In Search of Hegemony: Islamism and the State in Indonesia

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This thesis is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
The University of Melbourne

February 2019
Declaration

I certify that this thesis is the product of my own research, fewer than the maximum word limit in length, and contains no material which has been accepted as part of the requirements of any other degree at any tertiary education institution, or any material previously published by another person except where due reference is made.

Luqman Nul Hakim
Abstract

In post-authoritarian Indonesia, but particularly following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Islamism has become a contentious matter of scholarly debate. The prominent accounts emerging from security and democratisation studies place much analytical weight on ideology and culture by often portraying the relationship between Islam and politics in essentialist fashion, associating the dynamics of Islamism with interpretations of Islamic doctrine or the contest between moderate and radical Muslims. The institutionalist literature, on the contrary, explains the rise of Islamism as the result of the weak capacity of the state following the fall of the centralised New Order authoritarian regime. Another variant draws attention to the moderation of Islamic politics as the result of participation in democratic processes, especially electoral politics. Yet, such linear and teleological explanations obscure the complex circumstances that establish the different trajectories of Islamism. They also fail to comprehend how the prevalence of Islamist discourse on power struggles in the current democracy can produce a more conservative and illiberal form of Islamism.

In contrast, this thesis utilises the politics of hegemony approach as developed in the traditions of political discourse theory. By looking at Islamism and state transformation, this study is concerned with analysing the way various political struggles organised under the banner of Islam shape, and are being transformed by, the distinct configurations of power in specific historical conjunctures. It asks about the social conditions and contradictions that enable the articulation of dissent and demands through the narrative of Islam and how these relate to different forms of Islamist political projects. In particular the thesis addresses the way contestations and social coalitions forged throughout a process of struggle are constitutive for Indonesian politics and the practices of Islamism.

This thesis argues that the dynamics and trajectories of Islamism have been shaped by broader socio-political changes and political contestation both within and beyond Islamists in specific historical conjunctures. This study identifies three central discursive settings in which the relations between Islamism and the state in Indonesia have been constituted and contested, namely anti-colonialism and nation-state formation (1900s-1965), developmentalism (1966-1998) and democracy (1998-present). It is shown that the building of different Islamist political projects, as a mode of articulating diverse demands and dissent of social groups for the purpose of reshaping a given social order has influenced the reconfiguration of their interests, identities, subjectivities and relationships. By highlighting the logic of political contingency, this study explains the ways Islamists’ hegemonic struggles constitute distinct forms of contestation and coalitions which have significantly affected Indonesian politics and Islamism itself. The main insight of this thesis is to offer a non-essentialist reading of Islamic politics by linking distinct socio-political conditions and the discursive formation of Islamism within the evolution of Indonesian political history.
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<tr>
<td><strong>AKKBB</strong>: National Alliance for Freedom of Religion and Faith; <em>Aliansi Kebangsaan untuk Kebebasan Beragama dan Berkeyakinan</em></td>
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<td><strong>AKP</strong>: Justice and Development Party, in Turkey</td>
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<td><strong>Aksi Sepihak</strong>: Unilateral Action, PKI’s strategies to foster agrarian reform in the early 1960s</td>
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<td><strong>AMD</strong>: Military Enters Villages; <em>ABRI Masuk Desa</em>, New Order’s policies of surveillance and control over population in the early 1980s</td>
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<td><strong>BAMUSI</strong>: House of Indonesian Muslims; <em>Baitul Muslimin Indonesia</em>, Islamic wing of the PDIP, founded in 2007</td>
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<td><strong>Bansos</strong>: Social Aid Programs; <em>Bantuan Sosial</em></td>
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<td><strong>Pancasila</strong>: The Five Principles; state ideology professing belief in One God, Humanism, Indonesian unity, democracy, social justice</td>
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<td><strong>BKS</strong>: Cooperation Bodies; <em>Badan Kerja Sama</em>, a functional group under the army’s control to challenge Soekarno-PKI alliance in the late 1950s</td>
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<td><strong>BKUI</strong>: Coordinating Body of the Muslim Community; <em>Badan Koordinasi Umat Islam</em></td>
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<td><strong>BMK</strong>: Campus Mosque Religious Supervision; <em>Bina Masjid Kampus</em>, linked to the DDII</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BPUPKI</strong>: Investigating Committee for Preparatory Work for Indonesian Independence; <em>Badan Penyelidik Usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia</em></td>
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<td><strong>BTI</strong>: Indonesian Peasant Front; <em>Barisan Tani Indonesia</em>, linked to the PKI</td>
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<td><strong>CIDES</strong>: Center for Information and Development Studies, a think-tank linked to the ICMI</td>
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<td><strong>CSI</strong>: Sarekat Islam Central/Headquarters; <em>Centraal Sarekat Islam</em></td>
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<td><strong>CSIS</strong>: Centre for Strategic and International Studies, a think-tank linked to Ali Moertopo and established in 1971</td>
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<td><strong>DDII</strong>: Indonesian Council for the Islamic Predication; <em>Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia</em>, established in 1967 and led by Mohammad Natsir</td>
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<td><strong>DI/NII</strong>: Abode of Islam/Islamic State of Indonesia; <em>Darul Islam/Negara Islam Indonesia</em>, led by Kartosuwiryo in West Java on 7 August 1949 then expanded to such areas as Aceh of Northern Sumatra and South Sulawesi</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EU</strong>: European Union</td>
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<td><strong>Fatwa</strong>: Religious opinion</td>
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<td><strong>FPI</strong>: Islamic Defender Front; <em>Front Pembela Islam</em>, founded in 1998 under the leadership of Rizieq Shihab</td>
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<td><strong>FS-LDK</strong>: Forum of Coordination of Campus Predication; <em>Forum Silaturahmi Lembaga Dakwah Kampus</em></td>
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<td><strong>FSPPPI</strong>: Goodwill Forum of Islamic Parties; <em>Forum Silaturahmi Partai-Partai Islam</em></td>
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FUI : Forum of Islamic Society; *Forum Umat Islam*, founded in 2005 as an umbrella for various Islamist groups like HTI, FPI, and MMI

GAM : Aceh Independent Movement; *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*

GAPI : Indonesian Political Federation; *Gabungan Politik Indonesia*

Gemsos : Socialist Student Movement; *Gerakan Mahasiswa Sosialis*, linked to the PSI

*Ghazwul fikr* : The invasion of ideas; the praxis-ideology of the Islamists to maintain the ‘purity’ of their identity by rejecting the antagonistic others, expressed, for example, in anti-Western sentiments

GMKI : Protestant Indonesian Student Movement; *Gerakan Mahasiswa Kristen Indonesia*

GNPF-MUI : National Movement to Safeguard the MUI’s Fatwa; *Gerakan Nasional Pengawal Fatwa MUI*

Golkar : Functional Group Party

GUPPI : Association for the Improvement of Islamic Teaching; *Gabungan Usaha Pembaharuan Pendidikan*

GWOT : Global War on Terrorism

HMI : Association of Muslim Students; *Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam*, linked to the Masyumi Party

HTI : Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia

ICG : International Crisis Group, a Brussels-based NGO for violent and terrorism studies

ICMI : Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals; *Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia*

IMF : International Monetary Fund

ISDV : Indies Social-Democratic Association; *Indische Sociaal-Democratische Vereeniging*, the precursor of the PKI

ISIS/ISIL : Islamic State of Iraq in Syria/the Levant

JIL : Islamic Liberal Network; *Jaringan Islam Liberal*

KAMI : Indonesian Student Action Front; *Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Indonesia*

KAMMI : Action Committee for Indonesian Muslim Students; *Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia*, linked to the PKS

KISDI : Indonesian Committee for Solidarity with the Islamic World; *Komite Indonesia untuk Solidaritas dengan Dunia Islam*

KPPSI : The Committee for the Preparation of Formalisation of Sharia; *Komite Persiapan Penegakan Syariat Islam*, in South Sulawesi

Kyai : Islamic scholars, leaders of pesantrens especially in Java.

*Lakpesdam* : NU’s Institute for Human Resource Studies and Development; *Lembaga Kajian dan Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia*

LDK : Campus Predication Institute; *Lembaga Dakwah Kampus*

LGBT : Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender

LMD : Training of Preacher Combatants; *Latihan Mujahid Dakwah*, linked to the DDII

*Majelis Dzikir* : Islamic congregations

Masyumi : Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims; *Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia*
MIAI : Supreme Islamic Council of Indonesia; Majelis Islam A’laa Indonesia
MMI : Indonesian Holy Warrior Assembly; Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia
MPR : People’s Consultative Council; Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat
MPRS : Provisional People’s Consultative Council; Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara
MUI : Council of Indonesian Ulama; Majelis Ulama Indonesia, established in 1975
NASAKOM : Nationalism, Religion, Communism; corporatist framework under the Soekaro’s Guided democracy era
NEFO : New Emerging Forces, opposed to OLDEFO
NEP : New Economic Policy, in Malaysia
NKK/BKK : Normalisation of Campus Life/ Campus Coordination Board; Normalisasi Kehidupan Kampus/Badan Koordinasi Kampus; New Order’s policies issued in 1978 for depoliticising campus and student movements after the Malari. Yet, it then opened up the space for Islamisation activities in universities
Malari : Catastrophe of 15 January; Malapetaka Limabelas Januari, bloody demonstration involved university students, intelligentsia, and Muslim business groups against foreign capital and state’s business management
NKRI : Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia; Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia
NU : The Awakening of Muslim Scholars; Nahdlatul Ulama, considered as the largest Islamic organisation in Indonesia with its main social base in rural areas especially in East and Central Java
OLDEFO : Old Established Forces, opposed to NEFO
OPSUS : Special Operation; Operasi Khusus, military intelligence unit led by Ali Moertopo
PAN : National Mandate Party; Partai Amanat Nasional, established in 1998 under the leadership of Amin Rais and linked to modernist Islamist organisation, Muhammadiyah
Pangkostrad : Commander of Army Reserve Command; Panglima Komando Cadangan Strategis Angkatan Darat
Parmusi/PMI : Indonesian Muslim Party; Partai Muslimin Indonesia
PBB : Crescent and Star Party; Partai Bulan Bintang; established in 1998 and led by Yusril Ihza Mahendra, linked to the DDII
PDI : Indonesian Democratic Party; Partai Demokrasi Indonesia, founded in 1973
PDIP : Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle; Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan, established in 1999 led by Megawati Soekarnoputri, a splinter from the PDI
Perda syariah : Sharia-by-laws
Permesta : Universal Struggle; Perjuangan Semesta
Persis : Islamic Union; Persatuan Islam
Pesantren : Islamic seminaries
PII : Islamic Student Movement; Pergerakan Islam Indonesia, linked to Masyumi Party
Pilkada : Local Elections, Pemilihan Kepala Daerah
PK/PKS : Justice Party, later changed to Justice and Prosperity Party; Partai Keadilan/Partai Keadilan Sejahtera
PKB : National Awakening Party; Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa, established in 1998 and linked to the NU
PKI : Indonesian Communist Party; Partai Komunis Indonesia
PKU : Party of Awakening of the Muslim Community; Partai Kebangkitan Umat
PMII : Indonesian Islamic Student Movement; Pergerakan Mahasiswa Islam Indonesia, linked to NU
PMKRI : Union of Catholic University Students; Persatuan Mahasiswa Katholik Republik Indonesia
PNI : Indonesian Nationalist Party; Partai Nasionalist Indonesia
PNU : Muslim Community’s Awakening Party; Partai Nahdlatul Umat
PPMI : Federation of Indonesian Students; Perhimpunan Perserikatan Mahasiswa Indonesia
PPP : United Development Party; Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, established in 1973
PRRI : Revolutionary Government of the Indonesian Republic; Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia
PSI : Indonesian Socialist Party; Partai Sosialis Indonesia
PSII : Indonesian Islamic Union Party; Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia
PUI : Party of the Muslim Community; Partai Umat Islam
RIS : Republic of the United States of Indonesia; Republik Indonesia Serikat
RMS : Republic of South Maluku; Republik Maluku Selatan
SARA : Ethnic, Religion, Race and Inter-groups; Suku, Agama, Ras, Antar-golongan
Sekber-Golkar : Joint Secretariat of the Functional Group; Sekretariat Bersama Golongan Karya
Sekneg : State Secretariat; Sekretariat Negara
Shumuliyatul Islam : Comprehensive nature of Islam as religion and the state
SI : Sarekat Islam, founded in 1912
SIDIK : Studies and Information of Contemporary Islamic World; Studi dan Informasi untuk Dunia Islam Kontemporer
Sipilis : Secularism, Pluralism, Liberalism; FPI’s rhetoric
SUNI : Solidarity of the Indonesian National Union; Solidaritas Uni Indonesia
Tritura : Three demands of the people (dissolution of the PKI, reorganisation of the government, lowering prices of basic goods); Tiga Tuntutan Rakyat, a slogan anti-Soekarno rallies in 1966
Turba : ‘Go Down’ Strategies; Turun ke Bawah, PKI’s strategies to mobilise grass-root masses in the early 1960s
UKP-IP : Presidential Working Unit for the Implementation of the State Ideology of Pancasila; Unit Kerja Presiden Pembinaan Ideologi Pancasila, established in June 2017
Ulama : Islamic scholars/clerics; see Kyai
US : United States of America
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<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Usroh</em></td>
<td>lit. denoting a family, from Arabic <em>usra</em></td>
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<td>VOC</td>
<td>(Dutch) East India Company; <em>Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie</em>, founded in 1602</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Volksraad</em></td>
<td>Dutch-made People Council, set up in 1916</td>
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Luqman Nul Hakim
1
Introduction

In recent times, discussions on Islamic politics in Indonesia have been largely situated within two inter-related settings. These are, respectively, post-New Order democratisation after decades of authoritarianism and the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) campaigns following 9/11 and, more lately, the rise and demise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS/ISIL). The former offers new terrains for the emergence of Islamist parties and organisations with diverse agendas for a greater role in the political arena and the public sphere, while the latter brings about alarmist accounts of the dangers of the Islamisation of politics. Not a long time ago, ‘Indonesian Islam’ had, in fact, been praised as a central force for democratisation especially given to the presence of a tradition of religious pluralism and tolerance (e.g., Hefner, 2000; Effendy, 2003). Along with Turkey (until recently), Indonesia is also frequently considered as an example par excellence of democracy in a Muslim-majority society (e.g., Gerges, 2013). To others (e.g., Abuza, 2007; Fealy, 2004), however, the greater influence of Islam in the political arena has raised concerns, especially regarding various kinds of Islamist aspirations for a theocratic state and the implementation of sharia law. Consequently, Islamism, used here to refer to the practices of articulating and organising demands and dissent through the narrative of Islam, is also often seen as ‘the largest potential danger’ to the consolidation of democracy in Indonesia (Liddle and Mujani, 2013: 29-30).

But the most pressing issue in the current era of democracy is the prevalence of the mobilisation of Islam for power struggles as vividly exemplified throughout the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election, regarded as the most divisive and polarised local elections in Indonesian history (e.g., Hadiz, 2017). Prompted by an allegation

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1 Scholars often portrait the moderate and tolerant Islam in Indonesia and Southeast Asia generally, in contrast to that of in Arab worlds, as the historical product of the expansion of Islam in highly plural societies in this region that resulted in the vernacularisation of Islam (see, for example, Hooker, 1983; Azra, 2004; Formichi, 2016). For others, like Geertz (1960; 1971), such moderate characters are a result of syncretism associated with the religious practices in Javanese culture.
of the ‘blasphemy’ against Islam, the mobilisation of the Islamist and xenophobic sentiments had decisively paved the way for the dramatic defeat and subsequent jailing of the incumbent governor, the ethnic-Chinese and Christian Basuki ‘Ahok’ Tjahaja Purnama.² As such, this case is often seen as an indication of the strength of intolerant Islamism that fundamentally endangers democracy, sovereignty, and multicultural societies (e.g., Harsono, 2017; IPAC, 2018). Even though Indonesia is often regarded as a success story for the transition from authoritarianism to democracy, the mainstreaming of conservative Islam and the illiberal response to it have led some scholars to suggest that Indonesia is now experiencing a ‘democratic setback’ (Hadiz, 2017a; Hefner, 2018; Lindsay, 2018; Mietzner, 2018).

After two decades of the fall of the authoritarian regime in 1998, why have democratic contestations now been overwhelmed by the mobilisations of identity politics especially around the categories of Islam? Why has participation and inclusion of Islamic political vehicles in democratic processes and institutions not resulted in a more noticeable moderation of Islamism? These questions are crucial to assess the workings of democracy in Indonesia especially against the backdrop of the rise of populist politics and the mobilisation of identity politics in other parts of the world, whether in the developed or developing countries (e.g. Hadiz and Chryssogelos, 2017; Kaltswasser, et al, 2017).

This study primarily emerged out from dissatisfaction with dominant explanations which are generally premised on the inherent and unchanged features of the relationship between Islam and democracy, or Islam and politics more broadly. In contrast, drawing inspiration from scholarly traditions which situate Islamic politics in broader social, economic and political changes (e.g., Zubaida, 1993; Roy, 1994; Bayat, 1997; Halliday, 2005; Ismail, 2006; Hadiz, 2016), this thesis seeks to investigate the nature and trajectories of Islamism and how they

² Previously considered as unbeatable by most pollsters, Ahok’s political fortune was in tatters following his fateful words about a Koranic verse of Al-Maidah of 51 that concern whether Muslims can support non-Muslim leader. This speech, that was made in the Seribu Island of North Jakarta, had triggered accusation of blasphemy against Islam. This had become a pre-text for the Islamist mobilisations in the capital city of Jakarta under the banner of Aksi Bela Islam (Actions for Defending Islam), and shaped the configuration of forces throughout the election. This issue is further discussed in Chapter 6.
shape, and are being transformed by, political contestations and social coalitions with multiple forces both within and beyond Islamists throughout Indonesia’s modern political history.

More specifically, the approach of this study employs the politics of hegemony as developed in the traditions of political discourse theory (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001; Laclau, 1990; 1996). Hegemony here refers not only to a framework for explaining a distinct logic of social formation and change as ultimately a contingent outcome of political struggles. It is also understood as the practices of linking together diverse sets of demands amongst social groups through the creation of a distinct political project to reshape a given structure of power relations. In doing so, this thesis examines the social conditions and contradictions that might be possible for articulating demands and dissent through the narratives of Islam and how they relate to different forms of Islamist political projects, in particular their ideological underpinnings, social coalitions and dynamic nature. It also identifies the ways social agents of Islamism advance their projects and how contestations and social coalitions are forged and shaped throughout political struggles. Ultimately, the thesis seeks to comprehend the extent to which distinct social and power relationships that emerge through such processes characterise Indonesian politics and the practices of Islamism itself.

This study is a critique of many existing accounts of Islamism, especially ideological and cultural approaches which tend to provide a unitary and inward-looking model of explanation. Reinforcing security-oriented narratives, ideological approaches focus on Islamists’ violent and anti-democratic features by linking them to interpretations of Islamic doctrine (e.g. Ota, et al, 2010) or transnational Islamist networks (ICG, 2002; Ramakhrisna and Tan, 2003; Singh 2007). Especially after the 2002 Bali bombing, ‘Islamic radicalism’ has become a dominant explanatory concept to account for the relationship between Islam and politics in Indonesia (Fealy, 2004; Barton, 2004; Bubalo and Fealy, 2005). This essentially reasserts the

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3 The detailed explication of this concept is presented in Chapter 2 that specifically discusses the theoretical framework of this thesis.

4 For the discussions on the various concepts of Islamism and how they relate to such fields as violence, democracy, and multiculturalism, see for example Martin and Barzegar (2010), Volpi (2010), and Sayyid (2014).
notion of *jihad* that is conceived as a practical ideology of violence in Western scholarship (see, for example, Asad, 2007: 9). Not surprisingly, as a result of the GWOT imperatives, Islamic politics is subsumed under studies of violence and terrorism (e.g., Frisch and Inbar, 2008; Abuza, 2003).

Yet Islamic radicalism itself is also a ‘floating signifier’, understood with different contents and orientations. For example, by recognising the fluid boundaries between Islamist groups in Indonesia, Fealy (2004: 105) proposes two criteria for defining Islamic radicalism: (1) the demand for comprehensive implementation of sharia and the rejection of Pancasila as the foundation of the state and (2) the reactive behaviour either through languages, ideas or physical violence. To others (e.g., van Bruinessen, 2002: 117), contemporary Islamic radicalism is, in fact, ideologically rooted to some forms of ‘indigenous’ Islamist movements in the early post-colonial period, namely the *Darul Islam* (DI, the Abode of Islam) and Masyumi party, notwithstanding the different historical context of their emergence and development (van Bruinessen, 2002). More importantly, by constructing Islamic radicalism as a threat to Indonesia’s sovereignty, security and multicultural societies, the dominance of ideology approaches has not only influenced the practices of Islamism but also shaped the configuration of political forces that characterised post-New Order Indonesian politics, as discussed later (especially in Chapter 5).

Cultural approaches, on the other hand, have typically anchored their explanations in a unitary understanding of religion and politics, whereby ‘Western secularism’ is constituted as a prescriptive referent for categorising different forms of Islamism (Esposito and Vol, 1996; Asad, 2007; Ismail, 2006). At the extreme end, the ‘clash of civilisation’ thesis perceives Islamism as no more than cultural resentment that is essentially anti-modernity and anti-democracy (Lewis, 1990;

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5 Pancasila is the ideological foundation of Indonesia, comprising five principles: belief in One God, Humanity, the Unity of Indonesia, Democracy and Social Justice. Pancasila is historically considered as a political consensus especially between Islamist nationalists and secular nationalists in the making of Indonesia’s nation-state. The discussion on this issue is presented in Chapter 3.
Other variants (Nasr, 2009; Hefner, 2000; 2002; Tibi, 2009), however, put more emphasis on the struggles of ‘moderate’ Muslims to nurture a liberal democratic agenda and pluralism, which are mostly presented in an overly cultural essentialist fashion. Thus, many studies on Islamism in Indonesia—as generally dominant in the Western literature—are preoccupied with the dichotomies of moderate and radical Islam, understood mainly in cultural and behavioral terms with little political explanation of their emergence and contestation. Constructed according to the GWOT imperatives and Western geopolitical concerns, the juxtaposition of moderate and radical Islamism has been securitised under the binary categories of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ Muslims (Mamdani, 2002; 2004). Meanwhile, the culturalisation of Islamism in democratic transition studies is manifested, for example, in the categories of ‘civil’ and ‘uncivil society’—whereby the latter is postulated as not only incompatible but essentially threatening to democratic transition and consolidation (Beitingger-Lee, 2009; see also Hefner, 2000).

Another inadequate interpretation of Islamism is offered by institutionalist approaches which emphasise the role of institutions or political regime. In Indonesia, such explanations gain more traction in democratic transition studies which generally associate the rise of Islamism with the transformation of state institutions from authoritarianism to the democratic regime (e.g., Abuza, 2007). Sharing Migdal’s notion of strong state and weak society (1988), Islamists’ violent characteristics are treated as symptoms of the weak capacity of the state in managing political conflicts and in asserting its monopoly on violence. Therefore, they call for the strengthening of the state—thus merging what is implied by GWOT.

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6 Bernard Lewis, for example, argues that the source of current Islamists ‘cultural resentment’ is a prolonged historical encounter and conflict between Islamic civilisation and the West. For him, it is a manifestation of a state of humiliation and deprivation among Muslims globally when their past glories have been taken over by the West—‘thosewhom they regarded as their inferiors’. See, Lewis (1990; also 2002).

7 While admitting unfixed boundaries between civil and uncivil categories, Beitingger-Lee (2009: 160), for example, proposes overly essentialist parameters that render groups as uncivil. These are (1) the use of force and violence to acquire power; (2) the pursuit of illiberal and anti-democratic agenda; (3) undemocratic internal structure; (4) ideologically contradict to liberal democratic values; (5) lack of a ‘spirit of civility’; (6) racism and intolerance; and (7) illegality or criminal activities.
campaigns—with the securitisation of ‘political problems’ (e.g., the issues of separatist movements) which, in turn, facilitates the reorganisation of conservative political forces.

Another institutionalist model, the so-called ‘inclusion-moderation thesis’, tries to comprehend the moderation processes experienced by Islamists. Its proponents explain how Islamism can be relatively moderate in democratising Indonesia, for example, by associating it with the existing political system that discourages parties from rigidly developing ideological platforms (Ufen, 2011: 86-87) and prevents Islamic parties, which are mostly concentrated in certain regions, from scaling up to the national level (Buehler, 2009: 51-56; also 2012). This thesis is revisited by analysts (Buehler, 2012; Tomsa, 2012, Permata, 2008; Bubalo, et al., 2008) to further explain the political moderation of the Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS, Justice and Prosperity Party), which emerged out of a clandestine-Islamist movement in the 1980s but had ‘officially’ put aside its Islamist agenda and turned to incorporate good governance projects into its party platform prior to the 2004 election. This approach exhibits a lack of interest in unfolding the complex circumstances for different forms of Islamism and limits the analytical scope to those that navigate their ways through democratic institutions and thus isolates them from other Islamist movements. Meanwhile, explaining the ‘ moderation’ or ‘normalisation’ of Islamic politics as the direct consequence of their participation in democratic processes also fails to comprehend why Islam is now increasingly becoming a central ideological element to mobilise electoral constituents not only among Islamic but also ‘secular-nationalist’ parties.

Crucially, the crux of the problem with the ideological and cultural approaches lies in the relative absence of questions of power. Without taking seriously the constitutive nature of power for the emergence and trajectories of

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8 The moderation thesis, as claimed by its proponents, turns the question of the Islam and democracy relationship from ‘what will Islamists do to democracy?’ to ‘what does democracy do to Islamists?’ They suggest that the participation in democracy will ‘normalise’ the Islamists, leading to political moderation. Normalisation, here, is defined as ‘a process whereby Islamists become integrated members of political system, operating by the rules and norms of democracy, developing more transparent leadership and party structures and expanding the bases of their membership.’ See Bubalo, et al., (2008: iii).
different forms of Islamism, they tend to reify and essentialise the religion. Moreover, they also fail to unmask ideological underpinning and power constellation which influence the ways religion, in certain contexts, is politically treated. For example, these approaches have facilitated, in one and other ways, in depoliticising and culturalising social conflicts wherein Islam is treated as an object of intervention to be disciplined in order to maintain the post-Cold War neoliberal global order (Asad, 2007; Mamdani, 2004; Zizek, 2008; Chomsky, 2004). Contained within the domain of culture, consequently, political agencies of Islamism are domesticated and re-oriented in ways that serve the functioning of the logic of the market. Likewise, with an insufficient account of the questions of power, the institutionalists perceive democracy as a “non-political” framework while the political moderation of the Islamists is treated as an inevitable process due to their participation in democratic mechanisms rather than a relative outcome of contestations and specific relations of power within given historical circumstances.

By and large, such a theoretical gap has been filled by the contribution of political economy approaches, which generally emphasise structural crises and contradictions that induce people to participate in Islamic politics. In his study of the Arab world, for example, Ayubi (1991: 165-166) suggests that Islamism is an expression of class interests that develop against the backdrop of the failure of the state in providing welfare and political participation. This approach sees Islamism as the product of excluded Islamists who instrumentalise Islam, by ideological means, to articulate their grievances before the state and the public (see Anderson, 1997; Ayoob, 2008). In other words, contrary to the ‘Islamisation of politics’ thesis of ideological approaches, Islamic politics is explained from the ‘politicisation of Islam’ standpoint. While such approaches have been abundantly utilised in the context of the Middle East and North Africa, it is not the case with the study of Islamic politics in Indonesia. By infusing such scholarly traditions, Hadiz (2014; 2016; and Robison, 2012) thus suggests that Islamic politics in Indonesia and beyond can be seen as an expression of new forms of populism, responding to the contradictions resulting from capitalist development and the pressures of economic
globalisation. From this vantage point, the trajectory of Islamic politics lies in ‘the way the social landscape is reshaped by distinct phases of social and economic changes and how Islamic politics becomes grafted onto different conditions and agendas, whether to preserve or reshape the social order’ (Hadiz and Robison, 2012: 138).

Indeed, political economy approaches provide valuable explanations of the socio-political transformations which brought about structural crisis and changing social bases influencing the available options of social coalitions and contestations. As part of the legacy of the Cold War social conflicts, it is commonly argued that the destruction of the Left in Indonesia in the 1960s had inevitably constituted Islam as a major ideological means for voicing dissent associated with capitalist development and authoritarian political regime (e.g., Hadiz, 2014; Hadiz and Robison, 2012). In fact, associating the rise of Islamic politics with the destruction of the Left is not a uniquely Indonesian phenomenon as this had generally taken place in other Third World countries albeit in different degrees (for example, see Colas, 2004 for the case of the Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia; Toor, 2011 for Pakistan; Zubaida, 2011, for the Middle East context).

However, the approach adopted in this thesis seeks to investigate why and how structural dislocations can account for the emergence and development of a particular discourse, for example Islam, instead of the others. From the lens of the politics of hegemony, it is argued here that the objective presence of Islam cannot in itself account for Islamism (c.f., Sayyid, 1997). Rather, the key issue is the degree of ‘politicisation’ – that is, practices of organising demands among diverse social groups and the struggles to signify the dislocated political order. Therefore, the

9 He comprehends populism as the making of a cross-class alliance by emphasising the changing nature of the social bases as results of social and economic transformation. Thus, Islamic populism is defined as the merging of interests, grievance and aspirations of a cross-section of social classes, especially the urban poor, the new urban middle class and peripheralised groups of the bourgeoisie. For him, what distinguish it from other forms of populism is that Islamic populism utilises the ‘ummah’—community of believers—as a proxy for the ‘people’. Unlike the old forms populism whose social bases are rooted in the traditional urban and petty bourgeoisie, the current forms of Islamic populism emerge out of a more complex social bases and coalitions especially as results of neoliberal globalisation. See Hadiz (2016: 3; 2014; and Robison, 2012), also Colas (2004; 2014) for the case of Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia.
outcome of a dislocation cannot be determined in advance. In this approach, social formations and transformations are always a contingent outcome of the political struggles in reshaping power relations through the act of (re)constructing a new political order. Within such struggles, contestations between social coalitions are continuously produced which, in turn, shape distinct power configurations that characterise Indonesian politics and Islamism itself. As such, the approach of this study complements the tendencies of the ‘logic of necessity’ in structuralist political economy with the ‘logic of political contingency’.

Hence, this approach calls for a different conceptualisation of the relations between Islam and politics. Inspired by Sayyid (1997), who developed the study of Islamism from the insights of political discourse theory, it is argued that the relationship between Islam and Islamism is not as direct and monolithic as proposed by ideological and cultural approaches, nor is it as instrumental as structuralists generally maintain. Instead, such a relationship is constitutive, wherein ‘both Islam and the identity of Islamism are transformed as Islamists attempt to articulate Islam to their project’ (Sayyid, 1997: 46). In this viewpoint, the articulation of Islam as a political category is certainly not due to the ideological imperative to unify religion and politics (ad-din wa daulah). Instead, it is the function of how the Islamists constitute Islam as a ‘master signifier’, a surface of inscription that enables the social agents of Islamism to construct and organise claims, interests and identities by advancing distinct political projects (Sayyid, 1997). Here, the key is not the Islamist project itself, but the ways different actors relate to what it signifies and the ways that contestations and social coalitions are forged in such processes.

10 Framed within a broader horizon of orientalism and anti-orientalism debates, Sayyid (1997: 41-49) develops a concept of Islamism as part of his critics against the tendencies of essentialism in both camps. The former denotes Islam as an attribute with an historical essence while the latter considers that there is no such thing as Islam but only the contextual application of this term. As such, Sayyid does not utilise this concept as an analytical category for country-based political dynamics—i.e., his unit of analysis is Islam in relation to the global order, associated particularly with the crisis of Eurocentrism. Nevertheless, as explicated in the following chapter, I found it is very useful to bring forth his idea on the constitutive nature of Islam and Islamism in Indonesian and post-9/11 context wherein the studies on Islamic politics are mainly approached by the contrasting thesis: ‘Islamisation of politics’ and ‘ politicisation of Islam’.
In this vein, Islamism, as Roy (1994) rightly argues, is also understood as a political project. But unlike Roy, the project is not treated here only in terms of a revolutionary struggle to seize state power (c.f., Ismail, 2006; Sayyid, 2007). Indeed, as Gramsci (1971) suggests, there are different paths to advance political projects and bring about social transformation. For Gramsci, the capture of the state can be the outcome of hegemonic politics, that is a long process of ‘intellectual and moral’ reforms and political struggles to delegitimise the governing models of a certain political order and articulate a different vision of organising state and society. Therefore, the separation between ‘Islamism’ and ‘post-Islamism’ or ‘re-Islamisation’, wherein the former is regarded as more political while the latter as the dissociation of the religious sphere from politics, is not necessary.\footnote{Roy (1994) argues that Islamist movements have had lost their revolutionary characters in seizing the state power and they turned to be ‘neo-fundamentalist’, defined as moral-driven activism which, for example, more focus on the Islamic moral issues rather than creating new political forms or Islamic regime. For him, re-Islamisation only operates at the level of the social and personal, not the political sphere. Quite different from Roy, Bayat (2013; 2005a) develops the concept of post-Islamism, by using Iran as a historical reference, as a condition of ‘resecularising’ religion. He further states that:} This is particularly because both seek to articulate Islam and struggle for social transformation in particular ways—thus, they are indeed political (see, Ismail, 2006: Chapter 6; Sayyid, 1997; 2014).

Even, the projects for the dissociation of Islam from politics is no more than another form of politics that would significantly shape social coalitions and contestations. For example, the project of depoliticising Islam (as promoted by a Dutch Arabicist, Snouck Hurgronje, in the nineteenth century) is inseparable from the colonial project to prevent Islamism from being an anti-colonial force and to establish an alliance with other Islamist groups deemed as compatible with the interests of the colonial power. In the current era, a similar depoliticisation path is achieved through the neoliberal discourse of tolerance and multiculturalism which effectively replaces the questions of inequality and social justice with issues of

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 politics. In reality we may witness for some time the simultaneous process of both Islamisation and post-Islamisation (Bayat, 2005a: 5).
clashes between the ‘tolerant’ and ‘intolerant’ (Brown, 2006; Zizek, 2008). This is discussed further in the chapters to follow.

It is also worth noting that by envisaging Islamism in terms of hegemonic struggles, this study highlights the importance of the state. In contrast to the so-called ‘post-hegemony’ approaches, as outlined in Chapter 2, engaging the state is not only central in the politics of hegemony but unavoidable as the political spaces for the operations of political struggle (c.f., Mouffe, 2009). Here, the state is not an amalgam of institutions and actors governing a particular territory and population, but a site, and at the same time a contingent outcome, of the political in which certain practices and struggles are constituted and contested (Finlayson and Martin, 2006: 155, 161; c.f., Laclau, 1975). Such a process always entails the construction and modification of interests, identities and relationships among the social agents which shape the contestation and social coalition in the course of their struggles. It is, therefore, instructive to situate Islamism in the context of state formation and development – that is how different forms of Islamism define and shape power configuration that has evolved in Indonesia’s political history.

Linking Islamism to state transformation is crucial to comprehend hegemonic politics of the different forms of Islamism and the ways they characterise Indonesian politics. This is particularly because, as discussed in Chapter 3, Islamist political discourses have historically become a major element in the making and development of Indonesia’s nation-state. Since political struggles in post-colonial Indonesia have been mainly directed to control state power, situating Islamism and state transformation is also imperative to uncover the configuration of contestation and social coalitions in certain historical conjuncture. By looking at the transformation of the state, this study also considers the ways dominant global discourses—especially those which associate with the nexus of security, development and democracy—influence the changing nature of governing and organising state and society relations (c.f., Duffield, 2001; Hardt and Negri, 2000; Hadiz, 2006; Hameiri, 2010). Hence, this study situates the trajectories of Islamism and state transformation within the dynamic of national-global settings.
To study Islamism from the lens of hegemonic politics, there are conceptual issues need to be further elaborated. These are, respectively, the questions of the subjects of Islamism, the conditions of their emergence and development, and the distinct forms of Islamist project. In political discourse theory and post-structuralism in general, the concept of the subject has been a central topic of debate (Foucault, 1982; Laclau, 1990; 1996; Butler, 1997; Finlayson and Valentine, 2002; Hall, 1992: 275-283). Like structuralism, political discourse theory perceives that there is no given social actor or subject with embedded ‘human essence’ (as unified individuals who possess capacities of reason, consciousness and action) but their agencies are always situated in specific conditions (c.f., Sayyid and Zae, 1998: 249-267; Howarth, 2000). However, these subjects are also not seen as, to borrow a Marxian term, ‘the bearers of objective structure’. Instead, political discourse theory comprehends subjects as ‘subject positions’ within particular discursive structures (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 115).

Since there are always contending discourses or political projects in the (trans)formation of political order, individuals or groups inevitably occupy different, and sometimes contending, positions and agencies in that process (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 125; Laclau, 1990: 112). From this vantage point, Muslims who become the subjects of Islamism are not primarily identified by pre-determined identities and interests but are constituted discursively in specific historical settings. They may occupy different, or even conflicting, subject positions and agencies depending on the configuration of discourses. Therefore, the analytical focus of this study is on the way particular discourses constitute distinct forms of subject positions of the Islamists and how the contestations and social coalitions are forged through their political struggles.

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12 In a rather different treatment, Butler (1997: 10) argues that subjects always occupy a site of ambivalence, by which they are an agency but simultaneously become a terrain of subordination and discipline. Therefore, as Finlayson and Valentine (2002: 15) argues, ‘[s]ubject are not so much things either determined or determining, but more effects of forces that are always open-ended’. Laclau (1990; 1996; 1994) had further developed the conceptualisation of subjects. By appropriating Lacanian psychoanalysis, he conceived subjects as the place of lack, meaning that it is beyond positive ‘being’ nor a complete position in a discursive structure. Rather, subjects are always in the process of becoming and never complete, as continuous attempt to fill the void or to overcome its lack.
Regarding the historicity of the emergence and development of different forms of Islamism, political discourse theorists conceive it as inexorably linked to the specific context of dislocation, that is the conditions when diverse demands and aspirations are unable to be accommodated and fulfilled in the existing structure of power. It is this dislocation that opens a terrain for struggles among social groups, which are organised around multiple political discourses, not only for making sense of crises but also for reconfiguring a given political order. As Hay (1996) argues in the concept of ‘crisis narrative’, such dislocation is not necessarily defined through objective factors but, more importantly, as the perception of the needs of certain groups for rapid recovery and how the struggle for a new power configuration will improve their positions. Hence, the articulations of Islam and their associated political projects are always historical, meaning that the contents are not exclusively derived from ‘the essence’ of Islam but continuously redefined in accordance with hegemonic struggles.

Nevertheless, the articulations of Islam, i.e. organising diverse demands and dissent through the narrative of Islam, are indeed conditioned by how the Islamist political discourse is differently structured in an existing political order (c.f., Sayyid, 1997: 42-43). Thus, the different forms of Islamism—including their distinct projects, vehicles, and strategies—are not coming out of nowhere but are constituted in the structure of power in given historical periods. In fact, what is the political project of the Islamists? It is the construction of the Muslim ummah, as a form of political community. Instead of an empirical entity, however, the ummah should be better understood as a discursive formation, whose specific meaning and what it signifies may differ from one context to another. Like other political discourses, Islamism is always simultaneously inclusive and exclusive. It unifies particular and different social groups and, at the same time, draws the frontier with the excluded others. Depending on specific discursive contexts and the contestations, such frontiers can be manifested in different forms, including colonial power as manifested in the anti-colonial struggles or even ethnic and religious markers (e.g., ethnic-Chinese, the ‘infidels’, the communists, etc.) in the contestations for controlling the state power and resources. Whether the Islamists’ political project is considered as hegemonic or otherwise depends on its capability
to unify and represent the multitude of demands among diverse social groups. Additionally, the contestations and social coalitions forged throughout its hegemonic struggles would greatly affect Indonesian politics and the practices of Islamism itself.

**Notes on Research Methodology**

The examination of Islamic politics and state transformation in this thesis employs a qualitative methodology. To investigate the social formation and its change, the kernel of political discourse theory centres around four analytical principles; contingency, historicity, constitutive function of power and the primacy of politics (Laclau, 1990: 31-36; see also, Andersen, 2003; Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002). In doing so, an empirical analysis of the politics of hegemony should begin with a problem-driven research design, by focusing on the deconstruction of the often taken-for-granted social formations and the examination of the conditions of possibility for their emergence and changes (Howarth, 2005: 317-318; Marttila, 2015; Glynos and Howarth, 2007). This method is akin to Foucault's notion of ‘problematisation’ (1985; 1988; see also Dean, 2009). Crucially, the approach of this study allows combining both his archaeological and genealogical strategies, by which the former accounts for the ways a discourse sustains a social formation while the latter reveals its contingent and contested nature.

By locating the dynamics of Islamists’ hegemonic struggles in the context of nation-state formation and development, it is also imperative to begin this study by deconstructing the historical formation and the contestations in ‘defining’ Indonesia. In so doing, the thesis identifies three central discursive settings that become the spatio-temporal circumstances and are constitutive in transforming the

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13 Howarth (2000; 2005: 316-318, see also Marttila, 2015: 139) distinguishes this design with that of theory- and method-driven models. Method-driven models put more emphasis on technique of data collection and analysis than the empirical phenomena under study, while theory-driven approaches aim primarily at confirming a certain theoretical outlook. Regarding the problematisation strategies, Foucault argues that a research method is ‘a matter of analysing, not behaviours or ideas, nor societies and their “ideologies”, but the problematisations through which being offers itself to be, necessarily, thought—and the practices on the basis of which these problematisations are formed’ (1985: 11).
relations between Islam and the state in Indonesia’s political history. These are, respectively, anti-colonialism and nation-state formation (1900s-1965), developmentalism (1966-1998), and democracy (1998-present). The empirical research within these three settings is directed to link the discursive formations of Islamism and the materiality of their socio-political conditions throughout its hegemonic struggles. Rather than presenting chronological stages, therefore, the analysis of each discursive setting is based on three levels of investigation. Firstly, the social conditions and contradictions—including the global-national dynamics—through which the articulations of demands and dissent by the narrative of Islam have been made possible and the ways these relate to different forms of Islamist projects, particularly their ideological underpinnings, agencies, and relationships within and beyond the Islamists. Secondly, the ways social agents of Islamism advance their political projects and how the contestations and social coalitions are constituted through their hegemonic struggles. Thirdly, the extent to which distinct social and power relations established through their struggles have ultimately characterised Indonesian politics and the practices of Islamism itself.

This thesis draws upon secondary and primary data, collected and analysed in accordance to the spatio-temporal contexts under investigation. Secondary data includes a wide array of scholarly studies, printed and online official documents, pamphlets, statistics or survey results, training materials, biographies, and media reports. Primary research materials were obtained during fieldwork between July 2016 and January 2017 in Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Bogor and Bandung. I conducted semi-structured interviews and small-group discussions with the representatives of Islamic organisations, political parties, academics and researchers, journalists, Islamic student associations affiliated with Islamic organisations or parties, and activists at the grass root and middle-levels.

It is also worth noting that since political discourse theory does not rigidly differentiate linguistics from non-linguistic elements, as elaborated in Chapter 2, the analysis of this data is not focused on ‘language in use’ or ‘talk and text in context’, as generally applied in other variants of discourse theory like the critical discourse analysis developed by Fairclough and others (Fairclough, 2003; van Dijk,
Rather, all the data are treated as a ‘corpus’ or discourse material, meaning that they are not merely about the events or statements but are problematised in their specific conditions and in the extent to which they may reflect the contestations and social relations in certain historical conjunctures (c.f., Howarth, 2005: 316-349; Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002).

By emphasising the dynamic relations between Islamism and state transformation, this thesis is designed as a meso-level study. As such, the starting point is not the identification of Islamist groups, but the subject positions, agencies and relationships resulting from the hegemonic struggles which have shaped, and been influenced by, the respective three discursive settings under study. Therefore, the justification for selecting the Islamist groups in the fieldwork is rather loose and somewhat imprecise. In fact, the groups were selected not based on the strength of their social bases, but their discursive role in influencing the contestations and social coalition in certain historical periods. For instance, the Jaringan Islam Liberal (JIL, Liberal Islam Network) is selected in this study because its focus on the issues of promoting the forms of Islam that are compatible to the notions of liberal democracy and neoliberal markets against the specific backdrop of democratisation and GWOT campaigns (Chapter 5).

Furthermore, the selection of Islamist groups is also not based on those which participate in democratic institutions in the forms of Islamic parties or those with more roots in social organisations. Because ‘articulation’ is the unit of analysis (discussed further in Chapter 2), the groups selected in this study are greatly varied, although they all organise dissent, demands and aspiration through the narrative of Islam. They can manifest in various vehicles including political parties, social organisations, whether formal or non-formal – the latter like the Majelis Dzikir (Islamic congregations). Rather than building a strict distinction between these groups, the focus of the politics of hegemony is about the practices of constructing a cross-cutting alliance among diverse elements through the creation of a distinct project under the banner of Islam.

During the fieldwork, I also participated—as an observer—in the infamous Islamist mobilisations, the so-called Aksi Bela Islam (Actions for Defending Islam)
which called for the imprisonment of Ahok before the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election. The interviews with the participants from various backgrounds and the leaders of Islamist organisations and political parties were conducted during and after the events (discussed further in Chapter 6). Lastly, the closure of the website of the *Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia* (HTI), a prominent element of the *Aksi Bela Islam*, after the government banned this organisation in July 2017 has affected the writing of this thesis. The use of the documents, news, bulletins, and statements from its website can no longer be referred to their original web addresses but based on the versions which I had downloaded prior the website’s closure.

**Outline of the Thesis**

This thesis comprises seven chapters. After this Introduction, Chapter 2 addresses the main theoretical issues of the politics of hegemony and links it to the studies of Islamic politics. It outlines the ways this concept has been understood in contentious ways, particularly pertaining to its function as an analytical category and the ways the politics of hegemony operates. More specifically, it proceeds with unpacking this concept following the tradition of political discourse theory that is primarily associated with the works of Laclau and Mouffè.

Chapter 3 examines the genealogies of the competing political projects in the making of Indonesia under the discursive settings of anti-colonialism and nation-state formation. It shows that broader socio-political changes in the late nineteenth century had made possible for the emergence and development of anti-colonial movements organised by three central political discourses: Islamism, communism and nationalism. While anti-colonialism became their hallmark, the demands, aspirations and strategies of their respective social agents were starkly different, and these conditions would significantly characterise the contestations in ‘defining’ post-colonial Indonesia and the struggles to control state power. For example, as early as the 1930s, the debates between the so-called ‘Islamist nationalist’ and ‘secular-nationalist’ camps had mainly dealt with whether the post-colonial political community would be based on the identity of ‘*ummah*’ or *bangsa* (nation).
When Indonesia ultimately adopted Pancasila (the five principles, as discussed later) as its ideological foundation of the new nation-state, Islam was only an element of this new political formation. The chapter shows that the political history of post-colonial Indonesia is mainly about the efforts to maintain the hegemony of unity of nation-state based on Pancasila by dealing with its antagonistic others, as clearly reflected in the ‘political experiments’ of Parliamentary Democracy (1949-1957) and the so-called Guided Democracy (1957-1965).

In Chapter 4, the focus is on the relations between Islamism and New Order developmentalism. Beyond merely a form of state corporatism or instrumentalism, the chapter shows that such relationships were integral to the discursive formation and development of the New Order. Initially become the main element in the anti-communist alliance, the relationships between Islamist groups and the state had been subsequently transformed through developmentalism discourse. Constituted as an anti-thesis of Soekarno’s ‘Old Order’, the building of New Order hegemony was achieved by constituting ‘Pancasila democracy’ as a ‘master signifier’—as a terrain of the articulations of welfare, political stability and social harmony. New Order developmentalism had become a governing rationality to restructure state-society relations for the workings of the state-led development programs. The dynamics of these relations were influenced by the dominant strands of modernisation theory, that links economic growth to the maintenance of socio-political stability. As such, developmentalism became an ‘anti-politics machine’ which effectively depoliticised and disorganised representative-interests-based politics for the workings of technocratic models of intervention. Throughout this period, Islamic politics was domesticated in the domain of culture, whose agencies and subjectivities were constructed to defend the appeal of New Order modernisation projects.

Nevertheless, the hegemony of New Order developmentalism had begun to stumble in the early 1980s. Socio-economic crisis after the end of the oil boom and liberalisation policies had resulted in widespread resistance against the New Order, including as organised through the politicisation of Islam. Seen as depriving the ummah and benefiting the Christian and Chinese conglomerates, the Islamists’
resistance against New Order developmentalism was often complicated by racial sentiments. Regarding Islamic politics, the introduction of the asas tunggal Pancasila (the sole foundation), that banned all parties and social organisations to use ideological platforms other than Pancasila, had resulted in different responses which subsequently revealed three different forms of Islamism: the accommodationist, the confrontationist, and ‘social movement’. Throughout this period, the articulations of Islam were manifested in the forms of identity politics, constructed as a political basis for efforts to alter the power relations within the New Order state. The chapter also demonstrates that while the demands for democratisation in the last years of the New Order had infused diverse opposition groups, their target focused exclusively on overthrowing President Soeharto rather than providing a space for building a common political agenda as an alternative to the New Order.

Following this, Chapter 5 discusses Islamists’ hegemonic struggles for the post-Soeharto political order. It shows that democratisation discourse, which has been increasingly linked to the global discourse of terrorism and neoliberal globalisation, becomes a common ground for multiple social groups for transforming authoritarianism. After the fall of Soeharto, democratisation discourse is mainly articulated in the three main areas: political liberalisation, decentralisation and the building of plural and tolerant societies. It is argued that the functioning of democracy is less determined by the presence of democratic institutions and mechanisms, but contingent on complex contestations among social groups which seek to reorganise their interests, identities and demands through the narrative of democratisation. In regard to Islamism, democratisation has indeed provided the Islamists with a greater role in the political arena and the public sphere. Yet, as discussed, it does not necessarily facilitate the making of an effective representation vehicle for the sociologically diverse ummah.

The failure of building a more hegemonic force has had far-reaching consequences. For example, the inability to represent the diverse demands of Islamist movements in the political arena had prompted the rapid emergence of Islamist vehicles including the ones which utilised violent means. With a relatively
weak social base, Islamic parties have also tended to build consensus and compromise with other forces, including the reminiscent of the New Order. As such, the political battles between reform versus status quo that once characterised post-Soeharto politics had been immediately disappeared. In fact, such consensus had not only erased the fundamental differences among the parties but also made Islam increasingly become a ‘floating signifier’, appropriated by different actors with diverse contents and interests as particularly shown in the case local elections and the politics of sharia law in provincial and district areas (Chapter 5).

Chapter 6 focuses on the workings of the current Indonesian democracy from the lens of hegemonic politics and how these conditions also affect the practices of Islamism. More specifically, it looks at the fragmentation of Islamic politics in the post-New Order against two inter-related backdrops: (1) the depoliticising effects brought by the hegemony of neoliberalism in democracy and development practices and (2) the culturalisation of Islam as results of the GWOT campaigns, especially through tolerance and multiculturalism discourses. The chapter shows that the centrality of Islamist political discourse in political contestations is symptomatic of the crisis of democratic representation and the fragmentation of Islamism itself. As taking place in other parts of the world, the depoliticisation effects associated with the hegemony of neoliberalism have created a favourable terrain for the ‘populist’ articulations that claim to represent those are neglected and unheard in the existing representative system. Islam becomes a viable political discourse to construct ‘the people’ based on ummah identities, appealing to those who are marginalised by the rapacious elites especially in urban areas. Hence, the prevalence of Islamist political discourse and mobilisation in the current era is not antithetical with but springs directly from the actual practices of democracy in Indonesia.

However, due to the fragmented nature of Islamic politics, the practices of Islamist ‘populist’ politics cannot be effectively transformed into a cross-cutting alliance for representing the diverse demands of the ummah. By using the case of the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election, Chapter 6 also shows that the construction of the ummah subjects is still narrowly directed at electoral politics (hence, the term ‘electoral ummah’) and maintaining patronage networks. Consequently, this
fragmented ‘populist’ Islamist force can be easily captured by the contending elites rather than being a political force that challenges the existing structure of power which is seen as depriving the ummah. The final chapter of this thesis offers a conclusion that highlights the major arguments and analysis, by giving more emphasis to the theoretical and political implications of this study.
The Primacy of the Political: Islamism and the Politics of Hegemony

Introduction

This chapter outlines a theoretical framework to understand Islamism and its trajectories in Indonesia through the lens of the politics of hegemony. Following theoretical traditions developed in political discourse theory, particularly those associated with the works of Laclau and Mouffe (2001; Laclau, 1990; 1996; Butler, et al., 2000; Howarth, et al., 2000; Critchley and Marchart, 2004; Howarth, 2014; Smith, 1998), hegemony here is conceived in two spheres, which are inexorably intertwined. First, as an analytical category to comprehend social changes that puts emphasis on the significance of ‘the political’ at the forefront. Its central claim lies on the postulation that social change is the historical outcome of power struggles among competing forces with multiple political projects. Second, as the practice of constructing alliances by linking together different sets of demands of social agents to wage a distinct political project for the purpose of reshaping a given structure of power relations. The politics of hegemony in the form of cross-cutting alliances among diverse social groups is thus something to be constructed through which the nature and identities of such alliances are continuously constituted in the course of the struggles.

More specifically, this study conceives Islamism as a form of hegemonic struggle. By this, the nature and trajectories of Islamism are less rooted in, and thus driven by, different interpretation of religious doctrine, cultural norms or the imperatives of institutions. This chapter, by contrast, argues that Islamists’ hegemonic struggles are contingent on the outcomes of socio-political changes and political contestations involving multiple forces, both among and beyond Islamists, in given historical periods. Attention is given especially to how the strategies of
Islamist struggles and their associated contestations as well as social coalitions are forged; and how these struggles alter, and are shaped by, the distinct relations of power that, in turn, characterise Indonesian politics and the practices of Islamism.

Moreover, the approach of this study also highlights the importance of the state, comprehended specifically as a political terrain and simultaneously as contingent on the outcomes of hegemonic struggles. This theoretical position, as discussed later, is different from that of the proponents of ‘post-hegemony’ theories who advocate a politics of withdrawal from state institutions. Crucially, comprehending Islamism in the context of state transformation is also useful for linking Islamists’ hegemonic struggles within certain discourses that greatly influence the changing nature of governing and organising state and society relations.

This chapter examines the main approaches to hegemony by linking them to the discussion on Islamic politics, but the main emphasis is on those that developed around political discourse theory. Specifically, the central debates addressed here are those, respectively, pertaining to the analytical function of this concept and the ways that the politics of hegemony operates. This chapter shows that hegemony is not only useful as an analytical category, but its logic becomes ‘the ontology of the social’; that is how social and political formations and relations are constituted and transformed (Laclau, 2000: 44; 1990).

Furthermore, the theoretical framework used in this study emphasises the discursive dimension of hegemonic struggles that make it significantly different from those that place emphasis on political strategy or organisation, as in the case of studies of Islamic politics which employ social movement perspectives. So, the focus of this framework is twofold. First, the ways the Islamists constitute Islam as a ‘master signifier’, that enables them to construct and organise collective demands by advancing distinct political projects, in specific historical conjunctures. Second, the extent to which the contents, strategies and forms of Islamism are continuously shaped in accordance to their political struggles. Additionally, by appropriating the notions of ‘the relative structurality’ of discourses, that the articulations of certain discourses are always relatively embedded in the existing structure of power.
relations, this framework helps to link discursive formations of hegemonic struggles to specific socio-political circumstances.

Explaining Social Change: Hegemony as the Ontology of the Social

Theoretical debates about power, representation and social change have given the concept of hegemony currency in political studies (Martin, 2002; Howarth, et al., 2000). At the outset, however, it is worth noting that the way this concept is used is starkly different from the preoccupation of the field of International Relations, which associates it mainly with the maintenance of stability of post-Cold War global politics (see, for example, Clark, 2011; Chomsky, 2004). Instead, hegemony here is specifically employed to comprehend conditions for social change and the roles of social agents in that transformation. Historically, it emerges as a critique of some ‘forms of deterministic and mechanistic Marxism in which change is seen as unproblematically brought about by the laws of history working independently of political movements and human will’ (Bocock, 1986: 11). By introducing the notions of hegemony, political theorists attempt to supplement the economic logic of necessity with a political logic of contingency in explaining social change (Mouffe, 1979; Bobbio, 1979; Thomas, 2009; Laclau, 2000).

