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Genealogies of Islamic Radicalism in post-Suharto Indonesia^[1]

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The emergence of violent Muslim vigilante groups employing a *jihadist* discourse and mobilizing followers for *jihad* in regions where there have been inter-religious conflicts, such as the Moluccas or the Poso district in Central Sulawesi, is one of the most conspicuous new phenomena in contemporary Indonesian Islam. During the twenty-month presidency of Abdurrahman Wahid, such groups often gained control of the streets, and the army and police appeared unable, or unwilling, to contain them. Against the president's express orders, groups of *jihad* fighters could leave the island of Java for the Moluccas without being checked by police or army; upon arrival in the Moluccas they were even given modern weapons by certain military officers sympathetic to their cause.

There is almost a consensus among Indonesian political observers that all inter-ethnic and inter-religious violence of the past few years was provoked by power struggles between rival elite factions, or deliberately fomented by certain factions with the aim of destabilizing Wahid's (and now Megawati's) government. There is no doubt that inter-elite rivalry is a major destabilizing factor and that most of the violence is financed by military and civilian interest groups, but this does not mean that the radical groups carrying out violence are simply puppets, tools in the hands of unscrupulous political manipulators. At least some of these groups are rooted in movements that existed prior to the present crisis.^[2] The roots of most present Muslim radical groups in Indonesia can be traced to two relatively "indigenous" Muslim political movements, the Darul Islam movement and the Masyumi party, and to a number of more

recent transnational Islamic networks. Before going into the developments of the past few years, I sketch briefly these backgrounds.^[3]

During the Japanese occupation (1942-45), Indonesia's Muslims were rapidly politicized. Ulama were given military and political training courses; all Muslim organizations were merged in the Japanese-created umbrella organization Masyumi (Majelis Syura Muslimin Indonesia), which in the war for Independence was to be transformed into a leading political party. Within days after the Japanese surrender on 8 August 1945, young radicals forced Sukarno and Hatta to declare Indonesia's Independence. The attempts of the Dutch to return and re-establish their overlordship were opposed by force of arms. Ulama declared *jihad*, and Muslim militias, often led by ulama, played an important part in the struggle for Independence, alongside the more experienced armed forces led by Dutch- and Japanese-trained officers.

Muslim militias in West Java broke with the Republican government after the latter had accepted an unfavourable agreement with the Dutch (the Renville agreement, January 1948) and had ordered its armed forces, including the guerrilla groups, to withdraw to Central Java. Co-ordinated by a charismatic radical Muslim politician, Kartosuwiryo, the breakaway militias continued the struggle against the Dutch and gradually established their own, rudimentary government and state apparatus, that recognized no legislation but the *shari`a*. This Darul Islam movement, or the Islamic State of Indonesia, as it came to call itself, remained a serious competitor of the Republican government during the final years of the Indonesian revolution and became a major embarrassment to it after complete independence had been won. Rebellious movements in other provinces, such as Aceh and South Sulawesi, moreover joined the Darul Islam movement. The reasons for doing so were different in each case, but all agreed that the state should be based on the *shari`a*. In this respect, the Darul Islam movement remained an alternative to the essentially secular Republic until the capture of its leaders in 1962.^[4] Many other Muslim leaders, however, who were just as much in favour of an Islamic state, considered the Republic as the only legitimate government and strongly disapproved of the Darul Islam movement

because of its recourse to violence against it.

From its birth as an independent nation, Indonesia has been divided over the question of the legal status of Islam in this multi-ethnic and multi-religious state. Those who supported the Republic gave precedence to national unity and felt uncomfortable both with the idea of an Islamic state and with that of a non-religious state. The founders of the Republic decided to define it as a state based on religious and moral principles, which are embedded in the state doctrine of Pancasila. The five principles of Pancasila were believed to reflect cultural and moral values held in common by the numerous ethnic and religious communities of the country, including the belief in God.^[5] Muslim leaders demanded to add a phrase (later known as the “Jakarta Charter”), that would oblige Muslim Indonesians to live by the *shari`a*, but they gave up in the interest of national unity when they discovered that non-Muslims and nominal Muslims felt threatened by it.^[6] The Jakarta Charter was discussed again in parliamentary debates on a new Constitution in 1959, and was definitively shelved when it became clear that no majority could be found to support it.^[7] In the view of secular nationalists, non-Muslims and nominal Muslims, the Jakarta Charter was to remain associated with Darul Islam type efforts to establish an Islamic state and a form of dictatorship by the pious Muslim minority.

In 1952, the traditionalist Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) broke away from Masyumi because of a conflict over the distribution of positions. Few NU people had a modern education (most were only madrasa-educated), whereas the reformist Muslims in Masyumi were generally educated in western-type schools and universities, and therefore got all the government jobs available. This differential access to positions and facilities has remained a lasting source of conflict between traditionalists and reformists. Henceforth we can, with a little simplification, speak of two major currents in Indonesian Islam: the traditionalist (and usually accommodating) NU and the reformist (and occasionally oppositional) Masyumi.^[8] NU was culturally close to Sukarno and even his successor Suharto; Masyumi was, especially in the 1950s, much like a European social democratic party, one of the few Indonesian

parties that adhered to western ideas of democracy. Both Masyumi and NU were Muslim parties and represented Muslim demands (such as government support for Muslim education), but neither had a clear idea of what an Islamic society should be like. They were communalist parties, representing coalitions of distinct and identifiable Muslim constituencies. In the 1955 elections, generally considered as fair, they polled 21 and 18.5 percent, respectively, which made them the second and third largest parties. The largest party was the nationalist PNI (with 22.5 percent) and the fourth, with 16.5 percent, the communist PKI. Both had constituencies that were mostly nominal Muslim, and both received, like NU, their strongest support from Central and East Java, whereas Masyumi was the only large party with a strong non-Javanese constituency.^[9]

During the late 1950s, Masyumi became increasingly disaffected with Sukarno's style of leadership and his cooperation with the communists. The dislike was mutual, and reflected fundamentally different political attitudes. Secular politicians moreover always suspected Masyumi of secret collusion with the Darul Islam movement (which, significantly, also had its strongholds in non-Javanese parts of the Archipelago). In 1957, when Sukarno began flaunting his concept of "Guided Democracy" as an alternative to western-style democracy, Masyumi was the only one among the large parties to refuse cooperating. The Javanese-based parties, including NU, complied without much protest.^[10] The following year, several Masyumi leaders took part in a CIA-supported regional rebellion against Sukarno — somewhat surprisingly perhaps, considering the later anti-Americanism of many later politicians of Masyumi background, but in line with the party's anti-communism, its liberal economic policy preferences, and the regional composition of its constituency.^[11]

The relation between Masyumi and Sukarno deteriorated rapidly. In 1960, Sukarno dissolved the Constituent Assembly and replaced it with an Assembly in which Masyumi and a few other oppositional parties were no longer represented. Later that year Masyumi was ordered to dissolve itself, and in 1962 its leaders were imprisoned for alleged political offenses. Masyumi was never reconstituted as a party, but its

constituency has remained a recognizable entity, held together by a dense network of communication, friendships, intermarriage, education, and all sorts of institutions. Until the present day, association with NU or Masyumi is an almost primordial attribute of Indonesian Muslims.

Transformations of Masyumi

After the events of 1965-66, in which the PKI was physically destroyed, Sukarno was overthrown and Suharto established himself as the new undisputed leader, Masyumi's leaders were released from prison but not allowed to play political roles again. A new party, Parmusi, was established to cater to Masyumi's constituency, but without the backing of the Masyumi leaders it never got anything like the earlier party's clout.[\[12\]](#) The Masyumi elite appeared to split into two distinct groups.

The most prominent leaders (notably Mohammed Natsir, the most charismatic puritan Muslim leader there ever was) decided to devote their energies to *dakwah* (*da`wa*) rather than politics in the traditional sense. The rejection of the Jakarta Charter in 1959 had shown them that more than half of the nation's almost 90 percent Muslims rejected the obligation of living by the *shari`a*; obviously there was room for further Islamization. The *dakwah* council (Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia or DDII), established by Natsir and his friends in 1967, concentrated on missionary efforts among Indonesia's Muslims, intending to turn them into better Muslims, but it also became one of the most important voices of dissent in New Order Indonesia.[\[13\]](#)

We find with the Dewan Dakwah group an unlikely combination of attitudes: a belief in the superiority of western-style democracy over the neo-patrimonial forms of rule adopted by both Sukarno and Suharto, an almost paranoid obsession with Christian missionary efforts as a threat to Islam, and an increasingly strong orientation towards the Middle East, notably Saudi Arabia. The DDII established close relations with the Islamic World League (Rabitat al-`Alam al-Islami, established in 1962), of which Natsir became one of the vice chairmen.[\[14\]](#) It became the Saudis' preferred

counterpart when these began using their oil wealth to finance the spread of conservative and puritan brands of Islamic teaching.

Another important group of Masyumi personalities renounced on opposition to Suharto's New Order and joined the political machine Golkar, that was to become the government party.

[15] For a long time they remained inconspicuous but they succeeded — whether as a result of a deliberate policy or by accident is not entirely clear — in gradually giving this institution more Islamic content. In the early 1970s, Golkar was still dominated by nominal Muslims and secularists; by the late 1980s, these were becoming a minority, and in the 1990s a conservative brand of Islam, then patronized by Suharto, became established as the leading discourse.

The “greening” of Golkar was due not only to this accommodating group of Masyumi leaders but perhaps even more so to students of the 1966 generation. The leading Muslim Student's Association, HMI, was ideologically close to, but not formally affiliated with Masyumi and was therefore not banned. In 1965-66, its leaders had made themselves useful to Suharto and his generals by taking a leading part in the demonstrations against the PKI and Sukarno. In the early years of the New Order, a new generation of HMI leaders created a new liberal Muslim discourse that was highly compatible with the depoliticization of Islam considered necessary by Suharto's advisers. [16]

Throughout the New Order period, these people received much favorable press coverage, giving them a disproportionate influence, whereas Muslim thinkers and politicians of a less accommodating ilk were virtually ignored. People from this circle found it easy to make careers in politics (Golkar), the bureaucracy, education and business. They were the first generation of young men and women of strict Muslim background to join the new middle classes. [17] Presently, HMI alumni are to be found in virtually all political parties; Golkar is practically dominated by them.

