NEW HORIZON OF READING ISLAM AND POLITICS: POST-ISLAMISM IN INDONESIA[1]

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Abstract: *Despite the attempts made by radical Islamists to engulf the political arena of post-Suharto Indonesia by promoting mandatory implementation of shari'a law and jihad, Indonesia has witnessed a new trend in the discourses, actions and movements that seek to push Islam into the center stage. The strategy of implementing the shari'a from below, promoting da'wa (Islamic proselytizing) and non-violent endeavors has been appealing and considered more appropriate to deal with the current situations. There is reason to believe that Indonesia today is in the throes of a post-Islamist path. A sort of synthesis between the call for Islam's importance for public life and democracy, post-Islamism has emerged to be an alternative to Islamist radicalism. Through its endeavour to fuse religiosity and rights, faith and freedom, as well as Islam and liberty, this post-Islamist alternative has enabled Muslims to express their religious beliefs and practices,without plunging into violence and joining a cycle of militancy.*

Keywords: Post-Islamism, Politic, and Indonesia

A. Introduction

Has the threat of Islamism, largely defined as political discourse and activism that aim to change the secular system of society and the state to create an Islamic country by exploiting religious symbols and identities, come to an end in Indonesia?[2] This question should be posed given the demonstrations by radical Islamists who have actively pushed for the implementation of the *shari'a* (Islamic law) and even jihad in several areas

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[1] An earlier version of this article has been published as "Post-Islamist Politics in Indonesia", in Asef Bayat, ed., *Post-Islamism: The Changing Faces of Political Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 157-184.

[2] Scholars of political Islam such as Gilles Kepel, Oliver Roy, and John L. Esposito, to mention but a few names, have debated the appropriateness and usefulness of the term *Islamism*. For a new debate on the term and contested perspectives on its meaning inspired by events after 9/11, refer, for instance, to Richard C. Martin and Abbas Barzegar, eds., *Islamism: Contested Perspectives on Political Islam* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010).

of communal conflict in Indonesia since the fall of Suharto in May 1998. These events are very much alive in our collective memory. As a consequence of the rising tide of Islamist radicalism, many observers during the first decade of post-Suharto Indonesia imagined a bleak future for the most populous Muslim country in the world, one that may today be no different from Pakistan or even Iraq, countries that are gradually being sucked into a maelstrom of political and religious violence. However, after less than fifteen years it has become apparent that these observers need to adjust their pessimistic accounts, in line with Indonesia's growing democracy, which is now characterized by flourishing political activities based on electoral politics within the framework of a democratic system.

Some skeptics still judge Indonesia's emergent democracy as superficial, based on their assumption that it remains procedural rather than functional and is driven by political money and manipulation. Nonetheless, one cannot deny the reality of an electoral democratic system that guarantees much broader public participation in politics, although this participation may lack depth. Moreover, since democracy allows multiple opinions to emerge and claim space on the surface, it guarantees that radical Islamists' attempt to take control of the Indonesian public sphere will end in failure. Indeed, the ongoing consolidation of democracy has contributed to the weakening influence of radical Islamist movements that reject multiculturalism and citizenship, the foundations of democratic life. There is reason to believe that the era of high-profile politics staged by the militant Islamist groups has shifted toward a strategy of implementing the shari'a from below. Attempts to give the shari'a constitutional status and thereby enforce it at the state level ended in failure, attracting insufficient support in the People's Consultative Assembly. This failure ultimately serves to highlight the marginal position of militant Muslims and their unsuccessful efforts to popularize their discourse glorifying militancy and violence.

This paper aims to understand the shifting patterns of Islamic political activism in post-Suharto Indonesia and how this phenomenon is related to the nation's ongoing democratic consolidation and the moderate Muslims' campaign for democratic Islam. The central question to be tackled here is whether Indonesia is in the throes of forging a post-Islamist path. After a brief theoretical discussion on the concept of post-Islamism, this chapter looks at the historical context of the rise of Islamist radicalism that has threatened the burgeoning of democratic Islam in Indonesia and how it has been changing toward the call for

implementation of the shari'a at the personal level through *da'wa* (Islamic proselytizing). Next, it discusses the relentless effort by moderate Muslims to call for democratic Islam that has contributed to the weakening of the influence of radical Islamism. Finally, it examines the way the Prosperous Justice Party has negotiated its Islamist identity and ideology with the pragmatic politics of power sharing in the realities of the democratic electoral process.

B. Post-Islamism

Recent academic debates on the Muslim world have seen a major shift in the pattern of Islamic activism, from collective activism that is revolutionary in character toward an individual activism that accepts the imperatives of modern life. If the first is shaped by ideologies, what Asef Bayat defines as "post-Islamism" distances itself from political nuances and collective militancy while still ensuring harmonization and parallelism between Islam and modernity.[3] Post-Islamism is conceptualized by Bayat as a "conscious attempt to strategize the rationale and modalities of transcending Islamism in social, political, and intellectual domains." Representing "an endeavour to fuse religiosity and rights, faith and freedom, Islam and liberty," it renders religion into a plural reality with multiple meanings and accommodates aspects of democratization, pluralism, multiculturalism, and human rights. Bayat further argues that:

> post-Islamism serves primarily as theoretical construct to signify change, difference, and the root of change... The advent of post-Islamism does not necessarily mean the historical end of Islamism. What it means is the birth, out of the Islamist experience, of a qualitatively different discourse and practice.[4]

Post-Islamism is embedded in the process of cultural transaction that reflects how global cultures are assimilated in a locality. In today's society it seems difficult to separate the process of social, cultural, and political change from the development of global dynamics. Undeniably, the advancement of information and communication technology has significantly affected everyday lives in almost all parts of the world, with

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[3] Asef Bayat, "What Is Post-Islamism?" *ISIM Review* 16, no. 5 (2005): 5; see also Asef Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic. Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 10–11.

[4] Bayat, "What is Post-Islamism?", 5.

several significant repercussions. Globalization has not only changed the way people relate to space but also contributed to the creation of a homogenized culture, toward a synchronization of taste, consumption, and lifestyle.[5] On a more positive note, globalization has also deepened the penetrative forces of modern values such as democracy, tolerance, and human rights.

In parallel with the rapid process of globalization, the Muslim world has in fact seen major transformations. These include a greater sense of autonomy for both men and women and the emergence of a public sphere in which politics and religion are subtly intertwined. Mass education and mass communications have facilitated an awareness in Muslims of the need to reconfigure the nature of religious thought and action, create new forms of public space, and encourage debate over meaning. Within this context Islam has become the subject of dialogue and civil debate. Open contests over the use of the symbolic language of Islam and its meanings have increasingly shaped this new sense of public space that is discursive, performative, and participative. In such engagements, publicly shared ideas of community, identity, and leadership take new shapes.[6]

One noticeable effect of these developments is the proliferation of forms of piety that appear as congruent with the principles of individual freedom and democracy and are removed from their traditional religious moorings. Islam is presented in a way that is sophisticated, fresh, and hybrid, in order to make it an appealing alternative to urban, capitalist cultures. This has given rise to a sense of personalized Muslimhood, which conceals a clear shift from the earlier emphasis of Islamism on the Islamist polity to one on personal piety.[7] The model of Muslimhood presents both a challenge and an opportunity to rethink the established boundaries between the private and the public. Now individuals can

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[5] Arjun Appadurai, "The Production of Locality," in *Counterworks: Managing the Diversity of Knowledge*, ed. Richard Fardon (London: Routledge, 1995), 208–229; see also Manuel Castells, *The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture, vol. II: The Power of Identity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000).

