyad, Hadhrami Society Political Pattern, Pragmatism-Accommodative, Guided Democracy.

Introduction

Al-Irsyad is a part of socio-religious-movement organizations which took a role in the history of Indonesia. Although not as big as

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah in its development, the Al-Irsyad organization still shows its existence to this day—especially in developing Islamic educational institutions. Therefore, the study on Al-Irsyad remains relevant especially the unrevealed history of Al-Irsyad covering the depth of its academics.

Talking about Al-Irsyad certainly cannot be separated from the debates about the struggles of the Hadhrami people in Indonesia. Al-Irsyad emerged as a result of the internal Hadhrami conflict within Jamiat Khair (established July 17, 1905) between the Sayyid and non-Sayyid groups. The non Sayyid group regarded the Sayyid group's views in the field of religion was very rigid. , This assumption is probably the reason for the split in Jamiat Khair. As a result, the non-Sayyid established an organization called Jami'iyat al-Islam wa al-Irsyad al-Arabiyyah which has also been called Al-Irsyad. It received legal recognition from the Dutch East Indies government on August 11, 1915.¹

Al-Irsyad followed the path of Jamiat Khair, focusing on education and problems in the Arab community, although some non-Arab Muslims were members. Following the development of the situation at hand, Al-Irsyad then interacted and collaborated with other Islamic organizations such as Muhammadiyah and Persatuan Islam. Al-Irsyad also expanded his focus to broader issues, which included general Islamic issues in Indonesia. In terms of politics, Al-Irsyad participated in the al-Islam congress in the 1920s and joined the Indonesian A'la Islamic Council when this federation was founded in 1937.² After Indonesia's independence, Al-Irsyad joined the Masjumi Party and even became a special member of the party. The Masjumi Party is considered to have the same platform on Islam and can also channel the aspirations of Al-Irsyad members. Likewise, Al-Irsyad was accommodative to the political realities of Soekarno's Guided Democracy. Furthermore, it is the period of President Soekarno's era that will be the focus of the study of this article, especially concerning the role and political attitude of Al-Irsyad.

Many academics have conducted studies on Al-Irsyad, for example, Deliar Noer³ who categorizes Al-Irsyad as one of the modern

¹ Deliar Noer, *Gerakan Modern Islam di Indonesia 1900-1942* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1990), pp. 71-73.

² Ibid., p. 75.

³ Ibid., pp. 37-104.

organizations in the Islamic movement in Indonesia. Likewise, Bisri Affandi⁴ reaffirmed that Al-Irsyad is one of the modern movement organizations in Islam. Affandi's study explained more broadly the model of religious thought and practice outlined by Al-Irsyad as an Islamic reform organization. Another study conducted by Natalie Mobini-Kesheh⁵ revealed that the emergence of Al-Irsyad was part of the continuation of the revival or what is often referred to as *nabdhah*, which means a new or modern view in terms of education. Novelty-oriented education is at the core of the rise of Hadhrami society as the gateway to the modern world. However, all the studies that have been carried out by the researchers above, if we read, only focus on the discussion of Al-Irsyad as a modern Islamic organization on the one hand, and on the other hand talk about the pattern of Al-Irsyad's education. In addition, the focus of the study by the researchers above is related to the struggle of Al-Irsyad in the period before Indonesia's independence (in 1945). The rest, it is true that Badjerei's⁶ study not only discusses the modernity and pattern of Islamic education developed by the Islamic organization Al-Irsyad, but also discusses the role of Al-Irsyad in the political field. However, Al-Irsyad's political role in Badjerei's study only focused on the period before 1945.

Likewise, several studies of research results published in journals have not specifically touched on the role and political attitude of Al-Irsyad. For example, first, Muhammad As'ad's⁷ study only reaffirms the debate between the two Indonesian Hadhrami groups (Sayyid and non-Sayyid) related to religious rituals carried out by the Sayyid group, one of which is the celebration of Maulid. In this context, Al-Irsyad as a group that represents non-Sayyid, does not condemn Maulid but only criticizes some practices in the celebration that they consider as heresy. Second, Syamsul Rijal's⁸ study looks at the internal dynamics of the

⁴ Bisri Affandi, *Syaikh Ahmad Surkati (1874-1943): Pembaharu dan Pemurni Islam di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Pustaka al-Kausar, 1999).

⁵ Natalie Mobini Kesheh, *The Hadrami Awakening: Community and Identity in the Netherlands East Indies, 1900-1942* (Ithaca, New York: Southeast Asia Program Publication, 1999).

⁶ Hussein Badjerei, *Al-Irsyad Mengisi Sejarah Bangsa* (Jakarta: Presto Prima Utama, 1996).

⁷ Muhammad As'ad, "The Dynamics of The Indonesian Hadramis on The Maulid Celebration," *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies* 8, 2 (2020).

⁸ Syamsul Rijal, "Internal Dynamics Within Hadhrami Arabs in Indonesia from Social Hierarchy to Islamic Doctrine," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 11, 1 (2017).

Hadhrami community from the colonial period to the present. This study wants to explain that the internal conflict of the Hadhrami community in Indonesia has not yet been resolved. The first conflict was between the Sayyid and non-Sayyid groups, which triggered the non-Sayyid groups to establish Al-Irsyad. This conflict has not yet been resolved and will likely be difficult to resolve because it is related to differences in religious views between the Sayyid and non-Sayyid groups. Meanwhile, the recent conflict among Al-Irsyad itself, namely the infiltration of Salafism which injects conservatism among Ershad, which then these Salafi-leaning people want to dominate the leadership in the Al-Irsyad organization. This conflict ended with the division of the organization into two, namely Al-Irsyad Al Islamiyah and the Al-Irsyad Association. Third, Abdul Wahid Hasyim's⁹ study also only reaffirms the role of the Arab community who are members of the Jamiat Khair and Al-Irsyad organizations in modernizing Islamic education in Indonesia. Fourth, the study of Muhammad Nur Effendi¹⁰ also cannot be separated from Al-Irsyad's relationship with education. In this context, Al-Irsyad education contributes to the moral formation, which aims to improve the morals of the Indonesian nation and make the nation's successors obedient to their religion.