Indonesian Muslim reformism up to the 1970s was influenced by the Egyptian reformers Muhammad `Abduh and especially Rashid Rida. [18] Several Masyumi leaders had in fact studied

in Cairo, which they associated with `Abduh's modernism. [19] (Among NU `ulama, on the other hand, the preferred place for further studies long remained Mecca, where they studied classical *fiqh* texts with traditionalist scholars and had little contact with representatives of official Wahhabism; in the second half of the 20th century, however, increasing numbers of NU youth chose Cairo's Al-Azhar. [20]) During the 1950s and 1960s, Masyumi was so heavily involved in practical politics that it paid little attention to Islamic thought — this appears even to have been true of some non-political reformist associations such as Muhammadiyah. It was the ban of Masyumi and the general depoliticization imposed on Indonesian Islam under Suharto that caused a turn to Islamic thought. The ideas of the Muslim Brotherhood then became a major focus of orientation for people of Masyumi background. Initially the Islamic socialism of the Syrian Brother Mustafa al-Siba`i (whose book *Islamic Socialism* was translated early, banned under Suharto, and later reprinted with a different title) had a strong appeal, reflecting Masyumi's social-democratic leanings. [21] Later al-Banna became the leading authority, along with the Pakistani Abu'l-A`la Mawdudi. Several of Sayyid Qutb's works were also translated, including *Ma`alim fi'l-tariq* ('*Signposts on the Road*'), but his more radical political ideas appear not to have made the impact in Indonesia that they made elsewhere. It was the non-revolutionary, Saudi-sponsored brand of Brotherhood materials that became most influential in former Masyumi circles in the 1980s and 1990s.

Masyumi represented a wide range of reformist Muslim attitudes, ranging from liberal and modernist to puritan and conservative. The most puritan strand within Masyumi was the association *Persatuan Islam* or *Persis*, which militated uncompromisingly against local beliefs and traditional practices (including some that for many other Muslims belonged to the core of their religion). Persis relied heavily on a literal reading of the Qur'an and authentic *hadith*, and on many issues it adopted positions that were close to those of the Wahhabis — although Persis' chief religious authority, Ahmad Hassan, appears to have reached these positions independently. [22] Unlike other reformist currents in Indonesia, Persis never showed much interest in social and political teachings that could be derived from Islam but

concentrated on its strict application in personal life. Through its schools and youth training, and in the journal *Al-Muslimun*, which during the New Order found a readership well beyond the limited membership of the organization itself, *Persis* carried on a struggle for the purification of ritual and belief that was consonant with the understanding of Islam sponsored by the Saudis.

Many other understandings of Islam existed side by side, however. The *hausse* in Islamic publishing that began in the 1980s reflected this pluralism and the openness of many Indonesian Muslims to new ideas. A wide variety of intellectual currents made its influence felt in Indonesian Muslim discourses. Students and the gradually emerging Muslim middle class showed a great eagerness for Islamic reading, numerous discussion circles were formed where books were critically discussed. Besides Muslim Brotherhood and Mawdudi materials and the traditional fare of *pesantren* literature, much else became available: the works of Fazlur Rahman and other liberal Muslim writers; the perennialist Fritjof Schuon and the neo-traditionalists Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Sayyid Naguib al-Attas. Works by, and studies on, the great Sufis and Muslim philosophers were translated, and a growing number of Indonesian Muslim intellectuals published collections of their lectures, speeches and sermons — oral communication remains the primary form — as books, which found an avid readership. The ideas that made perhaps the strongest intellectual impact, however, were those of the Iranian thinkers Ali Shari`ati and, a few years later, Murtaza Mutahhari. These two authors appealed especially strongly to students and young intellectuals. Their attraction was in part due, no doubt, to their association with the Iranian revolution, which fascinated many young Indonesians.

Fazlur Rahmans thought became very influential in Indonesia due to the fact that several prominent Indonesians studied with him in Chicago and became staunch defenders of his ideas upon their return. Due to them, Indonesia is one of the few countries where his ideas have taken root and are developed further by young thinkers.^[23] Interestingly, Shari`ati's writings also reached Indonesia by way of the United States. The first Indonesians to read him were students in America, and most Indonesian translations of his work, as

well as that of Mutahhari, were done from the English. The discovery of these thinkers created a widespread interest in Shi`ism, especially among politically disaffected students. Even some leading intellectuals whose ideas were strongly influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood, such as Amien Rais, were fascinated by Shari`ati's daring interpretations and revolutionary message.[\[24\]](#)

The DDII responded to these developments in increasingly hostile terms; they intensely distrusted the Indonesian harbingers of Islamic liberalism and were even more fiercely opposed to Shi`a teachings. No doubt encouraged by their Saudi and Kuwaiti sponsors, they polemicized against Shi`ism as a fatal deviation from Islam and published an unending series of anti-Shi`a tracts and books. Their activities appeared to be focused increasingly on perceived threats: threats from within (Shi`a, Islamic liberalism) as well as threats from without: the Christian and Jewish threats to the world of Islam. They appeared to believe in a conspiracy of Christians (notably Catholics of Chinese descent, but including many others) to "roll back" Islam in Indonesia, or at least to destroy it as a political force.[\[25\]](#) In the late 1980s, anti-Semitic tracts (including various versions of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*), translated from the Arabic and published by groups close to the DDII, began flooding the book market. In the 1990s, anti-Semitism and conspiracy theories came to pervade the publications of the DDII and related publishing houses, almost to the exclusion of more rational analyses of world politics.[\[26\]](#)

Transformations of the Darul Islam

The regionally based Darul Islam insurrection persisted until the early 1960s, when its major leaders were all killed or captured. The support network was never entirely destroyed, however. Many of the rank-and-file, trying to rid themselves of the stigma of Darul Islam affiliation, avoided contact with their former comrades but underground networks appear to have persisted until the present day. Intermittently were there signs of their existence, and these suggested that there were intriguing connections with one of the intelligence services.

After the alleged communist coup attempt of 1965, West Javanese Darul Islam veterans were reportedly taken to the estates in Subang district to kill “communist” estate workers. It is widely believed that the powerful intelligence chief Ali Murtopo — who became Suharto’s chief advisor in his first decade as president, and who is rightly considered as the real architect of Indonesia’s New Order — cultivated a group of Darul Islam veterans and allowed them to maintain a network of contacts as a secret weapon against “communism” and other enemies, that could be unleashed at any convenient moment.[\[27\]](#)

In the 1970s and early 1980s, there were repeatedly eruptions of “Islamic” terrorism — arson and bombing of churches, night clubs, and cinemas — that were attributed to a shady group named *Komando Jihad* by the press.[\[28\]](#) These violent events occurred with greater frequency in the years prior to elections and had the convenient effect of dissuading people from voting for the one remaining Muslim party, PPP.

Komando Jihad leaders who were arrested proved to be Darul Islam veterans, and one of them spoke during his trial of his contacts with Ali Murtopo and a joint struggle against communism.[\[29\]](#) These activists, it appears, genuinely believed in the long-term aim of an Islamic state but at the same time perceived that the short-term objective of destroying “communism” gave them common interests with Murtopo’s intelligence operators. The *Komando Jihad* — later referred to by other names, such as *Teror Warman* (Warman being the name of one of its leaders, a West Javanese Darul Islam veteran) and NII/TII, “the Islamic state/army of Indonesia” — remained a useful scarecrow until the mid-1980s.[\[30\]](#)

The underground Darul Islam network consisted of more than a few intelligence-controlled veterans of the movement, however. It appeared to be capable of drawing other disaffected radicals into its orbit. In the early 1980s a small group of students in Yogyakarta published a semi-clandestine bulletin that openly flaunted its Darul Islam sympathies.[\[31\]](#)

The editors were arrested and put on trial, but a whole network of their contacts managed to survive intact and resurfaced after the fall of Suharto. Another important node in

the Darul Islam network was constituted by the *pesantren* (the Javanese variant of the *madrassa*) of Ngruki in the Solo region, which was run by two Arab teachers, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, both of whom were well-connected in Masyumi/DDII circles (Sungkar was in fact the chairman of the DDII's Central Java branch). In a series of trials, the authorities linked these teachers and many of their associates to *Komando Jihad* activities, which resulted in stiff prison sentences.^[32] After having served several years in detention, they took refuge in Malaysia. According to interviews that I made with exiled NII/TII activists in Malaysia in 1989, Sungkar and Ba'asyir were relative newcomers in that movement, whose role may have been exaggerated in the trials in order to incriminate the DDII. Trials of members of an alleged underground movement named *Usroh* (the Javanese form of Ar. *usra*, "nuclear family", i.e. the term used by the Muslim Brotherhood for its constituent cells) appeared to suggest that Ngruki was the centre from which this movement spread over Central Java.^[33]

In the mid-1980s, apparently in response to the imposition on all parties and associations of Pancasila as the sole ideology (to the exclusion of Islam, socialism or other doctrines), and to the violent repression of a riot in Jakarta's harbour, Tanjung Priok, in September 1984, there was a wave of violent incidents. These included the bombing of the Borobudur — symbol of Indonesia's pre-Islamic past — and of several branches of a major bank, owned by one of Suharto's Chinese business partners. The rigged trials that followed implicated alleged NII/TII activists as well as two prominent and internationally known Suharto critics.^[34] Again some members of the NII/TII network were arrested; others remained underground in Indonesia or fled to Malaysia, which was becoming a haven for a wide range of New Order opponents. From Malaysia, dozens and possibly hundreds or even thousands of Indonesians travelled to Pakistan and Afghanistan, in order to engage in *jihad* and receive guerrilla training.^[35] Contacts that I had with some Indonesian refugees in Malaysia in the late 1980s indicated that the NII/TII group included not only people from various parts of Java but also activists from Sulawesi. Acehese separatists, of whom there were also many living in Malaysia

then, were not considered as part of NII/TII but were in contact with it, and allegedly were also sending people to Pakistan for training.