[6] See, for instance, Armando Salvatore, "The Genesis and Evolution of 'Islamic Publicness' under Global Constraints," *Journal of Arabic, Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies* 3, no. 1 (1996): 51–70; Dale Eickelman and James Piscatory, *Muslim Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); Dale Eickelman "Islam and the Language of Modernity," *Daedalus* 129 (2000): 119–135.

[7] Jenny B. White, "The End of Islamism? Turkey's Muslimhood Model," in *Remaking Muslim Politics*, ed. Robert W. Hefner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 87–111.

choose from an expanded range of options among a wider assortment of religious representations, both traditional and secular, manufactured, packaged, and retailed by specialized service agencies. This free choice in turn offers individuals the opportunity to patch religious fragments together into a subjectively meaningful whole and transform them into powerful symbols able to be enacted in public.[8]

In the same vein Göle has argued that post-Islamist identities have enabled Muslims to experience the "banalization process." Actors from diverse backgrounds are involved in shaping the face of Islam in the public space and may enter into the modern urban context with little hesitance. By using global communication networks they participate in public debates, track patterns of consumption, and study the rules of the market while at the same time embracing individualistic, professional, and consumerist values.[9] This statement does not mean that Islam no longer functions as a source of guidance in Muslim life. Although its traditional function of stirring collective actions in society has faded, it serves as an inspiration imbued in the social and cultural imagination of the community, whereby society has transformed itself to accommodate modernization and globalization. It is as if we are seeing a synthesis between the wave of Islamism, on one hand, and, on the other, the growth of modern and secular education, and of free market values and democratic idioms, in the Muslim world.

Post-Islamism can be seen as an alternative that gains ground amid the failure of the project that attempts to position Islam as a political ideology and is thereby changing the political landscape of Muslim states. The experiences of many Muslim states confirm that the Islamist project has instead stigmatized Islam and transformed it into an enemy of modern civilization. As an alternative to religious radicalism, post-Islamism offers Muslims a way to actualize religious beliefs and values while still following the path of modernity and globalization, without plunging into violence and joining a cycle of militancy. Democratic values, which form the foundations of practical Islam and the politics of contemporary Muslim

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[8] Jose Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 36–37.

[9] Nilufer Göle, "Islamic Visibilities and Public Sphere," in *Islam in Public: Turkey, Iran, and Europe*, ed. Nilufer Göle and Ludwig Ammann (Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi University Press, 2006), 3–43.

society, suggest that being a democratic Muslim is no longer an oxymoron.[10]

In the context of Indonesia the roots of post-Islamism began to gain ground in tandem with the rise of the new Muslim middle class, which has gotten involved in the debates about objectifying Islam. Their rising demands for a more nuanced lifestyle—as the Islamic revival has swept across Indonesia since the 1980s—urged them to adopt Islamic symbols as a mode of modern cultural expression in public spaces.[11] Islamic symbols appear in middle-class attempts to construct new narratives of themselves and their place in the world from creative blends of their own cultural inheritance and global influences.[12] In response to the growing demand for the availability of religious space within the urban landscape of metropolitan and big cities, luxury Islamic centers, with a large mosque as the main building surrounded by training and educational buildings, shops, and a hotel, have been constructed on large tracts of land in major cities such as Jakarta, Surabaya, and Makassar. The new Muslim middle class comes to these places to engage in reciting the Quran, chanting *dhikr* (the profession of the faith), and the like while discussing various aspects of Islam. In this way Indonesian Islam has experienced a process of commodification, favoring global high technology and catering to consumerist Islamic appetites.[13] Styled in accordance with the (upper) middle class and new wealth's appetite and symbolized by religious insignia of all kinds, the post-Islamist identity has fostered a pluralist vision of Islam that contributes to the burgeoning of democracy.

C. Shades of Militant Islamism

The proliferation of the seeds of democratic Islam faced a serious challenge when the wave of Islamist radicalism erupted in the aftermath of the collapse of Suharto's New Order regime in May 1998. By that time, a number of militant Islamist groups had come to the fore and achieved

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[10] Vali Nasr, "The Rise of 'Muslim Democracy,'" *Journal of Democracy* 16, no. 2 (2005): 13–27.

[11] Moeflich Hasbullah, "Cultural Presentation of the Muslim Middle Class in Contemporary Indonesia," *Studia Islamika* 7, no. 2 (2000): 1–58.

[12] Ariel Heryanto, "The Years of Living Luxuriously. Identity Politics of Indonesia's New Rich," in *Culture and Privilege in Capitalist Asia*, ed. Michael Pinches (London: Routledge, 1999), 159–187.

[13] Mona Abaza, "Markets of Faith: Jakartan *Da'wa* and Islamic Gentrification," *Archipel* 67 (2004): 173–202.

notoriety by taking to the streets to demand the comprehensive implementation of the shari'a (Islamic law), raiding cafés, discotheques, casinos, brothels, and other reputed dens of iniquity and, most importantly, calling for jihad in the Moluccas and other Indonesian trouble spots. They had (and have) names such as the Front Pembela Islam (Defenders of Islam Front), the Laskar Jihad (Holy War Force), the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (Indonesian Holy Warriors Council), the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI, Islamic Community), and the Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI, Indonesian Islamic Party of Liberation), to mention but a few. They sought to impose a totalitarian world order by disseminating religious doctrines and via activism that espoused norms, symbols, and rhetoric imbued with animosity. The challenge posed by these groups intensified when bombs exploded in a nightclub at Legian, Bali, in October 2002. This bombing was followed by explosions at the Marriot Hotel in Jakarta in 2003, outside the Australian Embassy in Jakarta in 2004, again in Bali in late 2005, and more recently at Jakarta's Marriot and Ritz-Carlton hotels. While a moderate understanding of Islamic doctrines apparently remains the foundation of mainstream Indonesian Islam, the series of bombing attacks has served as a reminder that anti-civilian violence is a recurrent phenomenon in Indonesia today.

The expansion of militant Islamist groups was clearly emblematic of the expansion of Islamist ideology and violent activism in the political arena of post-Suharto Indonesia. This ideology asserts the shari'a as the highest law and the single source of all legislation. Militant Islamists define the shari'a as containing all of God's rules derived from the Quran and Sunna, which provide a comprehensive and universal guide and solution for every problem facing humankind. Their sense of urgency is perhaps heightened by the recent and protracted economic, political, and social crises that have afflicted Indonesian Muslim society. True and faithful Muslims therefore have no choice but to abide by the shari'a. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, the commander (*amir*) of Indonesian *mujahidin* (holy warriors) and leader of the *ahl al-hall wa'l aqd* (advisory council) of Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia, gave a speech to the first national congress of *mujahidin* in August 2000. He proclaimed that application of the shari'a is a nonnegotiable imperative and argued that its rejection must be countered by jihad.[14] He stated his belief that application of the shari'a would lead

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[14] Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, "Sistem Kaderisasi Mujahidin dalam Mewujudkan Masyarakat Islam," in *Risalah Kongres Mujahidin I dan Penegakan Syari'ah Islam*, ed. Irfan S. Awwas (Yogyakarta: Wihdah Press, 2001), 79–90.