In political discourse theory, hegemony is primarily seen as the ontology of the social, that is as political relations embedded in every formation of a political order and its transformation (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001; Laclau, 2000). The central

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14 According to Laclau, the ‘latent notion’ of hegemony can actually be found in Marx’s early works, although it is from Gramsci that this notion is fruitfully developed (Laclau, 2000: 44-47). Laclau’s theoretical project is to primarily develop Marxism by criticising its tendencies of economic essentialism and to envisage the specificity of the political dimension. The initial notion of hegemony, for example, is found in the Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Rights, when Marx stated:

For the revolution of a nation and the emancipation of a particular class of civil society to coincide, for one estate to be acknowledged as the state of the whole society, all the defects of society must conversely be concentrated in another class, a particular estate must be looked upon as the notorious crime of the whole society, so that liberation from that sphere appears as general self-liberation. For one estate to be par excellence the state of liberation, another estate must conversely be the obvious estate of oppression (Marx and Engels, 1975: 184-185).
premise is that such processes are always political acts, and, as such, involve the exercise of power. Like Foucault (1980; 1972), Laclau and Mouffe do not comprehend power narrowly as something which people possess and exercise over others. Rather, they emphasise the constitutive function of power in the production of the social and its change (c.f., Newman, 2004; Finlayson and Valentine, 2002). By conceiving the social as historical outcomes of political processes and struggles, politics is ultimately about the ways the social is constantly constituted by excluding other possibilities of organising society. Politics, to quote Jørgensen and Phillips, ‘is not just a surface that reflects a deeper social reality; rather, it is the social organisation that is the outcome of continuous political processes’ (2002: 36).

Furthermore, borrowing Derrida’s notions of deconstruction (1976), Laclau and Mouffe suggest that the boundaries between objectivity and the political, or between what seems natural and politically contested in a particular political order, becomes indistinguishable and unfixed (2001: 122-127; Laclau, 1993: 545-546; 1990; Sayyid and Zac, 1998). As such, the existing political order is essentially contingent, as the consequence of sedimented or institutionalised hegemonic struggles, and is always susceptible to being challenged by other counter-hegemonic forces. It is precisely within such contingent circumstances, political struggles to challenge and reshape the given structure of relations of power are made possible in the first place. However, the politics of hegemony is not only about forging an alliance among already existing social agents with their respective interests and identities, but as the production of new collective subjects. Hence, the politics of hegemony is not amalgamative but constitutive (Sayyid, 1997: 93).

Nevertheless, hegemony is a contentious concept. Its central focus on the practices of building an alliance among multiple social agents has been frequently a target of critique. Joseph (2002), for instance, points out that the concept of hegemony is ‘one-sided’ in that it is seen as a ‘product of social agents’ separated from a structural basis. He argues that ‘[i]f the concept of hegemony is restricted to

15 Laclau conceives deconstruction and hegemony as ‘two side sides of single operation’ (1993: 281). In this sense, hegemony naturalises particular articulations in the constitution of the social, while deconstruction shows its undecidability and contingent nature. See also Laclau (1990: 89-91), Torfing (1999: 103).
this agential approach, then a mistaken view of history and politics emerges that sees important social processes as simply the products of significant social actors or groups’ (2002: 1). This argument, however, is rather misplaced as the alliance building in the politics of hegemony is certainly not an aggregation of fully autonomous individual actors or groups. Rather, it is a political project that emerges from, and develops within, specific historical conditions whose ultimate purpose is the transformation of the structure of power relations in a given political order. More significantly, by emphasising the contingent and constitutive features of the structure of power, political discourse theory’s conceptualisation of hegemony has in fact allowed the exploration of the formation and transformation of certain political order by dissolving the static opposition between agency and structure (c.f., Laclau and Mouffe, 2001; Sayyid and Zac, 1998).

Nowadays, the concept of hegemony, particularly its association with the politics of representation, has also been challenged by a new theoretical tradition in social movement and cultural studies, one that is interested in so-called ‘post-hegemony’ (Day, 2005; Lash, 2007; Thoburn, 2007; Beasley-Murray, 2010; Tormey, 2015). Their proponents generally claim that current developments of global capitalism have made the sovereignty of state power irrelevant and social resistance more autonomous and self-organised. For them, post-hegemony represents a radical break from ‘politics-as-usual’, whereby the model of representation and representative politics are now replaced by a ‘horizontal’ style of politics (Arditti, 2007: 205-226; Tormey, 2015: 9, 35). A farewell bid to the theories of hegemony, for example, is strongly echoed in Richard Day’s Gramsci is Dead (2005). Day argues that contemporary capitalist globalisation has resulted in diverse forms of resistance labelled as ‘the newest social movements’. By this term, he refers to such movements as that of the assembleistas in Argentina, the Landless People's Movement (LPM) in South Africa and Zapatista villagers in Chiapas, Mexico. Instead of applying counter-hegemonic strategies, he claims, these movements operate non-hegemonically. This means that ‘[t]hey seek radical change, but not through taking or influencing state power, and in so doing they challenge the logic of hegemony at its very core (Day, 2005: 8).
Mirroring Hardt and Negri’s concept of the *multitude* (2004; 2000), Day’s objection to the logic of hegemony is because political blocs and social changes should still be achieved ‘through the processes of representation’ (Day, 2005: 75; see also Tormey, 2015). According to Hardt and Negri (2004; 2000), political movements today are no longer dominated by the notion of ‘the people’ that requires a unity of collective will to influence state power. In Day’s own argument, such movements refer to ‘those who are striving to recover, establish or enhance their ability to determine the conditions of their own existence, while allowing and encouraging others to do the same’ (2005: 13, emphasis in the original). Situated in the transition to Empire—where territorial state sovereignty is becoming less important—this *multitude*, they argue, can no longer be conceived in terms of an authority that is representative of the people but calls for new forms of non-representative politics.

Crucially, Laclau and Mouffe (2001) share similar assessments with the proponents of new social movements, particularly on how the developments of global capitalism have resulted in more local but widespread resistance which bring with them a plurality of demands and aspirations for political struggles—not necessarily on the plane of class-based politics. Yet, there are stark divergences between them. In contrast to Hardt and Negri and others, Laclau and Mouffe’s conceptualisation of hegemony primarily lies in recognising and establishing a link between various demands that forms the basis for subsequent transformations into alliances that challenge the existing structure of power relations (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 127-136; Stavrakakis, 2014). As such, the politics of hegemony does not necessarily eliminate the heterogeneity of demands among social groups. Rather, such differences are transformed into a common political project through which the new identities and interests of those groups are reconstituted in that process.

Another point of difference pertains to the importance of engaging the state. By emphasising the capacity of spontaneous and self-organising politics, the purveyors of post-hegemony launch a politics of withdrawal from the state institutions (see, for example, Mouffe, 2009: 230). Without engaging and
challenging the existing order, i.e. if we choose to escape the state completely, we only leave the door open for other forces to take over. To illustrate this, the movements around the Arab Spring can be taken as a paradigmatic example. Scholars and media pundits have widely celebrated these movements as a new form of revolutionary movement. Hardt and Negri (2011), for example, argue that the multitude of uprising expresses ‘democracy’s new pioneers’ in the Arab world. Notwithstanding their success in removing some of the dictators, the lack of a hegemonic political agenda has prevented the Arab Spring from bringing about substantive changes (see, for example, Bayat, 2017). Referring to the case of Egypt in post-Mubarak politics, the ‘self-limiting revolutions’ of Arab Spring, as Bayat cogently argues, have taken place where:

Revolutionaries remained outside the structures of power because they were not planning to take over the state; when, in the later stages, they realized that they needed to, they lacked the political resources—organisation, leadership, strategic vision—that would be necessary to wrest control both from the old regimes and from ‘free-riders’ such as the Muslim Brothers or the Salafists, who had played a limited role in the uprising but were organizationally ready to take power (2013: 54).

Moreover, the politics of hegemony has also gained more traction following trends to return to representation in democracy and political theories, especially those whose concerns are not the institutions of representative politics but the constitutive nature of representation (for example, Saward, 2010; Mouffe, 1992; 2005; Isin, 2015; Brown, 2015). The current global crisis of representative democracy indicated by, for example, a common distrust towards political parties, does not necessarily mean altogether the death of the politics of representation (e.g. Tormey, 2015). Writing in the context of Western Europe, Mouffe (2005) argues that such crisis is primarily associated with the outcome of the ‘consensus of the centre’ between centre-right and centre-left parties established under neoliberal hegemony, that ultimately lead to the disappearance of alternative ideas to neoliberal globalisation. This condition has created a favourable terrain for the rise of populist politics, that is now increasingly common in developed and developing countries (e.g., Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2012; Hadiz, 2016; Mizuno and Phongpaichit, 2009).

Yet, the forms and contents of populism emerging from such condition are varied, depending on the ways hegemonic struggles for reshaping the political order
are conducted. Often, it is marked by anti-democratic practices and have a right-wing character when the way they bring together a series of heterogeneous social demands and the construction of the unity of ‘the people’ is by using xenophobic rhetoric. In contrast, the experiences of populist movements like SYRIZA in Greece (e.g. Katsourides, 2016) and Podemos in Spain (e.g., Errejon and Mouffe, 2016; Iglesias, 2015) clearly show different pathways of breaking the consensual politics of ‘the establishment’—notwithstanding their limited success (c.f., Mouffe, 2018). Therefore, rather than celebrating the end of representation and hegemonic politics, political theorists like Laclau and Mouffe assert that these concepts are becoming more important than ever before.

Politics of Hegemony and the Studies of Islamism

The politics of hegemony has also been differently understood in the ways its logic operates. As Anderson (1976: 14) demonstrates, the initial use of ‘hegemony’ as it appeared in the writings of Plekhanov and Axelrod in the late 1880s, specifically meant a political strategy. This refers to a collective strategy that was necessary for the Russian working class to adopt in order to build political alliances with other groups in the struggle against Tsarism. In the same vein, Lenin also conceived hegemony essentially as a political strategy involving a temporary alliance of social forces under the leadership of the working class through the vanguard party. Such an alliance is strategic as the ultimate objective is to take over state institutions and replace them with a ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’ (Anderson, 1976: 16-17). These conceptualisations, therefore, formulate hegemony primarily as a political strategy and political alliance for the purposes of taking over state power.

A politics of hegemony that places emphasis on a political strategy of building alliances and organisational capacity is generally adopted in studies of Islamism that employ social movement perspectives, especially the so-called Resource Mobilisation Theory. Despite the fact that Lenin is infrequently cited as their main inspiration, the proponents of this theory (e.g., Tilly, 1978; Cohen, 1985; see also della Porta and Diani, 2006; Buechler, 2000) conceive organisations as the ultimate
means for mobilising collective actions. They typically argue that ‘[w]hile grievances are ubiquitous, movements are not. As a result, there must be intermediary variables that translate individualised discontent into organised contention’ (Wictorowicz, 2004: 10). Institutions such as mosques (Ismail, 2006, for the case of Tunisia and Algeria), university campuses and professional associations (Wickham, 2002, in the case of Egypt’s Muslim Brothers) and charity organisations (Clark, 2004) are often depicted as effective venues for Islamist recruitment and mobilisation.

In the case of Egypt, for example, Islamist mobilisation and politicisation of such institutions in the 1970s and 1980s took place in the context of authoritarian politics and the state’s failure in providing basic welfare (Wickham, 2002: 6; Anderson, 1997; Ayubi, 1991). This situation was complicated by a profound demographic change that brought about the emergence of the lumpen intelligentsia which then became the main component for Islamist mobilisation (Wickham, 2002: Chapter 3; Roy, 1994; Ibrahim, 2002). This term refers to a huge number of educated youths in Egypt during the period of 1970s-1980s, as a result of Nasser’s policy to widen access to higher education, but who could not be absorbed into job markets, and are thus socially and economically marginalised. In Indonesia, during the height of authoritarianism in the 1980s, university campus mosques and student-based Islamic propagation forum called the Forum Silaturahmi Lembaga Dakwah Kampus (FS-LDK, Forum of Coordination of Campus Predication)—regarded as the embryo of the Justice and Prosperity Party (PKS) and other contemporary Islamist movements—played a central role in Islamist recruitment especially when student movements and organisations were severely suppressed (Damanik, 2002; Machmudi, 2008; Feillard and Madinier, 2011). Writing on such Islamic social institutions as clinics and charity organisations in Egypt, Jordan and Yemen, Clark

16 Indeed, there are different variation in these theories. For example, McCharty and Zald (1977, see Buechler, 2000: 35-36) highlight the importance of organisations of movement in an economic tone and, consequently, perceive social movement organisations operating like firms competing for resources and participants. Charles Tilly (1978, see also Buechler, 2000: 36-37), by contrast, focuses on the dimension of power struggle. He mentioned four elements as prerequisites for collective action to take place: (1) group interests (the gains and losses the groups receive from their engagement with the movement); (2) intersection of networks and organisation; (3) resource mobilisation under the group control; and (4) opportunities to wage a struggle.
also argues that these institutions ‘represent an alternative organisation of state and society—a potentially revolutionary one—based on Islam’ (2004: 6).

Such organisation-oriented approaches emerge as a response against the views that treat structural breakdowns in the realm of politics, economics and culture as the ultimate explanation for the rise of Islamism. In this viewpoint, Islamism is perceived as grievance and responses of certain groups in the period of crisis. As Bayat (1998: 137) and Wickham (2002: 4-7) mentioned, the dominant studies on Islamic social movements depart from two theoretical traditions: cultural identity and political economy. The former comprehends Islamist activism as a cultural response against continuing domination of the West in Muslim societies spanning from the colonial period until the present day, while the latter as Islamist responses against post-colonial secular governments which fail to provide welfare and social equity for their citizens. Rather than merely reflecting grievance and disappointment, according to resource mobilisation theories, Islamic activism is a result of the organised mobilisation of collective actions.

Meso-level analysis of the politics of hegemony is useful to comprehend mobilising patterns of Islamist groups to bring about social change. However, focusing on organisations or institutions as a primary explanation is also problematic. First, the organisational forms and changing strategies of Islamism are not isolated from broader socio-political circumstances. As Hadiz rightly argues, the vehicles of Islamism are ‘largely contingent on how social alliances come to be built to represent the interests of an increasingly diverse ummah—the community of believers—in modern and profane competition over power and resources’ (2014: 42, see also Hadiz and Robison, 2012: 140-141). Second, this approach provides insufficient explanations for how the coherence of diverse, even conflicting, interests or identities among the participants is maintained. In the politics of hegemony, alliances and social coalitions are not the sums of individualised cost-benefit calculations and there are no pre-constituted interests. The coherence of the social coalition is continuously constructed through the contestations and the making of collective identities in the course of their political struggles (c.f., Ismail, 2004; Bayat, 2005).
At this stage, Gramsci’s breakthrough in the conceptualisation of hegemony is instructive. Unlike Lenin, Gramsci’s later works do not exclusively conceive hegemony as a temporary alliance between distinct class forces through ‘the vanguard party’ for revolutionary purposes (Gramsci, 1971; Mouffe, 1979). Rather, it serves as a distinct concept to understand how certain power relations are maintained and transformed. His primary focus is not the organisation of a class alliance but the dimension of moral, intellectual and political leadership to bring about social transformation. By this, he argues that ‘the supremacy of a social group manifests itself in two ways, as ‘dominant’ and as ‘intellectual and moral leadership’ (1971: 161). By introducing the category of intellectual and moral leadership, the practice of hegemony, as Barrett notes, can be seen as ‘the organisation of consent—the processes through which subordinated forms of consciousness are constructed without recourse to violence or coercion’ (1991: 54).

Gramsci subsequently introduces two forms of hegemonic politics: transformative and expansive hegemony (1971: 55-59; 106-114; 129-133). The former involves ‘the gradual but continuous absorption, achieved by methods which varied in their effectiveness, of the active elements produced by allied groups—and even of those which came from antagonistic groups and seemed irreconcilably hostile’ (Gramsci, 1971: 58-59). This process entails a ‘passive revolution’ because class alliances are integrated and incorporated into a system of power to prevent them from being oppositional. A clear example of this tendency is the accommodation of the New Order state towards the Muslim middle-class in the 1990s, in the face of Soeharto’s declining support from his traditional ally in the military (Hefner, 1993; Porter, 2002). Through various state-corporatist schemes, the principal objective of accommodating these groups was ‘to recruit strategic members of the rising middle classes into the regime and convince them that the existing corporatist structures served their career ambitions and interests’ (Porter, 2002: 27).

By contrast, expansive hegemony includes the production of a more solid consensus resulting from the merging of diverse interests of the popular classes by the hegemonic class that would ultimately establish a more genuine ‘national
popular will’ (Gramsci, 1971: 59; Mouffe, 1979: 182-183). Unlike ‘war of manoeuvre’ strategies that primarily involve taking over state power, expansive hegemony relates more to the strategies of a ‘war of position’. To illustrate this distinction, Bayat’s comparative analysis of Islamism in Egypt and Iran in the 1980s is useful (Bayat, 1998). In contrast to Iran’s experience, where Islamists ultimately took over state power through a revolution, Egypt’s Islamists under Mubarak’s rule successfully influenced change on the societal level but failed to challenge the regime decisively. He subsequently dubs the former as ‘revolution without movement’ and ‘movement without revolution’ for the latter.

Following Gramsci’s logic of hegemony, the political transformation is not just about capturing the state but, more importantly, about winning society by institutional, intellectual and moral hegemony (Mouffe, 1979: 178-185; Femia, 1981: 23-60). By advancing such dimensions, the Gramscian approach to Islamism (for example Bayat, 1998; 2005; Butko, 2004) has generally transcended the limitations found in Roy’s ‘failure of political Islam’ thesis (1994), which puts emphasis on taking over the state as the ultimate target of Islamism (see Ismail, 2006: 169). As a hegemonic project, as Butko mentioned, Islamist movements ‘desire not only the seizure of political power but also to establish a genuine revolutionary movement through the creation of a new society’ (2004: 42). Nevertheless, there are no linear and teleological stages in which hegemony over society is the backdoor to state power, and vice-versa. It largely depends on the degrees of politicisation, that is the ways a particular force constructs a common political agenda, representing the wide array of diverse social demands. The failure of such politicisation, even when a particular force has occupied the position of power like the case of President Morsi of the Muslim Brothers in the post-Mubarak era, is doomed to be easily challenged by other counter-hegemonic movements.

Moreover, in contrast to Orthodox Marxist traditions, Gramsci develops the category of hegemony to explain the process in the superstructure for the production of people’s consciousness (Bobbio, 1979: 21-47; Mouffe, 1979; Martin, 2002; Thomas, 2009). By so doing, meaning-making serves as a key element to neutralise existing power relations in such a way that these relations are ultimately accepted
as common sense and become unquestioned. It is through meaning production that people can be mobilised in the name of ‘collective will’, regardless of their actual differences in terms of, for example, class or ethnic identity, by building a particular historical bloc to wage a struggle against the existing power relations. Therefore, hegemony should be ‘no longer defined as an alliance of pre-constituted identities, but rather as a process of production of a new collective identity’ (Torfing, 1999: 108).

For Laclau and Mouffe (2001), Gramsci’s incorporation of the notions of moral-intellectual leadership and historical bloc is truly a watershed moment. By using the concept of the historical bloc and of ideology as its cement, Gramsci attempts to dissolve strict distinctions between base and superstructure in Marxian traditions, where the former determines the latter, to explain social change (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 67; Bobbio, 1979). This theoretical leap, according to Laclau and Mouffe, has opened up broader fields of political/ideological struggles and paved the ways for developing the logic of contingency in the concept of hegemony (Mouffe, 1979: 10; Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 65-71). Yet, the tendency for essentialism is still found in the Gramscian model of hegemony (see, Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 69; Barret, 1991: 51-80; Mouffe, 1979: 183-185). For example, Gramsci stated that ‘though hegemony is ethical-political, it must also be economic, must necessarily be based on the decisive function exercised by the leading group in the decisive nucleus of economic activity’ (1971: 161). Thus, Gramscian hegemony is still necessarily grounded on a fundamental class, understood as an objective group to which people belong, and that the working class has a privileged status to bring about social change. In this view, class hegemony is not seen entirely as a result of political struggle but has its own ‘ontological status’—that politics of hegemony is essentially determined, in the last instance, by the economy. Following this argument, social formation and transformation are thus structured around a single hegemonic centre, that is the working-class position (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 136-138).

Against this backdrop, the proponents of political discourse theory conceptualise hegemony by, first of all, recognising the plurality of social demands
and advancing them in such ways to promote a political struggle (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 97-105; Sayyid and Zac, 1998; Howarth, 2000; Torfing, 1999; Smith, 2012). This theoretical project, as discussed above, calls for a particular social ontology that emphasises the primacy of the political. In doing so, they conceive social formation and transformation as socially and politically constructed through the logic of contingency. Politics of hegemony can only operate in the context where the social formation is always a becoming, that is, opened and incomplete (c.f., Connolly, 2011). In this viewpoint, the politics of hegemony can be seen as a form of articulation that brings together different identities and interests into a common project and the creation of new forms of social order from a variety of dispersed elements.

Up to this point, there is an apparent convergence between Gramsci and Laclau in conceiving hegemony as a general category for explaining social change. Nevertheless, the way both conceptualise social subjects for the politics of hegemony differs significantly. This divergence primarily starts from their different treatment of politics. For Gramsci, politics is understood as a vehicle of the working class for societal and political transformation, whereas Laclau conceives politics as the reproduction of the social. From this vantage point, all social groups are considered as particularities within society that are structured around specific interests and aspirations. Without necessarily privileging the working class as the ultimate subjects for social change, all particularities—those of organising around the signifier of gender, environment, ethnic and religion and so forth—are qualified to wage hegemonic struggles. This depends ultimately on the politicisation among particular social groups in such a way that they are able to ‘take up representation of the universality of the community conceived as a whole’ (Laclau, 2001: 5-6).

Dislocation, Islamism and Hegemony: Towards a New Framework

In political discourse theory, the contingent character of a social formation, or the distinction between ‘the social’ and ‘the political’, is conceived in the Husserlian
senses of ‘sedimentation’ and ‘reactivation’ (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001; Laclau, 1999: 146; Marchart, 2007: 138-142; Sayyid and Zac, 1998). This theory proposes to conceptualise ‘the social’ as the terrain of sedimented discursive practices, while ‘the political’ is the moment of the institution of the social and the moment of the reactivation of the contingent nature of every social formation (Laclau, 1996: 43, 61). Accordingly, sedimentation refers to the ways in which particular practices or discourses have become seemingly natural and unquestioned, whereas reactivation is the process of questioning such sedimented practices. Political discourse theory of hegemony is predicated on the ultimate impossibility of the closure of certain social formation. By this, the social is never so sedimented that the moment of reactivation becomes impossible, nor can it achieve a moment of original institution, constituting itself totally from the beginning.

The moment of reactivation is predated by the structural dislocation, that is when the plurality of demands and aspirations are unable to be absorbed and accommodated in the existing structure of power. This dislocation triggers social agents to establish new forms of identification and articulate different demands for the new struggles to (re)signify the dislocated order. Therefore, the imposition of such demands and struggles is always a political act (Laclau, 1990: 27-31; see also Sayyid, 1997: 23-26; Howarth, 2000: 109-111; Dryberg, 2004: 241-255). Laclau argues that:

> We thus have a set of new possibilities for historical action which are the direct result of structural dislocation. The world is less given and must be increasingly constructed. But this is not just a construction of the world, but of social agents who transform themselves and forge new identities as a result’ (1990: 40).

The sources of dislocation, however, are deeply rooted in socio-historical conditions that inhibit the formation and transformation of a political order (Panizza, 2005: 11-13; Barros, 2005). Such conditions include economic or political crises that open up the possibility for social change. Economic and political crises, as happened in many historical experiences, are frequently followed by the emergence of collective demands which shape the previous order. For example, the crisis of the Welfare state in Europe in the late 1970s had paved the way for the Thatcherite hegemony, which held together various movements and aspirations that
articulated such notions as the ‘free market’, ‘competitive individualism’ and ‘strong state’ (Hall, 1983: 19-39). In the case of Indonesia, Soeharto’s New Order also emerged in 1966 from a complex economic and political crisis from which the new regime then articulated the discourses of political stability and economic growth as a new governing paradigm, or a new discursive configuration, for reorganising state and society relations (Bourchier and Hadiz, 2003; see also Moertopo, 1972).

Dislocation may also be fostered by rapid social transformations in the form of modernisation, urbanisation, uneven development and neoliberal globalisation. Some scholars (Bayat, 2007; Ismail, 2006, 2006a; Davis, 2004), for example, have observed the link between dislocatory effects of urbanisation and Islamist mobilisation. Studying Islamist activism in Middle Eastern cities in Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia, Ismail (2006) stated that urbanisation and neoliberal economic policies in these countries since the 1980s have generated informal housing communities among urban poor with a distinct solidarity mechanism, that makes them effectively disengage from the state. In Algeria, this condition has reinvoked the idea of the Oulad al-Houma (children of quarter), a form of collective identity and solidarity built around family and neighbourhood networks, where mosques and other informal activities subsequently became the main spaces of Islamist movement (Ismail, 2006: 123).

Hadiz and Robison (2012: 138-139; Robison 2014: 28-34; see also Hadiz, 2016) also demonstrate how social and economic changes have transformed a particular social landscape that ultimately influences the evolution of Islamic politics in Indonesia. Accordingly, they identify three main forms of Islamism. The first form initially emerged during the colonial and early post-colonial period as a response to defend small property and their social basis was traditionally rooted in the resentment of rural landowners and petty bourgeoisie. In the following stage, the rise of Islamic politics is situated in Cold War authoritarian regime and economic globalisation that resulted in the continued marginalisation of some elements of the middle classes and urban poor. The absence of the Left in the country, following the destruction of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) in the
mid 1960s, they argue, made Islam the most viable ideology to voice dissent against
the authoritarian regime. The latest form of Islamism is situated within the market
economy and is more rooted in urban educated middle-class professionals whose
main aspiration is to build Islamic ideals by also embracing democracy, ‘good
governance’ and economic liberalisation.

Another condition for structural dislocation is the exhaustion of existing
ideologies or the moment when political vehicles are no longer representative of
certain social groups. This resembles Gramsci’s notion of ‘crisis of authority’, a
situation when: ‘the ruling class has lost its consensus, i.e. it is no longer ‘leading’
but only ‘dominant’...; this means precisely that the great masses have become
detached from their traditional ideologies, and no longer believe what they used to
believe previously, etc.’ (Gramsci, 1971: 275-276). In this sense, the rise of
Islamism in Indonesia in the 1980s, at the heyday of authoritarianism, was not only
the outcome of modern and educated youths who found their aspirations hardly
accommodated by state power. It was also triggered by the exhaustion of the
existing Islamic vehicles which these youths considered as ineffective for political
bargains with the regime for the purpose of improving their social position.

Furthermore, the changing conditions of the social agents of Islamism also
significantly influenced their distinct aspirations and strategies. Partly as result of
state-sponsored Islamisation since the 1960s, especially related to religious
instruction given from primary to higher education levels, a new generation of
Islamists since the 1980s has been more rooted in secular-university campuses than
traditional-based pesantrens, or Islamic seminaries. Among other Islamist groups
emerging from this generation was Jamaah Tarbiyah, the precursor of the Justice
and Prosperity Party (PKS) and Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI). Rather than
promoting a more discipline-based and traditional way of learning Islam, these new
Islamist generations rely more on various Islamic short courses, reading materials
translated into Indonesian from Arabic (and to an extent, from Persian) and, more
recently, the internet. They also employed different methods of activism, adopted
especially from the Muslim Brothers, such as the so-called usroh system (literally,
‘denoting a family’) and running various social and charitable activities (e.g.
Feillard and Madinier, 2011; Machmudi, 2008). As such, this sort of ‘disengagement’ with the existing traditions of mainstream Islam in Indonesia as represented by the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU, The Awakening of Muslim Scholars) and Muhammadiyah had prompted some scholars to characterise these newly Islamist expressions as indicative of mere ‘splinter groups’ and an ideology imported from the Middle East (Azra, 1999; van Bruinessen, 2004; Bubalo and Fealy, 2005).

The notion of dislocation is central to understanding the politics of hegemony in political discourse theory. The reasons are twofold. First, dislocation crucially undermines the sedimented or hegemonic practices of certain political order. Second, it triggers social agents to reconfigure new demands by constructing new hegemonic struggles in the new constellation of power (Laclau, 2014; 1990). In other words, dislocation serves as nothing less than a prerequisite of politics—the moment of reconstituting the social. Nevertheless, despite what structural dislocation may tell us about the disruption of the existing political order, it does not directly explain which political forms will subsequently emerge. This is particularly because the result of the hegemonic struggles cannot be predetermined. The key point here is that it is instructive to analyse how certain dislocations have actually become the conditions of possibilities for the emergence and development of particular political projects and how the contestations and social coalition are constituted.

At this point, Laclau and Mouffe’s concept of discourse is crucial to uncover how social agents construct articulatory practices as a response to dislocated orders (Laclau, 1993: 541-547; Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 93-148). One of the central characteristics of their discourse theory is that, unlike Foucault’s early works and other theories of discourse, they reject the strict dichotomy between discursive and non-discursive practices (see also, Glynos, et al., 2009; Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002). As such, political discourse theory claims that there is no ontological difference between the linguistic and behavioral aspects of social practices. Nevertheless, asserting the discursive character of an object does not necessarily mean putting the existence of social phenomena into question (Laclau and Mouffe, 1987: 82). To use their simple illustration, an earthquake as an event ‘objectively’
takes place, independently of our will. But its specificity as an object may be constructed, for example, as a natural phenomenon or the expression of the wrath of God depending on the structuring of a discursive formation. Thus, ‘what is denied is not that such objects exist externally to thought, but [it is a] rather different assertion that they could constitute themselves as objects outside any discursive condition of emergence’ (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 108; see also Howarth, et al., 2000: 3-4; Howarth, 2000).

Additionally, the ways discourses are articulated cannot follow any predetermined course, as a monolithic and unified ideology. Discourse, in fact, is not an already-fixed ideology to which the meanings of an action or statement can be directly attached. Instead, it is an ideological-praxis—it is called discourse insofar as it is articulated and practised by which its dynamics are certainly contingent on socio-political circumstances. Laclau and Mouffe define articulation as ‘any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practices’ while discourse refers to ‘the structured totality resulting from articulatory practices’ (2001: 105). Thus, the relations between discourse and articulation are constitutive, meaning that articulations are produced within a discourse and, at the same time, they also shape and modify the discourse in particular ways. Furthermore, as stated earlier, a discursive approach to hegemony does not perceive that social agents have already possessed fixed identities and interests. Instead, it is through articulating certain political projects that their identities and interests are reconstituted and modified. By creating a collective demand and launching a political struggle, social agents will ‘retroactively create the interests they claim to represent’ (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: xi).

Nevertheless, other theoretical issues need to be addressed to develop a new framework on the politics of hegemony. As stated above, if structural dislocations open up the possibilities for the emergence of discourses or political projects, how one can account for the fact that a particular discourse has more chance of success than others? In order to avoid the charge of randomisation (e.g. Meiksins-Wood, 1986; Geras, 1987), Laclau had actually developed the category of availability and
credibility of discourses (1990: 66; Laclau and Mouffe, 2001). He used these concepts to assert the idea that a discourse may emerge and prevail not because of the intrinsic quality of that discourse, but simply because it is the only coherent structure that provides alternatives to the dislocated social order (Laclau, 2000: 44-59). However, he did not sufficiently provide tools to utilise these concepts for explaining the unevenness of discourses in empirical situations. This, as Sayyid (1997: 75) also pointed out, has become a source of confusion for analysts.

Against this backdrop, Barros introduces the notion of ‘relative structurality’ of discourses to suggest that the emergence of a discourse is inevitably embedded in existing social circumstances (2005: 250-273). This is because structural dislocation is never total, and the reconfiguration of a social order never produces something completely new. He stated that ‘[t]here will always remain traces of the relative structurality of the dislocated order into which the new demand anchors its commanding pretensions’ (2005: 252). It follows that certain demands or discourses that attempt to reconfigure the disorganised order have always been circumscribed and relatively structured in specific historical contexts. Consequently, the availability of discourses is uneven due to the historical specificity of their emergence. It is the unevenness among discourses, which is exactly the results of historical legacies of past-conflicts, that constitutes spaces for waging a hegemonic struggle (see Laclau, 2000: 54; 2001: 5-8).

Furthermore, Sayyid (1997: 74-77) also attempts to explain how a discourse potentially emerges as a hegemonic one. He argues that ‘the availability of a discourse is not the same as the objective existence of a discourse’ (1997: 75). The

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Laclau does not associate the category of availability and credibility of discourses with the quality of their contents but merely in their connection with the situation of crisis or dislocation. By frequently using Hobbes’ state of nature as an illustration, he argues that if a severe form of dislocation occurs, the mere availability of a particular discourse is ‘enough’ to ensure its victory (Laclau, 1990: 66; c.f. Sayyid, 1997: 74-77). In this case, the credibility of a discourse is less associated with the contents for reorganising the social order but because of the fact that without it there is only disorder.

Barros explicates further that:

The new order is never completely new because it takes place in a political space in which there is always a relative structuration: the dislocation of a structure does not mean that everything becomes possible or that all existing symbolic frameworks of meaning melt into air. Thus, a particular dislocation might have had a multiplicity of origins and could be more or less deep in its effects depending on the context in which it emerges (2005: 252).
discourse of Islamism, for example, is not analogous to the presence of Islamic teachings, symbols or repertoire perceived as an unopened book waiting to be excavated and instrumentalised. The availability of Islam and the making of its political project, however, are not necessary but contingent outcomes. Accordingly, the presence of Islam cannot automatically account for Islamism. Following Sayyid (1997; 2014), Islamism becomes available insofar as it is articulated by social agents as a way to makes sense of dislocated orders and to organise new demands. If Islamism then serves as a ‘master signifier’, a surface of inscription for multiple demands among different social agents, it would have a chance to be a hegemonic discourse.

Theoretical interventions made by Barros and Sayyid are crucial for developing a framework of the politics of hegemony that link its discursive formation to the structural conditions. Barros’s emphasis on the structural embeddedness of the discourse in specific historical settings allows us to identify the historicity of articulations and the specific kinds of their social agents. Meanwhile, Sayyid’s assertion on the specific notion of the availability of discourse helps to comprehend the specificity of the articulations and the political struggles, i.e. how diverse social demands are organised around particular discourse as a distinct political project. From this viewpoint, therefore, it is instructive to investigate how social and political changes have produced specific dislocatory effects to different social groups and to what extent is a particular discourse utilised to organise new collective demands and identities. Outlining such specific context of articulations is indispensable in order to empirically analyse the configuration of social agents—their identities, interests, strategies, contestations as well as social coalitions—in advancing distinct projects for hegemonic struggles.

In so doing, different articulations of Islam in Indonesia, including its trajectories, vehicles and strategies, can be identified from their relative embeddedness, both historically and sociologically, in the structures of power (see Hadiz, 2016; Hadiz and Khoo, 2011: 471). Consequently, there is no single and unified construction of a hegemonic project among Islamist groups in Indonesia, from the first instance, for they represent various demands and aspirations which
are continuously being shaped by socio-political changes. For example, as discussed in Chapter 5, Islamist groups which are relatively well anchored in state power have tended to advance the demands of the *ummah* by participating in post-Soeharto democratic politics, even if such strategies are not always successful. Meanwhile, those that have limited attachment to state power have attempted to achieve their political struggles outside state parameters, by building trans-national outlooks or employing varying degrees of violence or even through clandestine networks of terror (c.f., Hadiz, 2014a: 42-65).

By envisaging the logic of hegemony as outlined in this framework, the ultimate task of an Islamist political project is to constitute a cross-cutting alliance, developed through ethico-political leadership among different social groups under the banner of the *ummah*. So, the *ummah*, constructed here as a political project, becomes a master signifier through which different visions of Islamism will compete to claim. Given the interests and demands of social groups which potentially constitute this *ummah* are complex and perhaps, in many ways, contradictory, the competition among Islamists is unavoidable. Their success or otherwise in their struggles for hegemony will characterise Indonesian politics and the practices of Islamism itself in different historical contexts under study.

It is also worth noting that as systems of social relations and practices, the emergence and development of certain discourse are inherently *political*. This is particularly because the formation of the discourse always involves drawing political frontiers between ‘us’ and ‘them’ (c.f., Howarth, et al., 2000: 3-4). In this line of argument, the concept of social antagonism is crucial. Social antagonism is constituted when particular social groups are unable to completely achieve their demands due to the presence of others (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 25). For example, the populist discourse of right-wing politics in Western Europe is built on the frontier between antagonism of the ‘European’ and the ‘immigrants’ especially the ‘Muslims’, where the latter is perceived as the cause of the crisis experienced by the former and, at the same time, their presence is regarded as preventing the ‘completion’ of the identities of being European (e.g. Yilmaz, 2016; Mouffe, 2005: 50-71). By the same token, the Islamist discourse of the *ummah* in Indonesian
politics also excludes others that hamper the possibility of the construction of an ummah-based political community. Depending on the discursive settings, the excluded others can refer to such entities as the colonial power during anti-colonial struggles, the bureaucratic-military regime of New Order authoritarianism, the ethnic-Chinese, LGBT rights advocates and even ‘non-mainstream’ Muslims such as Ahmadi and Shia communities. Indeed, the formation and changing relations of antagonism do not emerge because of any intrinsic features but ultimately are an outcome of political construction in given discursive configurations. Rather than operating uni-directionally, however, social antagonism may take place in multiple forms: ‘any position in a system of differences, insofar as it is negated, can become the locus of antagonism’ (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 131).

Subsequently, Laclau and Mouffe introduce the notions of ‘equivalence’ and ‘difference’ to capture the making of particular linkage among different and antagonistic social groups (2001: 127-134). By emphasising the dimension of the political, the discursive approach to the politics of hegemony is built on the central idea that the plethora of social demands among antagonistic groups cannot be eliminated, for example, through aggregation or consensus. Rather it has to be politicised by constructing the relation of equivalence among different particular struggles. This politicisation, as Laclau outlines (1996: 41-42), involves two intertwined elements which make the politics of hegemony possible. First, the recognition of the plurality of political struggles that establish the differential character of the demands or mobilisation of their respective struggles. Second, the creation of the equivalence of all these demands in their opposition to the existing system.

The building of such equivalential relations among different demands calls for the creation of a new hegemonic subject that must be antagonised by a common opposition. In such a process, the particular struggles do not simply remain themselves but constitute an arena of universalising effects (see, Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 136). They are considered as hegemonic when they also present themselves as realising the aims of the struggles waged by broader groups. In this sense, the construction of a hegemonic force, or the relations of equivalence with
universalising effects, is not simply achieved by a negotiated agreement among social groups. More importantly, it requires a stronger kind of communitarian unity that is not only capable of maintaining the coherence of such equivalence but also becoming a common aspiration for all groups—notwithstanding their different identities and interests. Laclau calls this process as the production of a tendentially ‘empty signifier’, that actually refers to the struggles of creating a communitarian order which is still an absence or unfulfilled reality (1996: 36-46; 2000: 56-57). In the discourses of Islamism, for example, the idea of the ummah has symbolically united their various struggles and become, to borrow Said’s term (1981: 61), an ‘Islam of dreams’—an imagined communitarian order for which the Islamists are attempting to materialise (c.f., Mandaville, 2003; Sayyid, 2014).

Following this line of argument, the degree of hegemonic success heavily depends on the possibility to expand and maintain such chains of equivalence. What is required is not merely the building of a simple system or institution of political alliance. Instead, it is also necessary that such a process involves the transformation of antagonistic relations by creating a sense of collective will and shared identity (c.f., Howson, 2007: 241). Yet, this ‘sameness’ is also discursively constituted and unified through struggles against ‘the external others’. For example, the discourse of democracy in Indonesia in the late 1980s had become a central nodal point among a wide array of movements, regardless of their ‘original’ interests and identities, in order to undermine the New Order regime (see also Robison and Hadiz, 2004; Aspinall, 2005). Nevertheless, the chains of equivalence are also precarious. As explicated in the following chapters, such equivalential relations among pro-democracy movements were immediately replaced by the chains of difference after the Soeharto’s fall, in which they cannot establish a relatively coherent position in the democratisation era.

Thus, the hegemonic project of Islamism does not only require a sense of internal homogeneity within its alliance, but such coherence is also influenced by its relation to ‘external others’. In the case of Islamism in Turkey, for instance, the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) was a vocal advocate of European Union (EU) membership and democratisation. As Zubaida (2011: 185) argues, EU
membership was seen as means to effectively weaken the grip of the military in Turkish politics and prompt greater democracy, from which the Islamists would gain benefit. However, the AKP’s endorsement of democratisation does not necessarily mean that this Islamic-based party wished to democratise society, as amply demonstrated by government’s harsh response against the protesters in the 2013 Gezi Park demonstrations and subsequent repression of the press (see, Tugal, 2016; Moudouros, 2014). Instead, AKP’s articulation of a democratisation agenda is better seen as a strategy to weaken Kemalist hegemony and to broaden its social coalition (c.f., Celik, 2000: 201).

Nevertheless, this is not the case with Islamic politics in Indonesia where the coherence of Islamist political projects is extremely weak, particularly in the post-New Order era. Instead of being a horizon for strengthening and expanding equivalence by constructing a common agenda, the discourse of democratisation after the fall of Soeharto’s authoritarianism has brought about internal competition among the Islamists (Chapter 5). Such a condition partly contributes to the poor performance of Islamic parties in elections and the polarisation of Islamists movements. Thus far, as discussed in Chapter 5 and 6, the possibilities to expand the Islamist social base are strictly limited while there are no particular Islamist hegemonic forces can ‘exclusively’ claim of representing Muslims’ interests and identities. The failure of Islamist hegemonic struggles has brought about far-reaching impacts especially on the workings of Indonesian democracy and the practices of Islamism itself. The centrality of Islamist political discourse for power struggles in contemporary Indonesian politics, as examined in more detail in Chapter 6, is symptomatic of the fundamental crisis of the practices of political representation associated with the dislocation of democracy in the neoliberal era and the fragmentation of Islamism itself. Crucially, the fragmentation of Islamism also explains why ‘populist’ articulations of Islam can be easily appropriated and captured by the contending elites for power struggles rather than a political force to challenge the structure of domination that, in the eyes of the Islamists, has marginalised broad segments of the ummah.
Conclusion

This chapter has explored theoretical debates on the politics of hegemony and social changes by linking them to the studies of Islamism. In contrast to post-hegemony advocates who treat contemporary political movements as self-organising, the approach of this study envisages an understanding of social changes as historical outcomes of hegemonic struggles advanced by contending political projects. Therefore, the framework outlined in this chapter emphasises the importance of engaging the state, conceived as an arena and, at the same time, the relative outcome of political struggles. From this vantage point, the central task of the politics of hegemony is to build political linkages upon the plethora of demands among different social agents and transform them as a political alliance to reshape the existing structure of power relations in both state and society. Hence, the hegemonic project of Islamism is neither a set of ideological contents nor organisational models, but rather a mode of representing the plurality of demands among wider social agents, by forging a distinct political project—a ‘collective will’.

This study puts forward an argument that the nature and trajectory of Islamism can be understood from the practices of constructing a cross-cutting alliance among diverse social groups, developed through ethico-political leadership, under the banner of the ummah. Unlike approaches which envisage hegemony as political strategy or highlight the importance of organisation for collective action, the framework of this study examines the way Islam is articulated by different social agents as a response to socio-political change and how the discourse of Islamism is utilised to forge collective demands and identities for waging a hegemonic struggle. Rather than pre-determined, the contents, strategies and forms of Islamism are continuously shaped in accordance to the contestation and social coalition throughout their struggle.

By appropriating the notions of ‘the relative structurality’ and ‘the availability’ of discourses as developed respectively by Barros and Sayyid, the discussion of this chapter also suggests that the emergence and development of Islamism are always circumscribed within specific historical settings. More specifically, such a framework allows us to outline the way in which Islam is
articulated as a set of political projects to reshape the existing structure of power relations and the extent to which they shape—or being transformed by—historical conditions. Linking specific discursive formations to structural circumstances will make it possible to empirically identify the configurations of social agents, their strategies, contestations and social coalitions, in the process of their hegemonic struggles. This task will be accomplished by further investigation of how socio-political changes have produced dislocatory effects on Islamist groups and how the discourse of Islam is subsequently utilised to organise new collective demands for power struggles in different historical periods. For this reason, the next chapter will specifically discuss the genealogy of Islamism, as a particular political force, in the making of Indonesia during the late colonial era and early post-colonial context by highlighting the historical specificity of its emergence and development.
Introduction

This chapter discusses the genealogies of competing discourses in the making of Indonesia, by specifically giving attention to the dynamics of Islamic politics. In doing so, it outlines the emergence and development of these discourses, and how associated contestations and social coalitions are forged in the discursive context of anti-colonialism and nation-state formation. Rather than focusing on the ideological roots and their linear continuation, it is argued here that different articulations of Islam are better seen as the contingent result of power contestations and political struggles initially against the encroachment of colonial power and, later, in the competition to ‘define’ post-colonial Indonesia. Ultimately, this chapter also shows that these processes have not only constituted a distinct relationship between Islam and state power but also the practices of Islamism itself during the colonial and early post-colonial period.

It is also demonstrated that broader socio-political changes since the late nineteenth century had made possible the emergence and development of anti-colonial and state-formation discourses. These discourses were mainly centred around three categories: Islamism, communism and nationalism. By looking at the contestation and social coalitions in their political struggles, this chapter suggests that their different strategies of encounters with the colonial power and the social conflicts constituted throughout this period had significantly influenced post-colonial Indonesian politics, from nation-state formation to the present-day. Therefore, the focus of this chapter is to investigate the socio-political conditions for different articulations of Islam and the ways they are shaped and have been
transformed by contestations and social coalitions forged throughout the late colonial period and beyond.

As in other post-colonial Muslim-majority societies, structural dislocations associated with the collapse of European colonial power had opened the way for the contest between two distinct and (seemingly) incompatible articulations. The issue at stake was whether the post-colonial political community would be organised around the signifier of the ummah or the nation or bangsa (c.f., Mandaville, 2014: 64; Sayyid, 2014). Thus, the contest between the logic of the ummah and bangsa is about how to write the history of post-colonial Indonesia.

While such debates had prominently involved the competing discourses of Islamism, communism and nationalism, two distinct dynamics had specifically characterised Indonesia’s political history. Firstly, the Islamist aspiration for the ummah from the outset, crucially, did not involve a transnational community but was largely set within the framework of the nation-state. Yet, unlike Turkish experience with Kemalist hegemony that constructed the identity of ‘new Turkey’ by negating the Ottoman-legacies of the ummah, in Indonesia, the articulations of ummah and bangsa were contested throughout nation-state formation period. The re-articulation of Islam through various vehicles and strategies in different political settings, as discussed in this and subsequent chapters, has been partly made possible by such historical processes.

Secondly, beyond merely an ideological or aliran (political stream) divide of Indonesian society, the contestations between the so-called ‘Islamist nationalists’ and ‘secular nationalists’ in post-colonial Indonesia are directly linked to the political struggles to attain state power. It is also noteworthy here that the ‘secular-nationalists’ discourse had, in fact, been articulated by various groups from nationalists, communists, and non-Muslims and those who advanced regional-based aspirations. Throughout the nation-state formation, the hegemony of the nationalist discourse had been particularly achieved through the universalisation of the notion of the unity of multicultural-based Indonesia. As such, political struggles waged by the communists and Islamists (and later by ‘regionalists’) which
challenged the nationalist hegemony were framed in conjunction with the fate of
the unity of Indonesia’s nation-state.

It can be said that the political history of post-colonial Indonesia has been
primarily about efforts to maintain the unity of the nation-state by managing
different political discourses that were historically constructed since the colonial
era. In the immediate post-Independence era, the rifts between these discourses, as
discussed in more detail in this chapter, have been differently manifested within the
framework of Parliamentary Democracy (1949-1957) and the so-called Guided
Democracy (1957-1965). In the first framework, the contestations and antagonisms
had been managed through the central role of political parties and parliamentarian
politics. While the second centres around President Soekarno himself in which,
after dismantling the parties that were seen as the source of instability and
disintegration, he sought to manage the antagonisms by establishing a corporatist
political framework that proved to be a failure by the mid-1960s.

Anti-Colonial Political Discourses:
Islamism, Communism, Nationalism

This section discusses socio-political changes and structural dislocations which
facilitated the rise of anti-colonial struggles, especially those were organised around
the discourse of Islamism, communism and nationalism. Not only did these social
transformations inform their respective social bases, interests and demands, but also
the dynamics of contestations and coalitions in the course of their struggles.
Throughout the nineteenth century, following the deeper consolidation of Dutch
colonial power, anti-colonial mobilisation waged under the banner of Islam
emerged in many episodes of local resistance, albeit at different scales and being
relatively contained in certain areas (Ricklefs, 2012). The most famous uprisings
which seriously challenged Dutch colonial power were arguably seen in the Java
War (1825-1830) led by Prince Diponegoro and the long-lasting Aceh War (1873-
1904) in Northern Sumatra (Carrey, 2008; Reid, 1969; Alfian, 1987).
It is also worth noting here that while Islam had in fact been in the archipelago far before colonialism, the rapid spread of this religion and the strengthening of Islamic sentiments in the nineteenth and twentieth century were largely a response to the encroachment of colonial power. W.F Wertheim (1956), for example, argued that such a transformation had eventually given birth to anti-colonial resistance and, later, nationalist movements. In the early periods of anti-colonial struggles, Islam had increasingly become a rallying point that linked together people’s grievances against the colonial power. In other words, Islam served as the most viable discourse that could effectively separate political frontiers between the ‘infidel’ colonial power and the ‘Muslims’ who were ruled.

Nevertheless, the hegemonic position of Islamism in anti-colonial struggles had been immediately challenged by the forces that were organised through the discourse of communism and, later, nationalism. Not only driven by different strategies of an encounter with the colonial power, but the contestations between these anti-colonial discourses also reflected different social bases, interests and demands which ultimately constituted different political projects. Indeed, such contestations had also been influenced by the dynamics of global politics of that period, especially associated with the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia (1917), the fall of Ottoman caliphate (1924), Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), the rise of Sun Yat-Sen’s Kuomintang and the Qing dynasty’s fall (1912) in China, and nationalist movements in British India. More specifically, the dynamics of Islamism throughout this period had also been influenced by competition with other political forces in the attempt to dismantle colonial power and, later, to gain control over the post-colonial state by advancing different governing models and ‘imagined’ political communities.

**Islamism and The Making of Anti-Colonial Politics**

Anti-colonial articulations of Islamism in the nineteenth century took shape in the context of rapid socio-political changes in the archipelago. These were particularly associated with the consolidation of colonial empire, Dutch colonial policies, and
the ‘modernisation’ impulse brought by a new generation of Muslim. Since the
sixteenth century and even before the arrival of European colonial power,
Islamisation of native rulers had effectively constituted ulama or religious clerics
as an increasingly important class in both royal domains and societies (e.g.,
Ricklefs, 2012). This was so because the converted rulers had to rely on the ulama
in order to legitimise and to maintain their power. Meanwhile, the ulama gradually
made inroads to aristocratic power by assuming positions as counsellors, religious
judges or religious teachers. Such a social formation, as Benda (1955b: 14-15)
argued, had significantly influenced the emergence of two contrasting forms of
Islamist articulations in dealing with colonial power that often utilised native rulers
for divide at impera policies.

The first form, the legal and administrative, tended to work with and were
even accommodated into the structure of power. The other form, on the contrary,
operated outside the parameters of ‘the state’ and tended to build more
cosmopolitan networks. The position of the former initially became ascendant
especially when the colonial power instrumentalised native rulers in order to deepen
its grip in the colony. Subsequently, the ulama accommodated within the native
rulers lost much of their legitimacy because of the role they played in colonial rule
(Ricklefs, 2012; Laffan, 2003). Their dependence on the colonial power,
compounded with socio-economic hardships experienced by the people, had paved
the way for the identification among alienated Muslims that made possible for the
latter form of Islamism to extend itself towards anti-colonial positions.

The development of anti-colonial articulations of Islam also drew strength
from contact with global networks, especially the Hijaz (now Saudi Arabia). Islamic
reformism promoted by the returned Hajjis, which initially took the form of Islamic
orthodoxy and the purification agenda, soon forged political movements. Often, the
Dutch colonial power and native rulers, or adat chiefs in the case of outer islands,
were constructed as the enemies deemed responsible for the declining ummah. A
prominent manifestation of this Islamism was the Padri Movement of West
Sumatra, that was claimed by historian Anthony Reid as ‘the first clear evidence of
the new Muslim dynamism in the nineteenth century Southeast Asia’ (1967: 272;
The connection of Indonesian Muslims with the Middle East had become more intense following the improvement of sea-transport and, in particular, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. Even before the opening of the Suez Canal, it is reported that between 1858 and 1859 there had been a rapid increase of the Hajj pilgrims, from 100 to 3,000 per annum (cited from Laffan, 2003: 38). The Dutch had suspected the impact of the Hajj on the emergence of anti-colonial resistance in the archipelago. Indeed, the encounters with the wider Muslim world had helped the spread of a distinct consciousness by which anti-colonial sentiments were cultivated.19 This concern became a pretext for the Dutch to subsequently issue a policy for Hajj restriction in 1860 (Laffan, 2003: 37-39). Using Anderson’s concept of ‘imagined communities’, Laffan (2003) shows that the encounters with the pilgrims from other colonial-occupied countries in Mecca had facilitated the construction of the bilad al-Jawa (i.e., the lands of Indonesia and Malaya as known in the Hijaz), imagined as a new political entity, constructed against the ‘infidel’ colonial rulers. As such, it was the prototype of a ‘nation’ (c.f., Keddie, 1969).

Islamic militancy and its strong connection with the Middle East had immediately caused growing concern among Dutch colonial administrators (Benda, 1996). In fact, the contact between the pilgrims from Indonesia and those from other colonial-occupied countries, especially British-India, had been increasingly intensified in the 1870s. For example, between 1870s and 1880s, many Javanese students studied at the Sawlatya madrasa, established by Muhammad Kaymawi of Delhi (1818-1890), an Indian ‘rebel’ ulama who sought refuge in the Hijaz. See, for example, Laffan (2003: 38)
1955b: 17-19; Reid, 1967). As early as the 1850s, they had come to realise that pacification by military forces was no longer sufficient to counter rapid socio-political changes in the colony. This was particularly the case after the Padri War (1821-1838) and Java War (1825-1830) that led to the eventual bankruptcy of the East Indian Company (VOC, *Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*, established in 1602). The Dutch administrators began to contain Islamic militancy and the threat of, what they called, the ideas of ‘pan-Islamism’. From the late 1850s, the Dutch placed more restrictions on the *hajj*, followed by the establishment of a consulate at the Hijaz in the 1870s. Under pressure from religious parties in the parliament of their home country, the Dutch had, for the first time, subsidised the operation of Christian missions as a strategy to counter Islamisation (Benda, 1958: 339; Ricklefs, 2012: 12-13). These measures had been, in fact, counter-productive. They triggered the outbreak of further resistance, though in a relatively small-scale in rural areas under the local Muslim leaders such as the famous peasant revolt in Banten in 1888 (e.g., Kartodirdjo, 1966). Meanwhile, the colonial-sponsored Christianisation had expanded very slowly and was even relatively confined to the areas which had not previously been Islamised (Wertheim, 1956: 204-205).

The appointment of C. Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936), a prominent Dutch Arabicist and Islamologist, as the advisor of the newly created Office for Native and Arab Affairs (*Kantoor voor Inlandsche Zaken*) in 1889 was a watershed that dramatically altered colonial policies. From the outset, Hurgronje was critical of the existing policies towards Islam. For example, he argued that the idea of ‘pan-Islam’, the importance of which had been exaggerated by Dutch administrators, was not a political reality. He argued that the Ottoman caliphate itself had put it ‘in the museum of (its) political antiquities’ (Benda, 1958: 341). He also opposed ‘intolerant’ measures towards Muslims and proposed to provide Western education for them that, as he believed, would create a new Westernised class that would exorcise the danger of Islamic militancy (Benda, 1958: 343-344; Reid, 1967: 283).