To fill this gap, this study focuses on the role and political attitude of Al-Irsyad, as an Islamic organization dominated by the Hadhrami group, in the post-independence period of Indonesia in 1945, especially in the era of President Soekarno. So, this study aims to find out specifically the role and political attitude of Al-Irsyad in the era of President Soekarno. This study also reveals Al-Irsyad's political stance on Sukarno's political policies. Therefore, this study is part of an effort to complete the history of Al-Irsyad's journey which seems to have not been revealed by academics. Using historical research methods, this research supported by the main primary sources that have not been explored by scholars, namely a collection of writings welcoming the "*Musjawarah Besar dan Ulang Tahun ke-25 Pemuda Al-Irsyad, 1964*" and a collection of writings to welcome "*Muker IV Pemuda Al-Irsyad Tahun 1967*."

⁹ Abdul Wahid Hasyim and Pauzan Haryono, "Jamiat Kheir dan Al-Irsyad: Kajian Komunitas Arab dalam Modernisasi Pendidikan Islam Awal Abad XX di Jakarta," *Buletin Al-Turas* 25, 2 (2019).

¹⁰ Muhammad Nur Effendi, "Pendidikan Al-Irsyad dan Kontribusinya Terhadap Pendidikan Islam," *Jurnal Online IAI Darussalam* 20, 2 (2019).

Several sections will be disclosed in this article. First, this section of the article will discuss a glimpse into the history of Al-Irsyad. This section emphasized that Al-Irsyad was established due to differences of opinion in the Hadhrami community between Sayyid and non-Sayyid. This difference of opinion resulted in the non-Sayyid group establishing Al-Irsyad and leaving Jamiat Khair. This section mentions the Al-Irsyad movement in the field of education, even though in the future due to the dynamics of socio-political reality, Al-Irsyad involved in politics. The second part discusses the political role of Al-Irsyad which is pragmatism marked by the inclusion of Al-Irsyad as a special member of the Masjumi Party. This section shows the purpose of Al-Irsyad in politics as a means of struggle to be recognized as part of Indonesia's History. The last section discusses Al-Irsyad's accommodative political stance on Sukarno's policies with his Guided Democracy.

The Beginning of the Al-Irsyad Movement

Al-Irsyad is a socio-religious organization founded by Arab or Hadhrami descent in Indonesia. Therefore, this study is inseparable from discussions concerning the Hadhrami community. Besides, their existence is related to the history of the dispersal of Arabs from the Hadhramaut region, Yemen, and South Arabia. They are mostly male migrants who later married the local women. Over time, the Hadhrami people have developed a close relationship with most Indonesians. Moreover, certain similarities exist between the Hadhrami and some Middle Eastern societies, namely, their lineage tends to be traced mainly through the males. In this case, the offspring of the marriage is regarded as a Hadhrami.¹¹

The 20th century was referred to as the modern era, and this is in line with the implementation of the Ethical Policy of the Dutch East Indies Government. The influence of this policy was felt especially in the field of education. This implies that the natives had access to education. Although the main objective was for the benefit of professionals in the Dutch East Indies bureaucracy, this was admittedly valuable, especially for these movements. Education produced a lot of clever people, and various socio-political movements or organizations, in the early 20th century. The native organizations

¹¹ Frode F. Jacobsen, *Hadhrami Arabs in Present-day Indonesia: An Indonesia-Oriented Group with an Arab Signature* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), pp. 19.

include Sarekat Islam (SI), Budi Utomo, Taman Siswa, Muhammadiyah, and NU. Furthermore, both the Chinese and Arabic Hadhrami communities, which have been associated with Indonesian history for centuries, also founded certain movements, such as THHK-Batavia (T'iong Hoa Hwea Koan Batavia) or the Batavian Chinese Association, which encouraged the revival (*nabdab*) of the Arab Hadhrami community in Indonesia by forming Jami'at Khair.¹²

Al-Irsyad itself is part of a movement that colored the situation in the early 20th century. Meanwhile, the emergence of the Al-Irsyad marked the first serious split between the Sayyid and non-Sayyid groups in the Jami'at Khair, both of which maintained their positions as the most relevant Hadhrami *nabdab*.¹³ In this case, the Sayid group maintained social stratification because they belonged to the upper class. Furthermore, Hadhramaut, is the essence of maintaining a Hadhrami identity. According to this group, the traditions (customs) of the ancestral lands need to complement the Hadhrami identity. On the contrary, the non-Sayid groups that formed the Al-Irsyad practically adopted the Sayyid's traditions. They tried to shape a Hadhrami identity in line with the demands of the modern world. Additionally, the Irsyadi group criticized the Sayyid as non-Hadhrami intruders that had imposed social stratification. In this case, the Al-Irsyad tries to show that they are able to look modern without losing their Hadhrami identity.¹⁴

This split caused Ahmad Surkati and several non-Sayid Arab figures to establish a new organization in 1914 known as Al-Irsyad. This organization quickly developed and received recognition from the Dutch East Indies Government on August 11, 1915. Meanwhile, due to the tensions that arose in the Arab Indonesian community, the Jami'at Khair organization, which had been established on July 17, 1905, failed to function effectively.¹⁵ On the contrary, Al-Irsyad continued to grow, which was marked by the opening of branches in various regions. On August 29, 1917, Al-Irsyad opened its first branch in Tegal. The decision to open a second Al-Irsyad Branch in Pekalongan was made on November 20, 1917. Furthermore, it opened