Indonesia to solve its various crises. In his eyes the shari'a proved itself by being the leading political system for about fourteen centuries. It expanded throughout the world, bringing peace, justice, and prosperity. It was not until 1924, when worldly temptations (*penyakit kemewahan*) began to overwhelm the Muslim *ummah* (community), that its superiority was undermined by secular ideologies.[15] In an interview, he insisted that the shari'a is final (*harga mati*). It is not to be negotiated or debated. Rejecting the shari'a might even lead a Muslim ruler to apostasy.[16]

HTI's leader, Muhammad al-Khaththath, saw the importance of the shari'a as an alternative to secular ideologies, including nationalism, socialism, and capitalism, which are claimed to have exerted domination over the world but to have failed to bring humankind to a full realization of both its material and its spiritual dimensions. The shari'a is asserted as a means of establishing the *khilafa* system, which is the main goal of the organization. In al-Khaththath's opinion, the failure to enforce the shari'a will steer Indonesian Muslims clear of the only Islamic system that will bring them out of their crises and allow them to achieve prosperity, wealth, and justice.[17] Considering the necessity to establish the *khilafa* system, the chairman of HTI's Central Leadership Board, Hafidz Abdurrahman, has highlighted that every Muslim is obliged to participate in any attempts toward the implementation of the shari'a.[18] HTI's spokesperson, Muhammad Ismail Yusanto, has emphasized that the existing secular system has been flawed since the beginning. It simply marginalizes the role of religion in the Indonesian public sphere, as the system treats religion as merely a personal or private matter.[19] Members of the organization took to the streets to champion the slogan "Save Indonesia with the shari'a." HTI's belief is that Indonesia's dependence on Western countries, which has brought nothing but severe economic and political crises, can only be eliminated through the shari'a. Yusanto maintains that the shari'a is a mercy for all humankind. It is relevant to all problems faced by all people, regardless of ethnicity or religion. Its

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[15] Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, "Pemikiran Politik dan Dakwah Islam," in *Dakwah dan Jihad Abu Bakar Ba'asyir*, ed. Irfan S. Awwas (Yogyakarta: Wihdah Press, 2003), 136-137.

[16] Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, interview by the author, Surakarta, August 2006.

[17] Muhammad al-Khaththath, "Khilafah, Wajib Ditegakkan dan Perlu," *Al-Wai'e* 55 (March 2005), pp. 75-77.

[18] Hafidz Abdurrahman, "Menegakkan Khilafah Kewajiban Paling Agung," *Al-Wai'e* 55 (March 2005), pp. 12-18.

[19] Muhammad Ismail Yusanto, "Hizbut Tahrir Menolak Kepemimpinan Sekuler," *Pernyataan Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia*, *No. 060/PU/E/09/04*, Issued in the demonstration in Jakarta, on September 11, 2004 .

universality is predicated on the universality of Islam as a religion revealed by God.[20]

D. Toward the Shari'a from Below

The militant Islamists' discourse emphasizing the need for a change in the political structure as a means to implement the shari'a in a comprehensive manner has gradually shifted toward the application of the shari'a from below, in tandem with the efflorescence of Islamic popular culture. Trendy, colorful *jilbab*s (head scarves) for women and *baju koko* (Muslim shirts) for men have achieved prominence as symbols facilitating the interest of the Muslim middle class in demonstrating their religious identity as well as social status. They are involved in Islamic teaching sessions at five-star hotels and mass ritual programs such as *dhikr akbar* (remembrance of God) organized at grand mosques in metropolitan cities such as Jakarta and Surabaya. Coupled with the expansion of new da'wa genres, such as cyber da'wa and cellular da'wa, the growth of Islamic popular culture has offered Muslims alternatives in actualizing their religious beliefs and practices. Hence the irrelevance of militant Islamists' repudiation of the state democratic system claimed to have blocked the Islamist dream of making Islam visible and victorious.

Many militant Islamist leaders who had been at the front line to call for jihad in the conflict areas in the Moluccas and Poso, Central Sulawesi, now put new emphasis on the need to apply the shari'a at the personal level. This is considered a prerequisite for the establishment of a Muslim society. The attempt to raise individual awareness of the importance of the shari'a as guidance for Muslims in their everyday life is believed to be more crucial than its application by the state. After his release from prison in mid-2006, even Ba'asyir stated his opinion that the attempt to impose the application of the shari'a at the state level could disturb the main purpose of Muslim struggle, that is, upholding the principle of *tawhid* (obedience to God) as a foundation of Muslim belief. Individual consciousness of consistently applying the shari'a at the personal level—being a manifestation of one's total obedience to God—would automatically change the nation's political landscape as a whole. In Ba'asyir's opinion, his call on Muslims to participate in armed jihad against Christian enemies in early 2000 was linked up with the escalated conflicts

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[20] Ibid

between Muslims and Christians in the Moluccas and Poso. He was convinced that the conflicts that had killed thousands of Muslims and displaced other thousands was a result of the state leadership's idle disregard for the fate of Muslims and also their neglect of their main task to make Islam's victory into a reality. Instead, he argued, they served as a *taghut,* evil power who collaborated with the Zionists and the West to undermine Islam and the ummah. As a result, Indonesia had become a *dar al-harb* (realm of war) where jihad was necessitated. The fact that the conflicts have come to an end in parallel with the opening of more opportunities for Muslims to express their religious beliefs and identities, according to Ba'asyir, has rendered the status of Indonesia as the *dar al-harb* no longer relevant. In his eyes, Indonesia is now a *dar al-aman* (realm of Islam) that enables da'wa to flourish.[21]

While supporting the idea of implementing the shari'a from below, other militant Islamist leaders, such as former JI commander Nasir Abbas, stridently criticized Osama bin Laden's *fatwa* on the compulsion for every Muslim to participate in jihad, meaning killing Americans and their Zionist allies wherever they are.[22] In Abbas's point of view, bin Laden's jihad ideology and his pseudo fatwa on the compulsion to fight jihad against Americans and their allies were based on a false understanding about the essence of jihad.[23] His criticism of bin Laden's fatwa marked the shift in the ideological position of the JI leadership concerning jihad, resulting in conflict among them. In the same vein, Laskar Jihad former commander Ja'far Umar Thalib insisted that bin Laden was not qualified as a *mufti*, so his fatwa should be abandoned. Reiterating his persistent criticism of jihadist proponents, he highlighted what he understood as a danger of jihad when interpreted and applied wrongly by the followers of *bid'a* (reprehensible innovation). In his opinion, jihad is only legitimate under some conditions, among them that permission had to be obtained from the authorities and that it would only be for defense purposes.[24] Both Abbas and Thalib were of the opinion that bin Laden's call for jihad has instead brought disunity among Muslims and put the Muslim world into a war with the West.

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[21] Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, interview by the author, Surakarta, August 2006.

[22] For more detail, see, among others, Peter Mandaville, *Global Political Islam* (London: Routledge, 2007), 248–256.

[23] Nasir Abbas, *Membongkar Jamaah Islamiyah (Pengakuan Mantan Anggota JI)* (Jakarta: Grafindo, 2008).

[24] Ja'far Umar Thalib, interview, at a defunct website, www.alghuroba.org,, accessed March 19, 2009.

Aware of the political change occurring in Indonesia that facilitated the peace process in various conflict areas such as the Moluccas and Poso, as indicated above, the militant Islamist leaders did not simply criticize bin Laden's interpretation of jihad; they no longer saw any relevance for jihad as a means of realizing the application of the shari'a. Instead, they argued that da'wa (Islamic proselytizing) is more appropriate to make Indonesian Muslims aware of their duty to uphold the supremacy of the shari'a. On many occasions Ba'asyir himself promoted nonviolent endeavors to defend Muslim solidarity and struggle for the application of the shari'a. He now claimed that violence gives Islam itself a bad image. In response to demonstrations against the Israeli war in Lebanon and George W. Bush's visit to Indonesia in late 2006, Ba'asyir warned that demonstrators should hold peaceful protests and avoid any violent act. It was not the first time that Ba'asyir had called for peaceful demonstration. He even showed his disagreement with the path taken by Azahari and Noordin M. Top, two Malaysians believed to be behind terrorist bombings in Indonesia. In Ba'asyir's opinion, violence associated with armed jihad is only legitimate when enemies are attacking Muslims, thus in a defensive position to protect their dignity as part of the Muslim ummah.