From the lens of the politics of hegemony, his policy reorientation is principally an attempt to engineer consent and to disorganise dissent. Hence, it is a political project to identify and separate friends from enemies. Hurgronje’s main
policy strategies were twofold. First, he developed a dichotomy between *adat* (customary laws) and *hukum* (Islamic law); the former was conceived as changing and flexible while the latter as dogmatic and unchanged (Hurgronje, 1906: 153; Mamdani, 2012: 35-37). Based on his study on Aceh societies, Hurgronje understood these two domains were deeply intertwined in the production of anti-colonial subjects in the Aceh war. For the purpose of control and discipline, he sought to separate them by reforming *adat* and reifying *hukum*.²⁰ In the case of the Aceh War, this was implemented by distinguishing *ulama* and the customary chiefs (*uleebalang*), urging the Dutch authorities to support the latter against the former. Thus, rather than implementing a single (modern) Dutch law, the colonial power advocated legal pluralism (van der Kroef, 1953: 61-64; Cribb, 2010: 49). As such, colonial Indonesia was administered through separate legal codes based on the existing stratification policy of Europeans, foreign Orientals and the natives—that was strongly defined in terms of racial and religious markers.²¹ Second, he built a dualistic concept of Islam as a religion and Islam as a political ideology. By this, he advised toleration towards the former but ruthless suppression of the latter. As such, Hurgronje had pioneered a policy for separating, to use Mamdani’s words, “Europe’s good Muslims’ from its Muslim political adversaries’ (2012: 19).

By comparing Dutch colonial policies with British India under Sir Henry Maine (1882-1888), Mamdani (2012) shows that Hurgonje’s visions had transformed colonial rule. They had shifted colonial policies from merely instrumentalising local elites to controlling the population as a whole. To use a Foucauldian term, this was a kind of biopolitics that systematically redefined and reconstructed forms of Islamic subjectivities so as to be compatible with colonial

²⁰ Hurgonje’s legacies had paved the way for Professor C. van Vollenhoven (1874-1973) to codify the *adat* laws and developed them into a disciplinary science. See, for example, Lev (1985). In fact, the codification of customary law based on Hurgonje’s policies was also replicated in other colonies, for example, in French-occupied Morocco 1930s colonialism (Mamdani, 2012: 41).

²¹ Such racial classification dated back to the legal code known as the *Bataviasche Statuten*, issued in 1642. This was then applied in the whole Dutch colony in the nineteenth century under the Minister of Colonial Affairs of the Netherlands, Dirk Fock (1848-1945). For further discussion on this issue see van der Kroef (1953), Cribb (2010) and Fasseur (1994). It is also important to note that although such a legal system had formally ended following Indonesian Independence in 1945, the effects have remained until the present-day. For example, as discussed further in the following chapters, the constructions of the *ummah* among the Islamists often refer to the concepts of *pribumi* (the native) in which the ethnic-Chinese (foreign oriental) is politically constructed as its ‘antagonistic other’.
discipline. Hence, the colonial policies no longer rested on the strategy of ‘divide and rule’, but primarily on ‘define and rule’ (Mamdani, 2012: 42).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the dominant discourse of the Dutch colonial government was based on the principles of ‘associationism’—regarded as a new pathway to bridge the gulf between the rulers and the ruled. This new colonial era was signified by the watchword of ‘progress’ and ‘emancipation’, of which Furnivall (2010: 225-256) described it as an age of ‘expansion, efficiency, and welfare’. The cornerstone of this transformation was the so-called Ethical Policy, adopted by the Dutch colonial since 1901. The adoption of this policy was greatly influenced by the dominance of the liberals in the Netherland’s political scene and was a response to the miseries caused by the exploitation in the colony under Cultuurstelsel (forced cultivation) system (1830-1870), implemented immediately after the Java War.22 Strongly echoing the motives of liberal morality, in his speech before the Netherland’s parliament, A.W.F. Idenburg, the then Minister of the Colonies who subsequently become a Governor-General in Jakarta (1909-1916), stated that:

Egoism is not the basic principle of our colonial policy, but higher motives. Power is not its legal basis, but the moral mission of a more advanced people toward less advanced nations, who are not of a lesser species than the western peoples, but who join with them in the single organism of humanity’ (cited via Schmutzer, 1977: 16-17).

Concurrently, the Ethical Policy was implemented when private capitalism had increasingly become influential in directing Dutch colonial policies (Furnivall, 2010; Lindblad, 1998; Booth, 1998). The industries in the colonial home country began to see Indonesia as a potential market and a base of production. There was an influx of foreign capital, from both the Netherlands and internationally, especially for the extraction of raw materials in Java and the outer islands.23 Such


23 This trend was also influenced by a general rise in the prices of tropical commodities in European market between 1900 and 1910, especially sugar, coffee, copra, rubber and petroleum. By 1913, foreign investment in agriculture in East Sumatra reached f.206 million (some f. 109 million was Dutch capital) and such number increased dramatically when some of the large private estates (mainly British and French) took part. Chinese-Dutch capital in agriculture production also began to rise, reaching about f. 250 million in 1923. For the economic policies and development
development had inevitably required Indonesian labour for modern enterprises. And, to sustain industrial development the capitalists urged the colonial state to drive its policies towards modernisation and welfare. Under the Ethical Policy, there was a massive extension of the state apparatus and a proliferation of functions which served not only bureaucratic tasks but also, more importantly, the colonial state’s surveillance under the framework of *rust en orde* (tranquility and order). As such, the Ethical Policy is no more than a new model of capitalism, justified by liberal/humanitarian values and guarded by bureaucracy and security apparatuses. As a result, this policy had brought about paradoxes, especially in relation to the emergence of anti-colonial sentiments and movements, as discussed below.

The rapid expansion of modern education, mostly in urban areas, was the hallmark of this era, that had significantly reconstituted the social bases of anti-colonial struggles (Rickles, 2012: 14-15; Shiraishi, 1990: 28-29; van der Kroef, 1953; Noer, 1973). Significantly, Western education had challenged the central position of the rural-based *pesantren* or Islamic seminaries. This education was imperative, not only to generate well-trained workforces required to take up positions in the bureaucracy and in private companies but also as a way to ‘uplift’ the natives in the spirit of ‘association between the East and the West’ (Shiraishi, 1990: 28). More importantly, the education policy had created significant new members of the middle class, known as *kaum muda* (the youth), who had better social and economic positions than their predecessors (Shiraishi, 1990). This was a group that subsequently played a leading role in anti-colonial movements, whether in the camps of Islamism, communism or nationalism.

In regard to Islamic politics, the modernisation impulse also emanated from a connection to Cairo-based Islamic reformism (Noer, 1973; Laffan, 2003; Azra, 2004a; Ali, 2016; Kersten, 2017; Latif, 2008). The most distinctive feature of this reformism lay in positive attitudes towards modernity, seen as the only way to improve the position of the *ummah* under the Western colonial order. Its

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24 See Shiraishi (1990; 2003). See also Pramoedya Ananta Toer’s novels the so-called Tetralogy of Buru, especially the last volume *Rumah Kaca* (Glass House, 2006).
proponents, including Muhammad ‘Abduh (a disciple of the Islamic reformist and advocate of pan-Islamism, Jamaluddin Al-Afghani), also sought to ‘purify’ Islam from corrupting influences deemed as responsible for the backwardness of the ummah. As such, they dreamed of a new Islamic civilisation that relied primarily on *ijtihad* or independent rationality (Laffan, 2003: Chapter 6 and 10). It is only by adopting modern science and technology, they argued, that the gulf between the West and the East could be reduced.

Modernisation among the new generation of Muslims had significantly shaped the Islamic movement in the colony, at least in two aspects. First, it led to the proliferation of Islamic periodicals which not only signified the connection between Indonesian-Malay Islam with Cairo but also gradually redirected Islamic movements towards anti-colonial struggles. Second, rather than relying on a ‘populist’ model of the previous era that was narrow in scope, Islamic movements took the form of modern organisations. Thus, Islamic organisations like Muhammadiyah (founded in 1912), Sarekat Islam (1912), Tawalib of Sumatra (1919), Jamiatil Khair (1905) and Al-Irshad (1913) of Arab communities (Noer, 1973: Chapter 1; Laffan, 2003) emerged in this era.

It is clear then that socio-political changes and structural dislocations in the nineteenth and early twentieth century had a considerable influence on the emergence and development of anti-colonial outlooks among Islamic movements. Not only did such context inform their distinct social basis but also the character, demands and political strategies. If the previous manifestation of Islamic politics took the form of peasant resistance centred on local *ulama*, political Islam was now prominently urban-based and utilised modern-based organisational vehicles. As mentioned, their urban characteristics corresponded with the expansion of capital

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25 Rashid Rida’s famous periodical *Al-Manar* (established in 1898) had stimulated Muslim intellectuals in Southeast Asia to establish their own publications. This was started by *Al-Imam* (1906-1908) led by Tahir Jalaluddin in Singapore, followed by *Al-Munir* (1911-1915) based in West Sumatera led by Abdullah Ahmad. From the outset, *Al-Munir* was instrumental in cultivating an embryonic sense of ‘Indonesianess’. Together with Tjokroaminoto, the future leader of the Sarekat Islam, Abdullah Ahmad set up another newspaper, *Al-Islam* (1916-17) that focused on a nation-wide readership, declaring itself as the ‘organ for Indies Muslim nationalists’ (Laffan, 2003: 178). During the nationalist movement in the 1930s, Islamic media such as *Pedoman Masyarakat* and *Panji Islam* had been the central stage for the vision of a Free Indonesia. See, for example, Laffan (2003), Latif (2008), Kersten (2017).
that led to the development of industrial centres and infrastructure (c.f., Furnivall, 2010; Lindblad, 1998). The ‘age of capital’, as Shiraishi aptly described it, had resulted in the rise of non-agricultural economic activities, market expansion and business competition and, most notably, the considerable growth of cities which were increasingly connected to each other (Shiraishi, 1990: 8-27; van der Kroef, 1953, Furnivall, 2010; Lindblad, 1994). For example, since its inauguration in 1870, the railway system—initially built to transport sugar from private plantations to Semarang—had effectively linked all major cities in Java by 1894 and facilitated people mobility (Shiraishi, 1990: 8; Mrazek, 2002).

Following the implementation of the Ethical Policy, the position of local aristocrats continuously declined, replaced by new generations of educated youths, the so-called *kaum muda* (see, for example, Sutherland, 1979; Benda, 1966). Nevertheless, the *kaum muda* was immediately frustrated by the fact that the promise of upward mobility was blocked by the racially stratified social order enacted and maintained by the Dutch colonial government—'where natives were natives, however well educated' (Shiraishi, 1990: 30). In the context of stratified racial identification of European, foreign orientals and the native (*inlander*), the *kaum muda* subsequently politicised the ambivalent category of the native as a new political subject (c.f., Bhabha, 1994, Kapoor, 2008). As Anderson argues, the category of natives ‘always carried an unintentionally paradoxical semantic load’ (1983: 122). While it was utilised by the colonialists to signify the inferiority of colonised subject, the natives felt that in their common inferiority and miseries they were unified regardless of their class or ethno-linguistic group.26 The cultivation of native identities had created a new basis of solidarity which turned this newly educated class into the spokespersons for anti-colonialism (Shiraishi, 1990: 30-31).

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26 Anderson highlights the importance of this consciousness and identification for the constitution of an imagined community. He states that:

[B]y a sort of sedimentation, *inlander*—excluding whites, Dutchmen, Chinese, Arabs, Japanese, ‘natives’, *indigenes*, and *indios*—grew even more specific in content; until, like a ripe larva, it was suddenly transmogrified into the spectacular butterfly called ‘Indonesian’ (Anderson, 1983: 123).
During the period of Pergerakan (the Movement, 1912-1930s), the making of the natives as new anti-colonial subjects was appropriated and mobilised through three different, and often competing, political discourses of Islamism, communism and nationalism. In regard to Islamism, such transformation had greatly transformed Islamist anti-colonial articulations in which, for example, they became more ‘highly egalitarian and pro-social justice’ (Hadiz, 2016: 49). Such changing articulations would influence the contestations and social coalition forged throughout their political struggles. This is particularly shown in the development of Sarekat Islam (SI) which, according to Noer (1973: 114), represented the rise and fall of the position of the ummah in colonial Indonesia.

The Rise and Fall of Islamist Hegemony, 1912-1930: Sarekat Islam and Its Rivals

Emerging out as a mutual help association of Muslim entrepreneurs, directed mainly against their stronger Chinese competitors, Sarekat Islam (founded in 1912) soon became the first national organisation with a mass appeal, drawing support from a cross-alliance of the Muslim population. The appeal of SI was not limited to small traders as it was initially established but reached broader social coalitions including the ranks of the rising labour movement, ulama, some aristocrats, and all peasants (Shiraishi, 1990; Benda, 1958; Noer, 1973). In its first general meeting, held in Surabaya in January 1913, there were already fifteen established SI branches and thirteen of them sent delegates representing about eighty thousand members. Within two months, in the first SI Congress in Surakarta, the number of SI branches reached forty-eight, of which forty-two sent delegates to represent two hundred thousand members (Shiraishi, 1990: 49-50).

Writers like Shiraishi (1990) had demonstrated the significant role of rallies and newspapers in accelerating the expansion of SI.27 Noer (1973: 115-126), on the

27 For example, by the early 1913 prominent newspaper in some cities had become the SI organs, including Sarotomo, Oetoesan Hinda of Surabaya, Sinar Djawa of Semarang, Kaoem Moeda of Bandung and Pajajaran Warta of Batavia. Meanwhile, it is also reported that the first huge SI rally in January 1913, organised by Tjokroaminoto in Surabaya, was attended by about ten thousand. See Shiraishi (1990: 49).
other hand, had put more emphasis on the importance of organisational development especially in the early period, 1911-1916. He stated that Haji Samanhudi himself, the initial founder of SI, had looked for ‘people who have better education and experience’ (1973: 118). In 1912, he persuaded Tjokroaminoto, who was regarded at mass rallies as ‘a miracle-working messiah’ (van Bruinessen, 1995: 125), to join the SI, followed by the prominent journalist and politician Abdul Moeis (in 1912) and Agus Salim (1915). Looking more deeply, the phenomenal rise of the movement reflects the widespread dislocations experienced by Muslims and the natives in general, in which their dissent and hopes were mobilised through the Islamist political discourse. Thus, Islamist discourse provides the language through which, to borrow Shiraishi (1990), ‘people could “say” what they had been unable to “say”’ (1990: 340). Subsequently, SI transformed itself from an organisation to protect the interests of Javanese batik merchants to an inclusive populist movement, ‘aligning the interests of traditional petty bourgeoisie with larger anti-colonial and nationalist struggles’ (Hadiz, 2016: 63).

However, the hegemony of Islamism in anti-colonial struggles only lasted for a very short period of time, first being challenged by political forces organised by the discourses of communism and, later, nationalism. It is worth noting that the organisational structure of the SI, like that of other organisations of the time, was relatively loose (McVey 2006: 21), under the coordinating board called the Central Sarekat Islam (CSI). As such, its local branches enjoyed relatively independent and autonomous status and brought forward different interests and demands depending on the local contexts and constituents. Initially, SI built collaboration with the Indies Social Democratic Association (ISDV, set up by the Dutch revolutionary Sneevliet in 1914 in Surabaya)—the precursor of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). By 1918, as we shall see, conflict and competition between them had escalated.

The rapid growth of SI at the grassroots level had been accompanied by the increasingly strong influence of its Left wing, especially after the arrival of Semaun (who joined ISDV in 1915), Sneevliet’s protégé, in the coastal city of Semarang in
Under Semaun’s leadership, the SI Semarang continuously condemned the CSI leadership under Tjokroaminoto, Salim and Moeis on the basis that they were not radical enough in advancing the demands of social and economic justice. More specifically, they criticised Tjokro’s participation in the Volksraad (Dutch-made People Council) in 1917. The cooperation with the colonial power had degraded the credibility of Sarekat Islam in anti-colonial struggles. In the meantime, the conflicts between SI and ISDV were worsening in late 1917 and eventually triggered the latter to challenge the hegemony of SI in anti-colonial movements.

The popularity of radical politics in colonial Indonesia, as advocated by ISDV and SI Semarang and, to a lesser extent, SI Yogyakarta, grew after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 in Russia. Soon after the Revolution, in May 1918, the ISDV leadership declared that:

The Russian Revolution naturally dominates our thoughts at present... We, too, must take the path which the Bolsheviki have chosen, even though the situation here is different. Where capitalism exists, socialism is also possible (cited via McVey, 2006: 29).

The conflict between the CSI and SI Semarang could no longer be contained and reached its peak in the 1921 SI Congress when the CSI applied a policy of strict party discipline that forced the SI Semarang leaders to resign (Shiraishi, 1990). This caused a split in the ranks of the organisations between pro-communist elements, called the “Red SI”, which were opposed to the ‘White SI’ associated with CSI leaders, especially Agus Salim and Abdoel Moeis. If we look at the global context of that period, however, the conflict between SI and SI Semarang-ISDV was an irony. Between 1917 and 1920, the Soviets had placed emphasis on the importance of building alliances with pan-Islamism for anti-imperialist struggles.

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29 The SI Semarang developed very rapidly, from 1,700 members in 1916 to 20,000 in the following year. The SI Semarang immediately become a rival for the SI Surabaya, the headquarter of Centraal Sarekat Islam (CSI) under Tjokroaminoto and Salim. See McVey (2006: 22-28, also Chapter V), Shiraishi (1990), von der Mehden (1958).
30 In the 1921 SI Congress, in fact, Semaun still tried to convince the audience regarding the role of the left-wing in transforming the SI from a ‘party for capitalists’ to a ‘party for the people’ and that the PKI and SI shared similar objectives. Nevertheless, the voting favoured Salim-Moeis (27 against 7 voices), and PKI was officially dispelled from the SI. Tjokroaminoto, who was sympathetic to socialist projects, could not attend the Congress as he was still in a Dutch jail. See Noer (1973: 126-144).
and even created a ‘Mohammedan Central Commissariat’ in 1918 to facilitate a revolution in Muslim countries (McVey, 2006: 54).

Therefore, it is not surprising that Tan Malaka, a young Communist leader, reminded the CSI leadership that Islamism was a natural ally of communism in the struggles against colonial imperialism (McVey, 2006: 103). Semaun also attacked the arrogance of the CSI leadership, arguing that if the SI abandoned its left wing, the SI would only become a union of Muslim merchants. He also contended that religion *an sich* was insufficient as a basis for a popular movement to challenge colonialism (McVey, 2006: 103-104). From this discussion, it is apparent that the conflict between Islamism and communism was much influenced by competing strategies of struggle against colonialism rather than an inherent ideological incompatibility. Perhaps the figure of Haji Misbach of Solo, who left Muhammadiyah to become a PKI propagandist in 1922, provided a clear example of the convergence of Islamism and communism when he stated that:

Our friends who profess themselves communists but still like to express opinions aimed at abolishing the religion of Islam—these people, I am not afraid to say it, are not true Communists, or they do not yet understand the communist position. In turn, those who profess Islam but reject Communism, I am not afraid to say that they are not true Muslims, or they do not yet properly understand the position of the religion of Islam (cited in Shiraishi, 1990: 285).

Interestingly, the competition between Islamism and communism eventually forced the SI to articulate a vision of transnational Islam and, as such, it lost its ‘nationalising’ character. By 1921, for example, SI put Islam as the sole foundation of the organisation and subsequently embraced the idea of the pan-Islam project after the Ottoman caliphate was dissolved in 1924. The underlying objective of this transnational-oriented articulation was to unite Islamist elements within the SI itself (see van Bruinessen, 1995: 125-126). It is also an irony that the ideas of pan-Islam were articulated by SI at the time that the Ba’thists of Syria and Nasserists of Egypt were shifting from pan-Islamism to nationalism or Arabism (c.f., Formichi, 2010: 130; Esposito, 1991: 60-95; Zubaida, 2011: 175-199).

It is not surprising, therefore, that SI’s efforts to recover its hegemonic status often ended up with counter-productive effects. The paradigmatic example of this was SI’s participation in a pan-Islamist project, the so-called *Kongres Al Islam*
*Hindia* (Indies All Islam Congress, 1922-1929), as a response to ‘the caliphate question’ (c.f., Landau, 1994; van Bruinessen, 1995; Sayyid, 2014). Such a project was severely criticised by the communists, arguing that it was useless to engage with the caliphate issues which only concerned Turkey and never brought unity, freedom and welfare for Indonesian Muslims (van der Kroef, 1958: 45; Noer, 1973; Shiraishi, 1990). More importantly, such a project also led to factionalisation within SI itself. The dominance of modernist Islamists (especially Muhammadiyah and Al-Irshad) had practically isolated and subordinated Islamist traditional groups, which forced them to build their own vehicle, the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), in 1926, focusing primarily as a social organisation (van Bruinessen, 1995; Feillard, 1999; Noer, 1973).\(^{31}\) By 1927, SI’s relationship with its main ally in defending the caliphate issue, Muhammadiyah, also broke down (see, for instance, Alfian, 1989). This was particularly because the SI’s new strategy of non-cooperation, in its bid to challenge the popularity of PKI in anti-colonial struggles, contradicted Muhammadiyah’s dependence on Dutch subsidy for its educational and welfare programs. After losing support from its major elements, by 1929, SI gave up its pan-Islamist project in favour of Indonesian nationalism, and thus changed its name to *Partai Sjarikat Islam Indonesia* (PSII, Indonesian Islamic Union Party) (van Bruinessen, 1995: 135).

The change in SI’s articulation towards a nationalist orientation in 1929 was also greatly influenced by the surge of nationalism among *kaum muda*. In October 1928, the *kaum muda* held a Youth Congress in Jakarta, issuing a ‘Youth Pledge’ (*Sumpah Pemuda*), declaring three ideals that essentially attempted to constitute Indonesia as the common fatherland, nation and language (Ricklefs, 2001: 233; Anderson, 1983: 119). From this period, anti-colonial struggles were not only about dismantling colonial power but also to imagine a free Indonesia. Crucially, nationalism had increasingly become a new master signifier that was articulated through such diverse markers as religion, ethnic group and region.

\(^{31}\) One of the main causes was that, in the Congress of 1925, Agus Salim showed great enthusiasm in supporting Ibn Saud, a Wahabi who was deemed hostile to Islamic practices performed by the ‘traditionalist’ Muslims of Nahdlatul Ulama. See, Feillard (1999), van Bruinessen (1995).
The nationalist waves (1926-1930s) had marked a new episode of anti-colonial struggles in the archipelago. This development was also associated with the fragmentation within political forces representing communism and Islamism. After being the main challenger to SI, the communists were severely suppressed by the Dutch in the aftermath of the failed mass uprising of 1926-1927 (McVey, 2006: 323-346; Benda and McVey, 1960; Shiraishi, 1990). Likewise, SI had been increasingly weakened as it experienced a further phase of internal conflicts.\textsuperscript{32} It was against such a backdrop, in late 1926, Soekarno, the leading figure of the Bandung Algemeene Studie club and the future Indonesian first president, wrote a long article, entitled “Nationalism, Islamism, Marxism” (Soekarno, 1964: 1-53; 1969), calling for the unity of nationalists, Islamists and communists in anti-colonial struggles to achieve a Free Indonesia. In that article, Soekarno repeatedly emphasised the urgency of building a link between these three political discourses by constituting colonial power as a common antagonism. For example, he stated that ‘so long as Muslims remain hostile to the ideas of broad-minded nationalism and genuine Marxism, they never stand on the Sirotol Mustaqim (i.e., the right path blessed by the God) (Soekarno, 1969: 48). At the time of his writing, with the breakdown of the communists and Islamists, any attempt to build new solidarity among diverse movements seemed Sisyphean (McVey, 1969: 4; Shiraishi, 1990: 341-342; Legge, 1972).

By 1927, the nationalist political discourse had increasingly become a new nodal point that unified the diverse anti-colonial movements.\textsuperscript{33} Soekarno himself then set up the Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI) in that year, garnering broad

\textsuperscript{32} For example, PSII expelled its senior leaders, Soekiman and Soerjopranoto, in 1933 after an internal dispute with Tjokroaminoto. Between 1935 and 1939, the conflict between Salim and Abikoesno-Kartosuwiryo took place regarding the issue of non-cooperation policy, known as hijrah, that resulted in a new schism in the SI: Barisan Penyadar PSII and Komite Pertahanan Kebenaran PSII. See, for example, Noer (1973: 129-161).

\textsuperscript{33} In response to political awakening in 1927, political advisor to Dutch colonial government, M.WF. Treub warned the danger of this wave, stating that:

There is a ferment in the Indies. Various movement among the native and Chinese population are mingling and seeking contact with each other. The one is impelled by the urge to independence, the other by religious zeal, a third by hatred for authority. The inner motives of the leaders differ fundamentally, but this need not and does not prevent them from working with each other for the achievement of one common goal: the overthrow of Netherlands rule. (quoted via McVey, 1969: 1).
support from diverse elements particularly the new generation of Westernised intelligentsia. Indeed, this nationalist discourse was also appropriated by diverse, even conflicting, interests and visions. For example, as Ricklefs (2001: 230) observed, ethnic leaders and regionalist groups articulated nationalist discourse in the efforts to counter potential Javanese domination, Christian groups saw it useful to defend their position against Islamic domination, while the Arab and Chinese favoured nationalism for a multiracial aspiration. These vast differences were, albeit temporarily, unified in a chain of equivalence, in which an anti-colonial alliance and a vision of Free Indonesia were constituted as a new political solidarity. In such a coalition, the rakyat (the people) became a new political subject, that effectively referred to ‘the entire mass of Indonesians, the mystical embodiment of all the nation’ (McVey, 1969: 4).

Nevertheless, the nationalist-led anti-colonial struggles were not sustained, although they re-emerged following the outbreak of World War II. This was particularly associated with the changing of Dutch policies. Confronted with the radicalisation of the anti-colonial movements, combined with the global economic crisis of the 1930s in Europe, the Dutch colonial government became more repressive and their surveillance apparatuses were ready to crush any subversive movements and to send their leaders into exile in Boven Digul, western New Guinea (van der Kroef, 1953; Benda, 1966). By the 1930s, political organisations were no longer endorsed as part of ‘associationism’ policies but as threats to the colonial power (Shiraishi, 1990). In a nutshell, the period of ‘benevolent neutrality’ adopted by the Dutch since the Ethical era was strictly over while anti-colonial struggles on a non-cooperative basis had also come to an end.

**Imagining a Free Indonesia and the Birth of Pancasila: Islamist Nationalism and Secular Nationalism, 1930-1945**

Political debates on the relationship between Islam and nationalism since the early 1930s had resulted in the schisms of two antagonistic subjects: the Islamic nationalists and the secular nationalists. The contestations between them, as will be
explicated later, were not only apparent in this era but also after Indonesian Independence. Perhaps, the disagreements between these antagonistic groups were well represented in the long debates between Soekarno and Mohammad Natsir between 1930 and the early 1940s (see, for example, Noer, 1973: 296-315). Crucially, the debates were no longer framed in the horizon of anti-colonial struggles but a vision of a political community and a governing model for a Free Indonesia, or strictly speaking how to ‘define’ Indonesia.

The Islamists’ political vision for post-colonial Indonesia, as represented by Natsir, was the creation of an Islamic-based state. He, for example, stated that:

The objective of Muslims to fight for independence is to achieve the independence of Islam, in order that Islamic rules and structures of Islam can be applied, for the salvation and the dignity of Muslims in particular and all God’s creatures in general (Pembela Islam, 1931, cited via Noer, 1973: 281).

On the contrary, Soekarno, who was sympathetic to Kemalist political projects, declared that:

The principle of the unity of state and religion for a country whose inhabitants are not 100 per cent Muslim could not be in line with democracy... For such a country, there are only two alternatives, there are only two options: the unity of state-religion, but anti-democracy or democracy but the state is separated from religion (Panji Islam, 1940, cited via Soekarno, 1964: 454).

Furthermore, this period was also significantly marked by the desire of both subjects to gain control over state power. As discussed earlier, the Dutch repressive policies against non-cooperative-based movements had eventually shaped their strategies. In 1937, the Dutch government sponsored the establishment of the Majelis Islam A’laa Indonesia (MIAI, Supreme Islamic Council of Indonesia) in which Islamic groups, which were previously less ‘radical’, such as Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, Al-Irshad and Persatuan Islam (Persis, Islamic Union) became its main component. Two years later, the nationalist groups also formed the Gabungan Politik Indonesia (GAPI, Indonesian Political Federation) which requested a full parliament for Indonesia (Ricklefs, 2001: 242-3). Yet, their desire to be accommodated in state power was never fulfilled, until the Japanese arrived in Indonesia in 1942.
From the outset, both Islamist nationalists and secular nationalists warmly welcomed the Japanese arrival. They expected that this *dunia baru* (new world), would bring them a better position in the new structure of power relations. Unlike the Dutch, the Japanese tended to accommodate them (Benda, 1955: 354-356; Madinier, 2013: 45-53; Kersten, 2017: 132-133). Robert Cribb argues that such accommodation was made possible in the first place because the institutions of the Japanese occupation reflected a corporatist view of society, whose main target was ‘to engage the mass of the population directly with the state’ (2010: 103). Indeed, the Japanese interest to mobilise popular support for war aims had led them to give political space for the Islamists and nationalists. For example, in October 1943, the former MIAI was replaced by a more powerful Masyumi (*Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia*, Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims), led by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) leader, Kyai Hasjim As’ary. The Japanese also gave prominent roles to Muhammadiyah and NU, two Islamist organisations which were seen as ‘less radical’ and had broad masses in urban centres and villages respectively (Kobayashi, 2010: 300-311; Benda, 1958; Ricklefs, 2001: 252-255).35

The balance of power that provided a better position for the Islamists lasted almost uninterrupted until the end of 1944 (Boland, 1982: 8; Benda, 1955, 1955b). Circumscribed by continual military reversals in World War II, the Japanese sought to alter their overall policies in Indonesia. The new cabinet in Tokyo, on 7 September 1944, promised Indonesian independence in order to mobilise people for the war effort. The nationalists established youth militia, the *Barisan Pelopor* (Vanguard Column) with about 80,000 members (Ricklefs, 2001: 257). Among the

34 For example, Soekarno had turned his radical position from anti-cooperation with the Dutch to supporting the Japanese. He stated that ‘at this time Indonesia has common interests and needs with the Japanese… In the past, we were struggling to establish a free Indonesia through radical confrontation against the Dutch, now the struggle for building Indonesia is achieved through a cooperation with the Japanese (*Panji Pustaka*, 5 September 1942, cited via Abdullah, 2010: 115). Furthermore, Kartosuwiryo, the future leader of *Darul Islam* movement who was previously critical towards PSII’s cooperation policies, even declared that cooperation with the Japanese was a religious duty (Formichi, 2012: 138).

35 Yet, the politicisation of ulama/kyai, in some cases, could become counter-productive. Kurosawa (1993: 326-328), for example, showed that pro-Japanese kyais were often suspected of being Japanese spies, and ultimately became the target of animosity, especially when the people in the rural areas felt that the Japanese occupation had brought more miseries and hardships. The prominent case was an anti-Japanese rebellion led by Kyai Zaenal Mustafa of Tasikmalaya, West Java (Kurosawa, 1993: 457-471; Ricklefs, 2012: 67).
Islamists, the mobilisation policy was supported by Masyumi leaders who called on members ‘to prepare Muslims for the liberation of their country and their religion’ (Benda, 1958: 176). They also created an Islamic militia, *Hizbullah* (God’s Forces), which was said to have 50,000 members at the end of the war (Ricklefs, 2001: 257; 2012: 68).

The tensions between the Islamist nationalists and secular nationalists found a new stage in the Japanese-created *Badan Penyelidik Usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia* (BPUPKI, Investigating Committee for Preparatory Work for Indonesian Independence). In the first session, held on 29 May-1 June 1945, BPUPKI attempted to draft a new constitution. The ultimate debate was regarding the search of a *weltanschauung* for the creation of a free Indonesia. The debates of a foundation for post-colonial Indonesia, that had started in the 1930s, re-emerged. From the outset, however, the proponents of nationalist groups in this Committee opted for “*kebangsaan*” as the new political community while attempting to convince the Islamists that their aspirations were not essentially contradictory to the Islamic teachings and interests (Soekarno, 2018: 12-13). For example, Mohammad Hatta stated that:

> We will not establish a state with a separation of religion and state, but a separation of religious affairs and state affairs. If religious affairs are also handled by the state, then the religion will become state equipment and… its eternal character will disappear. State affairs belong to all of us. The affairs of Islam are exclusively the affairs of the Islamic *ummah* and the Islamic society (Hatta, cited from Lev, 1972: 44).

In a similar vein, Soekarno also expressed that:

> If we really are an Islamic people, let us then work as hard as we can, to see that the greatest number of seats in the Parliament, which we shall form will be occupied by Islamic representatives... I am even convinced that only when something like this happens, only then can it be said that Islam really lives in the soul of the people (Soekarno, 2018: 19-20).

Against such backdrop, the Pancasila (or the five principles, essentially comprised of belief in One God, humanity, the unity of Indonesia, democracy, and social justice) was subsequently accepted by consensus to accommodate different visions of a free Indonesia. The disputes between the Islamists and nationalists were ‘resolved’ by a compromise in a small committee through the so-called ‘Jakarta
Charter’, declaring that the state was based on belief in God with the additional words of ‘with the obligation for adherents of Islam to carry out Islamic law’ (Boland, 1982: 25-39). Yet, when this idea was brought to the plenary session some elements objected to such a compromise; not only Christian representatives but also Islamist groups. For example, Husain Djajadiningrat stated that the Jakarta Charter would lead to fanaticism as it seems that Muslims were being forced to implement the sharia (Boland, 1982: 28-29). The fact that these words did not appear in the post-Independence Constitution text, after further negotiations, had frequently disappointed some Islamist groups to the present-day.

Clearly, the antagonism between Islamist nationalists and secular nationalists had never been ‘completely’ resolved throughout this period and, as discussed later, it would continue into the post-colonial period. In such a context, the antagonistic other was no longer colonial power but the visions ‘to define’ a new political formation and communities of a free Indonesia. The rifts between members of the BPUPKI only exacerbated the existing differences that eventually weakened the Islamists in the early years of Indonesian politics. On the contrary, the ability of the nationalists to articulate the diversity for the sake of the unity of Indonesia had led them to a relatively hegemonic position in the post-colonial era. Additionally, this period also inherited the traditions of militia and violent mobilisation for the purpose of power struggles, which has also lasted until the current era.

Islamism and the Post-Colonial State Formation

As a de-colonial transformation, the making of a modern state in Indonesia, like in other Muslim worlds, had been characterised by a phenomenal rise of the popular support for nationalist political projects. The nationalist hegemony was marked by the mobilisation of the plurality of social groups through a common agenda for Indonesia’s nation-state formation. Retroactively, the identity of Indonesia itself can be seen as the result of political identifications, constructed firstly against the colonial power and, later, as an attempt to maintain the unity of Indonesia in the post-colonial state formation.
Political dynamics of the post-colonial state formation had been largely characterised by the following tendencies which significantly shaped Indonesian politics and the practices of Islamism. Firstly, post-colonial Indonesia’s state formation is principally about the dialectical relations between the efforts to maintain the unity of Indonesia and to politically manage the antagonisms that were historically rooted since the colonial era. Secondly, the tensions between particular identities had never transformed new political subjects as ‘citizens’ in the new Indonesia. The signifier of the *rakyat* (the people) that was constituted against the colonial power was replaced by the politicisation of identities in the attempt to occupy the place of power left by the colonial ruler. Thirdly, political struggles of this period are narrowly articulated as the struggle to enter the structure of state power, through which their survival would heavily depend on the continuous control over state power and resources.

Soon after Independence in 1945, the project of post-colonial state formation was challenged by two major problems: the rise of Dutch-sponsored regional authorities and the outbreak of ideologically-based insurgencies. Practically, between 1945 and 1949, there were two functioning states in Indonesia—the infant republic and the returning Dutch colonial power represented in the so-called *Republik Indonesia Serikat* (RIS, Republic of the United States of Indonesia). By the end of 1946, the Dutch had effectively controlled the eastern part of the archipelago, followed by their occupation in the major export-commodity producing areas of Java and Sumatera (Kahin, 2003). After a series of physical and international diplomatic struggles, this challenge was ‘formally’ resolved following the transfer of sovereignty from the Dutch to Indonesia in 1949 which effectively terminated the period of RIS. As we shall see, the legacies of such social conflicts of this period remained, at least until the mid-1950s.

Furthermore, the new Indonesia also faced insurgencies from *within* waged by both the communists and Islamists. In September 1948, following a series of violent conflicts in Central and East Java, the PKI under the leadership of Muso challenged the authority of the Indonesian government under Soekarno, declaring
a National Front in Madiun, East Java. The PKI was decisively crushed by the Republican army—assisted by Islamist militia and irregular units. The army’s success gained attention from Washington, which saw it as a potential ally for US-led campaigns against communism in Southeast Asia. In turn, the US support would not only facilitate diplomatic struggles to attain recognition of sovereignty from the Dutch (1945-1949) but also initiate a strong connection between the US and some sections of the army.

After the Madiun Affair, a tradition of hostility between the army-nationalists and PKI began, while the tensions between the Islamists and PKI worsened. Sharing a common enemy in the form of the PKI did not necessarily lead the army and the Islamists to become close with each other (Anderson and McVey, 1971: 138-139). This was because another insurgency under the banner of Islam, the so-called Darul Islam movement, led by Hizbullah leader and former Masyumi Executive Board member Kartosuwiryo, also broke out in West Java, declaring the establishment of the Negara Islam Indonesia (NII, Islamic State of Indonesia) on 7 August 1949. Kartosuwiryo garnered his main support from ex-militia such as Hizbullah who were disappointed with the government and the army. Yet, Masyumi and its prominent leaders like Natsir formally distanced themselves from the DI throughout the insurgency that lasted until 1962 (see, for example, Kahin, 2012; Madinier, 2013).

It is also important to note that the incorporation of Islam in the structure of power of new Indonesia was a not smooth process, unlike the experience of other Muslim-majority countries such as Malaysia (Hadiz and Khoo, 2011; Liow, 2009). After Independence, Islamism was primarily expressed through competition in the

36 Prior to the Madiun Affair, the PKI labour and peasant organs mobilised massive strikes in Delanggu of Central Java demanding better working conditions but turned into political actions against the Republic in Yogyakarta (50 kilometres from Delanggu). In Ngawi of East Java, PKI members also unilaterally seized government plantations (formerly Dutch-owned lands) and they also targeted Muslim landlords, mostly kyai in the villages, which resulted in violent conflicts between Muslims and communists. For a discussion of the Madiun Affair, see, for example, Swift (1989), Ricklefs (2001).


parliament in the midst of the tumultuous but slow period of state-formation. By November 1945, the formation of political parties was encouraged, seen as an instrument to ‘institutionalise’ political conflict and a legitimate vehicle to enter the state power. Generally speaking, the contending political forces of this period were historically rooted in the anti-colonial struggle era, yet they were now operating primarily to gain control over state power.

It is apparent that political developments in the early years of post-colonial Indonesia (1945-1949) had constituted a distinct form of power configuration, contestation and social coalitions which would greatly influence Indonesian politics and the practices of Islamism in the future. From this vantage point, the main legacies of this period were threefold. Firstly, the emergence of an increasingly powerful and ideologically coherent army. Secondly, the continuation of antagonistic relations between Islamism and communism. Thirdly, the distrust of the army towards political aspirations from both communism and Islamism, seen essentially as endangering the unity of Indonesia.

Pancasila versus Islam: Islamism and Parliamentary Politics, 1949-1957

After the transfer of sovereignty in 1949, the political project of nation-state formation was engineered through the framework of parliamentary democracy. This framework was chosen primarily because of the spirit to maintain the unity of the young republic. As Feith (2007: 127) showed, the multiparty system and parliamentary politics would facilitate better accommodation of various social groups. For example, the parties had helped to break down political and psychological barriers between those who had co-operated with the Dutch and those who had not during the revolutionary era. This was also the case for those who were previously active in the Dutch-created ‘puppet’ states under the framework of RIS (see also Anderson, 1990: 102). Therefore, the parties became increasingly important as a vehicle to enter state power and developed patronage functions, through which material resources were distributed. Quite remarkably, for more than
five years after the implementation of parliamentary democracy, the party leaders
had managed to postpone general elections and showed little commitment to the
grassroots-based representative democracy (Feith, 2007; Ricklefs, 2001: 289-290).

Initially, Masyumi was the only formal vehicle of representing the interests
of Muslims in the era of parliamentary democracy. Unlike other parties, it was
basically an amalgamation of some Islamic organisations with diverse, if not
conflicting, interests, aspirations and constituencies (see Madinier, 2013; Feith,
2007: 134-135). While there was no general election yet, the political composition
in the parliament was initially determined to reflect what were regarded to be the
party strengths, of which Masyumi assumed the greatest number of seats (Feith,
2007: 128).\(^\text{39}\) It is worth noting that parliamentary democracy did not provide
President Soekarno with real power, apart from the appointment of formateurs to
build a new cabinet that frequently required complex negotiations. Additionally,
this period had also been characterised by the rise and fall of cabinets, in which
there had been six cabinets between 1950 and 1957. Masyumi had continuously led
or become a coalition member of these cabinets, except during the Ali
Sastroamidjojo I period (July 1953-July 1955) when it together with PSI were
excluded from the coalition.

The perpetuous decline of Masyumi’s position began in the early years of the
Wilopo cabinet (April 1952-June 1953). This was started with the succession of
Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) on the grounds that its leaders felt that Masyumi had
continuously subordinated their political role (Seri Buku Tempo, 2016: 100).\(^\text{40}\) The
conflict culminated in Masyumi’s decision to give the post of Minister of Religious
Affairs, the position that was previously filled by an NU representative, to Fakih
Usman of Muhammadiyah. After the split, NU party built a coalition with other

\(^{39}\) The parliament comprised of 232 members, in which Masyumi had 49 seats, PNI (36), the
Socialist party PSI (17), PKI (13), Catholic Party (9), Christian Party (5), Murba (4), while over
42 per cent of the seats were divided among the remaining parties or individuals. See Feith (2007:
128).

\(^{40}\) The disappointment with Masyumi had actually emerged since the party’s establishment in 1945
when urban modernist politicians such as Sukiman and Natsir totally took control of the party
(Boland, 1982; Madinier, 2013). The separation between ulama and politicians became more
pronounced when the role of Party Council was degraded as merely an advisory body, and thus
minimised the political role of Nahdlatul Ulama. See Boland (1982), Madinier (2013).
Java-based parties, including PNI and PKI while Masyumi allied itself with the Socialist Party (Feith, 1958: 203). While Masyumi was still popular, its position in national politics had been marginalised. The retreat of Masyumi also concurrently followed by the decline of the Islamic petty trading and manufacturing bourgeoisie (Robison and Hadiz, 2004: 44).

It is worth noting that since the Natsir-led cabinet in 1950, Indonesia’s economic policy was mainly intended to secure indigenous \((\text{pribumi})\) dominance in the import sectors, through the so-called \(\text{Benteng}\) program (1950-1957)—that was xenophobic in nature (against international and Chinese capital). Nevertheless, the \(\text{Benteng}\) program also failed to facilitate the emergence of strong \(\text{pribumi}\) bourgeoisie and only produced political fixers and brokers who were strongly linked to political parties (Robison, 2009: 45). In fact, this program, as Robison argues, had constituted the ‘patrimonial’ feature of state-capital relations in Indonesia, in which the access to state power would determine ‘which individual enterprises prospered and which declined within the context of general state policy’ (Robison, 2009: 47).

While Islamic politics experienced fragmentation, the communists were on the rise again from the second quarter of 1952. This rapid development, after being crushed in Madiun in 1948 and under the hostile environment of the Cold War, was primarily associated with changing articulations and strategies under the leadership of the young D.N. Aidit (1923-1965). After the Madiun Affair, the PKI left aside its international outlook and, in turn, developed new relationships with nationalist forces, especially through PNI and Soekarno himself (Feith, 2007: 237-246; Ricklefs, 2001: 293-294). Such manoeuvres gave more freedom for PKI to reorganise its social bases without fear of army scrutiny. In the parliament, the rise of the PKI also effectively widened the existing schisms between the PNI and Masyumi. After Nahdlatul Ulama split from Masyumi, both PKI and PNI felt that they were more likely to cooperate with the former than the latter.

Prior to the 1955 elections, political tensions between the PNI and Masyumi escalated at both elite and grassroots levels. For example, as early as 1953, Soekarno warned Masyumi that many areas of the non-Muslim majority would
Soekarno’s position was strongly defended by PKI and Christian parties, arguing that democracy was now under serious threat by Islamic majoritarianism (Feith, 2007: 281-283). In its bid to gain broad support from the Islamists for the election, Masyumi promised to create a state based on Islamic law. On the contrary, the ‘secular parties’ subsequently associated Masyumi with Darul Islam, framing it as a threat to Pancasila and the unity of Indonesia (Ricklefs, 2001: 299-300). Thus, Pancasila—which previously served as a consensus among contending political forces especially between the Islamists and nationalists—was now appropriated and signified as an anti-Islamist slogan (see Feith, 2007: 317; Boland, 1982).

Not surprisingly, the 1955 general election had led to further polarisation in which the political sphere was divided into dichotomic blocs of ‘Pancasila’ versus ‘Islam’. It turned out that both PNI and Masyumi obtained 57 seats, followed by NU (45), PKI (39), PSII and Christian Party (8 respectively), Catholic Party (6), Socialist Party (5), and other smaller parties with less than four seats (Feith, 2007: 434-435). The formal debates between ‘Pancasila’ and ‘Islam’ blocs took place in the Dewan Konstituante (People Assembly), in which the foundation of the state became the subject of disagreement in drafting a new Constitution. Despite the internal conflicts they experienced in the previous three years, the polarisation of ‘Pancasila’ and ‘Islam’ blocs during and after the election had dragged Islamic parties to cooperate with each other. For example, when President Soekarno started to talk about the idea of ‘Guided Democracy’, as discussed below, Islamic

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41 In his speech delivered in South Kalimantan on 27 January 1956, Soekarno stated that:

The state we want is a national state consisting all Indonesia. If we establish a state based on Islam, many areas whose population is not Islamic, such as the Moluccas, Bali, Flores, Timor, the Kai Islands, and Sulawesi, will secede. And West Irian, which has not yet become part of the territory of Indonesia, will not want to part of the Republic (Feith, 2007: 281; Boland, 1982: 47-48).

42 Between 1945-1950s, Indonesia was governed by different constitutions. The 1945 Constitution, set up soon after the Independence, was replaced by the Constitution of the Republik Indonesia Serikat (RIS). After the formal sovereignty transfer (1949), this RIS Constitution was subsequently replaced by a temporary constitution when the unitary state was formed in 1950.

43 See a compilation of the speeches during the Konstituante debates in Kusuma and Khairul (Eds.) (2008).
parties attempted to launch a counter-attack to the ‘Pancasila’ blocs, accusing them of authoritarian tendencies (Boland, 1982; Lev, 1966).

The perpetual conflicts of the parliamentary democracy era were seen by the army and nationalists in general as endangering the project of Indonesia’s nation-state formation. They strongly believed that political articulations organised around the signifier of region and religion would challenge the unity of Indonesia. The parliamentary democracy period was also characterised by the outbreak of a series of insurgencies, driven by issues of economic injustice and Jakarta-centrism. These regional insurgencies took place almost concurrently in Ambon (RMS, 1950-1963), Sumatera (PRRI, 1958-1960), North Sulawesi (Permesta, 1958-1961), Aceh (DI, 1953-1962), South Kalimantan (DI, 1950-1963), all of which were crushed militarily.

In fact, since 1956, Soekarno had expressed anti-party sentiments and called for the termination of the parliamentary democracy. He saw that this framework had resulted in perpetual tensions which threatened the unity of Indonesia’s nation-state. In response, he replaced parliamentary democracy with a corporatist-technocratic framework through a variety of appointed bodies. By April 1957, for example, Soekarno announced a non-party ‘Working Cabinet’ (Kabinet Karya) under non-party politician Djuanda Kartawidjaja. This culminated in 1959 when Soekarno eventually dissolved the Dewan Konstituante and replaced it with a corporatist model of Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara (MPRS, Provisional People’s Consultative Council).44 He also declared the return to the 1945 Constitution had effectively closed the debate about the foundation of the state (Soekarno, 1965: 227-255). As such, Soekarno favoured the strengthening of the state at the expense of suppressing existing political differences which, in fact, sprung from the failure of the nation-state formation project itself (c.f., Anderson, 1990: 99-109).

44 In the MPRS, over half of the seats (154) was allocated for functional groups which were appointed by Soekarno. Crucially, through this framework Soekarno gave more allocation to the army and PKI while excluding Masyumi and PSI. See Ricklefs (2001: 324), Lev (1966).
From the Politicisation of Identities to Political Disaster: Islamism and the Guided Democracy, 1957-1965

The coming of Guided Democracy, which strengthened President Soekarno’s political position, dramatically reshaped the contestations and social coalition which characterised the political dynamics throughout this period (see, Lev, 1966). From the outset, the army fully supported Soekarno’s decision to implement Guided Democracy on the basis that this system allowed it to enter into the state power and to play a greater political role (Crouch, 2007). The army had consolidated its political role previously obtained from the imposition of martial law in March 1957 following the outbreak of the ‘regionalist’ insurgencies. In the economic realm, it had also extended business networks in the regions and obtained managerial positions in the ex-Dutch companies after the 1957 nationalisation program (Crouch, 2007; Samson, 1968; Anderson, 1990: 104-105). Initially, the relationship between President Soekarno and the army was mutually dependent which made a relatively smooth transition from parliamentary to Guided Democracy. Soekarno needed the army support to maintain the unity of Indonesia that was seen to be in danger throughout the 1950s, while the army realised Soekarno's role in providing legitimacy and support to the existing system that gave them benefit both politically and economically. But, this balance did not last long.

Aware of the potential dangers of dependence on the army to his position, President Soekarno attempted to build an alliance with civilian groups. From 1956-1959, Soekarno promoted the creation of a national front to incorporate all functional groups and linked them to the state under his leadership (Porter, 2003: 23-24; Reeve, 1985). In the late 1950s, the army leaders also began to establish their own model of functional groups to challenge Soekarno’s political bases. Its main aim was to dissociate the linkage between mass organisations with political parties. For example, they formed various cooperation-bodies (BKS, Badan Kerja Sama) under the army control, culminating in the creation of a Joint Secretariat of Functional Groups (Sekber Golkar) in 1964, which was primarily intended as an anti-communist front and as the army’s vehicle to enter the political arena (see, Crouch, 2007; Reeve, 1985).
In the Guided Democracy period, Soekarno attempted to manage antagonisms—which were regarded as the source of instability in the parliamentary democracy era—through a corporatist framework under the banner of NASAKOM (literally meaning Nationalism (represented by the PNI), Religion (Nahdlatul Ulama), Communism (PKI)). As such, political conflicts were to be contained through a corporatist framework dominated by Soekarno himself. Through NASAKOM, Soekarno gave PKI a greater role throughout the Guided Democracy as a counterbalance to the army. By 1957, PKI had rapidly developed as the strongest political force in Java. In the 1957 election for provincial councils, for example, its vote was 37.2 per cent higher than in the 1955 election, gaining new support from the ‘Leftist’ PNI (see, Rocamora, 1975). In Central and East Java, PKI won 34 per cent, followed by NU 29 per cent and PNI and Masyumi won 26 and 11 per cent respectively (Ricklefs, 2001: 316). As such, as discussed later, PKI was subsequently seen as a threat by the army especially in their competition to build a direct alliance with Soekarno and by the NU in their competition for people’s mobilisation at the grassroots levels.

Crucially, NASAKOM was a shortcut to manage political particularities for the purpose of nation-state formation, by politicising identities. Indeed, Soekarno fully understood that the project of nation-state building would require the creation of common and external antagonisms through which he could manage political differences and contestations in the country. For this purpose, he emphasised a foreign policy that was hostile towards the interests of Western countries, articulated in his rejection of neo-colonialism and neo-imperialism as outlined in anti-Nekolim slogans. Soekarno conceived global politics of that era as made up of two contending blocs, NEFO (New Emerging Forces) comprised of post-colonial countries against the OLDEFO (Old Established Forces) (Weinstein, 2007). By using this framework, by early 1960, Soekarno began to mobilise people for the Konfrontasi with Malaysia and the take over of West Irian from the Dutch (Courch, 2007). By urging that the Indonesian revolution is still unfinished, such mobilisation against the imperialist powers was principally driven by the need to create a sense of solidarity at home.
The period between 1959 and 1960s was also characterised by the continuous decline of the Indonesian economy. The efforts to establish a strong indigenous business class through Benteng program had completely failed by 1957, while the government’s development plan could not be achieved plainly because of the lack of financial resources (Robison, 2009). By early 1960, as Booth notes (1998: 162), the ratio of government expenditure to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was even lower than during the early years of Independence. This condition was particularly influenced by the collapse in world prices of Indonesia’s main export commodities, especially rubber. This was also associated with the burden of financing a series of military operations against regional rebellions in the mid-1950s and Soekarno’s reactionary foreign policies. By August 1959, government efforts to restrain inflation was clearly unsuccessful. The inflation rate continued to skyrocket—even exceeded 600 per cent in early 1966 (Ricklefs, 2001: 352; Booth, 1998: 165-172).

In fact, the politicisation of identities as a strategy to manage antagonisms had been increasingly beyond Soekarno’s control since 1953. On the one hand, Soekarno’s reactionary foreign policies and mobilisation for war had only strengthened the position of the army vis-à-vis Soekarno himself (Crouch, 2007). On the other hand, political tensions especially between NASAKOM elements (PKI, PNI and NU) escalated and led to violent clashes at the grassroots level. The turning point was when PKI and its peasant union, the Barisan Tani Indonesia (BTI, Indonesian Peasant Front) launched a unilateral action (Aksi Sepihak) in 1963-1964 to foster the implementation of land reform in which many PNI and especially NU elites became targets (Lyon, 1970; Mortimer, 2006). It was from this period that political conflict between PKI and NU was increasingly framed through religious idioms.

45 The position of PNI and its relations with other NASAKOM elements was ambiguous. The milieu of Guided Democracy had greatly pushed PNI to the Left, and this had brought about a serious dilemma for the party. First, the party was significantly losing its support in the bureaucracy and among local elites—it’s main social bases. Second, PNI’s support to the agenda of PKI, such as land reform and Aksi Sepihak, would only give the latter greater political benefits. Such transformation led to the association of PNI and PKI during the army-led anti-communist campaign in 1965/1966. Since PNI had more convergences with PKI than Islam throughout this period, I do not discuss PNI in more detail in this chapter. For studies of PNI, see McIntyre (1972: 183-210), Rocamora (1975).

46 By 1963, the implementation of Basic Agraria Law of 1960 stagnated, hampered by such problems as corruption, inadequate administrative support and opposition from landlords and religious
from the countryside (called *Turba, Turun ke Bawah* or ‘Go Down’ strategies) was influenced by two main political developments (Mortimer, 2006: 278). First, it was a response to the increasingly strong position of the army. After the 1957 nationalisation, PKI was unable to easily mobilise strikes in companies categorised as nationally strategic objects while the army had effectively mobilised anti-PKI functional groups in urban areas (Anderson, 1990; Mortimer, 2006). Second, without further elections, the NASAKOM framework had prompted PKI and NU—whose main social basis was at the village level—to mobilise the people. For PKI and NU, mass-based mobilisations were seen as a viable strategy to improve their bargaining position with the President.

The ‘zero-sum’ competition between the NASAKOM elements became uncontrolled and reached its peak on the eve of the 30 September 1965 coup. It then brought together the army and the Islamists as an anti-communist alliance which were involved in a series of brutal massacres, in which 200,000 to more than 1,000,000 people were killed (see, for example, Anderson and McVey, 1971; Cribb, 1990; Robinson, 2018). Soekarno’s political strategies for nation-state formation through NASAKOM had resulted in an internal confrontation between the three central forces that had constituted Indonesia, and eventually led to the disappearance of the Leftist discourses in Indonesia’s political sphere. Additionally, the legacies of Guided Democracy had discredited representative interests-based political articulations, and thus effectively led to the depoliticisation of citizenship and the strengthening of technocratic logic of governing and the politicisation of identities.

organisations. PKI saw land reform, that was backed by the Laws, as a communist issue that was instrumental to build a coherent movement in the countryside. On the contrary, the Islamists who were heavily targeted by the *Aksi Sepihak* saw PKI’s manoeuvre as fostering chaos. NU accused PKI and BTI of attacking religious schools and insulting to Islam. It urged followers to crush ‘the atheists’ and to defend their lands in the name of *jihad*. See Mortimer (2006: 376-328; 1972), Lyon (1970).
Conclusion

The foregoing discussion showed the emergence and development of three main discourses of Islamism, communism and nationalism in the struggle of anti-colonial movements and, later, in ‘defining’ post-colonial Indonesia. In anti-colonial struggles, Islamism, represented by Sarekat Islam, had become a hegemonic anti-colonial movement, comprising a cross-alliance among diverse social groups. Yet, its hegemonic position was subsequently challenged by communism and, later, nationalism. This chapter also demonstrates how socio-political transformation and the contestations of this period had significantly shaped the practices of Islamism.

From the very outset, Islamism was never singular or unchanging.

