PANCASILA/SHARIA:

CONTEMPORARY ISLAMISM AND THE

POLITICS OF POST SOEHARTO INDONESIA

By

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines several dynamics of Islamic politics and Islamism in contemporary post-Soeharto Indonesia. Islamism in Indonesia is investigated both through the lens of a social movement and through its ability to effect political and social change for contemporary Indonesian society. Historical and post-independence contexts of Islamism are briefly covered, before a survey of Islam in contemporary Indonesian politics is presented. Ultimately, this thesis argues that Islamism has achieved some success and influence presently through its articulation of a religiously inspired agenda, but present divisions related to competing external strategies of dealing with state, and its own internal fractures, will continue to hamper Indonesian Islamism as a fully effective realized social movement.

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1. Introduction

"Islamic fundamentalism," or better known as Islamism in the more neutral and scholarly journalistic lexicon, relates to the practice of Islam as both a social and political phenomenon, and involves a contestation over religious values, interpretations, and symbols as well as over political power and institutions. In the post-Cold War era of globalization and its "War on Terrorism," the Western political and media establishment have targeted Islamism as the biggest threat and danger to global peace, order, and stability. Yes, Islamism is about religious fanaticism, and terrorism to some degree, but it is also a political and social phenomenon that is much more complex and dynamic than these sometimes simple caricatures would indicate. Islamism is a phenomenon that is changing the world, and it demands a systematic and fair examination undertaken by level-headed scholars and intellectuals. But where to begin?

We begin in Southeast Asia. On September 27, 2001, a large crowd of over 1,000 Muslims gathered to demonstrate outside the American embassy in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta.[1] This took place just weeks following the terrorist hijackings and destruction of the World Trade Center, and much of the world was anxiously awaiting the inevitable American military response against Osama bin Laden and the Taliban in Afghanistan. Notably, much of the Islamic world had expressed its opposition to such a military response, preferring instead a somewhat more peaceful, non-military response. In any event, this demonstration on a September day in Jakarta was certainly

no different from any other demonstration taking place throughout the Islamic world at this time. The demonstrators arrived with their denunciations of America and their placards of "America the Satan." American flags and an effigy of President George W. Bush were gleefully burned by the mob. The crowd voiced its vociferous opposition to any American military retaliation and pledged to embark on *Jihad*, holy war, if America did indeed attack Afghanistan. The American government grew alarmed by these and other similar demonstrations and began pulling all non-essential embassy staff from Indonesia, voicing its concerns to the Indonesian government.

The Americans did not have to worry too much. America began its "War on Terrorism" the next month and Indonesia's streets remained relatively tranquil. Indonesia eventually emerged as a model moderate Islamic country and an ally in America's new war in the following weeks. I begin with a narrative of this demonstration because it serves in many ways as an ideal introduction and a fair microcosm from which to approach the study of Islam in contemporary Indonesian society and politics. It also touches upon the major analytical problem that this thesis seeks to address. How do religion and politics manifest themselves in contemporary social movements in developing world societies? Is Indonesian Islamic politics, or most Islamic politics in general, simply about *Jihad* and knee-jerk anti-Americanism? Or does Islamic politics represent a political and social phenomenon that is much more complex and nuanced? This thesis represents my attempt to examine Islam in Indonesian politics and society, tracing its cultural and historical context, delineating the contours

and dynamics of Indonesian Islam today, and ultimately evaluating it as a social and political movement in the broader perspective.

Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim country, represents an ideal case for the study of Islamic politics because it holds the immense potential of offering new perspectives and fertile ground for both scholars and interested observers of Islam alike. For far too long, both Islamicists and specialists of the Malay world have tended to see Indonesia and Southeast Asia generally in isolation, neglecting to incorporate it within the larger context of the great cultural and geographical breadth of the contemporary Islamic world. For much of its post-independence history, Indonesia was governed by the strong man authoritarian regimes of Soekarno (1945-66) and Soeharto (1966-98) that repressed any type of competitive or free wheeling politics. However, following the regional Asian Economic Crisis of 1997, the sudden collapse of Indonesia's economy, and the resignation of Soeharto, Indonesia embarked on a new democratic experiment that allowed a number of new political parties and social movements, including Indonesian Islamism, to contend for power and influence Contemporary Indonesia is a wild, chaotic, and exciting place, and the opportunity to study the development and emergence of a nascent, burgeoning Islamic politics cannot be ignored.

This thesis will approach the study of Indonesian Islamic politics in four stages. **(1)** Firstly, a theoretical context and underpinning to the study of religion, development, and modernization in a developing world context will be presented. Getting a clear

handle on the conceptual and intellectual space of Islamism and understanding some of its political and social agenda will next be explored. Framing Islamism in terms of it as a social movement and appreciating the challenge of it initiating and sustaining collective action will complete the theoretical prologue of this thesis. (2) Secondly, an analytical framework that incorporates a social science methodology to this thesis will be introduced to relate the theory of religion, politics, and social movements to the practice of Islamic politics in Indonesia. (3) Thirdly, the data and material related to Islamic politics in Indonesia will be presented and explored at length. The dynamics and context of *(i)* historical Islamism, *(ii)* post-independence Islamism, and *(iii)* contemporary Islamism in Indonesia will then comprise the empirical heart and soul of this thesis. (4) Finally, some analysis related to Islamism as a social movement, and its past, present, and future prospects and larger implications for Indonesian state and society on the whole, will be presented.

The need to appreciate fully and to come to terms with the practice of Islamic politics in Indonesia is now more timely and crucial than ever. The major research questions on which this thesis concentrates are two-fold. Can contemporary Indonesian Islamism be considered as a viable social movement? Secondly, what means of strategy and tactics has contemporary Indonesian Islamism employed to advance its agenda for social and political change for contemporary Indonesian society? The hypothesis of this thesis that emerges out of these research questions is that Indonesia's contemporary democratic transition has provided both the means and opportunity for Islamism as a

social and political movement to advance its agenda through collective action. Islamic

politics' end game in Indonesia remains unclear at this point; however, Indonesian

Islamism's ability to initiate and sustain its agenda largely depends on it mediating

between opposing poles of cooperation and confrontation with the state, while

delicately maintaining some measure of internal cohesion and common solidarity.

2. The Theory of Islamic Politics: Context, Agenda, and Movement

When we in the Western world, nurtured in the Western tradition, use the words "Islam" and "Islamic," we tend to make a natural error and assume that the religion means the same for Muslims as it has meant in the Western world, even in medieval times; that is to say, a section or compartment of life reserved for certain matters, and separable, from other compartments of life designed to hold other matters. That is not so in the Islamic world. It was never so in the past and the attempt in modern times to make it so may perhaps be seen, in the longer perspective of history, as an unnatural aberration which in Iran has ended and in some other Islamic countries may also be nearing its end.

Bernard Lewis[2]

The claim that Islam is a harmonious blend of religion and politics is a modern slogan, of which no trace can be found in the past history of Islam. The very term "Islamic state" was never used in the theory or practice of Muslim political science, before the twentieth century. Also if the first thirty years of Islam were exempted, the historical conduct of Muslim states could hardly be distinguished from that of other states in world history.

Qamaruddin Khan[3]

It is not always an easy task trying to draw some theoretical conceptualizations

in which to view the interface of Islam and politics. As illustrated by the two distinct

opinions expressed in the above citations, achieving consensus on what Islam exactly

means politically can be a nearly impossible task. "Islamic politics" as a term encompassing the relationship between Islam and the state, and the social and political practice of Islam, can be a much misunderstood and abused concept. Islamic politics in the popular Western mindset has often been tainted by the image of a raging and threatening "Islamic fundamentalism" fueling religious extremism, terrorism, and Khomeini's *fatwa* in the Rushdie-*Satanic Verses* affair. Islamic politics to a degree involves such currents, but it also exists as a much wider and more complex reflection on the fundamental practice of Islam as both a political and socio-religious basis for living life in a Muslim society.

Providing some theoretical perspectives on how Islamic politics arose out of a specific cultural and historical matrix can lend valuable insight into how Islamic politics developed its agenda, and what means and strategies it employs to operate in any contemporary political sphere, Indonesia or elsewhere.

2.1. Religion, Development, and Modernity: The Secular Path?

Development's major thinkers and strategists have always struggled trying to deal with Islam and its place in modern Muslim state and society. The dominant guiding ethos of development has been characterized by a view of a modernized and developed society as something invariably secular, of a separation between the affairs of the state and religion and society's division into that of a private, religious sphere and a public, political sphere.[4] Such a secular society, developmentalists argued, is not only an inevitable product of the larger processes of modernization and development

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but also something which should be striven for as a normative good because "it increases religious freedom, reduces the likelihood of state persecution of religious minorities, and permits the state to make more rational decisions free of religious bias." [5] So it was inevitable that throughout much of the early years of the buoyant development decade of the 1950s, Western developmentalists' approach to the newly independent nations of the Muslim world were colored by these pre-existing suppositions regarding religion, modernity, and secularization.

Leaders of new Muslim states were urged to depoliticize Islam quickly and marginalize it from the realm of politics to attain modernity, or face miring in endemic religious feudal despotism at their own peril. The noted Islamic scholar John Esposito has written about the approach that newly post independent states in the Muslim World tried to take in regards to Islam and state-building in his *Islam and Politics*.[6] Esposito categorizes three distinct models of nation-building in the Muslim World: an Islamic State, a Muslim State, and a Secular State. An Islamic State identified Islam as the preeminent political and social basis of any modern state. A Secular State took the exact opposite approach, drawing a clear distinction between Islam as private religious faith and the essentially secular character of public life and government that should reflect strict religious neutrality. A Muslim State took the middle way, acknowledging the state as Muslim, while keeping it independent of religious authority.[7] These three models of nation-building drove political development and modernization in the Muslim world until a startling phenomenon asserted itself. For rather than Islam

becoming progressively confined to a non-threatening private sphere as the Western development model dictated, Islam instead grew stronger, became much more visible and decidedly more radicalized. The fruits of development, the rise in living standards and peoples' welfare, and the spread of education and literacy more than anything helped to fuel the Islamic revival of the 1970s that so caught the West off guard. Secularist and ostensibly modern states considered as role models for development began to be challenged by a revival of the political and social expression of Islam. In Iran, the masses surged with revolution under the banner of Islam, and proclaimed the world's first "Islamic State" in 1979. Taking inspiration from the example of Iran, many new social and political movements were mobilized under the banner of Islam to challenge the often rigid and corrupt secular nationalist authoritarian status quo of many of the nations of the Islamic world.[8] Islamic politics suddenly emerged as an influential actor on the contemporary global political landscape. But what really does Islamic politics encompass?

2.2. Islamic Politics: The Agenda of Political Islam and Liberal Islam

Without overly essentializing or objectifying Islam, Islamic politics can be seen as a "competition and contest over both the interpretation of symbols and control of institutions, formal and informal that produce and sustain them."[9] This competition over the symbols integral to the religion of Islam "is played out against the background of an underlying framework that while subject to contextualized nuances, is common to Muslims throughout the world."[10] The basic religious doctrine of Islam, the belief in the

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unquestioned divinity of God and the *Qu'ran* as the final divine communication to humanity through God's true prophet and messenger, Muhammad, the importance of the *Hadith* (Prophetic traditions) and *Sharia* as proscribed divine law, all inform the basic framework that all Islamic politics share. The concept of *tauhid* as derived from the *shahadah*, the first pillar of Islam ('there is no God but God and Muhammad is his true messenger'), is the most significant contested symbol of Islamic politics *Tauhid*, as the doctrinal belief in the oneness of God, "the acknowledging of the Unity of God, the indivisible, absolute, and the sole real,"[11] is the basic foundation of Islam that also shapes its relationship with *Din-Wa-Dawla*, religion, and state. Any discussions of "Islamic political philosophy" would have to include such an appreciation for this *tauhidic* worldview where "everything is dependent upon one supreme being, Lord of all creation" and that "the implications of knowledge of God's unity run through every aspect of life."[12]

The mistake of the past and of today is to read Muslim politics as overly unified and monolithic. There exists a variety of interpretations and divergent opinions of *tauhid* and how to implement a *tauhidic* centered worldview. This vibrant debate is part of the inherent plurality of Muslim politics that many observers often overlook. Recognizing Islamic politics to be "constitut[ed] [as] the field on which an intricate pattern of cooperation and contest over form, practice and interpretation"[13] is a first step in understanding the relationship between Islam and politics. There are two major dominant streams of Islamic politics today: Political Islam and Liberal Islam.

a. Political Islam

Political Islam or Islamism is a major and perhaps the most prominent strand of Islamic politics. Most recognized in the Western popular imagination, Political Islam is a vision that sees no distinction between politics and religion or the state and Islam. Much of development literature has believed that "traditional Islam recognized no borderline between religion and politics" and "since religious Muslims still believe that God wants them to live in a community governed in accordance with the *Qu'ran*, the very concept of separating church and state is alien to their culture."[14] Olivier Roy in his cutting *Failure of Political Islam*[15] has written much about the origins of Political Islam and of some of its underlying social and political agenda. Roy ties the sociological phenomenon of Islamism directly to the problems of modernization and the challenge of political and economic development that many of these Muslim developing world societies face. The weakness and fragility of post-independence states, the growing corruption and ineffectiveness of many elites, urbanization and the demographic bulge, ethnic tensions, poverty, and other factors may have contributed to a political and social vacuum, which these Islamist movements have been able to fill. Exertion of religious identity, or the call for a "return to Islam," provides immense comfort in the shifting realities and dislocations of today's modern world.

Political Islam, rooted heavily in the *Wahhabi* Saudi religious tradition, springs from a very narrow definition of *tauhid* and exclusivist interpretation of the *Shahadah* (There is *no God* but God) that demands "the utter exclusion of any analogy, similarity

or quality in creation that reflects or transmits God."[16] Political Islam, or Islamism in its most commonly recognized guise, seeks to impart *tauhid* as a theological basis of society where "society is, or rather must be a reflection of divine oneness, of *Tauhid*."[17] A society that conforms to this basic tenet of Islam, the divine oneness of God, must not draw any distinctions between religion and politics because "a *tauhidic* society cannot tolerate either intrinsic segmentation (social, ethnic, tribal, or national) or a political authority that is autonomous with respect to the divine order, even in a contingent manner."[18] Muslim state and society should comprise a "Total Islamic Order" where political and religious authority are fused into the most clumsy and ungainly of modern creations, the "Islamic State," where *Sharia* law will govern. Only such an Islamic state can reflect Islam properly so that "God's absolute authority will then prevail, governing all aspects of the life of the individual as well as of society."[19]

b. Liberal Islam

Political Islam remains the most visible manifestation of contemporary Islamic politics, but another variant of the practice of Islamic politics, namely Liberal Islam, exists as an effective counterweight to the often overwhelming focus on the ideas of Political Islam. Charles Kurzman, an American scholar of Islam, has noted, "in historical terms, Islam has consisted of countless varied interpretations, among those a tradition that voices concerns parallel to those of Western liberalism."[20] These liberal concerns, dubbed Liberal Islam for the sake of convenience, shed light on a neglected distinct liberal tradition of Islamic politics, parallel and sometimes in opposition to the

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Political Islam consensus. Kurzman has identified six themes which mark the Liberal

Islam tradition: opposition to theocracy, support for democracy, guarantees of the

rights of women and rights of non-Muslims in Islamic countries, defense of freedom of

thought, and belief in the potential for human progress.[21]

Liberal Islam, according to Kurzman, shares much in common with the standard

bearer in Islamic politics, Political Islam. Both Political Islam and Liberal Islam

emerged in the modern era as responses to the processes of modernization, secularism,

and development sweeping much of the developing world, but Liberal Islam departs

radically from its Political Islam counterpart in its articulated response to these

aforementioned pressures. Kurzman compares and contrasts the origins and responses

of both Political Islam and Liberal Islam:

> Liberal Islam, like revivalist [Political] Islam, defines itself in contrast to the
> customary tradition, and calls upon the precedent of the early period of Islam in
> order to delegitimate present-day practices. Yet Liberal Islam calls upon the past in
> the *name of modernity*, while revivalists might be said to call upon modernity in the
> *name of the past*...there are various versions of Islamic liberalism, but one common
> element is the critique of both the customary and revivalist traditions for what
> liberals sometimes term "backwardness," which in their view has prevented the
> Islamic world from enjoying the fruits of modernity: economic progress, democracy,
> legal rights, and so on. *Instead, the liberal tradition argues that Islam, properly
> understood, is compatible with – or evens a precursor to – Western liberalism.*[22]

The Liberal Islam perspective is a vital and existing tradition in contemporary Islamic

politics, but nonetheless it has faced many obstacles and barriers to a more popularized

mass acceptance in the greater Islamic world at large. Many of its opponents,

particularly in the Political Islam camp have criticized Liberal Islam as simple

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imitation, a carbon copy of western liberal precepts, dressed up in an Islamic garb. Liberal Islam's proponents have countered that many of their beliefs emerge out of readings of original Islamic texts and other written traditions, independent of, and wholly distinct from, any Western tradition.[23] The Liberal Islam tradition is contextualized from within a very distinct Islamic perspective, its worldview emerging out of a relationship drawn between the principal sources of Islam: the divinely revealed book (*Qu'ran*) and the divinely inspired practice of the prophet Muhammad (*Sunna*), which together constitute the basis for Islamic law (*Sharia*) and the precepts of liberalism. Kurzman has identified three modes of Liberal Islam existent today: "the first mode takes liberal positions as being explicitly sanctioned by the *Sharia*; the second mode argues that Muslims are free to adopt liberal positions on subjects that the *Sharia* leaves open to human ingenuity; the third mode argues that the *Sharia*, while divinely inspired, is subject to multiple human interpretations."[24] Kurzman has labeled these modes as *liberal, silent, interpreted* in the Liberal Islam continuum. The difficulties that Liberal Islam faces presently are not only cultural and theological, but also deeply political. The political beliefs of Liberal Islam, namely its emphasis on democracy, freedom of thought, and the rights of women and minorities, are not very popular ideas in a contemporary Islamic world dominated by feudal monarchies and authoritarian dictatorships. Most of Liberal Islam's advocates have faced harassment, imprisonment, torture, exile, and sometimes death in some cases. Yet Liberal Islam continues to thrive and it is a perspective that needs to be explored in any larger discussion of the

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contemporary Islamic world.

2.3. Islamism as Social Movement: Collective Action and Politics

Utilizing theoretical perspectives to contextualize the emergence of Islamism out of modernity, development, and the subsequent shaping of its social and political agenda, can give the scholar much insight into where Islamic politics comes originates. But how does one theorize about how Islamic politics operates? Islamism is a very new and dynamic type of politics, but it remains very much of a social movement in terms of how it operates. Sidney Tarrow's *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action, and Politics*[25] establishes a very valuable conceptual and theoretical matrix in which to situate any study of contemporary Islamic politics.