As Ba'asyir has pointed out, the most suitable strategy for implementing the shari'a in Indonesia today is not jihad but, rather, informing Indonesian Muslims of the magnificence of the shari'a. In his eyes, this is consistent with the Prophetic strategy of da'wa to give hope (*tabshir*) and threat (*indhar*): the hope of heaven and the threat of hell. Following the Prophet, Ba'asyir related the implementation of the shari'a to the relationship between a person's life in this world and that in the hereafter. Every individual is a leader: a leader for oneself, one's family, one's village, and above all for one's country. Individuals are responsible in the hereafter for whatever they have done in this world. Political leaders who do not create laws to prevent their people from being condemned to hell will face retribution in the hereafter; they will be responsible for all people's sins.[25] However, this does not mean that Ba'asyir totally neglects the importance of jihad; he just sees da'wa as more appropriate to Indonesia's current situation. He sees da'wa and jihad as twin concepts, as alternate ways to establish God's laws on earth. In his eyes, the West has demonized and criminalized jihad because they are afraid of Muslims' return to the past glorious victory of Islam. Ba'asyir argued that Islam becomes weak if it is separated from jihad. Only with jihad will Islam gain

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[25] Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, interview by the author, Surakarta, August 2006.

honorable victory. However, he maintained that jihad should not be understood simply as holy war. It connotes any efforts to establish God's laws, and da'wa in this context is considered the most suitable way to realize the spirit of jihad.[26]

Commenting on the need to conduct da'wa in order to bring about the application of the shari'a, Yusanto emphasized the basic nature of Islam as a peaceful religion. In his opinion, jihad should be interpreted in its broadest sense, as any struggle for doing good deeds. This includes the commitment to perform daily prayers, fasting, the pilgrimage to Mecca, serving other people, and assisting the poor. In other words, jihad is no different from da'wa itself, meaning *amr ma'ruf*, "enjoining good," and *nahy munkar*, "opposing vice."[27] On a similar note, M. Rahmat Kurnia, another HTI activist, said that HTI promoted "nonviolent da'wa" (*dakwah tanpa kekerasan*). In his opinion, "violent da'wa simply engenders negative impacts on Muslims and jeopardizes their struggle as a whole."[28]

E. Moderate Muslim Response to Radical Islamism

The change in the militant Islamists' discourse toward calling for the implementation of the shari'a from below is indubitably associated with the ongoing democratic consolidation occurring in Indonesia, which has witnessed a transition away from authoritarianism over the last decade or so. This dynamic began with the downfall of Suharto in May 1998, which brought his New Order authoritarian regime that had been in power for more than thirty-two years to an end. The collapse of the New Order regime heralded the Reformasi, which has had a tremendous impact on the current dynamics of Indonesian politics. Coupled with the weakening of state power, the far-reaching process of liberalization and democratization that followed Suharto's demise opened a space in which large numbers of Indonesian people could discuss and develop opinions on the issues that affected their lives. A variety of groups, identities, and interests thus emerged, competing for the newly liberated public sphere. At the dawn of the Reformasi era, B. J. Habibie came to power as Suharto's replacement and embarked on a course of political reform. He promised to reschedule elections, release political prisoners, decentralize political power, allow political parties to operate freely, and liberalize the press. His initiatives to meet the demands for reform brought the first free

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[26] Ibid

[27] M. Ismail Yusanto, interview by the author, Surakarta, July 2006.

[28] M. Rahmat Kurnia, interview by the author, Jakarta, 2005.

and fair parliamentary elections since 1955, which were held in 1999 and led to the election of the late Abdurrahman Wahid as president.[29] More importantly, Reformasi paved the way for Indonesia to embark on a democratization process that extended people's rule to an increasing number of institutions and issues and thus guaranteed popular control and political equity.[30] Within this context Law No. 22/1999 was ratified on regional autonomy, devolving much of the administration's authority to local governments. This law promoted democratization, thereby allowing Indonesian people to get involved in political life and the decision-making process.[31] The last two successful general elections, held in 2004 and 2009, brought victory to the Democratic Party and brought its founder, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, to power as the first president directly elected by the people. Under the leadership of Yudhoyono the effort to strengthen democracy, good governance, and justice has continued.

No doubt, the ongoing democratic consolidation occurring in post-Suharto Indonesia has reduced the room to maneuver that had been available to militant Islamist groups. Broader spaces available for Muslims to express their interests and participate in politics have not only delegitimized the Islamist campaign for the establishment of an Islamic state but also moderated their vision about the ideal position of the ummah vis-à-vis the state. Moussalli has argued that there is a correlation between democracy and moderation in radical Islamist discourse, the development of which originated in a reaction to the political, economic, and international conditions of the Muslim world. He has further argued that radical violent Islamist discourse is only relevant when it is faced with isolation from society under conditions of social disunity, corruption, exploitation, and undemocratic regimes. The discourse automatically

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[29] See Marco Bünte and Andreas Ufen, "The New Order and Its Legacy: Reflections on Democratization in Indonesia," in *Democratization in Post-Suharto Indonesia*, ed. Marco Bünte and Andreas Ufen (London: Routledge, 2009), 3–28; see also Dewi Fortuna Anwar, "The Habibie Presidency," in *Post-Soeharto Indonesia: Renewal or Chaos?* ed. Geoff Forrester (Singapore: ISEAS, 1999), 33–47.

[30] Anders Uhlin, *Indonesia and the "Third Wave of Democratization": The Indonesian Pro-Democracy Movement in a Changing World* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997).

[31] P. Pratikno, "Exercising Freedom, Local Autonomy and Democracy in Indonesia, 1999–2001," in *Regionalism in Post-Suharto Indonesia*, ed. Maribeth Erb, Priyambudi Sulistiyanto, and Carole Faucher (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), 21–35; see also Henk Schulte Nordholt and Gerry van Klinken, "Introduction," in *Renegotiating Boundaries. Local Politics in Post-Suharto Indonesia*, ed. Henk Schulte Nordholt and Gerry van Klinken (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2007), 1–29.

moderates when the state provides sufficient spaces and freedom for Islamists to participate in dealing with public issues and concerns.[32]

The narrowing of spaces for maneuver available to militant Islamist groups as a result of democratization has cohered with Indonesia's increasing awareness of the danger of Islamist radicalism and terrorism. Following the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001, Jakarta came under constant international pressure to act swiftly against the alleged terrorist networks operating in the country. In the context of the global campaign against terror, the Indonesian government eventually had no choice but to join the international coalition to fight against terrorism. After the first Bali bombing in 2002, the Indonesian government took more serious initiatives to tackle radical religious threats and allocate a bulk of its resources to act against terrorism. New regulations have been enacted to provide legal devices for combating terrorism. President Megawati Soekarnoputri issued, for example, the Government Regulation in Lieu of Statute No. 1/2002 on War against Terrorist Crimes and Presidential Instruction No. 4/2002, which instructs the coordinating state minister of politics and security affairs to take the necessary steps to implement the regulation. These regulations were strengthened by Law Nos. 15 and 16/2003 on antiterrorism. President Yudhoyono has continued the campaign by strengthening counterterrorist capabilities through networking and programs of training and education, seminars, conferences, and joint operations. As a result, many terrorist cells have been destroyed, and their operational spaces have been tightened. For instance, Dr. Azahari was shot by antiterror police in a raid operation in his hideout in Malang, East Java. His supporting cells in Semarang, Wonosobo, Surakarta, Sleman, and Surabaya were subsequently discovered.