It was also argued that the relations between the subjects of anti-colonial struggles and the colonial power are not always mutually exclusive but are constitutive. It is through colonialism, constructed as a common antagonism, that anti-colonial struggles could link different groups regardless of their background to eventually create a new solidarity and consciousness in the making of Indonesia. In the period of post-colonial state formation, the political dynamics were greatly characterised by the dialectical relations between the efforts to maintain the unity of Indonesia by politically managing the antagonisms through the frameworks of parliamentary democracy and Guided Democracy respectively.

In the early post-colonial Indonesia, Islamism could not smoothly be accommodated in the structure of power. It was manifested primarily through parties in the framework of parliamentary democracy. The old rifts between Islamism, communism and nationalism recurred in this era but mainly aimed at controlling state power. The introduction of parliamentary democracy (1949-1957) had resulted in the outbreak of regionalist insurgencies while the parliament failed to achieve a consensus for creating a new Indonesian constitution. Although Masyumi—the major vehicle for the Islamists—was initially a major political force, it then suffered fragmentation and marginalisation culminated in ban of the party in August 1960 after its leaders being allegedly involved in the PRRI rebellion.

Soekarno’s move to Guided Democracy was crucially a political project for managing antagonism through corporatist framework of the NASAKOM. While it
provided Soekarno with more authority, NASAKOM had brought about internal conflicts among its elements that reached a peak in the 1965 tragedy. The legacies of Guided democracy would pave the way for the supremacy of the state and the technocratic model of governing—the elements of which would be more coherently articulated during the New Order.
4

The New Order and the Politicisation of Islam

Introduction

Unlike Turkey’s experience with Kemalism, decolonisation and modernisation projects in Indonesia have not been articulated through ‘de-Islamisation’, that is by removing the influence of Islam from the public sphere (c.f., Sayyid, 1997; Celik, 2000; Cagaptay, 2006; Uzak, 2010). Rather, they were achieved primarily through the creation of a technocratic governing model that was made possible by the depoliticisation of interests-based movements and political parties as well as the politicisation of identities. These conditions had paved the way for the rise of a developmentalist discourse that eventually became a cornerstone of the New Order state. Here, developmentalism had expanded beyond the articulations of the growth-oriented economy but, more importantly, involved the constitution of distinct social relations, practices and subjectivities amongst individuals and social groups (e.g., political parties, workers, military, Islam, families and so forth) which ultimately restructured state and society relations. How and through what mechanisms and strategies had Islam been constituted in New Order discourse? How were social coalitions forged throughout this period? What forms of agencies and subjectivities emerged from such processes? How did these complex processes characterise Indonesian politics and the practices of Islamism in the New Order era?

This chapter discusses the diverse articulations of Islam in relation to the emergence and development of the New Order (1966-1998). By conceiving the New Order as a discourse—as a totality of articulatory practices—it is argued here

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47 The Kemalist articulation of Islam can be summarised in its four strategies: secularisation, nationalism, modernisation and westernisation. Within Kemalist discourse, the making of a new Turkey is achieved by excluding Islam. By this, the Kemalists saw the ‘true’ identity of modernised and westernised Turkey can only be constructed by removing or suppressing Islamist discourses. For a discussion on how Islam is constituted in the Kemalism, see Sayyid (1997: 63-69).
that the relationship between Islamism and the state cannot be captured merely from the perspectives of state corporatism or instrumentalism. This is particularly because, from the lens of Islamic politics, the New Order itself also meant the consolidation of diverse Islamist articulations—and particular forces constituting New Order discourse. Indeed, the discursive formation of the New Order takes place through complex contestation and coalition that shapes Islamist articulations as well as the state’s responses. The outcomes of these complex processes, as shown in this chapter, eventually constituted the distinct power configuration of the so-called New Order and the diverse subject positions of Islamism.

More specifically, the chapter identifies three discursive periods within which different manifestations of Islamism were constituted. These are, respectively, the periods of formation (1966-1973), consolidation (1973-1983) and negotiation (1984-1998). Circumscribed within Cold War global politics and the legacies of Guided Democracy’s social conflicts, the formation period was characterised by the central role of the Islamists in an anti-communist alliance and the regime change in the mid-1960s. The encounters between the state and Islamism were largely situated around the issues of ideology, by which the discursive formation of the New Order was built upon the exclusion of communism and subsequently certain forms of Islamism. Meanwhile, the consolidation period was characterised by the hegemonic discourse of developmentalism. This was particularly achieved by constituting and universalising so-called Pancasila Democracy as a general nodal point of diverse demands and articulations organised around the signifiers of political stability, welfare and social harmony. Throughout this period, Islamist articulations took a new political turn in the form of culture and identity. As such, Islamism was domesticated in the domain of culture, within which its political agency and subjectivity were constructed and mobilised to defend the appeal of New Order developmentalism.

In the negotiation period, the central marker was the prominence of democracy discourse for organising and mobilising dissent and demands before the New Order’s authoritarian rule. Islamist articulations were manifested in the form of identity politics, constructed as a political basis for the struggles to reshape the
existing structure of power relations. Tantalisingly, the greater accommodation of middle class-based Islamism in the 1990s, as part of the changing balance of forces ensuing from economic development, had shaped the playing fields of power contestation among the Islamists and in their relationship to other forces for reshaping the existing structure of power relations (see, for example, Robison, 1996: 79-104). Such conditions had brought about polarisation and severe internal fracture within the New Order’s key political pillars. More decisively, the Asian economic crisis that hit the country in 1997 had undermined the legitimacy of New Order developmentalism and broadened the social basis of anti-New Order movements. Such dynamics altogether fostered the ‘organic crisis’ or the desedimentation of the New Order hegemony that culminated in Soeharto’s fall in 1998. Nevertheless, it is shown here that democracy discourse had only facilitated the opposition groups for overthrowing Soeharto but was unable to provide a space for creating common agendas as alternatives to the New Order. Not surprisingly, their broad social basis had, therefore, fallen apart following Soeharto’s resignation. To use Gramscian terms, the ‘war of position’ strategies waged by diverse political oppositions, soon became a ‘war of manoeuvre’ in the last years of the New Order.


This section discusses the ways Islam had been constituted within the early years of the discursive formation of the New Order. Crucially, this period was characterised by the construction of communism as a political frontier for the making of the New Order. Following the political turmoil of 1965-1966, the anti-communism discourse had facilitated the formation of a social coalition, led by the army, to crackdown on the communists and subsequently to discredit Soekarno’s rule. In this coalition, the Islamists played a prominent role as the army’s proxy both in the purging of the communists and the regime change. Another distinct feature of this period was that the contestations between the state and Islamists were largely framed around issues of state ideology. It is apparent that the discursive formation of the New Order was built through the exclusions of communism and
certain forms of Islamism in its ideological and power bases. Concurrently, the New Order embraced the organicism model, constructed through Pancasila Democracy and the idea of the family state, as its governing format that ultimately undermined representative-interests-based politics, including those organised around the marker of Islam.

**Anti-Communism and the Regime Change**

Anti-communism discourse has been a hallmark of Indonesian politics after 1965. As part of the social conflicts and tensions during the Guided Democracy period, anti-communist discourse portrayed the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) as a threat for security, political stability and religion—especially Islam. Framing the 30 September tragedy as ultimately the PKI’s effort to threaten Pancasila and the unity of Indonesia, the army began to launch an anti-communist coalition. By using the Islamists as the main proxy, the army urged the people to attack and eliminate the PKI’s supporters that led to the brutal massacre. Meanwhile, the severe tensions between the Islamists and communists since 1963 (Mortimer, 2006; Lyon, 1970), had prompted the Islamists to justify anti-communist actions as *jihad*, a holy war, on the basis that the PKI, in their eyes, would replace the Indonesian state with a communist and atheist model. Muhammadiyah, for instance, pronounced that ‘the extermination of the Gestapu/PKI... is a religious duty’ that was seen as an obligation for all Muslims (cited via Boland, 1982: 146). The Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), through its youth and paramilitary wings, Ansor and Banser respectively, also took part in deadly clashes with the PKI supporters especially in East Java (Fealy and McGregor, 2010; Feillard, 1999). While Masyumi, the biggest modernist Islamic party before it was banned by Soekarno in 1960 and the longtime enemy of the PKI, even called for regime change, expecting that the new government ‘would reverse the increasingly authoritarian actions of its predecessor’ and recover its position in the new political landscape (Kahin, 2012: 154).

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48 Regarding the direct role of the army in the 1965/1966 massacre and anti-communist mobilisation, see Melvin (2018).
Just within months, the anti-communist actions had given rise to a coalition representing broader demands for a regime change. The expansion of the coalition’s social base was mainly facilitated by the worsening of economic conditions in the mid-1960s, especially hyperinflation (Booth, 1998, Robison, 2009). In this coalition, Islamic student organisations and Muslim politicians were instrumental in facilitating regime change in 1966. Backed by the army, for example, university students established the Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Indonesia (KAMI, Indonesian Student Action Front) to replace the Perhimpunan Perserikatan Mahasiswa Indonesia (PPMI, Federation of Indonesian Students), which had once declared an anti-communist stance but now had many Soekarnoists in its leadership.\footnote{KAMI consisted of several student organisations, including the Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (HMI, Association of Muslim Students—linked to Masyumi), Pergerakan Mahasiswa Islam Indonesia (PMII, Indonesian Islamic Student Movement, linked to Nahdlatul Ulama), Gerakan Mahasiswa Sosialis (Gemsos, linked to Socialist Party of PSI), Persatuan Mahasiswa Katolik Republik Indonesia (PMKRI, Union of Catholic University Students) and Gerakan Mahasiswa Kristen Indonesia (GMKI, Protestant Indonesian Student Movement). See Hefner (2000: 66-70), Boland (1982: Chapter 3).}

KAMI was responsible for holding demonstrations against Soekarno in many urban cities, demanding the Tritura (three demands of the people): dissolution of the PKI, reorganisation of the government, and lowering prices of basic goods (Hefner, 2000: 67-70; Crouch, 2007). In addition, the Nahdlatul Ulama, the biggest Islamic party in the Parliament and the main partner of the army, played a significant role in the process of regime change, especially after many PKI members were expelled, killed or imprisoned following the tumultuous 1965 coup (Feillard, 1999: 88-89).\footnote{In 1966, NU-politician Achmad Sjaichu was the speaker of the MPRS. He approved the purges of the leftish parliamentary members to be replaced by the army-supported members. He also described NU and the army at this period as “two brothers”. See Feillard (1996: 42-67).} Soekarno’s rule effectively came to an end when the Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara (MPRS, Provisional People’s Consultative Council) named Soeharto, the Commander of Army Reserve Command (Pangkostrad), as acting president in March 1966 although he only obtained full powers two years later.

The fall of the staunchly anti-Western Soekarno and the massacre of the communists, which were greatly welcomed by the US and Western countries as ‘a gleam of light in Asia’ (New York Times 19 June 1966 via Roosa, 2006: 16), had dramatically changed the direction of Indonesian politics. The new army-dominated
government proclaimed the birth of the ‘New Order’ to replace the discredited ‘Old Order’, that was primarily signified by the general signifiers of political instability, economic crisis and authoritarianism. It then reversed many of Soekarno’s Third Worldism-style economic and foreign policies (Weinstein, 2007; Robison, 2009; Crouch, 2007). For example, in contrast to Soekarno’s hostility towards foreign capital, the new government began to provide conditions for the influx of international capital and assistance (see Robison, 2009: 131-175). Like other US-backed regime changes in the Cold War era, the new regime also became a prominent ally of the West in the region. Nevertheless, there was no pre-existing blueprint for the New Order to consolidate a coherent ideological program and power basis for its hegemony, and it took several years to achieve this. In this process, the struggles of political groups, including Islamists, to be accommodated in state power, therefore, would become a struggle for survival and such dynamics had, in turn, constituted the distinct characteristics of the New Order as a new political formation.

**Islamism in New Order Discourse:**

**The Strategies of Exclusion and Accommodation**

Having completely excluded communism from its discourse, the frontier of the New Order was also constituted by its negation towards some forms of Islamism. Political dynamics between 1966 and 1971, as discussed below, had been largely characterised by the contestations and changing social coalitions between the Islamists on the one hand and Soeharto and the army on the other. Through the strategies of exclusion and accommodation, the new government had not only attempted to distinguish its ‘friends’ from ‘enemies’ but, more importantly, had enabled diverse Islamist articulations which would ultimately shape the playing field of their relations, contestations and social coalitions in the early years of the New Order. From the lens of the politics of hegemony, these strategies had been a crucial stepping stone to disorganise Islamist groups from potentially being a counter-hegemonic force under the banner of Islam.
Generally speaking, all the Islamists initially saw the regime change as an opportunity to have a greater political role. This was particularly the case for Masyumi. Its leaders expected that the regime change would provide a chance for the party’s rehabilitation given their contribution in resisting Soekarno’s rule and their anti-communist position (Boland, 1982: 151; Kahin, 2012: 155; Hefner, 2000: 97). Nevertheless, their wishes were pre-empted by the army from the outset. A joint statement of army officers, issued on 21 December 1966, stated that the army ‘would take firm steps against anyone, whichever side, whatever group which will deviate from Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution as which already been done by the Communist Party Revolt in Madiun, Gestapu, Darul Islam... and Masyumi-Socialist Party of Indonesia’ (cited via Boland, 1982: 151; see also Ward, 1970). Seen as ideologically subversive as the PKI, especially due to the participation of its leaders in the PRRI rebellion, Soeharto and the army had eventually rejected Mayumi leaders’ plea.

Subsequently, Masyumi leaders proposed the establishment of a new Islamic party, the Partai Muslimin Indonesia (PMI, later changed to Parmusi). It was after excluding all Masyumi leaders in the party structure as the result of negotiations with the army and Soeharto that the PMI was finally legalised on 20 February 1967, led by Djarnawi Hadikusuma of Muhammadiyah (Kahin, 2012: 159; Boland, 1982: 152-156; Samson, 1971: 553; Ward, 1970). For the time being, as Ward (1970: 31-32) and Samson (1968: 1008) observed, there were two competing Islamist articulations within the party: the ‘idealists’, associated with former Masyumi leaders and the ‘realists’ camp which mostly came from Muhammadiyah. The position of the former continuously declined, and this culminated when Soeharto interfered directly in the party in 1970 by appointing M.S. Mintaredja, a Muhammadiyah figure who had no connection with Masyumi, as the party chairman and inserted his loyalists in its structure (Kahin, 2012: 161; Ward, 1970: 27-40).

This intervention had effectively disentangled the party from Masyumi’s influence. Mohammad Natsir, a Masyumi top leader, felt that there was no longer
an opportunity for him and Masyumi to play a role in the political arena.\textsuperscript{51} Masyumi then transformed itself into a \textit{dakwah} (predication) vehicle, under the newly crafted \textit{Dewan Dakwah Islamiyyah Indonesia} (DDII, Indonesian Council for the Islamic Predication). Natsir recalled that: ‘before we use politics as a way to preach, now we are using preaching as a way to engage politics’ (Kahin, 2012: 168). DDII gained momentum following the implementation of government-sponsored ‘building up’ (\textit{pembinaan}) communities (1967-1970s), particularly in ex-PKI strongholds.\textsuperscript{52} DDII expanded its target of ‘Islamisation of societies’ from previously a counter-Christianisation effort in Java to a more systematic recruitment of young preachers and university students (Kahin, 2012: 167-168; Hefner, 2000: 106-113). Since the late 1970s, financially supported by Saudi Arabia’s petrodollars as part its campaign to counter the influence of the Iranian revolution in Muslim countries, DDII had begun to launch an Islamisation agenda among university students and middle classes in urban cities. This, as discussed later, brought about far-reaching consequences. The most prominent was the expansion of the social bases of the Islamists and the cultivation of \textit{ummah} identities among a new Islamist generation, mainly young educated Muslims and university students, in the late 1970s and 1980s (c.f., Feillard and Madinier, 2011; Hadiz, 2016; Machmudi, 2008).\textsuperscript{53}

In stark contrast to Masyumi, the army tended to easily accommodate Muhammadiyah into state power from the very beginning (Samson, 1971: 554;

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{51} Soeharto’s intervention upset Natsir greatly. He described any efforts to rehabilitate the party would rather be a ‘quixotic’, saying that: ‘to compromise with such army interference and control would be a disappointment to former Masyumi supporters. Perhaps later, sometime after the elections, things will change and there will be better possibilities for playing a political role again’ (Kahin, 2012: 162).
\item \textsuperscript{52} This program was initiated by the new government to control the population in the ex-communist strongholds. Due to Islamists’ involvement in the PKI massacre, many of ex-communist members or sympathisers then ‘converted’ themselves into Christianity or other religions—that was seen by DDII as ‘Christianisation’ wave. It is reported that between 1966 and 1976, almost two million of Javanese converted to Christianity while another 250-400 thousand became Hindu (Hefner, 2011: 86). Against this backdrop, for example, DDII and Natsir facilitated the establishment of Pesantren Al-Mukmin of Ngruki, led by Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Baasyir, which was then reported as having links with regional and terrorist networks. See Kahin (2012), Solahudin (2013), ICG (2002), van Bruinessen (2000), Hefner (2000). Interview with Abu Ridho, DDII senior activist and co-founder of the PKS (Jakarta, 2 Nov. 2016).
\item \textsuperscript{53} Interview with Abu Ridho (Jakarta, 2 Nov. 2016), Professor Mohtar Mas’ed, Gadjah Mada University political scientist (Yogyakarta, 2 Sept. 2016), the late Professor Dawam Rahardjo, a Muslim scholar and activist (Yogyakarta, 21 Sept. 2016).\end{itemize}
Boland, 1982). For the army, Muhammadiyah had nothing to do with the political struggles of Guided Democracy. It also created distance from Masyumi leaders when the latter participated in the PRRI rebellion and officially broke its ties when the party was banned by Soekarno in 1960. Many Muhammadiyah members were largely accommodated in the early New Order, for instance, to fill the positions of religious teachers in accordance with the MPRS’s decree of 1966 that stipulated religion as a compulsory subject at all levels of education (Hefner, 2000; Boland, 1982).

Ironically, Nahdlatul Ulama’s relationship with the army and Soeharto declined after the regime change, due to the following reasons. NU was disappointed with Soeharto as the latter repeatedly postponed and rescheduled general elections—Indonesia had not had national elections since 1955. This was because Soeharto had not possessed an electoral vehicle yet (Feillard, 1999: 96-101). NU also protested to Soeharto that the army was given 50 per cent of seats in the parliament, in contrast to NU’s demand for just 5 per cent (Feillard, 1996: 42-67). From this time, Soeharto and the army saw NU as their greatest political rival given its strong grass-roots base, especially in the heavily populated areas of Java. The tension escalated in the mid-1966 when Soeharto attempted to undermine NU by inserting his loyalists in the parliament. As a response, NU politicians began to exploit Islamic slogans and rhetoric, including the sensitive issue of the Jakarta Charter—although the debates on it had been ‘officially’ closed since 1959 when Soekarno declared a return to the 1945 Constitution. The army subsequently attempted to isolate Nahdlatul Ulama’s political influence by, for example, securitising the latter as the ‘neo-Darul Islam’.

Circumscribed by such pressures, NU’s Islamic articulations in relation to the New Order were carried by two different kinds of social agents (Feillard, 1999). The conservative group, led by Idham Chalid, who was once regarded as a Soekarno

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54 Having dismissed PKI members, Soeharto appointed his 67 loyalists as new parliament members. Inevitably, this reduced the representation of Islamic parties from 42.4 per cent in 1955 to only 28 per cent. The controversies of the Jakarta Charter were raised again by NU’s official media *Duta Masyarakat* on 22 June 1966. Yet, the debates did not escalate and last long. By April 1968, Soeharto forced all Islamic-based parties (Nahdlatul Ulama, Parmusi, Perti) to terminate the debates on the Charter. See, for example, Feillard (1999: 101-102, 115-127), Ward (1970).
loyalist, tended to align itself with Soeharto and the army, believing this as an effective way to obtain access into state power and to prevent NU from being destroyed. On the contrary, the radical group, led by a young leader, Subchan, who was once an anti-communist figure and close to the army, opted to enter the structure of state power through electoral competition. The latter criticised Soeharto, arguing that the fruit of NU’s support in overthrowing Soekarno’s pro-communist regime was only the creation of another authoritarian one (Mietzner, 2009: 80). These competing strategies, as discussed below, did not only affect NU internally but also created complex and uneasy relations with the Soeharto regime in subsequent years.

By the late 1960s, it was clear that Soeharto preferred to use the existing Functional Group (Sekber Golkar), established by the army during the Guided Democracy period, as his electoral machine (Reeve, 1985; Ward, 1974; Bourchier, 2015). Not surprisingly, Nahdlatul Ulama’s radical group saw Golkar as its political opponent, and harshly protested its unfair tactics of intimidation and fraud prior to the 1971 election. It is common knowledge that Soeharto utilised intelligence-like strategies, carried out by the informal intelligence unit called Operasi Khusus (OPSUS, Special Operation) within the Army’s Strategic Reserve led by Soeharto’s aide, General Ali Moertopo (see, for instance, Feillard and Madinier, 2011; Feillard, 1999; Crouch, 1971; Hefner, 2000). One of the unit’s most infamous manoeuvres involved ex-Darul Islam commanders being mobilised, initially to crush the communists and then to help Golkar win elections (Hadiz, 2016: 116-136; Jones, 2010; Solahudin, 2013).

Golkar also attempted to undermine NU’s monopoly over Islam by embracing and accommodating other Islamists. For example, Golkar (orchestrated by the OPSUS) reactivated and financed the Gabungan Usaha Pembaharuan Pendidikan

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55 In his speech, Idham Chalid stated that “if a leader acts consistently simply for the sake of being known as consistent, without weighing up the consequence of his actions, the ummah he leads will be destroyed” (quoted via Bourchier and Hadiz, 2003: 85). In fact, as Fealy (1994) has shown, the flexibility—formulated in the NU’s principles of tawassuth (moderate), tawazun (balance), and tasamuh (tolerance)—has been the central character of Nahdlatul Ulama’s political thinking, that actually rooted in classical Islamic thinkers such as Al-Ghazali (1058-1111).
Islam (GUPPI, Association for the Improvement of Islamic Teaching), previously established in West Java in 1950, and made it the party’s Islamic wing (Cahyono, 1992; Feillard and Madinier, 2011: 37). More importantly, Golkar also successfully gained political support from the families of NU’s founding fathers such as Karim Hasyim and Aziz Bishri, sons of Kyai Hasyim Asy’ari and Kyai Bishri Sjansuri respectively (Feillard, 1999: 139-141).\footnote{Kyai Hasyim Asy’ari (1871-1947) is a respected ulama and the founder of NU and Tebuireng pesantren—the largest pesantren in Java in early 20 century. Kyai Bishri Syansuri (1886-1980) is other respected ulama from Denanyar of East Java and assumed as NU Chairman in 1972-1980.} Crucially, it appeared that the contestations between Golkar and NU’s radical group had resulted in the former’s new identification and self-presentation: that Golkar had become more ‘Islamic’ and provided a ‘home’ for the nahdlyin—the NU followers. In other words, by the 1970s Golkar had begun to hold hegemony over Islam.

\textit{In Search of a Political Format: Pancasila Democracy and Developmentalism}

The discursive formation of the New Order was constituted as the negation to the so-called ‘Old Order’ that was effectively signified as the period of political instability, the failure of development, and authoritarianism. In the politics of hegemony, the redefinition of the past was not only strategic for creating a clear break from the dislocated order but also instrumental to build legitimacy for the new political formation. Thus, in his official speech before the MPRS on 16 August 1967, the acting President Soeharto stated that:

\begin{quote}
[The New Order is nothing less than an ordering of the entire life of the people, nation and state that has returned to the pure implementation of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. We underline the word ‘returned’ because the New Order was born and has grown as a reaction to and is a total correction of all the forms of deviation and corruption carried out by what has come to be known as the Old Order (cited via Bourchier and Hadiz, 2003: 37).]
\end{quote}

After the 1971 election, that was predated by the exclusion of communism and some forms of Islamism, the proponents of the New Order began to advance a political project of so-called ‘Pancasila Democracy’, which essentially implied a distinct
state-society governing model. This project, which eventually became the political foundation for developmentalism, was best articulated in the New Order’s manifesto *The Acceleration and Modernisation of 25 Years’ Development* (Moertopo, 1972). Crucially, drawn on the notions of familial state and organic statism (Bourchier, 2015), Pancasila Democracy was articulated as a negation of any form of organised politics and political representation. The proponents of the New Order saw ideological polarisation, class struggles, and party-based competition are incompatible with Pancasila’s values of unity and harmony (Moertopo, 1972: Chapter 2, 3).

New Order’s central articulation was political stability, regarded as the ultimate condition for the workings of modernisation and development projects. This had brought far-reaching consequences in the constitution of agencies, subjectivities and social relations for both individuals and social groups which were defined by the parameters of development and modernisation. Indeed, such articulation had provided the rationale for the further implementation of the military’s *dwifungsi* (dual function) doctrine that granted exclusive roles in both defending the state and in socio-political life. This had made the military, apart from Golkar, as a key pillar of the New Order.

Through the notion of political stability, the New Order discourse also sought to diminish the role of parties and people’s political participation. As early as 1973, the party system was ‘simplified’ (through a process called *deparpolisasi*) by forcing all parties to merge into three state-designated ones, the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI, for the ‘secular-nationalists’), the United Development Party (PPP, for the Islamists) and Golkar. The policy of ‘floating mass’ (*masa mengambang*) was also introduced, to limit the activities of the parties only until district levels. Crucially, the floating mass policies had not only prevented the parties from mobilising the people at the grassroots but, more importantly, destroyed political representation. It was through disembedding people’s ties from the parties, the New Order sought to constitute them as developmentalist subjects. Through

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57 For the discussion of the *dwifungsi* doctrine in the New Order see, for example, Crouch (2007), Honna (2003), Jenkins (2010), Moertopo (1972).
‘deparpolisasi’ and ‘masa mengambang’ policies, it is claimed that ‘people in the village would not sacrifice their valuable time and energy for the political struggles in political parties or groups but will be occupied wholly with development efforts’ (Moertopo, 1972: 96). Hence, the ruling party, Golkar, then utilised an ‘anti-politics’ slogan: ‘politics no, development yes’.

Indeed, such disorganisation and depoliticisation had paved the ways for the dominance of the New Order’s technocracy. This had constituted the distinct logic of development, that the people’s welfare was defined and achieved ‘top-down’ by the bureaucracy and technocratic arrangements rather than as a result of people’s struggles through democratic institutions. Such logic had greatly depoliticised the agencies and subjectivities of the people, constituted merely as beneficiaries of development interventions. It is stated that people’s involvement ‘in the conflicts of political and ideological interests had as its result the fact that they ignored the necessities of daily life, the need for development and improvement of their own lives both materially and spiritually’ (Moertopo, 1972: 95). This anti-politics governing model was conveniently consistent with the globally dominant strands of modernisation theory, which strongly links the economic growth and state-led development to the maintenance of social and political stability (see, for instance, Huntington, 1968). In the New Order discourse, such Huntington-style modernisation projects were not only seen as a prerequisite for achieving economic development and social order but also to provide the basis for the development of Indonesian democracy (Moertopo, 1972).

The Consolidation Period, 1974-1983: Islamism and Biopolitics of Developmentalism

This section discusses three issues: (1) the ways developmentalism discourse is universalised throughout the consolidation of the New Order; (2) the forms of agencies and subjectivities produced by this hegemonic discourse, especially regarding the Islamists; and (3) the contestations and social coalitions which characterise the political dynamics and the practices of Islamism in this period. Within developmentalist discourse, Islamism was conceived as a mere system of
belief upon which Islam was articulated to bolster the appeal of modernisation. The Islamist articulations emerging from this period were, therefore, mainly manifested and confined within the domain of culture.

The ‘culturalisation’ of Islam was thus acknowledged and defended as the condition for development practices. Under the hegemony of developmentalism, the Islamists were transformed from objects of intervention into developmentalist subjects. This was achieved particularly by giving them certain forms of agency and autonomy in the cultural domain in such ways they, directly or indirectly, sustained developmentalism as a ‘regime of truth’. In a nutshell, rather than being ‘depoliticised’, Islamism of this period was actually ‘politically’ for the purpose of supporting and reproducing development practices that eventually sustained the hegemony of the New Order.

**Universalising Pancasila Democracy: A Master Signifier**

In the narrative of the New Order discourse, the articulations of Pancasila Democracy in the consolidation period were not associated with its role as the state ideology. Rather, it was primarily articulated as a requirement for developmentalism to operate. Throughout the New Order period, the developmentalist articulation of Pancasila, as we shall see, was made possible by the diverse practices and demands organised around three main nodal points: (1) political stability, (2) welfare and (3) social harmony. Through these nodal points, Pancasila democracy had been effectively constituted as a master signifier for developmentalism discourse. As such, developmentalism was not only a top-down single process but a result of complex relations, contestations and the social coalition which were continuously reorganised and modified throughout the New Order era.

Pancasila Democracy played a crucial role, to borrow Foucault’s term (1991; 1999), as an instrument of biopolitics in order to discipline the population that eventually led to the restructuration of the state and society relations. The aim was
‘a reorganisation of socio-political forces and the political structure…. in such a way that a stable and viable socio-economic basis can be achieved to support the development of society’ (Moertopo, 1972: 55-56). For example, in order to reorganise labour politics, the Soeharto government introduced the doctrine of *Hubungan Industrial Pancasila* (HIP, Pancasila Industrial Relations) that strictly did not recognise the rights of workers to strike on the grounds of building harmonious relations between the workers and the employers (Hadiz, 1997: 65). Through the strategies of biopolitics, the population as a whole are targeted as the object of development intervention and are then transformed into new developmentalist subjects. Regarding Islamism, the ultimate target of the New Order was to ensure the diverse Islamist groups accepted and supported the developmentalist style of Pancasila and, simultaneously, to prevent a political discourse that challenged the New Order hegemony.

By the first half of the 1970s, however, New Order developmentalism had faced resistance from different fronts. As extensively studied (e.g., Robison, 2009; Robison and Hadiz, 2004; Mas’oed, 1989), Soeharto’s early economic policies tended to favour foreign investors while the military, especially around Moertopo’s inner circle, played a prominent role in building politico-business networks with Chinese conglomerate groups. For the Islamists, they felt that New Order’s power consolidation had only resulted in further marginalisation economically and socially. The protests, involving *pribumi* (indigenous, largely Muslims) business groups, university students, intelligentsia, against foreign capital and state’s business management culminated in the bloody demonstration of 15 January 1974, known as the *Malari* (Robison and Hadiz, 2004: 64). It was after *Malari* that the questions of social justice and the *pribumi* discourse became a focus of public debate, that was then accommodated, albeit to a limited extent, through the State Secretariat (Sekneg) in the 1980s under Soeharto’s close aide, Soedharmono.58

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58 The accommodation of *pribumi* discourse in development policies does not necessarily mean that the post-*Malari* Indonesian economy led to a form of economic populism. It is also worth noting that underneath the *Malari* riots were the intensified conflicts among Soeharto’s inner circles. Moertopo’s ASPRI/OPSUS along with his ethnic Chinese business partners had increasingly become the common enemy for the technocrats, the reformist military officers (those who advocate the interests of the military as an institution, such as General Soemitro groups) and the
Almost concurrently, in late 1973, a broader resistance came from an alliance of Islamist groups against a Golkar-sponsored bill that would effectively secularise marriage and family laws. The Islamists saw the bill as a manoeuvre of the New Order, as Hamka (aka. Haji Abdul Malik bin Abdul Karim Amrullah, 1908-1981) a former Masyumi politician and a Muhammadiyah leading figure claimed, ‘to destroy and subjugate Islam’ (Cammack, 1997). This controversy was settled outside the Parliament, facilitated by the army’s lobby to ulama, that forced the government to substantially change the bill (Feillard, 1999: 172-179; Liddle, 1978: 126). Another stumbling block for universalising Pancasila Democracy emerged from the state-sanctioned PPP, especially from its Nahdlatul Ulama elements. To gain more voters from Muslims in the 1977 election, PPP leaders utilised a ‘double basis’ of the party ideology—i.e. Pancasila and Islam—although the government had obliged the addition of ‘Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution’ to the foundation of all parties. PPP was continuously pushed to take its Islamic jacket off.

For example, during the campaign period, Admiral Soedomo (Commander for the Restoration of Security and Order, Pangkopkamtib) and Amir Machmud (Minister of Home Affairs and head of General Election Committee) announced an anti-government conspiracy of the so-called Komando Jihad (Holy War Command) followed by the arrest of several Islamist activists (Solahuddin, 2013; Feillard and Madinier, 2011). While there was no explicit statement about its connection with PPP, such manoeuvres had undermined the Islamists. The PPP was also prohibited from using Ka’bah (the holy shrine of Mecca) as its symbol after the 1977 election.
Although it turned out that Golkar’s vote dropped slightly at the national level (from 62.80 to 62.11), the 1977 election was a watershed for the New Order hegemony, given that there was no viable political discourse that could potentially become a counter-hegemonic force.

Against such a backdrop, the New Order state began to embark more decisively on totalisation strategies in its efforts to control and discipline Islamism and socio-political life in general. As stated in the New Order manifesto, Pancasila Democracy was required to be applied ‘in every field of life, every organ and body of the state at all levels of societies, both in towns and in villages’ (Moertopo, 1972: 55-56). By 1978, The People’s Consultative Assembly (MPR) introduced Pancasila moral instruction, known as P4 (Guidelines for the Comprehension and Implementation of Pancasila). The P4 indoctrination became compulsory for civil servants, students and even social organisations. Through the ‘Moral Education Pancasila’, implemented in 1980, the P4 also became an inseparable part of the curriculum at all levels of education.

Some Islamist groups still resisted this policy, albeit on a limited scale. Islamist figures like Natsir, for instance, was concerned about a policy that he saw as the state’s attempt to ‘religionise Pancasila and Pancasilaise religion’ (Kahin, 2012: 176). The PPP, mostly from the NU elements, also led a walkout during the MPR’s plenary session (Feillard, 1999). It is against this backdrop that Soeharto expressed his disappointment during a meeting with military leadership in Pekanbaru in 1980, warning that:

‘[W]e must step up our vigilance, choose partners and friends who truly defend Pancasila and have no doubts about it.... we are obliged to persuade them in such a way that all social and political forces will base themselves on our natural ideology, Pancasila, with no addition whatsoever’ (cited via Rodgers, 1980: 37; see also Jenkins, 2010; Ismail, 1996).

The incorporation of Pancasila Democracy into religious policies was systematically initiated by the Minister of Religious Affairs (1973-1983), Alamsjah Ratu Prawiranegara. The ultimate aim was to transform religions to be compatible with development agendas. For example, the State Policy Guidelines (GBHN) since 1978 conceived the objective of New Order developmentalism as balanced social
progress between material and spiritual well-being.\textsuperscript{59} This had effectively justified religions as a ‘moral, spiritual, and ethical basis’ for development practices. Thus, as early as 1975, the Soeharto regime institutionalised such developmentalist articulation of Islam following the establishment of the \textit{Majelis Ulama Indonesia} (MUI, the Council of Indonesian Ulama). The primary objectives of this government-sponsored body were to strengthen national security, to maintain religious harmony and to facilitate government’s development programs (Ichwan, 2005; Porter, 2002: 78).

The Ministry of Religious Affairs had subsequently played a great role in controlling the population, by articulating the policies under the banner of managing social harmony and difference. In 1978, the Ministry issued a policy called \textit{tri kerukunan} (Three Harmonies) that was essentially a redefinition of new Islamist agencies and subjectivities according to developmentalism parameters (see, Porter, 2002: 62). The first is the harmony between the state and religion, especially Islam. It is believed that through massive indoctrination all Islamists would ultimately accept Pancasila as their ideology and way of life. The second is the harmony within a religion whose primary objective was twofold: (1) to remove doctrinal contradictions within religion in order to obtain a homogenous religious interpretation in conformity with Pancasila and (2) to utilise religion as the state’s proxy to control religious life, by which ‘unexpected’ articulations of certain religious groups—that potentially hindered development programs—could be judged internally as splinter groups or heresy. The third is the harmony between one religion and another. Its aims were to mediate inter-religious tensions and to guide all religious communities in their participation in development. The New Order also attempted to expand its strategies of managing difference beyond the domain of religion by introducing the SARA (Ethnic, Race, Religion and Inter-groups) framework. Typically, this framework had granted recognition towards

\footnote{In the MPR Decree No. IV/1978 on the State Policy Guidelines, the objective of national development is ‘to achieve a just and welfare society both materially and spiritually in accordance with Pancasila within the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia… within a safe, stable, orderly and dynamic national environment.’}
these differences but, at the same time, prevented them from being a basis of organising demands and dissent that would potentially challenge the New Order.

The New Order’s totalisation strategies for universalising Pancasila Democracy were essentially directed to control and restructure the population and territory altogether. It is not surprising that by the late 1970s, 84 per cent of the provincial governments in Indonesia were led by governors of military-backgrounds, the Soeharto’s loyalists (Emerson, 1978). In early 1979, the Soeharto government also stipulated greater administrative homogeneity and standardisation by enacting the Village Law, followed by the policies of *ABRI Masuk Desa* (AMD, *Military Enters Villages*) a year later. These policies, especially in the context of ‘floating mass’ doctrine and depoliticised societies, had provided the New Order regime with effective control and surveillance over territory and population. And, this also marked the increasing role of the military to encroach on the villages’ socio-political life (Honna, 2003: 60; Jenkins, 1984). The presence of the military at the lowest administrative levels, through the so-called *Komando Teritorial* (Territorial Command) structure, was instrumental to mobilise—often by force or intimidation—the whole population for supporting the development programs, even for issues like food security and birth control (known as KB or family planning).

### Islamic Developmentalist Subjects

Apart from the totalisation strategies as discussed above, the biopolitics of developmentalism had also been made possible by individualisation. It is understood here as the process by which the Islamists were transformed from the object of intervention to be developmentalist subjects (c.f., Foucault, 1991; Laclau and Mouffe, 2001; Clifford, 2001). Such double strategies—totalisation and individualisation—are mutually constitutive for the cultivation and reproduction of Islamic developmentalist subjects. Through individualisation, the Islamists would have a sort of self-governing mechanism and distinct agencies as well as subjectivities to reproduce developmentalism practices. It is the reproduction of
such practices that effectively sustain the hegemony of developmentalism discourse. This section also shows that the making of Islamic developmentalist subjects, including its different agencies, subjectivities and identities, is historically situated within larger social changes and their different social positions in the existing structure of power relations.

By the mid-1970s, as mentioned above, a new generation of Muslims had emerged with distinct aspirations. This generation mainly came from Masyumi-linked youths, particularly associated with Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (HMI, Association of Muslim Students). More specifically, they embarked to develop what is known as ‘new Islamic intellectualism’ (Effendy, 1995, 2003; Barton, 1999; Munawar-Rachman, 2010). This Islamic reform emerged from the dissatisfaction of young educated Muslims with their predecessors who had contributed to the contentious relationship between Islam and the state, from the Soekarno and Soeharto eras. From the very outset, the proponents of this reform had generally supported the New Order developmentalism as they no longer want to accept their continuous exclusion ‘because of the sins of their elders’ (Kahin, 2012: 162).

According to this group, the impasse of Islamism was occurred because the older Islamists ‘suffered from inflexibility, almost dogmatism, in practical considerations’ (Madjid, 1985: 383). The crux of the problem derived primarily from their understanding of the holistic nature of Islam (shumuliyatul Islam), that is the inherent relation between Islam as a religion and as a political ideology (ad-din wa-daulah). For them, such a theological position often led to strict formalism and legalism. They argued that although Islam certainly had indeed contained socio-political teachings, it did not constitute Islam in itself as an ideology. Some even went further to claim that the ideologisation of Islam can be considered to be reductionist (Effendy, 1995: 106; Wahib, 1981: 146). The leading figure of this group, Nurcholis Madjid, himself a disciple of Fazlur Rahman, a renown scholar for Islamic reform at the University of Chicago, maintained that ‘Islam is essentially a personal religion… that provides a place for the secularisation required for Indonesian modernisation’ (1970). Hence, he subsequently promoted the slogan: ‘Islam yes! Islamic party no!’ Such reform thus effectively produced ‘liberal’
Islamic articulations which were neatly compatible with New Order developmentalism (c.f., van Bruinessen, 2002: 124).

Reorientation of Islamic developmentalist subjects was also extensively conducted through reforming Islamic higher educations in the early 1970s (Kersten, 2017: 38-39; Boland, 1982: Ricklefs, 2012: 157). This reform was carried out by Professor Mukti Ali, who was a mentor to theological reform activists such as Ahmad Wahib and Dawam Rahardjo. While the underlying motives were largely political, this reform was instrumental in redirecting Islamic education to be more ‘liberal’ and compatible with developmentalism. For example, Mukti Ali and his associates replaced legalistic orientations of classical methodologies to ‘scientific’ and comparative ones. They saw that legalistic approaches were responsible for creating ‘narrow-minded’ Islamists and irrelevant for the immediate challenges of modernisation and industrialisation.

The making of Islamic developmentalist subjects was also developed from the programs called ‘Reactualisation Agenda’, initiated by Munawir Sjadzali, the Minister of Religious Affairs (1983-1993). This program was actually a response to the phenomenal rise of Islamisation among the urban middle class and university students in the late 1970s (Effendy, 1995). Specifically, he persuaded Muslims that they could implement Islamic values without establishing an Islamic state and that Pancasila is certainly not antithetical to Islam. He even argued that ‘from our history we note that the aspirations of Indonesian Muslims are better accommodated if Islamic parties no longer exist in this country’ (Sjadzali, 1994: 200-201). In the aftermath of the oil-boom, this program had huge financial resources, including to send many young Islamic scholars, mostly the lecturers of state-run Islamic universities.

60 The appointment of Mukti Ali of Muhammadiyah as Minister of Religious Affairs after the 1971 election was primarily directed to ‘punish’ Nahdlatul Ulama for its critical position against the Golkar and Soeharto. Subsequently, Mulyarto Sumardi (closed to Moertopo’s OPSUS) was then appointed as a directorate general of Islamic tertiary education. He implemented the policies of rationalisation, by which many Nahdlatul Ulama-affiliated rectors were targeted. It is also reported that Moertopo himself also involved in bringing many non-Nahdlatul Ulama and Western-graduated academics, who supported modernisation projects and had no background of political activism, into strategic positions in Islamic universities. See, for instance, Kersten (2017), Porter (2002: 54), Boland (1982), Noer (1978).
universities, to Western universities particularly in Canada and America (Kersten, 2017: 38; Porter, 2002).

Another strategy to cultivate Islamic developmentalist subjects was achieved through the state’s corporatisation of Islamist groups, by channelling them into the existing patronage networks (see, for instance, Porter, 2002; Vatikiotis, 1998). In this corporatisation scheme, Soeharto himself played a great role, especially by providing financial support from his foundations (yayasan) that were a resource pool for off-budget funds. The most prominent Islamic corporatisation body, as mentioned earlier, was the MUI. Throughout the New Order period, MUI’s role was instrumental in development programs by providing fatwas (religious opinion) for many issues, including controversial ones like the government-sponsored lottery and the use of IUD (Intra Uterine Device) for birth control (Mudzhar, 1993; Ichwan, 2005). MUI also recruited, trained and deployed Islamic preachers—they were given a title of ‘development preachers’ (da’i pembangunan)—to remote areas outside Java, following the transmigration programs. They were also deployed in some conflict-vulnerable areas such as plantations and mining sites, not only for delivering Islamic teachings but also Pancasila indoctrination (Porter, 2002).

Such corporatisation strategies expanded to other Islamic entities such as mosques and dakwah institutes. In the mid-1970s, the activities of mosques were supervised and controlled under the Golkar-linked organisation called Dewan Masjid Indonesia (DMI, Indonesian Mosque Council). DMI also involved in the building and renovating mosques at housing complexes, university campuses, transmigration sites and entertainment parks. In 1978, the Soeharto government and Golkar also sponsored the establishment of the Majelis Dakwah Islamiyah (MDI, Islamic Dakwah Council) initially as a counter-strategy in response to fierce competition between PPP and Golkar in the 1977 election. Its activities included

\[\text{From the early 1970s, Soeharto and his family established numerous yayasan, mostly for financing Golkar and expanding patronage networks. Through a Presidential decree of 1978, for example, state banks had to transfer 8 per cent of their operating profit to Yayasan Dharmais and Yayasan Supersembar. Bogasari, the flour milling monopoly owned by Soeharto’s Chinese-ethnic business partner, had to contribute 26 per cent of its profit to various yayasan. The Yayasan Amal Bhakti Pancasila (YABP) had facilitated the building of hundreds of mosques and Islamic centres throughout the country. For a detailed discussion on this issue, see Robison and Hadiz (2004: 55), Robison (2009), Schwarz (2000), Ismail (1996).}\]
sending preachers to villages to counter PPP and Nahdlatul Ulama activities, recruitment and training of ‘Pancasilaist’ mosque leaders and preachers (see, for example, Porter, 2002: 82-85).

Indeed, the hegemony of the New Order’s developmentalism over Islamist groups was uneven, whereby not all Islamists could be completely absorbed. They subsequently developed rather different Islamic articulations and forms of agency. It is worth noting here that such different articulations were not exclusively determined by distinct ideologies but rooted in their sociological basis which constituted different relations of power among Islamists group with the state. These ‘excluded’ groups, as discussed in more detail later, cultivated different imagination and trajectories of the ummah that significantly influenced the contestations and social coalitions in the period of negotiation (1984-1998) and after Soeharto’s fall.

Generally speaking, these Islamist groups were critical towards ‘liberal’ Islam and, in turn, advocated the re-articulation of shumuliyyatul Islam.62 The social basis of these groups were primarily the ‘conservative’ Masyumi heirs among university students and the new urban middle class. The making of these groups was made possible as a result of the Islamisation of society that began in the mid-1960s, especially associated with the government policy of religious instruction and DDII-led activities. Since 1966, the government had stipulated the study of religion as compulsory at all educational levels, which meant that not all the Islamists today are necessarily santri (those who learnt and graduated from Islamic seminaries). Even as early as the late 1970s, membership of these Islamist groups was largely recruited from ‘secular’ university campuses rather than in ‘Islamic’ ones. Being members of the middle class in urban areas, these young educated Islamists found themselves disappointed with the fact that their upward mobility was blocked given they were outside the New Order’s patronage networks (c.f., Hefner, 2000; Kuntowijoyo, 1991).63 By rearticulating the notion of shumuliyyatul Islam, these groups cultivated a new foundation of solidarity among their fellows and this

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63 Interview with Fahri Hamzah, former Tarbiyah activist and House of Representative (DPR) deputy speaker (Jakarta, 2 and 10 Nov. 2016), Dr Yon Machmudi, Tarbiyah activist and academic at the Unialversity of Indonesia (Depok, 19 Oct. 2016).
subsequently became a new basis for political groupings in the period of negotiation.

The cultivation of this Islamist articulation and identity throughout this period was also conditioned by the depoliticisation of campuses, after the Malari riots and student demonstrations in the late 1970s. Through the policies of NKK/BKK (Normalisation of Campus Life/Campus Coordination Board), student activism was prohibited at the campus. These policies unintentionally had paved the way for dakwah activities and the increasing role of university-based mosques (Porter, 2002: 56-57; Aspinall, 2005). It was in this period that DDII expanded its program to universities, establishing the so-called Bina Masjid Kampus (BMK, Campus Mosque Religious Supervision) and sponsoring the building of mosques in about fifteen universities (Kahin, 2012: 178; Feillard and Madinier, 2011: 113). The BMK leading figure, Immaduddin Abduurrahim, then organised many would-be Islamist activists to join his popular short-course Latihan Mujahid Dakwah (LMD, Training of Preacher Combatants) at the Salman Mosque of the Bandung Institute of Technology.

The development of these Islamist groups gained momentum following the Iranian revolution and ‘Islamic revival’ in the late 1970s. Facilitated by media technologies and networks in the Middle East (especially DDII-sponsored students in Saudi and Egypt), these groups got accustomed to the ideas and methods of such Islamic movements as Muslim Brothers, Hizbut Tahrir, or Jamaati al-Islam (Rahmat, 2008; Feally, 2010). Thus, once discredited by the proponents of the ‘renewal’ movement, the re-articulations of sumuliyatul Islam regained its currency. They rapidly built their networks in urban centres, initially by recruiting the members through a clandestine network of usroh (lit. denoting a family) and developing mutual aid and solidarity. It is worth noting at this stage that these

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64 At this period, the translation of influential works associated with Muslim Brothers and Jamaati al-Islam thinkers such as Sayyid Qutb, Hassan Al-Banna, Yusuf Qardhawi, Abul ‘Ala al-Maududi were massively conducted. After returning from study in the Middle East, these new Islamist activists established various institutes and study clubs, such as Yayasan Al-Haramain led by Dr Hidayat Nur Wahid (Saudi Alumni and co-founder of the PK/S), for studying Islamic movements and Islamic thoughts. Interview with Dr Hidayat Nur Wahid (Jakarta, 15 Dec. 2016), Abu Ridho (2 Nov. 2016), Dr Luthfi Zuhdi, imam (the leader) of the University of Indonesia’s mosque (Depok, 18 Oct. 2016). See also Furkon (2004: 129-130), Tamara (1986).
groups did not directly challenge the existing structure of power relations. Even, their activities, which were largely on theology (tauhid) and personal capacity and community building, remained within the corridor of the New Order developmentalist discourse (c.f., Hefner, 2000: 123-126; Asshiddiqie, 1999).


This section discusses Islamist articulations that were situated in the context when democratisation had increasingly become a new political discourse. Circumscribed in the context of post-Cold War global politics and the heightening authoritarianism at home, democracy discourse had provided a space for the Islamists—and other political forces—to articulate their demands to bring about political changes and to improve their own social positions. Throughout this period, Islamist articulations took the form of identity politics, by which dissent and demands were organised and mobilised by using the category of Islam. While in the previous period Islam was contained within the cultural domain, it had become more ‘politicised’ in this era. As such, the hegemony of the New Order discourse that was relatively ‘sedimented’ during the consolidation period was now put into question, challenged by diverse political articulations.

This period had also been characterised by the dramatic changes in Indonesia’s socio-economic conditions. Benefiting from the oil boom era of 1974/5 to 1981, Soeharto had virtually expanded his control in the economy and built complex patrimonial relations and politico-business networks (Robison and Hadiz, 2004: 72). In the early 1980s, economic stagnation had forced the country to implement the World Bank-sponsored liberalisation measures, called the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP). Economic liberalisation had forced the government to slash subsidies for essential goods that affected the lives of ordinary people. Yet, such measures had little impact in breaking—in fact, they in some ways strengthened—the existing politico-business networks, especially that of the Soeharto family and their cronies among the ethnic Chinese conglomerates.
From the mid-1980s, such structural dislocation had triggered some Islamist groups to challenge New Order developmentalism that was seen as depriving the ummah; some even used violent means (McVey, 1983: 218; Hadiz, 2016; Solahudin, 2013). It is from this period that anti-New Order authoritarianism protests became more heavily accompanied by anti-Chinese sentiments.

Throughout the negotiation period, Islamist articulations were manifested in the different forms of identity politics. It is argued here that such differences had been less driven by the ‘ideological imperative’ than bounded by their respective positions within the existing structure of power. As a new nodal point, democracy discourse had also forced New Order elements to reshape their approaches in dealing with Islamism and oppositional groups. More specifically, the greater accommodation of the aspirations of the middle-class Muslims in the early 1990s did not only signify the ‘Islamic turn’ of the New Order (Liddle, 1996) but more significantly altered the playing field of contestations and social coalitions. Such complex contestations, as discussed in more detailed later, had led to fracture within the New Order’s key political pillars. Crucially, this had contributed to fostering the de-sedimentation or the ‘organic crisis’ of the hegemony of New Order developmentalism, especially in the context of the 1997 economic crisis.

**Pancasila as the Sole Ideology:**

**Three Forms of Islamism**

The hegemony of New Order developmentalism, as already explicated, had been primarily built on the praxis-ideology of Pancasila Democracy. Thus, the sustainability and fragility of its hegemonic formation depended on the constitution of Pancasila Democracy as a master signifier, a terrain for diverse articulations of political stability, welfare and social harmony. As discussed earlier, the biopolitics strategies towards Islam had been relatively successful in mobilising Islamists of different stripes to support and maintain developmentalism hegemony. In regard to Islamism, this hegemony lasted until the early 1980s when the Soeharto
government promulgated a bill, proposed in 1982 and formally adopted in 1985, that effectively compelled all social organisations to accept Pancasila as *asas tunggal* (the sole ideology).

From the lens of political discourse analysis, the *asas tunggal* had only totalised Pancasila as the ideology of ruling power and thus lost its hegemonic and universalising character. Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, a former Masyumi leader, therefore, warned President Soeharto in his open letter that the *asas tunggal* had betrayed the nature of Pancasila itself as compromising all principles of life evolved from Indonesian societies (Prawiranegara, 1984: 74-83). As such, the *asas tunggal* debates had decisively become a moment of reactivation, that is a period when the hegemony of Pancasila Democracy became opened and contested. It is shown here that rather than completely containing Islamism (see, for instance, Dhakidae, 2003: Chapter 6), the *asas tunggal* had indeed re-politicised the Islamists which were once effectively domesticated in the domain of culture.

It is also worth noting that the *asas tunggal* debate took place when the Islamists increasingly saw the New Order economic development had brought about the marginalisation of the *ummah*. The Islamists’ discontents culminated in the bloody Tanjung Priok riots of 1984 when protesters led by Amir Biki\(^6\) criticised the *asas tunggal* compounded by anti-Chinese sentiments. Afterwards, the anti-Pancasila Islamists, allegedly the offshoots of the Darul Islam (DI), called for an ‘Islamic revolution’ and launched a series of violent attacks including the bombing of Borobudur temple in Central Java and two branches of Bank Central Asia in Jakarta, the largest private bank owned by the ethnic Chinese tycoon and Soeharto’s prominent business ally, Liem Sioe Liong. It was followed by a clampdown by the state, making these groups severely disorganised as some of its leaders were

\(^6\) Amir Biki was killed during the infamous massacre of 1984, that took between 18 to 400 lives. Biki was, in fact, a KAMI activist who supported army-led anti-communist campaigns in 1965/1966. He then became an entrepreneur as a business partner of the state oil company, Pertamina. Yet, he subsequently frustrated when he saw the fact that Chinese business groups were given favourable treatment and occupied virtually all state-related business projects. See Hadiz (2011: 22), Raillon (1993); see also his speech transcript’s *Let me die for the Islamic world*, before the Muslim crowds just before the riots in Bourchier and Hadiz (2003: 151-155).
imprisoned or fled overseas (Hadiz, 2016: 124; van Bruinessen, 2002; Temby, 2010; Solahudin, 2013).

Although social justice was the main demand put forward in these Islamist protests, it was not coherently conveyed as an Islamic issue. The reasons were twofold. First, the fear of military repression. Muslim scholars such as Abdurrahman Wahid, for instance, were concerned about the danger of associating such anti-New Order protests exclusively with Islam. He argued that the depiction of Islam and Pancasila as two opposing enemies would only augment the military’s suspicion of Muslims altogether (Ramage, 1995: 19-20). Second, the creation of Islamist developmentalist subjects—as the result of the biopolitics of developmentalism—had hampered them in organising radical demands and a social alliance under the banner of Islam. In fact, many Islamist groups were also absorbed and became the elements of the New Order regime.

The structural dislocations, as symbolically manifested in the asas tunggal debate, reveals three different forms of Islamist articulations, namely the confrontationists, the ‘social movement’ and the accommodationists. The first form is generally represented by those who ideologically maintain the views of a binary opposition between Islam and Pancasila, and they generally have no access to state power. This group ranges from the veterans of Darul Islam and ex-Masyumi activists to conservative Islamic students (such as HMI-MPO, a splinter group of the Madjid-led HMI and Masyumi-associated Pergerakan Islam Indonesia, PII) (see Ismail, 1996). Their confrontations against the New Order during the 1980s had made them severely repressed politically. Therefore, their influence in shaping the political constellation was almost negligible as they were driven to the fringes of politics if not underground.

The second form is paradigmatically shown by the Islamist groups like the Tarbiyah, the precursor of the Justice Prosperity Party (PKS), which is basically anti-asas tunggal but employed non-confrontation methods (Machmudi, 2008). These Islamist groups even blamed the confrontationists as the latter’s involvement in violence and provocative preaches had only prompted the repressions and put
Islamic movements under the military’s scrutiny. Yet, these two groups shared an ideological vision of *shumuliyatul Islam*. Their encounters with Middle East-based Islamic movements such as the Muslim Brothers and Hizbut Tahrir made them adopt the gradual strategy of Islamisation, known as *marhalah ad-dakwah*. This strategy, that is basically a ‘Gramscian-style’ movement, was not only important for protecting their members from the military’s suppression but also for building their own social base in society.