Tarrow defines the basic properties of a social movement as "*collective challenges by people with common purposes, and solidarity in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities.*"[26] Tarrow gives four empirical properties of a social movement: collective challenge, common purpose, solidarity, and sustained interaction. Collective action can refer to any number of political activities: writing a letter to a politician, attending a political meeting, or voting. But according to Tarrow, what marks social movements "contentious collective action," which "is the irreducible act that lies at the base of all social movements...."[27] This contentious collective action, defined as sustained, institutionalized, disruptive, humdrum, and dramatic, is ultimately what Islamism engenders as both a social and political movement.[28]

The timing of when a social movement initiates such collective action depends

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on a balance between political opportunity and incentive. The central premise of *Power in Movement* is that "*changes in political opportunity structure create incentives for collective action.*"[29] Tarrow defines such a political opportunity structure as "dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for people to undertake collective action by affecting their expectations for success and failure... [T]heories of political opportunity structure emphasize the mobilization of resources external to the group."[30] There are four properties that can forge a political opportunity: the opening up of access to participation, shifts in ruling alignments, the availability of influential allies, and cleavages within and among elites.[31]

Finally, the theoretical implication of Tarrow's work on social movements that is most relevant to the case of contemporary Islamic politics involves a consideration of movement outcomes and of their ambiguity. All social movements to a large degree seek the success, of seeing their political and social goals reach fruition. Achieving such success depends on both internal factors related to the movement itself, and other external factors that a movement has to manage. Tarrow asks, "What helps a movement to succeed? Most students agree that it is challenging or disruptive power that brings about success."[32]

Internal factors crucial to a movement successfully sustaining collective action include how social movements build common purpose and internal solidarity, framing meanings and symbols to bind their supporters and adherents together. Tarrow writes, "finding symbols that will be familiar enough to mobilize people around is one of the

major tasks of movement organizations."[33] In this respect, "movements frame their collective action around cultural symbols that are selectively chosen from a cultural tool chest and creatively converted into collective action frames by political entrepreneurs."[34] Common purpose relates to "why people band together in movements: to mount claims against opponents, authorities, or elites...[C]ommon or overlapping interests and values are at the basis of their common actions."[35] Solidarity, however, is what spearheads a social movement, for "it is participants' recognition of their common interests that translates the potential for movement into collective action."[36]

How movements come to terms with other external actors, most notably the state, is the final theoretical implication to consider. Most social movement theorists, from Alexis de Tocqueville to Tarrow, have recognized the progenitor role of the state in the historical and political development of all social movements. The state is considered important because "*state-building creates an opportunity structure for collective action of which movements take advantage.*"[37] This opportunity for social movements was closely related to the state because "it was the appearance of consolidated states as targets and fulcrums of collective action that provided the framework for the social movement."[38] This interaction between state and social movement is a crucial relationship to understand. Social movements often craft different strategies to leverage the state in order to implement a social agenda. Thus, the strategies employed to interact with and challenge the state is an important dynamic to consider when

evaluating past and present social movements.

Tarrow briefly touches upon the choice of strategy in his discussion of movement outcomes, and specifically, the "cycles of protest" that often characterize the rise and fall of social movements. Tarrow relates that most social movements originally emerge out of a radical agenda a struggle, with external actors to achieve their goals. Eventually, some accommodation is reached on this path of contestation, and a struggle agenda eventually becomes transformed into an agenda of reform. Considerations of struggle or reform inform the choice of strategy available to social movements. The choice falls to two options: seeking cooperation with the state, or seeking confrontation with the state. Neither choice is clear-cut, because each comes with its obvious advantages and disadvantages. Most of these considerations revolve around the ability of a social movement to promote a social agenda through either an attempt to reform (i.e. cooperation with) an existing institution or establishment, or alternatively to struggle (confrontation with) against such an institution or establishment. Reform offers the gradualist approach, with eventual promised success, but with the dangers of being co-opted or compromised by such an association with the state. Struggle offers the immediate approach, with realized, tangible achievements, but also with added dangers of outright repression and marginalization by stronger, more established forces. The key inevitably lies in finding a nice balance between the two competing perspectives, a moderate approach that can reach accommodation, but with real, tangible results. Finding a way to balance these two contrasting strategies in order to

sustain collective action, and carry out its social and political agenda, is a major

challenge for social movements in most contemporary political settings. [39]

3. Analytical Framework: The Methodology of Connecting Islam and Politics in Indonesia

Trying to craft a cogent analysis to make sense of Islam in Indonesia's history

and politics can be a bit of a daunting endeavor. Approaching such an endeavor

requires a solid methodology, anchored in the humanities and social sciences. Such a

methodology involves a balance between weighing both quantitative and qualitative

research techniques. Quantitative and qualitative researchers have become mortal

enemies, but this strict divide and apparent hostility that separate the worlds of the

abstract theoretical and the concrete empirical seems quite arbitrary and deeply

counter-productive to the goals of solid academic research. Both qualitative and

quantitative research techniques emphasize the importance of "inference, whether

descriptive, or causal, quantitative or qualitative, [as] the ultimate goal of all good social

science." [40]

However, adopting the methodology of social scientific inquiry is singularly

inappropriate for this study. Such techniques were originally developed and tested to

study something else entirely, namely the hard physics and materialism of the natural

world. In this respect, politics and societies are populated by human actors, who do not

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always follow the strict scientific regime of predictability, logicality, or even rationality. The work of Clifford Geertz and his methodology of "thick description" will therefore inform much of the research and analysis of the thesis. Strict social science does not always come close to understanding human behavior as there must exist autonomy for individual social science researchers through their accumulated experience, cultural immersion, and empathy (*verstehen*) to intuitively grasp the meaning of a problem independent of, and outside of, social science inquiry.[41]

Embracing a methodology that values first the power of human interpretation, and secondly the accumulated experience of the individual humanities researcher, are the empirical perspectives that support the research questions that this thesis seeks to address. Several important central questions regarding the interplay of Islam and the Indonesian state and society need to be investigated and answered concretely. What is the cultural and historical context to the role of Islam in pre-colonial and colonial Indonesia? What was the relationship of Indonesian Islam to the Indonesian nationalist movement and the post-independence state? How did Islam fare under the regimes of Soekarno and Soeharto? How have both the streams of Political Islam and Liberal Islam manifested themselves in today's Indonesia? Has Islamism in contemporary Indonesia been able to maintain some semblance of common purpose and solidarity? How has Indonesian Islam attempted to balance competing strategies of cooperation and confrontation with the state? A reading of Indonesia's history through pre-colonial, colonial, and post-independence contexts, and an overview of some aspects of

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its contemporary politics in its new post-Soeharto democratic era, may provide some answers.

4. Islamism in Indonesia: Historical, Post-Independence, and Contemporary Contexts

Having an appreciation for the long cultural and historical record of Islam in Indonesia makes a study of some aspects of its contemporary politics and society a much easier proposition. Islam emerged as an important cultural and social force in the shaping of an independent Indonesia. However, the place of Islam in Indonesia was a contested proposition right from the very start, setting the stage for the struggle and dilemma of Indonesian Islam to establish itself in the coming post-independence and contemporary eras of Indonesian history.

4.1.1. The Historical and Cultural Context of Islamism in Pre-Colonial Indonesia

Tracing the process of Islamization in Indonesia is crucially important in understanding Islam's impact on traditional, indigenous society and its forms of political institutions. Islam came to Indonesia not through war and conquest, but peacefully, through commerce and trade. Historians and historical records are both unclear about the exact details of Islamization, but most agree that the spread of Islam was smooth and relatively unopposed by the people of the archipelago Beginning from the 14th century, Islam became strongly established initially in the coastal, urban areas of the large islands of Java and Sumatra, where it had been introduced by Arab and Indian merchants and traders.[42]

The indigenous local practice of Islam in Indonesia came to be characterized by two distinct strands: traditionalist, syncretic nominal *Abangan* Islam and modernist, purist, devout *Santri* Islam. Traditionalist Abangan Islam sprang from an attempt to merge Islam with pre-existing Hindu-Buddhist practice and formulate a new synthesized tradition. *Abangan* Islam was not as concerned with purist Islamic doctrine as reflected in the *Qu'ran* and the *Hadith* (traditions of the Prophet), but with achieving a larger spiritual communion with God. *Abangan* Islam was an "Islamism [that] did not even pretend to purity, it pretended to comprehensiveness; not to an intensity but to a largeness of spirit."[43] *Abangan* Islam, steeped heavily in tradition, rejected more dogmatic interpretations of doctrine because "the concern of modernists with reconciling Islam to a so-called modernity, traditionalists maintained, was an implied rejection of the eternal truth embodied in the teachings of the great scholars of classical Islam."[44] In this respect, it reflected the strongly tolerant and sometimes infuriating contrarian character of traditional Indonesia: "adaptive, absorbent, pragmatic and gradualistic, a matter of partial compromises, half way covenants, and outright evasions."[45]

Santri Islam on the other hand was strongly concerned with purist Islamic doctrine and strongly rejected any traditional effort to synthesize Islam with pre-existing Hindu-Buddhist tradition. *Santri* Islam reflected a strongly modernist current in its interpretation of Islam for it "contended that traditionalist [*Abangan*] Islam had far too long been mired in a world of stagnation and superstition and that a return to the

purity of the *Qu'ran* and *Hadith* and an extended acceptance of the right of individual interpretation in religious matters would demonstrate that Islam was consonant with material and scientific progress."[46] *Santri* Islam was defined by an intimate attention to Islamic ritual and detail, valuing Islam "as a superior ethical code for modern man, as a workable social doctrine for modern society, and as a fertile source of values for modern culture."[47] Practitioners of *Santri* Islam saw their world not through that of the traditional Indonesian society, but primarily through that of the greater worldwide Muslim community, the *Ummat*. Such a community "uniting Muslims of all races and cultures" was "perceived in somewhat of an exclusivist fashion, divided between those who affirm Islam and those who are *kafir* (Non-believers)."[48] Indeed, *Santri* differentiations of themselves from *Abangan* were vociferous, and they "seem [ed] to lie entirely in their insistence that they [were] true Moslems while their *[Abangan]* neighbors [were] not, [and] to those whose commitment to Islam dominates all of their life."[49]

4.1.2. Dutch Colonialism and Islam in Indonesia

The coming of Dutch colonial power had a major transformative effect on Islam and on traditional indigenous institutions. Dutch colonial power decisively broke the traditional Javanese state, undermining completely its basis of legitimacy and authority, and appropriating it as a mere appendage of the Dutch colonial state. The Dutch colonial state also had a strained and difficult relationship with Islam. For just as Dutch imperialism sought to destroy the traditional Javanese state, a comparable attempt was

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also made to neuter and undermine Islam itself, so that it could pose no effective challenge to colonial conquest. In this respect, Dutch colonialism was not entirely successful. Dutch initial impressions of Islam were mixed: suspicion, outright hostility, but also ambivalence in the face of great religious tradition with which they had only had brief contact previously. There were some strong demands raised in some quarters of the necessity of the conversion of the heathens to Christianity, but such a large-scale policy of conversion of the native population was never seriously attempted during the long years of colonial rule. Rather, Dutch colonial policy towards Islam was shaped through the lens of the Dutch Protestant reformist religious tradition, the enlightenment era derived division of state and religion to that of a public and private sphere. Indonesians were allowed freedom in the private sphere, the right to practice their religion, and an Islam free from interference of the Dutch colonial state. However, this right was made conditional upon the religion, Islam, not entering the public sphere and becoming political. In other words, freedom of religion was guaranteed as long as it did not challenge the legitimacy of the colonial state. In the face of the immense power wielded by the colonial state and the great destruction it had wrought on traditional society, leading Indonesian Islamic leaders reluctantly accepted the colonial state's religious neutrality in exchange for the non-interference of Islam in politics. However, Islam and colonialism co-existed together only warily. The bargain entered into by Islam with colonial authorities was always tenuous and it would break down spectacularly in the early 20th century.[50]

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4.1.3. Islam, Nationalism, and Anti-Colonial Resistance

It was inevitable that Islam would emerge as the focal point in the resistance

against colonialism. In the early years of the 20th century at the peak of Dutch colonial

power, a new political consciousness derived from Islam would challenge colonialism

and later spawn a future nationalist movement. Islam was a powerful rallying

instrument because it served to clearly differentiate ruler and ruled, Dutch and

Indonesian. For no matter how powerful the Dutch seemed and what material and

technological advantage they possessed, they could never become Muslims The Dutch

were always the *Kafir* (non-believers). Islam was intensely political because it "came to

serve Indonesians as a rallying point of identity, to symbolize separateness from, and

opposition to, foreign, Christian overlords."[51] Islam, in a sense, became implicitly

oppositional, for "before men had been Muslims as a matter of circumstance, now they

were increasingly Muslims as a matter of policy."[52] The repression of colonialism in

Indonesia, but also in the larger Islamic world at large, was a catalyst to a national

awakening in Indonesia at the turn of the twentieth century, a process of reform to

revitalize old traditions and create new traditions in an effort to end the greater societal

political and cultural stagnation that colonialism had instigated. Islam was at the

forefront of the process for no other reason than that it was the only major force that

retained its credibility under colonialism. The traditional rulers and indigenous state

system had long been absorbed into the colonial administrative apparatus and no

longer held any real meanings for Indonesians.

The emergence of Islam as the early leader of the anti-colonial resistance in Indonesia was a decisive moment in the history of the region. This mass, popular Islam was most clearly reflected in the rise of three mass Islamic-based anti-colonial movements: *Serikat Islam* in 1911, *Muhammadiyah* in 1912, and *Nahdlatul Ulama* in 1926.[53] The proto-nationalist Sarekat *Islam* was a significant milestone in Indonesia, for it was the first significant political expression of resistance against Dutch colonialism. Although the movement was framed in Islamic terminology and symbols, it also hinted at a future Indonesian nationalism. The demands of *Serikat Islam* would go unheeded by colonial officials; the bargain of Islam's non-interference in politics clearly broken, the movement was repressed and it began to fizzle out. However, *Serikat Islam*'s example would be the inspiration later for the founding of two more prominent socio-religious organizations, *Muhammadiyah* and *Nahdlatul Ulama*, that would take up the anti-colonial struggle. *Muhammadiyah*, the representative of the modernist Indonesian Islamic community, and *Nahdlatul Ulama*, the representative of the traditionalist Indonesian Islamic community, would come to have an influence on the Indonesian political landscape that continues to resonate even today.[54] These two grass roots organizations, both with memberships reaching into the millions, disagreed fundamentally on some major points of Islamic doctrine. The disagreements were mostly related to the two different strands of Indonesian Islam that they represented. However, they nonetheless both agreed on the injustice of colonialism. These two organizations would provide valuable training and support bases for the development

of the Indonesian nationalist movement that would eventually succeed in freeing Indonesia from colonial subjugation.

Islam played a centrifugal role in Indonesian state and society but it has always been tinged with a bit of ambiguity. Confronted with an impressive and enduring Hindu-Buddhist tradition, Islam adapted and merged with these syncretic traditions to become a unique Indonesian Islamic religious ethic. The coming of Dutch colonialism severely disrupted traditional Indonesian society, precipitating a larger societal reappraisal of long held values concerning political authority and institutions in order to meet the challenge of Dutch colonial conquest. Such a reappraisal facilitated the creation of an oppositional or new political consciousness that would take the lead in the struggle against colonialism. However, Islam would not come to be prominent in an Indonesian nationalist movement that through revolution and war, would eventually overthrow Dutch colonialism.

4.1.4. Islam and the Japanese Occupation, 1942-45

The abrupt end of Dutch colonialism and the emergence of a modern independent Indonesia were mediated by a crucial interim period that would have an important influence on the shaping of Indonesian Islamic politics: the Japanese occupation of Indonesia from 1942-45. The Pacific War of World War Two destroyed Dutch colonialism in the archipelago forever, setting in motion great social and political forces that still dominate Indonesia. Japanese forces began landing in the archipelago in early 1942, and their military conquest over the weak and demoralized Dutch colonial troops

was almost complete by midyear. The Japanese were initially welcomed warmly by Indonesians The Japanese sought to forge a Greater East-Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, but behind this Japanese talk of brotherhood and kinship lay a desire to extract and exploit ruthlessly the great human and natural resources of their new military conquest.

The Japanese occupation of Indonesia, then, was no different from Dutch colonialism in this large respect. However, Japanese officials sought to exploit Indonesia's resources rapidly in order to aid the imperial Japanese war effort. They pushed for a mass mobilization of Indonesian society to achieve this goal, enlisting the help of previously imprisoned nationalist leaders such as Soekarno and Hatta to rally support for Japan among the masses of ordinary Indonesians The Japanese not only turned to Indonesia's nationalist secularist leaders, but they also attempted to enlist the support of Indonesian Islam. The Japanese recognized the great cultural and historical grassroots base of Islam, and sought to co-opt Indonesian Islam before it could emerge as an effective vehicle of anti-Japanese sentiment and resistance. In 1942, the Japanese occupation authorities first organized an Office of Religious Affairs in the occupation government to service the needs of Indonesian Islam. The agency was first led by a Japanese official, but leadership was later turned over to local Indonesian Islamic officials District Offices of Religious Affairs were quickly established across all the far-flung regencies of the archipelago, providing government support and patronage for local mosques and religious educational institutions Secondly, in 1943, to channel Indonesian Islamic political support for Japan's war effort, a large political umbrella

organization, *Masyumi*, or the Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims, was established under Japanese auspices to represent the political interests of Indonesian Islam. Both the large socio-religious of the traditionalist *Nahdlatul Ulama* and the modernist *Muhammadiyah* were subsequently incorporated into *Masyumi*. Finally, in 1944, the Japanese spearheaded the creation of an armed paramilitary organization of Muslim youths, dubbed the *Hiz'bullah*, Party of God, to ostensibly assist Japanese military forces in resisting the expected Allied military invasion of the archipelago.[55]

The short Japanese rule of Indonesia was to have a lasting impact on Indonesian Islam, for it "was allowed to gain a position of unprecedented strength from which it could no longer so easily be displaced by the nationalist leadership."[56] Indonesian Islam had been sidelined by the rising tide of secular nationalism in the pre-war years, but now Imperial Japan's patronage had made it an important player in Indonesia's immediate post-war independent future. The Office of Religious Affairs provided a government and bureaucratic network for Indonesian Islam to gather organizational strength. *Masyumi* gained Indonesian Islam a recognized mass political organ. In addition, *Hiz'bullah* gave it an army to fight for Islamic interests in independent Indonesia.

