Islamic Political Thought in Revolutionary Priangan and Kartosoewirjo's Haluan Politik Islam of 1946

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Abstract

Haluan Politik Islam offers a point of entry into the regional history of political Islam during the Indonesian Revolution. Composed by S. M. Kartosoewirjo in 1946 and associated with a Masyumi gathering in Garut, the tract connected the defence of Indonesian independence with a programme of Islamic social reconstruction. This article situates its arguments within Priangan's networks of religious leadership, party organisation, and revolutionary mobilisation, while tracing their antecedents in Sarekat Islam and the politics of hijrah. Using the historical method and contextual interpretation of the text, it argues that Priangan was an active setting in which national sovereignty, popular participation, religious obligation, and administrative competence were brought into a common political vocabulary. Kartosoewirjo distinguished national liberation from subsequent ideological competition, linked diplomacy to armed resistance, and envisaged change through both state institutions and village society. These positions complicate readings that retrospectively treat every element of his thought as preparation for the Darul Islam rebellion. The relationship between the 1946 programme and the proclamation of the Islamic State of Indonesia in 1949 involved conceptual continuity alongside changes in regional political and military circumstances. The article contributes a regional intellectual history of revolutionary Priangan by recovering the tract's political pedagogy and its movement between local, national, and religious horizons.

Keywords: Priangan; West Java; Indonesian Revolution; Kartosoewirjo; Islamic political thought; regional history

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Introduction

In 1946, Indonesian independence remained a claim that had to be defended, organised, and made credible in everyday life. The proclamation of 17 August 1945 had created a new political horizon, but it had not settled the distribution of authority, the relationship between religion and the state, or the means by which people would experience freedom. In West Java, these questions unfolded through the interaction of national parties, local religious leaders, armed organisations, and communities confronting renewed colonial intervention. Priangan was consequently more than a provincial setting for decisions made elsewhere. It was one of the arenas in which the meaning of the revolution was articulated and the future of the Republic was debated. [1]

S. M. Kartosoewirjo's *Haluan Politik Islam* belongs to this unsettled moment. Its prefatory account identifies a Masyumi meeting in Garut as the occasion from which the tract emerged. The audience included representatives of GPII, Hizbullah, Sabilillah, Muslimat, and GPII Putri. Kartosoewirjo presented the work as a concise guide to political struggle, intended to be accessible to ordinary people as well as Islamic leaders. That provenance matters. The text was produced through a regional organisational encounter, addressed actors engaged in the revolution, and sought to translate a religiously grounded vision into practical political conduct. Its discussion of statehood cannot be detached from those purposes. [2]

The central problem is how a programme developed in this regional setting connected the defence of a national republic to the pursuit of an Islamic political order. The tract recognised Indonesian independence as a common task, yet envisaged a future in which Islamic principles would govern public life. It affirmed popular sovereignty while placing revelation above departures from religious law. It urged ideological commitment but warned against ideological fanaticism that might fracture national unity. Understanding these relationships requires attention to chronology and to the difference between a proposed political future and the institutions subsequently established in its name. [3]

Regional history provides a productive framework for examining these tensions. Priangan is treated here as a field of political relationships, rather than as a culturally uniform territory or a self-contained explanation of rebellion. The relevant geography includes Kartosoewirjo's connections in Malangbong, the gathering in Garut, religious contacts extending towards Tasikmalaya and Wanareja, and links to organisations operating at the national level. A regional approach asks how these relationships gave political ideas an audience, a practical purpose, and a scale of action. It also asks where

[1] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 59–61.
[2] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 59–60.
[3] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 77–85.

the available evidence ends: the existence of a meeting and the intentions expressed in a pamphlet do not establish that every participant accepted its programme. [4]

Scholarship on Kartosoewirjo has approached these issues through several distinct questions. Cornelis van Dijk's account places Darul Islam within the history of rebellion, organisation, and conflict with the Republic. Suwelo Hadiwijoyo's comparative treatment of Kartosoewirjo and Kahar Muzakkar foregrounds political biography and the contested relationship between revolutionary leadership and rebellion. Al-Chaidar's documentary and interpretive writings give greater prominence to Kartosoewirjo's ideological formulations. These approaches make different bodies of evidence visible; they should not be reduced to a single position that ignores political thought. Nevertheless, a narrative organised around the eventual rebellion can encourage readers to interpret an earlier text through its later outcome. [5] [6] [7]

Other studies address the ideological dimensions more directly. Riyadi Suryana examines the origin, conceptual framework, and function of the politics of hijrah across a long period of Kartosoewirjo's activity. Akbarudin AM analyses his relationship to the Republic through an explicitly normative discussion of Islamic statehood. Rudiansyah reconstructs the conception of the Islamic State of Indonesia, while Asep Ilham examines the development of religious thought. These studies help identify the importance of religious reasoning, organisational experience, and political exclusion. The present analysis asks a narrower historical question: what did the 1946 tract propose within its Priangan setting, before later conflict altered the conditions in which its concepts operated? [8] [9] [10] [11]

Chiara Formichi's work on pan-Islam and religious nationalism provides an additional reason to resist a simple opposition between Islam and Indonesian nationhood. Her analysis traces shifts in Kartosoewirjo's political orientation, including the relationship between wider Islamic horizons and nationalist commitments. Within that perspective, regional history can clarify where such horizons were translated into

[4] Tempo, *Kartosoewirjo: Mimpi Negara Islam* (Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2011), 3–4, 13–15.