The third form emerged from among the modernist Islamists and the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), though each has starkly different characteristics and orientations. For the former, which were largely entrenched in state power, accommodating *asas tunggal* was inevitable. Such acceptance is also seen as the fruit of the ‘renewal’ movement that had significantly been successful in diminishing the presumed contradictions of Islam, Pancasila and modernity (Madjid, 2008; see also Maarif, 2009). Its proponents frequently argued that once Islam is no longer identified with a single party, all political parties and even the military began to promote their commitment to Islam (Hefner, 1997: 89; 2000: 122). In subsequent years, this group would typically utilise Islamic identities as a political strategy to advance their demands from within state power.

Unlike the modernists, NU’s accommodation to *asas tunggal* in the 1984 Congress of Situbondo was rather surprising. The bill was, in fact, promulgated to respond to the attitudes of ‘radical’ elements within NU since the 1971 elections. Crucially, its acceptance of *asas tunggal* was related to the emergence and ascendancy of the young generation, which was intellectually committed to such ‘neo-modernist’ ideals as pluralism, secularisation and human rights (Barton, 1995; Ramage, 1995: 26-46; Feillard, 1999). Pragmatically, such a decision would improve NU’s position vis-a-vis the PPP and, more importantly, increase its

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66 It is said that the doctrine of *marhalah ad-dakwah* is also important for their members to be more patient that Islamisation agenda should follow a gradual strategy, not by direct confrontation. Interview with Abu Ridho (Jakarta, 2 Nov. 2016), Suharna Surapranata, former Minister of Research and Technology (2009-2011) and head of PKS’ Advisory Councils (Majelis Pertimbangan Partai (MPP); Jakarta, 31 Oct. 2016).

leverage before Soeharto. NU also decided to leave politics, focused mainly as a social organisation, and formally broke away from the state-sanctioned party, the PPP (Bush, 2009: Feillard, 1999). As a result, as Munawir Sjadzali described, ‘all doors (of state departments) were open to NU and Abdurrahman Wahid’ (cited via Ramage, 1995: 55). In addition, NU’s relationship with the military improved considerably and this was crucial for Wahid, as discussed later, ‘to gauge how far he could go in his criticism of the regime before risking confrontation’ (Barton, 2002: 154).

Leaving electoral politics had made possible the development of NU as a civil society organisation that sought political changes from outside of the state parameters. Wahid recalled that ‘[i]f NU allowed itself to stay in the formal, government-sanctioned political structure then it would be increasingly compromised and unable to contribute to the national discourse on development and politics with a distinctive, independent voice’ (cited via Ramage, 1995: 33). Partly influenced by Wahid’s leadership, NU’s decentralised structures, as well as growing support from international donors for NGO activities, the organisation had contributed to the rise of civil society organisations in Indonesia. NU also initiated vibrant discussions (halaqah) to critically address such social issues as poverty, human rights, gender, environment, and social justice beyond religious views (Barton, 2002: 160). It also appears that NU’s accommodation of asas tunggal served as a shield and sword simultaneously: it protected Wahid and NU from the...
state’s repression while opening up an arena to contest the state’s monopoly of Pancasila.


By the late 1980s, democratisation had been a general nodal point among a broad section of societies, especially from the growing urban middle class. This was also influenced by the revolutions in the Eastern bloc—dubbed as the ‘third wave of democratisation’ (Huntington, 1991; Uhlin, 1997). More specifically, in Indonesia the demand for democratisation was also situated in the context of intra-elite rivalries, especially between Soeharto and General Moerdani, the commander of the armed forces since 1983 before he was sacked in 1988—and appointed as a less politically powerful Minister of Defence (Liddle, 1996; Mietzner, 2009). Soeharto specifically upset Moerdani groups when he began to establish a new base of power independent of the military. For example, Soeharto significantly reduced the grip of the military’s influence in Golkar in 1983 when he attempted to transform it into a cadre-based party under the leadership of Soedharmono (Robison and Hadiz, 2004: Chapter 2, 3). Being an increasingly powerful institution in the early 1980s, the State Secretariat, also led by Soeharmono, had severely cut off the privileges of the military in various lucrative businesses (Pangaribuan, 1995: 57). Such dynamics had been a turning point for the Soeharto government’s approach to Islam, as discussed below.

Indeed, as an empty signifier, democratisation had been signified by different social groups with different contents, interests and purposes. As such, it does not mean that they would necessarily democratised Indonesian politics but that through articulating this signifier they attempted to reshape and reconfigure the existing relations of power. Even some sections of the military also began to call for a return to ‘normal politics’ and democratisation in their bid to challenge Soeharto (see Honna, 2003). Soeharto also embraced democratisation discourse by initiating a
policy called *keterbukaan* (political openness) in 1989.\(^{71}\) Given the tensions with the military, Soeharto’s democracy was primarily articulated by courting urban middle-class Islamists into the state power. This ‘Islamic turn’ culminated when Soeharto sponsored the establishment of the *Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia* (ICMI, Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals) in December 1990, led by the Minister of Technology and Soeharto’s protégé, B.J. Habibie (Liddle, 1996; Hefner, 1993).\(^{72}\)

Rather than proliferating ‘associational pluralism’ to weaken Islamic opposition, it is suggested here that Soeharto’s support for ICMI politicises other Islamist groups whose understanding of democracy, as a response to the increasing corporatisation, became more critical. Crucially, the democracy discourse had created a new terrain for reinventing new political agencies among the Islamists in the context of ‘*keterbukaan*’. The articulations of Islam throughout this period largely utilised the category of identity politics in their bid to reshape the power relations of the New Order.

In fact, ICMI itself comprised of diverse elements which saw the significance of this organisation very differently. Most of them saw ICMI as a strategic vehicle outside Golkar for gaining access to state power. Others, like Imaduddin Abdurrahim, claimed that ICMI enables the Islamists to participate in politics as main actors, not spectators (Ramage, 1995: 48; Porter, 2002: 89; Hefner, 2000; Vatikiotis, 1998). While realising that Soeharto could instrumentalise ICMI (*vis-à-vis* the military or for election purposes, for example), they saw this rather as opportunities. Since they advocated the strategy of reform from *within*, ‘they had to build a close relationship with, not against, the state’ (Porter, 2002: 137; Mietzner, 2009: 82; Vatikiotis, 1998: Chapter 5).

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\(^{71}\) In his state address of 16 August 1990, Soeharto emphasised the needs for political openness, saying that ‘[^w]hen our society was still divided by ideological differences we had reason to be concerned about the differences of opinion. That time is now passing. Pancasila has taken firm root in our society. To fear diversity of opinion is to doubt Pancasila’s power and to hinder the evolution of Pancasila itself’. See Bourchier and Hadiz (2003: 195).

Generally speaking, ICMI’s articulations can be summarised in its three agendas: Islamisation, democratisation and demilitarisation. From the outset, its activists advocated a different version of Islamisation agenda. For ‘liberals’ such as Dawam Rahardjo and Nurcholis Madjid, Islamisation is understood as the use of Islam as the source of political morality (Porter, 2002: 138; Hefner, 2000). Others such as Adi Sasono, Soetjipto Wirosardjojo and Muslim bureaucrats defined Islamisation as an attempt to promote the brand of ‘moderate and modern’ Islam that was compatible with the development agenda (Ramage, 1995). The more conservative activists—generally associated with the DDII—advocated Islamisation in formalistic and legalistic forms.

It is also apparent that ICMI signified democratisation discourse primarily as a political strategy (Ramage, 1995: 62, 71). By this, its proponents constituted Islam as a new category as clearly shown in their demand of ‘proportionalisation’ in economics and politics, resembling Malaysia’s New Economic Policy (NEP). It appears that its underlying idea was to ‘seek revenge’ on those they perceived as responsible for the marginalisation of Muslims, frequently referring to ‘Christianisation’ and ethnic Chinese dominance in the economy (Ramage, 1995: 64-66; Schwarz, 2000; Hefner, 2000). Regarding the demilitarisation agenda, the ICMI activists tended to use it as part of their effort to improve their position before Soeharto, by sidelining the military (Ramage, 1995; Mietzner, 2009). They often expressed discomfort with the dominance of the military, especially the Moerdani-linked Catholic generals who were also deemed responsible for New Order’s anti-Islam policies.

Nevertheless, the rise of ICMI re-politicised other Islamists, which subsequently brought forth different Islamic articulations. The proponents of ‘social movement’ Islamism considered the state’s accommodation to Islam as a considerable opportunity to ‘pragmatically’ expand their social basis, by building

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73 For example, ICMI established a think-tank, the Center for Information and Development Studies (CIDES), as a counterweight to Moertopo’s Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). ICMI-associated newspaper, Republika was also regarded as an Islamic response to Kompas which is owned by Catholic Indonesians. See Ramage (1995: 64), Vatikiotis (2013: 210), Schwarz (2000: 179-182).
multiple socio-economic institutions for recruitment. One of its senior activists stated that ‘we didn’t care whether the state’s accommodation to Islam was because Soeharto himself became pious or a mere political strategy to deal with the military. We clearly saw this as momentum for *dakwah* and Islamic movements.’ Unlike other modernist Islamists who utilised ICMI as a vehicle for accessing state power, however, they presented themselves as ‘neither ICMI opponent nor Soeharto supporter’. The main reason for this position is certainly not ideological, but more sociological: they had no sufficient leverages for negotiations.

The critical response against the state-ICMI relationship was shown by Abdurrahman Wahid, the chairman of Nahdlatul Ulama. He was disappointed with ICMI’s political manoeuvres, arguing that it had promoted sectarian and exclusive politics (Wahid, 1995; Porter, 2002; Barton, 2002). Indeed, the rise of ICMI, largely represented modernist organisations like Muhammadiyah and HMI, had challenged his and NU’s strategic bargaining position before Soeharto that they enjoyed since 1984. Through the *Forum Demokrasi*, set up in 1991 by intellectuals, NGO activists and non-Muslim representatives, Wahid frequently criticised ICMI’s ‘manipulation’ of religion as well as the government’s ‘instrumentalisation’ of Islam. Wahid’s critical position had severely deteriorated his and NU’s relationship with Soeharto exactly at the period of New Order’s ‘Islamic turn’. This culminated in the 1994 NU Congress in Tasikmalaya, West Java, when Soeharto’s men attempted to unseat him from the NU leadership although this manoeuvre was completely unsuccessful (Barton and Fealy, 1996; Barton, 2002).

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74 By the late 1980s, this group had changed its method from the secretive *usroh* models to more exposed ones such as *liqa* (discussion), *daurah* (training), *rihlah* and *mabit* (retreat camps). The Tarbiyah activists had also built a number of institutions which were instrumental for recruitment such as the pre-university tutoring preparation centres of Nurul Fikri (since 1984), Al-Hikmah Islamic higher education (1987), Kairu Ummah, a *dakwah* institute (1989), and the Studies and Information for Contemporary Islamic World (SIDIK, a research centre, 1992). From 1993, they also began to assume strategic positions in campus-based organisations in big universities which were for decades had been occupied by HMI or other leftist student organisations. See Machmudi (2008), Damanik (2002), Rahmat (2008), Rosyad (2006).

75 Interview with Abu Ridho (Jakarta, 2 Nov. 2016) Dr Hidayat Nur Wahid (Jakarta, 15 Dec. 2016). For the HTI activist, such circumstance also allowed them to discuss more openly on their ideologies and agendas, including the aspiration of the caliphate albeit in limited forums. Interview with Muhammad Al-Khatthath, former chairman of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (Jakarta, 14 Dec. 2016), Ismail Yusanto (Jakarta, 7 Nov. 2016).

Rather than reflecting a battle between ‘idealists’ and ‘pragmatists’, Wahid’s critical stance against ICMI was better seen as signalling a different strategy of negotiation with Soeharto. While criticising ICMI’s sectarian Islamism, he repeatedly declared that ‘I am for an Indonesian society, not just an Islamic one’ (Hefner, 1997: 100). Wahid also organised a mass rally (rapat akbar) to commemorate NU’s 62nd anniversary on 1 March 1992, by publicly declaring NU’s loyalty to Pancasila and thus indirectly criticising Soeharto-ICMI’s sectarian orientation. In a letter written to Soeharto, just a day after the rally, Wahid boldly warned that:

By preventing Nahdlatul Ulama from obtaining conclusive legitimacy for its views, the responsibility for orientating Indonesia’s religious movement now moves to the government. If the government fails, then within ten years the strength of those who don’t accept the national ideology will grow (Schwarz, 2000: 192-193; Ramage, 1995: 66-67; Barton, 2002: 187).

In addition, Soeharto’s moves to court urban middle-class Islamists had clearly upset some military officers, and the tensions between ICMI and the military had thus heightened. Their rivalry culminated during the nomination of the vice-president in 1993, in which Soeharto finally gave approval to General Try Soetrisno instead of ICMI’s political patron, B.J. Habibie (Ramage, 1995: 63-64; Wahid, 2010: 67-72). ICMI’s close association with Habibie also became another source of anger for the military. This was so because the generals were upset with the transfer of arms industries and supplies management to the Ministry of Technology and, more importantly, they saw Habibie as their greatest rival if political succession were to take place (Porter, 2002; Ramage, 1995; Mietzner, 2009). Tantalisingly, the military’s resentment of ICMI, especially Moerdani’s men and secular-nationalist officers, had driven the former to build close relations with Wahid, given they shared the same concern regarding the issues of sectarianism and the dangers of Islamic fundamentalism.

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77 It was reported that about 200,000 people attended the rally at the Senayan Sports stadium. This rally, as Ramage (1995: 25) noted, had the following ‘symbolic’ objectives: First, reiterating public declaration to Pancasila would avoid NU’s explicit approval to Soeharto’s bid for a fifth term presidential nomination. Second, mass mobilisation demonstrated to ICMI and the state that the ummah remained behind Wahid. Third, amidst the rising tide of sectarianism, the rally wanted to depict Pancasila as the religiously neutral foundation of the state that should be upheld for the building of democracy and development.
By 1994, Soeharto had begun to purge his and ICMI/Habibie’s opponents. For instance, he dismissed Moerdani from the cabinet in 1993, restructured the military leadership and appointed more Muslims to ministerial posts. The military’s influence in Golkar also diminished again when Harmoko, the Minister of Information and Soeharto loyalist, was elected as the first civilian party chairman in 1993. Specifically, the removal of anti-ICMI commanders had increasingly prompted tensions between the publicly perceived as ‘Green’ versus ‘Red-and-White’ military wings. The rise of ‘green’ generals such as Feisal Tanjung, Hartono and Prabowo became a turning point for ICMI’s conservative Muslims to build a network with a section in the military (c.f., Hefner, 2000: 128-166). Intra-elite rivalries between Soeharto’s ICMI/Golkar civilian supporters on the one side and the military on the other were exposed to the public when the popular magazines Tempo, Editor, DeTik reported on a scandal involving Habibie in the purchase of old warships from the East Germany navy. These publications ended up being banned in June 1994.

Moreover, the state bureaucracy was also increasingly politicised when the tensions between ICMI and its antagonists spilled over into strategic posts. The appointment of more ICMI-linked nationalist ministers in 1993 had apparently reduced the posts for liberal-oriented technocrats (Porter, 2002; Schwarz, 2000). Inevitably, the State Secretariat (Sekneg), the closest institution to the President, became the arena for power competition. Some felt that ICMI activists had encroached on Sekneg’s role of controlling access to the president, in which Minister Moerdiono stood in favour of the technocrats. The tensions reached a peak when ICMI-associated Minister of Transport, Haryanto Danutirto, through a publicly leaked letter, was reported to have committed corruption (Ramage, 1995).

Though the 1993 Cabinet list had accommodated more Muslims, no ICMI’s outspoken activists gained the ministerial posts. Three of Habibie’s loyalists were appointed as the Minister of Education and Culture (Wardiman Djojonegoro), the Minister of Transport (Haryanto Danutirto), and the Minister of Trade (Satrio Budiharjo). By the late 1994, Soeharto had promoted the so-called ‘green’ generals into strategic positions such as Feisal Tanjung as Commander-in-Chief, Hartono (known as Anti-Wahid and linked to Soeharto’s children business) as ABRI’s powerful Bureau of Social and Political Affairs and President’s son-in-law, Prabowo, as head of the Armed Special Forces. Even, Republika, the ICMI-linked media, proclaimed Feisal Tanjung as the Muslim community’s choice of Man of the Year in 1993. See Porter (2002: 142), Ramage (1995: 47-78), Hefner (2000: 172).
While ICMI opponents, especially the military faction in the parliament, called for Haryanto to resign, its supporters saw this issue as part of Moerdiono’s conspiracy to discredit Habibie.\textsuperscript{79}

Clearly, the contestations and changing social coalition as the result of competing articulations of democracy had brought about polarisation that led to severe internal fracture within the New Order’s key pillars. In regard to Islamism, Soeharto’s support to middle-class Islamism in the form of ICMI had politicised other Islamists and altered the playing field of competition that was increasingly beyond Soeharto’s control. More specifically, the democracy discourse of this period had also facilitated the fragmentation of Islamism, overwhelmed by the internal battles for being absorbed into the state power. Yet, these developments, in one way or another, had greatly contributed to the de-sedimentation of New Order hegemony.

\textit{Political Unravelling and Soeharto’s Fall, 1995-1998}

By 1994, oppositional groups had proliferated and their demands for political changes increasingly became more vocal.\textsuperscript{80} Street demonstrations and strikes became a new phenomenon in Indonesian politics, though relatively small in size but widespread across urban cities (Aspinall, 2005; Lane, 2008). Anti-authoritarianism then served as the rallying point within which multiple demands were articulated in the last years of Soeharto’s rule. The New Order hegemony was

\textsuperscript{79} For example, ICMI-affiliated organisations like CIDES (led by Eggi Sudjana) and KISDI (led by Ahmad Sumargono) mobilised Muslims for demonstrations at the Sekneg office and some large cities, calling for the government to investigate the leaked letters. Even, Amin Rais, the chairman of ICMI’s council of experts, further claimed that the leak is ‘an act of subversion’. See Porter (2002: 151).

\textsuperscript{80} The retreat from democratisation in 1994 had prompted the emergence of multiple opposition organisations like AJI (the Independent Journalist Alliance, set up in 1994). The organisation called YKPK (the National Brotherhood Reconciliation Foundation, October 1994) became the avenue for military officers, bureaucrats, former ministers and politicians who had been sidelined by the Habibie/ICMI’s rise to power. In the same year, the Parkrindo (Indonesian Christian Party), the New PNI (led by Nyonya Supeni) and the New Masyumi had been established. By December 1995, other many political organisations were established, including an independent election watch-dog (KIPP) and quasi-political parties such as the People’s Democratic Party (PRD) and the Indonesian Democratic Union Party (PUDI). See Porter (2002: 162-171), Budiman and Tornquist (2001), Aspinall (2005).
also increasingly challenged by ‘regionalist’ insurgencies, organised through ethno-nationalist and communist-based articulations in Aceh of North Sumatra and East Timor respectively, which were seen as threatening Indonesia’s unity. More decisively, the economic crisis that hit the country since mid-1997, and especially after the dramatic drop of the rupiah’s value in early 1998, had fostered dislocations of the New Order. Against this backdrop, the more suppression by the regime that opposition groups suffered, the more the New Order lost its hegemonic character.

Soeharto’s support for urban middle-class Islamism, as discussed above, did not necessarily domesticate opposition. Instead, they triggered the rise of diverse radically political groups. By early 1996, Soeharto and his allies were concerned if Wahid of NU and Megawati Soekarnoputri of PDI, with their respective grass-roots support bases, would begin to build a formal alliance (Barton, 2002; Eklof, 2004). Efforts to undermine them had marked the new chapter of the use of violence, following the hegemonic crisis of the New Order. The turning point was when Soeharto repressed Megawati’s supporters, known as Kudatuli (Kerusuhan 27 Juli, riots of 27 July). Such repression became a backlash when it only brought diverse opposition groups into a relatively unified anti-New Order movement.

The mobilisation of ICMI-linked Islamic groups to attack pro-Megawati elements and anti-New Order groups in general, also showed the emergence of an alliance between the ‘green’ military and the conservative Islamists, especially the DDI and KISDI (Indonesian Committee for Solidarity with the Islamic World) (see Schwarz 2000; Honna, 2003; Porter, 2002). The military typically branded all opposition groups as the agents of instability, resembling the methods reminiscent of the communists. At this time, the military also reintroduced the doctrine of ‘vigilance’ (kewaspadaan) that enabled it to discredit and crush the opposition at any time (Honna, 2013: 118-124).

Inevitably, Wahid’s support for the pro-Megawati movement worsened the existing tensions between him and Soeharto. In October 1996, anti-Christian and anti-Chinese riots broke out in NU’s stronghold of Situbondo in East Java—followed by the same patterns in Tasikmalaya of West Java two month later. The riots were widely regarded as intentionally engineered to undermine Wahid. In the
aftermath of Situbondo riots, Wahid ultimately realised that direct confrontation with Soeharto was counterproductive and he had no choice but to negotiate with him (Barton, 2002: 221). Wahid began to rehabilitate his relationship with Soeharto in November, even publicly declaring his support for Golkar and Soeharto’s next presidential bid—in stark contrast to his position in the 1992 elections.\textsuperscript{81} He further upset pro-democracy activists when he worked with Tutut Soeharto and General Hartono of Golkar—who disliked Habibie and the ‘green’ generals especially Feisal Tanjung and Prabowo—and escorted them to visit pesantrens. By so doing, however, Wahid had directly challenged ICMI’s and PPP’s claim of representing Muslims and thus recovered his bargaining positions before Soeharto.

On the contrary, the PPP became more critical against the New Order and Golkar prior to the 1997 elections (Porter, 2002: 178; Aspinall, 2005). This was specifically triggered by Golkar’s and Wahid’s manoeuvre that led many PPP cadres to declare their loyalty to the ruling party. In fact, the party leaders were too optimistic about their ability to defeat Golkar, expecting to gain the votes from Megawati’s supporters. The PPP leaders then proclaimed that voting for the party was part of jihad, while it also brought the rhetoric of defending wong cilik (the little people) to attract Megawati’s masses. Without a formal alliance in the level of party leadership, many Megawati grass-root supporters joined the PPP rally, known as Mega-Bintang, which frequently clashed with Golkar crowds and anti-riot troops during the campaigns (Aspinall, 2005: 200-202; Porter, 2002: 181-183).

By early 1997, Amin Rais, the chairman of Muhammadiyah, previously an outspoken ICMI activist began to oppose the New Order. While the opposition leaders with the largest number of supporters—Wahid, Amin and Megawati—shared visions for political changes, the efforts to build a formal alliance between secular-nationalists, Islamic modernists and traditionalists declined. Wahid, for instance, argued that being patient was better to avoid confrontation (Barton, 2002: 229), while Amin shifted his strategy to ‘return’ to ICMI networks after Habibie.

\textsuperscript{81} In his biography, he even recalled that ‘[i]t is better that Golkar has a good win in the 1997 elections because if the numbers drop too much then Soeharto might panic and lash out again. … we’re going to be stuck with Soeharto for some years yet, so now it is not the time to push for change—we’d best retreat and consolidate’ (Barton, 2002: 223).
was named as the next vice-president (Porter, 2002: 201-104; Vatikiotis, 1998). The failure to build an alliance, even a tactical not strategic and long-term one, to challenge the New Order had clearly shown that they still considered that ‘their ambitions could only be achieved from within the regime—even if Soeharto had to go’ (Robison and Hadiz, 2004: 171).

Despite the fact that the opposition groups were fragmented, their social base had broadened rapidly in the last months of Soeharto’s rule (Robison and Hadiz, 2004: 164-183; Aspinall, 2005; Schwarz, 2000). In urban centers, ordinary people and middle classes immediately took part onto the streets, while uncontrolled unrest broke out following the drastic increase of basic commodities, hyperinflation and widespread unemployment as well as uncertain economic immediate future. The central role of students in anti-New Order mobilisations also evidently showed the absence of viable political vehicles to effectively channel such widespread dissents. Yet, the student movements were also fragmented. Unlike the radical and leftist student organisations which organised dissent beyond their campus and called for total reform, the Islamist student organisations generally framed their mobilisations as a ‘moral’ movement and remained confined within campuses (Aspinall, 2005: 226-228). The Islamists became more active on the streets when the network of Campus Dakwah Institute (LDK), largely associated with the Tarbiyah, built the Muslim University Student Action (KAMMI) in Malang in March 1998. However, their ‘moral’ and ‘purist’ tendency had prevented them, and other Islamist student organisations, from establishing collaboration with left-wing counterparts (Robison and Hadiz, 2004: 180-182).

In the midst of the politics of the streets and the breakdown of social order, the tensions inside the regime heightened. With Habibie as the sole candidate for

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82 During May 1998, Megawati never made any clear statement to give her support for student demonstrations (Robison and Hadiz, 2004: 171). Wahid was also not willing to push political changes further due to the fear of Soeharto’s repression. He even called off the demonstrations and argued that Soeharto should be given a chance to implement his promise for political reform (Barton, 2002: 241-244). After the announcement of Habibie as the vice-president, Amin Rais was no longer demanding for radical political changes until the last months before Soeharto’s fall in 1998 (Porter, 2002: 201-204).

83 Interview with Fahri Hamzah (Jakarta, 10 Nov. 2016), Dr Aris Munandar, Tarbiyah activist (Depok, 22 Oct. 2016).
the vice-president, the positions of ministries became an arena for contestations where anti-ICMI/Habibie groups sought to diminish Habibie’s influence. Consequently, many ICMI leaders and other Islamist groups such as Muhammadiyah, KISDI, and Persis deeply upset when only ICMI-linked bureaucrats, perceived as unrepresentative of Muslims, gained the positions in the cabinet announced in March 1998. Interestingly, these groups still expected that their own survival could be better assured in a post-Soeharto regime, in which Habibie would have greater power. Soeharto’s fall was imminent when Harmoko and other loyalists in DPR/MPR called for him to resign and threatened impeachment proceedings that would commence on 22 May (Schwarz, 2000). Being the last efforts for survival, Soeharto reacted by inviting Muslim leaders for consultations and offering them to sit in his ‘reform committee’, but none of them accepted. By the night of 20 May, Soeharto was completely abandoned by all his closest associates when he received a letter from Ginanjar Kartasasmita, the Minister of National Development Plan, announced his and other fourteen cabinet members’ resignation (Schwarz, 2000: 355; Robison and Hadiz, 2004: 170-171).

Conclusion

The discussion in this chapter has portrayed the diverse articulations of Islamism in the context of the emergence, development and the crisis of the New Order hegemony. It is argued that the relations between different Islamist articulations and the New Order discourse are constitutive. As such, the contestations and social relations that emerge from those changing relations have greatly formed the nature and distinct power configuration of the New Order and influenced the practices of Islamism. More specifically, this chapter has examined these dynamics under three central discursive periods, namely the periods of formation (1966-1973), consolidation (1974-1983), and negotiation (1984-1998). Accordingly, the manifestation of Islamist articulations and the relations between Islamism and the state throughout these periods have been greatly constituted within three dominant discourses: anti-communism, developmentalism and democracy respectively.
It was also shown that the hegemony of the New Order had been primarily built by constituting and universalising Pancasila Democracy as a master signifier, a general nodal point for diverse demands organised around the signifier of political stability, welfare, and social harmony. Previously utilised as a marker to distinguish itself from the discredited ‘Old Order’, Pancasila Democracy was then constituted as the pre-requisite for New Order developmentalism. Not only the articulations of growth-oriented economic policies, but the hegemony of developmentalism had also essentially produced distinct social relations, agencies and subjectivities which led to the restructuring of the state and society relations. This chapter also demonstrated that the different ways in which Islamists appropriated developmentalism discourse had resulted in the emergence of different forms of Islamism, namely confrontationist, accommodationist and ‘social movement’, which would shape the contestations and social coalitions throughout the New Order period.

More specifically, the New Order’s ‘Islamic turn’ by courting middle-class Islamists in the early 1990s, in the form of ICMI, had brought about polarisation that led to severe internal conflicts within the New Order’s key elements that were increasingly beyond Soeharto’s control. By privileging ICMI, Soeharto’s strategy also triggered other Islamists to articulate ‘radical’ demands in their bid to increase their leverage of negotiation with the regime. Thus, Islamic politics during this period was highly fragmented, characterised by the internal battles to enter state power. It is also shown here that the democracy discourse in the last years of the New Order had failed to facilitate the opposition groups to build a relatively common agenda. Not surprisingly, their broad social bases had effectively broken away following Soeharto's fall. In fact, the leaders of the opposition groups largely saw that their ambitions for controlling state power could only be guaranteed from within the New Order’s structure of power. Therefore, in the last years of Soeharto’s rule, national politics became increasingly an arena of open confrontation among power seekers, as they saw themselves as possible contenders for power in the post-Soeharto era. Circumscribed within such fragmented anti-authoritarian movements and the legacies of New Order’s Islamism, the Islamists would continue the struggle for hegemony in the post-New Order era, as discussed in the next chapter.
Introduction

Although anti-authoritarian movements, as discussed in Chapter 4, had an important role in toppling Soeharto from power in the midst of economic crisis, the lack of a common agenda limited their ability to navigate political changes with precision. One consequence is that hopes for radical changes resulting from the dismantling of the *ancien régime* under the banner of *reformasi total* had quickly faded away. In fact, as Gramsci (1971: 210-12; 275-6) had reminded us about the politics of hegemony, the *ancien régime* must not only fall before a new political formation can emerge, but an alternative order must be ready to take its place. To achieve this, a political struggle waged by particular social subjects requires the expansion of chains of equivalence among a multitude of social groups (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 182). Without such conditions, political frontiers between those in favour of transformation and those who defend the status quo are obliterated, and hegemonic struggles to establish a new political order are thus strictly impossible.

Against this backdrop, the main concern of this chapter is to comprehend diverse articulations of Islam in the struggles for the post-Soeharto political order. It shows that such struggles are situated and shaped in the context where democratisation discourse becomes a master signifier—a new terrain of various articulations for transforming the New Order’s authoritarianism. It is argued here that the competing articulations of democratisation, especially between those that signify it as an elite-driven process and as the ‘will of the people’, have brought about complexities which ultimately characterise the contestations and social coalitions as well as the transformations of the post-New Order politics. In so doing, this chapter identifies the complexities of democratisation discourse for
transforming the post-Soeharto political order in three central areas: (1) political liberalisation, (2) decentralisation, and (3) building plural and tolerant societies.

It is also worth noting from the outset that political struggles organised around democratisation discourses have been strongly linked to the ascendancy of neoliberalism and, later, the global war on terrorism (GWOT). Such convergences have not only influenced hegemonic struggles for the post-Soeharto political order but also brought distinct forms of agency and subjectivity to Islamism. Beyond the post-crisis economic restructuring agenda imposed by such international institutions as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, neoliberalism here is understood broadly as a form of ‘governmental reason’ premised on the expansion of the logic of the market that distinctively reshapes social relations, institutions, norms, subjectivities and ultimately state and society relations (e.g., Foucault, 2004; Brown, 2015; Larner and Walters, 2004). Specifically, the tendency of neoliberal articulations of democracy to negate vibrant political conflicts has not only led to the ascendancy of an elite-driven democratisation project but also greatly depoliticised people’s struggles organised around, for example, the demands for equality and social justice.

In the context of Indonesia, neoliberal-oriented democratisation fits comfortably with post-New Order domestic politics, where reform movements were severely disorganised after Soeharto’s fall. Instead of creating a space for hegemonic struggles between reform and status quo camps, post-New Order democratisation had facilitated the reemergence of the forces representing the interests of the status quo. In addition, the global promotion of democracy after 9/11 has been inexorably linked to the securitisation agenda for the restructuring of the global order, in which Islam is constituted as its ultimate target (Asad, 2007; Mamdani, 2004). Apart from securitisation strategies towards Islamism, democracy discourse has increasingly overlapped with distinct forms of multiculturalism discourse that contain Islamism merely in the domain of culture.

This chapter argues that the functioning of democracy in transforming the New Order’s social formation is less determined by the presence of ‘democratic’ rules and institutions as advocated by transitology approaches (e.g., O’Donnell et
than by the complexities resulting from contending articulations of democritisation. Through these articulations, the associated contestations and social coalitions involved in the struggles for the post-Soeharto political order are continuously reorganised and modified. The discussion in this chapter reveals that democratisation discourse, as articulated in the three main areas, have brought about different, and even contradictory, forms of Islamist articulations and agencies. While political liberalisation and decentralisation have provided Islamists with a greater role in the state and society, they do not facilitate the building of effective representation of a sociologically diverse ummah. Likewise, different articulations of multiculturalism discourse in the post-Soeharto era have even contained Islamism as cultural categories, from which the antagonistic lines of ‘radical-intolerant’ and ‘moderate-pluralist’ camps are constituted. As we shall see, such condition has further led to the fragmentation of Islamism, which not only shaped the relations between Islamism and the state but also among Islamist groups in the post-New Order era.

**Political Liberalisation and Fragmented Islamism**

This section discusses the articulations of Islam in the context of political liberalisation. Being a central signifier of the democratisation discourse, political liberalisation is primarily manifested in the reintroduction of multi-party elections and the lifting of ‘anti-democratic’ legal frameworks that constrain vibrant political participation. Furthermore, mainly due to the dominance of the transition paradigm, political liberalisation has also been associated with the crafting of democratic institutions that are focused primarily on elite-driven processes aligned to the agenda of international agencies (e.g., McLeod and MacIntyre, 2007). Yet, political liberalisation also discloses a new terrain for multiple social agents to create distinct forms of agency for the struggle to have a stronger impact on Indonesian politics and society. Thus, the establishment of Islamic parties, either those which explicitly state Islam as their ideology or those which directly link to the social base of the existing Islamic organisations, has given a legitimate entry point to those representing the centers of state power at the national and local levels. Meanwhile,
the Islamist movements of diverse articulations are freer to compete in controlling and ordering public spheres. It is shown here that while the arena for participation and contestation is increasingly opened, the pressure of electoral politics and the struggles to control state power replace the efforts to establish a cross-cutting agenda among the Islamists for uniting and furthering a democratic project.

**The Islamists and Political Representation**

The issue of how Islam should play a role following political liberalisation has revealed different forms of Islamism. From the outset, it is worth noting that the diverse articulations of Islam—their identities, strategies and interests—do not come out of nowhere but are related to the prevalent structure of power especially as nurtured in the last years of the New Order. It is not surprising that, by looking at the state-Islamism relationship since the 1990s, some scholars like Sidel describe the events leading to Soeharto’s fall as representing a ‘final push’ driven by ‘the forces associated with the promotion of Islam in Indonesian society and state’ (2006: 117-120; 126). If this assessment is correct, as Hadiz (2008: 462) rightly suggested, Habibie’s government (May 1998-October 1999) should have represented the ‘victory’ of Islamic politics. Yet, their alliance had in fact fallen apart immediately. Indeed, the assumption that the New Order’s hegemonic crisis directly benefitted Islamism, in the sense that Islamists will potentially provide a coherent narrative for a new political order, was always too premature and simplistic. From the lens of the politics of hegemony, the central issue is to what extent that the dislocation of New Order hegemony subsequently allowed Islamists to expand their chains of equivalence by linking themselves with diverse democratic struggles, as discussed below.

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84 Generally speaking, Islamist groups accommodated during the New Order believed that their political fortunes can only rise by continuing patronage networks with Habibie and celebrated his government as representing the *ummah*. For example, MUI declared that supporting Habibie would allow for the continuation of state-assisted Islamisation (Ichwan, 2005: 53). KISDI’s leader, Ahmad Sumargono, even blatantly stated that “if this status quo clearly benefits the *ummah*, why not?” (*Tempo*, 17 Nov. 1998).
In the early months after Soeharto’s fall, the dynamics of Islamic politics were associated with the way Habibie’s interim government forged its new power base. Indeed, Habibie’s articulation of democratisation is inseparable from his efforts to establish new legitimacy by distancing himself from New Order and clinging to power. Dubbed as ‘accelerated evolution’, Habibie had rapidly created rules and institutions regarded as necessary conditions for democratic transition (Habibie, 2006; Anwar, 2010: 106). Inheriting distinct power relations historically structured during the New Order, he built a power base by continuing to accommodate and mobilise modernist Islamists while relying on Soeharto’s key pillars: Golkar and the military. Despite a great concern should the military sabotage the political transition, the Habibie-military manoeuvre was, in fact, instrumental in mobilising Islamist support (Mietzner, 2009: 200; Honna, 2003: 168). This was particularly salient when Habibie’s government was widely criticised by his opponents, particularly cross-campus student movements, as representing an anti-reformasi coalition. This anti-Habibie movement culminated in the MPR special session that would formalise the interim government in November 1998. Against this backdrop, the military and pro-Habibie Islamist groups facilitated the creation of the so-called Pam Swakarsa (civil security forces) by mobilising some 100,000 militia-men from various organisations but mostly Islamist vigilante groups to counter anti-Habibie demonstrations. While anti-Habibie movements saw the MPR session as a

85 Since the 1990s, democratisation discourse had brought about the competing subjects between the so-called ‘conservative’ and ‘reformist’ camps in the military. After Soeharto’s fall, the latter became ascendant and supported democratic reforms. More specifically, the military’s articulation of democracy was prompted by two main motives. First, to recover social credibility after the military was discredited as ‘a dead tool of the government’ and its dwifungsi doctrine was severely criticised. Second, to enable the reformist camp under General Wiranto leadership for purging the conservatives and thus enhanced his bargaining position before Habibie. For example, Wiranto had secured the votes in favour of Akbar Tanjung, a Habibie ally and HMI veteran, for the party chairman during the Golkar Special National Congress in July 1998. Akbar’s rival was General Edi Sudrajat, a former military commander and a declared Habibie-ICMI opponent, who was popular within the ranks and Golkar’s ‘nationalist’ elements. See, for example, Honna (2003: 159), Crouch (2010).

86 Pam Swakarsa included such Islamist groups as MUI-linked Furkon (Islamic Forum for the Establishment of Justice and Constitution), FPI (Islamic Defender Front), Front Hizbullah, Banten army, Batalyon Al-Ghifari and so forth. See, for example, van Dijk (2001: 152-167), Wilson (2015). During the mobilisation, the military also revived its conservative doctrine of kewaspadaan (vigilance), by framing anti-Habibie groups as communists that should be fought against. Thus, as Honna (2003: 168) demonstrated, Habibie-Wiranto’s mutual dependence had frustrated the ‘reformist’ camps who saw that such relationship had prevented military reforms to move forward.
political battle for *reformasi total*, the military-backed Islamists accentuated Habibie’s opponents as representing anti-Islamic movements.

The Islamists within Habibie’s coalition were, in fact, increasingly concerned about their future vis-à-vis the military and Golkar. They began to realise that building an ICMI-like patronage network, as they previously believed, was no longer enough to secure their position. Rather, they had to rely on their own strength through participation in electoral politics. Prompted by the fragility of the Habibie coalition and political liberalisation, we witnessed the emergence of numerous Islam-associated parties in which 18 of them (out of 48 parties) were ultimately eligible to participate in the 1999 election (Suryadinata, 2002: 78-84). The issue at stake, as discussed later, is that the plurality of Islamic political vehicles does not necessarily lead to a better representation of the *ummah* by establishing a cross-cutting agenda for post-New Order politics.

One way to explain this challenge is related to the different subject positions of the Islamists nurtured historically in the structure of power since the New Order and within Habibie’s coalition. Such differences would have greatly influenced the ways they articulate political liberalisation. Less accommodated in the late period of the New Order and critical to the Islamist alliance within Habibie’s coalition, for example, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) saw political liberalisation as a moment to ‘take revenge’ for their marginalisation.\(^\text{87}\) Connected directly to NU’s official structure, the *Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa* (PKB, National Awakening Party) was set up in July 1998. However, partly dissatisfied with PKB’s pluralist platform—i.e. not an Islamic one—and its commitment to forge an alliance with Megawati’s PDIP (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan*), some NU figures decided to establish Islamic parties claiming to represent the *nahdlyin*. Among them were Wahid’s political rivals such as Abu Hasan, who formed the *Solidaritas Uni Indonesia* (SUNI, Solidarity of the Indonesian National Union), Syukron Makmun, who forged the *Partai Nahdlatul Umat* (PNU, Muslim Community’s Awakening Party) and *Partai Kebangkitan Umat* (PKU, Party of Awakening of the Muslim

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\(^{87}\) This phrase is taken form Wahid’s speech before a hundred thousand PKB supporters in a general meeting on 1 March 1999. See Salim (ed.) (1999: 199-206).

While projecting the image of national unity and advancing a pluralist platform, PKB found only found limited support from urban-based *reformasi* movements. In addition to the party’s reliance on the NU-based *pesantren* network mostly in Javanese villages, this also stemmed from Wahid’s manoeuvres working with Soeharto in early 1997, in his prior bid to contain ICMI’s monopoly of Islam, which severely dissatisfied pro-democracy activists. Nevertheless, PKB’s main competitor in claiming the NU constituency was arguably the previously state-sanctioned PPP.\(^88\) Besides having better infrastructure and experience, this was also because NU elements had surprisingly taken control of the PPP leadership, after being continuously marginalised since its establishment in 1973 (c.f., Feillard, 1999). The PPP’s decision to employ Islam as its ideological basis and the reintroduction of Ka’bah (the holy shrine of Mecca) as its party symbol had attracted NU figures dissatisfied with Wahid’s leadership and NU’s non-*pesantren* constituents.

Tantalisingly, the modernist Islamists who were well accommodated in Habibie’s coalition were also not immune to internal frictions. Some scholars like Mietzner (1999: 186-192; 194) pointed out that this fragmentation was linked to the manoeuvring of Amien Rais, an ICMI leading figure turned anti-Soeharto leader prior to Soeharto’s fall. The modernist Islamists expected that Rais would lead a ‘unified’ Islamic party founded by the *Badan Koordinasi Umat Islam* (BKUI, Coordinating Body of the Muslim Community), representing Islamic organisations such as ICMI, DDII, KISDI and other smaller groups. There was also another plan to ‘take over’ the PPP and to put him in its party leadership. All these scenarios collapsed when he ultimately felt that the ‘Islamic jacket was too small’.\(^89\) Rais

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88 Not all NU-based *pesantrens* supported the PKB. Some of them decided to remain in PPP such as *At-Tarogy* (Madura, East Java) and *Al-Anwar* (Rembang, Central Java), led respectively by charismatic leaders *Kyai* Alawy Muhammad (d. 2014) and *Kyai* Maimun Zubair (b. 1928-).

89 Abu Ridho told me that Rais’ final decision to build a pluralist party, and his ‘lack of confidence’ in an Islamic party, had disappointed modernist Muslims, especially within the DDII, who had offered him the leadership of Masyumi-model party. Interview (Jakarta, 2 Nov. 2016). Yusril Ihza Mahendra, a DDII and ICMI figure, also expressed the same disappointment, saying that
subsequently built a pluralist platform party, the *Partai Amanat Nasional* (PAN, National Mandate Party). Unlike Wahid’s PKB, PAN initially attracted leading pro-democracy figures yet its inability to manage the tensions between pluralist and Muhammadiyah-Islamist elements within the party subsequently led many of them to resign.90

It is apparent that the lack of leadership within the modernist Islamist camps had facilitated the rise of numerous Islamic parties. Among them was the *Partai Bulan Bintang* (PBB, Crescent and Star Party), led by Yusril Ihza Mahendra. While claiming to represent Masyumi’s revival, its main social base was mainly associated with conservative organisations such as DDII and KISDI which were staunchly anti-Western and actively promoted sectarian politics (Mietzner, 2009: 256-257; Platzdasch, 2009). Other modernist Islamic parties, but largely unsuccessful, were Deliar Noer’s *Partai Umat Islam* (PUI, Party of the Muslim Community), and Ridwan Saidi’s *Masyumi Baru* (New Masyumi Party) (Suryadinata, 2002: 74-101).

Significantly, the establishment of the *Partai Keadilan* (PK, Justice Party) represented different dynamics within modernist Islamist camps. The embryo of this party was *Jamaah Tarbiyah*, which took on ‘social movement’ strategies and remained ‘outside’ state power since the New Order. This party drew its constituency from the so-called ‘global santri’ waves, which refers to young educated Muslims and urban middle-class members who gained inspiration from Islamic activism in the broader Muslim world (Machmudi, 2008; Furkon, 2004). Another pillar of the party was the followers of the *Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia* (KAMMI, Action Committee for Indonesian Muslim Students) in university campuses. Against the backdrop of the depoliticisation of student movements in the 1980s, KAMMI had increasingly manifested as a solid Islamist-based vehicle which began to successfully occupy strategic positions in many

“...[It] was very bad behaviour, and we will certainly remember that for the future” (cited via Mietzner, 2009: 257).

90 Like PKB-NU relationship, PAN also faced the challenges to manage the tension between the pluralist banner and Muhammadiyah-Islamist elements. For example, PAN’s regional branches were dominated by Muhammadiyah activists, and this led to severe frustration among non-Muhammadiyah members. See Mietzner (1999: 189)
university-based student organisations since the mid-1990s (Aspinall, 2005; Damanik, 2002).

Other factors that constrained the building of a coherent form of representation were associated with strategic-ideological issues. This is particularly manifested in the debates of Islam versus Pancasila as a political discourse for representing and mobilising the *ummah* in the post-New Order era. While previously the articulations of Islam and Pancasila were relatively ‘reconciled’ through New Order developmentalism, its hegemonic crisis following Soeharto’s fall had made possible the rearticulation of Islam as a political signifier for nation-state reformation. The momentum was when the Law No. 3 and 5/1985 that obliged all parties and social organisations to recognise Pancasila as their sole foundation (*asas tunggal*) was revoked in early 1999. This had made possible the establishment of political parties and social organisations with Islam as their ideological platforms.

The advocates of the comprehensive nature of Islam as religion and the state (*shumuliyatul Islam*) perceived that reforming the state in accordance with Islamic laws (sharia) was an obligation for individual Muslims.91 Islamist organisations like Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) even further claimed that Islam is the only solution to Indonesia’s multi-dimensional crisis (Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, 2009). In contrast, the proponents of pluralist Islam argue that the decision of not using Islam as ideological basis of the parties does not contradict Islam in itself. For them, parties are only a method or vehicle to achieve the ultimate political goals in Islam, namely the creation of just and prosperous nation (see, for example, Wahid, 2010).

Aware of the public concerns for the re-articulation of Islam in the political arena, some Islamic parties established the short-lived *Forum Silaturahmi Partai-

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91 By this claim, they stated that supporting Islamic parties was mandatory for every Muslim. They legitimised this by using one of the *ushul fiqh* (legal inferences) method of *ma la yatimmul wajib ila bihi fahuwa wajib* (a means that without it the obligatory ends cannot be achieved, the status of (using) that means thus becomes an obligation). Interview with Abu Ridho (Jakarta, 2 Nov. 2016), Dr Hidayat Nur Wahid (Jakarta, 15 Dec. 2016).
Partai Islam (FSPPI, Goodwill Forum of Islamic Parties) in September 1998. Abu Ridho, a DDII activist and PK co-founder, recalled that this forum was instrumental in countering the securitisation of Islam and to convince fellow Muslim that Islam should play a greater role in the political arena. He further argued that ‘after the long period of New Order depoliticisation, Muslims at the grass-roots tended to see politics as ‘dirty’ and merely as the elite affairs, while many Muslim scholars were phobic towards the Islamisation agenda as if Islam is a threat to the nation’.

Finally, the aspect of time pressure for the holding of elections also provides a further explanation for the inability of Islamists to build coherent representation. Specifically, given that elections were put forward from 2003 to mid-1999, Islamic parties had limited time for nation-wide consolidation. Their immediate agendas were to fulfil the requirements to be eligible for participating in the elections and how to gain better votes. Instead of attempting to build a more inclusive agenda for nation-state reformation, they favoured revisiting their respective socio-historical roots and traditions. Consequently, their basis of political representation was largely inward-looking and not showing the cross-cutting demands of society.

Such an inward-looking character was not only found in parties which have historically rooted social bases such as Nahdlatul Ulama (PKB), Muhammadiyah (PAN), or Masyumi/DDII (PBB) but also in Partai Keadilan (PK). As admitted by the party founders, many of their members still felt unprepared to enter the political arena. Initially, there was a commitment among Jamaah Tarbiyah members that they would establish an Islamic party in 2010—moving the dakwah strategy from society to the state arena. Yet, political liberalisation following Soeharto’s fall in 1998 had prompted them to put such plans forward (Hisyam, et al., 2012; Munandar, 2011). Abu Ridho explained that:

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92 The forum was initially comprising of PK, PUI, Masyumi Party, PSII 1905, Partai Politik Tharekat Islam (PPTI) and Partai Islam Persatuan Indonesia (PIPI). Lately, PKU, PNU, PBB and PPP also joined the forum. See Wahono (2003: 117-129).

93 Interview with Abu Ridho (Jakarta, 2 Nov. 2016).

94 The decision to build a party was made through an internal referendum although some members opted to make Jamaah Tarbiyah a social organisation. Interview with Abu Ridho (Jakarta, 2 Nov. 2016), Dr Hidayat Nur Wahid (Jakarta 15 Dec. 2016), Dr Nur Mahmudi Ismail (Depok, 26 Oct. 2016).
Building an Islamic party is a necessary condition for *dakwah*. Every *dakwah* and *muamalah* (social activities) culminates in the political arena. Thus, the ultimate issue among us at that period was whether we will set up the party now or later. Soeharto’s power was declining, and we did not know whether or not the future political situation would be favourable for us (to build an Islamic party).95

Subsequently, with just some thousands of registered members, the party leaders ultimately adopted the principle of *al-hizb huwa al-jamaah al-jamaah hiya al-hizb* or the unity between *Jamaah* and the party. Rather than building outward-looking strategies by accommodating the multitude of demands of Muslim communities and broader pro-democracy movements, they were more focused on establishing cell-like networks of *Jamaah Tarbiyah*. In the initial phase, they even believed that the ‘militancy of its constituents was much more important than the quantity’.96

The foregoing discussion shows different articulations of Islam following the political liberalisation and the challenges experienced by the Islamists to establish a relatively coherent representation of the *ummah*. Clearly, the tensions between past legacies of the New Order model of corporatisation and present pressure for electorate politics have hampered the creation of chains of equivalence among their diverse articulations. There was also a strong tendency for Islamists to fail to link themselves with broader pro-democracy movements to create a post-Soeharto political order. In fact, they became increasingly inward-looking as the pressure of electoral politics made them rely on their ‘primordial’ social bases.

**Conflicts and Consensus:**
*Caught between Reform and Status Quo*

Although political liberalisation had considerably changed the institutional and legal frameworks of New Order authoritarianism, the absence of a coherent political force to direct nation-state reformation limited the substantive change under democratisation. More specifically, the inability of the Islamists to create a basis for cross-cutting representation, as we shall see, had forced them to continuously

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95 Interview with Abu Ridho (Jakarta, 2 Nov. 2016).
96 Interview with Dr Arif Munandar (Depok, 22 Oct. 2016), Dr Hidayat Nur Wahid (Jakarta, 15 Dec. 2016).
seek consensus and compromise that effectively blurs the dimension of the political, separating them from other political projects. For example, the continuous support of modernist Islamists (except PAN) for Habibie was mainly prompted to counter Megawati of PDIP who was emerging as a strong presidential candidate. She was supported by Wahid of PKB in an attempt to defeat Golkar in the 1999 election (Barton, 2002: 269). To counter the PDIP-PKB coalition, the modernist Islamists built an ‘Islamic’ image for Habibie and Golkar under new leadership of HMI-veteran activist, Akbar Tanjung.  

Yet, the hopes of the Islamists to control state power through electoral politics were in tatters after the nationalist-secularism of PDIP and Golkar won the elections. Accordingly, Megawati (PDIP) and Habibie (Golkar) became the most potential presidential candidates. With PAN’s poor electoral results, Amien Rais subsequently withdrew from the presidential race, and he turned to support Wahid (PKB). He mobilised Islamic parties to establish a new political grouping, known as the poros tengah (lit. the central axis)—as a counterbalance to the Megawati and Habibie blocs. Rais had less sympathy for Megawati because ‘[a]s an open party, PDIP had been significantly dictated and dominated by the forces representing Christian and Catholics’ (Najib, 2000: 104). Nevertheless, other Muslim-based parties, apart from PAN and PKB, remained with Habibie until he subsequently withdrew from the presidential race after his accountability speech at the MPR general session was rejected. It turned out that Golkar did not totally support

97 Interview with Dr Nur Mahmudi Ismail (Depok, 26 October 2016). During the campaign period, MUI also issued a religious recommendation (tausiyyah) to discourage Muslims from supporting non-Muslim leaders and parties dominated by non-Muslims, tacitly referring to the PDIP. See, for example, Ichwan (2005: 45-72; 2013).

98 The PDI-P emerged as the largest party with 33.7 per cent of the vote, followed by Golkar and PKB with 22.4 per cent and 12.6 per cent respectively. PPP came as in fourth with 10.7 per cent, followed by PAN with 7.1 per cent, whereas PBB and PK obtained only 1.9 and 1.4 per cent respectively. In total, the secular-nationalist parties gained 62.5 per cent, while Muslim-based parties (including PAN and PKB) only received 37.5 per cent (Suryadinata, 2002: 106). These results were even worse than in the 1955 elections. Compared to the results of the 1955 elections, the percentage of Islamic votes had dropped by 6 per cent, and when PKB and PAN were excluded the loss was 25.7 per cent (Suryadinata, 2002).

99 Habibie recalled that there was a pre-emptive scenario to refuse his accountability speech at the MPR on 19 October 1999, by instrumentalising such issues as East Timor succession and the commitment to fight corruption and bring Soeharto’s cronies to justice. The difference between those who rejected and accepted his accountability speech was, in fact, not so far: 4.78% or 33 votes (Habibie, 2006: 304).
Habibie’s candidacy, especially the so-called ‘White-Golkar’ faction led by Akbar Tanjung. When Habibie announced General Wiranto as his Vice-Presidential choice, in his bid to secure the support from the military, Akbar Tanjung felt that his own political fortunes would be enhanced if Habibie failed (Honna, 2003). Akbar shortly became Golkar’s new candidate, before the party ultimately decided to support Wahid due to the pressure from Habibie’s supporters in the party who denounced Akbar for betraying Habibie. Consequently, Islamic parties which previously supported Habibie and were staunchly anti-Megawati had no other option but to join the poros tengah.

Rather than reflecting an Islamic coalition to create a post-Soeharto political order (c.f., Wahono, 2003), the poros tengah indicated a form of political deadlock. Nur Mahmudi Ismail, then PK chairman, describes this situation as follows:

Given PK’s presidential candidate (Dr Didin Hafidhudin) was an unknown, and the poor results of the elections, the ultimate issue is how PK could realistically play a better role in politics. To be honest, our target was supporting a figure capable of navigating Indonesia’s democratic transition. When we supported Habibie, don’t judge that PK was pro-status quo, no. We saw him merely as a political figure who was pro-reformasi and pro-ummah. Even after the rejection of his accountability speech, we and other small Islamic parties still supported him for the presidential race… After he finally withdrew [from presidential race], we had to think of an alternative scenario. Initially, we tried to convince Amin Rais, but he was not confident. Like or dislike, Wahid then became the last option for us.  

Dubbed as the ‘honeymoon’ period for the Islamic parties (Barton, 2002), Wahid’s brief presidency in 1999-2001, in fact, relied on a fragile coalition. His cabinet had to accommodate all political elements, including the representatives of parties with the different platforms and also six generals—four of them were even still active in the military (Suryadinata, 2002: 163). It is not surprising that opposition to Wahid increased as internal disagreements came to the fore within his coalition. The internal conflicts began to appear when he dismissed Hamzah Haz (PPP), Jusuf Kalla (Golkar) and Laksamana Sukardi (PDIP) from his cabinet, while promoting key allies within the NU community in politically and economically strategic positions (Robison and Hadiz, 2004: 214; Bush, 2009).  

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100 Interview with Dr Nur Mahmudi Ismail (Depok, 26 Oct. 2016).
101 For example, President Wahid appointed his own brother, Hasyim Wahid, to the Indonesian Bank Restructuring Association (IBRA) that controlled over $600 billion. See Bush (2009: 137).
reform agenda, he also gradually attempted to disengage the army from politics by, for example, appointing a civilian, Professor Juwono Sudarsono, as the Defence Minister (Suryadinata, 2002: 167-9; Mietzner, 2009). In a snub to the powerful army, he subsequently named Admiral Widodo as the Commander of the Armed Forces and even forced Wiranto to resign in February 2000 (Honna, 2003; Mietzner, 2009).