4.1.5. Islam and Independence: Pancasila, Sharia, the Jakarta Charter, and the 1945 Constitution

The Japanese occupation quickly ushered in the birth of the modern independent Indonesian nation-state on August 17, 1945. However, the lead up to the independence

proclamation by the nationalist leaders Soekarno and Hatta in Jakarta was far from a smooth and harmonious process. Discussions leading to the proclamation were touched by a strong and vigorous debate over the future vision and ethos of a modern independent Indonesia. *Pancasila*, a secular, religiously neutral state, was the vision that ultimately prevailed, but it had to contest with *Sharia*, a vision of Indonesia governed by Islamic law and embraced by much of Indonesia's Islamic community.

Pancasila, a Sanskrit word meaning five principles, first emerged as a concept out of a famous speech given by Soekarno on June 1, 1945 before a group of Indonesians drafting Indonesia's first post-war independence constitution. Soekarno's speech posed a decisive question for the future of Indonesia: on what philosophical basis ought a free Indonesia to be built? Soekarno answered his question with the *Pancasila*, a political and intellectual conceptualization that incorporated five important beliefs: nationalism, internationalism, democracy, social justice, and "belief in one God." The *Pancasila* was subsequently inserted as a preamble to Indonesia's 1945 constitution "*as belief in the one supreme God, a just and civilized humanity, the unity of Indonesia, democracy led by the wisdom of unanimity, arising from deliberations among representatives of the people, and social justice for the whole people of Indonesia.*"[57] The *Pancasila* was an audacious touch by Soekarno that reflected the typically Indonesian impulse to be all things to all people, the *Pancasila* finding room to incorporate Muslims and non-Muslims, Javanese, and non-Javanese alike under one all encompassing umbrella. The "belief in one God" clause of the *Pancasila* acknowledged the important role of religion in Indonesian

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society, but it did so in a pluralist and religiously neutral manner that would not favor any one specific religion over another.

The forces of Indonesian Islam, on the other hand strongly favored *Sharia.* Driven by strong philosophical and religious convictions, most leaders of Indonesian Islam objected to *Pancasila,* and specifically, the "belief in one God" clause. Leaders of Indonesian Islam felt that the clause did not go far enough, and bordered on a type of coded secularism. They were quite adamant that the philosophical basis of Indonesia should lie firmly with Islam explicitly, and they favored a declaration of Indonesia outright as an Islamic state, governed by *Sharia,* or divine Islamic law.[58] Eventually to placate the strongly voiced interests of Indonesian Islam, a compromise was broached by the group overseeing the drafting the constitution to slightly amend the "belief in one God" clause.

The compromise, subsequently referred to as the Jakarta Charter, added a new seven-word qualification to a "belief in one God." Indonesia would embrace a "belief in one supreme God" under the *Pancasila, "with the obligation of adherents of Islam to practice Islamic law.*[59] This compromise formula of seven words, translated into the local Bahasa Indonesian language, became a rallying cry and slogan for Indonesian Islam. It horrified Indonesia's more moderate leaders and minorities, as they felt the Jakarta Charter covertly transformed Indonesia into an Islamic state governed by *Sharia.*[60] Soekarno and the nationalists recognized the growing concerns over the Jakarta Charter, and they dropped it unilaterally from Indonesia's constitution. Indonesia's

independence was proclaimed on August 17, 1945 and the Jakarta Charter was nowhere to be found. Indonesia Islamic forces were none too happy about this development, and they greeted Indonesia's independence and new secularist state with some misgivings and ambivalence. Much of Indonesia's post-independence and contemporary politics can be read as a reaction to the controversy over the Jakarta Charter and its dividing line between the nationalist *Pancasila* and *Sharia*.

4.2. Post-Independence Islamism in Indonesia; Islam under Soekarno and Soeharto, 1945-98

Throughout much of its post-independence history, Indonesia was governed by the authoritarian regimes of Soekarno (1945-66) and Soeharto (1966-98). Islam remained a vital social and cultural force in Indonesia that could not be easily ignored by these governments, but both regimes did a fanciful and skilled job of managing Islam, ultimately neutralizing it by balancing strategies of outright repression, or subtle marginalization. The traditional dynamics of Indonesian Islamic politics asserted itself in both a desire to confront (struggle) the state, or cooperate (reform) with the state, but the existing historical and external political dynamic of the repressed and closed Soekarno and Soeharto years ensured that Indonesian Islamic politics were a strictly a weak and non-threatening political and social affair for both of these regimes. These two themes of the politics of repression and the politics of marginalization assert themselves in the following brief four case studies of Islam drawn from the Soekarno and Soeharto years.

4.2.1. The Politics of Repression: Islam and the Nationalism

The deliberations surrounding independence and *Pancasila* left Indonesian Muslims deeply unhappy about the direction of independent Indonesia, but Indonesia's revolutionary war put on hold their ambitions to seek redress of their grievances. Beginning in late 1945, Dutch military forces returned to the archipelago, with the intention of crushing the independence movement and reestablishing the Dutch colonial administration. Indonesian Islam put aside its differences with secular nationalism and the two forces united to fight a bloody, protracted four-year combined conventional and guerilla war against Dutch military forces.[61] The truce that the forces of nationalism and Islam set to combat Dutch imperialism, however, was always an uneasy one that reflected on the difficult relationship between the forces of Indonesian secular nationalism and Indonesian Islam.

Indonesian secular nationalism, as strongly articulated by the nationalist leaders Soekarno and Hatta, was a very strong force that held great sway over a significant sector of Indonesian society. In this respect, Indonesian secular nationalism inherited the mantle of the pre-Islamic Hindu-Buddhist syncretic tradition and its *Abangan* Islam progeny, which departed from strict Islamic orthodoxy. Many in the *Abangan* Islam and secular nationalist camp would readily identify themselves as Muslims, but Islam would have little or no influence in the shaping of their very public and political persona. The revolutionary experience and its confrontation with the Dutch would only buttress the strength and the unyielding principle of strict secularism for the forces

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of Indonesian nationalism. The leading protagonists in the Indonesian revolution and in its nationalist movement at large were the forces of the newly established Indonesian military, which took the lead in mounting armed struggle against the forces of Dutch imperialism.

The subsequent course of the next four years of the revolution, from conventional warfare to international diplomacy, and finally to guerrilla conflict, would gradually empower the Indonesian military to take the lead in the nationalist movement, independent of, and sometimes in outright defiance of Indonesia's civilian nationalist leadership.[62] Indonesia finally won its independence in 1949, but the precedence of an Indonesian military taking its own initiative to guard the strict secularism of the Indonesian state, and consequently seeking to repress the forces of Indonesian Islam, would play itself out in the later years of Indonesia's post-independence era. The willingness of the Indonesian military to confront open Islamic expression was illustrated by the case of the *Darul Islam* movement. *Darul Islam* was a movement led by a charismatic Islamist leader, Sekarmadji Maridjan Kartosoewirjo, which seriously challenged the very legitimacy of the new post-war independent state. Faced with an outright military challenge to its very continued existence, the government was forced to resort to outright suppression of the rebellion. The *Darul Islam* movement embraced fully the *Sharia* vision of Indonesia, seeking to create the NII, *Negara Islam Indonesia*, the Indonesian Islamic State.

Darul Islam's minor insurgency against the government lasted fifteen years, and

cost close to 40,000 lives before it was brutally crushed and repressed by the secularist

government's military. *Darul Islam* was more a local conflict, a regional separatist

movement based in West Java, than a nation-wide Islamist struggle against the

government, however. Its armed rebellion was subsequently joined by other regional

rebellions in Aceh, South Sulawesi, and South Kalimantan throughout the 1950s but

these rebellions were not coordinated in any larger sense. Most of these rebellions had

to do with warlordism and the challenge of the post-war independence government

asserting its authority over regional governments and leaders in the far-flung regions

from Java. Nevertheless, most of these rebellions attempted to couch their rebellions in

terms of an Islamist challenge against the government, but this was more opportunism

than conviction. By the end of the first decade of independent Indonesia, most of these

rebellions had degenerated into mere nuisance and banditry. *Darul Islam* itself came to

an ignoble end when Kartosoewirjo was himself finally captured in 1962 and promptly

executed by the government. These movements were to remain footnotes, although

fascinating ones, in Indonesian history, until their memory was revived by later day

radical Islamist movements that sought to revive their spirit and take some inspiration

from their example. [63]

4.2.2. The Politics of Marginalization: Nasakom and Soekarno's Guided Democracy, 1959-65

The *Darul Islam* rebellions represented one course for Indonesian Islamic politics

in the early post-independence era, but most mainstream Islamist organizations opted

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to reject outright confrontation and rebellion, and instead work within the system by participating in electoral politics to advance their agenda. The *Masyumi* party, the main political organ of Indonesian Islam during this period, was quite active in this regard. *Masyumi* sat in parliament; it joined various coalition government arrangementsand participated in Indonesia's first free and fair nationwide elections in 1955. In this respect, most Indonesian Islamic leaders accepted the *Pancasila*'s "belief in God" concession with reservations. They agreed to work politically within the framework of the secularist Indonesian nation-state but they had mixed motives. Some Indonesian Muslims never did come to accept the Indonesian nationalist state and they rejected nationalism totally as a basis of unity for Indonesians. Echoing a strongly devout Islamist sentiment, Islam and the *Ummat*, they still felt, was the ultimate basis on which to build a society. Nationalism was fundamentally flawed because "it looked like a modern version of the tribal and ethnic solidarities which had divided the Arabs in pre-Islamic times and against which Prophet Muhammad had struggled."[64] However, a compromise approach and an acceptance to work within the Indonesian nation state did not infringe on their fundamental political goal of the establishment of an Islamic state in Indonesia because "cooperation with secular forces was accepted only as a temporary expedient."[65]

However, not all of Indonesian Islam felt the need to establish an Islamic state. More moderate forces initially "theoretically favored an Islamic state, but its urbanized, pragmatic character ensured it an influential role in secular politics and made it a

moderating influence within Islam."[66] Elements of this more pragmatic approach were

reflected in most of what Islam aimed to accomplish politically in the early years of

Indonesia under Soekarno. They sought to achieve "recognition of Islam as an

influential and legitimate political force with a degree of political power commensurate

with its numbers."[67] Most Islamic political parties and organizations reluctantly

accepted the secularist authority and legitimacy of the Indonesian nation-state. Politics

in Indonesia was considered a pragmatic business and Islamic political ideology was

mostly symbolic. Islam politically "became a framework of unity rather than the

pursuit of the Absolute."[68] The Islamic state, then, was not as important as making

Islam highly visible in the political space through the pursuit of social and economic

goals.

However, the unfolding context of the early years of Indonesia made the

integration of Islamic politics into the Indonesian mainstream a difficult and tenuous

process. During these early years of independence, Indonesia was a chaotic mess, torn

apart and fractured by various regional separatist rebellions, and paralyzed by various

political intrigues and instability at the political center in Jakarta. During the 1950s,

Indonesian governments were sworn in and subsequently defeated with alarming

regularity. In theory, Indonesia was a constitutional democracy during these years, but,

in practice, it was a dysfunctional one, as it lurched from one crisis to another. Finally,

President Soekarno put an end to the democratic experiment when he proclaimed

martial law, dissolved the parliamentary government, and established the authoritarian

Guided Democracy regime in 1959.[69]

Guided Democracy was a governmental regime conceived on the basis of

Nasakom: Nationalisme, Agama, Kommunisme, Nationalism, Religion (Islam), and

Communism; it represented Soekarno's attempt to bind all the competing interests of

Indonesia's pluralist society at that time, from secular nationalism, to communism, to

Islam together under one united umbrella. Soekarno, of course would lead *Nasakom* by

the force of his charismatic political leadership and personality. He was simply the

only political leader in Indonesia who could conceivably attempt such a near

impossible balancing act between irreconcilably estranged interests. However, *Nasakom*

was doomed from the very beginning by a deep polarization between the forces of

nationalism, represented most strongly by the increasingly politically influential

Indonesian military, and the forces of communism, as represented by the emerging PKI,

Partai Kommunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party). Islam was caught in the

middle, and it was gradually pushed to the sidelines. The alleged implication of

Indonesian Islam's involvement in the assorted regional rebellions of the 1950s

provided further impetus for its growing marginalization. The Soekarno government

in 1960 banned *Masyumi.* Islam would play no further visible role in the later Soekarno

years. Soekarno's Indonesia during its later years would gradually be whipped up into

a frenzy of nationalist agitation and revolutionary sloganeering, and Islam steadily

began to grow more discontented and unhappy with its place in the secularist,

nationalist status quo. Beset by its own internal fragility and inherent contradictions,

Nasakom, the alliance between nationalism and communism, would fracture

spectacularly. Soekarno's regime would lead Indonesia to the precipice of political and

economic disaster, culminating in the regime's overthrow through *Gestapu. Gestapu,* a

failed alleged communist coup in September 1965, would unleash an unprecedented

massacre upon Indonesia, where between 500,000 to over a million or more Indonesians

perished in an orgy of mass violence and sectarianism.[70]

4.2.3. The Politics of Repression, Islam, and the New Order State, 1966-90

The growing instability of Soekarno's regime, its spectacular collapse leading to

the rise of Soeharto's New Order, gave new hope to an Indonesian Islam that now

wished to exert itself more politically. Soeharto's corrupt and militaristic New Order

regime, 1966-98, would seize the reins of Indonesia following the trauma of *Gestapu.*

Soeharto and the Indonesian military sought to construct an authoritarian technocratic

"development state" that opened Indonesia to foreign investment and global capital

Political life was stifled and repressed in the interests of development as Soeharto, his

corrupt family, and crony retainers would rule Indonesia unchallenged for the next

three decades.

Islamic forces embraced the New Order as an active partner, but it was then

subsequently repressed by the regime that it had so helped to gain power. After the

chaos of the disintegration of Soekarnoist Indonesia, Soeharto's New Order had strong

support from all sectors of Indonesian society, including that of Islam. Many

Indonesians grew sick and tired of the anarchy of the Soekarno era and genuinely

wished to see Indonesia put back on its feet politically and economically. Indonesian

Islamic forces, however, went further than most other political and social forces by

actively backing Soeharto and cooperating to bring the New Order to power. The

Indonesian Islamist movement became an active partner of Soeharto and the

Indonesian military's seizure of Indonesia by actively instigating and participating in

the military-backed massacres of *Gestapu* that liquidated any resistance to the new

ruling order.[71] Growing alarmed at a resurgent and politically independent Islam that

could possibly challenge the regime, Soeharto's New Order cracked down and

marginalized Islam. Like the rest of Indonesian society, Islam was to be depoliticized in

the interests of the "development state." All Islamic political parties agreed under

pressure to consolidate in 1973 into a single, state-mandated official Islamic party, the

PPP (*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*, United Development Party) that was easily

controlled by the regime. The PPP remained an insignificant political actor throughout

much of the New Order period, as it was subjected to constant political harassment and

forced to accept the *Pancasila* without question. During the first two decades of the

New Order, any political expression of Islam outside of its proscribed boundaries was

severely repressed, independent Islamist organizations were disbanded immediately,

and their leaders jailed indefinitely.

4.2.4. *The Politics of Marginalization: Reformasi, Islam and ICMI, 1990-98*

Soeharto's New Order regime coincided with a great economic boom that

transformed Indonesia very rapidly. The rigidity and conformity of New Order

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political life provided an attractive investment environment for outside foreign capital to flood in, creating a new wave of economic prosperity and growth for Indonesia that eventually served to undermine the New Order regime itself.[72] The key ingredient in the economic turnaround in Indonesia, according to many, was a striking depoliticization of Indonesian society, where Soeharto and his coterie ruled unquestioned and where competitive politics were a sham. The repression of dissident elements continued through the 1980s, until a startling phenomenon asserted itself in the early 1990s. The fruits of the New Order's development state - economic prosperity, social mobility, mass education, and literacy - served to create a new more modern and professional class in Indonesia's major cities and elite circles. This new class also began to voice an increasing dissatisfaction over the rigidly authoritarian and increasing corrupt New Order and its privileged circles. This new middle and professional class also began to voice a growing affinity for Islam.

The external context of the greater Islamic world at large - the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and its coinciding resurgence of openly Islamist movements across the Middle East and South Asia - provided a new impetus for Islam to express itself more readily and openly in a new Indonesian social and cultural context. Soeharto and his regime during the late 1970s and 1980s were very aware of these domestic trends and of a greater societal Islamic revival throughout the Muslim world. Islam in Indonesia was increasingly emerging as an independent political force that could no longer be easily controlled or manipulated by the traditional repressive tools of the regime. Strategies

of mass jailings and banning of Islamic movements no longer appeared to be attractive strategies, as they could hold the potential of making martyrs of the Indonesian Islamist movement, eventually fueling a new more threatening and dangerous Islamic underground mass movement that could pose the first real significant threat to the regime. In addition, the experiences of other military-secularist governments in the Islamic world served as sobering examples of the perils of ignoring or underestimating Islam as a realized mass political and social movement. Secularist governments like Algeria and Egypt had both rejected outright compromise with their domestic Islamist movements and had been drawn into a long and destructive conflict of stalemate and attrition with Islam. Islam could no longer be forcibly repressed as in the days of old. A new strategy had to be developed where Islam would be drawn out into the open, co-opted, and integrated into the existing authoritarian " developmental state" political structure.[73]

Consequently, the New Order's political leadership sought to embrace Islam on its own terms. Restrictions on public Islamic activity were relaxed, the wearing of *Jilbab* head scarves in public educational institutions was permitted, and Soeharto and many of the ruling elite sought consciously to live a new visibly Islamic, pious lifestyle. Islam was given a prominent place in political life again, as the regime sought to open itself up to Islamic movements and organizations it once had a hand in repressing. The most highly symbolic axis of this New Order Islamic revival was the founding of ICMI, the Association of Indonesia Islamic Intellectuals, in 1990. The organization was founded

by several prominent Indonesian Islamist intellectuals as the means of promoting a new

Islamist-orientated vision of Indonesian society and politics.[74] However, one of the

rules of the New Order's authoritarian game dictated that in order for a new

organization to survive, and to thrive without undue governmental interference, it had

to seek out a patron, someone influential in the New Order government who could

protect and promote this new organization's interests. ICMI found its patron and

leader in B. J. Habibie, Soeharto's long time associate, family friend, and then Minister

of Research and Technology (1978-98) in government. ICMI always tried to claim its

equidistance from the New Order as an independent and critical organization, but with

its patron *cum*-leader operating within the highest circles of the New Order as

Soeharto's favorite minister and almost surrogate son, this claim would prove to be

rather dubious to maintain. Indonesian Islam, as represented by ICMI, had sought the

path of reconciliation and cooperation with the state, but during this process of

rapprochement, Islam's public credibility as an independent and critical social force

was damaged. ICMI's agenda and sustained collective action would always be

manifested as part of the New Order's agenda for collective action, calling into question

Indonesian Islam's very authenticity as a realized social movement. The experience of

ICMI, however, finally proved that the New Order's "opening to the Muslim

community was always circumscribed," as "Muslims seen as too critical or democratic

were excluded from presidential favor."[75] Thus, behind the New Order's *faux*

Islamization was a strong motivation to co-opt this new, resurgent, potentially

threatening political force, and to craft a pliant and regimist Islam. This so-called regimist Islam would fit comfortably within the authoritarian milieu of the New Order, providing a new pillar of support for Soeharto. Indeed, many saw Soeharto's opening to the Indonesian Islamist constituency not only as *real politik* in co-opting a threatening new political and social force, but also as leverage against an increasingly restless military and other pro-democracy, civil society forces. Indonesian Islam, as represented by ICMI, had allowed itself to be manipulated for the crass political opportunism of Soeharto in the bigger picture.[76]

The end of the New Order regime was just as spectacular as its beginnings.[77] Throughout much of its existence, Soeharto's New Order had sought to buttress its position and underline its legitimacy by pointing to the success of the government in managing and promoting Indonesia's economy. For three decades, Indonesia, blessed by an abundance of natural resources, political stability, and extremely favorable foreign investor confidence, had grown unchecked, with little or no experience of a prolonged recession or depression. Many in Indonesia could see this economic boom as never ending, as ostentatious wealth and gross corruption began to infect some of Jakarta's more elite and privileged circles. However, the Asian Economic Crisis of 1997 would serve as a sobering wakeup call to these elites; it would also underline the fragility of the New Order's claim to political legitimacy through Indonesia's continued economic development and growth. The crisis had its origins in the enveloping processes of globalization then taking hold in Southeast Asia, and the rapid

development of an unregulated international economy where capital knew no borders and flowed with little or no controls. Many of the countries of the region, including Indonesia, had hitched their fates to this new international economy from the early 1980s, advised by foreign economists and development professionals to rapidly deregulate their economies and open their country to unregulated foreign capital and investment. The continued growth of these economies was largely dependent on this continued flow of capital and on the very human whims of those making the decisions to commit capital to the emerging markets of the region. The Asian Economic Crisis, then, was an economic crisis born out of perception and ill confidence. The crisis was driven and exacerbated by the panic buying and selling sprees of currency on the international currency market. The panic began in Thailand, emerging out of concerns related to a depreciating property market there, and quickly became a regional contagion, humbling many of the previously highflying economies of the region.