¹² Keshah, *The Hadrami Awakening*, pp. 39-40.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

¹⁵ Affandi, *Syaikh Ahmad Surkati*, p. 208.

a branch in Bumiayu and Cirebon on October 14 and 31, 1918. Another branch was opened in Surabaya city on January 21, 1919.¹⁶ Al-Irsyad continued to show greater vitality and energy than the Jami'at Khair in terms of executing its activities. The great excitement among the supporters of Al-Irsyad was reflected in the amount of money they donated to the organization.¹⁷

Besides, until the establishment of the Islamic Council of *A'laa* Indonesia in 1937, the Al-Irsyad organization limited itself to the fields of religion and education.¹⁸ However, in later developments, it also participated in politics. The Al-Irsyad was faced with the option of dealing with the reality of Indonesia's socio-political problems and the need to maintain its existence in the political circle. Finally, when MIAI (*Majelis Islam A'la Indonesia*) emerged as a federation organization in the context of the nation's struggles, Al-Irsyad participated in the 10th Al-Islam Congress held from February 28 to March 1, 1938.¹⁹ Subsequently, the Al-Irsyad also indulged in a similar pattern, namely getting involved in practical politics.

Al-Irsyad's Political Pragmatism

At the beginning of the Japanese occupation period, from 1942 to 1945, all political activities in Indonesia, including the Islamic movement, almost came to a halt. Japan interrupted the influence of the Pan-Islamism movement, and it was also busy conquering the Islamic forces in Java, including Al-Irsyad, which was engaged in education. This organization, which had been developing since 1914, also experienced a downturn that almost halted all its activities, both in the fields of education, preaching, etc. In addition, certain Al-Irsyad's branches were closed, while some others became inactive. The school building leased by Al-Irsyad was partly sold to its owner, and some were entrusted to Muhammadiyah. Some of the members joined the Muhammadiyah and never returned to the Al-Irsyad.²⁰

Al-Irsyad was only excited to emerge from adversity in 1949. Conversely, in 1950, it joined the Masyumi party, and in 1951, the Al-

¹⁶ Badjerei, *Al-Irsyad Mengisi Sejarah*, pp. 77-79.

¹⁷ Noer, *Gerakan Moderen Islam*, p. 75.

¹⁸ Ibid., 77.

¹⁹ Badjerei, *Al-Irsyad Mengisi Sejarah*, p. 135.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 152-153.

Irsyad officially became a special member of this political movement. In this context, Al-Irsyad that initially represented the interests of the Hadhrami community, had understood the socio-political realities developing in Indonesia and decided to get involved in practical politics. Kesheh²¹ stated that the relationship between Hadhramaut and Indonesia had been severed since the Japanese occupation. This is similar to the war between the Republic of Indonesia and the Netherlands, which led to the Dutch recognition of Indonesian independence in 1949. This aided the Indonesian nationalists in narrowing the freedom of the Hadhrami people. Therefore, supposing the Hadrami community has to remain in Indonesia's homeland, then politically, it needs to be the center of their allegiance. Based on this, the Hadhrami people accepted to become Indonesian citizens, even without being asked. Therefore, the Masyumi Party fights for these people to be recognized as Indonesian citizens.

The joining of the Masyumi party indirectly indicates a slight change in the Arabian orientation. Al-Irsyad, through its Executive Board, stated that they officially joined the Masyumi Party, however, although they were automatically regarded as members of this movement, they were not registered individually. Eventually, the Al-Irsyad Youths became active in the Masyumi Party. Likewise, although they were active in the GPII (Indonesian Islamic Youth Movement), the organization's funds were channeled to the Masyumi Party. The recognition of the Al-Irsyad as a member of the Masyumi admittedly hampered efforts and the process of re-improvement in its internal structure, especially improvements in the fields of education and cadres. This is proven by their absence at the 27th Mu'tamar Al-Irsyad held in Solo in 1951 because almost all Youth Branch Leaders and masses were focused on GPII activities.²²

Masyumi did not found GPII, however since its establishment in 1945, it has had close ties with this Islamic party. Several GPII figures gradually became members of the Masyumi leadership. Therefore, since its establishment, it has been regarded as a supporter of Masyumi. The GPII acts as the right-hand man of the Masyumi party, or at least a part of the Muslim struggle reflected in this organization.²³

²¹ Kesheh, *The Hadrami Awakening*, p. 152.

²² Badjerei, *Al-Irsyad Mengisi Sejarah*, pp. 160 and p. 162.

²³ Deliar Noer, *Partai Islam di Pentas Nasional* (Jakarta: Grafiti Pers, 1987), p. 373.

Ahmad Syafii Maarif²⁴ reported that the GPII was founded by the Masyumi therefore, its existence supports membership, irrespective of the fact that it implicitly has no organizational relationship with any party.