[5] Cornelis van Dijk, *Darul Islam: Sebuah Pemberontakan*, trans. Grafiti Pers (Jakarta: Grafiti Pers, 1983), 1–5.

[6] Suwelo Hadiwijoyo, *Kahar Muzakkar & Kartosoewirjo: Pahlawan atau Pemberontak?!* (Jogjakarta: Palapa, 2013), 118–209.

[7] Al-Chaidar, *Pemikiran Politik Proklamator Negara Islam Indonesia S.M. Kartosoewirjo: Fakta dan Data Sejarah Darul Islam* (Jakarta: Darul Falah, 1999), 45–52, 533–45.

[8] Riyadi Suryana, "Politik Hijrah Kartosuwiryo; Menuju Negara Islam Indonesia," *Journal of Islamic Civilization* 1, no. 2 (2019), 83–95.

[9] Akbarudin AM, "Pemikiran S.M. Kartosoewirjo tentang Negara Republik Indonesia," *IN RIGHT: Jurnal Agama dan Hak Azazi Manusia* 2, no. 2 (2013), 357–78.

[10] Rudiansyah, "Analisis Pemikiran Politik Sekarmadji Maridjan Kartosoewirjo tentang Negara Islam Indonesia" (UIN Sumatera Utara, 2021).

[11] Asep Ilham, "Pemikiran Keagamaan Sekarmadji Maridjan Kartosuwiryo 1927–1962" (UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, 2023).

organisational relationships and a programme for governing. The objective here is not to claim that the relationship between Islam and nationalism has remained unstudied. It is to examine the architecture of one tract through the regional circumstances of its production and its proposed movement from individual reform to village organisation and national institutions. [12]

The historiographical starting point must also acknowledge Formichi's 2012 monograph, which explicitly examines *Haloean politik Islam* and its relationship to parliamentary participation, national unity, and social transformation. The tract is therefore not an unexamined document, and regional context cannot be claimed as an entirely new discovery. The contribution offered here is a focused rereading of its conceptual sequence through the relationship between the Garut organisational audience, religious networks, and capacities for action at individual, village, and national levels. This places the discussion alongside existing scholarship rather than treating earlier studies as a uniformly military historiography. [13]

The article argues that *Haluan Politik Islam* gave a coherent form to an Islamic understanding of independence through three connected operations. It redefined political participation as a religious and civic obligation; it distinguished the immediate task of national liberation from the subsequent struggle over ideology; and it linked Islamic social transformation to practical capacities in administration, education, and everyday community life. Priangan mattered because party relationships, religious authority, and revolutionary mobilisation supplied the immediate setting in which this programme was articulated. The argument does not make the tract a sufficient cause of Darul Islam. It instead identifies the conceptual continuities that became politically consequential under changed conditions after 1948.

The contribution is therefore a regional intellectual history of the Indonesian Revolution. It retains Kartosoewirjo's agency as a political writer while locating that agency within relationships he neither created alone nor fully controlled. Its specific contribution lies in connecting the tract's internal sequence of arguments to its regional provenance and its changing scales of political action. The analysis proceeds from the historical method to findings on political formation, the production of the text, and its conceptual programme, before discussing the relationship between regional mobilisation, state formation, and the later Darul Islam movement.

Method

This study uses the historical method through heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography. Heuristics involved identifying Kartosoewirjo's writings and relevant historical scholarship through library collections and bibliographic

[12] Chiara Formichi, "Pan-Islam and Religious Nationalism: The Case of Kartosuwiryo and Negara Islam Indonesia," *Indonesia* 90 (October 2010), 131–32, 137–38.

[13] Chiara Formichi, *Islam and the Making of the Nation: Kartosuwiryo and Political Islam in Twentieth-Century Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2012), 89–92.

searches. *Haluan Politik Islam* is the central primary text. *Sikap Hidjrah*, volume 2, and *Nasib Rakyat di Tanah Jajahan* supply supporting evidence for the earlier religious and anticolonial vocabulary. Their evidentiary value lies in their reproduction of Kartosoewirjo's arguments, rather than in their status as neutral descriptions of the societies they discuss. Historical scholarship supplies context for organisational developments, the Japanese occupation, the revolution, and Darul Islam. [14] [15] [16]

External criticism distinguishes the date of composition from the date and condition of the edition consulted. *Haluan Politik Islam* belongs to 1946, but the page references used here follow the modern Sega Arsy edition identified bibliographically as 2015. The research record also describes a 2019 reprint obtained from the library of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. This discrepancy prevents a stronger claim about the precise printing used and is retained as an edition limitation. Legibility and a complete-looking reproduction make a text usable; they do not by themselves establish identity with an original printing. No manuscript collation or exhaustive comparison of editions is claimed. [17]

Internal criticism attends to authorship, audience, purpose, and the historical position from which claims were made. Kartosoewirjo's statements about the aspirations of Muslims, the effects of colonial rule, and the desirability of an Islamic state are read as political interventions. They establish what he sought to persuade readers to believe or do, not the unanimous convictions of Priangan's population. The prefatory account is evidence for the declared occasion and intended audience of the tract. Its accessible language and practical examples are evidence of a pedagogical purpose, although the surviving material does not permit measurement of circulation, readership, or popular reception. [18]

Interpretation combines close attention to concepts with reconstruction of their historical relationships. Politics, ideology, reality, national revolution, social revolution, Darul Islam, and Darus Salam are examined in their sequence within the tract. The analysis distinguishes the writer's religious propositions from historical explanation and separates prescriptions from demonstrated political practice. A contextual intellectual history also treats ideas as connected to institutions and audiences. This is consistent with the broader conception of intellectual history employed in the research, in which beliefs

[14] Gilbert J. Garraghan, *A Guide to Historical Method* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1946), 33.