In tandem with the ongoing democratic consolidation and the war on terror, nascent opposition across the spectrum of Muslim democrats against militant Islamists has begun to gain ground in Indonesia. The wave of Islamist militancy marked by the mounting call for the shari'a and jihad has increasingly been seen as threatening three principles of democratic life: (1) the raison d'être of the *rechtstaat* (law state) and the rule of law, (2) the sovereignty of the people, and (3) the unity and plurality of Indonesian society. These three principles demand that state legislatures

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[32] Ahmad S. Moussalli, *Moderate and Radical Islamic Fundamentalism: The Quest for Modernity, Legitimacy and the Islamic State* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999), 104–105.

should be built, enforced, and developed in accordance with democratic principles. In other words, the application of the shari'a and jihad contradicts the principles of human rights, as guaranteed by the Indonesian constitution.[33] More and more Muslim moderates show an increasing awareness of the danger of the militant Islamists' call for the shari'a and jihad to multiculturalism and democracy. Together with local activists and elites outside the power circle, they are involved in movements campaigning for civic freedom.[34]

Moderate Muslims concerned with this matter set up a variety of NGOs as loci for their activism. Examples of these kinds of organizations include Jaringan Islam Liberal (JIL, Liberal Islamic Network), the International Center for Islam and Pluralism (ICIP), the Wahid Institute (TWI), and the Ma'arif Institute for Culture and Harmony, to mention but a few. JIL was set up in Jakarta in 2002 by a group of Jakarta-based young intellectuals, such as Ulil Abshar Abdalla, Luthfi Assyaukanie, Saeful Mujani, and Ahmad Sahal. They organized discussions, seminars, and workshops to disseminate liberal, progressive views on Islam. They also established an active Web site and a moderated chat group on the Internet as an interactive forum for critical debates on Islam—which frequently provoked heated reactions from their critics. The Web site quickly expanded with the establishment of media syndication. Columns and articles discussing progressively varied aspects of Islamic teaching spread widely beyond the network and appeared outside Muslim-related publications. Popular radio stations set up chat shows to discuss day-to-day needs and offer answers to the problems of Muslims from the progressive point of view on air.[35] Similar to JIL, ICIP has been concerned with the dissemination of progressive, tolerant, and open-minded ideas about Islam. Under the leadership of Muhammad Syafi'i Anwar and Syafiq Hasyim, it actively organized discussions, seminars,

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[33] Tim Imparsial, "Penyeragaman dan Totalisasi Dunia Kehidupan Sebagai Ancaman terhadap Hak Asasi Manusia, Sebuah Studi Kebijakan di Indonesia" (research report, Jakarta, 2006).

[34] Ihsan Ali-Fauzi and Saiful Mujani, *Gerakan Kebebasan Sipil Studi dan Advokasi Kritis atas Perda Syariah* (Jakarta: Nalar, 2009), 91–112.

[35] For a further account on JIL, see, for instance, Zuly Qodir, *Islam Liberal: Paradigma Baru Wacana dan Aksi Islam Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2003); Angela M. Rabasa, Cheryl Benard, Lowell H. Schwartz and Peter Sickle, *Building Moderate Muslim Networks* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2004); and Ahmad Ali Nurdin, "Islam and State: A Study of the Liberal Islamic Network in Indonesia, 1999–2004," *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies* 7, no. 2 (2005): 20–39.

workshops, and conferences with the main aim of strengthening pluralism and multiculturalism in Indonesia.[36]

While JIL and ICIP incorporated progressive Muslim thinkers from any segment of the faithful, TWI was established by a group of young Muslim intellectuals affiliated to the largest mainstream Muslim organization, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). The founders include Ahmad Suaedy, Rumadi, and Abdul Moqsith Ghazali. A forum to disseminate progressive ideas by the most outstanding NU scholar and liberal thinker, Abdurrahman Wahid, TWI has been active in organizing campaigns for tolerant Islam, pluralism, and religious freedom. Various innovative programs have been introduced both to facilitate communication and cooperation between Muslim and non-Muslim progressive intellectuals and to enhance Muslim intellectuals' capacity to raise awareness among grassroots Muslims of the importance of pluralism and democracy.[37] Progressive Muhammadiyah intellectuals led by Ahmad Syafii Ma'arif followed in the footsteps of their NU counterparts by establishing the Ma'arif Institute in 2003. Its main mission is to disseminate Islamic reform through interreligious dialogues and cooperation.[38] Through various programs and initiatives, the institute serves as a forum for young progressive Muhammadiyah intellectuals to promote critical thinking on religious issues relevant to contemporary Muslim interests.[39]

Beyond the boundaries of these organizations, representatives of mainstream Indonesian Muslims in NU and Muhammadiyah have also expressed their specific concern about the threats of militancy and radicalism. In response to the threats posed by militant Islamist groups who campaign for the shari'a, seek to circumscribe the rights of

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[36] On the establishment of ICIP and its main mission, see, for instance, K. Khudori, "ICIP: Menapaki Jejak Transformasi Pluralisme ke Pluralitas," in PSIK, *Pluralisme dan Kebebasan Beragama: Laporan Penelitian Profil Lembaga* (Jakarta: PSIK Universitas Paramadina, 2008), 149-176.see also Budhy Munawar-Rachman, *Reorientasi Pembaruan Islam: Sekularisme, Liberalisme dan Pluralisme Paradigma Baru Islam Indonesia* (Jakarta: LSAF, 2010), 77–88.

[37] Ahmad Suaedy, director of the Wahid Institute, interview by the author, Jakarta, July 19, 2010; Rumadi, a Nahdlatul Ulama young intellectual, interview by the author, Jakarta, July 9, 2010.

[38] Fajar Reza Ul Haq, director of the Ma'arif Institute, interview by the author, Jakarta, July 20, 2010.

[39] On the profile of TWI, see its Web site, www.wahidinstitute.org; see also Munawar-Rachman, *Reorientasi Pembaruan Islam*, 101–110. As for the Ma'arif Institute, see M. Hilaly Basya, "Religious Leaders and Democratic Transition in Post–New Order Indonesia: A Study on the Role of Muhammadiyah Scholars in Reducing Radical Islamic Movements" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Leiden University, Leiden, 2010).

minorities, marginalize pluralist sentiments, and even call for jihad, these moderates have worked closely together to promote discourses on interreligious harmony, democracy, egalitarianism, and gender equality. At the same time, they continue to exercise a profoundly moderating and democratic influence on Islam and Indonesian politics, through their campaigns asserting that Islam and democracy are compatible and via their condemnation of Islamic radicalism. They have not only rejected proposals to implement the shari'a but also organized meetings to condemn terrorist actions committed in the name of Islam. To them, terrorism cannot be tolerated, since it is in total opposition to Islam.[40]