The impact of the Asian Economic Crisis on Indonesia was far-reaching and precipitous. The corruption and mismanagement excesses of the New Order regime had always been marked as concerns for foreign investors, but given the panic environment surrounding the crisis, these concerns were magnified. Foreign investors grew agitated about the sustainability of their investments and rapidly began to pull their capital from Indonesia. Overnight, the Indonesian currency, the Rupiah, lost almost three quarters of its value on the international currency market and the Indonesian economy began to contract rapidly.[78] The crisis began to have serious

political implications for Indonesia and Soeharto's New Order government as well. The New Order was simply not prepared to deal with the crisis effectively, as Indonesia's previously uninterrupted economic booms had fostered a deep complacency and ineffectualness on the part of most Indonesian government officials in economic management. The development blue print that Soeharto and economic advisors had followed for three decades, in regards to unregulated foreign investment, was suddenly rendered obsolete by the unpredictable whims of these new processes of globalization. Soeharto and his government were powerless to ameliorate the crisis, as Indonesia rapidly began to fall into economic depression and creeping bankruptcy. Soeharto was forced to turn to outside help, and in a major turning point, the government sought outside help in the form of international aid and loan guarantees from international organizations, primarily the International Monetary Fund (IMF). This aid, however, did not come with no strings attached, as the government was forced to adhere to an inordinate amount of strict conditions attached to the aid. The IMF favored strict austerity prescriptions for Indonesia's ailing economy, in the form of cutting government spending and subsidies for basic food staples and petrol. These IMF prescriptions were not very popular among Indonesia's masses, who could barely cope with the impact of the economic crisis. The Indonesian government proved reluctant to implement the tough IMF loan conditions, and tried to renege in its commitment to follow through with the IMF prescriptions. However, the increasingly desperate position of the Indonesia economy through late 1997 into early 1998 forced the

government to obey the IMF in order to qualify for further assistance. Proceeding with the various IMF agreements undermined Indonesia's sovereignty in economic and political affairs to an unprecedented degree, but it also served to destroy the personal position and unquestioned political authority that Soeharto had wielded in Indonesia unchallenged for three decades. Soeharto's acceptance of the IMF conditions made him appear to be personally weak and vulnerable, both culturally and politically. In early 1998, Michel Camdessus, the IMF managing director, arrived in Jakarta to personally lobby Soeharto and oversee the signing and implementation of yet another IMF aid agreement and loan package. The evening news later that day carried the pictures of Soeharto personally signing the IMF agreement, with Camdessus ominously lurking right behind.[79] The cultural and political symbolism, embodied in the imagery of Soeharto readily bowing to the wishes of someone else, was not lost on many Indonesians Soeharto's days were numbered.

Dissent now began to be voiced from all sectors of Indonesian society over the New Order's inflexible authoritarianism, and especially over the personal figure of Soeharto. Throughout much of the New Order years, organized dissent and civil society, groups pressing for Indonesia's democratization, had been weak and dispirited, but the Asian Economic Crisis gave these movements a new strength and vitality. Many of these groups were very fractured and divided in terms of political ideology, religious orientation, and their prescriptions for Indonesia's future, but one common goal served to unite this new opposition: Soeharto had to leave office immediately.

This demand for change, a reform to Indonesian politics and society that began to be voiced loudly by these newly empowered social movements, gave a focus and a name to the larger movement: *Reformasi*. On Indonesian university campuses, many Indonesian students took the lead in opposing the government by organizing large-scale pro-democracy demonstrations as part of this larger *Reformasi* movement. Student demonstrations at first were sparsely attended, but they began to take on a completely new momentum as the full force of the Asian Economic Crisis began to hit Indonesia in early to mid 1998. These demonstrations, rather than being repressed outright by the authorities, slowly began to attract their covert support, as various interests in elite circles sensed Soeharto's weakness. A demonstration in early May 1998 at the elite Trisakti University, preserve of Jakarta's wealthy, was the turning point for the *Reformasi* movement. The demonstration turned violent when unarmed student demonstrators were shot and killed by the security forces. The aftermath of the shootings and the mourning for the victims set off a chain reaction in Jakarta - three days of mob violence and large-scale rioting that devastated the city, triggering a full-scale evacuation of foreign nationals from the country. Soeharto, on a trip abroad in Egypt, returned to Indonesia immediately, but he could not personally contain the chaos and street anarchy sweeping Indonesia. Under both international and domestic pressure, Soeharto resigned suddenly as Indonesia's President on May 21, 1998. The immediate post-Soeharto era would offer a new opportunity, or beginning of sorts, for Indonesian Islamic politics, freed of the manipulative and repressing political artifices

of Soekarno and Soeharto that had so dominated Indonesian state and society.

4.3. Contemporary Islamism in Indonesia

The abrupt resignation of Soeharto put an end to his authoritarian and corrupt New Order regime, but it also brought about a new uncertainty and instability in Indonesia's politics and in its society. Soeharto's fall ushered in Indonesia's democratic revolution, and it offered both the means and the opportunity for the re-emergence and revival of Indonesian Islamic politics as a contending force in Indonesian society and politics. Any comprehensive analysis of the dynamics of contemporary Indonesian democratic politics requires a strong empirical focus on Islam and its political expression. Contemporary Indonesian Islamic politics is a study of a social movement. The ability of such a social movement to sustain its collective action and enact its agenda depends on a combination of two factors. The first factor relates to Indonesian Islamism's ability to remain united, maintaining some internal common purpose and orientation. The second factor concerns Indonesian Islamism's contrasting approaches to dealing with the secular state. Recognizing Islamism as a social movement will inform the following study of contemporary Indonesian Islamic politics.

4.3.1. Contemporary Democratic Indonesia: Islam Triumphant?

B. J. Habibie, Soeharto's long time crony and handpicked successor as President, recognized the weakness of his position and initiated a far-reaching democratic transition that overnight dismantled the authoritarian structures and regulations that the New Order had built to sustain its unchallenged three-decade tenure. Political

prisoners and dissidents were released immediately from Soeharto's New Order prisons, basic civil liberties were guaranteed and entrenched in law, and long time restrictive laws on political parties and activity were repealed. Indonesian political life took on a new, refreshingly open, and free wheeling character as politics democratized. Social forces and movements that had long been marginalized by Soeharto's New Order regime began to come to the forefront of Indonesian society again and express themselves politically. Literally hundreds of new political parties were formed to advance the agendas of a completely new set of social forces. However, this new openness had a destabilizing cost, as Indonesia began to be shaken by a completely new outbreak of sectarian and separatist violence that threatened to tear Indonesia apart and put an early end to the democratic experiment.[80]

One of the most striking and distinctive characteristics of Indonesia's contemporary experiment with democracy is the presence of a politically resurgent and powerful Islam. After decades of being ignored, marginalized and manipulated by both of the regimes of Soekarno and Soeharto, Islam has positioned itself as one of the central players of Indonesian political life. After the fall of Soeharto, almost 140 political parties were formed to contest the June 1999 democratic elections called by the interim Habibie administration. Although there was immense diversity among the new parties that reflected the archipelago's great plurality, many of these new parties were of an expressively Islamic political orientation. Most of these new parties consciously appropriated Islamic terminology and symbols, framing an Islamic political platform

and tailoring their electoral appeals specifically to Islam. The outcome of the June 1999

elections, in which 48 parties were ultimately allowed to compete, was inconclusive as

no one political party could gain a clear majority. Secular forces led by the nationalist

PDI-P (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia- Perjuangan*, Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle)

and the former ruling party, Golkar, combined to gain a slim majority, but the mutual

antagonism between the two parties guaranteed that they could not work together as a

coherent political force. Islamic political parties, well organized and united, seized the

initiative from the secularist nationalists and outmaneuvered them to elect Indonesia's

first democratic President and post-Soeharto government. Indonesia's immensely

complicated electoral system, a product of its authoritarian past and political

compromises agreed to by reformist forces to ease out the New Order, left a political

vacuum that was filled by the forces of contemporary Indonesian Islamism. The

election of the President and the new democratic government was not through direct

popular suffrage but rather indirectly through the Peoples' Consultative Assembly, the

MPR. The June 1999 elections elected representatives to a new post-Soeharto

democratic parliament. Parliamentary representatives, along with regional, military

and functional group representatives, would comprise the greater body of the MPR,

which would serve as a sort of Electoral College to choose the President and the new

government.[81]

4.3.2.Abdurrahman Wahid as President, October 1999-August 2001

In the frantic and duplicitous political maneuvering that surrounded the crucial October 1999 MPR session, the various factions of Islamic political parties grouped themselves together in an alliance of convenience known *Poros Tengah* (Axis Force). Taking advantage of the internal divisions racking the secular nationalist side, the *Poros Tengah* narrowly succeeded in electing its own Muslim candidate, Abdurrahman Wahid, as President, defeating the nationalist candidate and the leader of the largest party, Megawati Soekarnoputri. For the first time in Indonesia's history, a very devout Islamic political figure was elected President, thus seeming to ensure that Islam would play a central and influential role in Indonesia's future governance Wahid, a long time chairman of the mass socio-religious organization, *Nahdlatul Ulama* with deep roots in traditionalist Islam, projected a very moderate and democratic image that was acceptable to most sectors of Indonesian political life In the immediate aftermath of the divisive and wrenching Presidential election, Wahid moved to mend fences with the secularist nationalist side and included them in his new national unity coalition government Wahid then ensured the election of his defeated rival Megawati as Vice-President and included several leading nationalist political figures in his cabinet.[82]

4.3.3. The Fall of Wahid, the Rise of Megawati, 2001-present

Abdurrahman Wahid was the first freely and democratically elected President in Indonesia's history, but his time in office would be trying and would end abruptly. Wahid would serve as President from October 1999 until his impeachment and removal

by the MPR in August 2001. Wahid's presidency offered immense hope and great potential for a stable and democratic Indonesia, but expectations did not translate into reality as Wahid presided over a very shaky and erratic government. In a sense, Wahid's Indonesia harkened back to the earlier days of Soekarno: a charismatic, larger than life political personality leading an unwieldy government composed of a myriad of diverse and sometimes diametrically opposed interests. The experiment was doomed from the beginning. Indonesia's governmental and decision-making apparatus were consequently paralyzed under Wahid's increasing inaction and indecision, as Indonesia lurched from one post-Soeharto crisis to another. Left unresolved and festering were the issues and challenges that arose to confront Wahid's government during its short tenure: the lingering after effects of the Asian Economic Crisis and the challenge of Indonesian economic reform and recovery, Indonesia's democratic consolidation and the need to address past human rights abuses, and the challenges to the territorial integrity and unity of Indonesia amidst growing regional separatist sentiment. The Indonesian public and international community looked for a scapegoat for democratic Indonesia's seemingly disconcerting drift to Balkanization - and they found Wahid a convenient target.

Wahid's personal style, it must be said, also contributed to his short tenure as President. Wahid's moderate Islamic and democratic credentials appealed across the rather wide secularist and nationalist spectrum in Indonesia, and these credentials seemed to support his ability to lead a national government. However, Wahid's

personal and somewhat quirky personal style slowly began to be flagged as a sore point

for his government's coalition partners. Wahid's striking sense of informality and

startling spontaneity served him well in opposition by keeping the New Order's

authorities off balance, but these skills of cloak and dagger did not translate well into

government at all. Wahid's inevitable decline was sealed when he started to fire

ministers of his various coalition partners in rapid succession beginning in early 2000.

The final straw came when he seriously alienated his once strong supporter and ally,

Vice-President Megawati, by firing one of her close associates from the cabinet,

accusing him of corruption.[83] The political consensus from all quarters of Indonesian

society began to coalesce around the need to remove Wahid as soon as possible. Efforts

made towards the removal of Wahid finally culminated in an extraordinary MPR

Special Session of August 2001 where Wahid was removed as President. Megawati was

installed as President, and Hamzah Haz of the Islamist United Development Party

(PPP) was elected as her Vice-President. A national government was once again

established, as Indonesian politics started to return to some sense of normality.[84]

Drawing a typology of contemporary Indonesian Islamic politics is ultimately

the heart and soul of this examination of the interplay of Islam and politics in today's

Indonesia. The context and legacy of historical and post-independence Islamism have

both strongly contributed to shaping the contours of Indonesia's contemporary political

setting. The fall of Soeharto, the interregnum of Habibie, the rise and fall of Wahid and

the rise of Megawati, provide the immediate context to the picture of Islamic politics in today's Indonesia.

How do the themes of Political Islam and Liberal Islam play themselves out in contemporary Indonesian Islamic politics? Who are Indonesian Islam's most important political parties and leaders? What is the gist of their agenda? How does each of the distinctly identifiable currents of Islamic politics situate themselves on the spectrum between a *Pancasila* (Secularist) orientation, and a *Sharia* (Islamist) orientation? In addition, how are these currents positioned on the axis between contrasting strategies of Cooperation (Reform) or Confrontation (Struggle)? An overview in two parts will be presented to give a feel of some of the landscape of contemporary Indonesian politics and address some of these questions.

4.3.4. The Picture of Contemporary Indonesian Islamic Politics: The Short Version

The contemporary political landscape of Indonesia presents a challenge for the non-specialist or layperson, simply because of its sheer complexities. The complexity of Indonesian State-Society is both a product of its long historical and cultural pluralist heritage and the political intrigues and power plays of Indonesia's now post-Soeharto, democratic like politics.

Figure 1 gives the political standing and institutional position of some of the major streams of Indonesian Islamic politics As the data below describes, the 1999 election results of Indonesia's first free and fair democratic elections in nearly four decades illustrate that while no one political party gained an absolute majority, the

moderate stream of Indonesian Islamic politics, as represented by the secularist PDI-P,

Golkar, and the PKB, so moderate as almost to be secular, were the clear victors of the

election in terms of vote percentage and seat allocation in parliament, the MPR.[85] The

more overtly Islamist political parties, as represented by the PAN/PK and PPP parties,

also did relatively well after being allowed to openly advocate a Political Islam agenda,

after four decades of political repression and *Pancasila* conformity under Soeharto's

New Order. The more hard-line elements of Indonesian Islamic politics, as represented

most prominently by the PBB party, did less well than expected, although its vote

percentage and seat allocation indicate that there is a small and devout constituency in

Indonesia that is receptive to a hard-line Political Islam, *Sharia* message. The election

results are displayed below:

Figure 1. June 1999 Elections – Political Standing and Seat Allocation[86]

Party	Percentage	Seats*
PDI-P	33.74%	154
Golkar	22.44%	120
PKB	12.61%	51
PPP	10.71%	58
PAN	7.12%	35
PBB	1.8%	14

* Seats apportioned on a complex Proportional Representation/Local District system; this accounts for the discrepancy between the seats gained by the PPP and PKB.
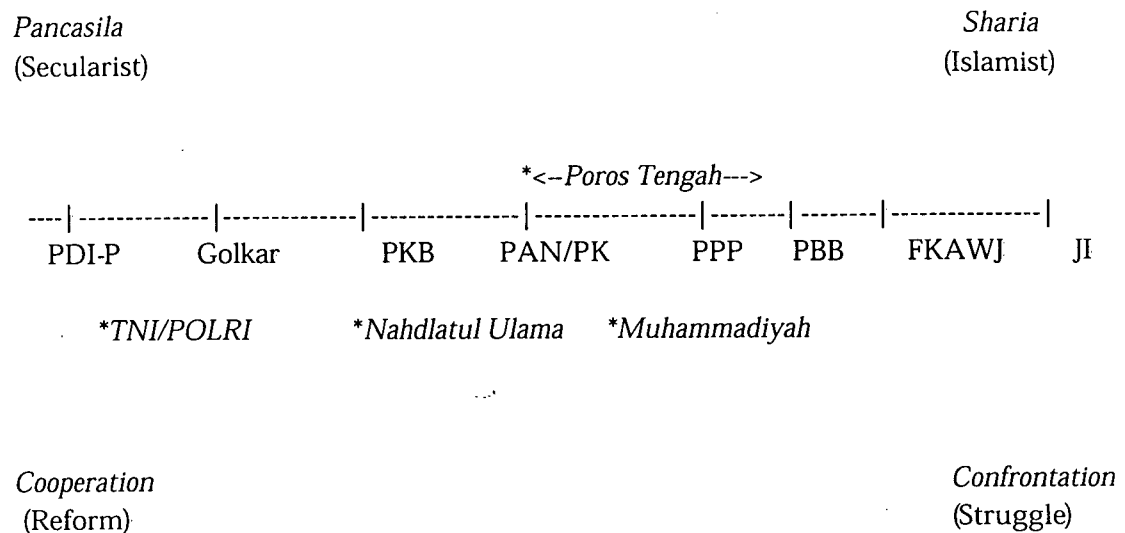
Figure 2 below analyzes Indonesian Islamic politics in terms of a *Pancasila*

(Secularist) *and Sharia* (Islamist) internal orientation, and Cooperation (Reform) and

Confrontation (Struggle) external inclination; it then situates the major streams of Indonesian Islamic politics on a spectrum which incorporates these methodological terms of analysis. These four poles of analysis essentially serve as the four corners, or four foundations on which contemporary Indonesian Islamic politics rests. Liberal Islam encompasses the *Pancasila* and cooperative approach. Political Islam emphasizes the *Sharia* and more confrontational approach.