[15] Dudung Abdurahman, *Metodologi Penelitian Sejarah Islam* (Yogyakarta: Ombak, 2011), 101.

[16] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Sikap Hidjrah*, vol. 2 (publication details of the reproduction not established); S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Nasib Rakyat di Tanah Jajahan* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2018). The latter publication details are verified in the ISI Yogyakarta library catalogue. No page references are assigned to these supporting texts.

[17] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 59–122. Page references throughout follow the 2015 bibliographic identification. The source-access record describes a 2019 reprint. The printing discrepancy remains unresolved; neither pagination identity nor textual identity between the printings is independently established.

[18] Kuntowijoyo, *Pengantar Ilmu Sejarah* (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 1995), 77–78.

and habits of thought form part of social experience rather than existing only as detached doctrines. [19]

Historiography brings these readings into a chronological and thematic narrative. Earlier political formation is used to explain the resources available in 1946; subsequent events are considered to assess continuity and change, not to assign the earlier text a predetermined destination. The approach remains documentary and interpretive. It does not introduce interviews, field observations, statistical measures of support, or new archival discoveries. The absence of systematic reception evidence limits the regional argument to the documented setting, networks, and programme of political action. [20]

Results

Political formation and the making of regional relationships

Kartosoewirjo's political formation crossed educational, geographical, and ideological boundaries. His schooling in the colonial system and later attendance at the medical school NIAS placed him in a milieu where political reading and organisational activity could extend beyond formal study. His subsequent development as a political writer depended heavily on H. O. S. Tjokroaminoto and the Sarekat Islam environment. The historical significance of this background is not that education mechanically produced a particular ideology. It is that he acquired access to political vocabularies, journalism, and organisational relationships through which colonial domination could be criticised and an alternative order imagined. [21]

His work for *Fadjar Asia* during 1927–1929 was especially important. Moving through editorial responsibilities, he used journalism to criticise colonial officials and Indonesian actors whom he regarded as politically compromised. The press connected personal conviction with public argument. It also exposed the divisions within anticolonial politics: opposition to Dutch rule did not imply agreement about religion, political cooperation, or the proper institutional form of independence. His polemics against Parada Harahap and *Bintang Timoer* indicate the sharpness of these disagreements. They should be read as interventions within an argumentative political field, rather than as dispassionate assessments of his opponents. [22] [23]

Sarekat Islam supplied a wider setting for this formation. Its organisational reach extended beyond a narrowly Western-educated constituency and brought urban and rural populations into political relationships. Yet its history also involved conflict

[19] James Harvey Robinson, *The New History* (New York: The Free Press, 1965), 101–6.

[20] Louis Gottschalk, *Understanding History: A Primer of Historical Method* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 48–49, 53–54.

[21] Suwelo Hadiwijoyo, *Kahar Muzakkar & Kartosoewirjo: Pahlawan atau Pemberontak?!* (Jogjakarta: Palapa, 2013), 121–23, 129–30.

[22] Suwelo Hadiwijoyo, *Kahar Muzakkar & Kartosoewirjo: Pahlawan atau Pemberontak?!* (Jogjakarta: Palapa, 2013), 129–30.

[23] Holk H. Dengel, *Darul Islam–NII dan Kartosuwirjo* (Jakarta: Pustaka Sinar Harapan, 1995), 13.

between Islamic and communist currents, disputes over party discipline, and changes in political strategy. Kartosoewirjo entered this world after the expansive unity associated with earlier Sarekat Islam mobilisation had become more difficult to sustain. The experience gave him both a model of mass political organisation and an awareness of how ideological differences could divide an anticolonial movement. [24] [25]

The consolidation of his connections in Priangan introduced another dimension. Organisational travel brought him into contact with Ajengan Ardiwisastra in Malangbong. His marriage to Ardiwisastra's daughter Dewi in April 1929 strengthened a relationship already formed through political activity. While kinship should not be treated as automatic political loyalty, it contributed to his embeddedness in a regional environment of religious leadership. Contacts with Ardiwisastra, Mustafa Kamil of Tasikmalaya, and Yusuf Tauziri of Wanareja linked political work to local religious relationships. Priangan became a place in which an activist formed elsewhere could acquire a more sustained social and intellectual setting. [26]

These relationships were not politically uniform. Yusuf Tauziri later opposed the proclamation of Darul Islam, and the historical accounts describe conflict involving his followers and Kartosoewirjo's forces. This divergence is crucial to a regional interpretation. The presence of religious networks did not mean that Priangan's ulama shared one programme or that personal contact guaranteed acceptance of Kartosoewirjo's authority. The region contained competing assessments of religious obligation and legitimate political action. Later disagreement also makes it hazardous to reconstruct a unified movement from earlier contacts alone. [27]