There is no doubt about the contributions of Al-Irsyad and other Islamic organizations to this party. It is a known fact that the members are evenly distributed throughout the archipelago due to the support of other special organizations. For example, the spread of Masyumi members was due to the role of Muhammadiyah (which is spread throughout Indonesia than any other organizations), al-Jam'iyat al-Wasilah (North Sumatra, including the Karo region), al-Ittihadiyah (North Sumatra), the Indonesian Muslim Ummah Association (Majalengka and Sukabumi), the Islamic Union (Priangan and Bangil), Al-Irsyad (in various places in Java, where Arab descendants reside), the All Aceh Ulama Association (Aceh), Maṭla'ul Anwar (Banten), and Nahdatul Waṭan (Lombok).²⁵

However, although Muslims, including Al-Irsyad, have already joined the Masyumi party, their political position at the state level is "unfavorable" compared to those with a neutral stance in religious or nationalist groups. This is a continuation of the weak Muslims' position in the BPUPKI (Agency for Investigating Preparatory Efforts for Indonesian Independence) and PPKI (Preparatory Committee for Indonesian Independence) before the Indonesian Independence. Another unfavorable factor was the establishment of PNI (Indonesian National Party) in August 1945. Besides, it was the only party when Sukarno was head of state. However, this had no relationship with the PNI led by Soekarno in the 1920s. Moreover, the common people believed that Soekarno and Hatta seemed to appoint nationalist or religiously neutral people. Another advantage of the nationalists is related to the KNIP (Central Indonesian National Committee) composition, which was then regarded as a parliament before forming one based on the election results. Noer²⁶ reported that of the 136 KNIP members appointed by the President, only 15 belonged to the Islamic group. Meanwhile, Umar Hubeis is one of the Islamic

²⁴ Ahmad Syafii Maarif, *Islam dan Politik di Indonesia Pada Masa Demokrasi Terpimpin, 1959-1965* (Yogyakarta: IAIN Sunan Kalijaga Press, 1988), p. 106.

²⁵ Noer, *Partai Islam di Pentas*, p. 55.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 45-46.

representatives from the Al-Irsyad circle that had been a member of the KNIP since 1947.²⁷

Kuntowijoyo²⁸ stated that in 1945, the Muslims' political position did not change for the better. The relationship between the politically conscious Muslims and the government during Sukarno's reign was often distant, therefore Islam found itself in a similar position as an unwanted stepchild. After an optimistic short term, various reasons to politically alienate Islam from the state emerged. The involvement of Muslim minorities in the DI / TII rebellion in West Java, South Sulawesi, and Aceh has put the majority, particularly those committed to democratic and constitutional politics, in a difficult situation.

In general, the political ideals of the Muslims during the early days of independence (1945) experienced numerous obstacles. The role of this community was marginalized by Soekarno's politics, and this was compounded by the internal conflict among the Muslims. After the "November 1945 Pledge" regarding the agreement of Muslims to establish the Masyumi political party, in July 1947, the PSII (Indonesian Islamic Sarekat Party) left Masyumi, and decided to function as an independent political party.²⁹

Due to this political condition, the Islamic leaders organized a Congress of Indonesian Muslims in Yogyakarta held from December 20 to 25, 1949. The Al-Irsyad organization also participated in this wonderful opportunity. It is evident that Mohamad Saleh Syu'aidy, one of the leaders and cadres of Al-Irsyad, was appointed as Secretary-General in the committee. One of the objectives was to strengthen the unity of all Muslims, except for PSII that had left the Masyumi. In addition, the congress, which was attended by 129 Islamic organizations, both local, regional and national, including the representative of the Al-Irsyad Youth, Adnan Nurdiny, stated that they were not Arabs, and "they came to seek unity."³⁰ In this context, it is obvious that they had dropped their Arabian identity. This also implies that they sought the recognition of the Hadhrami people as part of Indonesia for existence.

²⁷ Kesheh, *The Hadrami Awakening*, p. 154.

²⁸ Kuntowijoyo, "Religion, State and Social Formation in Indonesia," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 15 (1987), pp. 67-82.

²⁹ Maarif, *Islam dan Politik*, p. 167.

³⁰ Badjerei, *Al-Irsyad Mengisi Sejarah*, p. 158.

The congress, which was held from December 20 to 25, 1949, led to the following decisions (1) establishing the Indonesian Muslim Congress Agency (BKMI), (2) ratifying the BKMI Basic Regulations, (3) all organizations present agreed to become members of the BKMI, (4) proposing that the government established a Settlement Commission to discover the ideal way to resolve the Darul Islam (DI) problem, (5) proposing that Islamic lessons be made the main subject in all public schools, (6) Islamic organizations engaged in the educational field to synchronize lesson plans and syllabus, (7) urged the government to immediately draft regulations to improve pilgrimage trips (8) rejects the formation of new "Islamic organizations" other than the existing ones, (9) agreed to return to the November 1945 Pledge, which regards Masyumi as the only Islamic political party and all social organizations as its special members. These decisions were recorded and submitted to the Islamic parties as a Congress Resolution.³¹

As already stated, Al-Irsyad officially became a special member of the Masyumi Party.³² Several movements other than the Al-Irsyad, which were listed as special members of the Masyumi Party until 1953, include the al-Ittihadiyah organization, al-Jamiatul Washliyah, Muhammadiyah, PERGAI, Persis, and the Islamic Ummah Association (PUI). Meanwhile, Sayyid Ali Bin Salim Hubeis and Sayyid Muhammad Ba'asyir were representatives of Al-Irsyad in the Masyumi Party Council.³³

The joining of Al-Irsyad is interpreted as the practice of pragmatic politics. The main problem facing Al-Irsyad is based on the recognition of the Hadhrami people as Indonesians as well as the sustenance of its existence. Therefore, at that time, although the Al-Irsyad association was not regarded as a political organization, it had ordered all its members to join and support the Masyumi party. Al-Irsyad believed that the most appropriate thing to do was to support the Masyumi Party. Masyumi's stance and views are considered to share several similarities with Al-Irsyad. It is also viewed as being able to fight for Al-Irsyad, which is regarded as part of Indonesia. Therefore, this organization urged Masyumi to fight for the legal

³¹ Ibid., p. 159.

³² Ibid., p. 160.

³³ *Suara Partai Masyumi*, January 1953.

position and citizenship of Arab descent, where the majority were members of the Al-Irsyad. The aim was to curb the discrimination against their citizenship.