The Darul Islam movement in those years does not appear to have held a coherent ideological view apart from the unreflected ideal of establishing an Islamic state and putting the *shari`a* into practice. It was a political movement, not a religious one. Its followers adhered to Salafi Islam — which inhibited the development of close relations with Malaysian Muslim radicals, who were traditionalist in ritual and doctrinal matters and who were shocked by the Indonesians' brusque rejection of revered practices — but there was not a clear intellectual connection between their puritan conception of Islam and their political action. Their Islamic ideal was quite un-ideological and did not entail a clear vision of the nature of their Islamic state.

“*Campus Islam*”

It is, of course, especially among students and intellectuals that one would expect more explicitly ideological views of Islam, and a variety of such views did in fact develop in the 1980s. Liberal Islam was the dominant trend among committed Muslims in the student movement throughout the 1970s, but in the 1980s more radical trends appeared. The context of this emergence of radical Islamism was the suppression of student political activity after the last wave of student protest in 1978 and the banning of the large students' associations (such as HMI) from the campuses since the early 1980s. These measures aimed at, and largely succeeded in, depoliticizing the campuses and individualizing dissent. [\[36\]](#)

The Iranian revolution, as said above, made a great impression on Indonesian students and caused a widespread interest in the Muslim thinkers associated with this revolution. It was not only students but also some of their elders, including some prominent Muslim intellectuals who came under the charm of Shari`ati's and Mutahhari's writings. The idea of a revolutionary Islam, defending the rights of the weak and oppressed (*mustad`afin*) and recognizing women as subjects and political actors, and the allegorical

interpretations of the Qur'an and other scriptures exerted a great attraction on socially committed young people. A movement of self-conversion to Shi'ism began, which by the end of the century involved tens of thousands. Some of these are converts in the full sense of the word, many others sympathizers and admirers of the Shi'a. Though initially strong among students, presently the Shi'a movement draws its following from various sectors of the population. Its most prominent leader claims that they include in West Java many former Darul Islam activists, and elsewhere also military personnel, notably of the marines.[\[37\]](#)

Suharto's policy of depoliticizing Islam reached its climax towards the mid-1980s, when all parties and associations were forced to shed all loyalties to other ideologies besides Pancasila. The last remaining Muslim party, PPP, had to give up all symbols identifying it as Islamic and to open itself, at least in theory, to non-Muslim members. Such Muslim organizations as the students' association HMI had both Pancasila and Islam in their statutes, and new legislation meant that they were de facto obliged to renounce on Islam as their foundation. This caused great unrest and led to resistance.[\[38\]](#) Students and some vocal government critics refused initially, but the resistance was broken rather easily. The HMI split over the issue; its central board was persuaded to go along with the government, but a rival section persisted in rejecting the "sole foundation" and insisting that Islam was their guiding principle.[\[39\]](#) The more radical Muslim students' organization PII, formerly affiliated with Masyumi, also refused to comply and went underground. Like the dissident wing of the HMI, it had to keep a low profile and restricted its activities to participation in discussion circles (*halqah*) in schools and universities.[\[40\]](#) There were no overt expressions of protest among students. The brief wave of violent protest, culminating in the Tanjung Priok riots of September 1984, completely bypassed the universities. Most of the student activists turned quietist, and the earlier calls for overthrowing the Suharto regime gave way to efforts to become better Muslims through moral and mental training.

In retrospect, present Muslim student activists speak as if a unitary and coherent movement, which they call the *Tarbiyah*

movement, took shape in the 1980s. It is hard to say whether anything as coherent as that ever existed, but it is true that *tarbiyah*, education, or perhaps indoctrination, came to replace overt political activism after 1978. Group discussions and “mental training” sessions organized in the Salman mosque at Bandung’s Institute of Technology were seminal and inspired activities elsewhere.^[41] Some study circles (*halqah*) convened in campus mosques, more secretive discussion groups, known as *usroh* (Ar. *usra*, “nuclear family”, the term used by the Muslim Brotherhood for its cells), met in the homes of their members. The major aim of these interconnected, informal discussion groups was *tarbiyah*; seniors acted as instructors (*murabbi*) training and disciplining junior members. There were also occasionally larger training sessions, which tended to be dramatic events, aiming at effecting personality change in the participants. The teaching materials appear to have consisted mostly of Muslim Brotherhood materials and the writings of Maududi. The emphasis was on personal morality and piety, discipline, and an inner rejection of the Pancasila state and of un-Islamic practices in modern Indonesia.

The dominant influence on these student activists was undeniably the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. One network of discussion circles in fact named itself *Ikhwanul Muslimun* and presently claims to be the Indonesian branch of the Brotherhood. The movement of the 1980s and early 1990s appears to have been less unitary and coherent than this claim suggests. It appears that various groups were influenced by the Brotherhood independently of one another and through different channels. The Brotherhood’s influence was mostly mediated through its literature, but there were also some personal contacts through international Muslim youth organizations. For others, Malaysia’s Muslim youth movement ABIM served as an important role model to be emulated — an indirect and somewhat diluted Brotherhood influence.^[42] What came to be known as Indonesia’s *Usroh* movement was far from homogeneous, and did not adopt the same combination of Brotherhood ideas. Most of the student groups were quietist and apolitical; they were primarily concerned with individual moral self-improvement and with the *Usroh* as a moral haven in an immoral world. But there were also *Usroh* groups affiliated with such NII/TII leaders as

Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, which believed in the necessity of establishing an Islamic state and imposing the *shari`a* on fellow Muslims. No firm boundaries between these various groups existed.

Another influence that became perceptible on some campuses in the 1990s was that of the extremely puritan Islam of Wahhabi `ulama in the Arabian peninsula or, as its followers preferred to describe it to themselves, “Salafi Islam.”^[43] This influence was mediated through the Saudi-financed Institute for Islamic and Arabic Studies, LIPIA, in Jakarta and through a growing number of Indonesians who studied religious subjects at Saudi universities or with Saudi or Yemeni `ulama. Only a minority of these students, incidentally, came to represent upon their return the austere teachings of Wahhabi Salafism (which may be seen, perhaps, as an extreme form of the puritanism represented in Indonesia by Persis).^[44] It was they who organized a growing network of discussion circles to spread their version of true Islam, which at least in theory rejected involvement in worldly politics. The Salafi study groups even avoided contact with society at large — at least until 1999, when the conflict in the Moluccas caused a major faction of them to mobilize for *jihad*.

The final Suharto years: Islam (but which Islam?) empowered

By the late 1980s the depoliticization of Indonesian society was almost complete, when a reversal set in. Perhaps because opposition to his rule appeared to be developing within the armed forces, that had been its major prop, perhaps for other reasons, Suharto suddenly adopted a friendlier attitude towards “scripturalist” Islam and began courting those Muslim circles that had been his staunchest critics (i.e., circles close to the former Masyumi leadership). He allowed the establishment of an association of Muslim intellectuals, ICMI, under the leadership of one of his closest advisers and future successor, B.J. Habibie, and endorsed its demands for affirmative action. This meant, in the Indonesian context, efforts to achieve proportionate representation of Muslims in the political, military and bureaucratic spheres, where Christians and nominal Muslims had always been over-represented and had held many key positions.

“Proportionality” became a key word.[\[45\]](#) The establishment of an Islamic bank (soon to be followed by other Islamic economic institutions), an Islamic quality newspaper that could compete with Indonesia’s leading (Christian-owned) dailies, legislation raising the status of the Islamic courts, and (in 1993) the replacement of the Christian cabinet ministers who had presided over the economy by Muslim ministers were measures that considerably improved Suharto’s image in the eyes of his former Muslim critics. Even the DDII, initially suspicious of this sudden change in Suharto’s attitude, gave him the benefit of the doubt and in the course of the 1990s even joined the ranks of his apologists.[\[46\]](#)

Criticism of ICMI and, implicitly, of Suharto henceforth came mostly from secular intellectuals, from non-Muslims and only a small number of committed Muslim spokesmen. The most prominent among the latter was NU leader Abdurrahman Wahid, who warned of the danger of “sectarianism” and anti-pluralist Muslim fundamentalism. In Wahid’s perception (as well as that of many others in the NU), ICMI was dominated by “reformist” Muslims and was unlikely to grant the traditionalists a fair share. Wahid refused to join ICMI and instead established, together with a number of intellectuals of secular and Christian backgrounds, the Forum for Democracy, a small NGO that brought issues of civil rights, human rights and democracy into the public sphere.[\[47\]](#)

Under Wahid’s leadership, the NU, which had at most times been highly accommodating towards the government, temporarily grew into a force of opposition and a challenge to the Suharto regime.[\[48\]](#) Although several other leading members of the organization continued to cooperate with the regime and in fact were also active in ICMI, the traditionalist NU, which throughout the 1950s through 1970s had appeared as the most conservative and narrow-minded segment of the Indonesian *umma*, began to draw international attention for being perhaps more open to pluralism, inter-religious tolerance and secular conceptions of democracy than reformist Islam. Members of NU’s young generation, to whom Abdurrahman Wahid extended a measure of protection and patronage, developed a political and religious discourse that was much more daring and creative than that of their

peers in ICMI and other circles of Masyumi background.[\[49\]](#)

Within ICMI one found the entire range of reformist Muslim positions, from liberal “neo-modernists” to persons close to the DDII, but the organization was dominated by Muslim bureaucrats. The radicals saw it as a vessel to achieve their “Leninist” objective of getting control of the state (either directly or in the form of having more non-Muslims in the state apparatus replaced by Muslims of ICMI affiliation), the liberals saw it as crowning the process of the emergence of a Muslim middle class, and for most bureaucrats it was simply an important means of benefiting their personal careers. All had an interest in keeping Suharto in power for a few more years — even those who, I am sure, disliked or even despised him. With few exceptions — Amien Rais being one of them — ICMI’s Muslim intellectuals remained loyal to Suharto almost to the end and only deserted him when Habibie, their chairman and Suharto’s first successor, did so. Those who jumped on the bandwagon of the *reformasi* movement (and *reformasi*, political reform, the keyword of those days, meant to most demonstrators primarily getting rid of Suharto) were reluctant to let *reformasi* run its full course and break down the entire New Order.