The disputes within PSII during the 1930s gave the idea of hijrah a particular political role. Debate over participation in colonial institutions set advocates of cooperation against those who maintained a non-cooperative position. Kartosoewirjo's explanation of hijrah framed political separation in religious terms, directing attention to the moral purpose of struggle and the obligation to persevere towards liberation. The concept did more than designate refusal of a particular institution. It provided a language for judging whether a political relationship was compatible with religious commitment and anticolonial purpose. [28]

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[24] Al-Chaidar, *Pengantar Pemikiran Politik Proklamator Negara Islam Indonesia S.M. Kartosoewirjo: Mengungkap Manipulasi Sejarah Darul Islam/DI-TII Semasa Orde Lama dan Orde Baru* (Jakarta: Darul Falah, 1999), 44, 55.

[25] Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and Muhammad Arya Mahasta, "Dinamika Sarekat Islam dan Komunis (Proses Penyusupan Komunis dan Perpecahan Sarekat Islam)," *Islamika: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 20, no. 2 (2020), 64.

[26] Tempo, *Kartosoewirjo: Mimpi Negara Islam* (Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2011), 3–4, 13–15.

[27] Tempo, *Kartosoewirjo: Mimpi Negara Islam* (Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2011), 4.

[28] Al-Chaidar, *Pengantar Pemikiran Politik Proklamator Negara Islam Indonesia S.M. Kartosoewirjo: Mengungkap Manipulasi Sejarah Darul Islam/DI-TII Semasa Orde Lama dan Orde Baru* (Jakarta: Darul Falah, 1999), 84–86.

His conflict with PSII sharpened when the party moved towards broader political cooperation. Kartosoewirjo and associates formed the Komite Pembela Kebenaran PSII, while his expulsion was confirmed at the party congress in Palembang in January 1940. The sequence exposes the limits of interpreting him simply as an unchanged representative of the party. His ideas developed through institutional disagreement as well as apprenticeship. The regional relationships available in West Java mattered because exclusion from one organisational setting did not end his political activity or his concern with cadre formation. [29]

Occupation and revolution as changing conditions of mobilisation

The Japanese occupation from 1942 to 1945 changed the institutions through which Islamic leaders could act. Occupation policy brought religious administration, organisational consolidation, and the mobilisation of Muslim youth into a new relationship with imperial power. Benda and Boland provide the historical context for these changes, including Masyumi and Hizbullah. These opportunities were inseparable from the coercive conditions of occupation. Their significance for the subsequent revolution lies in the organisational forms and trained personnel that outlasted the regime, rather than in any assumption that Japanese policy represented genuine liberation. [30] [31]

Kartosoewirjo's response also changed with the political situation. His writings in *Soeara MIA* in 1943 expressed enthusiasm for the promise of a new order associated with Japan. This position complicates the idea that the rhetoric of anticolonial refusal produced one fixed tactic. By 1946, *Haluan Politik Islam* rejected both Belandaisme and Jepangisme as damaging inheritances. The contrast reveals a reassessment of political relationships after occupation and war. It also demonstrates why a historian must preserve the distinction between the actor's ideological commitments and his changing expectations of particular powers. [32] [33]

After the proclamation, the return of Allied forces accompanied by Dutch colonial interests transformed independence into a contested military and political reality. British forces landed in Jakarta on 29 September 1945, while the presence of NICA intensified fears of restored Dutch rule. Conflict and insecurity affected cities including Bandung. These circumstances linked regional defence to the Republic's struggle for survival. For communities and armed organisations, independence was experienced through the

[29] Al-Chaidar, *Pengantar Pemikiran Politik Proklamator Negara Islam Indonesia S.M. Kartosoewirjo: Mengungkap Manipulasi Sejarah Darul Islam/DI-TII Semasa Orde Lama dan Orde Baru* (Jakarta: Darul Falah, 1999), 87–88.

[30] Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam under the Japanese Occupation, 1942–1945* (The Hague and Bandung: W. Van Hoeve, 1958), 151.

[31] B. J. Boland, *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), 9–13.

[32] Chiara Formichi, "Pan-Islam and Religious Nationalism: The Case of Kartosuwiryo and Negara Islam Indonesia," *Indonesia* 90 (October 2010), 137–38.

[33] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 65.

immediate problem of who could protect territory and exercise authority, rather than solely through constitutional declarations. [34] [35]

Islamic political consolidation formed part of the response. The post-independence Masyumi party was established in Yogyakarta on 7 November 1945 and developed branches including those in Priangan. It must be distinguished from the organisation bearing the same name under Japanese occupation. The continuities of personnel and organisation are important, but the setting had changed from imperial mobilisation to political activity in a proclaimed republic. Kartosoewirjo's participation linked his regional work to a national Islamic political framework. That connection is essential for understanding why the Garut address dealt with the future of Indonesia rather than with a separate regional polity. [36]