This struggle caused the Al-Irsyad Youth to join the PORPISI (the Association of All Indonesian Islamic Youth Organizations), which is evidence to gain recognition. As an organization of the Muslim Youth Federation, PORPISI's mission is to uphold Islamic values. As reported in the speech made by the Chairman of the PORPISI Workers' Agency, Ismail Hasan, on the 17th birthday of Al-Irsyad Youth, which was held on September 26, 1956, "the era of Independence Revolution has inspired all freedom fighters to always chant Allahu Akbar, which implies saying the name of God, this, therefore, gives hope to all religious groups and motivates them to always be optimistic in developing the Islamic *syiar*. Ismail Hasan further stated that the Al-Irsyad Youth does not want to be left behind in carrying out its business and therefore has decided to work hand in hand with other Islamic organizations for the interests of Islam and the Muslims"³⁴

However, as an Arab community organization, they were unable to abandon their feelings completely. This attitude was evident in several decisions of the Al-Irsyad Youth Conference held in Pekalongan from February 24 to 25, 1956. The decisions reached include, first, to appreciate and show gratitude to the Cabinet of Burhanuddin Harahap for their firm and revolutionary stance in canceling the KMB (Bunadar Table Conference) agreements which obviously endangered Indonesia. Second, offer full support to the government for its firm stance on the struggle of the Moroccan people. Third, offer full support to the struggle of the Arab state in respect to the Palestinian issue.³⁵

Based on this fact, it was emphasized that they were unable to eliminate their Arabian feeling. This was proven when Al-Irsyad's sentiment emerged in defending the fate of their brother, the Arab nation, in Morocco and Palestine. Kesheh³⁶ stated that the Hadhrami people's support for Palestine becomes a kind of litmus test and an

³⁴ Ismail Hasan, "Kata Sambutan Ketua Badan Pekerja PORPISI," *GEMA Pemuda Al-Irsyad* (Jakarta: PB. Pemuda Al-Irsyad, 1956), p. 5.

³⁵ Muhammad Hamdun, "Beberapa Keputusan Konperensi Pemuda Al-Irsyad Seluruh Indonesia di Pekalongan Tanggal 24 dan 25 Februari 1956," *GEMA Pemuda Al-Irsyad* (Jakarta: PB. Pemuda Al-Irsyad, 1956), pp. 25-26.

³⁶ Kesheh, *The Hadrami Awakening*, p. 146.

ideal tool to measure the responsibility towards the Arab national identity. Al-Irsyad members actively supported Palestine because of the 'urubah, namely the same Arab national identity that the Hadrami people and their brothers are fighting for in Palestine.

On the other hand, the Hadhrami community, which is part of the diaspora, sometimes exhibits their feelings and local identities where they live. Umar Hubeis stated that Al-Irsyad did not lag behind in supporting the Indonesian independence fighters during the Indonesian Revolution to disarm the Dutch colonialists. Soekarno's statement proved this before the PSII Congress held in Solo on April 19, 1951, which stated that the Al-Irsyad and Muhammadiyah Movements had both accelerated the Great Revolution of Indonesian Independence.³⁷ Based on this context, it is clear that the Hadhrami community in Al-Irsyad is trying to embrace the Indonesian identity by being actively involved in politics, as earlier mentioned. However, at the same time, they also do not intend to give up their Arab or Hadhrami identity.

Al-Irsyad's Response to Guided Democracy

During the Guided Democratic era, which commenced with the Presidential Decree on July 5, 1959, the Islamic political forces were divided into 2 groups. This includes both those who rejected and accepted the decree. The Masyumi represented the first group, and they considered the Guided Democracy system to be authoritarian. According to the Masyumi, this system is a form of deviation from the Islamic teachings. The main opponent of the Masyumi was Mohammad Natsir who tended to evoke Islamic political leaders. The second group was represented by NU, PSII, and Perti (Union of Tarbiyah Islamiyah) as members of the Muslim League. NU and its friends assume that supporting the Guided Democracy system is a form of realistic and pragmatic attitude. According to KH. Syaifuddin Zuhri, Minister of Religion during this era and the NU leader, the consideration to join the Guided Democracy system is based on the values of the Islamic boarding school which stated "mā lā yudraku kulluhu lā yutraku ba'duhu", which means that anything that is not 100% achievable need not be abandoned (thrown away). Therefore,

³⁷ Umar Hubeis, "Al-Irsyad Setengah Abad," *Menyambut Mubes Pemuda Al-Irsyad* (Pekalongan: Pemuda Al-Irsyad Cabang Pekalongan, 1964), p. 17.

Islamic leaders that chose to participate in the Guided Democracy system established the Muslim League with NU as the main player.³⁸

As a result of this harsh attitude, Masyumi finally had to endure Soekarno's trial, which was disbanded in March 1960. The main reason for this disbandment was that most Masyumi leaders involved in the PRRI-Permesta incident opposed the Soekarno government in Jakarta. Another reason is that it is inseparable from the Masyumi's political line, which from the onset was inconsistent with Soekarno's policies. Therefore, in accordance with enforcing allegiance to Nasakom, in early 1962, the Masyumi and PSI leaders were arrested and imprisoned. On the contrary, the leaders of the Islamic boarding school were increasingly closer to the palace.³⁹ The disbandment of Masyumi Party indicated that the struggle of the modernists, including Al-Irsyad, through the political party line had to run aground.