The spectrum ranges from the very moderate, secular forces of Indonesian Islamic politics, as led by the PDI-P to the other extreme of radical, Islamist forces of Indonesian Islamic politics, as represented by *Jemmah Islamiyah*, or JI. The left side of the spectrum covers the secular to moderate forces of Indonesian Islamism: the PDI-P, Golkar, and the PKB. An internal *Pancasila* (Secularist) orientation combined with an external Cooperation (Reform) inclination is what marks this end of the spectrum. The opposing, right side of the spectrum covers the established to radical Islamist forces of Indonesian Islamism: *Laskar Jihad, Jemmah Islamiyah*, and to some degree, the PBB. A resolutely internal *Sharia* (Islamist) orientation combined with an inclination of Confrontation (Struggle) is characteristic of this end of the spectrum. The middle end of the spectrum covers the remaining, more established and conventional forces of Indonesian Islamism: the PAN/PK, the PPP, and the PBB to some extent. These forces strike a compromise between the four foundations of Indonesian Islamic politics, more *Sharia* (Islamist) than *Pancasila* (Secularist) internal orientation, and more predisposed towards cooperation (Reform) than Confrontation (Struggle). The Indonesian Military

and the *Nahdlatul Ulama* and *Muhammadiyah* organizations, adjacent political currents to

Indonesian Islamism, also fit within this broad middle of Indonesian Islamic politics as

well. The spectrum is drawn below:

Figure 2. Contemporary Indonesian Islamic Politics Spectrum[87]

Pancasila   *Sharia*
(Secularist)   (Islamist)

                                                <--Poros Tengah--->
```
----|--------------|--------------|----------------|------------------|--------|--------|----------------|
    PDI-P      Golkar        PKB      PAN/PK         PPP     PBB    FKAWJ      JI
```

         TNI/POLRI   *Nahdlatul Ulama*   *Muhammadiyah*

Cooperation   *Confrontation*
(Reform)   (Struggle)

Finally, **Figure 3** is the companion piece to **Figure 2's** spectrum, but it also can

serve as an independent and concise overview to the landscape of contemporary

Indonesian Islamic politics. The outline below is divided into two sections: primary

political currents and adjacent political currents. Each current's acronym is deciphered

and translated. Each of their major and most prominent leaders is identified and their

political standing described. The outline is presented as follows:

Figure 3. Deciphering the Acronym Soup: Some Definitions, Identifications, and Leaders[88]

A: Primary Political Currents

PDI-P *(Partai Demokrasi Indonesia - Perjuangan)* Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle: secularist/pluralist nationalist: President **Megawati Soekarnoputri** (2001-), Vice-President (1999-2001)

Golkar: corporatist nationalist/secularist. DPR Speaker **Akbar Tandjung**. Former Presidents **Soeharto** (1966-98), **BJ Habibie** (1998-1999)

PKB *(Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa)* National Awakening Party: moderate/rural traditionalist Islam. Former President **Abdurrahman Wahid** (1999-2001) also known as **"Gus Dur"**

PAN/PK *(Partai Amanat Nasional/Partai Keadilan)* National Mandate Party/Justice Party: modernist/urban Islam. MPR Speaker **Amien Rais**

PPP *(Partai Persatuan Pembangunan)* United Development Party: establishment/New Order era modernist Islam. Vice-President **Hamzah Haz** (2001-)

PBB *(Partai Bulan Bintang)* Crescent Star Party: Strongly Islamist. Justice Minister **Yusril Izha Mahendra**

FKAWJ *(Forum Kommunikasi Ahlu Sunnah wal-Jamaa'h)* Communication Forum of the Followers of the Sunna and the Community of the Prophet: radical extremist Islamist mass movement. **Ja'far Umar Thalib,** supreme commander of the *Laskar Jihad* paramilitary organization. Recently announced that it was disbanding, October 2002.

"JI *(Jemmah Islamiyah)*". Radical underground Islamist network, which seeks an Islamic state across Southeast Asia. Major suspects in the recent Bali bombings of Oct 11/02. Reputed to be linked to Osama bin Laden and *Al Qaeda* Associated organization, MMI *(Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia).* Indonesian Mujahidin Council, **Abu Bakar Bashir** alleged *Al Qeada* operative and spiritual leader of the movement. **Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin** alias **Hambali** is a JI leader linked to *Al Qaeda.*

B. Adjacent Political Currents

*TNI/POLRI *(Tentara Nasional Indonesia - Polisi Republik Indonesia)* Indonesian Military/Police; Formerly close to Golkar; now officially neutral and non-partisan,

guaranteed 38 seats in the DPR/MPR, until 2004 elections. Generally nationalist/secularist, but not in all cases.

*NU: *(Nahdlatul Ulama)* Revival of Religious Scholars, mass socio-religious organization primarily representing the traditionalist/*Abangan* community. Officially non-partisan, but closely associated with the PKB. **Wahid**, **Haz** have their roots in this organization.

Muhammidiyah, Followers of Muhammad, mass socio-religious organization, primarily representing the modernist/*Santri* community. Largely non-partisan, but Rais and other modernist leaders have their roots in this organization.

Poros Tengah: Centre or Axis Force Islamic political party alliance (PAN/PK+PBB+PPP+PKB+ some Golkar + some TNI/POLRI) formed Oct 1999 by **Rais** to elect **Wahid** President in the MPR, National Assembly. Allied with PDI-P (minus PKB) to impeach **Wahid,** and install **Megawati,** August 2001. Status? Undetermined

4.3.5. The Picture of Contemporary Indonesian Islamic Politics: The Long Version

The entire story of contemporary Indonesian Islamic politics is certainly not within the scope of this short study. One can only hope to glimpse a brief picture, and gather some general, but revelatory, context and impressions regarding the general dynamic and compelling tenor of Islamic politics in today's Indonesian political context. The major and most important forces in Indonesian Islamic politics fall into three basic streams: Moderate Islamism, Establishment Islamism, and Radical Islamism.

The following **Figure 4** is a graphic illustration of how each of the main streams of Indonesian Islamic politics fits under this triple rubric. Moderate Islamism represents one end of the spectrum and emphasizes an affinity for Liberal Islam, which fits its compatibility with a mostly *Pancasila* (Secularist) orientation and cooperative approach. Radical Islamism is decidedly Political Islam, anchored firmly in the *Sharia* and holding a confrontational approach. Establishment Islamism is the great

overreaching middle of contemporary Indonesian Islamic politics, overlapping on both

of the territories of Moderate and Radical Islamism. Establishment Islamism leans more

in the direction of Political Islam, but it compromises this approach with the

cooperative approach of its Moderate Islamism cousins. The figure is established

below:

Figure 4. Contemporary Indonesian Islamism through Three Lenses: Moderate, Establishment, and Radical[89]

PDIP

PAN -PK

PKB

Golk

PPP

PBB

LJ

JI

| Moderate | Establishment | Radical |
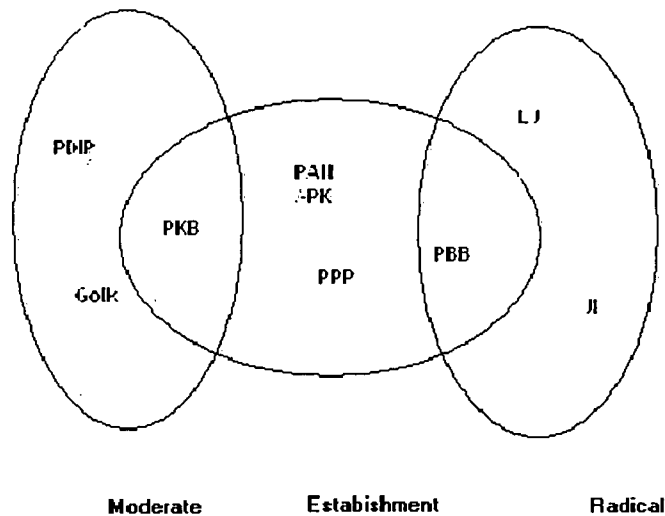
Legend

PDIP – Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle
Golk – Golkar
PKB – National Awakening Party
PAN/PK – National Mandate Party-Justice Party
PBB – Crescent Star Party
LJ – Laskar Jihad
JI – Jemmah Islamiyah

So, which specific Indonesian Islamic political forces fit within **Figure 4's** three

lenses? **(4.3.5.1)** "Moderate Islamism: The Politics of Secularism" incorporates *(i.)* PDI-

P, *(ii.)* Golkar, and *(iii.)* PKB **(4.3.5.2)** "Establishment Islamism: The Politics of

Pragmatism or Opportunism?" covers *(iv.)* PAN/PK, *(v.)* PPP, and *(vi.)* PBB. Finally,

(4.3.5.3) "Radical Islamism: The Politics of Extremism, *Jihad*, and Terrorism"

encompasses *(vii.)* FKAWJ/*Laskar Jihad* and *(viii.)* JI/*Jemmah Islamiyah*

Network/Indonesian *Al Qaeda.*

4.3.5.1. Moderate Islamism: The Politics of Secularism

It has not often been recognized that an Islamic politics could be practiced in a

moderate form that allows and in fact embraces the principles of secularism. In

Indonesia, this brand of politics is the most visible and arguably most influential type of

Islamic politics on the contemporary political stage today. Moderate Islamism in

Indonesia, in this respect, reflects the concerns and perspectives of Liberal Islam, as

outlined earlier in this work. Moderate Islamism's embrace of liberalism in an Islamic

context in Indonesia is still not expansive, but the themes of religious tolerance, political

pluralism, and safeguarding the rights of women and minorities are now beginning to

be voiced with greater frequency from within moderate Islamism. Together, the three

major forces of moderate Islamism, the *PDI-P* (Indonesian Democratic Party of

Struggle), *Golkar* (the former Soeharto New Order ruling party vehicle), and the *PKB*

(National Awakening Party) achieved an almost colossal 69% share of the vote in the

June 1999 elections and they control close to 325 of 500 seats in Indonesia's

parliament.[90] All three of Indonesia's post-Soeharto presidents have come from these

three parties: Habibie of Golkar, Wahid of the PKB, and Megawati of the PDI-P.

However, controversies over political leadership and personality have served to divide

and hamper these forces from exerting the political strength concurrent with their

recognized institutional strength in government and parliament. Nevertheless all three

political parties share the same social and religious agenda. The principles of *Pancasila*,

Indonesia's recognized principles of a secular, religiously neutral state, are what bind

Moderate Islamism together, along with a desire to work within the state to protect and

advance this agenda.

(i) PDI-P, Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle

PDI-P is the largest and strongest political party in Indonesia today. The party

received the largest share of the vote in the June 1999 elections and although it was

blocked from the Presidency in October 1999 by political maneuvering, it eventually

achieved this prized goal in August 2001. Its leader and Indonesia's current President is

Megawati Soekarnoputri, daughter of Indonesia's founding President and preeminent

secular nationalist, Soekarno. Megawati spent much of her life as a Jakarta housewife

before she entered politics as a parliamentary representative for the Soeharto-era PDI,

Indonesian Democratic Party, in 1987. PDI-P is a splinter party from the original PDI,

born out of New Order political manipulation in the mid-1990s to topple an

increasingly popular Megawati from her party. Megawati remains an enigma both in

person and in politics. Her basic political passivity and political cautiousness have

worked against her on occasion, namely, when she was blocked from the Presidency in 1999. However, these traits also reveal a dogged streak of persistence and determination that eventually secured the Presidency for Megawati later in August 2001.

Much of what Megawati, and consequently her party, believes is derived directly from her father. Megawati's nationalist credentials are unquestioned in this regard. The PDI-P consequently seeks much of its legitimacy from Indonesia's nationalist legacy of the past. PDI-P's political consciousness is resolutely secular, but that does not make it irrelevant in a consideration of Indonesian Islamic politics. The PDI-P's secular politics are important in the continuum of Indonesian Islamic politics because much of PDI-P's support originates in the Indonesian *Abangan* traditionalist Islamic community, where strict scriptural Islamic orthodoxy is less of a concern than of a general attachment of Islam as an amorphous identity marker. Indonesian *Abangan* adherents, and most nationalists in this respect, would strongly assert their identities as Muslims. However, any role for Islam in public life would be strongly dismissed by most nationalists The party's avowed secularism also allows it to embrace and draw tremendous support from many in Indonesia's minority, primarily Christian communities. Megawati and her PDI-P's strong sense of Indonesian nationalism, infused with a strongly secularist outlook based on the *Pancasila*, is what marks this stream of moderate Islamic politics[91]

(ii) Golkar

Golkar once so dominated Indonesian politics that its victories in the periodic elections held throughout the Soeharto era were often a foregone conclusion. Originally established as an obscure civilian-military cooperative body during the late Soekarno era, Golkar (*Golangan Karya*, Functional Groups) emerged as the perfect ruling party vehicle for the New Order's corporatist agenda. In the New Order conceptualization, politics had to be tightly controlled and mass society deeply depoliticized to further the greater goal of development. In fact, the New Order did not even acknowledge Golkar to be a political party per se; Golkar was simply a collection of societal interests, political and non-political, civilian, and military that truly represented Indonesia. In the practical reality, however, Golkar operated very much as a political party, and once its patron and its supportive regime of Soeharto and his New Order fell, Golkar suffered tremendously. Although Golkar is very much a shadow of its former overwhelming strength in post-Soeharto democratic Indonesia, it retains some influence as a political player, albeit mostly as a secondary one. Taking advantage of its organizational bench strength, and unparalleled New Order era patronage and bureaucratic networks stretching across many of Indonesia's far-flung regions, Golkar finished as the runner-up to the PDI-P in the June 1999 elections, becoming the second largest political party in Indonesia's MPR. Golkar has retained much of the secularist corporatist nationalist character of its New Order days, and sits very much on the *Pancasila*, secularist side of the spectrum. However, Golkar is slightly

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more amenable to the *Sharia,* Islamist perspective, because many of its post-Soeharto leaders, including former President B. J. Habibie and current DPR parliamentary speaker Akbar Tandjung,[92] are seen in a more favorable light by Indonesian Islamism. Golkar's less secularist, *Pancasila* orientation in this respect may be related to the fact that it is increasingly taking on a more regionalist Eastern Indonesia character, where the practice of Islam is slightly more rigid than in the traditional *Abangan* strongholds of Java. The tension in Golkar between staying true to its essentially secularist corporatist nationalist roots, while also appealing to its more *Santri, Sharia* base, is something to watch in the coming years.[93]

(iii) PKB, the National Awakening Party

PKB, the National Awakening Party, is the third component of moderate Islamism today, and is the political party that is the more overtly Islamic than the primarily secularist and religiously neutral PDI-P and Golkar. However, the PKB remains firmly in the camp of moderate Islamic politics. The PKB is essentially the party of Indonesian Islamic traditionalism, and much of its support base derives from the heartland of rural, *Abangan* strongholds of Central and Eastern Java. It is also closely associated with the traditionalist mass socio-religious organization *Nahdlatul Ulama,* and although the two organizations are formally separate, they share many common leaders, organizations, and political agendas. Former President Abdurrahman Wahid served as head of *Nahdlatul Ulama* for many years before he became the chief patron of the PKB during his short time in office. The PKB firmly coexists with

Pancasila, for although it is eager to see a greater public and formal institutional role for Islam in the Indonesian public sphere, it is conscious of the need to appeal to Indonesia's pluralist diversity and to reassure Indonesia's many minorities. The impeachment of Wahid, PKB's major patron, has left the party in limbo now. Deeply unhappy about the unceremonious exit of their leader, PKB members sit in an opposition of sorts, deeply torn by internal divisions, personality conflicts, and much hand-wringing over the circumstances of Wahid's impeachment. The PKB remains deeply estranged from both extreme ends of the spectrum, *Pancasila* and *Sharia*, and this does not bode well for a future accommodation of the two perspectives. The PKB as major representative of the traditionalist *Abangan* community has a long cultural and historical legacy as the vehicle for compromise and moderation.[94]

4.3.5.2. Establishment Islamism: The Politics of Pragmatism or Opportunism?

Establishment Islamism represents both the peak and potential decline of an explicit Islamist practice of politics in Indonesia. The core constituency of establishment Islamism in Indonesia today stretches over the ground of three significant political parties - PAN/PK, PPP, and PBB - that have a major influence on today's Indonesian politics, disproportionate to their level of electoral support and institutional strength in parliament. Establishment Islamism fits nicely within the Political Islam theoretical and cultural-religious agenda, as discussed earlier in this work. The new Vice-President of Indonesia, Hamzah Haz, and the Speaker of the MPR ('People's Consultative Assembly'), Amien Rais, represent the PPP and PAN/PK parties respectively. All three

parties possess a strong and devout following among Indonesia's modernist *Santri* Islamic community, and their social and political agendas make no bones about pursuing the implementation of a *Sharia*, Islamist vision for the future in Indonesia. However, what clearly marks out establishment Islamism is its very mainstream, establishment character. All three components of Establishment Islamism seem content to forge a cordial relationship with the nominally *Pancasila*, secularist, religiously neutral state that is post-independence Indonesia. They participate in electoral politics, enroll in parliament, and occupy some of the highest institutional positions of Indonesia's secularist status quo government. However, the agenda of Establishment Islamism has not consciously moderated itself to incorporate *Pancasila*. On the contrary, for what underlies Establishment Islam's cooperation with the state is pure *realpolitik* or pragmatic decision making. Establishment Islamism seeks to advance its *Sharia* agenda eventually, in a gradualist, reductionist manner of politics that seeks change from within. The danger of course is that the politics of pragmatism soon become the politics of opportunism in which the expression or adoption of an Islamist orientation simply becomes the means to an end for certain unscrupulous politicians to gain power and influence. Indonesian Establishment Islamism's politics of pragmatism have not devolved into the politics of opportunism yet, but the scenario is ever present and worth keeping in mind when trying to get a handle on Establishment Islamism in Indonesia today.[95]

(iv) PAN/PK, The National Mandate Party/Justice Party

PAN/PK, the National Mandate Party and Justice Party, actually exist as two distinct parties, but in reality they work so closely together that they function as essentially one political party. Both parties are relatively new, founded in 1998-99 as creations of the new democratic openness then sweeping post-Soeharto era Indonesia. Their constituency is the young, highly educated, urbanized *Santri*, and devout middle classes that came of age during Soeharto's New Order. They fall most clearly on the *Sharia* end of the spectrum, but both parties try to emphasize something of an open, pluralist character and moderate image The most highly visible Islamist leader associated with PAN/PK is the MPR Speaker, Amien Rais, and these parties essentially serve as convenient vehicles for his political ingenuity and seething personal ambition. Rais is an academic and political scientist, trained in the United States. He came to prominence in Indonesia during the early decade of the 1990s when he chaired the mass socio-religious modernist Islamic organization, *Muhammadiyah*. Rais was once associated with the New Order's ICMI for a time, before he emerged as a prominent leader in the democratic movement that toppled the New Order and Soeharto.[96]

The PAN once served as the darlings of Indonesia's *Reformasi* movement and was predicted by many observers to make a big impact in the 1999 elections The PAN crafted a very Western-orientated political platform that emphasized pluralism and democratic rights, but its lack of organizational strength outside of Indonesia's big cities was a major handicap PAN flopped in the 1999 elections, finishing a distant fifth as

Rais was forced to rethink his political approach and reposition PAN on the political

Islam spectrum from moderate to overtly sectarian.[97] During the run-up to the October

1999 MPR election which decided the presidency, Rais was able to recover his political

influence by being elected the Speaker of MPR, as a result of an alliance of convenience

with Golkar. Realizing that he could not immediately fulfill his long standing personal

ambition of becoming President, Rais forged an alliance of Islamic-based political

parties in the MPR, the so-called "Axis Force" that was able to elect Wahid president.