The constitutional compromise of 18 August 1945 supplied another background to the tract. The removal of the Jakarta Charter's clause requiring the observance of Islamic law by Muslims became a focal point in disputes over the religious foundations of the new state. Historical accounts connect Kartosoewirjo's dissatisfaction to this settlement and to the course of Republican policy. Yet these grievances should not erase the tract's explicit prioritisation of national independence. Disappointment with the Republic's foundations and continued participation in a common anticolonial struggle could coexist in the unsettled politics of 1946. [37] [38]

Garut and Malangbong as sites of political articulation

The provenance of *Haluan Politik Islam* places regional organisation at the centre of its production. The text presents itself as a digest of a political address to a full meeting of Masyumi in the Priangan area, held in Garut during 1946. Its association with Malangbong identifies a further regional setting for its composition. Rather than treating these locations as incidental biographical details, they can be understood as connected sites in which a programme was addressed to organisational participants and subsequently given written form. The speech-to-tract sequence made arguments portable beyond the immediate meeting. [39]

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[34] Abdilah Farid Rifki, "Perjuangan Bersenjata di Jawa Tahun 1945 untuk Mempertahankan Kemerdekaan Ditinjau dari Gerak Sejarah Siklus," *Historiography: Journal of Indonesian History and Education* 1, no. 1 (2021), 2.

[35] Marwati Djoened Poesponegoro and Nugroho Notosusanto, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia VI* (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 2019), 186–87.

[36] Al-Chaidar, *Pengantar Pemikiran Politik Proklamator Negara Islam Indonesia S.M. Kartosoewirjo: Mengungkap Manipulasi Sejarah Darul Islam/DI-TII Semasa Orde Lama dan Orde Baru* (Jakarta: Darul Falah, 1999), 104.

[37] Ilyas, "Islam dan Kebangsaan: Pergumulan dalam BPUPKI, PPKI, dan Piagam Jakarta," *Buletin Al-Turas* 26, no. 1 (2020), 27.

[38] Sarina, "Sekarmadji Maridjan Kartosoewirjo (Studi tentang Pembentukan Negara Islam Indonesia 1945–1962)" (UIN Alauddin Makassar, 2018), 32–33.

[39] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 59–61.

The range of organisations named in the preface illuminates the intended political constituency. Youth, armed, and women's organisations appeared within the same declared audience. This is evidence of the programme's breadth of address, although it does not establish equal participation or agreement. Kartosoewirjo's preference for language comprehensible to ordinary people also reveals an effort to extend political argument beyond elite discussion. The tract sought to guide leaders and enable broader understanding at a moment when the direction of struggle could not be taken for granted. Its regional setting thus helps explain its educational form.

This pedagogical purpose shaped the argument. Explanations of politics, accounts of colonial domination, and familiar examples transformed abstract questions of sovereignty into matters of practical conduct. The writing repeatedly moved between the suffering of a subordinated population and the responsibilities of citizens in an independent country. Its force rested partly on that movement: a society formerly denied the right to govern itself was now called upon to learn how to exercise political responsibility. The tract's audience was invited to become a political subject, not merely to approve a statement of doctrine. [40]

The preface and language do not establish actual regional reception. No reliable circulation figures, systematic reader testimony, or comparison of local responses are available in the evidence used here. The findings therefore concern a documented attempt to organise political understanding. This distinction is especially important because later Darul Islam mobilisation might otherwise be taken as proof that the tract had already achieved widespread acceptance in 1946. The evidence supports the regional provenance and intended function of the text more firmly than it supports claims about the scale of its influence.

Political obligation and the recovery of popular agency

Kartosoewirjo began by defining politics as the means of organising and governing a state. The apparently elementary definition carried a historical argument. Under colonial rule, Indonesians had been treated as a subordinated people and discouraged from meaningful political participation. In the tract's account, intimidation and repression had associated politics with danger, producing reluctance to engage in public affairs. Independence required a change in this relationship: people could no longer regard government as exclusively the business of rulers beyond their control. [41]

His formulation that "politics is permissible, indeed obligatory" sought to overcome that inherited aversion. The translation preserves the pairing of halal with wajib, distinguishing religious permission from a positive duty. Participation became both a civic responsibility and a religious duty, especially for Muslims. The language of politik-bewust connected awareness of rights to awareness of obligations in governing the country. This was not a claim that office seeking was inherently virtuous.

[40] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 63–71.
[41] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 63–66.

Kartosoewirjo warned against competition for positions when it generated disorder and damaged public security. Political authority had value because of the purposes it served, including justice, public order, and the application of Islamic norms. [42]

The result was an account of independence that required participation. Political freedom would remain incomplete if ordinary people continued to understand themselves only as recipients of commands. In Priangan's revolutionary setting, this argument addressed the problem of how people mobilised against colonial power could acquire responsibilities within a new order. The tract did not provide empirical evidence that this transformation had occurred. It identified it as a task. Its historical importance lies in the attempt to make religious obligation a resource for converting subordination into civic agency.