There was also a form of Muslim street politics that in the course of the 1990s gradually became more prominent and that appeared to enjoy the connivance if not the support of (a faction within) the Suharto regime. KISDI, the Indonesian Committee for Solidarity with the World of Islam, claims as its founding date 1987 but its first public appearance was in 1990, around the same time that ICMI was established. Its founders belonged to the most “hard-line” wing of DDII, were firm believers in a Western Jewish and Christian conspiracy to weaken or destroy Islam, and were generally hostile to non-Muslims. It would have been unthinkable for a group like this to operate publicly during the 1980s, but during Suharto’s last years they came to dominate the streets. Their first actions were demonstrations of solidarity with Palestine — a very acceptable cause in Indonesia, which has never recognized Israel — and later they took up the causes of oppressed Muslims in Bosnia, Kashmir, Chechnya, and Algeria. At the time of the American bombing of Iraq in Operation Desert Storm in 1991, when many Indonesians

tended to sympathize with Iraq, KISDI remained conspicuously silent, suggesting dependence on Saudi Arabia. In the course of the 1990s KISDI moved into protest actions against news media that carried reports they considered as unfriendly to Islam (including Muslim media that reported views they did not countenance). Their most conspicuous actions against the Catholic-owned but religiously and politically neutral newspaper *Kompas* resulted in a financial settlement; by the end of the decade, they were accused of running a sort of protection racket, extorting money with the threat of demonstrations.

By the late 1990s, KISDI was not the only group that was posturing against Christians and “Jews” but it was the most vocal. Given the virtual absence of Jews in Indonesia, it is not immediately obvious why anti-Semitism became such a prominent element of conservative Muslim discourse.^[50] Solidarity with Palestine is only part of the story; the labels “Jew” or “Zionist” refer to a whole range of internal enemies and such threats as secularism, cosmopolitanism and globalization, as well as the inseparable evil pair of capitalism and communism. Though rarely explicit, the reference appears to be primarily to the Chinese business elite but it also includes liberal and cosmopolitan Muslim thinkers.^[51] This local version of anti-Semitism was perhaps tolerated because Suharto himself was in those final years turning against his erstwhile Chinese allies; it was definitely encouraged by certain people in Suharto’s direct surroundings, including his ambitious son-in-law, special forces commander Prabowo Subianto. Conspiracy theories modeled on *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, with a Chinese-Catholic-Zionist conspiracy aiming at the destruction of Islam in Indonesia, came into circulation and were endorsed by certain military circles, with the apparent aim of mobilizing mass anger against the Chinese.^[52]

Suharto’s downfall and Muslim politics

Suharto’s fall was precipitated by a grave economic crisis and violent riots in Jakarta, in which numerous Chinese women were raped and hundreds were killed (many of them burnt alive in shopping centres that they appeared to be

looting). The riots resulted in the flight of most Chinese businessmen and of their capital — a development that some of the Muslim radicals were known to consider as desirable, but that also meant the virtual bankruptcy of the Indonesian economy. The question of what exactly happened, and which were the forces behind the events, was and remains a matter of much speculation. Both military and criminal elements appear to have been involved in starting the riots.

The final months of Suharto's rule and the transition period imposed major realignments on political Islam. Many Muslim politicians, including such radicals as the KISDI leaders, remained loyal to Suharto until the very end, fearing that change might cause them to lose the access to power they had so recently gained. Of ICMI's leading figures, Amien Rais was the only one to publicly criticize Suharto before his position had significantly weakened. Amien, who was the chairman of Muhammadiyah and a leading member of ICMI's Council of Experts, was forced to resign the latter position in 1997. This, and the silence of all other senior figures, made him the natural leader of the emerging anti-Suharto coalition and the *Reformasi* movement. Students constituted the major force of this movement; senior public figures were late in joining. Of the nation-wide Muslim student organizations, neither the modernist HMI nor the traditionalist PMII (affiliated with NU) took visibly part in the movement. A new Muslim student association, KAMMI, was established in early 1998 and rapidly rose to prominence due to its active role in demonstrations. KAMMI was founded by *da'wa* groups from some sixty campus mosques and had links with the Muslim Brotherhood-influenced *Tarbiyah* movement. KAMMI incorporated numerous HMI members (especially from the dissident wing, HMI-MPO) too, but its leading activists tended to consider HMI and especially its alumni association, KAHMI, as too close to the regime. PMII activists, on the other hand, tended not to join this Muslim student front but to ally themselves with their secular colleagues in action committees that were more radical in their rejection of the New Order. [\[53\]](#)

The *Reformasi* movement was united over the demand that Suharto should step down. The unity disappeared as soon as Suharto resigned his position on May 21 and handed power to

his vice president, Habibie, whom many Muslims saw as representing their interests and who installed a cabinet in which ICMI personalities and the Islamic wing of the Armed Forces were strongly represented. The secular wing of the *Reformasi* movement considered Habibie as too much part of the New Order to be acceptable, and it demanded ‘total reform’. Especially the left-leaning student movement demanded the complete overthrow of the New Order and all of Suharto’s collaborators. KAMMI and other Muslim student groups did not taken an open stand against Habibie but kept demanding that Suharto and others guilty of large-scale corruption be tried. A broad spectrum of secular and non-Muslim groups, from long-time opponents of the New Order to former establishment figures, were concerned that Habibie’s presidency would further empower radical Muslims and therefore opposed him. They put Megawati Sukarnoputri, Abdurrahman Wahid and the Sultan of Yogyakarta — none of whom had, for different reasons, been much in evidence in the *Reformasi* movement — forward as leaders capable of voicing the demands of the people. Amien Rais and the public personalities who had come to associate themselves with the reformist front that he led steered a middle course, maintaining relations with Habibie and his cabinet (many of whom were, after all, old friends) while withholding full legitimatization and calling for economic, political and legal reform.^[54]

KISDI, ICMI-affiliated radicals and a whole range of new militant Muslim groups, on the other hand, came out strongly in support of Habibie against the wing of the student movement that clamoured for total reform and against Habibie’s secular opponents. Such groups came to dominate street politics and intimidate left-leaning and liberal groups under Habibie and his successor, Abdurrahman Wahid. Some of them, like KISDI, were more or less transparent and had a clear historical link with earlier forms of Muslim politics, others were less so and appear to have arisen purely in response to financial stimuli supplied by certain military and political factions. Many of the rank-and-file of these new militia-type groups appeared not to have been active in Muslim organizations before but to belong to the large reservoir of not regularly employed street toughs (known as *preman*, ‘freebooters,’ in Indonesian). They played a similar

role as had been played under the New Order by Pemuda Pancasila and similar officially sponsored *preman* organizations, as the informal strong arm of the state or other interest groups. In the tense days of November 1998, when the MPR, Indonesia's super-parliament, convened in an extraordinary session and Habibie's position was under serious threat, the army commander recruited over 100,000 civilians, many of them affiliated with radical Muslim groups, as auxiliary security guards.

The elections of 1999: Muslim parties

The MPR decided on new elections in June 1999, after which a new MPR was to elect a new president. For the first time since the 1950s, there was an almost unlimited freedom for parties with any sort of platform to contest the elections. If the elections showed anything it was that political Islam had little appeal among the population at large. Out of 48 parties contesting the elections, 14 defined themselves as Muslim, but among them only the PPP, the Muslim party of the Suharto period, received a significant percentage of the vote, ending as fourth with around 11 percent. The Crescent-and-Star Party (PBB), which claimed to be the true successor of Masyumi, and in which KISDI leaders played a role, did not rise above 2 percent, and the Partai Keadilan (Justice Party), which represented what I have called "campus Islam" and which was one of the very few parties with a proper program, got only 1.5 percent. The other Muslim parties did even less well.

Both Abdurrahman Wahid and Amien Rais, the chairmen of the two largest Muslim associations, led parties that were deliberately not explicitly Islamic and that appealed to constituencies wider than NU and Muhammadiyah, respectively. Both saw themselves as leaders of the nation rather than of segments of the *ummah*, and their parties, though very different from one another, both appealed to non-Muslims as well as Muslim voters. However, since both had also to defend the interests of their 'natural' constituencies, this often placed them in awkward positions. All officers of Abdurrahman's party, the PKB, were NU personalities and the party polled best in the NU's strongholds in Java; many

Indonesian Chinese also voted for it because Abdurrahman's track record as a defender of minority interests. The party ended third in the elections, with 13 percent. Amien's party, PAN, represented a rainbow coalition and included many non-Muhammadiyah and even non-Muslim persons in its board. It performed disappointingly, however, receiving only 7 percent of the vote.

The three New Order parties, not surprisingly, made a better showing than the recently founded ones, especially outside Java, for they were the only ones that could count on a well-functioning party apparatus down to the district level. The great winner of the elections was Megawati, who had taken over the leadership of the most important wing of the Indonesian Democratic Party, the PDI-P, and won 35% of the vote. The New Order's government party, Golkar, though considerably weakened, came second with 23%, and the PPP, as said, ended just after the PKB with 11%. Perhaps more than for any single party, the elections were a great victory for the Muslim student union HMI; a large number of HMI alumni were voted into parliament on the tickets of various parties. In Golkar, the "green" wing, most of whom (including the new chairman, Akbar Tanjung) were HMI-affiliated, had won an internal power struggle with the "nationalist" wing, led by retired generals. Many PPP politicians too were HMI alumni, and even in the PDI-P there were a few.[\[55\]](#)

The two chief currents of mainstream Islam, Muhammadiyah and NU, clearly did not vote as cohesive blocks as they had done in the 1950s.[\[56\]](#) Although the PKB was clearly the party of the NU's most charismatic leader, the NU vote was divided. Considerable numbers of NU members, especially outside Java, voted PPP, the party in which many NU politicians still had vested interests and that had recently elected a politician of NU background, Hamzah Haz, as its chairman.[\[57\]](#) Even in Java and Madura, the PKB's real strongholds, entire communities were split between these two parties, which in some cases even led to bloodshed. Golkar also attracted a part of the NU vote – since 1984 many local NU leaders had established close and profitable relationships with this government party. There were moreover two newly established parties that specifically targeted the NU

constituency (but these did not perform too well). Finally, quite a few young NU activists opted for Megawati's PDI-P, which was more clearly associated with resistance to the Suharto regime. The Muhammadiyah vote was even more dispersed. In the 1950s, Masyumi had been the obvious party for Muhammadiyah members to vote for, but none of the parties that pretended to be Masyumi's legitimate successor had a wide appeal. The largest of them, the Crescent-and-Star Party, placed itself in an extremist corner by including the KISDI activists. Amien Rais, who probably commanded the personal loyalties of significant numbers of Muhammadiyah members, had declined joining up with the Crescent-and-Star and led instead the deliberately pluralist National Mandate Party (PAN). This party's poor showing indicated that most Muhammadiyah votes probably went to the older parties, PPP and Golkar, between which they had been divided for most of the Suharto period. The strong association between Muhammadiyah and Golkar reflected the fact that many Muhammadiyah members were civil servants.