Often, the tensions between Wahid and political parties expanded along with their societal constituencies. This was particularly the case when the Islamists saw some of Wahid’s policies as counter-productive for the interests of Muslims. The main examples were Wahid’s proposals to open trade relations with Israel and to lift an MPR ban on communism—that dated back to 1966 when Soeharto came to power. But, the most pressing issue was Wahid’s statements regarding the worsening religious conflicts in Maluku and North Maluku in 1999 which were seen by his opponents as pro-Christian and having less sympathy for the fate of Muslim communities. In response, the Islamists convened a demonstration at Monas Square of Jakarta in January 2000, in which their leading figures such as Amin Rais called for "jihad in the conflict zones" (Sidel, 2006: 183)—although the main target was to undermine Wahid’s legitimacy. The call for "jihad" was responded by the deployment of paramilitaries, organised by the notorious Laskar Jihad, led by Afghan war veteran Ja’far Umar Thalib (Hasan, 2002: 147-148; Sidel, 2006: 182-3).

The fragmentation of Islamic parties and the disappointment of the Islamists with the precipitous decline and reversal of Islamisation had facilitated the rapid emergence of other vehicles, claiming to represent the ummah including those which resorted to violence. For example, in 2000s, a series of bomb attacks waged

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102 PK accused such policies as a form of Wahid’s escapism from his failure to tackle economic recovery. See the party’s official statement issued on 16 April 2000. Nugraha (2001: 67-70).

103 For example, the jihadist were upset when President Wahid decisively rejected their demands, saying that ‘I don’t care if you want jihad...the bottom line is that if you threaten the stability of the state, we will take action (Zada, 2002: 132). Yet, the President was unable to prevent them to exacerbate the conflict when some elements within the military, dissatisfied with his pressure for reforms, also instrumentalised the situation to undermine his legitimacy by facilitating the deployment of some 3000 Laskar Jihad fighters in Maluku. See Aditjondro (2001: 100-28), Sidel (2006), Hasan (2002).
by the ‘radical’ Islamists began to catch the public eye while Islamist vigilante groups such as the notorious Front Pembela Islam (FPI, Islamic Defender Front) became more active to raid the ‘places of vice’ under the slogan of ‘amar ma’ruf nahi munkar’ (lit. ‘enjoin the good, forbid the evil’) (Sidel, 2006; Wilson, 2015). During this period, the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI, Indonesian Holy Warrior Assembly), led by Abu Bakar Ba’asyir, was established in Yogyakarta demanding the implementation of sharia and the projection of an Islamic state (Hilmy, 2010: 109-117). On 28 May 2000, the Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) also began to openly mobilise the Islamists when they convened the first international conference at Senayan, Jakarta, calling for the establishment of a global caliphate (Fealy, 2007; Munabari, 2010; Osman, 2010).

In addition, such conditions also significantly transformed the MUI’s socio-political role and Islamist orientation. Having been accommodated in the New Order and Habibie’s interim government, Wahid’s administration marked the decline of MUI’s role. This was particularly after the open conflict between Wahid and MUI regarding the halal fatwa on the Japanese-brand food enhancer, Ajinomoto. More specifically, Wahid’s confrontation with the Islamists had made MUI a new Islamists’ base to challenge Wahid and an avenue for an Islamisation agenda. As early as 2000, for example, MUI had dramatically altered its position from the khadim al-hukumah (servant of government) to the khadim al-ummah (servant of the ummah). Crucially, this change opened the door for ‘conservative’ Islamists figures such as Din Syamsuddin, Choilil Ridwan, and subsequently

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104 The MMI Congress in Yogyakarta was attended by several Islamic figures such as Deliar Noer (PUI), Hidayat Nur Wahid (PK), Fuad Amsyari (ICMI). The central element of MMI, as suggested by van Bruinessen (2002) and ICG (2002), were the activists of Darul Islam. Even the date of its establishment symbolically marked the fifty-first anniversary of Kartosuwirjo’s Darul Islam (DI). See Hasan (2002: 150), Hilmy (2010: 109-117), van Bruinessen (2002).

105 In 2001, MUI issued a haram fatwa due to the allegedly presence of pig-fat elements in this product. This fatwa could lead to the shutdown of the company with some 4000 workers in East Java because the company had to pay the compensation fee and lost its consumers not only in Indonesia but also Malaysia. Recognising the counter-productive effects of closing the company in the time of economic crisis recovery, President Wahid openly challenged the MUI declaring this product as halal—certainly by providing different ‘religious’ interpretations and justifications. The fact that his declaration was made after he met with Japanese Minister of Justice and the commitment to invest 1.5 trillion rupiahs in the country was massively utilised as further pre-text by the Islamists to undermine Wahid’s position from power. See Gatra (10 Jan. 2001).
Muhammad Al-Khaththath to play a more influential role in this body (Ichwan, 2013). All these developments, generally labelled as the ‘conservative turn’ (van Bruinessen, 2013), as discussed later, will significantly shape the MUI’s Islamist orientation, especially in ordering the public sphere (Kersten, 2015).

Wahid’s coalition and political legitimacy were continuously deteriorating. His relationships with key political parties were beyond repair after he kicked out their representatives from the cabinet, as it was with the military. These conditions facilitated the anti-Wahid alliance between the ‘conservative’ elements of the military, the modernist Islamists, and the disappointed parties. At the grassroots levels, the tension between the traditionalist versus modernist Islamists, especially between NU and Muhammadiyah, intensified and even led to violence. After initially promoting Wahid for the presidency after the 1999 elections, Rais considered his past decision as a ‘sin’, claiming further that ‘if Gus Dur (Wahid’s nickname) continues to be kept as president despite his failure to achieve political and economic stability, there is a risk that Indonesia will break up’ (Barton, 2002: 342). The parliament served as the major institutional base to launch formal impeachment proceedings against Wahid, by using two cases of corruption in which he was allegedly involved that subsequently led to his fall from the presidency.

Though NU and Muhammadiyah still played role in the MUI, the involvement of the more ‘vocal’ figures from conservative Islamist organisations had significantly shaped its Islamist orientation. For example, in the new document of the Outlook of the Indonesian Council of Ulama (published in 2000), apart from issuing fatwas the organisation added three roles: (1) khidim al-umma; (2) ishlah wa taqadd; (3) amr ma’ruf nahy munkar (enjoin good forbid evil). The last two points clearly showed the influence of, and indeed utilised by, the conservative Islamists. See Ichwan (2013).

It is reported that PKB/NU-affiliated militia began to attack Muhammadiyah’s offices and schools. Some NU clerics, directly or indirectly, also contributed to legitimise violence when, for example, they granted Wahid the title of waliyul amri dlaluri bissyyukah (legitimate interim ruler according to Islamic law) that framed the opposition as bughot (rebels) which legitimate to be fought against. This also became a pre-text for the establishment of pro-Wahid militia such as Pasukan Berani Mati (Troops Ready to Die) from NU’s stronghold in East Java. See Feillard (2002: 127), Mietzner (2009), Barton (2002).

In August 2000, the parliament started to investigate two cases, ‘Brunei gate’ to refer a $2 million gift from the Sultan of Brunei to the President and ‘Buloggate’, involving a $350,000 gift from the deputy head of the National Logistics Agency (BULOG, BadanUrusanLogistik) given via Wahid’s assistant. Although Wahid’s involvement was never proven, the parliamentary investigation continued and culminated in the impeachment of the President. See Bush (2009: 137).
The inauguration of Megawati as the new president in July 2001 was anticlimactic for Islamic politics. Islamic parties tended to build consensus and even claimed to be on board the bandwagon that brought Megawati to the Presidential Palace. Even the parties which actively promoted Islamisation at the parliament were well accommodated in Megawati’s coalition when their leaders, Yusril Ihza Mahendra (PBB) was appointed as Minister of Justice while Hamzah Haz (PPP) became Vice-President after Wahid’s impeachment. The leading NU clerics who previously defended Wahid immediately declared that they were ready to cooperate with the new government. The violence at the grassroots level also cooled down when NU leaders had no interest in opposing the Megawati administration after the removal of Wahid from power—some of them even felt relieved that the ‘burden’ to support and defend Wahid had been taken off (Mietzner, 2009: 268).

Megawati made considerable concessions to her power coalition, mostly anti-Wahid elements. For example, Megawati gave enormous privileges to the military, including greater institutional autonomy and increased influence in security affairs. The Megawati era also marked the end of the advancement of an Islamic agenda through parliamentary politics, given Islamic parties had given up on their efforts to advocate the Jakarta Charter—which effectively provided a legal basis for sharia implementation—into the newly amended constitution. Having incorporated Islamic parties in the cabinet, the Megawati-military alliance also strengthened the draconian ‘nationalist’ stance to undermine the radical Islamists (e.g., Sidel, 2006; Mietzner, 2006). By mid-2000, for example, security forces began to crack down on the Laskar Jihad troops and arrested Islamic figures allegedly supporting the radical Islamists. She also reversed Wahid’s policies in dealing with separatist movements, by which she took a conservative approach and thus gave the military further concessions such as in the case of the Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM, Aceh

109 In the 2002 cabinet reshuffle, she returned the post of TNI commander to the army by appointing General Sutarto, known as a determined defender of the military’s interests. She also supported the promotion of a conservative and anti-military reform General Ryacudu as the position of army chief of staff. Matori Abdul Jalil of PKB, after his support to impeach Wahid, gained the position of minister of defence. However, after his stroke in August 2003, Megawati did not replace him and thus virtually gave the military control of its internal security affairs. See Mietzner (2006: 34).
Independent Movement) where she declared martial law and launched one of the largest military campaigns in Indonesian history.

Significantly, the fragmentation of Islamism and political compromise had swung the political pendulum back in favour of the status quo. This is particularly apparent in the reversal of military reforms and the changing orientation of Islamic parties. Epitomising post-reformasi fears of instability and disintegration, the resentment of political elites and the public towards the military had considerably declined.\textsuperscript{110} By using the political discourse of ‘defending NKRI’ (\emph{Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia}), the military found new legitimacy to re-enter socio-political affairs after the doctrine of \textit{dwifungsi} was officially terminated in April 2000 (Courch, 2010: 140-142). Due to the shortage of (civilian) leadership, many parties also tended to nominate retired military generals for the positions of governors or district heads which virtually allowed them to re-organise their powers in the decentralisation era (Honna, 2006; Hadiz, 2010).

The compromise made by the Islamists with ‘secular-nationalist’ elements had ultimately shaped their practices. The Islamist parties increasingly moved to the ‘consensus of the centre’ and faced internal frictions.\textsuperscript{111} PPP, for example, which previously advocated the Jakarta Charter, had put aside this agenda especially after the party signed a political contract with the PDIP to join in Megawati’s coalition. After failing to achieve the electoral threshold, PK rebuilt the party as the Justice Prosperous Party (PKS, \textit{Partai Keadilan Sejahtera}). No longer visibly advocating an Islamist agenda, PKS introduced a new platform of ‘clean, caring and professional’, indicating its support for a neoliberal agenda of good

\textsuperscript{110} Politicians at the parliament even warned the danger of the military reforms, regarded as reducing the capacity to defend the country from disintegration (Mietzner, 2006: 38).

\textsuperscript{111} The changing orientation of these Islamists parties is less attributable to the party’s internationalisation of liberal values or related to the softening processes as expected by the proponents of moderation through democratic inclusion. Rather, it is better understood as results of the imperatives of operating within a distinct form of democracy when Islamic forces fail to build a hegemonic linkage that ultimately forced them to build consensus and become part of status quo—instead of offering an alternative social order. The ‘consensus of the centre’ here is adopted from Mouffé’s analysis of the transformation of the Left parties in European context which instead of offering an alternative to neoliberal order tend to build compromise under the ideological platform of “reconciled or consensus societies” between the Left and Right. See Mouffé (2000; 2005), Laclau and Mouffé (2001).
Surprisingly, PBB, which did not utilise Islamist slogans in the 1999 elections, built a pro-
sharia image, expecting to gain votes from sharia-minded masses within PPP and PKS. Neverthel-
less, its poor performance in the 2004 elections—compared to a dramatic increase of PKS—triggered internal debates
regarding the party outlook (Platzdasch, 2009: 248). Meanwhile, PKB experienced internal divisions after Wahid’s fall, with the rise of a Matori Abdul Djalil camp who supported Megawati and opposed a Wahid loyalist, Ali Shihab. Unlike the 1999 election, there was also a relative dissociation of PAN and PKB from their Islamic social base after Amien Rais and Wahid had no decisive power in Muhammadiyah and NU respectively.113

The fragmentation of the Islamic parties had also paved the ways for Golkar, the New Order party, as the most credible political contender in the 2004 election. Slamet Effendy Jusuf, the Golkar’s committee for winning elections, confidently claimed that:

Golkar’s victory will become a national necessity (kebutuhan nasional). Our nation needs a solid political force to bring back political stability and security as the pre-
requirements for development... providing more jobs, and public order... Those things can only be found in Golkar. To win Golkar in the elections means to save the
country from its disintegration... and to recover it from the severe multidimensional crisis (Jusuf, 2003: 22).

Crucially, the failure of Islamic parties to build a coherent representation of the ummah had driven the Islamists into further divisions. Such conditions had triggered the rapid emergence of a multitude of Islamist vehicles claiming to represent the ummah, including by exercising violent means and strategies. This is in contrast with neo-Weberian analysts (e.g., Abuza, 2007) who comprehended the proliferation of ‘radical’ Islamist group as a direct result of the weakness of state institutions associated with the democratic transition. The absence of a coherent

113 Unlike Amin Rais, Muhammadiyah chairman Syafii Maarif (1998-2005) was less interested in political parties. During the interview, he even stated that he decided to prevent Muhammadiyah from being dragged too far (terseret-seret) in political competitions that made some PAN leaders, including Amin Rais, upset. Muhammadiyah-PAN relationship culminated when the party led by Sutrisno Bachir, a businessman and less popular within Muhammadiyah members, in 2005. Meanwhile, Abdurrahman Wahid failed to struggle for his bid in the 2004 presidential race amidst the fragmented support from PKB and NU.
force to provide alternatives to the New Order had only paved the way for the reorganisation of Soeharto-linked elites. Dominated by the practices of compromise and consensus, the political frontiers that separate new political forces from those reminiscent of the New Order effectively disappeared. Consequently, the period between 1999 and 2004, claimed by the proponents of transitology approaches as the completion of democratic transition (e.g., Liddle and Mujani, 2013: 25; Mietzner, 2009: 291), had instead demonstrated that a hegemonic momentum to establish a new political formation had been lost.

Decentralised Development: Islamism and Localisation of Power

This section discusses the diverse articulations of Islam in the context of decentralisation. Like political liberalisation, decentralisation has been a central signifier for democratisation discourse—championed as a turning point to dismantle New Order’s authoritarianism by devolving considerable powers, resources and authorities to the local levels. Following the dislocation of New Order hegemony, decentralisation was appropriated by such demands as economic justice between local and national revenue sharing, equal access to development against the prolonged Java-centrist model, better public service provisions, and the cultural recognition and autonomy of the locals. Imposed by international donors like the World Bank, decentralisation has also been constituted as an inseparable part of the transformation of neoliberal development in the so-called ‘good governance’ which increasingly incorporated such ‘democratic’ notions as ‘civil society’, ‘participation’ and ‘social capital’ (Hadiz, 2010; Harris, et al., 2004; Fine, 2002).

114Decentralisation was introduced during the Habibie’s interim government, based on Law No.22/1999 and Law No.25/1999 which put into effect in 2001. The first gave wide-ranging authorities from central to local governments except the five areas of defence and security, foreign policy, fiscal and monetary affairs, the judiciary and religious affairs. Meanwhile, the latter provided local governments with greater shared revenue from such sectors as forestry and mining. See Aspinall and Fealy (2003).
Circumscribed by the struggles to transform New Order authoritarianism, such competing articulations initially converged on the conviction that decentralisation would strengthen civil society, peoples’ participation and local democratic governance (Aspinall and Fealy, 2003). Yet, this convergence began to crumble when neoliberal articulations of decentralisation ultimately bolstered technocratic and managerialist forces for local governance reforms, which were ‘anti-politics’ in nature (c.f., Hadiz, 2010: 30). This section shows that the decentralisation framework does not necessarily lead to teleological democratic development. Rather, it is highly contingent on complexities resulting from the confluence of diverse articulations of decentralisation through which the interests, identities, practices and institutions are constantly reconstituted and reorganised.

The discussions on decentralisation and Islamism come up following the mobilisation of identity politics in local power struggles. Comprehending identity-based articulations—especially religion and ethnic—as mere ‘pathology’ of democracy is inadequate because such practices spring directly from the confluence of diverse articulations of decentralisation and democratisation. In regard to Islamism, the fact that Islamic parties have been unable to establish a relatively coherent representation of Muslims has greatly influenced the practices of Islamism in local settings. This section shows that Islamic parties are also inclined to ally themselves with ‘secular-nationalist’ elements although the possibilities for bringing more Islamic political projects are opened in some localities (c.f. Buehler, 2016). In fact, this is not only prompted by the pressures for winning the elections but also reflects the disappearance of political alternatives as all parties subsequently tend to construct ‘nationalist-religious’ platform—albeit with a different degree. Therefore, democratic politics is no longer marked by a battle between different political alternatives but mere a project of consensus—a ‘reconciled society’ (c.f., Duile and Bens, 2017). Against this backdrop, Islam as a political discourse is increasingly becoming a floating signifier, appropriated and articulated by multiple social subjects—not necessarily Islamist groups—with different contents and interests. All these developments are apparent in the dynamics of Islamism in local elections (pilkada) and the making of sharia-by-laws (perda syariah).
Islamism and Decentralisation

The failure of Islamic parties, as discussed in the preceding section, in constructing a coherent vehicle to represent the diverse demands of the ummah at the national level has greatly influenced their practices in decentralised politics. This is particularly the case for the Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS) that officially declared itself as a dakwah (predication) and cadre party. In contrast to public concern regarding its Islamist agenda, PKS leaders generally do not see decentralisation as a moment to advance the project of Islamising local politics. They saw that political compromise and consensus are also inevitable in local politics due to the following reasons. First, the fact that its constituents are geographically concentrated in certain areas, mostly with urban characteristics. Second, the conviction that building an alliance with non-Islamic elements is a key to survival and to win local contestations—especially in areas where PKS is relatively weak.¹¹⁵ These conditions drive the party literally into a pragmatic logic and practice in facing local elections (Pilkada).

Drawing on interviews and discussions, it is apparent that PKS leaders perceive decentralisation as a central arena for the attainment of more favourable positions to compete for access to state institutions and local resources. It is not surprising when a senior party leader states that ‘if we decide to compete in a local election, we need to aim to win by whatever strategies. If we can then influence local governance with Islamic values, thank God, it would be an additional advantage’.¹¹⁶ Yet, the prevalence of such a pragmatic logic does not necessarily characterise the behaviour of all groups within the party (Munandar, 2011; c.f., Muhtadi, 2012) and is deeply rooted in the socio-political changes during the post-Soeharto democratisation era. Moreover, decentralisation also brought about internal tensions within the party. For example, PKS activists, especially those associated with Jamaah Tarbiyah, have been increasingly questioning its

¹¹⁵ Interview with Cahyadi Takariawan (Yogyakarta, 8 Sept. 2016), Dr Hidayat Nur Wahid (Jakarta, 15 Dec. 2016).
¹¹⁶ Interview with Dr Nur Mahmudi Ismail (Depok 26 Oct. 2016).
conventional methods of gradual Islamisation (marhalatu dakwah) from society to the state levels in the context of decentralisation. This is particularly because this method is incompatible with the pressure of local elections: there is always a discrepancy between the efforts to build a solid social base in given areas and the demand to win local elections.

These discrepancies have considerably affected PKS’ political practices as, for example, manifested in the way the party forges alliances for local elections. Given that the localisation of power is bounded within specific administrative settings, it is more often than not that the party creates rather pragmatic coalitions for winning the Pilkada.¹¹⁷ PKS leaders often argued that this strategy is taken because the party’s social base, unlike Golkar’s, which is deeply rooted after three decades of the New Order, is unevenly concentrated in Indonesia. Not surprisingly, the coalition-building that ensues frequently dissatisfied the party’s core Islamist constituents, as they see that PKS as no different from other parties.¹¹⁸

Another manifestation of this discrepancy is shown, for example, in the debates about whether the party should nominate its own cadres or external figures with greater potential to run for Pilkada. Like other parties, PKS is inclined to nominate a non-cadre candidate for Pilkada although the party has an internal mechanism for selecting its own cadres.¹¹⁹ The fact that new parties, like PKS, fail to offer alternative leaders has paved the way for contending old elites who have better positioned because of their histories in the Soeharto era (e.g., Hadiz, 2010: Chapter 4). Crucially, this also opens up the possibility for political transaction and money politics. For example, Yusuf Supendi, the former PK(S) founder who subsequently resigned from the party, accused PKS leaders of receiving 40 billion rupiahs from Adang Daradjatun, a former police general, for his nomination in the

¹¹⁷ The party even collaborates with Christian-based parties. Interview with Dr Hidayat Nur Wahid (Jakarta 15 Dec. 2016).
¹¹⁸ Interview with Dr Yon Machmudi (Depok, 19 Oct. 2016).
¹¹⁹ For example, PKS previously declared its cadre, Mardani Ali Sera, as a candidate for vice-governor to pair with Sandiaga Uno (Gerindra Party) for the 2017 Jakarta election. Sera’s nomination collapsed when PKS and Gerindra finally nominated Anis Baswedan (an external figure to both PKS and Gerindra) and Sandiaga Uno to challenge the more fancied Ahok-Jarot pairing (supported by PDIP, Golkar, PPP and PKB). Interview with Dr Hidayat Nur Wahid (Jakarta, 15 Dec. 2016).
Jakarta gubernatorial race in 2007 (Kompas.com, 17 March 2011). Indeed, with fragmented representation and a lack of leadership, small/medium-sized parties like PKS are becoming vehicles that function as an event organiser for the Pilkada, whose participants are those who have enormous financial support and/or popularity.

The ascendancy of pragmatic logic has significantly affected the party’s internal dynamics, including changing relations between the party and its ‘traditional’ constituents. Within the Jamaah Tarbiyah, for example, the doctrine of party unification, i.e. al-hizbh wal jamaah, wal jamaah hiyal hizb, is increasingly at odds when Jamaah-based activists feel that the party has sidelined dakwah activities. Currently, the demands for separation between the party and Jamaah are voiced among the younger generation while the elders are concerned in case this prompts the dakwah-oriented constituents to leave the party. KAMMI activists, another PKS’ central element among university students, also tend to distance themselves from the party. While from the outset they did not completely accept the doctrine of unification, they found that it is better to develop professional careers such as in business or bureaucracy rather than join and being active in the party after graduating from their studies. Some of them even opt to affiliate with other parties, following the footsteps of HMI activists who have developed political fortunes virtually in all parties. All these demands grew more considerably following the corruption scandals involving no less than PKS chairman, Luthfi Hasan Ishaaq, in 2013 and more so after the internal frictions that occurred when a conservative group took over the party leadership in 2015.

A further problem is that PKS’ main activists remain young middle class and university graduates with limited influence in broader society, not to mention their

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120 In fact, political transactions during the nomination of the candidates for Pilkada are normalised, commonly labelled as the mahar (lit. dowry) paid by candidates to the parties in a process resembling traditional marriage rituals. For example, Dedy Mulyadi (Golkar chairman at West Java) publicly stated that his own party asked him to pay 10 billion rupiahs (Liputan6.com, 28 September 2017).

121 Interview with Dr Yon Machmudi (Depok, 19 Oct. 2016); Fahri Hamzah (Jakarta, 10 Nov. 2016); Saptro Waluyo, journalist and Tarbiyah activist (Depok, 22 Oct. 2016).

122 Interview with a KAMMI activist (Yogyakarta, 27 Feb. 2017); Kartika Nur Rokhman, KAMMI national chairman (Jakarta, 16 Dec. 2016).
limited financial capacities. Thus, the party’s self-sufficient financing slogan of *sunduquna juyubuna* (lit. our fund is from our pocket) is at odds with the increasing costs for financing its programs and activities, especially related to *Pilkada*. These young activists also have no opportunities for developing careers or business as they are overwhelmingly absorbed into party’s activities such as being a member of ‘success teams’ for *Pilkada*, the national elections or personal assistants to PKS politicians.

The party also faces the challenge of expanding its social basis beyond its traditional constituencies. For example, the party’s efforts through charity and educational networks are still constrained by limited resources, and in some areas like Yogyakarta, this even prompts harsh competition especially with Muhammadiyah who feel that PKS activists have infiltrated and made use of its institutions – such as educational institutions and mosques – for the party’s benefit. Equally important to mention are PKS attempts to forge an alliance with some labour activists though such initiatives have largely failed (Hadiz, 2016: 148). Although the party attempted to broaden its base to embrace workers, farmers and fishermen, they have no clear strategies for such groups or lack the resources to implement them. One informant even stated that this strategy was ineffective for the purpose of winning elections. For instance, the former Minister of Agriculture (2009-2014) from PKS, Suswono, had disbursed many ministerial-financed programs in Central Java but he eventually failed in his bid for a seat from the province in the 2014 parliamentary elections.
Significantly, the attempts to expand the party’s social base by linking itself to diverse social groups have resulted in the intense debates not only among political scientists but also within internal circles. Some observers often highlight the tensions between the ummah (defined as homogenous) and electoral constituents (heterogeneous) as a sort of a political dilemma as if the relations between the two are mutually exclusive (Muhtadi, 2012; Munandar, 2011; Permata, 2008). In fact, the tensions between ummah and constituent are always in place and become a constant political challenge, not for choosing one over the other but to establish chains of equivalence through which the agenda of the ummah finds linkages with a multitude of demands of other social groups.

Within the PKS’ inner circle, the debates between the ummah and its constituents are exemplified in the controversies surrounding the party’s self-declaration as an ‘open party’ with a new slogan ‘PKS untuk semua’ (PKS for all). This shift is publicly understood as the antithesis to the dakwah party. While political scientists like Fealy (2010) and Buehler (2012) underscore the party’s rigid internal structure, referring to the powerful role of the Majelis Syuro (Party’s Consultative Assembly) under the leadership of Hilmy Aminuddin, the controversy around the ‘open party’ platform brought the party’s internal conflicts into the public realm. It reveals that the tensions between ‘pragmatists’ and ‘idealists’—dubbed mockingly as the ‘prosperous’ versus ‘justice’ camps, referring to the party’s own name. The declaration of an ‘open party’ is widely associated with the former camp, which include such figures as Annis Matta (then PKS Secretary General) and Fahri Hamzah (Munandar, 2011). They argued that the party’s traditional constituents built through dakwah activities can be easily captured by

128 The platform of ‘PKS for All’ was introduced in 2010 Congress. Observers like Fealy (2010) argues that this move as rather contradictory, since the party has to continuously balance a double agenda: to secure electoral success through growing mainstream support and to satisfy the religiously devout identity of PKS elements. Meanwhile Hadiz (2016: 137) states that this is a bid to specifically court the support of elements of wealthy Chinese businessmen. Conducted a fieldwork at the time when internal conflicts within the party has increasingly open to public, the informants from different camps provide different narratives regarding this issue. For the proponents, like Fahri Hamzah, the open party is seen as instrumental to transform the party for the so-called “second leap” (referring to the fact that after 2004, PKS’ votes remain stagnant). He also criticises the party when the current PKS leadership tend to revoke this platform, by declaring the party as a dakwah party. Interviews with Fahri Hamzah (Jakarta, 10 Nov. 2016), Abu Ridho (Jakarta, 2 Nov. 2016), Cahyadi Takariawan (Yogyakarta, 8 Sept. 2016).
other parties through the practices of money politics. Meanwhile, their opponents rebutted that ‘even if this strategy (i.e. changing party’s orientation) worked PKS could do nothing compared to resource-rich parties such as Golkar and PDIP… This even led to risky political transactions.’

Although PKS leaders consider Pilkada as a strategic momentum for political consolidation, they admit that there is no linear correlation between the districts or provinces led by PKS and the expansion of its social base. Such a phenomenon can only take place in a situation where contestation does not directly link to political representation. Currently, facilitated mainly by the media and private survey companies and promoted by international agencies like the World Bank and USAID, the logic of ‘success stories’ and well-trained officials have become determinant factors in Pilkada and national politics (see, Hadiz, 2010). In other words, the technocratic logic is not only becoming the governing reason but also a basis for its evaluation. Political lexicons such as ‘representation’ or even ‘political aggregation’ are increasingly replaced by the notions of ‘electability’ or ‘popularity’—referring mainly to voters’ volatile behaviour. Therefore, the activities of the parties are subsequently defined as the efforts to establish public-acknowledged images rather than an arena for organising diverse demands among social groups and offering an alternative of governing public affairs.

**Islamising Local Politics:**

*A Symptom of the Islamists’ Hegemonic Failure*

One major issue regarding the increasing role of the Islamists in decentralisation era is arguably the pressure for Islamisation agenda, especially through the promotion of *perda syariah* or sharia-by-laws in local areas (Künkler and Stepan,

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130 Interview with Abu Ridho Jakarta (2 Nov. 2016), Fahri Hamzah (Jakarta 10 Nov 2016).

131 This is particularly the case in West Java Province and Depok Municipality where PKS figures—Ahmad Heryawan (2008-2018) and Nur Mahmudi Ismail (2006-2016)—served two consecutive periods of administrations. In the 2014 elections, PKS only controlled only 6 out of 50 local parliament seats in Depok, dropped significantly from the 2009 election in which the party occupied 11 seats. Interview with Abu Ridho (Jakarta, 2 Nov. 2016), Fahri Hamzah (Jakarta, 10 Nov. 2016), Cahyadi Takariawan (Yogyakarta, 8 Sept. 2016).
Islamising local politics, or *syariatisasi*, is frequently seen as an inevitable result of the intersection between Islamism and decentralised democracy. While there is no guarantee that *syariatisasi* of local politics is a direct continuation of the Islamisation of society, observers tend to quickly conclude that this phenomenon represents ‘a historical breakthrough in the trajectory of political Islam in Indonesia’ (Hasan, 2007: 10). Without undermining the importance of discussing the development of sharia issues, and its associated problems and contradictions, it is suggested here that *syariatisasi* is a symptom of the Islamists’ hegemonic failure rather than indicating their strength or coherence, as discussed below.

The localisation of power, as extensively studied, has facilitated the mobilisation of communitarian politics—often a merge between religion and ethnics markers—by a multitude of social groups for the concrete struggles to improve their social position in local areas (Schulte-Nordholt and Klinken, 2007; Hadiz, 2010). For example, Islamist organisations like *Front Pembela Islam* (FPI) in Jakarta, the Committee for the Preparation of Formalisation of Sharia (KPPSI) in South Sulawesi and numerous *Majelis Ta’lim* (Islamic congregations) in Jakarta and Java, or even transnational-oriented HTI have increasingly influenced local power contests at provincial and district levels (Bush, 2008; Nashir, 2007; Buehler, 2016). Furthermore, these organisations actively advocate the enactment of sharia-by-laws (*perda syariah*) whose contents mainly pertain to regulate women’s dress and behaviour (Robinson, 2009: 171), create moral-based societies, and also incline to be discriminatory towards minority groups (Bush, 2008: 175). Nevertheless, rather than representing a coherent struggle for sharia implementation, as discussed later, Islamist organisations tend to advance their demands for sharia with different strategies and are more pragmatic in nature. These characteristics have been mainly

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132 HTI activists have an ambiguous position regarding decentralisation. While helping them to expand their outlets at local levels, they concern that decentralisation is incompatible with the centralistic governing model they advocate and even discloses possibilities for non-Muslims to control the local power. Interview with Ismail Yusanto (Jakarta 7 Nov. 2016).

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resulted from the inabilities of Islamic parties in establishing a relatively coherent representation among diverse Islamist movements.133

In the decentralised political context, the failure of Islamic parties to build a viable vehicle representing the diverse demands of the ummah in the political arena has brought about two immediate implications. Firstly, instead of building a collaboration with Islamic parties, many extra-parliamentary Islamist organisations tend to support parties or candidates which have greater chance to win the pilkada. They see this strategy as the only mean to have better access to state power and influence within society. The absence of Islamist hegemonic agenda has greatly facilitated mutual instrumentalization between the established local elites and the Islamists for building patronage networks to control and preserve privileged access to the state institutions and local resources.

Secondly, as a political discourse, Islam has increasingly become a floating signifier, appropriated and articulated by any parties especially for courting Islamist constituents dissatisfied with Islamic parties. This also explains, as further discussed in Chapter 6, why Islamist discourse has been increasingly prominent for the current struggle for power in the democracy era. In fact, all these developments are at odds with the inclusion-moderation thesis which argued that the participation of major Islamist organisational vehicles in democratic process would lead to the moderation or normalisation of Islamic politics (Brocker and Künkler, 2013; Tomsa, 2012; Buehler, 2013).

Among the Islamists, the growing demands of perda syariah are also considered as an immediate response to the presumed crisis within the existing legal system and socio-economic conditions. Hidayat Nur Wahid, for example, states that ‘the demands for sharia should be positively appreciated, as an alternative solution for social problems. These demands rapidly grow because members of society perceive that law enforcement in this country is extremely weak’ (2004: 162).

133 One informant stated that: ‘through organisation like FPI, we struggle for the implementation of sharia especially in local areas. To achieve this goal we have to collaborate with any figures and any parties—no matter who they are—especially when Islamic parties cannot advocate this demand and work with us’. Interview with Mahdi Assegaf, FPI activist and the leader of largest Islamic Majelis Syababul Kheir, (Bogor, 4 Dec. 2016).
Similarly, HTI activists also advance the slogan of ‘save Indonesia with sharia and caliphate’ (Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, 2009), seen as a solution for the continuous marginalisation of the ummah and socio-economic problems faced by this country. In fact, the perda syariah discourse has also been appropriated by diverse social agents, including local governments which often advance it rather opportunistically.

For the latter, supporting perda syariah is often seen as a strategy to address legitimacy problems due to corruption and the failures of managing the government (Bush, 2008) and to pre-empt challenges against the government that could be waged by extra-parliamentary Islamist organisations like FPI or HTI (Hadiz, 2016). In addition, Buehler (2008; 2016) also pointed out that the introduction of perda syariah provide benefits for the local governments, opening a new avenue for capital and power accumulation.134

Therefore, it is not surprising that the major advocates of sharia-by-laws are not necessarily Islamic parties but mostly associated with the district heads, mayors or governors who collaborate with Islamist groups during the Pilkada (Buehler, 2013; 2016; Bush, 2008). In the parliament, the strongest factions in all provinces that produced sharia-by-laws between 1999 and 2009, as noted by Buehler (2013: 67-8), were not the Islamic parties. In fact, ‘secular-nationalist’ parties have increasingly utilised Islam as their new political slogan and even created an ‘Islamic wing’ within their parties. For example, the ‘secular-nationalist parties of PDIP had established its Islamic wing, Baitul Muslimin Indonesia (BAMUSI, The House of Indonesian Muslim, set up in 2007)135 or the Democrat Party’s self-depiction of being ‘nationalist-religious’ party under the then leadership of Anas Urbaningrum, a former HMI chairman. Crucially, all these developments have prevented Islamic parties like PKS from claiming themselves as the sole and the most ‘legitimate’ articulator of Islam, especially in matters related to sharia-by-laws.136

134 Some of the sharia-laws, such as zakat (alms-givings) that target local bureaucrats and private sector enterprises, can create a new source of revenue that can be utilised for expanding the patronage networks, especially with Islamist groups. In the district of Bulukumba of South Sulawesi, for example, local civil servants are requested to pay 2.5% of their annual salary for zakat, collected and managed directly by the local government. See Buehler (2008: 262-263)
135 Interview with Dr Cornelis Lay, a UGM political scientist (Yogyakarta, 16 Jan. 2016).
It is also worth noting that instead of being a chain of equivalence among diverse demands of Muslim communities, the perda syariah debates have only weakened Islamic politics, contributing to further division of Muslims into mutually antagonistic camps. Those who oppose the introduction and implementation of syariah are often members of Muslim community who perceive that sharia-by-laws are frequently discriminatory against women and minority groups (Wahid Institute, 2007). Some (for example the then Vice-President Jusuf Kalla) even stated that perda syariah, which is more driven by political than religious motives, is actually ‘insulting to Islam and God’ (via Bush, 2008: 175). On the contrary, the purveyors of sharia-by-laws like HTI and FPI often accused the groups which opposed them, the so-called ‘liberal Islam’, as the Western-created agencies which are hostile to those who seek to implement Islam comprehensively. For example, FPI leaders often frame Muslim scholars and activists unsupportive to the issues of sharia implementation as ‘sipilis’ (lit. syphilis) groups, referring to the advocates of ‘secularism, pluralism, liberalism’ (see, for example, Kersten, 2015). It is apparent that the discourse of sharia-by-laws only created further internal divisions within Muslims. In fact, they are increasingly overwhelmed in their debates of defining ‘the truest’ Islam rather than what Islam can offer to deal with the problems affecting Muslims generally and the wider population such as poverty and equality. Therefore, rather than showing a distinct political agency to reshape power relations in favour of the ummah, the sharia debates in the context of decentralised democracy only reveal the fragmentation of Islamic politics and pave the ways for the instrumentalisation of Islam by the established local elites.

Building Plural and Tolerant Societies: Securitisation and Culturalisation of Islamism

Partly prompted by the outbreak of ethnic violent conflicts following Soeharto’s fall (e.g., Wessel and Wimhofer, 2001; van Klinken, 2007; Bertrand, 2004; Colombijn and Lindblad, 2002), building plural and tolerant societies are also

constituted as a project for post-New Order’s democratisation. While political liberalisation and decentralisation, as discussed above, have produced diverse Islamists’ articulations seeking a greater role in the state and society, the pervasiveness of identity politics in power struggles has raised a concern about the intrusion of communitarian-based mobilisation in the political arena. This set the ground for mainstreaming the dangerous enterprise of ‘Islamisation of the state’. Mainly advocated through the dominant discourses of multiculturalism and tolerance, Islamist articulations are then confined to the domain of culture. Consequently, the projects of building plural and tolerant societies for a democratisation agenda are often achieved, paradoxically, by the process of depoliticisation of Islamic politics.

By depoliticization, this study specifically refers to the attempts of removing ‘a political phenomenon from the comprehension of its historical emergence and from a recognition of the powers that produce and contour it’ (Brown, 2006: 15. Italics in original). In the context of building plural and tolerant societies for democratisation, depoliticisation of Islamic politics takes place within two central directions. First, through the securitisation of Islamic politics, especially following the merging discourse of GWOT and democratic transition. As discussed later, the GWOT discourse has facilitated the sharp distinction between Islamist articulations considered as compatible with democratisation agenda from other articulations which are seen as not only endangering democracy but also threatening national stability and sovereignty. Second, through the culturalisation of Islamic politics as mainly propagated following the dominance of the multiculturalism and tolerance discourses—increasingly seen as a central instrument for managing political difference. Through these discourses, for example, certain articulations of Islam—especially those associated with the purveyors of shumuliyatul Islam—are essentially presented as a challenge to a harmonious and multi-cultural nation. As we shall see, these depoliticisation processes have greatly influenced the production of distinct Islamist agencies and subjectivities which fit comfortably with the project for restructuring neoliberal global order and Indonesia’s presumed democratisation.
Islamic Radicalism and Securitisation of Islamism

Following the GWOT campaigns, Islamic radicalism has increasingly emerged as an explanatory concept for the current understanding of the relationship between Islam, politics, and violence (Mamdani, 2002; Asad, 2007; Sen, 2006). In Indonesia, the concept of Islamic radicalism captures not only the Islamists with violent articulations, especially the *jihadist* and vigilante groups which sprung up more visibly since the 2000s but also those which advocate the comprehensive nature of religion and politics (see, for example, Fealy, 2004). Largely defined in terms of ideological and behavioral aspects, however, this category can easily lead to simple profiling of the Islamists while at the same time obscuring the dimensions of power that produce their emergence and contour their development. Moreover, while the GWOT discourse reveals two contending forms of Islamism (i.e. the moderates vs the radicals), it also shapes the contestations and social coalitions among social groups for the post-Soeharto reorganisation of power.

Especially after the 2002 Bali bombing, the US-led GWOT has apparently become a nationalised discourse that reveals the different forms of Islamism in coping with the relationship between global politics and violence (see Hefner, 2002). Yet, the GWOT discourse had initially brought about an ambiguous response from the Islamists. While they generally condemned violent acts in the name of Islam, the Islamists were also concerned about the consequences of this campaign for Islamism. For example, the then Vice-President Hamzah Haz (PPP) warned the US against ‘scapegoating’ Muslims, claiming that the WTC attack might help to ‘cleanse’ their sins (via Hefner, 2002: 754). Even after the 2002 Bali bombing that took more than 200 lives, many Muslim leaders were still sceptical regarding the existence of Al-Qaeda’s regional branch of *Jamaah Islamiyah* (JI)—seen by security specialists as the perpetrator of terror in Indonesia and the region (Jones, 2004: 25).138

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138 For the discussions on the *Jemaah Islamiyah* (JI) in Indonesia and Southeast Asia, see Abuza (2003); Barton (2004); ICG (2002); Ramakhrisna and Tan (2004).
It is not surprising that the tendencies of associating the GWOT and the US-led campaign to undermine Islam are more pronounced among the advocates of the *shumulyatul Islam*. Hidayat Nur Wahid, then PKS chairman, for example, argues that the GWOT is not only targeting Islam but also the integrity of Indonesia’s nation-state by providing supports for separatist movements as well as creating disharmony within Muslim communities (2004: 144-152). Following the GWOT campaign, the promotion of ‘liberal Islam’ and interventions in Islamic education under the umbrella of ‘deradicalisation’ programs are often regarded as *ghazwul fikr* (lit. the invasion of ideas) to systematically destroy the *ummah*.\(^{139}\) HTI spokesperson, Ismail Yunanto, further argues that the deployment of the Islamic radicalism concept is specifically ‘to target people or groups regarded as threatening the status quo, particularly Islamist activists who struggle for the implementation of Islamic teachings.’\(^{140}\) Another HTI senior activist, Yusuf Mustakim, sees that the tensions between ‘moderate’ and ‘radical’ Islam as implied by the GWOT discourse are fabricated to discredit Muslims altogether. He states that ‘the difference between those who appropriate Islam for individual piety and those who are aware that Islam must be implemented comprehensively is seen exclusively from the lens of security.’\(^{141}\)

Tantalisingly, these Islamist groups also utilise the GWOT campaigns to escalate anti-Western views which is performative for the reconstitution of their identities. In fact, constituting ‘the West’ as the antagonistic other for the Islamists is not a new phenomenon, given their identities have been politically constructed in this way, as vehemently articulated in the praxis-ideology of *ghazwul fikr*.\(^{142}\) Specifically, their anti-Western practices are functional for their efforts to broaden their social base and, in turn, to build ‘peaceful’ images as a counter to the ‘radical’ label that had been attached to them. For example, Suharna Surapranata, the head

\(^{139}\) Interview with Dr Hidayat Nur Wahid (Jakarta 15 Dec. 2016).

\(^{140}\) Interview with Ismail Yusanto (Jakarta, 7 Nov. 2016).

\(^{141}\) Interview with Yusuf Mustakim, HTI Yogyakarta-based spokesperson (Yogyakarta, 23 Sept. 2016).

\(^{142}\) *Ghazwul fikri* is often defined as the defence of cultural or ideological system against all forces which ‘potentially’ undermine Islam. Its perpetrators include the forces representing the Jews, Christian, Communists or cultural expression like hedonism and consumerism. See van Bruinessen (2014: 61-85).
of PKS’ Central Advisory Board (MPP, Majelis Pertimbangan Partai) recalled that anti-US mobilisation prior to the 2004 elections was ‘like a blessing in disguise because at that time the party did not attract Muslims more generally through the promotion of sharia or other Islamist slogans.’ HTI activists also claim that their ideology becomes more acceptable among general Muslims, accusing the West as the ‘real’ face of terror. One HTI activist states that:

Our *dakwah* is not waging jihad against the perpetrators… but protecting the *ummah* by, for instance, disseminating the awareness about Western conspiracy and hypocrisy… In the name of GWOT, they are continuously killing Muslims, our women and children in Afghanistan, Iraq, and others. So, who are the radicals then? Who are the real terrorists?

The GWOT discourse also discloses the debates around the relations between Islamism, security, and democracy. Security analysts (e.g., Abuza, 2007), have typically argued that the rise of radical Islam has been a result of the transformation from an authoritarian regime to democracy. The weak capacity of the state in the aftermath of the New Order is often seen as responsible for the emergence of Islamist groups (Abuza, 2007: 5). Crucially, such approaches tend to call for the (re)strengthening the state as a solution for dealing with the radical Islamist groups (Abuza, 2007: 5, 67).

It is also worth noting that securitisation of Islamism in Indonesia takes place in the period when the interconnection between democratisation and political stability was regarded as determining the fate of the Indonesian nation-state and regional stability. After 9/11, the global concerns regarding international terrorism have increasingly changed the involvement of strong states in sponsoring terrorist organisations to that of relatively weak states unable to control the threat of transnational non-state actors (Volpi, 2010: 156; Fukuyama, 2004). Accordingly,

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143 In the 2004 election, PKS’ national votes increased dramatically from 1.36 to 4.34 per cent. Apart from its success to create the image of ‘clean’ party, the party leaders also pointed out that such anti-US demonstration and humanitarian activities such as helping the people during the Jakarta flood in 2003 were also instrumental for the widening the party’s constituency. Interview with Dr Hidayat Nur Wahid (Jakarta, 15 Dec. 2016), Dr Suharna Surapranata (Jakarta, 31 Oct. 2016).

144 Interview with Yusuf Mustakim (Yogyakarta, 23 Sept. 2016).

145 These issues are mainly discussed in the literature of International Relations (IR) and humanitarian intervention. See, for example, Rotberg (2004), Krasner and Pascual (2005), Fukuyama (2004).
the GWOT campaigns have increasingly become a new avenue for the state transformation worldwide, that often giving a blank cheque for various forms of international interventions (Duffield, 2001; Hameiri, 2010). In the context of Indonesia, the fall of Soeharto that was accompanied by religious and ethnic violent conflicts had often raised the fears that democratic transition in this country would result in the ‘balkanisation’ or even lead to a ‘failed state’ (Aspinall and Berger, 2001; Abuza, 2003). Moreover, by framing Southeast Asia as ‘the second front’ of the GWOT, Washington began to actively engage the countries in this region for the anti-terrorism campaign (see, for example, Acharya, 2007). As such, as Hadiz (2006: 124-5) pointed out, GWOT campaigns were also instrumental for creating a distinct form of governance for the purposes of maintaining Indonesia’s nation-state, containing radical Islamic forces and maintaining security for the operations of international capital in Indonesia and the region.

Therefore, the securitisation of Islamism is directly linked to the restructuring of global order and state-building under the banner of the global promotion of democracy (c.f., Fukuyama, 2004). While previously democratisation is promoted by emphasising institutional building, strengthening civil society and good governance, after the GWOT democratisation agenda put more emphasis on the advancement of ‘civic’ practices and values such as religious tolerance. Moreover, all these changes took place concurrently with the reorientation of the post-Cold War global development agenda which highlights the importance of technocratic and market-friendly governance. By reviving Huntington’s revisionism of modernisation theory, this new development agenda privileged political order and stability by depoliticising democratisation processes. In fact, the ascendancy of security approaches after 9/11, that frequently conceive Islamism as a threat to national security and stability, has converged comfortably with the neoliberal global ordering.

At the societal level, the securitisation of Islamic politics has also exacerbated the conflicts between the ‘radical’ and ‘moderate’ Muslims. It is primarily conducted through the promotion of ‘liberal’ or ‘civil’ Islam, seen as a sort of civil society force functional for the working of democracy (c.f., Mujani, 2007). This
orientation has been articulated by various Islamist groups, in particular the Islamic Liberal Network (JIL, *Jaringan Islam Liberal*). Other Islamists, like HTI and FPI, frequently see JIL as a US-created agent to undermine Indonesian Muslims and as a domestic source of *ghazwul fikr*. Commenting on such charges, Ulil Abshar Abdala, a JIL leading figure, states that:

> Indeed, the rise of JIL can be cynically seen as part of the GWOT scheme. It is undeniable because one of its agenda is fighting the jihadists and radical Islamists. Yet, this is only one among other JIL’s activities and intellectual aspirations... Essentially, JIL believes that the framework of liberal democracy is the best one, and we attempt to provide a conceptual and theological basis to support it. I think this is JIL’s most significant contribution, refreshing Islamic teachings for the workings of the current democracy.  

The foregoing discussion shows that the GWOT discourse has constituted ‘Islamic radicalism’ as an object of knowledge production on the one hand and the political object of surveillance and securitisation on the other. Framed as threats to democratisation and national security, governing Islamic radicalism facilitates the reconstitution of a global order that directly affects the reorganisation of power in post-Soeharto Indonesia. The GWOT discourse has effectively depoliticised Islamism, meaning that its political agency to represent the diverse demands of the *ummah* has been increasingly removed. It also further aggravates the fragmentation of Islamism, as apparently seen in the confrontation between ‘the radical’ and ‘the moderate’ subjects, defined merely in an ideological and cultural sense.

**Multiculturalism and Politicisation of Difference**

After the Soeharto’s fall, especially in the context of the prolonged ethnic and religious violent conflicts, multiculturalism discourse found broader appeal as a central component for ‘democratic transition’ and sustaining peaceful and harmonious societies. Nevertheless, multiculturalism discourse had been

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146 JIL is a loose and fluid forum comprising of young middle-class Muslim intelligentsia, based in Utan Kayu, Jakarta. The forum promotes a more ‘liberal’ interpretation of Islam through discussions, seminars and web-based media outlets. See also Ali (2005), Kersten (2015).

147 Interview with Ismail Yusanto (Jakarta, 7 Nov. 2016), Yusuf Mustakim (Yogyakarta, 23 Sep. 2016).

148 Interview with Ulil Absar Adalla (Jakarta, 6 Dec. 2016).
differently articulated by social groups with various contents and trajectories, which shaped the spaces of contestation and constituted different forms of Islamist agencies. Such diverse articulations were situated in the global setting of the war on terrorism and liberal democracy promotion on the one hand and the need to create a new format for managing differences suitable for the post-Soeharto democratisation agenda on the other. Arguably, there were three articulatory forms of multiculturalism discourse during this era: (1) multiculturalism as part of the GWOT imperatives, (2) multiculturalism regarded as the modalities of democracy, and (3) multicultural aspiration for a new framework of the state’s management of diverse societies.

Following the GWOT campaign, the questions of Islamism and global violence had been a new basis for categorising the forms of Islamist agencies, by further promoting the culturalisation of Islamism (see, Asad, 2007; Mamdani, 2002). Hefner (2002), for example, states that the real struggles ‘lie within Muslim societies, where ultraconservatives compete against moderates and democrats for the vision and soul of the Muslim public’ (2002: 763, *italics* in original). Therefore, such cultural categories of Islamism had strengthened the already existing binary subject of ‘radical’ and ‘moderate’ Islamism, by which the former was often seen as representing ‘anti-democracy’ tendencies. Consequently, the diverse forms of Islamism are no longer acknowledged as having political agencies for the struggle for a better position through democratic contestation but are ‘politicised’ for the mainstreaming of ‘moderate’ Islamism.

Multiculturalism discourse has also been articulated as an integral part of democracy modalities, especially by highlighting the ideas of pluralism and tolerance. Within this distinct discursive framework, Islamist groups which seek to articulate religion in the political arena were under scrutiny. Maarif (2010), for example, has warned about the danger of Islamist groups which call for the implementation of sharia on the basis that this aspiration is incompatible with the nature of Indonesian society and, worse, it can lead to exclusionary politics. The underlying thesis is that ‘democratic consolidation’ can only be sustained by
constructing the identity of ‘Muslim democrats’ or ‘civil Islam’. By advocating such issues as the protection of minority rights and tolerance, the making of ‘pluralist’ Islam identities is often carried out by defining other Islamists as ‘radical’ and ‘intolerant’ which are not only incompatible but also threatening Indonesia’s democratic consolidation (see, for example, Künkler and Stepan, 2013).

The last articulatory model of multiculturalism discourse—that is inexorably linked to the second one—is associated with the state’s management of diverse societies. Emerging out from a critique of the New Order’s model of organising societies—based on top-down and universalisation framework, many ‘pro-democracy’ NGOs advocated the need for recognising differences and strengthening state’s capacities, especially through the rule of law, to guarantee the protection of minority rights (see Hefner, 2018). Indeed, such articulations have disclosed the spaces for the previously ‘suppressed’ groups, such as Ahmadi (regarded as a minority sect within Islam) and penghayat kepercayaan (the followers of ‘indigenous’ religion) to claim the rights for political recognition. In the context of post-Soeharto Indonesia, however, such an articulatory model has brought about a paradoxical result: the contestation of religious rights. Reports on religious freedom in Indonesia, such as from the Wahid Foundation (2018) and the CRCS (2013), have shown the increasing trends of intolerance and conflicts, especially against religious minority groups. This not only signals the increasing role of ‘conservative’ or ‘radical’ Islamists in ordering the public sphere but is also a result of the contested religious rights. For example, Front Pembela Islam (FPI) often instrumentalise a Joint Decree (Surat Keputusan Bersama, made by Home Ministry, Religious Affairs Ministry, and Attorney General’s Office) as a pretext to attack Ahmadi communities and claiming itself as ‘helping’ the government in law enforcement.

In regard to Islamism, the ‘backlash’ of multiculturalism discourse reached a peak when the MUI, that was increasingly dominated by ‘conservative’ Islamist figures, issued a fatwa in 2005 that condemned the notions of pluralism, liberalism

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149 Interview with Dr Ahmad Rumadi, head of NU’s Lakpesdam (Jakarta, 9 Dec. 2016), Dr Najib Burhani, senior LIPI researcher and Muhammadiyah activist (Jakarta, 8 Dec. 2016).
and secularism. Clearly, the ultimate target was the proponents of ‘moderate-pluralist’ Islam (Kresten, 2015; Ichwan, 2013). While this fatwa was criticised by many Muslim scholars, Islamist groups like FPI, HTI and to some extent PKS have utilised it for Islamist mobilisation. A new vehicle called the Forum Umat Islam (FUI, Forum of Islamic Society), pioneered by HTI and FPI, was forged to follow up on the ‘anti-multiculturalism’ fatwa.\(^{150}\) Polarisation among Islamist groups on the basis of multiculturalism discourse had clearly manifested in such public debates as the promulgation of the anti-pornography bill, by which both groups often mobilised their respective supporters onto the streets.\(^{151}\) The rift between the so-called ‘intolerant’ and ‘tolerant-pluralist’ Islamism culminated in June 2008, when FPI and FUI activists, who at that time were holding a demonstration demanding the ban against the Ahmadi groups, violently attacked the masses from the Aliansi Kebangsaan untuk Kebebasan Beragama dan Berkeyakinan (AKKBB, National Alliance for Freedom of Religion and Faith) that organised a rally to commemorate the birth of Pancasila in Jakarta (The Jakarta Post, 2 June 2008).

Because of fear about the danger of ethnic and religious conflicts which threatens the unity of Indonesia, the discourse of tolerance and multiculturalism has comfortably fit into nation-building discourses. This linkage has created new spaces of contestations and social coalition which characterise post-Soeharto Indonesian politics, as discussed below. It is apparent that the construction of ‘intolerant’ Islamist identities refers not only to their different behaviour but is now seen as inherently threatening to the pluralistic and tolerant nature of Indonesian societies (c.f., Burhanudin and van Dijk, 2013). Terms like ‘Arabisasi Indonesia’ (lit. Arabisation of Indonesia) versus Islam Nusantara (lit. Islam of the archipelago), for example, has often constituted a language war against transnational-based and

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\(^{150}\) The Indonesian Forum of Islamic Society (FUI, Forum Umat Islam) established in 2005, specifically to follow up the MUI fatwa to counter the proponents of secularism, pluralism and liberalism. Comprised of several ultra-conservative Islamist groups, FUI’s main components were HTI and FPI—the most vocal mass-based Islamist organisations in Jakarta. FUI was led by Alkhaththath, then also the HTI chairman. After the 2008 Monas incident, HTI subsequently expelled him from its structure. Subsequently, HTI organise the rallies on various issues without building an alliance with other Islamist organisations. Interview with Muhammad Al-Khaththath (Jakarta, 14 Dec. 2016), Ismail Yusanto (Jakarta, 7 Nov. 2016).