Ideology and reality within a staged revolutionary programme

The distinction between cita-cita and kenyataan organised Kartosoewirjo's discussion of political strategy. Ideology defined the desired destination, while reality consisted of the people, resources, skills, and circumstances through which it could be approached. His analogy of travelling to Bandung or Jakarta made the relationship concrete: the destination remained, but the available means of transport could change. Tactical adaptation was therefore compatible with continuity of purpose. This formulation made practical judgement part of ideological commitment rather than a concession that necessarily weakened it. [43]

The tract also cautioned against excessive attachment to one's ideology when it destroyed respect for other political convictions. That warning should be read within the emergency of national liberation. Kartosoewirjo did not abandon his belief in the superiority of Islam as a political foundation. He recognised that ideological competition could obstruct the shared struggle against colonial rule. The balance between conviction and restraint was consequently strategic and historically situated. It does not justify describing the programme as unrestricted pluralism, but it does challenge the view that ideological rigidity exhausted its political possibilities. [44]

His concept of alam perjuangan distinguished two phases. The first extended from the proclamation until complete independence, understood as release from foreign colonial interference across the national territory. The second would begin once that condition had been secured and would involve a fuller competition among ideologies. The proclamation thus marked a beginning rather than the completion of liberation. This sequence is one of the strongest reasons to read the tract within 1946: its immediate priority was a common national task whose successful outcome was still uncertain. [45]

[42] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 69–71.
[43] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 73–75.
[44] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 77.
[45] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 79–80.

In the subsequent phase, political groups would strive to gain public support for their respective convictions. Kartosoewirjo acknowledged that communism, socialism, or nationalism could shape government if they obtained that support, while expecting Islam to prevail through ideological struggle. His envisioned Darul Islam remained grounded in popular sovereignty, but its governing principles were bound to the Qur'an and the Prophet's Sunnah. The text therefore combined a process of winning public legitimacy with a substantive religious limit on legitimate government. Neither element can be omitted without changing its political argument. [46]

The distinction between national and social revolution developed this sequence further. The national revolution confronted colonial domination and sought international recognition of Indonesian independence. The social revolution transformed society from within. Kartosoewirjo's treatment of the former combined diplomacy with armed struggle: diplomacy required the backing of popular strength, while force without diplomatic engagement faced limits in the international sphere. The argument resists a simple description of him as rejecting negotiation under all circumstances. What mattered was whether diplomacy served independence rather than weakening the struggle. [47]

The social revolution extended beyond a change of rulers. It involved moral and spiritual reform, including a personal revolution that would cultivate an independent soul through religious commitment. By contrasting the lesser struggle with a greater social struggle, Kartosoewirjo gave lasting weight to the work of transforming people and communities. The sequence was not wholly mechanical. Social preparation could accompany national struggle, provided it did not undermine unity or defence. The tract's warning that revolution should be constructive gives this relationship an explicit constraint. [48]

Islamic authority and the practical requirements of governing

The religious horizon of the programme was comprehensive. Kartosoewirjo envisaged the Republic on Islamic foundations, the broad application of religious law, freedom for Muslims to fulfil religious obligations, and liberation from oppression. Darul Islam described the desired worldly order, while Darus Salam named the ultimate horizon of salvation. Political action was directed towards divine approval and mercy, expressed through Mardhatillah and Rahmatillah. These concepts connected government to a moral purpose extending beyond the acquisition or preservation of power. [49]

Yet the argument did not end with a statement of religious foundations. Kartosoewirjo recognised that legislation could fail if the executive lacked capable personnel. A majority able to approve Islamic law would not ensure its implementation.

[46] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 80–81.
[47] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 83–85.
[48] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 86–87, 101–4.
[49] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 92–95.

He called for attention to both representative and administrative institutions, and for political training to complement military preparation. Ulama knowledgeable in religious law and educated actors familiar with administration were expected to contribute different forms of expertise. The problem was how conviction could become effective governing practice. [50]

Ordinary people occupied a similarly practical position. Kartosoewirjo argued that citizens had to experience evidence of freedom and improvement, not simply hear declarations about sovereignty. Political education required tangible proof. His repeated appeal, "Evidence! Once again: evidence—the people demand evidence!", made the demand unusually explicit. This demand linked obedience and public responsibility to the credibility of independent government in everyday life. The appeal to rakyat murba prevented the programme from becoming solely a discussion of legislative victory or elite leadership, even though the text did not specify comprehensive mechanisms through which popular demands would control those leaders. [51]

The final movement was from the person to the village and beyond. Where an individual could practise Islamic norms, the construction of Darul Islam could begin there; where capacity extended to a kampung or desa, the programme could operate at that level. His instruction to "begin building Darul Islam within a person" gave individual conduct a constitutive political role. Community formation and action through state institutions were thus complementary. This sequence supplies a particularly clear regional dimension: the nation's future was to be built through socially embedded capacities, while those capacities remained connected to a wider political and religious horizon. The tract ended with an integrated programme, not an isolated declaration of an Islamic state. [52]

Discussion

Priangan as a site of intellectual and political mediation

The findings indicate that Priangan's importance was relational. Kartosoewirjo's political education did not originate entirely within West Java, and the objectives of *Haluan Politik Islam* were national. What the regional setting supplied was a configuration of relationships through which broader arguments could be brought to bear on revolutionary circumstances. Malangbong's religious connections, the Garut meeting, Masyumi organisation, and the presence of named associated groups made the question of the state an immediate matter of guidance and mobilisation. The text's provenance allows intellectual history to be joined to regional history without claiming an autonomous regional ideology.

[50] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 109–14.
[51] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 116–18.
[52] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 119–22.