A former NU leader and president, the late Abdurrahman Wahid argued that the mounting calls for the shari'a were clearly against Indonesian democratic ideals. His unqualified conviction was that democracy cannot accept the application of Islamic law. In a democratic nation-state, the implementation of an Islamic legal system would subordinate non-Muslims to Muslim citizens, in effect making them second-class citizens.[41] Wahid's counterpart, former Muhammadiyah leader Ahmad Syafii Ma'arif, insisted that Islam upholds the principle of unity for all mankind, whereby a culture of tolerance is encouraged. In his opinion, democracy has a strong foundation in Islam.[42]

Ma'ruf Amin, the head of the fatwa committee of the Indonesian Council of Ulama (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, MUI), strongly condemned terrorism perpetrated in the name of jihad. He insisted that whereas terrorism spreads violence and fear, jihad, when performed correctly in accordance with its proper conditions and rules, brings peace for the people. In his eyes, jihad is, in essence, Muslims' utmost struggle to realize the common good. It is not terrorism. Consequently, suicide bombing claimed for the sake of jihad is totally forbidden in Islam.[43] Amin's

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[40] Masdar Farid Mas'udi and Masykuri Abdillah, two leading Nahdlatul Ulama intellectuals, interviews by the author, Jakarta, August 7, 2007, and August 1, 2010, respectively. Also Tarmizi Thaher, former minister of religious affairs and also a Muhammadiyah intellectual, interview by the author, Jakarta, August 4, 2010.

[41] Abdurrahman Wahid, "Islam in a Democratic State: A Lifelong Search," in *A Celebration of Democracy. A Journalistic Portrayal of Indonesia's 2004 Direct Elections amongst Moderate and Hardline Muslims*, ed. Asrori S. Karni (Jakarta: Era Media Informasi, 2006), ix–xx.

[42] Ahmad Syafii Maarif, "Islam in Indonesia and Democracy," in *A Celebration of Democracy. A Journalistic Portrayal of Indonesia's 2004 Direct Elections amongst Moderate and Hardline Muslims*, ed. Asrori S. Karni (Jakarta: Era Media Informasi, 2006), xx–xxiii.

[43] Ma'ruf Amin, the head of the fatwa committee of the Indonesian Council of Ulama, interview by the author, Jakarta, July 18, 2007.

opinion on jihad and terrorism represents MUI's official position as a semigovernmental body directly involved in the campaign against terrorism. Along with the Department of Research and Development (Balitbang) of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, MUI established a Special Team for Fighting against Terrorism through an Islamic Religious Approach (Tim Penanggulangan Terorisme Melalui Pendekatan Ajaran Islam). Within this context it issued a fatwa clarifying the distinction between jihad and terrorism.[44] It also actively promoted the peaceful understanding of Islam through so-called antiviolent religious sermons (*khutbah anti-kekerasan*). In a praiseworthy endeavor, it published a compilation of sermons in 2006 entitled *Taushiyah dari Mimbar yang Teduh: Kumpulan Khutbah Anti Kekerasan* (Admonition from the peaceful pulpit: Anthology of antiviolent sermons), to be distributed to thousands of mosques across Indonesia.[45]

F. The Prosperous Justice Party

The effort made by moderate Muslims to campaign against Islamist radicalism by disseminating tolerant, peaceful Islam has not only reduced the space to maneuver available to radical Islamist groups. This campaign also brought a new hope for Islam's inclusion in the state democratic system. In line with the transformation of Indonesia's political system, new political parties have arisen to represent a wide range of ideologies and interests, and these include parties that explicitly espouse the application of the shari'a (Islamic law) and other conservative positions. One such example is the Justice Party (Partai Keadilan, PK), which represented the growing strength of political Islam in Indonesia. This party was fundamentally different from the other Islamic parties: the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan), the National Awakening Party (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa), the National Mandate Party (Partai Amanat Nasional), and the Moon and Crescent Party (Partai Bulan Bintang). Its differences were in its historical roots, its ideology, its political goals, and the broader electorate it appealed to. It was derived from the da'wa (Islamic proselytizing), Muslim Brotherhood–inspired

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[44] Indonesian Council of Ulama, *Fatwa MUI tentang Terorisme No. 3/2004* (Jakarta: Indonesian Council of Ulama, 2005), i–17.

[45] Department of Religious Affairs, *Meluruskan Makna Jihad, Mencegah Terorisme* (Jakarta: Department of Religious Affairs, 2006).

movement that preaches Islam as a total way of life and which began to gain ground on Indonesian university campuses in the 1970s.[46]

As a party that drew its inspiration from the Brotherhood, PK defined Islam primarily as a political ideology and endeavored to position it at the center of Indonesian politics. Its vision of Islam was of a classical, complete, and universal system that comprehensively governs all spheres of social, political, economic, and cultural life. It proclaimed the shari'a as the only system that could rid Muslims of the multitude of problems and catastrophes that afflict them, all of which result from the implementation of secular systems. PK believed that only through the shari'a would Muslims be able to challenge the domination of the Western powers, which are in league with the Zionists to undermine Islam and the Muslim ummah.[47] Implicit in this rhetoric was a rejection of the existing nation-state system, seen as a weapon of the imperialist West to divide Muslim nations and demolish the *khilafat* (caliphate). It is not surprising that PK was very much concerned with issues of Islamic solidarity and the reestablishment of the caliphate.[48] PK's political manifesto demonstrated a clear tension between the ideal of the ummah and the reality of the nation-state. It was known as an avant-garde party of *ikhwan* and *akhawat*, popular terms used by *tarbiyya* members to address their fellow activists. Its electoral campaign pushed Islamist viewpoints and emphasized its exclusiveness as an Islamist party. Significantly, PK garnered only 1.4 percent of overall votes in the 1999 elections and thus failed to meet the 2 percent electoral threshold.

The result of the 1999 elections forced PK to rebrand itself as the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, PKS), whose vision further developed the ideology, thought, and systems of its predecessor

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[46] On the *tarbiyya* movement, see Rifki Rosyad, *A Quest for True Islam: A Study of the Islamic Resurgence Movement among Youth in Bandung, Indonesia* (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2006); S. Salman, "The Tarbiyah Movement: Why People Join This Indonesian Contemporary Islamic Movement," *Studia Islamika* 13, no. 2 (2006): 171–241. And on its transformation into the Prosperous Justice Party, see Ali Said Damanik, *Fenomena Partai Keadilan Transformasi 20 Tahun Gerakan Tarbiyah di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Teraju, 2002); Mathias Diederich, "A Closer Look at *Dakwah* and Politics in Indonesia: The Partai Keadilan," *Archipel* 64 (2002): 101–115; and Yon Machmudi, *Islamising Indonesia: The Rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party* (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2008).

[47] Aay Muhammad Furkon, *Partai Kedilan Sejahtera: Ideologi dan Praksis Politik Kaum Muda Muslim Indonesia Kontemporer* (Jakarta: Teraju, 2004), 149–157; M. Imdadun Rahmat, *Ideologi Politik PKS, Dari Masjid Kampus ke Gedung Parlemen* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2008), 55–57.

[48] Furkon, *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera*, 53; Rahmat, *Ideologi Politik PKS*, 58.

and its desire to establish Islam and the shari'a as the social, political, and legal system of Indonesia.[49] However, it now gave a different emphasis to the party's goals concerned more with the real issues facing Indonesian Muslims. It now presents itself as the party of moral reform, and rather than seeking direct political power it aims to show the public, through da'wa, what a government based on the moral principles of Islam would look like. The party used the slogan "Clean and caring" to launch popular campaigns focusing on the national issues of a weak economy and rampant corruption.[50] To cope with the reservations shown by its secular nationalist rivals and Indonesian people in general, PKS sought to create a new image as a moderate Islamist party, adopting the national and democratic rhetoric. The party acknowledged the principle of a secular political state as a prerequisite of liberal democracy,[51] the secular format of the Indonesian nation-state, the state ideology of Pancasila, and the 1945 Indonesian constitution. It made these the framework of its political participation in the electoral democratic system.