The only party with an explicitly Islamic political ideology was the Justice Party (Partai Keadilan). Most of its leaders and cadres had been raised in the Islamic students' movement and its ideology mirrored that of the Muslim Brotherhood. It combined a strong desire for democratisation and overthrow of the old power structure with explicit ideas on Islamic economics and Islamization of the polity. Its poor performance in the voting booth (1.5 percent) should be seen in perspective: many of its voters were highly educated, and the party represents an influential segment of society.

Since no party had won an absolute majority, the election of a new president was to be the result of complicated negotiations between the parties and other relevant actors, including the military. In the aftermath of the elections, Amien Rais forged an alliance of his PAN with the three major Muslim parties, PPP, Crescent-and-Star, and Justice, called the Central Axis (*Poros Tengah*), which appeared to have as its chief aim to prevent Megawati from becoming president. Some, especially the more "fundamentalist", members of the coalition, objected to the very idea of a woman becoming president, others were primarily concerned about the high proportion of Christians in Megawati's PDI-P or doubted her own Muslim credentials.

Habibie, whose Golkar remained strong and who had the power of office, was the strongest alternative to Megawati and had the goodwill of many reformist Muslims, who believed that he was genuinely interested in empowering them. He was too clearly linked to the Suharto period, however. Amien made the unlikely but statesmanlike move of allying with his old rival Abdurrahman Wahid and supporting the latter's bid for the presidency, causing a brief lull in the usually uneasy relations between traditionalist and reformist Muslims.^[58] Once president, Abdurrahman lost little time in antagonizing his allies, and disappointed reformists soon became his fiercest opponents again.

Jihad and the call for the shari`a

It was not through the ballot that the more radical Muslim groups expressed themselves but through street politics. As said before, some of the vigilante-style groups that emerged, and that soon surpassed KISDI in militancy, may owe more to financing by military or civilian circles engaged in a struggle to retain or gain economic and political power, but a few of the radical groups are rooted in the Islamic movement of the preceding decades. The most vigorous of them are the *Majelis Mujahidin*, which consists of those sections of the Darul Islam movement that have come out from the underground, and the *Laskar Jihad*, which came forth from the most puritan wing of the Islamic students' movement. Both are linked up with transnational radical Islamic networks, and members of both — though it is hard to say how many — pride themselves on combat experience or military training in Afghanistan. This has since September 11 led to, thus far unsubstantiated and probably untrue, claims that they are part of Usama bin Ladin's al-Qa'ida network and international pressure on the Indonesian authorities to clamp down on these movements.

The *Laskar Jihad* first came to public attention in early 2000. It was formed in response to the interreligious conflict in the Moluccas and the apparent inability of the government to protect the Muslims there.^[59] The movement that became *Laskar Jihad* had until that moment been an apolitical and quietist one, strongly influenced by the most puritan form of Wahhabi Salafism. Many of its members had at least a few

years university education and had previously taken part in other Islamic student movements or been in contact with the Darul Islam underground. They had come under the influence of a charismatic preacher of Arab descent, Ja`far Umar Thalib, who had spent years in Saudi Arabia and Yemen studying with some of the most uncompromisingly Salafi and conservative ulama and who had previously, through a Wahhabi Salafi network, been sent to Afghanistan to take part in *jihād*. From 1994 to 1999 they contented themselves with teaching and preaching the strictest Wahhabi interpretation of Islam, but the conflict in the Moluccas propelled them into radical activism, spurred on by *fatwas* requested from their Arabian mentors. It opened a training camp in West Java and soon was sending thousands of members to the Moluccas as relief workers and holy warriors.[\[60\]](#)

The *Laskar Jihad* does not appear to believe that Islam enjoins a specific economic and political system — a major difference with Muslim Brotherhood-inspired movements — but is inclined to place (its own interpretation of) the *shari`a* above human-made law. It appears to reject the notions of democracy and popular sovereignty as conflicting with Islam (in accordance with the Wahhabi view that democracy is *kufur*, sinful) and was outspoken in its rejection of Megawati's presidency because of her gender. The *Laskar Jihad* claims it does not take part in the struggle to conquer the state and turn it into an Islamic one because it considers the struggle to improve each individual member's quality as a Muslim more important. (Ja`far Umar Thalib's frequent meetings with military commanders and other power brokers appear to be not entirely consistent with this claim, however.) Its relations with the Dewan Dakwah, especially the more conservative leaders of this Saudi-influenced body, are cordial. After the *Laskar* had executed one of its members for having an illicit sexual relationship, the first instance of a *hudud* punishment in modern times in Indonesia, it was congratulated by the Dewan for upholding the *shari`a*; the young man, who had agreed to this punishment, was posthumously given the “*shari`a* award”.[\[61\]](#)

The *Majelis Mujahidin* gives a different emphasis to its *shari`a* discourse, associating it with the Jakarta Charter and the historical struggle of the Darul Islam movement. It

appears to be a front of various groups that all have some relation with the Darul Islam underground, its chief organizer being the man who in the early 1980s published a series of semi-clandestine bulletins in Yogyakarta, Irfan S. Awwas, and its chief religious authority or *ahl al-hall wa'l-'aqd* being Abu Bakar Ba'asyir of the pesantren of Ngruki, the alleged founder of the Usroh movement, who in 1978 had been arrested in connection with the *Komando Jihad* trials. The Majelis held its first congress in Yogyakarta in August 2000. It was attended by some 1500 people, including several prominent guest speakers, such as the historian Deliar Noer, the Madurese *kyai* (traditional *'alim*) Alawy Muhammad, and the chairman of the Justice Party, Hidayat Nur Muhammad. This suggested a reunion of the formerly underground Darul Islam movement with some of the most outspoken voices of the legal Islamic opposition to the Suharto regime, or at least an endorsement of the former by the latter. The entire congress focused on the implementation of the *shari`a* in Indonesia and the shape that an Islamic state should take; several of the speakers called for a new caliphate. The congress elected Ba'asyir as the supreme leader of the movement, the *amir al-mujahidin*.^[62]

Majelis Mujahidin members began lobbying Muslim parliamentarians on the incorporation of the *shari`a* into the Constitution and have been agitating actively in various provinces and districts (mostly old Darul Islam strongholds) for the enactment of the *shari`a* at the regional level — which they believe to be a possibility under a new law on regional autonomy that allows for locally adopted regulations (although the law leaves matters of religion explicitly with the central government). In concrete terms, imposition of the *shari`a* appears to be understood primarily as the suppression of “vice”, a ban on the sale of alcohol, forced veiling of women, and restrictions on the movement of women unaccompanied by a male protector. Impatient vigilante groups have begun enforcing these bans even before their enactment, raiding bars and hotels, and harassing “improperly dressed” women.^[63] The *Majelis Mujahidin* was also very concerned about the conflict in the Moluccas, in which it perceived an international conspiracy against Indonesian Islam, and like the *Laskar Jihad*, though in smaller numbers, it is believed to have sent members to the Moluccas to take

part in *jihad*.

After September 11, both movements came under suspicion for links with Usama bin Ladin. Ja`far Umar Thalib made it known that in his Afghan days he had in fact met Bin Ladin but did not think of him as a pious Muslim. To make his repudiation of Bin Ladin more credible, the *Laskar Jihad* posted a *fatwa* by the late Saudi *mufti* Bin Baz on its website, in which Bin Ladin is declared an erring sectarian for his rebellion against the Saudi regime and called upon to repent. The *Laskar* refrained from demonstrating against the American assault on Afghanistan — although Ja`far Umar Thalib later went on record with strongly anti-American statements.

Majelis Mujahidin spokesman Awwas, on the other hand, defiantly spoke of his admiration for Bin Ladin while denying direct contact with the al-Qa`ida organization. Transnational connections and combat experience in Afghanistan are a matter of pride in these circles; the recent claims by a well-connected young activist that no less than 15,000 were trained in Afghanistan appear much exaggerated, however. [\[64\]](#) Following the arrests of radical Muslims in the Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore, all of whom were allegedly involved in terrorist activities and all of whom appeared to have links with Abu Bakar Ba`asyir, the latter came under close international scrutiny and pressure was put on the Indonesian authorities to arrest him.

Ba`asyir had in fact spent a decade and a half in exile in Malaysia, having fled after his first prison term when a new trial was pending. He had established a network of contacts among committed Muslims in Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines, occasionally referred to as *Jamaah Islamiyah*. [\[65\]](#) The pesantren in Ngruki was an important node in the network; in the 1990s, its students came from all over Indonesia and included a few from Singapore as well. Preachers from Malaysia regularly visited the pesantren, and an Indonesian who was arrested in Manila with a large amount of explosives was a former student at the pesantren. The Malaysian and Singaporean police authorities perceived Ba`asyir as the regional al-Qa`ida commander, organizing terrorist actions all over Southeast Asia. The publicly

available evidence does not bear this out. It is after all not surprising that many radicals know a man who has for two decades been considered as a leading Darul Islam figure, but there is no indication of his actually controlling these allegedly violent cells. The degree of organization of his network also appears strongly exaggerated.