As a result of the Masyumi disbandment, Al-Irsyad was unable to get involved in practical politics. Finally, Al-Irsyad experienced a dilemma in stepping up and determining their attitude. Besides, assuming the Al-Irsyad followed the political line of Mohammad Natsir and Masyumi, which were tough on Soekarno, it is bound to endanger their existence. Based on this awareness, Ali Hubeis, the General Chair of the Al-Irsyad Central Board in the early days of the Guided Democracy, brought Al-Irsyad to live independently, took care of the members, and recovered their assets, especially the schools. Ali Hubeis presumed that assuming Al-Irsyad follows Masyumi and is disbanded, and the schools are bound to be affected, thereby making it difficult to develop.⁴⁰

Al-Irsyad's decision during the Guided Democracy era was similar to that carried out by the NU, namely following Soekarno's pattern of political behavior, by adopting a "pragmatic and accommodative attitude towards politics." This meant that Al-Irsyad was not in a position to oppose Soekarno's political policies. For example, during the 25th Anniversary of the Al-Irsyad Youth in 1964, it was emphasized that "they consistently stood behind the Revolutionary Leader, the Great, Bung Karno, in mobilizing the unity of the

³⁸ Aminuddin, *Kekuatan Islam dan Pergulatan Kekuasaan di Indonesia: Sebelum dan Sesudah Runtuhnya Rezim Soeharto* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1999), pp. 61-62.

³⁹ Maarif, *Islam dan Politik*, p. 103.

⁴⁰ Hussein Badjerei, *Anak Krukut Menjelajah Mimpi: Sebuah Otobiografi* (Jakarta: LSIP, 2003), p. 144.

Indonesian state, and eliminating all apathy towards the annihilation of any form of imperialists/colonialists on earth. Moreover, by upholding the teachings of Islam introduced by the Prophet Muhammad, the Al-Irsyad Youth together with the Revolutionary Leaders developed a socialist state to curb the peoples' suffering."⁴¹

Wakid⁴² (General Chairperson of the Al-Irsyad Youth Executive Board) stated that in the context of the 25th Anniversary and the Great Al-Irsyad Youth Conference held in Solo from September 23 to 26, 1964, themes that supported the Guided Democracy were raised. First, Al-Irsyad participated in implementing the Guided Democratic Government Triprogram and Dwikora. The second is mobilizing the potential of the Al-Irsyad Youth for the resilience of the National Revolution. The third is the success of the National Conference for Islamic Youths in Indonesia and the Asian-African Islamic Conference (KIAA).

Likewise, Oemar Soeparman Harry Soelistya's remarks (Chairperson of the Pekalongan Municipal Marhaenis Youth Movement Branch Leadership Council) at the 25th Anniversary stated that "it is a fact that the Al-Irsyad Youth in Pekalongan has been able to settle in the midst of Indonesians particularly the Pekalongan people. Therefore, it is an inappropriate assumption to presume that members of the Al-Irsyad Youth are a minority group because they have been able to integrate themselves with the people in general. Furthermore, this Al-Irsyad Youth Anniversary coincided with the excitement and enthusiasm of Dwikora, to erode imperialism and neo-colonialism."⁴³

It is clearly evident that Al-Irsyad's attitude and views tend to support Soekarno's programs in accordance with the Guided Democracy, such as the Dwikora movement that opposes the behavior of imperialism and neo-colonialism. Dwikora is Soekarno's political policy made in connection with the event that led to the formation of the Malaysian Federation State. On May 27, 1961, Tengku Abdul Racman Putu, Prime Minister of the Malaya Federation, expressed the

⁴¹ A. Wakid, "Sambutan PB. Pemuda Al-Irsjad," *Musjawarah Besar dan Ulang Tahun ke-25 Pemuda Al-Irsjad* (1964), p. 6.

⁴² Wakid, "Sambutan PB. Pemuda Al-Irsjad, p. 6.

⁴³ Oemar Soeparman Harry Soelistya, "Sambutan dalam Hari Ulang Tahun ke-25 Pemuda Al-Irsjad," *Musjawarah Besar dan Ulang Tahun ke-25 Pemuda Al-Irsjad* (1964), p. 16.

idea of forming a new State before the Foreign Journalist Associates. These new countries include Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak, and Sabah. This led to the consultation of the British Prime Minister Harold McMillan in October 1961. The emergence of the Malaysian Federation idea disrupted the relations between Indonesia and Malaysia and resulted in a war of words between the 2 parties. Soekarno assumed that the idea of the Malaysian Federation was a British Neocolonialist project that tended to endanger the Indonesian revolution.⁴⁴

On various occasions, Al-Irsyad's statements and attitudes during the Guided Democracy era did appear to support Soekarno. Badjerei further stated that "the Al-Irsyad organization serves as a media for progressive revolutionary Islamic youths. Based on this motto, the entire body was electrified by the Pledge on October 28, 1928, and the heroic patriotic spirit of November 10, 1945, as well as the mandate of TAVIP (The Year of *Vivera Pericoloso* or Living Dangerously) Great Leader of the Revolution. Therefore, Al-Irsyad Youth is the supporter, successor, and continuation of the Indonesian National Revolution against anti-slavery and colonialism in all its forms and manifestations. They need to be in line with the progressive revolutionary youth organizations in designing the banner of the revolution toward the realization of a just and prosperous society, blessed by Allah SWT."⁴⁵

On a similar occasion, Jusuf Talib⁴⁶ also emphasized that the themes of the Grand Conference include mobilizing the potential of the Islamic Youth for the resilience of the National Revolution, participating in implementing the Government's Guided Democracy and Dwikora programs, executing the TAVIP pronounced by the President or Great Leader of the Revolution on August 17, 1964, as well as succeeding the KIAA and the National Muslim Youth Generation Conference throughout Indonesia. In this theme, raising potential means concentrating on the progressive forces of the Islamic Youth regarded as part of the revolutionary organization. This simply implies securing the course of the national revolution to achieve both

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 16.