Despite the principle of God's absolute sovereignty held by most Brotherhood theoreticians, PKS saw no contradiction between Islam and democracy. It argued that the community has the right to define political institutions via democracy, which it accepted as an instrument to infuse Islam into Indonesian politics.[52] Reference was made to Yusuf Qaradawi, a moderate Brotherhood thinker, who acknowledges that the people have the right to govern themselves and that this does not detract from God's ultimate sovereignty. This is the progressive, inclusive political Muslim position, which increasingly perceives democracy as incorporating the values that Islam advocates, including consultation, enjoining what is good and prohibiting evil, and resisting unbelief.[53]

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[49] Rahmat, *Ideologi Politik PKS*, 114.

[50] Elizabeth Fuller Collins, "'Islam Is the Solution': *Dakwah* and Democracy in Indonesia," *Kultur, the Indonesian Journal for Muslim Cultures* 3, no. 1 (2003): 148–182; Elizabeth Fuller Collins and Ihsan Ali Fauzi, "Islam and Democracy: The Successful New Party PKS Is a Moderate Alternative to Radical Islamism," *Inside Indonesia* (online), no. 81 (January 2005), http://insideindonesia.org/content/view/192/29, accessed on December 3, 2009.; and Ary Hermawan, "PKS dan Perubahan Paradigma Gerakan Islam," *Republika*, April 10, 2004, 4.

[51] Ziya Öniş, "Globalisation and Party Transformation: Turkey's Justice and Development Party in Perspective," in *Globalising Democracy*, ed. Peter Burnell (London: Routledge, 2007), 122–140.

[52] Cholid Mahmud, one of the PKS leading figures in Yogyakarta, interview by the author, Yogyakarta, March 2008.

[53] James Piscatori, *Islam, Islamists and the Electoral Principle in the Middle East*, ISIM Paper, 1 (Leiden: ISIM, 2000).

Borrowing from the framework developed by Baker to analyze the dynamics of political Islam in Egypt, it is interesting to look at the extent to which the PKS's rise represents the birth of a new Islamism with a much longer-term vision of social and political reform. As Baker argues, the new Islamists' adoption of participatory government and their pragmatic approach distinguish them significantly from the first generation of Islamists, who sought political power in order to reform the social order in accordance with Islam. They are more content to contest elections and take up whatever seats or offices they may win. Instead of cultivating a defensive discourse of Islam as a religion under attack, and thus calling on its followers to defend it against its enemies, the new Islamists call Muslims to participate in the task of improving society.[54] Their thinking might be characterized as holistic, inclusive, and favoring dialogue. Religion is seen as just one part of the solution. It needs to be viewed in conjunction with national interests, economic realities, and cultural traditions. Given their emphasis on the national interest, they are open not only to collaboration with other political forces and non-Muslims as equal partners but also to dialogue and collective deliberation. The new Islamists represent, as Mandaville has noted, "a broader generational and strategic shift identifiable in Muslim movements across several settings today."[55] PKS's decision to put an emphasis on national interest and dialogue in its political vision indeed reflects significant elements in a post-Islamist trajectory.

The opportunity to get involved in democratic, electoral, power-sharing-based politics served as the catalyst for PKS to dramatically break with its rigid ideology of the totality of Islam (*Islam kaffah*), as developed by the tarbiyya movement. It believes that the Pancasila, as the philosophical foundation of the state, can function as the main inspiration for the whole process of statecraft and governance. Yet PKS does not see the ideology of Pancasila as a bastion of secularization, blocking all other political aspirations. It suggests instead that the Pancasila and democracy can work together with Islamic values and principles. In an elegant maneuver, PKS proposed the implementation of the Medina Charter (Piagam Madinah), the constitution of the Medina city-state under the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad.[56] By referring to the Medina

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[54] R. Baker, *Islam without Fear: Egypt and the New Islamists* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).

[55] Mandaville, *Global Political Islam,* 114.

[56] PKS's chairman, Tifatul Sembiring, reiterated his party's denial of the importance of the Jakarta Charter in a seminar in London on Indonesian politics and

Charter, PKS demonstrated the compatibility of Islam with democracy and, at the same time, its determination to abide by the civic principles of pluralism and peaceful coexistence among and within diverse religious groups. During the campaigns in the run-up to the April 2004 parliamentary elections, PKS reiterated its vision as a party of moral reform concerned with the fight against the nation's core problems, including corruption, collusion, and nepotism. The image it presented was of a disciplined organization, outwardly and inwardly unsoiled, free of corruption, and morally pure. This strategy worked well. The party won significant electoral support, as much as 7.34 percent.[57]

PKS appears to have become more pragmatic in its drive to meet its political targets, particularly those of winning regional-level direct elections (*pemilukada*). It has been quick to provide loans for sympathetic intending candidates and has collaborated with other parties, including the nationalist-secular Indonesian Democratic party of Struggle (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan, PDI-P) and the religious Christian Prosperous Peaceful Party (Partai Damai Sejahtera). In this way it has been able to promote its members and sympathizers to the posts of governor and head of district across Indonesia. PKS scored a prestigious victory in Depok, West Java, where its leading cadre and former minister of forestry under Abdurrahman Wahid's presidency, Nur Mahmudi Ismail, was elected as the city's mayor. It also nominated a former high-ranking police officer, Adang Daradjatun, and his running mate, Dani Anwar, for election as Jakarta's governor and vice-governor. At that time the party was confident that it did not need to collaborate with other parties. The PKS team was defeated by Fauzi Bowo and his running mate, Prijanto. Despite this failure, PKS participated in the 2008 election race in West Java by nominating its own cadre, Ahmad Heryawan. It collaborated with the National Mandate Party, whose candidate Dedi Yusuf stood as Heryawan's running mate. PKS won this election. This success was followed by another PKS victory, when its candidates Syamsul Arifin and Gatot Pudjonugroho were elected to the posts of governor and vice-governor of North Sumatra in the direct elections in the same year.

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economic progress. According to him, what PKS has endorsed is the application of the Medina Charter that in essence guarantees religious pluralism. See Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, "Mengkaji Indonesia dari Inggris" (June 20, 2008) at its defunct website, www.pk-sejahtera.org, accessed on March 26, 2010.

[57] Francois Raillon, "Islam and Democracy: Indonesia's 2004 Election and Beyond" (paper presented at the European Institute for Asian Studies Special Briefing, Brussels, 2004), 2.