This interpretation avoids making geographical location a sufficient explanation. The existence of ulama networks could support mobilisation, but those networks also contained disagreement. Yusuf Tauziri's later opposition demonstrates that religious authority remained contested. A regional history attentive to agency must therefore include choices made by people who refused Kartosoewirjo's project as well as those who assisted it. Otherwise, a story about regional relationships becomes a retrospective map of loyalty. The evidence supports an arena of negotiation and conflict, not a seamless religious community moving towards a single political outcome. [53]

The tract also moved across scales. It addressed the individual conscience, village society, national representative institutions, administrative service, and Indonesia's international recognition. These scales were connected by an argument about capacity: political action had to correspond to the resources and competence available at a given level. The travel analogy and the village programme expressed the same principle in different forms. Priangan was significant because the translation between national objectives and local action could be attempted there. It was neither an isolated locality nor a passive recipient of national ideology. [54]

Such a perspective qualifies histories that begin with the region chiefly as the later territorial base of Darul Islam. The regional importance of the 1946 text predates the proclamation of a rival state. Its setting included participation in a national party and appeals to preserve national unity. To recover these elements is to restore the range of political possibilities present at the time. It does not diminish the later conflict; it makes the transition to that conflict a historical problem requiring explanation rather than a conclusion already contained in the geography.

Religious nationalism and the unfinished meanings of independence

The tract's relationship between Islam and nationhood is best understood through its conception of unfinished independence. Kartosoewirjo did not treat the proclamation as meaningless. He treated it as the beginning of a struggle that had to establish territorial freedom, international recognition, and the capacity for self-government. In this account, religious obligation energised national defence. The prospective Islamic order emerged from the question of what the liberated nation should become. This is compatible with Formichi's attention to the interrelationship of Islamic political horizons and nationalism, although the present emphasis falls on the regional formulation of a specific programme. [55]

National unity and ideological competition were arranged temporally. This arrangement allowed a common front against colonial power without requiring every participant to abandon a preferred future. It was also vulnerable to disagreement about when independence was sufficiently complete, which compromises were legitimate, and

[53] Tempo, *Kartosoewirjo: Mimpi Negara Islam* (Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2011), 3–4.
[54] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 73–75, 119–21.
[55] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 79–85.

who could define the transition between phases. The programme left these matters dependent on political judgement. Its apparent clarity about ends should therefore not conceal uncertainty about the historical circumstances in which those ends could be pursued.

The distinction between ideological constancy and tactical flexibility exposes a related tension. It explains how Kartosoewirjo could retain an Islamic objective while participating in different organisations and reassessing political opportunities. Yet flexibility did not mean that all outcomes were acceptable. Strategies were judged by their relationship to a substantive religious destination. The historian should consequently resist both a portrait of rigid unchanging conduct and an account of pragmatic adaptation detached from belief. His programme made adaptation an obligation precisely because ideology was supposed to remain authoritative.

This relationship also brings the human stakes of the argument into view. The tract's appeal to a previously subordinated people and its insistence on practical proof of freedom addressed aspirations for dignity, public participation, and protection from oppression. These concerns should not be collapsed into elite rivalry over state doctrine. At the same time, an aspiration to liberate people does not prove that a proposed government would fulfil it. The historical claim concerns the political uses of emancipation within Kartosoewirjo's programme, not an endorsement of that programme's promised results. [56]

Popular sovereignty and the limits of the proposed order

Popular sovereignty occupied an important but bounded place. The tract expected ideological movements to gain support and identified the people as the foundation of political legitimacy. Religious law, however, defined limits beyond which government should not depart. This combination means that sovereignty was neither absent nor unlimited. Its practical operation depended on the relationship between public endorsement, religious interpretation, and administrative authority. The text offered a commitment to these principles without resolving every possible disagreement among them. [57]

That unresolved relationship is analytically more informative than assigning the text an uncomplicated democratic or theocratic label. A majority could justify an ideological victory, but the legitimacy of law was also measured against revelation. Ordinary people were to be educated into political responsibility, while leaders and ulama retained an important guiding role. The tract's account of participation therefore contained both emancipatory expectations and an asymmetry of interpretive authority. Its historical significance lies partly in the effort to hold those elements together during the formation of a new state.

[56] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 63–71, 117–18.
[57] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 80–81, 92.

The administrative discussion further complicates a purely doctrinal reading. Kartosoewirjo understood that religious legislation could remain ineffective without trained executive personnel. This concern gives government a material and organisational dimension. It also shifts attention from a symbolic question about the state's name or foundation to the work of implementing rules. In a regional revolutionary environment where military preparedness could dominate priorities, the demand for political training asserted that governing required skills distinct from fighting. The anticipated order depended on cooperation among actors possessing different competencies. [58]

The call for tangible evidence of freedom placed another constraint on legitimacy. Citizens should experience a changed relationship with authority and improvements in life. This is an important qualification to rhetoric that would make ideological correctness sufficient. Yet the text did not supply systematic evidence about popular preferences or establish how dissenting citizens would be represented under the desired religious settlement. Recognising that absence is part of source criticism. It preserves the force of Kartosoewirjo's social concerns while identifying the institutional questions his tract left open.