A third militant group, in fact the first to get organized and keep up a visible presence in the streets of Jakarta, is the Front for the Defence of Islam (*Front Pembela Islam*, FPI), which is widely perceived to be more like a racket of mobs for hire than a genuine Islamic movement. Its chief leader, Habib Rizieq Syihab, is a Jakarta-born Hadrami sayyid, who studied in Saudi Arabia, and several other members of Jakarta's *habaib* (sayyid) community play leading roles in it. The rank-and-file appear to be mostly poor and of low education, from the circles where *habaib* are held in great respect, and one of the functions of the FPI's activities appears to be to give these *habaib* some leverage with the political elite. The FPI carried out raids on bars and brothels but also held political demonstrations, one of them calling for reinstatement of the Jakarta Charter. They also ransacked the offices of the National Human Rights Commission, which they felt had not been objective in its investigation of the Tanjung Priok massacre (where the army had shot hundreds of Muslim demonstrators). The FPI also threatened actions against Americans in Indonesia in retaliation for the assault on Afghanistan. [\[66\]](#)

Concluding observations

In the case of Indonesia, the thesis of a "decline of political Islam" or a shift from "Islamism" to "neo-fundamentalism", such as Olivier Roy perceives elsewhere, is not really tenable. [\[67\]](#) Most of the radical Muslim political movements in Indonesia have been what Roy calls neo-fundamentalist. Islamism, in Roy's sense of a movement with a vision of restructuring society, has hardly existed here. Elements in the Muslim student movement of the 1980s did have a vision of a more just order of society and under the influence of Sayyid Qutb and especially Shari`ati dreamed of an Islamic revolution. But even the self-converted Shi`is, who admired the Iranian revolution, soon turned inward and became

quietist — one group of them might be described as ‘neo-fundamentalists’ but the larger and more influential section turned to mysticism instead. [68]

There are, in fact, numerous Muslims in Indonesia who do have a vision of a society with more economic and political justice and more equal gender relations, but one does not encounter them in the conspicuous radical groups. Both among traditionalists and reformists, young people are searching for a relevant Islamic liberalism, different from Western models and rooted in an authentic Islamic discourse. Young traditionalists dare to go further than their reformist peers, and have been opening a dialogue with (the heirs of) the Marxist left. Intellectually this is the most interesting group, that has discovered and embraced the neo-Ibn Rushdian thinkers of the Muslim West, Hasan Hanafi, Muhammad Abed al-Jabri and so on. In response to the increased prominence of radical groups, liberal Muslims of various shades have also stepped up their activities and are making serious efforts to strengthen their presence on all levels in the public sphere, using the entire range of media including radio and broadsheets, which until recently intellectuals looked down upon and left to the fundamentalists. [69] The activities of these Muslim liberals are, not surprisingly, often financed by foreign sponsors such as the Asia and Ford Foundations, just like those of DDII, KISDI and some of the later radical groups are financed by sponsors in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Pakistan.

The nature of Muslim political movements appears to be a response to the changing political environment (and the availability of foreign funding) rather than to some inherent internal dynamic. Transnational networks — along which people, money, and ideas move — have become extremely important but they are not the sole determining factor. Saudi money has undeniably played a role in shaping debates in Indonesian Islam and in promoting certain interpretations and attitudes rather than others. The remarkable prominence of Indonesian Arabs in the leadership of the more militant groups is probably related to the increasing importance of transnational communications too (besides the religious prestige commonly attributed to Arabs in Indonesia). Arabs have played a prominent part in the transmission of neo-

fundamentalist and *jihadist* discourse from the Middle East to Indonesia. This has not been universally welcomed; there are now the first signs of an anti-Arab backlash among indigenous Indonesian Muslims, who consider this radicalism as alien.

It has been observed by several scholars that governments of Muslim countries (and perhaps especially the secular governments among them) have often, in order to pre-empt radical Islamic opposition movements, taken policy measures that have served to Islamize the economy, legislation and culture.^[70] One might think of Suharto's courting the Islamists as another example in a series of similar accommodations, were it not that Suharto did not have to fear a strong Islamic opposition movement but rather released such a movement and managed to keep it as his apologists and defenders. Of the post-Suharto governments, Habibie's depended even more on the support of the Islamists than Suharto did, and it was under him that radical Muslims were given arms and were employed as paramilitary auxiliaries of the police and army. Abdurrahman Wahid had to face these violent radical groups and attempted to bridle them but failed because of his weak control over the armed forces. There was little doubt that the armed groups were sponsored and given free rein by Wahid's military and civilian opponents. President Megawati has even less legitimacy in the eyes of the Muslim radicals, not only because she is a woman but also because her party is perceived to be dominated by anti-Muslim elements. This has given the conservative Muslim elements in her coalition (represented by vice-president Hamzah Haz) extra leverage, that may result in some Islamizing measures. It has also made her dependent on, if not hostage to, the military. The arrest of Ja`far Umar Thalib in May 2002 and the absence of serious protests against it suggest that it may well be possible to contain the radical groups — but at the cost of the military's return to power.

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[1] A first draft of this paper was written for the international colloquium “L’islam politique à l’aube du XXIème siècle” organized in Tehran on October 28-29, 2001 by the Institute of Political and International Studies and the French Institute of Iranian Studies in Tehran. The present version was written in February-March 2002 and updated in July 2002. The author

thanks Andrée Feillard, Noorhaidi Hasan, Andi Faisal Bakti, and an anonymous reader for their comments on the earlier versions.

[2] On these various radical and violent movements, see: Chaider S. Bamualim et al., *Radikalisme agama dan perubahan sosial di DKI Jakarta [Religious radicalism and social change in the Special Region of Jakarta]*, research report, PBB IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah & Bappeda Pemda DKI Jakarta, 1999/2000; International Crisis Group, "Indonesia: violence and radical Muslims". Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2001; and Noorhaidi Hasan, "Faith and politics: the rise of the Laskar Jihad in the era of transition in Indonesia", *Indonesia* 73 (2002), 145-169.

[3] This introductory survey is necessarily very sketchy. For more substantial accounts, see: Martin van Bruinessen, "Islamic state or state Islam? Fifty years of state-Islam relations in Indonesia", in: Ingrid Wessel (ed.), *Indonesien am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts*. Hamburg: Abera-Verlag, 1996, pp. 19-34, and Robert W. Hefner, *Civil Islam. Muslims and democratization in Indonesia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000. For the first decades of the Republic, Boland's account remains an important source: B.J. Boland, *The struggle of Islam in modern Indonesia*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971.

[4] Hiroko Horikoshi, "The Dar-ul-Islam movement of West Java (1942-62): an experience in the historical process", *Indonesia* 20 (1975), 59-86; C. van Dijk, *Rebellion under the banner of Islam: the Darul Islam in Indonesia*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981; Holk H. Dengel, *Darul-Islam. Kartosuwirjos Kampf um einen islamischen Staat in Indonesien*. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1986.

[5] The formulation of these five principles and their official interpretation have, not surprisingly, been subject to considerable change as the political context changed. For an overview see: Marcel Bonneff et al., *Pantjasila: trente années de débats politiques en Indonésie*. Paris: Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1980. The term of the first principle, belief in God, initially allowed impersonal and immanent conceptions of the Divine, but has from the 1960s on been interpreted as "belief in the One Great God" (KeTuhanan Yang Maha Esa), obliging e.g. Hindus and Buddhists to redefine their beliefs in transcendent and monotheistic terms. Other principles of Pancasila have also undergone what may be called Islamization of their interpretations.

[6] This phrase, “with the obligation, for its adherents, to practice the shari`a of Islam” (*dengan kewajiban menjalankan syariat Islam bagi pemeluknya*) referred probably only to the basic obligations of prayer, fasting, alms-giving, division of inheritance etc., not to any particular political obligations, let alone an Islamic economic and political system. On the debates concerning the Jakarta Charter see Boland, *The struggle of Islam*.

[7] H. Endang Saifuddin Anshari, *Piagam Jakarta 22 Juni 1945 dan sejarah konsensus nasional antara nasionalis Islami dan nasionalis 'sekular' tentang dasar negara Republik Indonesia, 1945-1959* [*The Jakarta Charter of June 22, 1945 and the emergence of a national consensus between Islamic and 'secular' nationalists concerning the state ideology of the Republic of Indonesia, 1945-1959*]. Bandung: Pustaka, 1981.

[8] Not all who remained in Masyumi were reformists, however; many traditionalists in Jakarta and West Java remained faithful to Masyumi and distanced themselves from (Javanese-dominated) NU. Nor did all NU politicians always adopt an accommodating attitude towards Sukarno and Suharto.

[9] Ethnic Javanese constitute by far the largest ethnic group of Indonesia, and their culture dominates the country, to the chagrin of many intellectuals of other ethnic origins. The Java - Outer Island division has been a major factor in Indonesia's political history.

[10] Again, this is a simplification. In NU, for instance, there was a group that was ferociously opposed to Guided Democracy and worked together with Masyumi personalities in the Democratic League (Liga Demokrasi). See, e.g., Greg Fealy, "Rowing in a typhoon: Nahdlatul Ulama and the decline of parliamentary democracy", in: David Bourchier and John Legge (ed.), *Democracy in Indonesia: 1950s and 1990s*. Clayton: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies Monash University, 1994, pp. 88-98.

[11] On this rebellion, known as PRRI/Permesta, see: James Mossman, *Rebels in paradise: Indonesia's civil war*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1961; for an analysis of American policy towards Sukarno in those years: Audrey Kahin and George McTurnan Kahin, *Subversion as foreign policy: the secret Eisenhower and Dulles debacle in Indonesia*. New York: The New Press, 1995.

[12] Ken E. Ward, *The foundation of the Partai Muslimin Indonesia*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1970; Hamish McDonald, *Suharto's Indonesia*. Blackburn, Vict. (Aus): Fontana Books, 1980.

[13] In spite of its great importance, the Dewan Dakwah has hardly been the object of serious research; the only book-length academic study known to me is a mediocre doctoral thesis: Asna Husin, *Philosophical and sociological aspects of da`wah. A study of the Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia*. Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University, New York, 1998.

[14] On the Rabitat al-`Alam al-Islami, see Reinhard Schulze, *Islamischer Internationalismus im 20. Jahrhundert*. Leiden: Brill, 1990.

[15] Golkar had been established as a somewhat leftist, corporatist alternative to the political parties under Sukarno but developed into a sort of state party, dominated by the military and bureaucracy. See: David Reeve, *Golkar of Indonesia: An alternative to the party system*. Singapore, etc: Oxford University Press, 1985.

[16] For an early critical view of this group (reflecting the perceptions of disaffected Dewan Dakwah leaders), see: Kamal Hassan, *Muslim intellectual response to New Order modernization in Indonesia*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa, 1980. Cf. Martin van Bruinessen, "Indonesia's ulama and politics: caught between legitimising the status quo and searching for alternatives", *Prisma, the Indonesian Indicator* no. 49 (1990), 52-69.