\(^{151}\) Interview with Muhammad Al-Khaththath (Jakarta, 14 Dec. 2016), Ledia Hanifah (Jakarta, 3 Nov. 2016), Iffah Nur, HTI Women (Muslimah HTI) spokeswoman (Jakarta, 11 Nov. 2016).
‘intolerant’ Islamism, especially HTI, FPI and Salafi groups. The fact that the Islam Nusantara platform is often associated with anti-Arabisasi and anti-intolerant Islamists has made it also vocally articulated and defended by ‘nationalist-secular’ parties like PDIP. The nationalist discourse of Islamism subsequently manifests in the utilisation of such terms as ‘defending NKRI’ or ‘NKRI harga mati’ (NKRI as the final form of the state), which specifically frame transnational Islamism and those advocating sharia as betraying the state ideology of Pancasila. In fact, ‘defending NKRI’ discourse, that was previously associated with the re-entrance of the military in the socio-political arena, is now appropriated for the building of a coalition between ‘moderate-pluralist’ Islamist and ‘nationalist-secular’ groups against the ‘intolerant-radical’ Islamists.

The foregoing discussion shows different articulations of multiculturalism discourse in relation to the practices of Islamic politics in the post-New Order era. With regard to our discussion of Islamists’ hegemonic struggles, such development has brought about far-reaching consequences which are ironically counter-productive both for building a hegemonic Islamism and also for establishing a more substantive democracy. First, the three articulations of multiculturalism discourse have failed to facilitate the creation of political unity among different Islamist groups. Instead, they draw new antagonistic lines between the so-called ‘radical-intolerant’ and ‘moderate-pluralist’ Islamism. Second, as part of democratisation agenda, the aforementioned articulations of multiculturalism had not facilitated the creation of citizenship-based representation. Rather than investing in social

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152 NU had formally adopted the platform of Islam Nusantara in the 2015 Congress— in its bid against the influence of transnational-inspired Islamism. This idea was actually developed from notions of pribumisasi Islam (lit. indigenisation of Islam) that was introduced by Abdurrahman Wahid in the 1980s. This notion accentuates the merging of Islam and local traditions which characterised Indonesian Islam, while Islam Nusantara emphasises opposition towards transnational-based Islamism like HTI and Salafism (Sahal and Aziz, 2015). In turn, the Islamists like HTI sees Islam Nusantara as more dangerous than Islam Liberal given the better acceptance of the former as a bandwagon for those who oppose the sharia and the caliphate projects. For HTI’s views on Islam Nusantara, see Al-Wai, 1 July 2015. Interview with Ismail Yusanto (Jakarta, 7 Nov. 2016), Muhammad Al-Khaththath (Jakarta, 14 Dec. 2016).

153 For example, PDIP chairwoman Megawati Sukarnoputri calls for the importance of building Indonesian Islam. Such identity is constructed ‘not by importing from the Islamic culture of the Middle East, which is not necessarily compatible with the values of our Indonesia-ness’. The transcript of her speech before the inauguration of its party’s Islamic wing, BAMUSI, is retrieved from https://pdiperjuangan.id/article/category/detail/210/Berita/Pengarahan-Ketua-Umum-PDI-Perjuangan-PadapPelantikan-Baitul-Muslimin-Indonesia- (accessed, 25 Jan. 2018).
transformation, such distinct multiculturalism discourse has produced the ideology-praxis of ‘the difference for the sake of difference’. Third, multiculturalism discourse in the post-New Oder has brought about the culturalisation of Islamism, by which the category of ‘tolerance’ is constituted as new signifier to define the different nature and trajectories of Islamic politics. In the absence of citizenship-based articulations, culturalisation of Islamism in the forms of ‘moderate-pluralist’ and ‘radical-intolerant’ Islam had, in fact, politicised them especially in defining different electoral constituencies. As such, multiculturalism discourse contributes to the prevalence of identity politics that characterise current practices of democracy in Indonesia.

Conclusion

The discussion of this chapter captures the diverse articulations of Islam where democratisation is constituted as a master signifier—a new terrain for various efforts to transform New Order authoritarianism. Indeed, democratisation has been appropriated and articulated by diverse social subjects with different interests and trajectories which brought about the complexities of a new configuration of contestations and social coalitions. In regard to Islamic politics, this chapter examines such complexities and dynamics in three areas, namely, political liberalisation, decentralisation and the building of plural and tolerant societies. It is postulated here that the functioning of democracy in post-New Order Indonesia is not primarily determined by the presence of necessary rules and institutions. Rather, it is contingent on the ability of social subjects to expand the chains of equivalences linking together diverse democratic demands and the continuous presence of the dimensions of the political.

While political liberalisation and decentralisation facilitate the Islamists to seek a greater role in state and society, the logic of difference tends to characterise their struggles. Specifically, they have failed to build a coherent political vehicle when the momentum to do so was opened by democratisation discourse. Unable to transform the tensions between past legacies of New Order’s corporatisation and
the present pressure of electoral politics, the Islamists experience severe fragmentation with far-reaching implications. Besides triggering the rapid emergence of Islamist vehicles claiming to represent the *ummah*, the fragmentation of Islamism also paves the ways for competing elites—mostly associated with oligarchs nurtured during the New Order era—to occupy political voids disclosed by democratisation and decentralisation. This fragmentation also prompts Islamist parties to continuously build a consensus and political compromise. Instead of offering an alternative order they tend to maintain the status quo, even by forging an alliance with the old elites. Therefore, rather than showing the completion of democratic transition and entering the period of its consolidation, the momentum for hegemonic struggles to form a clear break with the New Order was actually lost. Hence, the political discourse of reform versus the status quo is replaced by the search for order and compromise.

It is also shown that Islamist struggles for post-Soeharto political order have also been shaped by the multiculturalism discourse, which is initially regarded as a central component for democratic consolidation and sustaining peaceful and harmonious societies. There are three main articulations of multiculturalism discourse, which are situated in the context of GWOT campaigns and global promotion of liberal democracy. These articulations of multiculturalism discourse had effectively produced the culturalisation of Islamism, by which the category of tolerance becomes a parameter to define different nature and trajectories of Islamic politics in the antagonistic forms of ‘moderate-pluralist’ and ‘radical-intolerant’ camps.

Undoubtedly, all these developments have influenced the post-Soeharto reorganisation of power that maintains the technocratic logic of governing and depoliticised society. In fact, since the end of the Cold War and especially after the GWOT, depoliticisation of social conflicts has become a global trend for the reconfiguration of neoliberal global order (Mamdani, 2002; Asad, 2007; Brown, 2006). As such, the notion of ‘tolerance’, instead of equality and social justice, for example, has increasingly become a key term for ‘describing and prescribing conflicts rendered as cultural’ (Brown, 2006: 299). In the post-New Order context,
the absence of a relatively hegemonic political project and cross-cutting representation have made democratisation an arena for the mobilisation of identity politics as the viable basis of political contestation. Such issues, which greatly characterise current Indonesian politics and the practices of Islamism, will be further elaborated in the subsequent chapter.
Introduction

The preceding chapter revealed that the articulations of Islam following post-New Order democratisation have not led to the creation of chains of equivalence that link together cross-cutting demands and agendas among diverse social groups under the banner of the ummah. Instead, Islamic politics in the democratisation era is largely characterised by further fragmentation in both electoral politics and the civil society arena. Crucially, such fragmentation takes place against two inter-related backdrops: (1) the hegemony of neoliberalism which has depoliticising effects for democracy and development practices (2) the securitisation and culturalisation of Islam in the aftermath of the GWOT campaign. The purpose of this chapter is twofold. First, to investigate the convergence of neoliberal hegemony and post-New Order democratisation, particularly the ways it constitutes distinct practices, institutions and imaginaries of democracy. Second, to analyse how this contributes to the absence of a hegemonic Islamic bloc for the workings of Indonesian democracy as well as the practices of Islamism.

In the aftermath of the Cold War and especially after 9/11, democratisation projects worldwide have been undertaken in the context of the hegemony of neoliberal globalisation (see, for example, Volpi and Cavatorta, 2007; Brown, 2015; Tar, 2009 for the case of Africa). The dominance of economic rationalities has not only resulted in market-oriented policies but also significantly influenced the workings of political representation. As such, democracy is increasingly signified by the logic of market competition as mere electoral politics in which individual and social groups are reduced to abstracted voters. Instead of creating ‘the people’ (demos) as ultimate subjects, neoliberal-driven democratisation has
often been followed by the depoliticisation of social conflicts and the promotion of a technocratic model of governing.

Without the terrain of social conflicts and the confrontations between different projects of society, the political dimension of democracy disappears. Hence, democracy only allows people to vote without the possibility of choosing between political alternatives. In the case of Indonesia, as discussed in Chapter 5, this condition takes place when there are no coherent political forces capable of representing cross-cutting alliances for a post-Soeharto political order and when the political sphere is dominated by the elite-based consensus and compromise. How has this condition—labelled as ‘post-politics’ by Mouffe (2005; 2018)—shaped post-New Order democratisation? What are the consequences for the workings of democracy and the practices of Islamism?

This chapter argues that the depoliticisation effects brought about by neoliberalisation of democratic politics and development have created a favourable terrain for the articulations of such categories as religion and ethnicity that claim to represent those who feel neglected and unheard in the existing representative system. Islam, therefore, becomes a viable political discourse to construct ‘the people’ based on *ummah* identities, appealing to those who are peripheralised by small groups of rapacious elites. From this vantage point, the advent of so-called ‘Islamic populism’ as a form of the construction of the people through the language of Islam is not antithetical to, but directly springs from the actual practices of democracy in post-New Order era. Hence, the prevalence of Islamist political discourse in current Indonesian politics is symptomatic of the dislocation of democracy rather than something that inherently threatens it.

Democratisation discourses have indeed facilitated the Islamists to construct the forms of the people around the signifier of the *ummah* to advance their social positions and agendas in the post-New Order political settings. Such processes have constituted distinct forms of agency, subjectivity, institution and relation of power which characterise the practices of democracy and Islamism. It is shown here that the primacy of Islamist discourse for power struggle is not necessarily indicative of the ‘Islamisation of politics’ that often seen as fundamentally threatening to
Indonesian democracy. Conversely, it is also not a mere ‘politicism of Islam’ instrumentalised by the competing elites or political parties for the purposes of maintaining their positions of power. In fact, both the Islamists and contending elites and political parties—as distinct political subjects—are also conditioned and shaped as results of the confluence from the practices of democracy and Islamism. Such relations are particularly shown in the making of what this study calls the ‘electoral ummah’, whose features and consequences will be discussed in more detail later.

Like other forms of populist politics, Islamists’ construction of the people often has a right-wing character in that it brings together a multitude of social demands among Muslims by using xenophobic rhetoric. Mainly due to such exclusionary propensities, the mainstreaming of Islamic populism as a threat to pluralist democracy and the unity of Indonesia’s nation-state has currently gained more traction. Nevertheless, it is shown here that the attempts to counter the rise of Islamic populism by politicising and mobilising other forms of communal identity, mostly around the markers of nationalism and pluralist Islam, have not only sharpened the existing antagonistic relations among these groups but also shaped the playing field for contestation and social coalition between Islamists and beyond. Regarding the rise of Islamic populist politics, it is further argued that the ultimate challenge for democracy is not defending or deterring one form of identity over others but transforming the existing antagonistic relations by undertaking a hegemonic politics which links together multiple others in a search for the creation of more inclusive unity.

**The Impasse of Democracy:**

**Democratisation without Hegemonic Forces**

By utilising the parameters of transitology approaches, such as civil-military relations, the presence of democratic institutions and free elections, one can too quickly conclude that democratic transition in Indonesia has been completed, moving towards a new stage of democratic consolidation (see, for example,
Mietzner, 2009; Liddle and Mujani, 2013). While admitting the significant progress in transforming authoritarian rule, other scholars (for example, Hadiz, 2017a; c.f., Robison and Hadiz, 2004) contend that the workings of democracy in Indonesia are still flawed, if not experiencing serious setbacks. For them, democratisation has not fundamentally changed the existing political structures. In fact, democratic mechanisms, they argue, have been instrumentalised and hijacked by the powerful elites nurtured since Soeharto era for their efforts to maintain control over power and resources. While sharing the concerns with structuralist perspectives in comprehending the trajectories of democratisation as embedded in a given structure of power, the focus of this section sheds lights on the constitutive roles of the political—i.e. the spaces of social conflicts and differences—for the workings of post-New Order democratisation.

Over two decades of Reformasi, democratisation projects have not resulted in the emergence of coherent political blocs that allows vibrant confrontations between different projects of society. Instead, the political sphere disclosed by democratisation tends to be structured and dominated by the ideology of consensus that effectively eliminates the frontiers between friends and enemies of change and becomes elite-driven in nature. Such conditions have led to the impossibility for political alternatives and subsequently created a terrain for populist articulations—claiming of representing the people against the uncaring political establishment. In relation to the practices of Islamism, these developments constitute distinct forms of agency, relationship and subjectivity which ultimately contour contemporary Indonesian politics. This is particularly the case in the formation and development of the ‘electoral ummah’, understood here as a form of Islamist identification of the people in the current context of electoral politics. Specifically, this phenomenon emerges from the confluence between the actual practices of democracy and the fragmented Islamism in the aftermath of the New Order.
Democratisation, Neoliberalism and Fragmented Islamism

Since the fall of the authoritarian regime in May 1998, the nature of Indonesian democracy has been vigorously debated (for example, Robison and Hadiz, 2004; Schulte-Nordholt, 2004; Schulte-Nordholt and van Klinken, 2007; Ford and Peppinsky, 2014; Törnquist, 2013). Following post-New Order democratisation, dominant views propagated by transitology and institutionalist approaches have been extensively criticised when the presence of institutions, especially those associated with elections and decentralisation, has not brought about a fundamental change. Schulte-Nordholt (2004: 29-50), for example, argues that the introduction of democratic frameworks, including local autonomy and decentralisation, does not necessarily mark the shift from authoritarian to democratic rule or from a strong state towards a strong society. Utilising the notions of ‘changing continuities’, he contends that democratisation has in fact provided long-entrenched local elites, historically developed from the colonial era to New Order period, with the opportunities for expanding regional networks of patron-client ties which are often organised around ethnic and religious identities. Furthermore, Robison and Hadiz (2004; Hadiz, 2010; see also Winters, 2011, 2013) also contend that post-New Order political struggles have facilitated the reconsolidation of Soeharto-linked oligarchs who instrumentalise democratic institutions and frameworks to maintain their privileges in a more dispersed and decentralised structure of power. The ultimate points of these critics are that the trajectories of democratisation are not linear or determined by the imperatives of democratic institutions. Rather, they are primarily shaped by the conditions and constellations of forces which are historically rooted in socio-cultural and structural circumstances.

Drawing upon the lens of hegemonic politics, this section approaches the trajectories of democratisation in post-New Order Indonesia by looking at the confluence between the articulations of democracy and actual political practices which are mutually interpenetrating in their struggles to redefine interests, identities

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154 The debates on the trajectories of democratisation in Indonesia generally revolve around the perspectives which emphasise the primacy of actors, institutions, or structures as determining factors. See, for example, Hadiz (2008). For a more recent discussion on democratisation and the oligarchy thesis in Indonesia, see Ford and Pepinsky (2014).
and agencies. In doing so, it emphasises the political contingency of democracy as an empty signifier—through which social groups attempt to signify it with different contents and agendas (c.f., Lefort, 1988; Laclau, 2001: 3-14; Little and Lloyd, 2009). In such a process, the identities and interests of social groups are continuously reconstituted throughout their struggles for post-Soeharto political order. In this theoretical tradition, the project of democracy is ultimately about ‘a profound transformation of the existing relations of power’ to establish a new hegemony, by constructing the people (*demos*) that is articulated through political struggles to change unjust and unequal power in socio-political and economic relations (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: xi). These processes always entail the drawing of political frontiers (i.e. between *demos* and the antagonistic others), because without them democratic politics is reduced as mere administration. It is postulated here that the very nature of the political is thus constitutive to the forms and trajectories of democracy.

Many recent studies show that the disappearance of the political has increasingly become a global phenomenon in current democracy practices and that this is closely associated with the hegemony of neoliberal globalisation—even if its manifestation differs from one conjuncture to another (Brown, 2015; Mouffe, 2018; c.f., Rodan, 2018 for the context of Southeast Asian countries; Wolin, 2008 for the case of the US). In her study in Western European context, for example, Mouffe (2005; 2005a; 2018) shows that the watershed of this situation was the constitution of the ‘consensus of the centre’ that had been developed since the early 1990s—associated with Anthony Gidden’s Third Way ideology articulated particularly by Tony Blair’s New Labour in the United Kingdom and Schröder’s Social Democratic Party in Germany (SPD). This ideology claims that the adversarial

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155 Laclau and Mouffe (2001, see also Mouffe, 2000) argue that the hegemonic logic is crucial to revitalise, or radicalise, democracy. In agreement with Lefort’s conception of democracy as ‘the empty place of power’ (1988), Laclau further states that:

In order to have democracy we need a particular force that *occupy* the empty place of power but do not identify with it. This means that there is only democracy if the gap between universality and particularity is never filled but is, on the contrary, ever reproduced. Which also means that democracy is only possible on a *hegemonic* terrain. However, the latter implies, as we have seen, that relations of power is also constitutive of it, from which we can deduce that power is also constitutive of democracy (Laclau, 2001: 7-8).
models of politics, i.e. Left and Right oppositions, had become obsolete and that the politics should be about the management of public affairs.\footnote{For a critical discussion on the Third Way discourse and how it shapes European politics, see for example Bastow and Martin (2003), Hale, et al. (eds. 2004).} Crucially, the disappearance of such oppositions has then naturalised the dogma that there is no alternative to neoliberal globalisation and that political problems are reduced to technical issues which can be dealt with by the experts.

These transformations have not only influenced the quality of the workings of democracy but created a new political formation that democracy theorists like Mouffe (2018) and Rancière (1999) call a ‘post-democracy’ situation.\footnote{Rancière defines post-democracy as ‘the government practice and conceptual legitimation of a democracy after the demos, a democracy that has eliminated the appearance, miscount, and dispute of the people and is thereby reducible to the sole interplay of state mechanisms and combinations of social energies and interests’ (1999: 102).} They argue that this situation is primarily characterised by the disarticulations of two idealised democratic pillars—equality and popular sovereignty—from democracy discourses.\footnote{Beyond merely a ‘form of government’, theorists like Mouffe comprehend democracy as ‘a specific form of organising politically human coexistence’ which are constituted by the articulations of two different traditions—political liberalism (rule of law, individual rights) and popular sovereignty (Mouffe, 2000: 18). In this sense, the forms of democracy are not-static but depend on the hegemonic struggles between these contending articulations in creating certain forms of democratic regimes throughout history. See also, Macpherson, 1977; Lefort, 1988.} From this viewpoint, the rise of populist politics that seem to give back the ‘voice’ or popular sovereignty to unrepresented people against the political establishment has been an expression of resistance emerging from the disappearance of the spaces of the political in current democracy discourses (c.f., Panizza, 2005; Mouffe, 2005; 2018).

In the context of Indonesia, the character of the spaces of the political in the current democratisation era is, at least, constituted from two major directions. First, the unchanged tradition of depoliticisation and technocratic governing throughout New Order developmentalism. The democratisation agenda for transforming the authoritarian regime—articulated mainly through political liberalisation, decentralisation and the building of plural and tolerant societies—has not facilitated the creation of democratic subjects in forms of organised and representation-interest-based movements. Instead, democratisation projects have further depoliticised them and strengthened technocratic rationalities. More importantly,
such a condition creates a distinct consciousness and normalises the idea that politics is exclusively a government affair while the people are an object of intervention for the bureaucratic-technocratic regime. Second, the failure of democratisation in creating hegemonic blocs, representing cross-cutting alliances to establish an alternative to post-Soeharto political order. This is the case with the dynamics of pro-democracy movements since the fall of Soeharto and, in particular, Islamic politics. Indeed, democratisation has disclosed the terrain for the articulations of Islam to have a greater role in the state and society. Yet, as discussed earlier, the political spheres are more dominated by the ideology of consensus that subsequently facilitates increasing discrepancies, if not disjuncture, between diverse Islamist movements in civil society and their representation in the political arena. Such a condition has brought about far-reaching consequences for the workings of democracy and the practices of Islamism, as further discussed in the remaining part of this chapter.

While these developments have, in fact, been historically nurtured following the formation and development of Indonesia’s nation-state, the current hegemony of neoliberalism in democratisation projects has constituted a distinct political formation that tends to further negate social conflicts and to favour of a technocratic logic of governing. The issue at stake is not merely that democratic institutions are increasingly instrumentalised and occupied by politico-business elites. Rather, neoliberal articulations which are ubiquitous in almost all aspects of our life have fundamentally converted political logic, meaning and imaginaries of democracy into economic one (Brown, 2015: 17; c.f., Foucault, 2004). Within such economic rationality, democracy is increasingly signified merely as electoral competition for controlling the state power whilst individuals and social groups are constructed as statistical abstracts for the electoral votes. Moreover, the economisation of democratic politics also replaces political concepts with market-oriented ones, such as ‘representation’ with ‘electability’, ‘governance’ with ‘management’ and so forth (Mouffe, 2005; Brown, 2015).

Although political participation and the strengthening of civil society may be endorsed under the banner of ‘good governance’, neoliberal discourse has
fundamentally undone vibrant deliberations when ‘well-trained’ technocrats and
the so-called ‘best practices’ are mainstreamed as a benchmark for managing public
affairs (Abrahamsen, 2000; Harris, et al., 2004). This is particularly salient in the
debates on decentralisation in Indonesia in the last two decades, in which it had
been previously celebrated as a turning point for strengthening civil society,
people’s participation and democratic processes at local levels (c.f., Hadiz, 2010;
Aspinall and Fealy, 2003). Crucially, by undermining the possibilities for
confrontations and social conflicts that may result in the changing relations of
power, neoliberal discourses basically promote an anti-democratic model of
participation that negates representative-based politics—or, to put succinctly,
participation without democracy (c.f., Rodan, 2018).

Apart from the disappearance of the political, the ‘post-democracy’ situation
is also a result of the growing ‘oligarchisation’ of societies (Mouffe, 2018; 2005).
Indeed, this phenomenon takes place following the prolonged processes of capitalist
development which have often gone hand in hand with the exacerbation of
inequality and facilitated politico-business alliances to occupy the control over state
power and resources.159 With the prevalence of technocratic rationalities in
economy and politics—previously conditioned and sustained through the
hegemony of developmentalism and then neoliberalism—the people are
continuously excluded from democratic and development processes. Significantly,
the oligarchisation has eliminated the democratic ideal of defending equality from
the current discourse of democratisation. Often, the issues of economic inequality
are only addressed partially by the government through ‘reactive’ economic
policies like Bansos (Bantuan Sosial, Social aid programs), whose practices have,
in fact, generally become immediate strategies to expand patronage networks or to
boost electability. These developments, as Crouch (2004: 104) argues, have
fundamentally rolled back democracy as they created a new form of politics that
‘once again becoming an affair of closed elites, as it was in pre-democratic times.’

159 For the historical genesis on the oligarchisation of Indonesian politics and the broader discussion
on this issue, see Robison and Hadiz (2004), Robison (2009), Winters (2013), Ford and Pepinsky
(2014).
Indeed, the hegemony of neoliberalism in democracy and development practices have not exclusively been imposed through the international financial institutions-driven economic rearrangements, in particular the World Bank and the IMF, but also reproduced through diverse articulations waged by social groups which otherwise sustain its hegemony. In fact, neoliberal ideology is also articulated by most post-New Order pro-democracy movements which, for example, persistently criticise the state as a hindrance for the autonomy of civil society (c.f., Hadiwinata, 2003; Prasetyo, et al., 2003). Like the strategies of pro-market proponents who advocate privatisation and deregulation policies, these pro-democracy movements also call for the simplification of politics as mere instruments of the rule of law for the protection of civil and political rights. Furthermore, neoliberal ideology promotes a distinct conception of civil society as an aggregation of collective identities and interests which are imagined as already-fixed entities and ready to be mobilised and consolidated vis-à-vis the state (c.f., Carroll and Jarvis, 2016). While continuously imagining the state as a ‘Leviathan’, the assumptions of civil society as the sum of social groups with fixed identities and interests have led pro-democracy movements to become fragmented particularities, which are confined and isolated within their respective issues and social groups. Such demarcated and fragmented tendencies prevent them from establishing a political linkage and cross-cutting alliance—by creating a ‘collective will’ in Gramscian terms—to represent the multitudes of demands and agenda in the form of a ‘new’ political bloc to reshape given structure of power (see, Martin, 2009: 92-111; c.f., Savirani and Törnquist, 2015).

The practices of Islamism are, in fact, also not immune from the social transformation brought about by the neoliberal globalisation. Specifically, the mainstreaming of the dangers of Islamist articulations in politics, as strongly endorsed by neoliberal discourses and prescriptions, has gained more tractions as part of the post-Cold War global trend of the culturisation of social conflicts, and this has been more so in the aftermath of the 9/11 (see, for example, Mamdani, 2002; 2004). Through the distinct discourse of multiculturalism and tolerance, for example, religious articulations are channelled through the non-political sphere of culture while the social conflicts are confined and depoliticised under the
tolerant/intolerant slogans. This strategy primarily aims at reducing and culturalising social conflicts as mere moral and ethical problems of living in co-existence, rather than structural questions associated with social injustice and inequality issues (see, for instance, Sen, 2006; Zizek, 2008a; Brown, 2006). It is not surprising that neoliberal ideology fits comfortably with the GWOT discourse in securitising and re-orienting the relationship between Islam and politics in order to produce a theology and subjectivity of anti-politics. This, for example, is achieved by localising Islamist articulations within the issues of violence and (in)tolerance which, consequently, sustains the reproduction of antagonistic subjects between the moderate-pluralist and the radical-intolerant Islamism.

Indeed, as discussed in Chapter 4 and 5, the fragmentation of Islamic politics in the democratisation era is also partially rooted in the different relations of power among the Islamists. Specifically, democratisation discourses have not transformed the tensions between the legacies of the New Order corporatisation and current pressure for electoral politics. Their starkly different subject positions in articulating democracy for the reconstitution of their respective interests, identities and agendas have resulted in complex—often in antagonistic—relations. These developments have, in turn, prevented them from building the chains of equivalence that represent diverse demands of Islamist groups under the banner of the ummah. Nevertheless, the fragmentation of Islamism itself is constitutive to the workings of democracy, and this particularly relates to the following tendencies. First, the wide discrepancies between diverse Islamist movements and the practices of representation in the political arena. Second, with the absence of a relatively viable vehicle, the Islamists are increasingly vulnerable to pragmatism and are even instrumentalised and captured by competing elites in electoral politics. Third, Islam increasingly becomes a ‘floating signifier’ that can be appropriated and signified by a wide range of social groups with different purposes and contents.

The foregoing discussion highlights the extent to which the depoliticisation effects of neoliberal hegemony have transformed the practices of democracy and Islamism. It puts forward an argument that post-New Order democratisation agendas have increasingly aligned with the neoliberal discourses that fundamentally
influences the practices of democracy and development which tend to eliminate the nature of the political. This is particularly salient when such convergences have resulted in the articulations of democracy as a mere electoral competition among elites on the one hand and the negation of social conflicts and the strengthening of the technocratic logic of governing on the other. Meanwhile, the election itself does not offer the possibilities of choosing different political projects primarily because the political sphere—as results of the negation of social conflicts—is then dominated by consensus and compromise.

Notwithstanding the different historical conditions of emergence and development, Indonesia’s democratisation in the last two decades has fit quite comfortably with the category introduced by theorists like Chantal Mouffe and Jaques Rancière as the ‘post-democracy’ situation. By focusing on the context of European politics, both comprehend ‘post-democracy’ as a situation associated with the hegemony of neoliberal globalisation over three decades or so which have made possible the disarticulation of two fundamental democracy pillars of equality and popular sovereignty from current democracy discourses and practices. From this viewpoint, it is the disappearance of the political from current democratisation discourses that create a favourable terrain for Islamist political discourse and its mobilisation for power struggles. Islam becomes the available praxis-ideology that provides the Islamists with the ways of reading the socio-economic dislocations and crisis experienced by the ummah, organising dissent and providing hope. Meanwhile, without a solid social base of representation, the contending elites and political parties have no other strategies but politicising and mobilising communal-based identities as an instant route for the purposes of electoral politics. Significantly, the confluence between the practices of Islamism and democracy that is characterised by the crisis of political representation associated with neoliberal globalisation are influential for the current workings of democracy and Islamism in Indonesia, as discussed below.
The Making of The Electoral Ummah

While there are no significant groups which seriously attempt to overthrow ‘democratic’ regime in current Indonesia, it does not necessarily mean that democracy effectively becomes ‘the only game in town’—as propagated by the proponents of transitology (see, for example, Künkler and Stepan, 2013). On the contrary, what is happening is the merging of diverse political practices which are rearticulated through democracy discourses. Being a master signifier of post-New Order political discourse, democracy has indeed created a terrain for the multitude of social groups to articulate and reconstitute their interests, identities and agencies. In so doing, they often mobilise different available modalities (such as religion, culture/adat, regioness, and so forth) for organising collective demands in the bid to improve their social positions in the new structure of power. Hence, there is always a confluence, or even clashes, between the existing political practices. New political formations such as the rise of bossism in local politics (e.g., Sidel, 2004), clientelism (e.g., Schulte-Nordholt and van Klinken, 2007), adat revivalism (e.g., Tyson, 2010) or Islamic politics (e.g., Abuza, 2007) which have emerged following the Soeharto’s fall are not necessarily a pathology or disorientation for democracy. Instead, these formations reveal a relative outcome of the confluence between diverse practices among social groups which, in fact, have been made possible to develop through democratisation discourses. In a nutshell, the actual forms of democracy are always contingent and contested.

Like other political discourses, Islam is articulated by the Islamists in the context of democratisation to organise their collective demands under the banner of the *ummah*. Indeed, there are multiple, often contradictory, Islamist articulations of democracy that prioritise different practices and orientations. Such different articulations and strategies, as discussed in the previous chapters, have also been influenced by the characters of their respective social basis and relations of powers. All these factors have, in turn, revealed different forms of identity and subjectivity that crucially influence the contestations and social coalitions throughout their political struggles. By looking at the confluence between the practices of democracy and Islamist articulations, it is argued here that the prevalence of
Islamist political discourse for power struggles in democratisation era is neither a culmination of the ‘Islamisation of politics’ nor mere the ‘politicisation of Islam’ by contending elites or parties. Rather, this is a result of complex processes through which the forms of agency, identity, interests and relationships of the Islamists and contending elites and parties are constituted in the current democracy era.

The political formation emerges from the confluence of the practices of democracy and Islamic politics is particularly shown in the formation of the electoral *umma*. Specifically, it is defined here as a form of Islamist identification of the people developed in the context of democracy that is increasingly signified as mere electoral competitions among the elites and the failure of Islamists’ hegemonic struggles. Crucially, the current rise of Islamist political discourse and mobilisation for power struggle is set against the backdrop of a ‘post-democracy’ situation, as discussed above. Its emergence marks the dislocation of democratic politics that opens new terrain for the articulation of Islam in the political arena. Islam becomes the praxis-ideology to reorganise the interests, identities, and demands which are articulated by the construction of the *umma* as a political imaginary of the people. In this sense, the construction of the *umma* is a form of Islamist articulation of democracy, by redefining a form of political agency of the ‘unrepresented’ people. Nevertheless, such a political formation could be more democratic or otherwise, depending on how the *umma* is articulated and the type of politics that is constructed through distinct configurations of contestation and social coalition.

There are two central conditions which make possible for the electoral *umma* to emerge and develop in current Indonesia. Firstly, the dominance of economic rationalities which signified democracy as mere electoral competitions. When democracy is limitedly perceived as selecting governmental officeholders, the elections become a crucial moment for the contending elites to control state power and resources. With the depoliticisation ideologies and the absence of organised and representation-interests-based movements, political struggles are then occupied by the mobilisation of communal-based identities as immediate ways for both contending elites and dominant social groups to win the elections and gain control
over state power. As such, electoral politics becomes no more than a marketplace where the elites/political parties and dominant social groups build short-term and pragmatist contracts for (re)developing patronage networks should they hold the state power.

Such relationships have significantly redefined the ways these political subjects behave. For example, both the elites and the people realise that the elections, especially in the case of local election (Pilkada), are only a political ‘ritual’ to build or strengthen the patronage networks.\(^\text{160}\) It is through the moment of elections, the subjects of ‘patron’ and ‘client’ are continuously redefined. In such a context, the elections become zero-sum competitions that determine the rise and fall of the structure of patronage networks among the competing groups. Often, such intense contestation involves such murky practices as money politics, violent mobilisation and multicultural fragmentation (see, for example, Hadiz, 2010: Chapter 5). A senior PKS politician, for example, summarises the current challenge of electoral competition in relations to the practice of democracy as follow:

It is difficult to do political works (kerja politik) in terms of building and strengthening the party’s social basis. This is particularly the case in Pilkada, when we sometimes have to build a coalition with other parties not because we have the same platforms or political agendas but simply because of the potential chance to win the election... Although kerja politik is indeed important, we cannot rely on it exclusively because the elections become more competitive while kerja politik cannot be automatically converted into electoral votes... Even, the potential voters which we have consolidated in certain areas can be easily destroyed during the election periods by other parties with greater resources.\(^\text{161}\)

The second condition for the rise of the electoral ummah is associated with the fragmentation of Islamism. This is a result of the failure of the Islamists to establish chains of equivalence, in the form of a cross-cutting alliance that represents the multitude demands of the ummah, especially in the post-New Order era. Such fragmentation is constitutive for the practices of political representation among the Islamists, which are characterised by two trends. First, the increase and more deeply rooted Islamist movements with broad social basis in the civil society arena. In addition to their different historical conditions of emergence, the absence of Islamic

\(^{160}\)Discussion with Professor Mohtar Masoed (Yogyakarta, 2 Sept. 2016) and Gadjah Mada University’s political sociologist, Frans Djalong (Yogyakarta, 15 Sept. 2016).

\(^{161}\)Interview with a senior PKS politician (Jakarta, 15 Dec. 2016).
forces capable of representing a wide array of demands among Muslims has prompted the proliferation of Islamic vehicles—including the ones which articulate violent means (see, for instance, Hadiz, 2014a: 42-65). In fact, political struggles for building the ‘collective will’ among the Islamists in civil society arena are increasingly difficult to achieve when democratisation discourses have resulted in the creation of antagonistic relations—instead of transforming them into a new political bloc.\textsuperscript{162}

Second, the rapid increase of popular distrust of the existing representative system through political parties, including the Islamic ones. The distrust towards Islamic parties is not only stemming from the fact that these parties are seen by fellow Islamists as no different with ‘the secular’ ones—embroiled in corruption practices, internal frictions and conflicts, and incapable of offering alternative policies.\textsuperscript{163} But the crisis of representation is also a consequence of the disappearance of the political, within which the current practices of democracy are primarily characterised by consensus and compromise on the one hand and the depoliticisation of ‘the people’ on the other. These two trends have paved the ways for the growing disjuncture between the multitude demands within the civil society arena and political parties tasked to represent them in the political arena. As such, it has made possible for the articulation of populist articulation under the banner of the \textit{ummah}, constructed as an alternative mode of representing the people.

Furthermore, such circumstances have also influenced the distinct features of the electoral \textit{ummah}, which are mostly anti-democratic and illiberal in nature. It is worth noting that these characteristics are more associated with the fragmentation of Islamism than stemming inherently from Islam. While the electoral \textit{ummah} is a form of Islamists’ identification of ‘the people’ in current democracy practices, it tends to be more divisive than uniting diverse demands of social groups. This is particularly because the frontiers in the making of this \textit{ummah} are not drawn as a vertical battle between the ‘\textit{ummah}’ against the ‘rapacious elites’ but mostly

\textsuperscript{162}For discussions on hegemonic struggles in civil society arena, identity construction and democratic politics, see for example (Martin, 2009), Mouffe (2006; 1992).

\textsuperscript{163}Interview with Professor Mohtar Maso’ed (Yogyakarta, 2 Sept. 2016), Professor Syafii Maarif (Yogyakarta, 25 Sept. 2016).
established in horizontal and for the limited purposes of the elections. Moreover, due to the fragmentation of Islamic politics, the contestations among Islamist groups in signifying the ummah identity have also prompted the escalation of the ‘conservative turn’, when Islamist groups claim themselves as more holding the ‘truest Islam’ and defending the interests of the ummah than those of others (c.f., van Bruinessen, 2013).

The ummah identities have also been constructed by excluding various forms of antagonistic others, often articulated in the sentiments of anti-Chinese, anti-Christianisation, anti-LGBT, anti-Shia and so forth. Crucially, such exclusionary and xenophobic practices are exacerbated when the ummah identities are mobilised for (re)building patronage networks through the electoral politics. Furthermore, the mobilisation of this distinct form of the ummah has very little chance to alter the existing structure of power that is seen as responsible for the continued marginalisation of the ummah. For example, although the Islamists are aware that neololiberalisation in development practices has resulted in the growing inequality and poverty, some of them like HTI, PKS and KAMMI often framed these problems as because the current government had lost sovereignty in economic policies due to the overwhelmed foreign debt and the great role of multinational companies. Their responses against the growing inequality and neoliberalism are then articulated narrowly in the rhetoric of anti-asing and anti-aseng, which is characterised by xenophobic sentiments.

The fragmentation of Islamic politics also contributed to the pragmatic tendencies of the electoral ummah. For example, when asked about the form of alliance and the importance of parties to represent the ummah in the political arena,

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164 Interview with Ismail Yusanto, HTI Spokesperson (Jakarta, 7 Nov. 2016), Kartika Nur Rokhman, KAMMI activist (Jakarta, 16 Dec. 2016).

165 The narrative of anti-asing and anti-aseng had been, in fact, circulated since the 2014 presidential election. It is essentially employed to frame that Jokowi administration only serves the interests of foreign investors, while anti-aseng specifically refers to the capital coming from China. Such a narrative has become more pronounced following Jokowi’s infrastructure mega projects which involved massive investment from China. The rumours of the influx of Chinese workers in infrastructure and mining projects which are seen as marginalised the positions of the pribumi have been widely circulated and fabricated, especially among the Islamists (Kompas.com, 8 Aug, 2018).
the leader of a popular Majelis Dzikir (Islamic congregation) in West Java states that:

Building alliances with them [political parties] is only a method, not the essence. The parties are only a vessel…. In these days, we cannot and should not only depend on Islamic parties to represent us in politics. In fact, they are not really struggling for dakwah and the ummah—yet they still use Islamic flags. In many cases, as you know, it is the secular parties which support shariah implementation…. I don’t care if this is part of their political strategy. The baseline is this: we can collaborate with and will give support to individuals or parties in the elections insofar as they give assurance to accommodate the interest of the ummah, to give a role to ulama (religious leaders) … and to combat the enemies of Islam.166

Moreover, although the articulations of the ummah seem to provide the Islamists with a sense of resistance against what they see as the dominative structure of power, their struggles cannot be expanded by linking themselves with the multitude of demands amongst wider social groups. As such, political struggles in the name of the ummah is only directed at a short-term objective of winning the elections, instead of broader socio-political change. In the context of the crisis of political representation, both the Islamists and the competing elites see the mobilisation of Islamist discourse as a shortcut strategy for developing patronage networks through the moment of elections. Therefore, Islamist groups which were previously only at the fringe now occupy a strategic position as a voting machine.167

Through building an alliance with Islamist groups, the identities of the parties or contending candidates are also redefined and modified, which are then promoted and ‘sold’ like a product-brand to appeal the market of Muslim voters. Therefore, the model of political representation conducted through the electoral ummah, to use Pitkin’s typology of representation (1967) is not a substantial one, characterised by the clear linkage between the interests and agenda of the represented and those who represent. Rather, it is merely a descriptive and symbolic representation. Significantly, the agencies and subjectivities of the electoral ummah are constructed by ‘temporarily’ transforming the identities of the ummah into the electoral constituency. It is temporary because the creation and the politicisation of the ummah are narrowly constructed in the moment of elections, not as a sustained

166 Interview with Mahdi Assegaf (Bogor, 12 Nov. 2016).
‘democratic’ movement which continuously struggles for reshaping the unjust structure of power. Without a hegemonic agenda and solid social basis, the mobilisations of the electoral ummah can be easily instrumentalised and captured by the contending elites (see, for example, Hadiz, 2017).

The discussion of this section has shown the contingent and contested character of the workings of democracy, by specifically giving greater attention to the practices of Islamic politics. It puts forward an argument that the prevalence of Islamist political discourse and the mobilisation of the ummah is not marked a linear function of the Islamisation of politics. Rather, these had been made possible by the dislocation of democratic politics that is primarily characterised by the crisis of political representation. While the construction of the ummah is significantly a response of the Islamists to the crisis of the representative system, political struggles waged under this banner do not necessarily bring about a more democratic political formation. This is particularly revealed in the practices of the electoral ummah. It is also shown that the prevalence of Islamist mobilisation is not a unidirectional form of the instrumentalisation of Islam by the contending elites. This is because the interests, identities, and relationships between the ummah and contending elites and political parties are also continuously reconstituted and modified throughout the formation and development of the electoral ummah.

**Islamism and The Populist Moments:**
**The Politics of Inequalities and Representation**

The rise of populist politics and communal-based mobilisations can be understood as an expression of resistance against a ‘post-democratic’ situation brought about by neoliberal hegemony (see, for example, Mouffe, 2018; 2005). These phenomena, taking place in both developed and developing countries, have marked the dislocation of democratic politics that opens a new terrain to launch new forms of struggle. More specifically, the disarticulations of equality and popular sovereignty from current democracy discourses have facilitated the politicisation of the people to challenge the existing political order. For sure, the politicisation and mobilisation
of the people can be done through various discourses and may take many forms of expression. Nevertheless, due to the relative absence of confrontations of political projects as the result of the depoliticisation of social conflicts, the discursive construction of the people in the current era is prominently filled by, in particular, religious articulations. In regard to the discussions of Indonesian democracy and Islamism, the issues addressed in this section are as follow: What are the conditions of possibilities for the rise of the so-called populist moments—why now? What is the distinct nature of resistance waged by the Islamists through the populist articulation of the ummah? What are the consequences of these dynamics for the workings of democracy and the practices of Islamism?

Crucially, populist politics here should not necessarily be associated with derogatory meanings like the forms of political irrationality or indefinite loyalty to particular leaders (e.g., Coniff, 1999) or as essentially anti-democracy (c.f., Mietzner, 2018). Populism is also not just ‘an ideology’ or rhetoric of politicians that promote the practice of politics as conflicts between two homogeneous and antagonistic groups—the people versus the corrupt elites (e.g., Mudde, 2004; Canovan, 1981). This is because the populist label can be attributed to a variety of ideological contents and movements, ranging from the rise of far-right parties in Europe (Lazaridis, et al., 2016), the progressive left politics like the Podemos in Spain (Iglesias, 2015; Errejón and Mouffe, 2016) and Syriza in Greece (Stavrakakis and Katsambekis, 2014; c.f., Mudde, 2017) to those which utilise religious banners (Marzouki, et al., 2016; Hadiz, 2016 for the case of Islamic populism in Indonesia, Turkey and Egypt). It is also inadequate to conceive populism as a type of political regime (e.g., Eatwell, 2017) because populist politics can be compatible with diverse institutional frameworks, whether democratic or otherwise.

From the lens of hegemony, populist politics is understood as politico-discursive practices of constructing a political frontier through the building of chains of equivalence that divides ‘the people’ from ‘the establishment’ (Laclau, 2005; Panizza, 2005, 2017; Stavrakakis, 2017).168 Therefore, what is at stake is the

168 Laclau (2005: 43) asserts that:
very ways the people are constructed and the political frontiers in these processes are drawn. As a political struggle, populism emerges as a response to, and an attempt to signify, a given dislocated order. From this vantage point, linking the politico-discursive and distinct socio-political settings to comprehend the relations between the construction of a popular subject and the nature of a dislocated political order is crucial (c.f., Hadiz, 2016; Barros, 2005; Panizza, 2005). In fact, although constructing the people becomes the main task for every radical political struggle (Laclau, 2006), not all populist politics have egalitarian and democratic trajectories.

Like in many parts of the world, the current emergence of populist politics in Indonesia is set against the dislocations brought about by the neoliberal practices of development and democracy. As a hegemonic global paradigm for restructuring politics and society, neoliberalism has currently experienced a fundamental crisis associated with inequalities and the problems of representation. In the case of Indonesia, for example, the World Bank (2016) shows that the country has currently experienced an unprecedented unequal wealth distribution between the richest 10 per cent and the rest of the population—even the four richest tycoons have more wealth than the poorest 100 million Indonesians (see also, The Guardian, 23 Feb. 2017). Yet, Indonesia is not unique because neoliberal practices of capitalist development across the world have generated an increasingly unequal distribution of wealth globally—albeit at a different scale and speed (e.g., Alvaredo, et al., 2018; Hadiz, 2016).

But, the most pressing issue is that the depoliticisation effects of neoliberalism have made it impossible for the people to seek an alternative order and to articulate the demands for equality and social justice through conventional democracy discourses. These tensions have contributed to the current

\[\text{[W]e only have populism if there is a series of politico-discursive practices constructing a popular subject, and the precondition of the emergence of such a subject is, as we have seen, the building up of an internal frontier dividing the social spaces into two camps. But the logic of that division is dictated, as we know, by the creation of an equivalential chain between a series of social demands in which the equivalential moment prevails over the differential nature of the demands.}\]

\[\text{169}\] Harvey (2005: 79-80), for example, shows that neoliberalism always bears internal contradictions and tensions between its articulations for maintaining a free market, individual rights, and political legitimacy on the one hand and the depoliticisation of social conflicts and the politics of inequality on the other. See also Steger and Roy (2010: 119-137), Duggan (2003).
dislocations of neoliberal hegemony in democracy and development practices while also triggered the emergence of various struggles to challenge its political formation. Gonzales-Vicente and Carroll (2017) aptly describe the dislocation of neoliberal hegemony as follows:

The combination of techno-logistical transformations in production and pro-market policy sets that facilitated the globalisation of capital, and which dealt a death blow to national development strategies, was met by elites with intensified efforts to dislocate politics from society through the process of ‘depoliticisation’ that in turn allowed for further marketising efforts. However, this dislocation has dovetailed with a formidable social crisis characterised by unprecedented levels of inequalities and vulnerability amid immense wealth, calling into question the elite consensus around neoliberalism (2017: 991).

More specifically, the growing disparities as experienced by the Muslim-majority population like Indonesia have accentuated the sense of perpetual marginalisation among the Islamists. They see the ummah has continually sidelined economically since the era of colonialism to the secular nation-state formation until the current period of neoliberal globalisation (see, for example, Hadiz, 2016; 2014). For the Islamists, the cultivation of such sense of deprivation has persistently accompanied the emergence of various Islamist vehicles—including the ones which exercise violent means. Furthermore, neoliberal campaigns for domesticating Islamism in the presumed ‘non-political’ domain of culture, especially through multiculturalism discourses in the aftermath of 9/11, cannot prevent the Islamists from reconstructing and politicising the ummah as a response against the current dislocations associated with neoliberal globalisation and the crisis of political representation.

Against this backdrop, the anti-establishment narratives that frame the ummah as ‘the marginalised majority in its own country’ find broad appeal among economically vulnerable Muslims, particularly the urban poor and precarious middle-class. This is particularly salient in the context of the increasing unequal access and distribution of wealth, uncertain and precarious working conditions, and, more importantly, the absence of viable political vehicles to articulate their demands. Depending primarily on their respective ideological visions and the

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170 Interview with Ismail Yusanto (Jakarta, 7 Nov. 2016), Dr Dwi Condro (Solo, 15 Dec. 2016), Abu Ridho (Jakarta, 2 Nov. 2016).
171 See, for example, Al-Wai, 20 Aug. 2010; Al-Wai, 25 Apr. 2014.
characteristics of social basis, the Islamists have adopted a wide variety of populist responses and struggles under the banner of the ummah. Developed within the slum areas of Jakarta, for example, Front Pembela Islam (FPI) have attracted local Muslim youths, generally unemployed and less-educated, particularly because its ‘solidarity networks’ can offer a sense of security and certainty in their daily life (see, for example, Wilson, 2008; Mudhoffir, 2017).  

A more ambitious way of articulating the ummah is arguably shown by the now-disbanded Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI). As a branch of the transnational Islamist movement, its purveyors politicise the ummah through the aspiration of a global caliphate, constituted as the ‘solution’ for the crisis of democracy and neoliberal capitalism (Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, 2009). Typically, HTI criticises Indonesian electoral democracy on the grounds that it only strengthens the status quo and produces legislation which are counter-productive for the interests and positions of the ummah. Furthermore, HTI also attacks the existing democratic system due to its failure to bringing welfare and the sovereignty of the people but only paving the ways for the domination of politico-business alliances through electoral mechanisms.

Another central aspect of populist politics is the role of passion in the construction of the popular subject and its mobilisation (see, for instance, Laclau, 2005; Mouffe, 2005). In the case of the mobilisation of ummah, the Islamists frame their struggles as both political movement and ibadah (religious-motivated activities). This is, for example, shown in the Aksi Bela Islam during the Jakarta gubernatorial election, in which many participants from outside Jakarta took part in this event for, in what they saw, as religious motives. In fact, the cultivation of

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172 FPI members, who are unemployed, stated that they joined the organisation because its networks provide them with jobs in informal economic sectors and prevents them from doing maksiat (vice) as they regularly involved in pengajian (Islamic gatherings). Interview with FPI members (Jakarta, 15 Nov. 2016).

173 See, for example, Al-Wai, 25 April 2014; Al-Wai, 4 Jan. 2008.

174 See Al-Wai, 7 July 2014.

175 Interview with S and M, participants of Aksi Bela Islam from West Sumatra and East Kalimantan (Jakarta, 4 Nov. 2016).
ummah identities has also achieved through religious activities run by various majelis in almost daily basis, especially in Jakarta areas.  

Moreover, the dimension of passion is always crucial—both historically and theologically—in the relations between Islamist political discourses and the construction of the ummah, although the latter is signified differently among Islamist groups. In constructing the ummah, as Sayyid (1997: 44) argues, Islamist discourse has not only functioned ‘to unify a particular community with respect to this signifier, but it also the name by which the Muslim community identifies and actualises itself.’ For the Islamists, therefore, the ummah is not only a subject constituted for current political struggle but it also hopes of the imagined political community.

Nevertheless, the manifestation of populist politics across the world varies greatly. Such differences are constituted according to the nature of dislocations, the ways popular subjects are constructed, and the political struggles are conducted (see, for example, Mouffe, 2018; Panizza, 2005; c.f., Gonzales-Vicente and Carroll, 2017). In the case of Indonesia, the problems of representation brought about by democratisation projects have influenced the practices of Islamist populist politics. These problems, as discussed in Chapter 5, can be summarised as follow. Firstly, while Islamist political discourse has increasingly become a praxis-ideology as an expression of resistance to neoliberal globalisation among Islamist groups, there is a growing disconnection between the multitude of Islamist movements and Islamic parties. The fact that Islamic parties are embroiled in corrupt practices and have no long-term Islamic agenda beyond electoral politics have contributed to the increasing distrust among the public. Furthermore, partly forced by the pressures of electoral politics, Islamic parties also tend to build ‘the consensus of the centre’, that is generally seen as transforming themselves from ‘undemocratic zealots to democratic normalisation’ (Bubalo, et.al., 2008). While often celebrated as a result of the ‘inclusion-moderation’ process required for democratic consolidation (see, for example, Buehler, 2012; Tomsa, 2012; Permata, 2008), these developments

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176 Interview with Mahdi Assegaf (Bogor, 12 Nov 2016).
177 Interview with Mahdi Assegaf (Bogor, 12 Nov. 2016), Ismail Yusanto (Jakarta, 7 Nov. 2016).
have fundamentally distanced Islamic parties from certain Islamists groups which see that their parties have no differences with the ‘secular’ ones. Secondly, the failure of the Islamists to build chains of equivalence in the post-New Order era has greatly contributed to further fragmentation of Islamic movements in civil society arena. These fragmentations have led to the proliferation of a wide array of Islamic vehicles and strategies which ultimately characterise the contestations and social coalitions among the Islamists and beyond in current Indonesian politics.

Against this backdrop, rather than representing a long-term alliance and shared agenda, Islamist populist politics is primarily manifested in the construction of the *ummah* that is limitedly directed for building and maintaining patronage networks. Its populist articulations are mostly reactionary in characters, cultivated through the accumulation of public distrust against the government in failing to address the problems of inequality and social injustice. Failed at being a hegemonic political force, this populist form can be easily captured by contending elites for their purpose of struggles for power rather than becoming a political force to challenge the structure of domination that has produced social injustice and marginalised the *ummah*. As a paradigmatic case, these tendencies are best exemplified in the case of the 2017 Jakarta Gubernatorial election.

‘*Aksi Bela Islam*’ and the Ahok Saga: Competing Forms of the Electoral *Ummah*

The primacy of Islamist political discourse for power struggles through the formation of electoral *ummah* had been vividly manifested throughout the race for the 2017 Jakarta governorship. Considered as the most divisive and polarising local election in Indonesia’s history (e.g., Hadiz, 2017), a series of Islamist mobilisation under the banner of ‘*Aksi Bela Islam*’ (Actions for Defending Islam) had been a turning point for a dramatic defeat of the incumbent and seemingly undefeatable governor—a Chinese-ethnic and a Christian—Basuki Tjahaja ‘Ahok’ Purnama. In

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178 Interview with Abu Ridho (Jakarta, 2 Nov. 2016). He further argues that the transformation into an open party, as advocated by some group within the PKS, would make the party lost its ‘selling point’.
a short tenure after his former running mate, Jokowi, won the 2014 presidential election, Ahok’s technocratic-style performance had, in fact, enjoyed high approval rates especially among the urban middle class who saw him as bringing ‘concrete results of work’ (*Jakarta Globe*, 15 Dec. 2016). As part of his uncompromising efforts for resolving endemic problems in the capital city, he pursued contentious policies including aggressive campaigns of evictions and forced displacements which brought about massive anger and sense of marginalisation among the affected groups and beyond the grassroots level.\(^{179}\)

The relative absence of the parties credibly voicing dissent through democratic institutions\(^{180}\) had made Islamist vehicles especially the *Front Pembela Islam* (FPI) more appealing for the urban poor. Meanwhile, Ahok’s strong connections to ethnic Chinese developer conglomerates, including their prominent role in the widely criticised reclamation project in North Jakarta, had complicated people’s response against social injustice and marginalisation with xenophobic sentiments (e.g., Wilson, 2016). His political demise has culminated when his fateful words about the Koranic verse Al-Maidah 51 (which concerns whether Muslims can support non-Muslim leaders) in a speech during his visit to Seribu Island of North Jakarta was made viral in the social media.\(^{181}\) Alleged as

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\(^{179}\) While there is no exact data for the evictions, the Jakarta Legal Aid Foundation (LBH-Jakarta) estimates that more than 16,000 poor and working-class families have been affected by Ahok’s policies while only 30 per cent of them have been offered alternative accommodation. More specifically, the eviction of Bukit Duri had magnified the resentments because Ahok disregarded the Court’s decision that favoured the people of Bukit Duri for the legal status quo in the area (*Tirto.id*, 6 Jan. 2017). See also Wilson (2016).

\(^{180}\) For example, the PDIP that proclaim itself as the party of *wong cilik* (little people) and gained the greatest votes in the 2014 election in Jakarta had decided to nominate Ahok for the 2017 Jakarta election, so did with the NU-linked parties of PKB and PPP. Its rival, Gerindra, lost its legitimacy after its cadre, M Sanusi (a member of Jakarta provincial parliament) was arrested by the anti-corruption agency due to his involvement in the corruption scandal in Ahok’s megaproject of North Jakarta reclamation. Meanwhile, PKS had been experiencing internal friction after its new leadership sidelined other camps within the party.

\(^{181}\) The Ahok case was triggered by the circulation of a controversial video containing his speech in YouTube, claimed by some to have been edited. The uploader, Buni Yani, was also sentenced to 18 months in prison under the Electronic Information and Transaction Law for inciting religious or ethnic hatred (SARA). See Butt (2017). In fact, many survey polls were confident about Ahok’s electability, at least until January 2017, regardless of the *Aksi Bela Islam*. For example, in January 2017, *Lembaga Survei Indonesia* mentioned that his electability was 32.6 percent compare to Anies Baswedan with only 21.4 percent (*Kompas.com*, 17 Jan 2017), while the *Indikator Politik Indonesia* stated the electability for both candidates were 38.2 and 23.8 percent respectively (*Indonesiasatu.co*, 28 Jan. 2017).
blasphemous against Islam, his statement became a pretext for the FPI-led mobilisation and the construction of anti-Ahok movement.