PKS's campaign to strengthen its image as a moderate Islamist party open to all segments of Indonesian society (a catchall party) intensified in the run-up to the parliamentary elections in April 2009. Its pragmatic politics place less and less emphasis on ideology, and many voters questioned whether PKS had abandoned its Islamist agenda and reconciled itself to operating within the framework of Indonesian nationalism. They ask if the priority the party gives to electoral victory means that it has downgraded its religious agenda or if this merely represents a tactical shift in its political strategy. This sort of skepticism echoes the reservations held by established Muslim organizations, as noted above. To counter some of this criticism PKS aired a series of media advertisements. One of these used the slogan "The party for all of us" and featured a series of comments from different people of diverse backgrounds, from an old garbage collector to a beautiful girl wearing a T-shirt and jeans (without a head scarf). Through these campaigns, the party sought to demonstrate its alignment with a moderate version of Islam. Despite their ambivalent position on certain issues, the party's elite did not hesitate to call for civic freedom and democracy. Likewise, the chairman of the consultative body, Hilmy Aminuddin, repeatedly rejected any affinity with Wahhabism and denied allegations of their animosity toward traditional religious practices, such as *tahlilan*, *yasinan*, and *mawludan*. The leaders also affirmed their theological affiliation with mainstream Indonesian Islam, the *ahl al-sunna wa'l jama'a*.[58]

It is worth noting that PKS's ideological position and political pragmatism have also provoked criticism from the party's members and sympathizers. The involvement of this so-called da'wa party in electoral politics has sparked debate in numerous blogs. Will its commitment to da'wa reshape politics, or will politics steer PKS away from da'wa?[59] People have openly queried whether the PKS legislators still retain their credibility as preachers (*du'at*) committed to Islamizing society through politics or whether they are simply politicians pretending to be preachers. Some bloggers are even questioning whether the Islamic struggle for the

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[58] See the statement made by Hilmy Muhammad at a seminar in London as reported in "Ketua Majelis Syuro: Saya Sering Memimpin Tahlil dan Yasin" (July 22, 2008), at its defunct website, www.pk-sejahtera.com, accessed April 5, 2010; see also "PKS Menjawab Fitnah," (October 25, 2008), at its defunct website www.pk-sejahtera.com, accessed on 7 April, 2010. See also a sort of self-critique article by PKS cadre Yon Machmudi, "PKS Mengancam Eksistensi Ormas Islam?" spread in various blog spots.

[59] See, for instance, debates at www.pkswatch.blogspot.com.

supremacy of God's teachings can be pursued through the un-Islamic democratic game. Concerns about PKS's collaboration with secular parties, and particularly with a Christian party like the Prosperous Peaceful Party, provoke the most heated debates. In fact, more and more PKS members and sympathizers are worried that this short-term power-oriented political maneuver will deflect the party from its main mission of improving Indonesia's political systems and practices. They believe that this kind of coalition simply demonstrates the hypocritical nature of politicians and their hunger for power. In response to discontent spreading among party members and sympathizers, PKS intensified the cultivation of da'wa as a complementary strategy to dominate the political landscape of Indonesia. It developed various da'wa activities, including *halqa*, *daura*, *pengajian* (religious lectures), *liqa* (meetings), *rihla* (tours), *mabit* (staying overnight), seminars, and workshops, which are deemed necessary as a manifestation of the tarbiyya vision to build an Islamic society based on the eight Brotherhood principles laid down by Hasan al-Banna.

The strategy to accept democracy and balance its political pragmatism with da'wa successfully led PKS to win 7.89 percent of the overall votes in the 2009 general elections. This result put the party in the top four after President Yudhoyono's Democratic Party and the other two secular nationalist parties, Golkar and the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle, winning 20.45, 14.85, and 14.65 percent, respectively. As the coalition partner of the Democratic Party, PKS has continued to strengthen its position as a moderate Islamic party that respects civic freedom and human rights.

G. Conclusion

This chapter has sought to demonstrate that the influence of the radical Islamist ideology and movement that attempt to transform Indonesia into an Islamic state by calling for the comprehensive implementation of the shari'a and jihad in various conflict areas in eastern parts of the country has significantly faded away. Attempts made by radical Islamists to impose a totalitarian world order by disseminating religious doctrines and activism that espoused norms, symbols, and rhetoric imbued with animosity ended in failure, and this ultimately serves to highlight the marginal position of radical Muslims and their unsuccessful efforts to popularize their discourse glorifying militancy and violence. In the face of this failure radical Islamists have shifted toward a strategy of implementing the shari'a from below (or adopting it at the

personal level), promoting da'wa (Islamic proselytizing), and nonviolent endeavors with the aim of making Indonesian Muslims aware of their duty to uphold the supremacy of Islam. The new course they have taken is considered more appropriate to deal with the current situation and the future challenges facing the ummah. The circle of militancy and violence is believed to only jeopardize the struggle for the victory of Islam.

There are some factors contributing to the radical Islamists' failure to change the political landscape of Indonesia and conversely, their changing strategy of calling on Muslims for the implementation of the shari'a at the individual level. These include the democratic consolidation that facilitated the opening of political opportunity in the era of Reformasi and the burgeoning of modern democratic idioms as a result of moderate Muslims' campaign against Islamist radicalism. The opening of the post-Suharto Indonesian public sphere has allowed moderate Muslims from diverse backgrounds to get involved in the debates about objectifying Islam, and this prevents militant Islamist actors from dominating religious symbols and the interpretation of religious creeds through their militant campaigns and from imposing their agenda of an Islamic state. For the sake of democracy, more and more Muslim moderates are showing an increasing awareness of the danger of the militant Islamists' call for the shari'a, as well as the need to disseminate multiculturalism, gender equality, justice, and civic freedom, the universal values believed to be embedded in Islam as a mercy for all (*rahmat li'l 'alamin*). In the midst of the celebration of democracy in Indonesia, the logic behind the call for the implementation of the shari'a as an alternative to the formerly totalitarian political system has automatically lost ground.

The Indonesian government's success in bringing the bloody communal conflicts in various parts of the country to an end—which occurred in parallel with the ongoing democratization process—is another factor that has urged militant Islamists to change their course, for the conflicts had been taken as legitimation by the militants to call for the need to apply the shari'a at the state level and fight jihad as a solution to the government's perceived failure to protect Islam and the Muslim ummah. No less important were the initiatives taken by the government in collaboration with civil society organizations to tackle the threat of Islamist radicalism and terrorism. In response to mounting pressures from the international community, the government joined the international coalition against terror, under the framework of which various political, legal, and strategic measures have been deployed.

There is reason to believe that Indonesia today is in the throes of starting along a post-Islamist path. A sort of synthesis between the call for Islam's importance for public life and democracy, post-Islamism has emerged as an alternative to Islamist radicalism. Through its endeavor to fuse religiosity and rights, faith and freedom, as well as Islam and liberty, this post-Islamist alternative has enabled Muslims to express and actualize their religious beliefs and practices, without plunging into violence and joining the cycle of militancy. Discussion on post-Islamism is relevant to studies on the shift in the Islamic political discourse and activism occurring in a democratizing Indonesia, which, like other parts of the Muslim world, has seen huge social change as a result of globalization. The growth of Islam's public visibility, which has occurred in tandem with the celebration of democracy, has become irrefutable evidence of the transforming dynamics of Islam in this country.

The phenomenon of PKS sheds light on the relevance of the discussion on post-Islamism in relation to the recent dynamics of Islam in Indonesia. As an Islamist party that drew its inspiration from the Brotherhood-inspired tarbiyya movement, PKS has participated in electoral politics and launched popular campaigns in order to expand its electorate and base of support—thus winning significant votes in the elections. Conveying alternative political visions to a wider audience, it has been active in promoting clean governance, anticorruption, and professionalism, deemed to be the prerequisite to get rid of corruption, an incompetent bureaucracy, poverty, and other fundamental problems faced by Indonesia as a nation. Its ability to package these issues was the key to PKS's success in garnering significant votes in the 2004 and 2009 parliamentary elections, capturing, respectively, 7.34 and 7.89 percent of the overall votes. Despite its ambivalence toward democracy, PKS has also increasingly developed an inclusive political platform and altered its basic perception about what is permissible in a democratic environment. It has no doubt learned how to get involved in the electoral democratic games and become a proactive force contributing to the process of further democratic deepening in Indonesia.[]

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