⁴⁵ Hussein Badjerei, "Pidato Pengantar PB. Pemuda Al-Irsjad pada Sidang Paripurna III Mubes Pemuda Al-Irsjad, Aula Universitas Al-Irsjad 23-9-1964 Jam 19.30," *Musjawarah Besar dan Ulang Tahun ke-25 Pemuda Al-Irsjad* (1964), p. 36.

⁴⁶ Jusuf Talib, "Program Perjuangan Pemuda Al-Irsjad, Sala, 24 September 1964," *Musjawarah Besar dan Ulang Tahun ke-25 Pemuda Al-Irsjad* (1964), p. 56.

the short and long-term goals of the Indonesian Political Manifestation. Latif⁴⁷ reported that the Year of Vivera Pericoloso, or living dangerously, reminds the people of revolutionary mines and emphasizes the importance of courage in facing crises and independence the foundation of Democracy.

The short-term goal is to implement the Dwikora Cabinet Tri program, which includes clothing, food, and development. Meanwhile, the long-term goal is to create a just and prosperous society based on Pancasila. Therefore, the relationship between the themes, raising the potential of the Islamic Youth for the resilience of the national revolution, and participating in the implementation of the Government Dwikora Programs is interrelated. The concentration of the progressive power of the Al-Irsyad Youth was to participate in implementing the General Program of the Indonesian Revolution, which includes the political, economic, social, mental, cultural, and security sectors.⁴⁸

Al-Irsyad's support for Soekarno was also confirmed in the Youth Struggle Program Decree enacted in the Grand Conference held in Solo from September 23 to 26, 1964. The contents of the program were first, all participants that need to actively carry out the Dwikora. Second, the Al-Irsyad Youth actively supports and implements the KIAA (Asian-African Islamic Conference) as a potential to unify revolutionary progressive Muslim ummah in the Asian African Continent in order to form a new society that is clean and free from Nekolim (neo-colonialism) in all its manifestations. Third, the Al-Irsyad Youth Grand Conference stated that it intends to help the struggle of North Kalimantan, Sarawak, Malaya, Singapore, South Vietnam, South Arabia, and other nations that are still under oppression of the Nekolim.⁴⁹

On a certain occasion, Gey Attamimi⁵⁰ also stated that from its founding in 1939 to 1964, the Al-Irsyad youth struggled and closely followed the Islamic movement's ups and downs as one of the vital potentials in the success of the Indonesian Revolution. As an

⁴⁷ Yudi Latif, "Analisis Politik Tahun Vivera Pericoloso," *Kompas*, 8 December 2009.

⁴⁸ Talib, "Program Perdjuangan Pemuda, p. 56.

⁴⁹ Geys Attamimi, "Perjataan, Sala, 26 September 1946," *Musjawarah Besar dan Ulang Tahun ke-25 Pemuda Al-Irsjad* (1964), p. 50.

⁵⁰ Geys Attamimi, "Peranan Pemuda Al-Irsjad dalam Penjelesihan Revolusi Indonesia," *Musjawarah Besar dan Ulang Tahun ke-25 Pemuda Al-Irsjad*, (1964), p. 23.

organization that bases its struggle on Islamic principles, it made many ideal and potential contributions to the Indonesian revolution in terms of its growth, especially in the mental sphere. The formation of the Al-Irsyad at the beginning of the 20th century, almost the same period, other national movements were established, such as Sarekat Islam, Budi Utomo, Muhammadiyah, etc, was a manifestation of the growing awareness of Indonesians.

Badjerei⁵¹ also stated that the Al-Irsyad Youth Organization was a clearly unequivocal national Islamic movement from the beginning. The spirit of Al-Irsyad Youth nationalism has manifested quite a lot in the movement and struggle with other organizations. Furthermore, certain attitudes prove that it is a national organization. According to Badjerei, "they regret the fact that certain outsiders do not know much about the contents of the Al-Irsyad Youth, thereby having wrong perspectives about the movement. The foundation and ideology of this country are based on the Pancasila, which guarantees and provides a sufficient position for everyone. This was clearly stated in the preamble of the 1945 Constitution, which according to the Presidential Decree of July 5, 1959, was inspired by the Jakarta Charter. Badjerei further stated that they are in the midst of a great struggle to complete the national revolution, with 2 basic weapons in their hands, namely Pancasila and Manipol. They are on the way to completing the 3 frameworks of the revolution's goals. The spirit of unity needs to be implanted more firmly. The Pancasila inspired by the Jakarta Charter and Manipo or Usdek is a solid and strong unity platform."

Badjerei's statement supports the Guided Democracy system by its Manipol or Usdek. The Political Manifesto which was later developed to Manipol or Usdek (1945 Constitution, Indonesian Socialism, Indonesian-style Democracy, Guided Economy, and Social Justice), is the basic foundation for the implementation of Guided Democracy. DPAS (Provisional Supreme Advisory Council) proposed that the President's address on August 17, 1959, be converted into a Manipol. It was formed on July 22, 1959, under the 1945 Constitution. Soekarno chaired DPAS, however, the day-to-day operations were left to the deputy chairman, Roeslan Abdoelgani, a PNI figure who was chiefly involved in the implementation of the Guided Democracy. The formation of the DPAS as a Guided Democratic mechanism was again

⁵¹ Badjerei, "Pidato Pengantar PB. Pemuda Al-Irsjad, pp. 37-38.

strengthened in March 1960 with the establishment of the DPRGR (Mutual Cooperation Council) as a substitute for the people's elected DPR, which was dissolved.⁵²