Utilising the fatwa of the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI)\textsuperscript{182} which argued that Ahok had committed blasphemy, Islamist groups under an ad hoc grouping called the Gerakan Nasional Pengawal Fatwa MUI (GNPF-MUI, National Movement to Safeguard the MUI’s fatwa) hold mass demonstrations against him, demanding his removal from office and imprisonment (Fealy, 2016).\textsuperscript{183} While previously Islamist groups like HTI had launched campaigns to ‘tolak pemimpin kafir’ (lit. reject ‘infidel’ leaders—narrowly defined as non-Muslim),\textsuperscript{184} it was the discursive-framing of Ahok as ‘blasphemer’ (penista agama) that effectively constructed the anti-Ahok movement, being a nodal point for diverse resentments and demands. Not only had Islamist mobilisations paved the way to his defeat in the election but also influenced the court to slap him with a two-year sentence for committing blasphemy against Islam.\textsuperscript{185} Despite the reputation of former minister of education Anis Baswedan as a ‘moderate’ Islamic intellectual, the way he won the election had raised great concerns that Indonesian democracy is now overwhelmed by intolerant Islamists who endanger Indonesian plural society and global credentials as the host of moderate and democratic Muslims (\textit{The Washington Post}, 9 May 2017).

Understandably, the alarming views and the securitisation of Islamism have regained currency, that subsequently framed the contestations as the battle between ‘intolerant’ versus ‘tolerant’ Islam. Andreas Harsono (2017), for example, warned that the rise of Islamic extremism will threaten Indonesia’s democracy and the rule

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\textsuperscript{182} While there are various interpretations of this verse, MUI issued a fatwa that Ahok had indeed committed blasphemy against Koran, the ulama and Muslims. The fatwa was signed on 11 October 2016 by its chairman, Ma’ruf Amin.

\textsuperscript{183} GNPF-MUI comprised of several Islamist organisations, including FPI, HTI, some Majelis Dzikir and Salafi-modernist networks. See IPAC (2018). The anti-Ahok rallies were held in 4 November (attended by 150,000-250,000) and 2 December 2016 (500,000-750,000 participants), making these probably as the largest religious gatherings. See, for example, Fealy (2016).

\textsuperscript{184} Interview with Ismail Yusanto (Jakarta, 7 Nov. 2016); Iffah Nur (Jakarta, 9 Nov. 2016)

\textsuperscript{185} For the discussion on legal aspects of this issue, see, for example, Butt (2017).
of law. Beyond the lens of Islamic radicalism, Wilson (2017) argues that Ahok’s fall is mainly associated with socio-economic factors, in particular, the culmination of antipathy and resentment among Jakarta’s poor affected by his vision of urban renewal. Meanwhile, Mietzner and Muhtadi (2017) emphasise the role of religious identity, especially the belief that Ahok had insulted Islam, as the determining factor for Ahok’s loss. By situating the Ahok case within ‘the evolution and mechanics of broader oligarchic conflicts’, Hadiz (2017a: 266) contends that the Islamist mobilisations were less an evidence that Islamic radicalism is on the rise than of the capacity of the contending oligarchs to instrumentalise and exploit social divisions and people’s frustrations through religious-political languages to advance their own interests.

While recognising the importance of linking the socio-economic conditions and identity politics, the analysis of this section puts more emphasis on the primacy of Islamist political discourse in constructing a different form of the ummah culminating in the contestations between anti-Ahok and pro-Ahok movement. This is particularly salient following the blasphemy issue which then shaped the discursive battles of the elections from ‘technocratic populism’ versus ‘Islamic populism’ to ‘pluralist-tolerant Islamism’ versus ‘populist-intolerant Islamism’ (Majalah Tempo, 17-23 April 2017). Beyond the apparent collision of reasserting the dichotomic categories of ‘moderate’ and ‘radical’ Islamism, it is shown here that Islam functions as an empty signifier to which both pro-Ahok and anti-Ahok movements seek to articulate their electoral interests. Indeed, electoral politics had transformed Ahok into a historical figure around which multiple narratives had constituted different forms of electoral subjects which shaped the contestation and social coalitions during and after the election. Therefore, it is instructive to deconstruct the Ahok case by examining dominant narratives and the ways different forms of interest, identity and subjectivity of the contending forms of the electoral ummah are reorganised.

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186 He also stated the Ahok case become a precedence that the Koran must not be interpreted by non-Muslims, which essentially endangers the freedom of expression. Discussion with Andreas Harsono (Melbourne, 2 Nov. 2018).
Significantly, there are four major inter-related discursive-narratives through which the Ahok case is signified and contested. The first one is certainly the blasphemy narrative. Instead of being a mere technical-legal problem, this narrative had become a trojan horse for the articulations of other issues and demands among multiple groups. This narrative had made possible the mass mobilisations led by the Islamists within GNPF-MUI groups, culminating in the peaceful rally of 2 December. The fact that Ahok was well-connected to President Jokowi and the parties behind him had subsequently prompted the GNPF-MUI purveyors to see this alliance as the defender of the ‘blasphemer’, and this drove them closer to the parties outside the national coalition (i.e. Gerindra, PKS, PAN, PBB). Moreover, the magnitude of the mobilisations had also forced President Jokowi to seek balancing forces, including by approaching NU and Muhammadiyah in his bid to narrow down the GNPF-MUI influences (Majalah Tempo, 14-20 November 2016).

Although there was speculation that Jokowi’s circle did not want Ahok convicted or jailed and there were weak arguments in the court for charging him with blasphemy, Ahok could not avoid being found guilty in the face of the pressures of GNPF-MUI masses (see, for example, Fealy, 2016). The blasphemy narrative had also brought about serious polarisation at the grassroots levels within the ‘moderate’ Islamic organisations especially Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). Not only had many of its members joined the rally, NU’s position towards the Ahok’s case and its close relations with Jokowi put this organisation under severe criticism. In turn, due to its long traditions and credentials as advocates of pluralism, NU cultivated ‘pluralist Islam’ identities to negate other forms of Islam articulated by GNPF-MUI camps. As a result, there was a growing reconsolidation of Christian and other non-Muslim factions with NU and Jokowi’s party coalition, constituting a pro-Ahok movement against the rest.

Second, there was the narrative of political economy. One variant of this narrative is the elite capture thesis that looks at the Ahok case as a symptom in

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187 Discussion with Frans Djalong (Yogyakarta, 15 December 2016).
188 In fact, PKS did not join the anti-Ahok rally from the beginning. Only in the 2 December rally, PKS openly support the movement and its leaders appeared on the stage.
which the mobilisation of identity politics by the contending oligarchs had become
the current ‘salient feature of conflict over power and resources’ (Hadiz, 2017a: 262; 2017). This is particularly the case because both Ahok and Anies Baswedan
camps were, in fact, well connected with the Soeharto-nurtured contending elites
and there was a sense that the Jakarta race would determine the outcome of the 2019
presidential election. Another variant of the political economy narrative centred on
the politics of the urban poor (e.g., Wilson, 2017; 2016). In this view, strong support
from Jakarta’s working class and urban poor in the anti-Ahok movement was an
expression of resistance against his urban development policies.

The Ahok case had also been shaped by the narratives of political identity,
that led to two tendencies: the racialisation of politics and the Islamisation of
political leadership. Not only because of Ahok’s own background as a Chinese
Indonesian, but his collaboration with Chinese-ethnic tycoons in many urban
development projects had also sharpened the racialisation of Jakarta’s politics (e.g.,
Sulaiman, 2017). By reasserting the colonial policies of societal stratification, such
racialisation narrative had constituted antagonistic subjects between ‘the Chinese’
that is perceived as dominating the Indonesian economy and the marginalised
‘pribumi’ (often narrowly signified as Muslims). In the Jakarta election, this
narrative was merged with the politics of urban poor in which the rhetoric of
‘victimisation of the Muslim majority’ by ‘non-native Chinese’ became a rallying
point in constituting the anti-Ahok movement. The politicisation of the pribumi
categories was also voiced by the GNPF-MUI masses in a 31 March 2017 rally, just
two weeks before the second round of the election, that greatly raised the concerns
about the dangers of racial conflicts (BBC Indonesia, 31 March 2017). Controversially, the winning Governor Anies Baswedan himself is seen as
capitalising on such racial sentiment when in the inauguration speech he stated that:
‘[i]n the past, we pribumi were the conquered. Now, it’s time for us to be the hosts

Furthermore, the narrative of Islamisation of political leadership following
the Ahok case had a broader implication for the issues of national integration. The
rhetoric of ‘rejecting the infidel leader’ that was initiated by Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia
for example, had sharpened the tensions between the pro-Ahok and anti-Ahok movements. Reviving the old debates around the ummah and bangsa (nation) as a legitimate political community, the anti-Ahok camps questioned the cultural legitimacy of non-Muslim leadership in Muslim majority province of Jakarta. Significantly, this narrative had worsened the existing tensions between NU and HTI, manifested in the discursive battles of ‘Islam Nusantara’ versus ‘Transnational Islam’. Moreover, this narrative also exacerbated the tensions between ‘tolerant’ versus ‘intolerant’ opposition, by which the latter is considered as endangering the unity of nation-state. For example, following the imprisonment of Ahok, there had been mass rallies in non-Muslim majority provinces, especially in Eastern Indonesia, calling for multicultural aspiration (Kompas.com, 10 May 2017).

The fourth narrative is associated with the rhetoric of the return of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). This narrative had been mobilised by the anti-Ahok camp and the military officers who continuously utilised anti-PKI sentiments. Having been framed as endangering Indonesia’s unity, the anti-Ahok movement found anti-PKI narratives as a counter-strategy to recalibrate their ‘ultra-nationalist’ faces by building an alliance with the military. In fact, General Gatot Nurmatyo, the then military commander, had frequently warned of the danger of a ‘proxy-war’ associated with geopolitical dynamics during the 2017 Jakarta election (The Jakarta Post, 15 Dec. 2016, The Economist, 20 Dec. 2016; Tirto.id, 27 Sept. 2017). While the anti-Ahok camp often exaggerated the ‘proxy war’ rhetoric by associating it with the rise of China—supposedly behind Ahok—in the region, the pro-Ahok camp was concerned with the ambition of the military to re-enter political arena.190

Clearly, the competing forms of the electoral ummah as manifested in the battles between pro-Ahok and anti-Ahok movement were constructed by a variety of discourses with less attention given to how justice and equality could be

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189 During the interview, HTI claims as the first group which denounce this slogan, soon before the issue of blasphemy became public debates. Interview, Ismail Yusanto, Jakarta, 7 November 2016; IfIah Nur, 9 November 2016.

190 Prior to the election, a report written by Alan Nairn (The Intercept, 29 Apr. 2017) circulated that exposed of planning a coup (makar) by ambitious military officers. While the report was generally seen as less than reliable, it became a cause for public concern, especially in the pro-Ahok camp (Asian Correspondent, 22 Apr. 2017).
articulated through a socially cross-cutting alliance. Through the aforementioned narratives, electoral politics had constituted the Ahok case as an empty signifier through which different actors signified it with different contents and interests. Likewise, it had also transformed and reduced the diverse categories of Islamism and political struggles into dichotomic camps which were mobilised for the narrow purposes of winning the election. The introduction of religious popular movements, in the forms of ‘Islamist populism’ and ‘pluralist Islam’, for the elections took place in the context of the growing public distrust of political parties. Their different patterns of contestations and social coalitions had not necessarily reflected shared ideological platforms and interests for the struggles of different political projects but were mostly superficial and pragmatist in character.

These developments would substantially affect the workings of democracy and the practices of Islamism, at least, for the following reasons. Firstly, the introduction of religious mobilisation for electoral purposes would strengthen the prominent role of Islamist political discourse for constructing the distinct form of the people which masks the poor performance of the existing political parties. Secondly, it is very unlikely that these forms of the electoral ummah would shape development agendas for the interests of the ummah. This is particularly because the alliance on which it hinges is not the product of hegemonic struggles representing the multitude of demands and advancing a distinct political project for reshaping the existing structure of power. Even if the anti-Ahok camp claims the anti-establishment mantle, they are in fact linked to other groups of oligarchs, including no less than the Soeharto family and an ethnic Chinese billionaire and media mogul, Hary Tanoesoedibjo. Thirdly, the different forms of the electoral ummah had actually exercised Islamist political discourse for an exclusionary logic of doing politics. The difference is only in their strategies of articulations, in which the ‘populist-Islamism’ supposedly behind the anti-Ahok movement exploits Islam for majority rule while pro-Ahok Islamists articulate Islamist discourse to celebrate cultural differences (rahmatan lil ‘alamin, Islam as the blessings for all) but fiercely excluding what they labelled as ‘intolerant’ Islamist groups.
Politicising Identity, Depoliticising Citizenship: Islamism and Democratic Challenges

In the aftermath of the Ahok saga, scholarly debates on the current state of democracy and Islamism in Indonesia have been largely dominated by pessimistic views. Lindsey (2018), for example, argues that Indonesia is now retreating from democracy due to the growing expression of intolerance, calling for revisiting the notion of the ‘smiling face of Islam’ that was once celebrated as the character of Indonesian Islam. From a more structuralist lens, Hadiz (2017a) portrays the democratic setbacks and the deepening illiberalism in current Indonesia as the result of the mainstreaming of conservative Islamic morality and reactionary nationalism, which increasingly becomes the salient feature of the intra-oligarchic competition. Meanwhile, Mietzner (2018; see also Power, 2018) explains ‘democratic deconsolidation’ by specifically looking at the ways Jokowi’s administration—whose victory in the 2014 election is seen as saving Indonesia’s democracy from an immediate take over by his ‘hard-line populist’ contender, Prabowo Subianto—deals with the challenges of populist politics which are seen as counter-productive. By using a combination of criminalisation strategies with politico-legal instruments and patronage-oriented accommodation policies, he argues, the regime’s efforts ‘to protect the democratic status quo from populist attacks turned into a threat of democracy itself’ (2018: 261). From a rather different way, this section discusses the challenges of democracy in relation to the practices of Islamism by linking them to the absence of hegemonic forces and the continued depoliticisation of demos.

In response to the socially divided society resulting from the Jakarta election, the concerns for the mobilisation of identity politics for power struggles have been expressed not only by observers but also around Jokowi’s circle who seek to protect the president’s political future. In fact, many analysts (see, for example, Hadiz, 2017; Busch, 2017) have asserted that Islamist mobilisations during the Jakarta election were a rehearsal for challenging Jokowi in the 2019 presidential election. Thus far, Jokowi has navigated a situation to secure his fortune by disorganising the socio-economic dissent articulated through Islamist discourses and politicizing a ‘new identity’ organised around the nationalist rhetoric. In so doing, he offers a
different kind of narrative to signify the current democratic dislocations and to mainstream the dangers of ‘sectarian’ and ‘intolerant’ Islamism for the unity of Indonesia’s nation.

But resolving the existing polarisation of society by politicising another form of communal-based identity would only exacerbate the antagonistic relations and thus postpone the making of inclusive and democratic citizenship. As such, the threat to democracy is not essentially coming from Islamism in itself but lies primarily on the actual practices of democracy which are unable to constitute democratic subjects (demos). In so far as democracy practices are dominated by the struggle for state power and the hegemonic forces capable of representing cross-cutting demands and interests among the multitude of social groups are absent, the politicisation of identities and depoliticisation of citizenship will continue. These developments can easily lead to two anti-democratic situations: the technocratic-authoritarian rule and communal-sectarian societies.

Since the early phase of anti-Ahok rallies, there had been speculation that the ultimate target of Islamist mobilisations was to undermine Jokowi and his allies, seen as the protector of a ‘blasphemer’ (e.g., Fealy, 2016). This is quite understandable given the anti-Ahok movement had built an alliance with the parties outside the national coalition which were eager to challenge Jokowi’s presidency in the 2019 election. To undermine the Islamists, for example, Jokowi’s government had attempted to pre-empt mass mobilisation by detaining a number of politically peripheral figures and accusing them of planning a coup (makar) on the eve of the 2 December rally—albeit this was proven ineffective, if not counter-productive (Majalah Tempo, 12-18 Dec. 2016). Jokowi’s primary reaction has been to deter the Islamists’ challenges by (re)constructing and politicising ‘new identity’ associated with the discourses of nationalism. In many occasions and public statements, he has often re-emphasised the sanctity of the Unitary State of 191

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191 Those who are detained by the police include Kivlan Zein (anti-communist retired general and closed to Rizieq Shihab), Sri Bintang Pamungkas (senior activist and lecturer), Ahmad Dhani (musician), Rachmawati Soekarno, and other less known individuals like Hatta Taliwang Firza Husain, Rijal Ijal, Alvin Indra. The police publicly accused these individuals of planning a coup, by showing unconvincing evidences including the money transfer made they made for the 2 December rally ranging only from 3-300 million rupiahs (Majalah Tempo, 12-18 Dec. 2016).
Indonesia (NKRI) and introduced a new national holiday, Pancasila day, on 1 June (see, for example, Hadiz, 2017a: 269). In addition, a new institution called the Presidential Working Unit for the Implementation of the State Ideology of Pancasila (UKP-IP) was set up, resembling the now-defunct New Order-model of Pancasila mainstreaming (*The Jakarta Post*, 7 June 2017).

In the context of post-New Order Indonesia, politicising nationalist discourse also meant providing a channel for the greater involvement of the military in politics. For some, this is also seen as a strategy to counter-balance the military under politically ambitious commander General Gatot Nurmantyo who built strong ties with and was popular among anti-Ahok Islamists (*Reuters*, 9 Jan. 2017; *Tirto.id*, 29 Sept. 2017). As always, restructuring the relationships between the state, the military and Islamism requires the politicisation of communist revivalism—constructed as the ‘big Other’ in Zizekian terms. The alliance of the Islamists and the military since the New Order era have been sustained by the reproduction of the ghosts of communism (see, for example, Honna, 2013). In a bid to increase his leverage before the military and the Islamists, Jokowi ultimately raised anti-communist sentiments, stating that he himself would ‘crackdown on the communists’ (*Tempo.co*, 3 June 2017). As such, he disappointed human rights activists who had previously supported and praised him for promising to comprehensively resolve the 1965-related human rights problems.

The efforts to disorganise the Islamists associated with anti-Ahok camp continued by mainstreaming Pancasila as the way to prevent the nation from the dangers of disintegration. Jokowi even stated that current democracy has ‘gone too far’, left the door wide open to the extremists for mobilising Islamist sentiments (*The Jakarta Post*, 22 Feb. 2017; *Kompas.com*, 22 Feb. 2017). The Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) was implicated when its leader Habib Rizieq Shihab was investigated by the police for several accusations including an infamous ‘sex-related chatting’ scandals that made him been charged by the anti-pornography law that his organisation had once endorsed heavily. However, banning FPI altogether is often seen too risky for Jokowi as this could be instrumentalised for justifying his ‘anti-Islam’ credentials (Hadiz, 2017a: 269). On the contrary, it is very likely that
the regime also sees that Rizieq—who is now residing in Saudi Arabia after his case was made public in May 2017—can be instrumentalised for its own political purposes. This is not surprising if one looks at the FPI’s history (and Rizieq’s connection especially with former military commander General Wiranto who is now also a Jokowi’s cabinet member) as a military proxy for challenging anti-government student demonstrations in 1998. In fact, it was also reported that the Palace envoys including the Chief of National Police, Head of the Intelligence Agency and PDIP politicians visited Rizieq in Saudi in mid-2018. While the meetings were never made public, a PDIP politician revealed that these were related to the 2019 election (Kumparan, 28 May 2018).

More defenceless than the FPI to such political pressure is the Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI). After much speculation regarding the plan to clump-down organisations deemed as anti-Pancasila, the government ultimately enacted the Regulation in Lieu of Law (Perppu) 2/2017 in July, providing a new legal basis to ban mass organisations (Ormas) without judicial process (The Jakarta Post, 14 July 2017; Kompas.com, 24 Oct. 2017). Among dozens of anti-Pancasila organisations on the government list, in fact, only HTI that so far had been targeted by this new legal framework (CNN Indonesia, 9 Aug. 2017; Kompas.com, 16 July 2017). Ismail Yusanto, the HTI national spokesperson, believed that the government’s ban against the HTI is inseparable from its position in the anti-Ahok movement, stating that ‘anti-Pancasila’ label is only a strategy to discredit Islam, that was also used by Soekarno in the late 1950s and Soeharto during the New Order era (Kompas.com, 8 May 2017; personal correspondence). Given the fact that HTI’s main basis is within university campuses, lecturers and students known to be its members are scrutinised and threatened with sackings or suspensions (The Jakarta Post, 9 Aug. 2018; BBC Indonesia, 21 July 2017). Nevertheless, the banning of HTI has been welcomed and supported by NU and its youth wing Banser, on the grounds that both have ideological differences and, more importantly, the former has increasingly set its feet at NU’s traditional strongholds (Hadiz, 2017a: 270; Osman, 2018; Power, 2018: 314-5).
Afterwards, Indonesia’s political discourse of democracy is increasingly dominated by the politicisation of the battles between ‘anti-Pancasila’ and ‘anti-Islam’ identities which are expected to define the blocs of the electoral constituency. This is particularly salient prior to the 2018 simultaneous local election (*Pilkada*, held on 27 June 2018)\(^{192}\) and the 2019 presidential election. For example, as early as May 2018, the ‘#2109GantiPresiden’ (2019 ChangeThePresident) movement, that was started from *WhatsApp* groups and the social media, had become a political grouping that was also instrumentalised by the anti-Ahok-associated candidates in the *Pilkada* (*Detik.com*, 4 July 2018). More importantly, the politicisation of identities for electoral contestation has led to the ascendancy of the promotion of conservatism and sectarian politics in current democracy discourses in. For instance, a veteran politician and the founder of PAN, Amin Rais stated that:

> At this moment, we need to mobilise all national forces to join into a grand coalition. Not only PAN, PKS, Gerinda but also all groups that defend the religion of Islam, that is *hizbullah* (God Parties). Against whom? To struggle against *hizbusyaitan* (Parties of Satan) (*Tirto.id*, 17 April 2018).

The Islamists, who vaguely call themselves the 212 alumni, referring to those participated in the anti-Ahok rally of 2 December, have also actively taken part in influencing local elections. For example, FPI leader Rizieq Shihab called for his followers to support all candidates nominated by PKS, Gerindra, and PAN. Moreover, several candidates had visited and sought support from the FPI leader in Saudi Arabia (*Tempo.co*. 28 March 2018).\(^{193}\) Yet Rizieq’s call has never been easily materialised among the Islamists in the local context. This is particularly because (1) there is a little correspondence between the patterns of a coalition for the *Pilkada* and national-level dynamics (c.f., Buehler and Tan, 2007) and (2) different forms of the electoral *ummah* build a coalition with different individual candidates—not based on parties. Perhaps, such polarisations are well demonstrated in the *Pilkada*  

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\(^{192}\) Half of the country’s 34 provinces held the election on this date, including the densely populated areas of East, Central, and West Java, South Sulawesi, and North and South Sumatera. The elections were also conducted in 115 regencies and 39 cities.

\(^{193}\) Those who visited Rizieq Shihab included Sudirman Said (a governor candidate for the Central Java) and Nur Supriyanto (a mayor candidate for Bekasi, West Java). Even, the latter put Rizieq’s photo on his widely distributed campaign posters claiming that his nomination is supported and blessed by the FPI leader (*jppn.com*, 27 March 2018).
in Bogor regency. With the greatest number of voters in West Java province (3.3 million), Bogor regency becomes highly competitive area—both for district and provincial elections. The party-coalition pattern in the Bogor’s election differs greatly from the national-level dynamics, where PKS and PAN built a coalition with Golkar and Nasdem (pro-Ahok parties) to nominate Ade Ruhandi-Ingrid Kansil pairs against Ade Yasin-Iwan Setiawan supported by a coalition between Gerindra, PPP and PKB (Pikiran Rakyat, 4 January 2018). In fact, the polarisation is also experienced by the Islamists at the societal level when the 212 figures support different candidates. For example, Al-Khatthath’s FUI (Forum Umat Islam) and his groups take side with non-party candidates (Ade Wardhana-Asep Ruhiyat) while Mahdi Assegaf’s Syababul Kheir built a political contract with Ade Yasin-Iwan Setiawan (SuaraIslam, 2 March 2018)."}

Interestingly, one of the major responses among the ‘Pancasila’ camps to the pressures of Islamist mobilisations has been, in fact, to strengthen their Islamist identities prior to the Pilka. For instance, the incumbent governor from PDI-P Ganjar Pranowo pairs with Taj Yasin, the son of Kyai Maimoen Zubair (a senior and respected kyai in Nahdatul Ulama) for the Pilka in Central Java province (Kompas.com, 9 Jan. 2018). Meanwhile, Ridwan Kamil (nominated by PPP, PKB, Nasdem, Hanura parties) runs with a conservative Islamist figure of the Tasikmalaya regent Uu Ruhzanul Ulum, who is, in fact, the grandson of Kyai Choer Affandi, a senior figure of the Kartosuwiryo’s Darul Islam in West Java (Tempo.co, 7 Jan. 2018; c.f., Solahudin, 2013). Typically, their proponents argue that such combinations are complementary—combining the ‘nationalist’ and ‘Islam’ identities (see Power, 2018). Indeed, this does not necessarily reflect that they have built cross-cutting representation among these social forces but have merely come up with symbolic branding. From the lens of radical democracy, these practices

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194 Both groups mobilised their masses for anti-Ahok rallies but representing different social basis of Islam. Al-Khatthath’s groups are associated with more ‘modernist’ Islam (linked to ex-Masyumi and HTI) while Mahdi’s is closed to ‘traditionalist’ Islam (linked to NU and FPI). During the election campaign there had been circulated pamphlets, containing a political contract between Syababul Kheir and Ade Yasin-Iwan Setiawan, where the former put forward demands including the support for sharia implementation and anti-LGBT. Ultimately, these candidates won the election despite the fact that Ade Yasin is a sister of the former Bogor regent who had been jailed for corruption issues.
have further promoted the disappearance of the political by imagining a reconciled society (c.f., Duile and Bens, 2017).

The swinging pendulum towards Islam has prompted the Islamists associated with the anti-Ahok movement to stage a national gathering of Islamic scholars (Itjima’ Ulama) in July 2018, for the purpose of selecting presidential and vice-presidential nominees under the banner of the Koalisi Umat (lit. the ummah coalition). They proposed Prabowo Subianto for the presidential candidate, paired with a non-politician and conservative popular preacher Abdul Somad or Salim Segaf Al-Jufri (the top leader of PKS) (Tirto.id, 8 Aug. 2018). However, after a long process of negotiations within the party coalition of Gerindra, PKS, PAN and lately Demokrat Party, Prabowo Subianto ultimately run with a businessman and Jakarta’s vice-governor who had just been inaugurated less than a year, Sandiaga Uno (The Jakarta Post, 10 Aug. 2018). Meanwhile, there had been rumours that Jokowi would pick Mahfud MD, a former chairman of the Constitutional Court, as the vice-president nominee. Despite Mahfud’s popularity among Jokowi’s supporters according to polls, the latter made a last-minute cancellation when he—being pressured from his coalition parties and NU—ultimately announced Kyai Ma’ruf Amin instead—a 75-year-old MUI Chairman who is considered as an NU conservative ulama responsible for MUI’s conservative fatwas against LGBT, Ahmadi and Shia communities and, more importantly, that of stating Ahok had blasphemed Islam (Fealy, 2016). While this decision disappointed some of Jokowi’s supporters (especially the pro-Ahok and human rights activists), political narratives in the public have been overwhelmed by the struggle to define the respective candidates as legitimately ‘more Islamic’ than others. Even a senior PKS politician such as Hidayat Nur Wahid had to naively defend his candidates by declaring that Sandiaga Uno can be categorised as ‘ulama—regardless of his lack of credentials in Islamic knowledge (CNN Indonesia, 17 Sep. 2018).

The foregoing discussion shows that the problems of democracy are less stemming exclusively from Islam than a confluence of the actual practices of democracy and the absence of hegemonic blocs following the post-New Order era. Through this confluence, the interests, identities and subjectivities, relationships
among social subjects are continuously modified and reorganised. Crucially, these developments bring about far-reaching consequences for the workings of democracy and the practices of Islamism in Indonesia. The politicisation of identities around the signifier of Islam and nationalism only exacerbate the existing antagonistic relations and thus postpone, if not cancel, the making of inclusive and democratic citizenship. In the case of the presidential election, this also masks the absence of political projects for governing societies. Superficial debates (e.g. which candidates are more pious, better in reading Koran, etc.) in the public sphere which tend to polarise society and increased conservatism had significantly replaced the contents of the reform programs offered by the candidates. The incumbent inclines to maintain the status quo and political compromise, while the contender relies heavily on mobilising public dissatisfaction towards the government without offering a viable alternative.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has explained the prevalence of Islamist political discourse and communal-based mobilisations for power struggles as results of the dislocations of democratic politics associated with the hegemony of neoliberal globalisation. More specifically, neoliberalism had brought about the depoliticising effects for democracy and development practices that resulted in the creation of the so-called ‘post-democratic’ situation. This is a circumstance in which the dimensions of the political for the articulations of equality and popular sovereignty disappeared from current democracy discourses. In the context of Indonesia, this condition primarily emerges out from the post-New Order democratisation projects that are followed by the depoliticisation of *demos* (the people) instead of resulting in hegemonic forces capable of representing cross-cutting demands and agenda among the multitude of social groups. Consequently, democracy is increasingly signified as elite-based contests for controlling the state power while the absence of hegemonic political forces has prompted the contending elites and dominant social groups to mobilise identity politics for power struggles. Often, the politicisation of identities for electoral politics exacerbates the exclusionary practices along sectarian lines.
Nevertheless, the primacy of Islamist political discourse is not necessarily a manifestation of the ‘Islamisation of politics’ nor inherently a result of the ‘intolerant Islamism’ in taking over democracy, nor merely the instrumentalisation of the contending elites that utilise Islam for their own interests. Instead, it is a result of the confluence of the actual practices of democracy and Islamism which are constitutive for the reorganisation of the interests, identities and relationships among the Islamists and contending parties or elites. This also marks the political contingency of democracy that its dynamic is always contested rather than a linear evolution and development. These dynamics are comprehended by using the Ahok case, especially to show the ways Islamist political discourse occupy the democratic space and forge the different forms of the electoral ummah.

The discussion of this chapter has also revealed that countering the prominent of Islamist discourse by politicising other forms of identities organised around the political discourse of nationalism is counter-productive. Besides that it only exacerbates the existing social antagonisms, the politicisation of identities will only lead to the depoliticisation of democratic citizenship. From the lens of hegemonic politics, the ultimate challenge for democracy is not defending or deterring one form of identities over another but a political project for transforming antagonistic relations into a common struggle for emancipatory politics through creation of a more inclusive unity.
On 9 May 2017, a Jakarta court sentenced an ethnic Chinese and Christian incumbent governor, Basuki ‘Ahok’ Tjahaja Purnama, to two years in prison for committing ‘blasphemy’ against Islam—harsher than what prosecutors had asked for. This sentence only added to his woes after a dramatic defeat in the gubernatorial election held just two weeks earlier. The fact that his defeat and subsequent jailing were overtly conditioned by enormous mobilisations of Islamic and xenophobic sentiments had made both scholars and some of the wider public consider this moment as a turning point that rolled back Indonesia’s democratic progress. A renowned Indonesian human rights activist, for example, described Ahok’s imprisonment as opening ‘the door to fear and religious extremism’ and paving the way ‘to move Indonesia from a secular to an Islamic state’ (The Guardian, 10 May 2017; The New York Times, 9 May 2017).

In spite of a much-praised successful democratic transition after decades of New Order authoritarianism, why is Indonesia now confronting religious intolerance? Why have the inclusion and participation of Islamist organisational vehicles in democratic processes not led to a more conspicuous moderation of Islamic politics? Why has Islam increasingly become a prominent discourse for power struggles and mobilisations in Indonesia’s present-day democracy? These are significant questions given that Indonesia has been widely considered as the world’s largest democratic Muslim-majority country. Crucially, the saga of Ahok also highlighted many contentious aspects of the relationship between Islam and politics, particularly those associated with Islamism and democracy, against the backdrop of the rise of ‘right-wing’ populism in many regions in the world today.

Following the core argument put forward in this thesis, the answers to those questions are less associated with the intrinsic relationship between Islam and democracy or mere consequences of the ‘Islamisation of politics’ agendas wherein
the ‘radicals’ have increasingly dominated the public sphere and political arena. Instead, the current dynamics of Islamism are unequivocally conditioned within a distinct context in which it has evolved in Indonesia. By situating Islamism within broader socio-political changes, this thesis has shown that the nature and trajectories of Islamic politics are less rooted in a particular interpretation of religious contents, cultural norms or institutional imperatives. Rather, they are contingent on socio-political changes and political contestations involving multiple forces, both within and beyond Islamists, throughout given historical periods. More specifically, this study comprehends Islamism as a form of Islamist struggle for hegemony. Here, the concept of hegemony is not only employed as a category for explaining a logic of social formation and change contingent on the results of political struggles. It also refers to the practices of constructing cross-cutting alliance that links together the multitude of demands by building a political project for the purpose of reshaping a given social order (c.f., Laclau and Mouffe, 2001; Laclau, 1990; 1996; 2000; Sayyid, 1997).

With a few exceptions (e.g., Hefner, 2000; Hadiz, 2016), contemporary studies on Islamic politics in Indonesia have, in fact, conceived Islamism exclusively as a post-Soeharto phenomenon that is associated with the demise of the centralised authoritarian regime. These studies have generally emerged and developed within two inter-connected settings: the post-New Order democratisation and the GWOT. Accordingly, the variants of cultural and institutional approaches have dominated the discussion on the dynamics and trajectories of Islamism for democratic transition and consolidation in Indonesia (see, for example, Künkler and Stepan, 2013; Tomsa, 2012; Abuza, 2007; Ufen, 2011; Bubalo, et al., 2008). Following 9/11 and particularly after the 2002 Bali bombing, studies on Islamism have been increasingly driven by security and ideology-oriented narratives. Typically, they associate violent and anti-democratic articulations of certain Islamist groups with particular interpretations of Islamic doctrine or actor-organisation networks (Fealy, 2004; Barton, 2004; Bubalo and Fealy, 2005; van Bruinessen, 2002; ICG, 2002; Ramakrishna and Tan, 2003; Singh, 2007; Ota, et al., 2010). With the relative absence of questions of power to explain the different forms of Islamism, these approaches tend to present Islamism in a rather monochromatic
and overtly culturalist fashion. More importantly, these approaches have also facilitated the securitisation and depoliticisation of Islam by mainstreaming the ‘dangerous’ enterprise of ‘Islamisation of politics’, seen as a threat to national security, democracy and multicultural society.

The approach taken in this thesis has enabled an analysis that situates Islamism in specific historical conjunctures, by linking the relations between distinct socio-political conditions and the discursive formation of Islamism in Indonesia. Indeed, the contributions of critical political economy studies (e.g., Hadiz, 2016; 2014; Hadiz and Robison, 2012) have helped to interrogate the conditions of structural dislocations and the changing social basis which constitute the specific landscape for the dynamics of Islamic politics. The analysis of this thesis, however, does not depart from the ways that social transformation has shaped the distinct forms and trajectories of Islamism. Rather, it looks at the practices of organising demands among diverse social groups and transforming them as a political project under the banner of Islam to alter the structure of power relations in both the state and society. Hegemonic politics is, therefore, a mode of representing the plurality of demands by ‘politicising’ particular discourses against the context of dislocations. In this process, the identities, interests and subjectivities of its social agents are reconfigured in the course of their hegemonic struggles. By highlighting the ‘logic of political contingency’, as presented in Chapter 2, this approach conceives the social formation and its changes as the result of political struggles in which the lines of contestations and social coalitions among political forces are continuously drawn which, in turn, characterise Indonesian politics and Islamism itself.

By envisaging Islamism in terms of hegemonic struggles, this thesis has also underscored the importance of the state. More specifically, the state here is seen as a space and, at the same time, a contingent outcome of the political in which specific practices and struggles are constituted and contested (see, for example, Laclau, 1975; Finlayson and Martin, 2005). It has been argued that situating Islamism in the context of state formation and transformation is crucial to reveal the ways different forms of Islamism define and shape the power configuration that has
evolved in Indonesia’s political history. This is particularly relevant due to the following reasons. Firstly, Islamist political discourses had become the very element—along with communism and nationalism—for the making of Indonesia’s political community from the periods of colonialism, nation-state formation, to the present days. In a nutshell, Islamism is inseparable from the evolution of the Indonesian nation-state.

Secondly, the main struggles of Islamism had shifted from anti-colonial movements to contestations over state power following Independence. The legacies of colonial capitalist development that failed to generate a relatively strong domestic bourgeois class and the centralisation of the economy since the early post-colonial period, as Robison (2009) and others (e.g., Lindblad and Post, 2009; Booth, 2007) argue, guaranteed the primacy of the state in the accumulation of economic and political resources. Moreover, the failure of the Islamists to build a foundation of the state that could guarantee the better position of the ummah in the aftermath of Independence had often left a sense of marginalisation which prompted Islamist movements to wage political struggles for control of state power and political authority whether through democratic mechanisms or other, even violent, means.

Thirdly, state transformation is not only associated with domestic-based political struggles but has been also greatly influenced by dominant global discourses that shape the nature of governing and organising state and society relations (e.g., Duffield, 2001; Hameiri, 2010; Hadiz, 2006). For example, anti-colonial movements in the East Indies in the early nineteenth century had been greatly influenced by their connections with decolonisation projects across the globe and the crisis of colonial power following the Great Depression and the World Wars. Likewise, the ascendancy of developmentalism throughout the New Order had been made possible and conditioned by the dynamics of Cold War politics and a modernisation agenda that linked economic growth with the depoliticisation of society. Also, the current dominant discourses of democracy and multiculturalism have been greatly shaped by the discourses of neoliberal triumphalism and the GWOT that reasserts ‘the clash of civilisation’ thesis. Such complex connections have created a distinct governing model that becomes a ‘regime of truth’ for
prescribing state and society relations, especially to discipline Islamism in such a way to be functional for the hegemonic (global) order (c.f., Foucault, 1991; Dean, 2010; Larner and Walters, 2004). In turn, this ‘governmentalisation’ has ultimately shaped the power configurations, subjectivities, and contestations which characterise the dynamic relations between the state and Islamism in given periods.

The arguments and analysis developed in this thesis have been mainly directed to comprehend contemporary Islamism by genealogically looking at the changing relations between Islamism and the state in Indonesia’s political history. In doing so, this study identified three central discursive settings that have conditioned and transformed such relationships throughout the historical conjuncture. These are, respectively, anti-colonialism and state formation (1900s-1965), developmentalism (1965-1998), and democracy (1998-present). As shown in Chapter 3, broader socio-political changes in the late nineteenth century had made possible the rapid construction of anti-colonial subjects and political vehicles organised mainly around the discourses of Islamism, communism and nationalism. Regardless of their different backgrounds, social bases, and demands, it has been suggested that the relationships between these anti-colonial subjects and the colonial power—by constructing the latter as a common antagonism—are constitutive for the creation of a consciousness and solidarity for the making of a new collective identity and imaginary: ‘Indonesia’.

Yet, the chains of equivalence constructed under the banner of anti-colonialism had not necessarily resolved the existing internal tensions and contradictions among the particularities of its elements. As early as the 1930s, the hegemony of nationalism in anti-colonial movements had instead resulted in two antagonistic subjects that subsequently characterised the debates on Indonesia’s nation-state formation: the ‘Islamic nationalist’ and the ‘secular nationalist’. As took place in many other post-colonial Muslim-majority countries, decolonisation projects had opened a new terrain for competing articulations sought to ‘define’ the newly formed nation-state (c.f., Mandaville, 2001; Sayyid, 2014). In the case of Indonesia, the central contests were about whether the post-colonial political
community should be organised around the signifier of the ‘ummah’ or ‘bangsa’ (nation).

In stark contrast to Malaysia’s experience of accommodating Islam in its state formation period, Islam in post-colonial Indonesia had been effectively sidelined from the nation-state discourses. Yet, unlike Turkey’s Kemalism project, the making of a new nation in Indonesia was not undertaken by a systematic disarticulation of Islam and constructing it as the ‘antagonistic other’. When Indonesia adopted Pancasila as its political foundation, seen as a political compromise for accommodating political differences, Islamism was constituted as a mere particular element. Accordingly, the political history of post-colonial Indonesia is about maintaining the hegemonic order for the unity of a nation-state based on Pancasila by politically managing its diverse elements and dealing with its antagonisms. The ways these particularities and antagonisms are managed have greatly transformed state and society relations, particularly in regard to Islamism.

In post-colonial Indonesia, Islam could not be smoothly accommodated into the structures of state power but through political contestations in the framework of Parliamentary Democracy (1949-1957). Not only had such contestation vigorously revived old rifts between Islamism, communism and nationalism, but also disclosed different forms of Islamism in the attempt to control state power. In fact, the practices of representative politics in this period, that was largely Java- (or Jakarta) centric in character, had resulted in the outbreak of regionalist insurgencies—some of which then merged with religious markers and associated with political parties—especially in the outer islands. The central government saw these ‘movements’, regardless of their initial demands for equality and justice, as new antagonisms which endangered the unity of Indonesia’s nation-state. Soekarno’s move to the so-called Guided Democracy (1957-1965) was a turning point in the management of antagonisms for the nation-state building projects. Throughout this period, these projects were achieved by undermining representative-interest politics and


196 See, for example, Uzak (2010), Cagaptay (2006) for the historical account of the relations between Kemalism, Islam and nationalism in Turkey’s nation-state building.
promoting a corporatist governing model. Having terminated Parliamentary Democracy where he had very limited authority, Soekarno—supported by the military—sought to manage the antagonisms by creating a new corporatist framework, the NASAKOM (Nationalism, Religion, and Communism), under his own control. Yet, the internal competition among its elements became increasingly uncontrollable, which then led to a political catastrophe, culminating in the 1965/1966 massacre.

In the context of Cold War global politics and Guided Democracy’s social conflicts, the army and the Islamists, with significant support from the US, were at the forefront of the destruction of communism and regime change—out of which a new political formation was established. Presenting itself as an antithesis of the previous order, as we have seen in Chapter 4, the hegemonic formation of the New Order was set up by constituting Pancasila democracy as a new master signifier. As such, Pancasila democracy became a terrain for the diverse articulations of demands for welfare, political stability, and social harmony. It has been suggested that the relations between Islamism and the state had changed throughout the New Order. Initially a central element in the anti-communist alliance that produced the New Order, Islamist articulations were transformed through the developmentalism discourse.

Influenced by the dominant strands of modernisation theory, that links economic growth and state-planned development to the maintenance of social and political stability, developmentalism discourse during the New Order had gone beyond economic issues to a governing rationality to restructure social relations, practices and subjectivities of the population (c.f., Bourchier and Hadiz, 2003; Moertopo, 1972). It promoted disorganisation of representative-interests-based politics and the suppression of political differences for the functioning of a technocratic regime that promised of producing welfare and stability through top-down interventions. As such, Islamism was depoliticised and domesticated in the domain of culture, whose agencies and subjectivities were constructed to defend the appeal of New Order’s modernisation projects. Through the introduction of an anti-politics framework, as vividly seen in the anti-SARA (Ethnic, Religion, Race
and Inter-group) policies, the New Order sought to sterilise the political arena from the articulations of identity politics. In fact, rather than depoliticising Islam and other identities, New Order developmentalism had actually politicised them by prescribing new subjectivities, agencies, and relationships required for sustaining its hegemony.

Nevertheless, the socio-economic dislocations following the end of oil boom era and due to liberalisation policies in the early 1980s, which produced new inequalities, had triggered resistances that were mainly organised through the politicisation of Islam (McVey, 1983; Robison and Hadiz, 2004; Hadiz, 2016). Perceived as depriving the ummah and benefiting Christian and Chinese-owned conglomerates, dissent against the New Order had also been articulated through anti-Chinese sentiments. In this period, the narrative of being Muslim was constituted as directly connected to the prihumi (the native) identity, by the exclusion of the ethnic Chinese as its antagonistic other. Nevertheless, this resistance could not be converted into a hegemonic force to challenge the New Order under the banner of Islam. This is particularly because, as argued in Chapter 4, from the very outset the Islamists had different subject positions and power relations within the discursive structure of New Order developmentalism.

Apart from the socio-economic dislocations, the crisis of New Order hegemony was also marked by the rise of contending articulations of Islam when the regime introduced the asas tunggal Pancasila (the sole foundation) in 1983, which forced all parties and social organisation to adhere to Pancasila as their only ideological platform. Crucially, these diverse articulations had revealed the construction of three forms of Islamism, namely the accommodationist, the confrontationist and ‘social movement’. Unlike the ‘modernist’ Islamists that easily accepted this policy because of their role as a New Order key pillar, the ‘traditionalist’ Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)—that had been critical towards Soeharto regime since the 1971 elections—supported this policy in the attempt to improve its bargaining position and to end its political marginalisation. Meanwhile, the confrontationists were made up of the Islamist groups associated with the off-shoots of the Darul Islam (DI) and were reminiscent of conservative Islamists associated
with Masyumi. While rejecting the *asas tunggal*, the third form of Islamism took non-confrontation strategies but focused on the building of new social bases. Unlike the ‘modernist’ and NU Islamists, the purveyors of ‘social movement’ Islamism revived the idea of *sumuliyatul Islam* (the unification of Islam as religion and political ideology). Tantalisingly, the social base of this Islamism emerged out of the Islamisation of society project—which was also supported by the regime—conducted since the late 1960s and 1970s by Islamist organisations like the Natsir-led *Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia* (DDII) and its networks in university campuses. Largely comprising of young educated Muslims, its proponents drew inspiration from transnational Islamist movements, especially after the Iranian revolution. Crucially, such different articulations of Islam had greatly shaped the contestations and social coalitions in the later period of the New Order. Hence, rather than signalling the strength and coherence of the New Order, the *asas tunggal* marked its hegemonic crisis, opening spaces for diverse Islamist articulations.

The period of the 1990s was a decisive moment for the changing relations between the state and Islamism. Prompted by intra-elite rivalries and the ‘third wave of democratisation’ global phenomena, the demands for democratisation were increasingly articulated by multiple social groups, in particular the Islamists. Throughout this period, Islamist articulations were manifested in the form of identity politics, constructed as a new basis for the struggles to improve their positions in the structure of power. The regime’s attempts for balancing political forces by courting the Muslim middle-class and ‘modernist’ Islamists under the *Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia* (ICMI) vehicle had instead brought about further polarisation.¹⁹⁷ This strategy had triggered NU to articulate different forms of Islamism based on the *bangsa* signifier in its bid to increase its bargaining position with the regime. NU also built an alliance with other forces—nationalist, Christian, human rights activists, and so on—which were concerned with ICMI’s sectarian tendencies. Ultimately, such polarisation led to a severe internal fracture in the New Order regime, culminating in its organic crisis following the 1997 Asian

economic crisis and Soeharto’s resignation. While the social basis of the opposition groups against New Order authoritarianism expanded rapidly, as we have seen, democracy discourse could not facilitate the creation of a chain of equivalence among these pro-democracy groups with a relatively common agenda. In fact, they remained a particularity which instead saw themselves as possible contenders to occupy state power after the Soeharto’s fall in 1998.

It has been argued that the functioning of the democratisation agenda, conducted after 1998, is less determined by the presence of new institutions and mechanisms as propagated by the transitology approaches. Rather, it is contingent on complex contestation and social coalition among social groups who seek to reorganise their demands, interests and identities through democratisation discourses. Indeed, democratisation in this period had become a master signifier—a new terrain for various articulations for transforming New Order’s authoritarianism. As discussed in Chapter 5, there were three central nodal points for transforming New Order authoritarianism to democracy, namely, political liberalisation, decentralisation, and building plural and tolerant societies. Instead of decisively moving from democratic transition to its consolidation, the contestations among diverse political forces within these respective areas have obscured the frontiers between ‘reformers’ and ‘status quo’ and paved the ways for the latter to reorganise its power in the new setting.

Democratisation has indeed facilitated Islamists to have a greater role in state and society, but it does not facilitate the establishment of effective representation of the sociologically diverse ummah. While political liberalisation had made possible for the birth of various Islamic parties, the failure to manage the tensions between the legacies of New Order’s corporatisation and the pressure of electoral politics prevented them from building a cross-cutting political agenda under the banner of Islam for post-Soeharto political order. Their failure to build a hegemonic project in the political area had prompted the rapid emergence of Islamist vehicles, claiming to represent the ummah with diverse strategies including those which employed violent means. As such, this thesis has also offered an understanding of
the so-called ‘radical’ Islamists from the problematic of democracy rather than ideology-oriented explanations.

With a relatively weak and fragmented social base, Islamic parties have also tended to build ‘the consensus of the centre’ that instead of offering an alternative order or policies sought to advocate political compromise with the old elites. Accordingly, political discourse in post-New Order Indonesia has been increasingly dominated by the imagining of a ‘reconciled’ community under the ‘nationalist-religious’ banner. Moreover, such consensus has not only erased the fundamental differences among the parties but made Islam increasingly become a floating signifier, appropriated by diverse political forces with different contents and agendas. This is particularly salient in the politics of sharia-by-laws (*Perda Syariah*) adopted by many local governments following decentralisation policies. It has been pointed out that *Perda Syariah* is less associated with a phenomenon of Islamisation of local politics than a new avenue for contending elites for controlling the state power by building an alliance with dominant social groups. Rather than uniting the Islamists, the sharia issue has significantly divided if not exacerbated the existing antagonism among Islamist groups. In fact, as many scholars (e.g., Bush, 2008; Buehler, 2016) have demonstrated, the major advocates of the sharia-oriented policies in the district and provincial levels are not primarily coming from Islamic parties. Thus, the sharia issue is more a symptom of Islamist hegemonic failure than indicator of its strength or coherence.

It has been argued that the dynamic relations between Islamism and the state in the post-New Order period also takes place within two-intertwined contexts. These are, respectively, (1) the hegemony of neoliberalism which brings about depoliticising effects for democracy and development practices and (2) the securitisation and culturalisation of Islamism as results of the GWOT discourses. Neoliberal tendencies to depoliticise social conflicts and to favour a technocratic logic of governing have effectively dissociated politics from society and erased the political dimension of democracy. Therefore, democratic politics is increasingly dominated by elite consensus instead of facilitating the confrontations between different political alternatives. In regard to Islamism, neoliberal-driven
depoliticisation has comfortably fit with the GWOT imperatives for securitising and culturalising Islam. Operating through multiculturalism and tolerance discourses, for example, the agencies and subjectivities of Islamism are naturalised into cultural categories in the antagonistic forms of ‘moderate’ and ‘radical’ Islamism (c.f., Mamdani, 2004; Sen, 2006). Yet, the containment of Islam in the domain of culture cannot prevent the Islamists from politicising it at the moment when neoliberal development practices bring about inequality and further marginalisation but, at the same time, they cannot articulate their dissent and demands through the existing representative framework.

From this viewpoint, the advent of the so-called ‘Islamic populism’, as a form of the construction of ‘the people’ based on Islamist political discourse, is not antithetical but springs precisely from the actual practices of democracy. Nevertheless, due to the fragmented nature of Islamism, the practices of Islamist populist politics, at least at this moment, cannot be transformed into a cross-cutting alliance for representing the demands of diverse demands of the ummah. By using the 2017 Jakarta election as a paradigmatic case study in Chapter 6, it is apparent that the construction of the ummah subject is only directed at the narrow purpose of winning electoral politics and maintaining patronage networks involving contending elites. Consequently, this fragmented populist form can be easily captured by contending elites in their power struggles rather than becoming a political force that challenges the existing structure of domination that, in the eyes of the Islamists, has marginalised the ummah.

There are limitations to the arguments and analysis presented in this thesis. First, constituted as a meso-level study, this thesis puts more emphasis on the constitutive relations between Islamism and the state transformation than on internal dynamics within particular Islamist groups. By analysing the diverse articulations of Islam and political contestations in specific discursive settings, the arguments of this thesis tend to be thematic-oriented in character and thus less focussed on showing the development of particular Islamist groups from one historical period to another. Undoubtedly, further micro-studies of hegemonic politics would complement this thesis. Albeit using different approaches, there have
been excellent studies on Islamism and the state in Indonesia based on single case studies. Yet, their research scopes largely focus on the periods before and during the New Order and thus further study is needed to capture more recent developments.

Second, by looking at the relations between Islamism and the state transformation, by which the identities, interests and strategies of the Islamists are continuously modified and reorganised, this study can be criticised as limiting Islamism as mere state-related struggles. As such, this study can be seen as neglecting other sociological factors such as the role of new forms of education which greatly shape the articulations and practices of Islamism, which cannot be fully reducible to state-related hegemonic struggles (Hefner, 2018; ). While these factors are indeed important to take into account, it does not necessarily mean that such processes are fully independent from political contestation in the state arena. Given the main purpose of this study is to comprehend Indonesia’s socio-political history from the lens of Islamic politics, framing the study within Islamism and the state relationships remains central.

Third, by specifically looking at Islamism in the context of nation-state formation and development in Indonesia, this thesis also lacks comparative insights from other Muslim-majority countries. Comparative studies will be crucial to enrich comprehension of the different trajectories of Islamism and outcomes from its engagement and contestations in constructing and shaping the political order in different contexts. Nevertheless, finding generality or family resemblance in the practices of Islamism and the state in Muslim majority countries is beyond the scope of this thesis. In fact, this thesis seeks to find a specific manifestation of Islamism that was greatly shaped by broader structural changes, nationally and globally.

In spite of these limitations, the findings and arguments presented by this thesis have theoretical and political relevance. They explain the ways that the hegemonic struggles of Islamism have shaped the configuration of power in Indonesian politics. Theoretically, the post-structuralist political discourse

198 These studies include Feillard (1999) and van Bruinessen (1994) on Nahdlatul Ulama, Federspiel’s Persatuan Islam (2001) and Madinier’s research on Masyumi (2013).
approach adopted here has offered a non-essentialist reading of the relations between Islam and politics, especially on Islam and democracy relationships. More specifically, this study emphasises the constitutive nature of the way Islamism transforms, and is being shaped by, the contestations and relations of power throughout its hegemonic struggles (c.f., Sayyid, 1997). As such, this theoretical position differs significantly from the ‘Islamisation of politics’ thesis as propagated by cultural and ideological-oriented approaches or the ‘ politicisation of Islam’ thesis generally advocated by the structuralists.

This theoretical standpoint opens up the possibilities, if not challenges, for the reinvention of democracy and Islamic politics in present-day Indonesia. By rejecting any kind of inherent relationship between Islam and democracy, this approach allows investigation into the conditions of possibilities for the mobilisation of Islam and xenophobic sentiments for power struggles. This is particularly important against the backdrop of the neoliberal-driven culturalisation of politics. It is more often than not that conceiving Islamism and democracy in terms of a battle between ‘tolerant’ and ‘intolerant’ forces has obscured and thus naturalised the fact that such differences are also conditioned by the issues related to political inequality and social justice. In a nutshell, essentialising Islam and democracy relations in terms of such binary categories have not only reasserted the ‘clash of civilisation’ narratives but also effectively constituted Islam as a distinct subject that is functional for the reproduction of neoliberal hegemony.

Moreover, countering the ‘Islamist populist politics’, which is often seen as intolerant and anti-democratic, by further politicisation of other identities organised around the hyper-nationalism and ‘pluralist Islam’ rhetoric is also counter-productive. Such politicisation has indeed exacerbated the existing antagonistic relations among the Islamists and led to a further ‘conservative turn’ that claims to represent the ‘truest’ Islam. Meanwhile, the so-called ‘pluralist-nationalist Islam’ has, in fact, similar exclusionary and anti-democratic tendencies, especially in dealing with the so-called ‘radical’ Islam. From the lens of hegemonic politics, the ultimate challenge for democracy is to transform the antagonistic relations of these identities into a common struggle for emancipatory politics through the creation of
inclusive and democratic citizenship (*demos*) (c.f., Mouffe, 1992; Little, 2002). As early as 1933, Soekarno had imagined Independence from the colonial power as a ‘golden bridge’ (*jembatan emas*), by which the different and contradictory identities within anti-colonial movements would form the building blocks of a more prosperous and just Indonesian society.\(^{199}\) Indeed, Soekarno’s political project is still relevant, if not more urgent than ever before, given that Indonesian politics remains predominantly characterised by politicisation and mobilisation of identities for contests over state power and the depoliticisation of citizenship.

\(^{199}\) In his short manifesto-like book entitled *Imagining a Free Indonesia*, Soekarno described anti-colonial movements as the result of the politicisation and mobilisation of diverse identities for struggles to take power from the colonial ruler. See Soekarno (1964: 257-324).
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