During the brief Wahid presidency, Rais was frustrated that he was not able to exert a

more lasting and direct influence on the increasingly erratic Wahid. The new Megawati

era again leaves Rais in limbo, as he decides how best to position himself for the

Presidency again in the next elections of 2004. PAN/PK essentially reflects the concerns

and political interests of Rais. They remain officially pluralist, open parties on a

Western model, but the temptation to attract votes and more overt support from a

primarily Indonesian Islamic-based constituency has pushed these parties to take on a

more sectarian character. Rais seems unsure of which approach to take in campaigning

for the presidency: the pluralist democrat, or the sectarian Islamist. PAN/PK to a large

degree exhibits his split personality. Both Rais and his political party base will have to

decide on which approach to take in the future, before they alienate the Indonesian

public at large with their endless indecisive political hedging.[98]

(v) PPP - United Development Party

The PPP (United Development Party) is a reconstituted and reformed party from the New Order era that has adjusted well to the uncertainties of today's Indonesia. As one of the two surviving political parties of the New Order (Golkar being the other survivor), the PPP has defied its bland label to emerge as an effective vehicle for strong Indonesian Islamist sentiment today. The PPP is resolutely Islamist, its party's symbol is framed around the Ka'bah, and *Sharia* is its political *raison-dêtre*. The PPP once struggled as the one Islamic choice during the New Order, subjected to constant interference and political manipulation from the New Order authorities. However, this legacy from the New Order has been a political blessing as the PPP label has been effective in gathering and mobilizing political support under a very familiar party moniker. In this respect, the brand of PPP has served as a convenient all-enveloping umbrella for essentially discredited mainstream New Order era politicians to seek renewal and political power via Islam and *Sharia* The PPP has also gained renewed credibility in Indonesia's post-Soeharto *Reformasi* era by its embrace of a pro-democracy, anti-military agenda. During the Habibie and Wahid eras, the PPP strongly supported the introduction of new democracy laws and was quite visible in the MPR opposing measures to protect the military from accounting for its human rights abuses.

The leader of the PPP and Indonesia's current Vice-President Hamzah Haz represents the ascendancy of the PPP in Indonesia's *Reformasi* period. Haz, who hails from Kalimantan, spent much of the New Order, some twenty odd years, as an

ordinary parliamentarian. He only came to prominence post-Soeharto, when he was elevated to the interim cabinet of Soeharto's successor Habibie. He used this cabinet position to gain leadership control of the PPP in 1998-99. After a brief spell in Wahid's cabinet, he found himself as the perfect compromise candidate during the August 2001 MPR Session, and he was elected to the Vice-Presidency.[99] Haz's election to the symbolically important, but politically powerless post of Vice-President, leaves the PPP in a strategically significant position to contest for power in a future Indonesian national election. In this respect, the post of Vice-President could be useful in creating some national visibility and name recognition for Haz and the PPP. The Vice-Presidency also gives Haz and the PPP some flexibility in operating within the government. The post of Vice-President is politically powerless, and this gives the PPP wide latitude to chart an independent course in government, in effect acting as a type of opposition party.[100] The relationship between Megawati's PDI-P and the PPP is already very ambivalent, more a marriage of political convenience than a true political partnership. Haz already has attempted to separate himself from the government and establish his own Islamic-centric power base by courting some of the more radical leaders of the Indonesian Islamist movement. Whether Haz can carefully establish his own political identity and political constituency, while at the same time appearing to be loyal to the government and his erstwhile coalition colleagues, is the major challenge that he faces in the future. The larger dilemma for the PPP, however, is how much of its embrace of the mainstream New Order establishment past will eventually constrict its

ability to offer a fresh beginning for Indonesian Islamism, free of the taint and legacy of

the Soeharto era.[101]

(vi) PBB, The Crescent Star Party

The PBB (The Crescent Star Party) is the most overtly dedicated Islamist party

and most uncompromisingly hard-line party on the mainstream contemporary

Indonesian Islamism spectrum. Founded in 1998, it consciously conceives of itself as

the heir to the old Islamist tradition of the *Masyumi* party.[102] The *Sharia* informs its

social and political character to a greater degree than the other components of

Indonesian establishment Islamism. Many of its key supporters and grassroots come

from the very hard-line *Santri* Islam community and from some organizations known to

have been close to ICMI and Soeharto in the final years of the New Order.[103] The PBB is

very influential in some of Jakarta's elite and prosperous commercial circles, which

increasingly voice support for a hard-line form of political Islam that is found elsewhere

in the contemporary Islamic world. The PBB frequently advocates an alternative

Islamist form of government for Indonesia that is firmly anchored in the *Sharia*. Many

of its prominent leaders have been openly contemptuous of Megawati as Indonesia's

president and of most nationalist, moderate secularist parties in general. In this respect,

the PBB has a more difficult time playing the waiting and gradualist game than its

establishment Islamism colleagues. The PBB cooperates with the *Pancasila* and has

entered several coalition government arrangements, but this has been a rather uneasy

and ambivalent undertaking. The leader of the PBB and Indonesia's Justice Minister is

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Yusril Izha Mahendra, a former Soeharto speechwriter and noted legal scholar. Yusril has had a difficult time balancing the conflicting internal dynamics of the party. As a cabinet minister, Yusril is sworn to hold up the secularist, *Pancasila* nature of the Indonesian state, and this has not sat well with some of the more devout supporters of the PBB who want no truck with *Pancasila*. The PBB is in a highly influential and strategic position to advance the *Sharia* agenda in the long term, but whether it can reconcile this strategy with its own competing internal dynamic is certainly open to question.[104]

4.3.5.3. Radical Islamism: The Politics of Extremism, Jihad, and Terrorism?

Radical Islamism represents the most extreme and desperate end of the spectrum in contemporary Indonesian Islamic politics It is a form of Political Islam, as earlier outlined in the theoretical discussion of this essay, but it departs from its Establishment Islamist colleagues in its stridency and willingness to confront and challenge the forces of the secularist establishment almost immediately and with violence The " Total Islamic Order," the "Islamic State," and the *Sharia* are superficially what concern the forces of Radical Indonesian Islamism, but the *means* of how to advance this vaguely articulated agenda has steadily become the obsession of Radical Indonesian Islamism. The fixation on the *Jihad* ethic and a new more dangerous flirtation with terrorism have steadily become the major means, the collective action of Radical Indonesian Islamism in recent months These means that Radical Islamism employ go far beyond what most mainstream Indonesian Islamism, be it Moderate or Establishment, is willing to even

consider. In this light, Radical Islamism seek s no cooperation or accommodation with the *Pancasila*, secularist state. It is unremittingly hostile to the state and is not afraid to seek a confrontation (*Jihad*, terrorism in the most extreme cases) if it feels its interests of Islam or the larger community are at stake. Seizing the state, or seizing political power to advance a social agenda from the theoretical basis of Islamism, is not a motivation for Radical Indonesian Islamism. Instead, vague notions of a utopian like Islamist future, once the state is broken, are what fuel the imagination of most Radical Indonesian Islamism.[105]

The collapse of the Soeharto government in 1998 and Indonesia's subsequent democratic transition left an opening and ample opportunity for various assorted hard-line Islamist movements to organize and mobilize politically. However, the major difficulty in studying these types of movements has been their sheer numbers and diversity from well-organized established political parties to informal collections of lobby groups associated in one form or the other with Islam. Although these movements often receive the most press attention and concern from the international community, they constitute a very tiny minority that does not accurately reflect on the great depth and practice of contemporary Indonesian Islamic politics. However, Radical Indonesian Islamism's peripheral status in the mainstream of Indonesian Islamic politics has contributed to fueling an increasing radicalism and employing ever more unconventional hard-line tactics. The line between political movement and organized criminal enterprise is also something that is often blurred in Radical

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Indonesian Islamism. Some of the more visible manifestations of Radical Islamism in Indonesia and in the larger Southeast Asian region have been known to support their organizations through illicit criminality: kidnapping, robbery, extortion and the like.[106] Radical Islamism is the dystopia of contemporary Indonesian Islamic politics. *Laskar Jihad* and *Jemmah Islamiyah* are some of the most visible and representative examples of this stream of Indonesian Islamic politics.

(vii) FKAWJ/Laskar Jihad

The FKAWJ (Communication Forum of the Followers of the Sunna, and the Community) is the radical umbrella organization that fronts the notorious *Laskar Jihad* paramilitary that is perhaps the most visible manifestation of Radical Islamism in Indonesia today.[107] Perhaps *Laskar Jihad's* leader, Jaffar Umar Thalib, can serve as some sort of example of some of the major themes associated with Radical Indonesian Islamism. Thalib primarily came to prominence in Indonesia and abroad because of the activities of his *Laskar Jihad* organization, which has been accused of mounting a *Jihad* in the Moluccas Islands, fermenting inter-communal violence and unnecessary loss of life. In a recent profile in *New York Times Magazine,* Thalib was labeled "arguably the most feared Islamic militant in the most populous Muslim nation on Earth and who would soon be mentioned in the same breath of Osama bin Laden."[108] Thalib's background does not match his notoriety. He comes from an Indonesian Arab family, and was the son of a prominent *Santri,* religious teacher and independence era freedom fighter. To some extent, Thalib's early years were a muddle, several attempts at schooling in

Jakarta and Pakistan before a stint in Afghanistan waging *Jihad* against Soviet and Communist forces. His experience in Afghanistan was a formative experience. He returned to early 1990s Indonesia in obscurity, quietly building his hard-line organization before the opportunity presented itself for growth and expansion.

The outbreak of inter-communal violence and Muslim-Christian sectarianism in Eastern Indonesia's Maluku province beginning in early 1999 provided the perfect opportunity for Radical Indonesian Islamism to flex its muscles.[109] The conflict had originally erupted locally as a provincial eruption, but quickly began to take on national and sectarian religious dimensions Demands for direct intervention on the part of many Indonesian Muslims outside Maluku became widely voiced in Indonesia by early 2000, and several particularly unscrupulous and radical Indonesian Islamist organizations, led by *Laskar Jihad*, were able to use these demands to recruit and organize an armed intervention, a *Jihad* on the part of Indonesia's Muslims in Maluku. Beginning in the early months of 2000, with the quiet acquiesce if not active support of the local authorities, *Laskar Jihad* was able to organize openly, recruiting young Javanese youth and mounting paramilitary training camps. By April 2000, *Laskar Jihad* was openly preparing to leave Java and embark to Maluku for their armed intervention. Finally, 3,000 *Laskar Jihad* paramilitaries left Java in April 2000. By early May 2000, they had arrived on the scene and had begun mounting very organized and effective armed attacks on local Maluku Christians The conflict in Maluku had now grown out of a

local disturbance into a national conflict, with serious implications and consequences for Muslim-Christian relations and Indonesia's continued geopolitical stability.

Laskar Jihad represents the danger of the Radical Indonesian Islamism movement. It certainly represents a minority and fringe opinion on the Indonesian Islamic politics spectrum. But the means it employs, namely armed confrontation and the *Jihad* ethic, perfectly exploits the vacuum of post-Soeharto Indonesia in terms of a viable and working political and legal institutional framework. In a sense, the phenomenon of Laskar *Jihad* may be perceived as simply a problem of law and order, rather than as a much-realized armed rebellion movement that could eventually topple the secularist Indonesian state. Nevertheless, *Laskar Jihad* is the most prominent and visible manifestation of radical Indonesian Islamism today. The funding muscle behind *Laskar Jihad* remains very murky at this point, and some observers have speculated that the organization received much of its money from dissident and radical elements in the Indonesian political and business community close to the late Soeharto regime. The reasoning goes that these elements have seen fit to use *Laskar Jihad* to ferment chaos and violence, in order to destabilize Indonesia's new democracy and facilitate a return to New Order style authoritarianism. Speculation that a bigger picture lurked around *Laskar Jihad* seemed to have been confirmed when it was mysteriously announced that *Laskar Jihad* was disbanding and withdrawing all of its paramilitary combatants from Maluku province in mid October 2002.[110] The speculation ran that *Laskar Jihad* had served its purpose for the time being, and its patrons had decided that it needed to be

shut down. All and all, it was a rather strange and apparently anti-climatic ending to one of the more striking stories in Indonesian Islamic politics.

(vii) Jemmah Islamiyah – The Ngruki Network: Al Qaeda in Indonesia?

The terrorist attacks of September 11 suddenly focused the world's spotlight again on the forces of global radical Islamism, and in particular, Osama bin Laden's underground terrorist *Al Qaeda* network. Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim country, understandably emerged as a focal point for one area of possible *Al Qaeda* activity. The diffuse nature of the Indonesian archipelago, combined with the weakening and fragile post-Soeharto Indonesian state, would seem to offer many opportunities for *Al Qaeda* to regroup and rearm from Afghanistan. Following the September 11 attacks, the American and other Western governments frequently warned the Indonesian authorities of the potential *Al Qaeda* threat from within the archipelago's borders. Indonesian officials seemed to shrug the advice off, with tragic consequences. On October 12, 2002, a series of bombs exploded outside several nightclubs in the heart of the central tourist district of Kuta, in Bali. Immediate attention turned to *Al Qaeda* and its alleged satellite branch office in Indonesia, *Jemmah Islamiyah*, as those responsible for the bombings.[111]

Jemmah Islamiyah is perhaps the most notorious and secretive branch of Radical Indonesian Islamism. The group's origins lie in the repression of the Soeharto New Order years when all expression of open dissent, especially of the openly Islamic variety, was treated harshly by the New Order's authorities. Many intelligence reports

pinpoint JI's founding to 1976, but most of its current character is said to have taken shape in the mid-1990s, at the instigation of external *Al Qaeda* agents.[112] In any case, JI's most public face and spiritual leader is Abu Bakar Bashir, a long-time radical Islamist activist and preacher who came to prominence by running a religious boarding school in Solo, Central Java. Bashir spent several years in New Order prisons as the price for his dissent before he fled to exile in Malaysia. He returned to Indonesia following the fall of Soeharto, to attend to his boarding school, and some say, also to develop and extend the reach of his underground radical Islamist network, *Jemmah Islamiyah*.[113] Following the Bali bombings, there has been an inordinate amount of speculation surrounding JI and its possible implication in terrorist activities. JI's goals are unclear at this point. The motive most commonly linked to JI seems to be its desire to construct a vast Supra-Islamic state, a new Southeast Asian Caliphate, stretching across much of the Muslim majority areas of the region – from Southern Thailand to the Southern Philippines to Malaysia, and to Indonesia. JI's links to *Al Qaeda* seem tenuous at this point, but further investigation by local Indonesian law enforcement and Western intelligence agencies may yet shed light on this intricate connection, to say the least. A prominent leader of JI named Nurjaman Riduan Isamuddin, alias Hambali, is alleged to be a high-ranking operative of *Al Qaeda* and said to be the mastermind of the Bali bombings and reputedly other terrorist activities throughout Indonesia.[114]

It remains beyond the scope of this work to investigate and chronicle the JI movement. Suffice it to say, the contemporary and fluid dynamics of the situation

make a clear and final assessment of the movement a near impossibility now. Most

observers certainly should recognize that this stream of Indonesian Islamic politics

exists and is a legitimate political concern for Indonesia and global security at large.

However, JI's influence and role in the larger social movement dynamics of Indonesian

Islamic politics, which is of primary concern to this work, is largely perfunctory. JI does

not court or even engage the mainstream of Indonesian Islamic politics In fact, it seeks

to destroy Indonesia outright and replace it with some sort of mythical Southeast Asian

Caliphate. The means it allegedly employs – terrorism - is condemned by all other

streams of Indonesian Islamic politics from mainstream moderate to hard-line Islamist.

5. Analysis: Reflecting on the Theory of Contemporary Indonesian Islamism

This thesis began with the stated intention, and hypothesis, of perceiving the

course of contemporary Indonesian Islamic politics through three theoretical

foundations The first foundation involved a consideration of perspectives related to

the growing emergence of religiosity and so-called "fundamentalist" movements in the

developing world. John Esposito and several other noted observers have commented

that the strength of these religious movements in these developing world settings has

often coincided with the ongoing processes of modernization and associated pressures

of secularization. The second theoretical theme presented earlier in this thesis looked at

the specific relationship between Islam and politics. Olivier Roy has drawn the most

convincing portrait of one of the more well-known streams of Islamic politics, Political

Islam, which is very influential in much of the contemporary Islamic world. However, Charles Kurzman has helped to draw a more nuanced and complex picture of the shape of Islamic politics by presenting some themes associated with an alternative paradigm of Islamic politics, Liberal Islam. Finally, the third theoretical foundation presented earlier in this thesis tried to link modernization and Islamic politics together by presenting theoretical material related to the dynamics of social movements, collective action and politics. The work of Sydney Tarrow and his *Power in Movement* was covered in order to situate Islamic politics within a broader perspective, taking into account its own internal movement dynamics and its interaction with other external actors, most notably the state. After this lengthy empirical examination of Indonesian Islamism through historical, post-independence, and contemporary periods, the question arises as to how the theory reflects on the empirical record?