Al-Irsyad indeed carried out the pragmatic-accommodative policy. This meant that they accepted Soekarno's political policies during this Guided Democracy era. Based on preliminary analysis, it is evident that the first reason Al-Irsyad accepted the Guided Democracy system was to save the organization. Second, is based on the fact that Al-Irsyad understood that the Jakarta Charter inspired the emergence of the Presidential Decree in order to save the Republic of Proclamation. Joeniarto⁵³ confirmed that the Presidential Decree passed on July 5, 1959, was inspired by the Jakarta Charter. Endang Saefuddin Anshari⁵⁴ also reported that there is a connection between the Jakarta Charter and the 1945 Constitution among the considerations related to the issuance of a Presidential Decree. In this case, the 1945 Constitution is inspired by the framework of unity following the Jakarta Charter. It is an obvious fact in the Jakarta Charter that the first Pancasila principle states, "Godliness by Implementing Islamic Shari'at for its Adherents." In this context, it is understood that Al-Irsyad is part of a group that prioritizes upholding Islamic law in the state. On various occasions, Irsyadi circles often stated that their view of Islam was in line with the thoughts of Abu al-A'la al-Maududi.⁵⁵ It is known that these thoughts regard Islam as a state ideology based on the doctrine of tawhid which implies that sovereignty rests with God, not humans.

Furthermore, at the end of Soekarno's reign, and alongside the domination of the Communist Party over the policies of the Guided Democracy Government, Al-Irsyad changed their attitude. This organization abandoned accommodative politics and joined other mass movements to oppose the PKI and Soekarno's Guided Democracy pattern. This is consistent with Al-Irsyad, which stated that

“to increase vigilance and suppression of the Gestapu/PKI/Baperki to their roots in the Surakarta area, the

⁵² Maarif, *Islam dan Politik*, pp. 53-54.

⁵³ Joeniarto, *Sejarah Ketatanegaraan Republik Indonesia* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 1996), p. 91.

⁵⁴ Endang Saifuddin Anshari, *Piagam Jakarta 22 Juni 1945: Sebuah Konsesus Nasional Tentang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia, 1945-1949* (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 2001), pp. 131-132.

⁵⁵ Geys Attamimi, *Dasar-Dasar Pokok dalam Membina Pemerintahan Islam, GEMA Pemuda Al-Irsyad* (Jakarta: PB. Pemuda Al-Irsyad, 1956), p. 7.

Youths together with other progressive revolutionary Islamic organizations actively participate by its militant spirit. In the first stage, not less than 1 (one) platoon of Al-Irsyad Youth had completed military training at Kandang Menjangan, Surakarta. On this occasion, as many as 600 people consisting of Marhaenis, Catholics, Christians, Muhammadiyah, HMI, PII, etc participated in the training.”⁵⁶

Meanwhile, Al-Irsyad, together with other mass organizations, stated several demands, such as dissolving the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), clearing the state apparatus of the Gestapo/PKI elements (Overhaul of the Dwikora Cabinet), and improving the people's economy (lowering the prices of goods). They appealed to the youth of Al-Irsyad and the Islamic Young Generation in general not to be deceived and plunged into issues intended to divert the attention of the national struggle from the pros and cons of the Ampera Cabinet, Marhaenisme, Bung Karno, etc.⁵⁷

Furthermore, on May 4, 1966, the Al-Irsyad Youth Executive Board stated that their political statement was related to several factors. Besides, part of the statement is that "the 1945 Constitution accompanied by the Guided Democracy system, has not been implemented, and consequently, there has been a misuse of the Guided Democratic notion. In their opinion, Guided Democracy is not a limitation of democratic rights. Rather it offers leadership to the people on ways to ideally and reasonably use and maintain democratic rights in accordance with their personality.”⁵⁸

Conclusion

This study analyses 2 patterns of political behavior related to the Al-Irsyad, as a Hadhrami community organization in the era of President Soekarno, namely pragmatism and pragmatic-accommodative. The political pattern of pragmatism was carried out by Al-Irsyad when they joined the Masyumi Party as a special member

⁵⁶ “Pemuda Al-Irsyad Mendapat Gemblengan Kemiliteran,” *Majalah Genta* 2, 22 (n.d), p. 18.

⁵⁷ Anwar Tjokroaminoto, “Pelihara Terus Rasa Saling Mencinta Antara PSII dengan Pemuda Al-Irsyad, Tingkatkan Gerakan Tri Dharma Tolak Baya,” *Muker IV Pemuda Al-Irsjad* (Jakarta: PB. Pemuda Al-Irsjad, 1967), pp. 22-23.

⁵⁸ PB. Pemuda Al-Irsjad Jakarta, “Statemen Politik,” *Muker IV Pemuda Al-Irsjad* (Jakarta: PB. Pemuda Al-Irsjad, 1967), pp. 95-96.

until 1960. This was based on 3 reasons, with the first related to identity politics. Meanwhile, with their inclusion in practical politics, this organization had the media campaign that they were part of Indonesia, even though they were unable to leave their Arab identity on various occasions. Second, the Masyumi Party is considered to have many similarities with the Al-Irsyad. Third, its existence was recognizable.

Furthermore, the pragmatic-accommodative political pattern was carried out by Al-Irsyad after the dissolution of the Masyumi Party, and this coincided with the implementation of the Guided Democratic government system. Al-Irsyad's reason for engaging in pragmatic-accommodative politics was to survive during the Guided Democracy era. It is known that Al-Irsyad was one of the special members of the Masyumi Party, which was disbanded in March 1960 because it was considered to be stubborn and opposed Soekarno's politics in several ways. Therefore, supposing this organization wants to continue to exist and not be disbanded, it needs to be lenient as well as accommodate Soekarno's policies. In reality, Al-Irsyad's pragmatic-accommodative political stance on Soekarno's policies during the Guided Democracy era was only temporary. Finally, Al-Irsyad needs to be realistic in criticizing and turning against Soekarno alongside the changing political atmosphere, the President's weakening position, and many layers of society that opposed these policies. []

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