[17] For an insider's view of the emergence of this Muslim middle class, see: Aswab Mahasin, "The santri middle class: an insider's view", in: Richard Tanter and Kenneth Young (ed.), *The politics of middle class Indonesia*. Clayton: Monash University Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, 1990, pp. 138-144.

[18] Deliar Noer, *The modernist Muslim movement in Indonesia 1900-1940*. Kuala Lumpur, etc.: Oxford University Press, 1973; G. F. Pijper, "Het reformisme in de Indonesische Islam", in: idem, *Studiën over de geschiedenis van de islam in Indonesia 1900-1950*. Leiden: Brill, 1977, pp. 97-145; Mona Abaza, "Southeast Asia and the Middle East: Al-Manar and Islamic modernity", in: Claude Guillot, et al. (ed.), *From the Mediterranean to the China*

Sea: miscellaneous notes. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998, pp. 93-111; Michael F. Laffan, *The umma below the winds: Mecca, Cairo, reformist Islam and a conceptualization of Indonesia*. Ph. D. thesis, School of Asian Studies, University of Sydney, 2000.

[19] See the biographical notices in: Mona Abaza, *Indonesian students in Cairo: Islamic education, perceptions and exchanges*. Paris: Association Archipel, 1994, pp. 73-90. Abaza mentions two Indonesians who met with Sayyid Qutb in the 1930s. In those years, the latter was not yet affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood, however. Other contacts included such secularist thinkers as Taha Husayn and Mustafa `Abd al-Raziq.

[20] Martin van Bruinessen, "Pesantren and kitab kuning: Continuity and change in a tradition of religious learning", in: Wolfgang Marschall (ed.), *Texts from the islands: Oral and written traditions of Indonesia and the Malay world [= Ethnologica Bernensia 4]*. Berne: The University of Berne Institute of Ethnology, 1994, pp. 121-146.

[21] On the appreciation of this book in Nasser's Egypt, see Hamid Enayat, *Modern Islamic political thought*. London: MacMillan, 1982, pp. 144-9.

[22] See the perceptive notes on A. Hassan in Pijper, "Het reformisme", pp. 120-134; cf. Noer, *The modernist Muslim movement*, pp. 82-92; Howard M. Federspiel, *Islam and ideology in the emerging Indonesian state: the Persatuan Islam (PERSIS), 1923 to 1957*. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Howard M. Federspiel, *Islam and ideology in the emerging Indonesian state: the Persatuan Islam (PERSIS), 1923 to 1957*. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

[23] Two students of Fazlur Rahman became extremely influential in Indonesia: Nurcholish Madjid, who is the best known Muslim intellectual of the country, and M. Syafii Maarif, presently the chairman of Muhammadiyah. Many young thinkers are influenced by Fazlur Rahman, the most remarkable of them being Taufik Adnan Amal, a lecturer in Makassar, who has recently published an original and provocative work on Qur'an interpretation.

[24] For the various intellectual influences of the 1980s, see: Martin van Bruinessen, "Indonesia's ulama and politics: caught

between legitimising the status quo and searching for alternatives", *Prisma, the Indonesian Indicator* no. 49 (1990), 52-69; a more recent overview of the impact of modern Shi'ism on Indonesia is: A. Rahman Zainuddin and M. Hamdan Basyar (ed.), *Syi'ah dan politik di Indonesia [Shi'ism and politics in Indonesia]*. Bandung: Mizan, 2000.

[25] For these alleged conspiracies, see e.g., Abû Hilâl Al-Andûnîsî, *Ghâra tabshîriyya jadîda `alâ Andûnîsyâ [The new evangelical invasion in Indonesia]*. Jidda: Dâr al-shurûq, 1984; Mohamad Natsir, *Islam dan Kristen di Indonesia [Islam and Christianity in Indonesia]*. Jakarta: Media Da'wah, 1988.

[26] I have given an analysis of the role of anti-Semitism in contemporary Indonesian Muslim discourse in: Martin van Bruinessen, "Yahudi sebagai simbol dalam wacana Islam Indonesia masa kini" ["The Jew as a symbol in contemporary Muslim discourse in Indonesia"], in: *Spiritualitas baru: Agama dan aspirasi rakyat [Seri Dian II Tahun I]*. Yogyakarta: Dian/Interfidei, 1994, pp. 253-268. See also Bill Liddle's analysis of DDII's journal, *Media Dakwah*: R. William Liddle, "Media Dakwah scripturalism: one form of Islamic political thought and action in New Order Indonesia", in: Mark R. Woodward (ed.), *Toward a new paradigm: recent developments in Indonesian Islamic thought*. Tempe, Arizona: Arizona State University Program for Southeast Asian Studies, 1996, pp. 323-356. On reformist Muslim publishing in general, see: Robert W. Hefner, "Print Islam: mass media and ideological rivalries among Indonesian Muslims", *Indonesia* 64 (1997), 77-103.

[27] Andr e Feillard, *Islam et arm e dans l'Indon sie contemporaine*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1995, p. 119 reports the understandable unhappiness of Christian circles with this policy. Another senior intelligence officer, the Catholic Sutopo Yuwono, told her that the services were seriously divided over Murtopo's policy.

[28] For a chronology of these events, see: June Chandra Santosa, *Modernization, utopia and the rise of Islamic radicalism in Indonesia*. Ph.D. thesis, Boston University, 1996, pp. 304-310, 430-433.

[29] The main defendant in the Komando Jihad trials, Haji Ismail Pranowo, had been regional commander of the Darul Islam for the province of East Java.

[30] More on the intelligence connection in Martin van Bruinessen, "Islamic state or state Islam? Fifty years of state-Islam relations in Indonesia", in: Ingrid Wessel (ed.), *Indonesien am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts*. Hamburg: Abera-Verlag, 1996, pp. 26-7; Tapol, *Indonesia: Muslims on trial*. London: Tapol/ Indonesian Human Rights Campaign, 1987, pp. 15-6.

[31] The bulletin *Ar-Risalah* and its successor *Ak-Ikhwan* (published after an official ban of the former) ran, among other things, articles on the life and struggle of Darul Islam leaders Kartosuwiryo and Daud Beureu'eh.

[32] Tapol, *Muslims on trial*, pp. 91-4; Santosa, *Modernization*, pp. 335-6. An interesting study, based on fieldwork in this pesantren in 1994, provides useful insight in the ideology, activities, and social networks of these teachers: Farha Abdul Kadir Assegaff, *Peran perempuan Islam (penelitian di Pondok Pesantren Al Mukmin, Sukoharjo, Jawa Tengah)* [*The role of Muslim women: research in the pesantren Al Mukmin, Sukoharjo, Central Java*]. S-2 thesis, Social Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, 1995.

[33] Tapol, *Muslims on trial*, pp. 88-98. This is confirmed by Assegaff, *Peran perempuan Islam*, who mentions Ba'asyir as the originator of the Usroh movement (p. 196), and emphasizes the close links with the Dewan Dakwah (pp. 52-4). A unique recent study of a part of the movement, based on interviews with participants as well as police records, is the thesis by Abdul Syukur, *Gerakan usroh di Indonesia: kasus peristiwa Lampung 1989* [*The Usroh movement in Indonesia: the case of the Lampung incident of 1989*], S-2 thesis, History Department, Universitas Indonesia, 2001.

[34] Tapol, *Muslims on trial*, *passim*; Santosa, *Modernization*, pp. 326-332.

[35] A few days after the September 11 attacks, a young political scientist perceived to be close to the Darul Islam movement, Al Chaidar, made a surprising press statement, claiming that between 1983 and 1989 no less than 30,000 Indonesians had fought alongside the Afghan Mujahidin. This number includes, he further alleged, 15,000 fighters who presently constitute the core of the Darul Islam movement (AFP dispatch, Jakarta, September 21, 2001). Whatever his reason for making this statement, I believe

that it contains at least one zero too many.

[36] Ashadi Siregar, "Budaya mahasiswa pasca NKK" ["Student culture after the law on normalization of campus life"], in: Fauzie Ridjal and M. Rusli Karim (ed.), *Dinamika budaya dan politik dalam pembangunan*. Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana Yogya, 1991, pp. 213-219; Muridan S. Widjojo et al., *Penakluk rejim Orde Baru: gerakan mahasiswa '98 [Vanquishers of the New Order regime: the student movement of 1998]*. Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1999.

[37] Interview with Jalaluddin Rakhmat, leader of the Ikatan Jamaah Ahlul Bait Indonesia, the largest Shi'i association, August 19, 2001. Cf. Zainuddin and Basyar (ed.), *Syi'ah dan politik di Indonesia*.

[38] Faisal Ismail, "Pancasila as the sole basis for all political parties and for all mass organizations: an account of Muslims' responses", *Studia Islamika* vol.3 no.4 (1996), 1-92.

[39] The only serious study of this rejectionist section of the HMI, HMI MPO, is: M. Rusli Karim, *HMI MPO dalam kemelut modernisasi politik di Indonesia [The HMI MPO in the crisis of political modernization in Indonesia]*. Bandung: Mizan, 1997.

[40] Muhammad Wildan, *Students and politics: the response of the Pelajar Islam Indonesia (PII) to politics in Indonesia*. M.A. thesis, Islamic Studies, Leiden University, 1999.

[41] These Bandung training sessions were led by the lecturer Imaduddin Abdurrahman, a former HMI leader who had been opposed to the liberal line adopted by Nurcholish Madjid and was closer to the DDII. He was briefly arrested in 1978 and was forced into exile in the USA during the mid-1980s but could later return and become one of the founders of ICMI. V.S. Naipaul witnessed one of the training sessions in 1981 and describes it in his *Among the believers*. (He revisited Imaduddin a decade later and reports on the latter's enthusiasm for ICMI in *Beyond belief*.) Islamic student activism in Bandung and Yogyakarta is described in the contributions by Nurhayati Djamas and M.M. Billah, respectively, in Abdul Aziz, Imam Tholkhan and Soetarman (eds.), *Gerakan Islam kontemporer di Indonesia [Contemporary Islamic movements in Indonesia]*. Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 1989.

[42] On the role of ABIM as a node in a transnational network connecting it with Indonesia's HMI on the one hand, and the Muslim Brotherhood and the Pakistani Jama'at-i Islami on the other, see: Hussin Mutalib, *Islam and ethnicity in Malay politics*. Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1990, pp. 79-83.