5.1. Indonesia, Islamism, and Modernization

Much of this thesis' earlier theoretical explorations were spent on the wider issues of modernization, secularization, and religiosity in the developing world. Esposito has written much about the enigmatic historical role that religion played in nation-building for many of the newly independent nations of the Islamic world.[115] Post-independence political leaderships were often faced with pursuing deeply incompatible visions of either a secular state or an Islamic state, with little room for maneuvering. The case of Indonesia as the world's most populous Muslim nation,

rapidly undergoing its own process of modernization over the last five decades, is intimately concerned with these historical and cultural issues.

Religion was a delicate issue for most post-colonial leaders, and this was certainly the case in Indonesia. Islam emerged as one of the most important and sustained cultural touchstones of pre-colonial Indonesia, branching into both a traditionalist *Abangan* and modernist *Santri* practice that reflected on the intrinsic dynamism and pluralism of the social and cultural practice of Islam in Indonesia. Islam continued to play an important part in Indonesian society in the following years by challenging Dutch colonialism, rallying resistance to foreign intervention while framing new indigenous meanings and markings of a distinct and indigenous Indonesian identity of Islam. The leaders of Indonesia's mostly secularist nationalist revolution attempted to by-pass Islam, but Indonesian Islam rallied late in the game to express its social and cultural vision for an independent Indonesia that had to be taken seriously by the nationalist establishment.

Indonesian Islamists struggled in the convening years of the Soekarno and Soeharto regimes to have a voice and to rally support for their Islamic agenda, but both governments were devastatingly effective in handicapping Islamism, as with any type of a threat or effective socio-political force challenging the secularist, authoritarian status quo. The Soeharto New Order period of Indonesia also marked a turning point for Indonesia, as the full fruits of the regime's modernization and development focus had significant repercussions for religion and its place within Indonesian society. Islam

did not fade in cultural and social importance in Indonesia during these years of rapid

modernization and economic boom, as the secularist development model had

predicted. Rather, Islam gained new strength and vitality during this time that served

to buttress Indonesian society in the face of the dislocations brought about by rapid

modernization. The devastating impact of the Asian Economic Crisis of 1997 on

Indonesia represents the pitfalls of modernization and its seemingly inevitable

dislocations. Overnight, Indonesia's three-decade development success story

evaporated into thin air. Soeharto and his New Order collapsed after three decades of

unchallenged supremacy, and Indonesia was left without political and economic

stability. The contemporary picture of Islam in post-New Order Indonesia confirms the

continued strong social and political sway of Islam for most Indonesians. The June 1999

elections witnessed the rise of a new and more aggressive Islamic politics that for the

first time was ready to challenge the secularist hegemony of the Indonesian state

openly. Most discussions of contemporary Indonesia almost inevitably boil down to

the fact that it is the world's most populous Muslim nation, and that it has to be

watched very closely now, in the context of 9/11, the "War on Terrorism," and so on.

Islam is pervasive in Indonesia today in politics, culture, and society. It is a socio-

political force that must be taken seriously now.

5.2. Indonesia, Islam, and Politics

A consideration of Islamic politics itself is worthy of a lengthy treatise because of

its immense complexity and subtle nuances. "Islamic Politics" is certainly not a

monolithic term and the accumulated empirical evidence of the character of Islam in Indonesian politics presented earlier in this thesis is illustrative of the great dynamism and range of Islamic politics.[116] The two dominant themes of Islamic politics, Political Islam and Liberal Islam, weave themselves throughout the fabric of both historical and contemporary Indonesian Islamism. Both Political Islam and Liberal Islam shape two distinct visions of Indonesia, pivoted on and framed around the intensely cultural and symbolic meanings of *Sharia* and *Pancasila*. These contrasting visions have served to motivate and bind an important Islamist-orientated constituency in the Indonesian body politic.

Political Islam is a vision of Islam, politics, and society that finds most favor among those Indonesian Muslims who are drawn primarily to the *Sharia* perspective. As Roy has written, Political Islam is a vision that sees no distinction between religion and politics. *Sharia* is symbolic of Political Islam's dedicated ethos: achieving a synthesis of religion and public life that seeks to reconcile today's modernity with the past historical glories of Islamic culture and civilization. As the empirical evidence presented earlier in this thesis illustrates, Political Islam's historical roots in Indonesia have now come to the forefront of contemporary Indonesian politics. Currents of both Establishment Indonesian Islamism and Radical Indonesian Islamism today either covertly or overtly support Political Islam's implementation.

Liberal Islam is a vision of Islam, politics, and society that finds most favor among those Indonesian Muslims who are drawn primarily to the *Pancasila* perspective.

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Kurzman has written that Liberal Islam departs from its Political Islam counterpart by offering solutions and ideas that emphasize a decidedly liberal direction. Liberal Islam rejects the focus on the union of religion and politics, and instead seeks to implement perspectives that seek religious tolerance and pluralism, political freedoms and private religious rights; it also fights to safeguard the rights of women and minorities. As the previous empirical evidence has pointed out, Liberal Islam is a current that is important to consider in contemporary Indonesian politics Liberal Islam embraces many of the streams of Moderate Indonesian Islamism that remain dominant in Indonesian public life today. Professing an affinity for the politics of secularism, many in the Moderate Indonesian Islamist camp have worked to mitigate the influence of Political Islam.

5.3. Indonesia, Islam, and Social Movements

The contemporary salience of Islamic politics in the Indonesian state and its society has much to say about the relationship of religion and politics on the contemporary global political landscape, but it can also tell us quite a bit about how social movements arise out of a specific cultural and historical context. Sydney Tarrow's Power *in Movement* has provided a useful theoretical approach for trying to order and understand the motivations and dynamics of various Islamic actors and groups in the still opaque politics of post-Soeharto Indonesia. Tarrow defines a social movement as "*collective challenges by people with common purposes and solidarity in sustained interaction with elites, opponents and authorities.*"[117] It is doubtful that Tarrow's condition, that a social movement contain "common purpose and solidarity," is

satisfied in Indonesia. The "Islamic social movement" is so fragmented, as has been shown, that one could say that more than one movement exists, albeit under the thinly stretched awning and rubric of Islamic politics. However, it is clear that Islamic politics are not monolithic. The contemporary context of Indonesia's post-Soeharto political environment fits Tarrow's notion of the importance of a political opportunity structure serving as a catalyst for the resurgence of a social movement. Finally, Tarrow's approach directs the researcher to investigate how social movements operate within this new political opportunity structure. Tarrow's work involves a consideration of the strategic choices available to social movements in dealings with external actors, most notably the state. The choice of strategy for social movements inevitably falls to two clear choices: seeking cooperation with the state, or seeking confrontation with the state. However, as the empirical evidence presented earlier in this thesis illustrated, the relationship between the state and social movements in the Indonesian context is not as straightforward as Tarrow's theoretical conceptualizations. The various Islamist movements each hold confrontational or cooperative inclinations, but the place of the state in the Indonesian context is more complicated and nuanced.

Maintaining some sort of common purpose and coherence is integral to *Power in Movement*'s definition of an effective social movement. Tarrow emphasizes that having a shared set of values, framed meanings, common symbols, and common enemies would obviously help bind a social movement together and help it initiate and sustain its collective action. Having some sort of common purpose and solidarity on a

consistent basis, however, is not something that characterizes contemporary Indonesian Islamist politics, as the empirical and descriptive data outlined earlier has painfully charted. The various factions within Indonesian Islamism are divided against each other, and this does not bode well for the present and future success of a unified, single movement. Many of these divisions are long standing and go right back to the very origins of the introduction of Islam to the archipelago and its splintering into traditionalist *Abangan* and modernist *Santri* camps. This cleavage is not necessarily fatal to Islamism as a single, united contemporary social movement, though. *Abangan* Muslims and *Santri* Muslims still profess a common solidarity to Islam, and social movements have been known to encompass a large diversity of belief, practice, and experience.

The most important internal fracture of contemporary Indonesian Islamist politics revolves around the *Pancasila* (Secularist) and *Sharia* (Islamist) axes which call into question the very social agenda that Islamism seeks to enact through collective action. The social agendas of the various competing contemporary Indonesian Islamisms, whether they be derived from a religiously neutral *Pancasila* perspective or an overtly Islamist *Sharia* perspective, are an incoherent mess. The *Pancasila* seems to be the perspective that finds most favor in contemporary Indonesian politics. However, this consensus is derived from the essentially secularist parties of PDI-P and Golkar that would object to their classification on any religious politics spectrum. Putting aside a discussion of moderate and secular Islamic politics in Indonesia for the moment, the

divisions encompassing establishment Islamism and radical Islamism also undermine Islamic politics in Indonesia as a viable and coherent social movement. Establishment Islamism, as represented by the figures of Haz and Rais, holds many influential and strategic leadership positions in government from which potentially to advance an overt Islamist *Sharia*- styled agenda for Indonesia's future, but the new aggressive and uncompromising voices of Radical Islamism now threaten to overshadow establishment Islamism and make it irrelevant. The radical Islamist agenda that such forces as *Laskar Jihad* and *Jemmah Islamiyah* advocate may make a big splash domestically and internationally, but ultimately it is an agenda and strategy that will lead nowhere. The international external political environment that exists presently, i.e. the "War on Terrorism," will certainly not tolerate any establishment of a radical Islamist regime in Indonesia, and Radical Islamism's inevitable failure could discredit any practice of Islamist politics, be they Moderate or Establishment Islamism. Certainly, most overtly Islamist movements have tied their political and ideological fortunes to the *Sharia*, but the meanings that underlie the *Sharia* are also contested and open to question. Political Islam as represented by the forces of Establishment and Radical Islamism would seek the imposition of the *Sharia* in a very uncompromising manner, seeking direct inspiration from the original texts and legal-historical legacy of Islam. Liberal Islam, as represented by the forces of moderate Islam, would minimize the use of *Sharia* to, for example, minor religious courts, or only consider the Islamic

corpus through a liberal lens. Therefore, contemporary Indonesian Islamic politics appears to be a much-fractured affair.

The theoretical material related in Tarrow's *Power in Movement* emphasizes the singular importance of changing political opportunities for social movements. New opportunities provide both the incentive, and most importantly the means, for a social movement to rise to the occasion, challenge the prevailing establishment, and eventually implement a shared and collective agenda. Indonesia's recent history certainly did not offer any opportunities for Islamism to emerge as an effective and unified social movement. The repression of Islam by Dutch colonialists and by the post-independence Indonesian successor regimes of Soekarno and Soeharto ensured that Islam would remain strictly marginal to the mainstream political currents of the time. However, contemporary democratic Indonesia is an entirely different proposition. The authoritarian artifice that Soeharto and his predecessors built is fast receding. Democratic Indonesia is increasingly politically unstable and socially fluid as whole hosts of governments led by Habibie to Wahid to Megawati continue to fall. Traditional political leaders and elites have been dislodged from their comfortable perches and are rather unsettled. A new political dynamic is developing in contemporary Indonesia, and old and new alliances are fracturing or forming on a daily basis. It is said that politics abhors a vacuum, and the various Islamist movements stretching from moderate to establishment to radical have emerged as significant contenders in this contemporary context. So, Indonesia today presents an enormous

opportunity for the various streams of Indonesian Islamism finally to speak up and make a challenge for power. It also represents an enormous challenge as well for these assorted Islamist movements.

The strategic choices that social movements take within this political opportunity structure are Tarrow's final theoretical contribution to this thesis. Considerations of strategy for a social movement flow out of Tarrow's notion of "movement outcomes" in *Power in Movement.* One of the most important dimensions of initiating and sustaining collective action involves a prolonged interaction and balancing act with external actors, most notably the state. Tarrow judges that the ultimate success and failure of such a social movement largely depends on how deftly social movements manage and develop this important relationship. However, as the empirical evidence presented earlier in this thesis illustrates, the relationship between the state and the various Islamist social movements in Indonesia is not as clear cut as Tarrow's theoretical matrix likes to paint. Indonesian Islamist movements act both from within the government/ state, and outside of it, to fight to implement an Islamist agenda. However, the state is not a neutral actor in this process. The state authorities in earlier historical and post-independence contexts worked to repress the forces of Indonesian Islamism outright In recent years, state actors have worked to co-opt and integrate the various forces of Indonesian Islamism into the political mainstream. During this process, many Islamist movements have become compromised, their agendas diluted by the attraction of political power and prestige.

The empirical data presented earlier of some of the landscape of contemporary Islamic politics reveal a decided emphasis on the strategy of cooperation with the state. Islamic politics in Indonesia today is intensely a mainstream affair. Indonesian Islamist factions, which may harbor a secret agenda to seize control of the state through armed rebellion or a *Jihad*, are a noisy but very tiny minority. Largely, Islamist movements in Indonesia work within the political mainstream and prevailing establishment to enact their social agendas. The benefits of such an accommodationist strategy in driving the gradualist, or creeping Islamization of Indonesian state and society, can be readily apparent to any keen observer. The Islamist political agenda and its political rhetoric are now familiar territory in Indonesian politics, and this environment bodes well for the success of the Islamist agenda in Indonesia. Islamist ideas are not radical propositions in Indonesia anymore and this may be a reflection of the future amenability of Indonesian Muslims to Islamist cultural and political conceptualizations.

However, accommodation with the state brings with it the great potential of being compromised by the state. In this respect, Islamist movements, and their leaders in particular, have fallen into this trap to a large degree. Islamist movements and political parties have now occupied the highest and most strategic positions in Indonesia's assorted post-Soeharto governments. Indonesia, however, remains firmly a *Pancasila*, religiously neutral, state for the time being and in the near future. The form and the rhetoric of Islamism remains, but the content and the agenda have become diluted beyond original recognition. Have these Indonesian Islamist movements really

accomplished anything or stayed true to their agendas? There is often an unfortunate tendency for the politics of pragmatism as evidenced by the cooperative, gradualist approach to transform itself into the politics of opportunism. Some of Indonesian Islamism's most prominent leaders would seem to fall into this category. The Islamist agenda simply becomes a means to an end, a path to power and influence for these leaders. Amien Rais and Hamzah Haz typify the approach of much of contemporary, predominately establishment-styled Indonesian Islamism. Both sit very comfortably at the apex of the secular Indonesian nation-state as MPR Speaker and Vice-President, yet the Islamist agenda remains stalled. If Haz and Rais did not both claim the banner of Islam, it would be exceedingly difficult to distinguish them from secularist politicians. In this respect, both secularist politicians and self-styled Islamist politicians engage in political power plays and maneuvering, and accumulate patronage for supporters and friends in Indonesia today.

5.4. The Evaluation: Seeking a Verdict on Contemporary Indonesian Islamism?

This thesis first sought to contextualize Indonesian Islamism within the larger context of the interaction between modernization and religiosity, and the specific relationship between Islam and politics. Indonesian Islamism was then framed through the eyes of a social movement. The weighted evidence accumulated through a consideration of Islam in historical, post-independence, and finally contemporary contexts seems to confirm the validity of such approaches. The historical and contemporary setting of Indonesia indicates that religion is often compatible with

modernization. The great diversity of the practice of Islamic politics in Indonesia proves that Islamic politics is a complex and nuanced phenomenon that defies easy labels and stereotypes of radicalism, terrorism, and *Jihad*. However, the course of Indonesian Islamic politics through past and contemporary contexts indicates that there are many divisions within Indonesian Islamism. Contemporary Indonesian Islamism has proven to being organized and mobilized into various socio-political movements, giving visibility to some sort of a religiously-orientated agenda. But Indonesian Islamism has encountered serious difficulties of sustaining this collective action because of internal divisions These internal divisions have led to a failure to implement a long-term, concrete and coherent Islamist-styled agenda. The various movements within Indonesian Islamism will only solve this dilemma in the long term by adeptly managing the dynamic of cooperation and confrontation with the state, while also resolving their own internal dynamics and achieving some modicum of common purpose and solidarity.

6. Conclusion; Islam, Politics, and Indonesia: A Future?

I want to end this thesis by returning for a moment to where we began, namely that late September day in Jakarta when 1,000 odd Muslim demonstrators gathered outside the American embassy to express their disapproval of America, or the West in general The demonstrators stood outside the gates of the embassy compound, burned American flags and an effigy of President George W. Bush, while proclaiming a desire

to embark on an immediate *Jihad* if the Americans struck in Afghanistan. The question raised was whether this demonstration truly represented the dynamics of Indonesian Islamic politics. There is no decisive answer at this point.

The sentiment of *Jihad* and of confrontational, militant hostility against the prevailing establishment is certainly held by only a minority, and it has a marginal position in Indonesia today. Anti-Americanism is more prevalent in Indonesia today, but it is more tied to Indonesian nationalism than Islam. However, the demonstration mentioned above also represents the mobilizing and symbolic power of an Islamist-derived agenda in gaining political visibility and contending for power and influence in the social and political vacuum of contemporary Indonesia. If Islamic politics were not an effective and contending social movement, we would not be giving it all this attention and scholarly examination. Of course, the dilemma of contemporary Indonesian Islamism also presents itself in this demonstration as well. The demonstrators were able to tap into a very powerful sentiment of religiosity, or an attachment felt to Islam in Indonesian society, and to launch a form of collective action - the demonstration. However, no one was listening to the *Jihadis* or demonstrators when the bombs started to fall on Afghanistan, and Indonesia's streets remained relatively tranquil. This one demonstration and other means of collective action have regained a new visibility for Indonesian Islamism on the contemporary political and social stage; however, it is not clear that Islamists will be able to employ this strategy successfully to achieve long-term political change for Indonesian society.

So where does contemporary Indonesian Islamism go from here? This is a question that can give rise to an inordinate amount of crystal ball gazing, or any number of far-fetched and unlikely scenarios. It must be said that the future of Indonesian Islamism has not been decided yet. Much will depend on the various factions of Indonesian Islamism itself, and their ability to manage both external strategy and achieve some manner of internal unity. Much will also depend on how the state reacts to Islamic demands. Contemporary Indonesia represents both an immense opportunity and a difficult challenge for Indonesian Islamists. Such an opportunity does not materialize every day for Islam, as the long cultural and historical record of Indonesia has shown. Indonesian Islamism needs to respond presently, or it risks facing another long spell as a marginal and weak social movement.