Continuity and change from the 1946 programme to Darul Islam

The proclamation of the Islamic State of Indonesia on 7 August 1949 gave institutional form to ambitions that had been articulated earlier. The continuity included Islam as the basis of public order, Darul Islam as a political objective, and the connection between national liberation and social transformation. Accounts of the movement describe administration, religiously grounded legal institutions, and arrangements for collecting zakat and taxes. These developments are relevant to the programme's concern with governing as well as fighting, although the textual correspondence alone does not establish the origin of each institution. [59] [60]

The conditions under which continuity operated had changed. The Renville settlement in 1948 and the withdrawal of the Siliwangi Division from West Java altered regional military and political relationships. Historical accounts connect these events to the movement towards a separate political organisation and a rival claim to sovereignty. Their relevance is causal but not exclusive: a changing regional balance made previously articulated concepts available for different institutional uses. The tract supplied an ideological framework; it did not itself produce the military situation or determine the decisions taken in response to it. [61]

[58] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 109–14.

[59] Aga Itbah Baihaki, "Peran Kartosuwirjo dalam Pembentukan Negara Islam Indonesia 1947–1962" (UIN Sunan Ampel, 2019), 63, 68.

[60] Rudiansyah, "Analisis Pemikiran Politik Sekarmadji Maridjan Kartosoewirjo tentang Negara Islam Indonesia" (UIN Sumatera Utara, 2021), 95.

[61] Risman, "Strategi Politik Sukarmadji Maridjan Kartosoewirjo dalam Mendirikan Negara Islam Indonesia (NII) Sebelum dan Sesudah Kemerdekaan" (UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 2019), 30–31.

This distinction protects the chronology of 1946. *Haluan Politik Islam* could defend independence, allow ideological competition after liberation, and envisage work through representative and executive institutions without already functioning as an unambiguous declaration of war against the Republic. The later establishment of NII cannot be projected backwards as the meaning of every earlier argument. Equally, the tract's calls for unity and constructive transformation do not establish that subsequent conduct faithfully realised them. The relationship between a political text and a movement must be assessed through both continuities and departures. [62]

A regional approach makes this relationship more precise. The post-Renville situation mattered because authority was disputed in a specific political and military landscape. It was in West Java that national agreements, troop movements, local armed strength, and competing religious leadership interacted with Kartosoewirjo's existing programme. Explaining that interaction requires more than either an exclusively ideological account or an exclusively military one. The available evidence supports a connection between political thought and regional contingency, while stopping short of a complete reconstruction of decision-making throughout the movement.

Historiographical contribution and evidentiary limits

The principal historiographical intervention is to change the temporal standpoint from which *Haluan Politik Islam* is read. Rebellion-centred histories remain indispensable for explaining conflict and organisation. Ideological studies remain indispensable for identifying religious concepts and political commitments. The present reading brings these approaches together around the tract's own historical situation. Its regional provenance, sequence of arguments, and practical pedagogical purpose reveal a programme concerned with how people would learn to govern, how liberation would be defended, and how a religiously grounded future might be pursued.

The evidence does not sustain a claim to recover the political convictions of Priangan as a whole. It is strongest for Kartosoewirjo's declared purposes and the documented organisational occasion. Modern reproductions also mediate access to the primary writing, and uncertainty about the printing cautions against claims of comprehensive textual verification. Supporting writings with incomplete publication details are useful for identifying an earlier vocabulary but are not given invented dates or page references. These limitations define the scope of the contribution rather than invalidating the text's historical value.

Within that scope, the article shows that regional intellectual history can explain more than the location of ideas. It can recover how a programme linked relationships, audiences, and capacities across different scales. The village, representative institution, administrative office, and national struggle formed parts of a connected political imagination. Reading that configuration within revolutionary Priangan makes it possible

[62] S. M. Kartosoewirjo, *Haluan Politik Islam* (Bandung: Sega Arsy, 2015), 79–85, 103–4, 109–14.

to retain the coherence of Kartosoewirjo's thought without reducing historical outcomes to the execution of a plan already completed in 1946.

Conclusion

Haluan Politik Islam emerged from the interaction of Kartosoewirjo's earlier political formation, Priangan's organisational and religious relationships, and the unsettled conditions of Indonesian independence. Sarekat Islam and the politics of hijrah supplied important antecedents, while the Garut Masyumi meeting gave the programme a regional occasion and an intended constituency. Priangan was therefore an active setting of political articulation, connecting local authority and mobilisation to debates about the future of the nation.

The tract constructed an integrated programme around political participation as obligation, the relationship between ideology and reality, the priority of national liberation, and the subsequent pursuit of Islamic social transformation. It combined popular sovereignty with religious authority and joined institutional participation to reform of individuals and village society. Its attention to diplomacy, administrative competence, political education, and tangible evidence of freedom reveals a broader conception of struggle than armed mobilisation alone.

The relationship with Darul Islam involved continuity of objectives and concepts, but their institutional expression depended on changed political and military circumstances after 1948. The 1949 proclamation cannot be treated as the inevitable meaning of the 1946 programme. By recovering that distinction and connecting the tract's political pedagogy to its regional provenance, this article contributes a historically bounded account of Islamic political thought in revolutionary Priangan. Its distinctive contribution is a focused interpretation of the region as a setting in which religious conviction, national sovereignty, and practical capacities for governing were brought into relationship before their later reconfiguration in conflict with the Republic.

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