[43] The terminology is confusing. The term "*Salafiyya*" (from *al-salaf al-salih*, "the pious forefathers", whose unspoilt Islam was to be taken as a criterion to judge later practice by) is commonly used to refer to the (modernist) reformism of `Abduh. Like the Wahhabis, `Abduh rejected religious practices that could not be traced to the first generation of Muslims, but he went quite far in allegorical and rational interpretation of the Qur'an, whereas the former reject all but the most literal reading. Neither associated their program of religious purification with a political program. The Muslim Brotherhood of Hasan al-Banna also called itself *Salafi* but did have a political program, which is why some authors (e.g. Schulze, *Islamischer Internationalismus*) speak of "*neo-Salafiyya*". There are yet others who claim the term "*Salafi*" for themselves. The group mentioned here emphatically has no political program, which distinguishes them most clearly from Brotherhood-influenced groups. To prevent ambiguity, I shall refer to this movement as "Wahhabi Salafism." Its history is the subject of a current Ph.D. research project by Noorhaidi Hasan.

[44] The few biographies that I have seen indicate that some of these Wahhabi Salafis had a prior association with *Persis* or *Al Irsyad* (an association of Indonesian Arabs with similar puritan religious views). Indonesians of Arab descent appear to be over-represented in this group.

[45] Muslims constitute 88% of Indonesia's population, but this statistic obscures the fact that at least half of them are either secular or nominal Muslims and do not consider Islam as the most important aspect of their identity. Those who spoke of proportionality implicitly claimed 88% of all positions for their own group, which in fact was only a minority of all Muslims.

[46] One of the best analyses of Suharto's shift towards scripturalist Islam is: R. William Liddle, "The Islamic turn in Indonesia: a political explanation", *The Journal of Asian Studies* 55 (1996), 613-634. Much of Robert Hefner's *Civil Islam* deals with the rise of ICMI and the cooptation of many reformist Muslims. Cf. van Bruinessen, "Islamic state or state Islam?".

[47] Adam Schwarz, *A nation in waiting: Indonesia in the 1990s*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1994, pp. 190-3.

[48] There had been a few times before, however, in which precisely this traditionalist movement had been the major force of opposition. See e.g. Mitsuo Nakamura, "The radical traditionalism of the Nahdlatul Ulama in Indonesia: A personal account of the 26th National Congress, June 1979, Semarang", *Southeast Asian Studies (Kyoto)* 19 (1981), 187-204, and Martin van Bruinessen, *NU: tradisi, relasi-relasi kuasa, pencarian wacana baru [NU: tradition, power relations and the search for a new discourse]*. Yogyakarta: LKiS, 1994, Chapter 3; Feillard, *Islam et armée*, Chapters IV-VI.

[49] See Djohan Effendi, *Progressive traditionalists: the emergence of a new discourse in Indonesia's Nahdlatul Ulama during the Abdurrahman Wahid era*. Ph.D. thesis, Department of Religious Studies, Deakin University, 2000; cf. van Bruinessen, *NU*, Chapter 7.

[50] Liddle, "Media Dakwah scripturalism"; James T. Siegel, "Kiblat and the mediatic Jew", *Indonesia* 69 (2000), 9-40; cf. Bruinessen, "Yahudi".

[51] A recent book provides perhaps the most explicit example: Sidik Jatmika, *Gerakan Zionis berwajah Melayu [Zionism with a Malay face]*. Yogyakarta: Wihdah Press, 2001. It is ostensibly a critique of those Indonesians who are in favour of establishing diplomatic relations with Israel, but the final chapter sketches a world-wide conspiracy involving international NGOs and transnational corporations, joining hands to spread free sex, homosexuality, spiritism, market economy and other evils. The most prominent Malay-faced Zionist attacked here is, unsurprisingly, Abdurrahman Wahid. Wihdah Press is a publishing house associated with the Majelis Mujahidin, the self-declared successor of the Darul Islam movement.

[52] One relatively sophisticated version of this conspiracy theory was published by a member of parliament close to KISDI: H. Hartono Mardjono, *Reformasi politik suatu keharusan. Pengkhianatan politik-ekonomi 1997-1998 sama dengan pengkhianatan G-30-S/PKI 1965 [Political reform needed. The political and economic betrayal of 1997-1998 is identical with the betrayal by the Communist Party's coup attempt of 1965]*. Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1998. A more dangerous version was

produced by a Muslim think tank working for Prabowo Subianto; see Robert W. Hefner, *Civil Islam*, pp. 201-7.

[53] On the spectrum of attitudes in the student movement of 1998, see: Edward Aspinall, "The Indonesian student uprising of 1998", in: Arief Budiman, et al. (ed.), *Reformasi: crisis and change in Indonesia* (Clayton: Monash Asia Institute, 1999), pp. 212-237; Muridan S. Widjojo and Moch. Nurhasim, "Organisasi gerakan mahasiswa 98: upaya rekonstruksi" ["The organization of the student movement of 1998: an attempt at reconstruction"], in: Muridan S. Widjojo, et al. (ed.), *Penakluk rejim Orde Baru: gerakan mahasiswa '98* (Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1999), pp. 290-376.

[54] The political developments and debates of the months before and following Suharto's resignation are beyond the scope of this article. For a meticulous chronological and thematic overview, based mainly on Indonesian press reports, see: Kees van Dijk, *A country in despair: Indonesia between 1997 and 2000*. Leiden: KITLV Press, 2001. Perhaps the most insightful account of this period of transition is in the new chapters of Adam Schwarz' *A nation in waiting: Indonesia's search for stability*. Boulder: Westview Press, 2000.

[55] See the analysis by Gerry van Klinken in *Inside Indonesia*, April-June 2001, p. 20, and by by Hendrajit in *Detak*, no. 146 (4-10 Juli 2001), p. 7. The number of HMI alumni in the preceding parliament, the last to be elected under Suharto, had even been a little higher yet.

[56] On the dispersal of the Muslim vote, see especially: Marcus Mietzner, "Nationalism and Islamic politics: political Islam in the post-Suharto era", in: Arief Budiman, Barbara Hatley & Damien Kingsbury (ed.), *Reformasi: crisis and change in Indonesia*. Clayton: Monash Asia Institute, 1999, pp. 173-199.

[57] The PPP was born out of a forced merger of all Muslim parties, including the NU, in 1973. When outspoken NU politicians were marginalized in PPP, the NU decided at its 1984 congress that it should henceforth be a non-political association and broke off formal ties with the PPP. Many politicians of NU background nevertheless remained active in PPP, but the party was led by reformists until in 1998 Hamzah Haz, a NU politician from West Kalimantan, was elected as its chairman. Hamzah belongs to an NU faction that is hostile to Abdurrahman Wahid

and is known to favour the idea of an Islamic state.

[58] The best account of the negotiations and deals that brought Abdurrahman to the presidency is: Marcus Mietzner, "The 1999 General Session: Wahid, Megawati and the fight for the presidency", in: Chris Manning et al. (ed.), *Indonesia in transition: social aspects of reformasi and crisis*. Singapore: 2000, pp. 39-57.

[59] A discussion of the origins of the conflict in the Moluccas is beyond the scope of this article. In the central Moluccas the conflict began with the expulsion of immigrants from other islands (who were Muslims) by the local Christian elite, and when local Muslims became involved it turned into a vicious internecine war between local Muslim and Christian communities. See: International Crisis Group, "Indonesia: Overcoming murder and chaos in Maluku", Asia report, Brussels, 2000; Gerry van Klinken, "The Maluku wars: bringing society back in", *Indonesia* 71 (2001), 1-26.

[60] Interview with spokesman Abu Zaki in the movement's home base near Yogyakarta, July 9, 2001. The best account of *Laskar Jihad* is Noorhaidi Hasan, "Between faith and politics". The movement is quite forthcoming with information on itself and its activities through the magazine *Salafy* and a regularly updated website, www.laskarjihad.or.id/.

[61] See the Dewan Dakwah's magazine, *Media Dakwah*, June 2001, pp. 54-55.

[62] The proceedings of the conference were published by Irfan S. Awwas as *Risalah kongres Mujahidin I dan penegakan syari'ah Islam [Papers of the First Mujahidin Congress and on the implementation of the shari'a]*. Yogyakarta: Wihdah Press, 2001.

[63] These anti-vice campaigns were not a monopoly of the Mujahidin, however, and in fact were mostly carried out by other militias, see: International Crisis Group, "Indonesia: violence and radical Muslims", pp. 7-8.

[64] Al Chaidar, the author of a number of books on the Darul Islam movement and until recently perceived as very close to the movement, made this statement to the press on September 21, 2001 (as reported in an AFP dispatch and on the www.detik.com

news site).

[65] This name already occurs in the *Usroh* trials of the 1980s; defendants then claimed that the *Jamaah* was not another name for either Darul Islam or *Usroh* (Tapol, *Muslims on trial*, p. 91-94). The Singapore police authorities in early 2002 claimed to have proof that the *Jamaah Islamiyah* was a movement dedicated to establishing a vast Islamic state embracing Malaysia, Indonesia and the southern Philippines (Singapore Government press release, Jan. 11, 2002, and reporting in *The Straits Times*, Jan. 12-26, 2002).

[66] Bamualim, *Radikalisme agama*, pp. 22-37; International Crisis Group, "Indonesia: violence and radical Muslims", pp. 7-8, 12-13.

[67] Olivier Roy, *The failure of political Islam*. London: I.B. Tauris, 1994.

[68] Significantly, the most prominent leader of the Indonesian Shi`a, Jalaluddin Rakhmat, has established a foundation for Sufi teachings, *Tazkiyah Sejati*, in Jakarta and has avoided direct participation in the post-Suharto power struggles.

[69] The most visible of these groups, because of its close association with Jakarta's cultural elite, is the Islam Liberal group, which has radio talk shows, syndicated newspaper columns, a lively email discussion list and a very interesting website, www.islamlib.com/. It is by no means the only group engaging in such activities, nor necessarily the most effective one.

[70] This is one strand of the argument in Gilles Kepel's *Jihad, expansion et déclin de l'islamisme*. Paris: Gallimard, 2000. Cases in point are Egypt, Malaysia and Turkey.