GLOSSARY

Abangan: Nominal, or traditionalist Indonesian Muslim

Golkar: Functional Groups, ruling political party of Soeharto

ICMI: Association of Indonesian Islamic Intellectuals, late Soeharto-era Islamist group

IMF: International Monetary Fund

Jakarta Charter/1945 Constitution: Dropped amendment to Indonesia's constitution, emphasizing the duty of Muslims to adhere to Islamic law

Jemmah Islamiyah: Radical Islamist group, allegedly linked to terrorism and Osama bin laden and *Al Qaeda*

Hadith: Islamic term, encompassing Prophetic traditions, i.e. the sayings and teachings directly attributed to the Prophet Muhammed

Hiz'bullah: Indonesian Islamic paramilitary organization during the Japanese occupation years

Kafir: Arabic term, literally meaning Non-Believer, Infidel, i.e. Non-Muslim

Old Order-Guided Democracy: Referring to the post-independence era of Indonesia under Soekarno (c.1945-65)

Laskar Jihad: Radical Islamist para-military organization, infamous for involvement in sectarian violence in Eastern Indonesia

Masyumi: Important post-war Indonesian Islamic political party, banned by the government in 1960

MPR: People's Consultative Assembly, highest constitutional legislative body in Indonesia

Muhammadiyah: Long standing socio-religious organization representing the modernist Indonesian Islamic community

Nahdlatul Ulama: Long standing socio-religious organization representing the traditionalist Indonesian Islamic community

Nasakom: Nationalism, Religion, Communism, Soekarno's governing ideology for post-independence Indonesia

New Order: Referring to period of Indonesia under Soeharto (c.1966-98)

PAN/PK: National Mandate Party/Justice Party

PBB: Crescent Star Party

PDI_P: Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle

PKB: National Awakening Party

PPP: United Development Party

Pancasila: The Five Principles official ideology of the Indonesian secular state outlining "A Belief in One God," nationalism, democracy, internationalism, social justice. See Guided Democracy-Old Order entry

Poros Tengah: Axis Force, informal alliance of Islamic -based parties in the 1999 elections

Reformasi: Reform, generally referring to the pro-democracy movement that toppled Soeharto in 1998

Santri: Devout, or modernist Indonesian Muslims

Sharia: Islamic law

Tauhid: The theological basis of Islam, emphasizing the singular uniqueness of one God

TNI/ABRI: The Indonesian Military

Ummat: Arabic term, generally referring to the world-wide Muslim community

ENDNOTES

[1] *BBC News Online*, "Anti-US Rally Raises Jakarta Tension," September 27, 2001; "Eyewitness: Anti-US Anger in Indonesia," October 3, 2001. http://bbc.co.uk.

[2] Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), p. 2.

[3] Qamaruddin Khan, cited in Dale Eickelman and James Pisacatori, *Muslim Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), p. 34.

[4] See Donald Eugene Smith, *Religion, Politics, and Social Change in the Third World: A Sourcebook* (New York : Free Press, 1971); Peter L Berger, *The Sacred Canopy : Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967); and Jeff Haynes, *Religion, Globalization, and Political Culture in the Third World* (London: MacMillan, 1999).

[5] Howard Handelman, *The Challenge of Third World Development* (New York: Prentice Hall, 2000), pp. 26-27.

[6] John L. Esposito, *Islam and Politics* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1998).

[7] *Ibid*, pp. 99-158.

[8] See Gilles Kepel, *Jihad. The Trail of Political Islam* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002) for more context regarding this Islamic revival.

[9] Eickelman and Piscatori, p. 5.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] Cyril Glasse, *The Concise Encyclopedia of Islam* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989), p. 400.

[12] M.B Hooker, *Islam in Southeast Asia* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988), p. 44.

[13] Eickelman and Piscatori, p. 2.

[14] Handelman, pp. 28-29. See also Smith and Berger for more context.

[15] Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994).

[16] Glasse, p. 400. See also John. L Esposito, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), Volume 4, pp. 190-96 for a more theological-historical discussion of *Tauhid.*

[17] Roy, p. 40.

[18] *Ibid,* pp. 40-41.

[19] *Ibid,* p. 40.

[20] Charles Kurzman, "Introduction: Liberal Islam and its Islamic Context," in his *Liberal Islam. A Sourcebook* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 6.

[21] *Ibid,* pp. 3-5.

[22] *Ibid,* pp. 7-9. Note my parenthesis.

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] *Ibid.*

[25] Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement; Social Movements, Collective Action, and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); David S. Meyer, Nancy Whittier, and Belinda Robnett, *Social Movements: Identity, Culture, and the State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) was also useful.

[26] *Ibid,* pp. 3-4. Note my parenthesis.

[27] *Ibid,* p. 2.

[28] *Ibid,* p. 5-9.

[29] *Ibid,* p. 85. Note my parenthesis.

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] *Ibid,* p. 171.

[32] *Ibid,* p. 119.

[33] *Ibid.*

[34] *Ibid,* p. 5.

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] *Ibid,* p. 62. Note my parenthesis.

[37] *Ibid,* pp. 153-78.

[38] *Ibid.*

[39] *Ibid.*

[40] Gary King, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 5.

[41] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

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[43] Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed: Religious Developments in Indonesia and Morocco* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 16.

[44] Allan A. Samson, "Conceptions of Politics, Power and Ideology in Contemporary Indonesian Islam," in Karl D. Jackson and Lucian Pye, eds., *Political Power and Communications in Indonesia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), p. 198.

[45] Geertz, *Islam Observed,* p. 16.

[46] Samson, p. 198.

[47] Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (New York: The Free Press, 1960), p. 127.

[48] Samson, p. 206.

[49] Geertz, *The Religion of Java*, p. 127.

[50] Karel Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam: Contacts and Conflicts 1596-1950* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1993).

[51] Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam Under the Japanese Occupation 1942-45* (The Hague and Bandung: van Hoeve, 1958) p. 13.

[52] Geertz, *Islam Observed*, p. 40.

[53] Benda, p. 43.

[54] The famous Indonesian novel, Pramoedya Ananta Toer's Buru Quartet Tetralogy, *This Earth of Mankind, Child of all Nations, Footsteps, and House of Glass*, is worth searching out to get a perspective on the wider context of the Indonesian nationalist revival at the turn of the century.

[55] Benda, pp. 67-79.

[56] Benda, p. 56.

[57] Manning Nash, "Islamic Resurgence in Malaysia and Indonesia," in Martin E. Marty and Scott Appleby, eds., *Fundamentalisms Observed* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 1991), p. 5. Also William H. Frederick, *Indonesia: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1993) was useful for consulting the Indonesian constitution.

[58] *Ibid*, pp. 50-53.

[59] *Ibid.*

[60] *Ibid.*

[61] Please see George McTurnan Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1952); Anthony Reid, *The Indonesian National Revolution, 1945-50* (Hawthorn: Longman, 1974). B. J. Boland, *The Struggle of Modern Islam in Modern Indonesia* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982) is also very good for looking at Islam

during this early nationalist period.

[62] Harold Crouch, *Army and Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 1988) is the best work on this complex relationship between civilian authority and military independence in an Indonesian context.

[63] Cees Van Dijk, *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam: The Darul Islam in Indonesia* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981).

[64] Robert Hefner, *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 39.

[65] Samson, p. 215.

[66] *Ibid.*

[67] *Ibid.*

[68] *Ibid.*

[69] Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1959) is the classic tome on this period.

[70] This is a high estimate of the casualties of the *Gestapu* Period. Most figures put it around 500,000 to a million. See M. C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia Since c. 1300* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993) for more information.

[71] Mohammad Kamal Hassan, *Muslim Intellectual responses to New Order, Modernization in Indonesia* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kementerian Pelajaran, Malaysia, 1980), pp 6-30; Benedict R. O'G Anderson, *A Preliminary Analysis of the October 1, 1965, Coup in Indonesia* (Ithaca, N.Y., Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University, 1971) for more background information regarding *Gestapu*, the Indonesian Military, and Indonesian Islam.

[72] Hal Hill, *The Indonesian Economy Since 1966. Southeast Asia's Emerging Giant*

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 4, writes "A key theme is the remarkable transformation in the Indonesian economy since 1966...[T]he Indonesia of the mid-1990s is almost unrecognizable in a comparison with that of the mid 1960s...[F]rom the despair of the early period, the new regime was able to engineer an amazingly rapid recovery, as manifested in sharply declining inflation and rising growth." This was written, of course, *before* the Asian Economic Crisis.

[73] Many have interpreted the opening to Islam as part of Soeharto's strategy to contain an increasingly restless and secular military. See Crouch and David Jenkins, *Suharto and his Generals : Indonesian Military Politics, 1975-1983* (Ithaca, N.Y. : Cornell University, 1984). My interpretation falls under more of a larger socio-economic explanation for the rise of Islam, as an independent socio-political movement within the context of Islam and society in developing world contexts (including Indonesia, of course). The above citations are useful for exploring alternative perspectives, though. Kepel and Roy provide the larger Islamic world context.

[74] For more on the tortured ICMI story, see Hefner, pp. 127-168. See also, Douglas Ramage's useful *Politics in Indonesia : Democracy, Islam, and the Ideology of Tolerance* (New York: Routledge, 1995) for more late New Order era perspectives on ICMI, Habibie and his ilk.

[75] Hefner, p. 200.

[76] In this light, see V. S. Naipaul's wonderful, *Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions Among the Converted Peoples* (London: Little Brown, 1998), especially pp. 3-30, for an interview and profile of some figures close to ICMI and Habibie at this time. It is not all that flattering, really.

[77] The Reformasi period is very recent, so measured academic considerations are still pending. See Adam Schwarz *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability* (Boulder : Westview Press, 2000); Arief Budiman, Barbara Hatley and Damien

Kingsbury, *Reformasi : Crisis and Change in Indonesia* (Clayton, Australia : Monash Asia Institute, Monash University, 1999); Kevin O'Rourke, *Reformasi; The Struggle for Power in Post Soeharto Indonesia* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2002).

[78] O'Rourke, p. 419, produces charts which track the value of the Indonesian currency, Rupiah, on the US $ plunging from 4,650 to 14,900 in the period from December 1997 to June 1998.

[79] See Steven Butler and Philip J. Longman, "Sick Tiger Fights Back," *U.S. News & World Report*, 03/23/98, Vol. 124 Issue 11, p49, 1/5p, 1c; "IMF Belatedly Approves $960 Million Installment On Indonesia Bailout," *Wall Street Journal - Eastern Edition*, 11/09/98, Vol. 232 Issue 92, pB2, 0p.

[80] Important separatist movements in Indonesia include movements from East to West, in the two geographical extremes of Indonesia. In the East is Aceh, and in the West is West Papua (Irian Jaya). Many of these movements have their origins in New Order repression and mismanagement, but important cultural and historical grievances also fuel these movements.

[81] Schwarz, pp. 367-436, and O'Rourke, especially pp. 283-297, were useful in drawing this narrative.

[82] *Ibid.*

[83] *Ibid.* The minister in question was Laksamana Sukardi, State Minster of State Enterprises. He was restored to the cabinet following the removal of Wahid.

[84] O'Rourke, pp. 381-407, is valuable for drawing on this recent history.

[85] Indonesia's only previous free and fair democratic election occurred in 1955. See Feith for more background.

[86] Electoral data is taken from *The Indonesian General Election 1999*, website, http://un.or.id/ge. The chart is my own tabulation.

[87] The spectrum is my own envisioning of contemporary Indonesian Islamic politics. However, several sources helped to create it. Schwarz, pp. 367-436, and O'Rourke, pp. 381-407, were useful in setting the larger contemporary Indonesian political party dynamic and political party context. John Mcbeth's "The Case for Islamic Law," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, August 22, 2002, also clarified some issues. Several Indonesian language sources, *Tempo Magazine*, especially the December 30, 2001 ("Syariat Islam di Indonesia") and October 7, 2001 ("Siapa mau Syariat Islam?) editions, were also exceedingly valuable in gathering perspectives related to the *Pancasila/Sharia* issue vis a vis many of the Islamic political parties in Indonesia. Finally, several websites including Kompas http://kompas.co.id, *Republika*, http://republika.co.id and *Indonesia Publications*, http://www.indopubs.com provided additional clarity.

[88] The outline is again my own conceptualization of contemporary Indonesian Islamic politics. See the previous footnote for sources.

[89] The figure is my own creation. See previous footnotes.

[90] *The Indonesian General Election 1999*, website, http://un.or.id/ge.

[91] For more on the PDI-P and Megawati phenomenon, see Jane Perlez, "For Indonesia Leader, Small Talk Edges Tough Talk," *New York Times*, 10/22/2002, Vol. 152 Issue 52279, pA3, 0p, 2bw; Sander Thoenes, "A Former First Daughter: Popularity, but Without Punch?" *Christian Science Monitor*, 10/15/98, Vol. 90 Issue 225, p6, 0p, 1c.

[92] Tandjung was recently convicted for corruption for illicitly funneling government funds to Golkar's campaign treasury during the 1999 elections, but he remains free and is the parliamentary speaker during the duration of his appeal.

[93] Schwarz, pp. 383-84, outlines Golkar's dilemma in post-Soeharto Indonesia. See also, "Golkar Plots its Comeback," *Economist*, 8/4/2001, Vol. 360 Issue 8233, p36, 2p, 1c.

[94] Schwarz, pp. 388-91. See also Ilene R. Prusher, "An Indonesia Leader Who Left All

Wondering," *Christian Science Monitor*, 7/27/2001, Vol. 93 Issue 170, p7, 0p, 1c ; Seth
Mydans, "Indonesia's Ex-President Expects to Be Restored," *New York Times*,
10/20/2001, Vol. 151 Issue 51912, pA4, 0p, 1bw, for more on Wahid's fall and its impact
on the PKB. Wahid does not retain any formal leadership positions, but his supporters
still remain dominant in the PKB. Matori Abdul Djalil, a former prominent PKB leader
ousted for his opposition to Wahid and now present Minister of Defense in the
Megawati cabinet, has made some noises about launching his own splinter PKB faction,
but its strength remains hard to gauge.

[95] Schwarz, pp. 385-88, details this very well. See also, "The Challenge for Moderate
Islam," *Economist*, 6/22/2002, Vol. 363 Issue 8278, p37, 1p, 1c.

[96] For more on Rais see, "How Rais Missed being No. 1,"*Asiaweek*, 11/19/99, Vol. 25 Issue
46, p13, 1/4p, 1c; Jose Manuel Tesoro, "The Rise--and Rise--of Amien Rais," *Asiaweek*,
11/12/99, Vol. 25 Issue 45, p34, 2p, 2c. "Reformist Is Chosen to Lead Indonesia
Parliament," *New York Times*, 10/04/99, Vol. 149 Issue 51665, pA3, 0p, reports Rais' rise
in post-Soeharto Indonesia.

[97] Personal communication, Jakarta, Indonesia, May 2001, regarding the shifts in
PAN/PK's orientation.

[98] Schwarz, pp. 392-94.

[99] For more on Haz, see Timothy Maples, "Indonesia's Hamzah Gains in Prominence,"
Wall Street Journal - Eastern Edition, 10/3/2001, Vol. 238 Issue 66, pA18, 0p, 1bw; Michael
Schuman and Rin Hindryati, "In Selection of Indonesian Vice President, A Victory for
New Megawati Government," *Wall Street Journal - Eastern Edition*, 7/27/2001, Vol. 238
Issue 19, pA7, 0p.

[100] Personal communication, Jakarta, Indonesia, May 2001, regarding PPP's oppositional
role in government.

[101] For more on the PPP today, see Schwarz pp. 391-92. "Hamzah meets with Laskar Jihad," *Jakarta Post,* August 8, 2001, details Haz's growing closeness to some of Indonesian Islam's more unsavory characters. Recent developments have seen the emergence of a splinter, anti-Haz faction, PPP-*Reformasi* but the strength of this splinter group has yet to be seen.

[102] For more on the *Masyumi* party, please refer earlier to pp. 35-38 in this thesis.

[103] Hefner, pp. 109-110. Some of these organizations include KIDSI, The Indonesian Committee for Solidarity with the Muslim World, which was prominent in the hard-line Islamist community.

[104] Personal communication, Jakarta, Indonesia, May 2001. See also Schwarz, pp. 394-96 on the PBB's origins and constituency.

[105] International Crisis Group, *Indonesia, Violence, and Radical Muslims,* Jakarta/Brussels, December 2001.

[106] John Gershman, "Is Southeast Asia the Second Front," *Foreign Affairs,* (July/August 2000): 60-61 offers a strong overview of radical Islamism, terrorism, and Southeast Asia.

[107] For perspectives on *Laskar Jihad,* see Noorhaidi Hasan "Faith and Politics: The Rise of the *Laskar Jihad* in the Era of Transition in Indonesia," *Indonesia* 73 (April 2002): 145-69 ; Michael Davis, "*Laskar Jihad* and the Political Position of Conservative Islam in Indonesia," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 24.1 (April 2002): 12-32.

[108] Marshall, Andrew Marshall, "The Threat of Jaffar," *New York Times Magazine,* March 10, 2002.

[109] For more on Maluku, see George Aditjondro, "Guns, Pamphlets and Handie-Talkies: How the Military Exploited Local Ethno-Religious Tensions in Maluku to Preserve Their Political and Economic Privileges," in *Violence in Indonesia* (Hamburg: Abera-Verl, 2001), edited by Ingrid Wessel and Georgia Wimhofer, pp. 100-29; Gerry Van Klinken,

"The Maluku Wars: Bringing Society Back In," *Indonesia* 71 (April 2001): 1-25.

[110] Extremist Group *Laskar Jihad* has Disbanded, Says Official," *Straits Times Online,* October 15, 2002, http://straitstimes.asia1.com.sg.

[111] Raymond Bonner, "Bombing at Resort in Indonesia Kills 150 and Hurts Scores More," *New York Times,* 10/13/2002, Vol. 152 Issue 52270, pA1, 0p, 2 maps, 1c, 1bw; Raymond Bonner and Jane Perlez, "Indonesia Links Muslim Group With Terrorism," *New York Times,* 10/17/2002, Vol. 152 Issue 52274, pA1, 0p, 1bw.

[112] International Crisis Group, *Al Qaeda in Southeast Asia: The Case of the Ngruki Network in Indonesia,* Jakarta/Brussels, August 2002.

[113] *Ibid.*

[114] For more information see, Romesh Ratnesa, Jason Tedjasukmana, Simon Elegant, Zamira Loebis, Nelly Sindayen, Elaine Shannon, Douglas W, Douglas, "Confessions of a *Al Qaeda* Terrorist," *Time,* 9/23/2002, Vol. 160 Issue 13, p34, 6p, 1 map, 10c, for more on the international Indonesia-*Al Qaeda* connection.

[115] See this thesis, pp. 6-8.

[116] See this thesis, pp 8-13.

[117] Tarrow pp 5-6. The italics are Tarrow's. See this thesis, pp. 14-18.

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