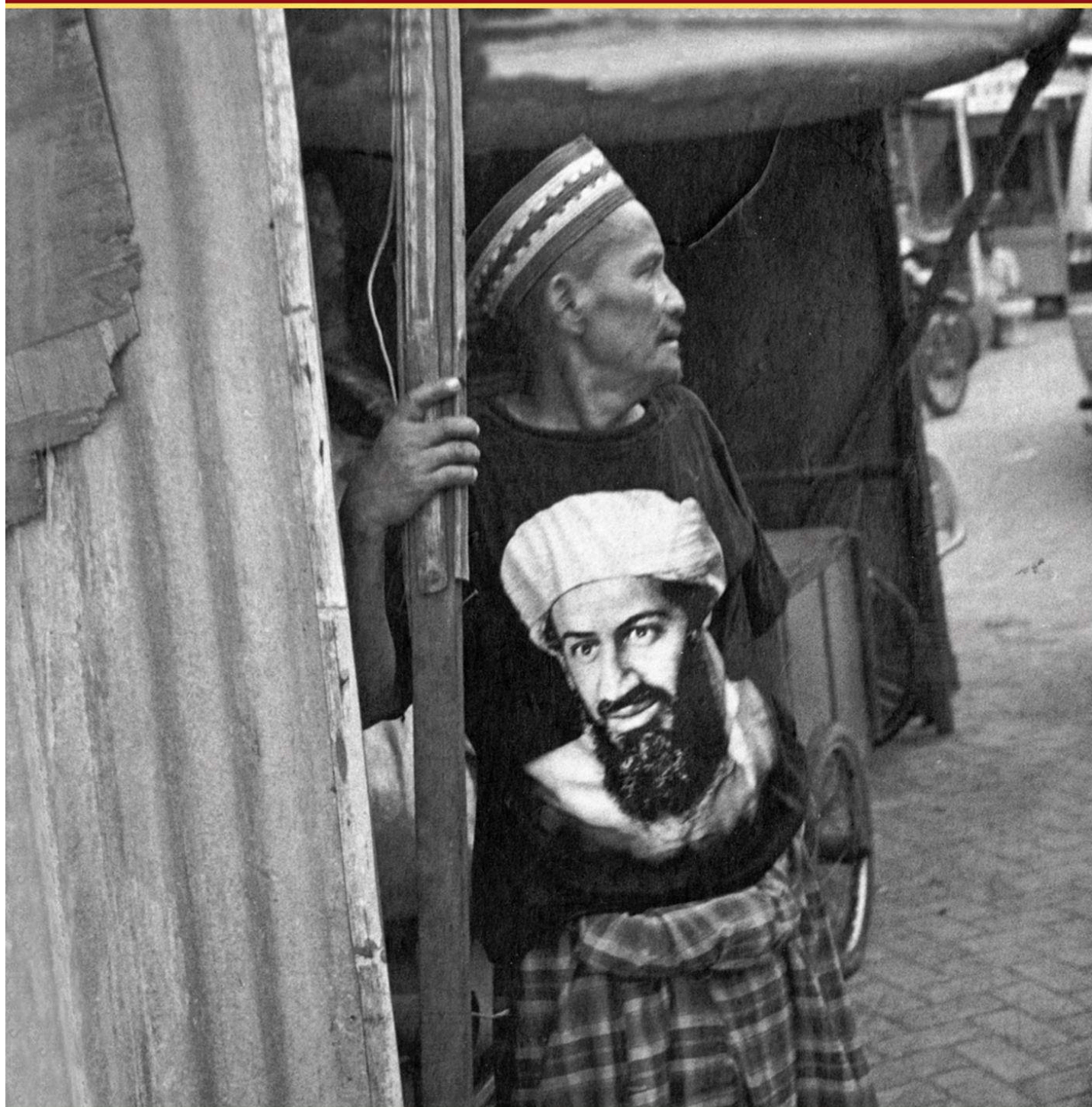


THE END OF INNOCENCE?

Indonesian Islam and the Temptations of Radicalism



Andrée Feillard & Rémy Madinier



Institut de recherche sur l'Asie du Sud-Est
contemporaine

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Translated by Wee Wong

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ABSTRACT

Long cited as a model of harmonious cohabitation between different religions, the most populous Muslim country in the world until recently occupied a special place in the Western imagination. Indonesia, home to a peaceful version of Islam, offered a reassuring counter-model to a rowdy and accusatory Arab Islam. Since 1999, however, confrontations between Christians and Muslims in the Moluccas, excesses of vigilantism in Sulawesi, and especially the Bali and Jakarta bombings have shattered these simplistic stereotypes. For many terrorism experts - often self-proclaimed - Indonesia's mutation confirmed the hackneyed thesis that equated obscurantism with Islam, and saw violent outbreaks as an inevitable consequence.

The End of Innocence is far removed from the hollow analyses underlying this essentialist thesis. The book positions the evolution of Indonesian Islam in the broader context of the recent history of the archipelago, and provides a rigorous analysis of the origins and causes of the 'radical temptation,' deciphering its simplistic ideology and showing how it has been nourished by political manipulation. The authors, both historians specializing in Indonesian Islam, describe the hold of religious extremism as well as the strong resistance it has provoked in a country that has quickly become one of the key spots in the upheavals occurring throughout the Muslim world

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*To the memory of
Nadjichah Mochtarom*

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Introduction

Long cited as an example of harmonious cohabitation between different religions, the biggest Muslim country in the world occupies a special place in the Western imagination. Indonesia reassured with its brand of irenic Islam, a convenient counter-model to a rowdy and finger-pointing Arab Islam, but seeds of doubts were planted when confrontations broke out between Christians and Muslims in the Moluccas in early 1999. With the intervention of external militias one year later, perceptions evolved: henceforth Javanese Islam could take on the visage of hate-filled bearded men who had come to transform the spice islands to a hotbed of jihad. Many saw in this mutation a confirmation of the old thesis of a consubstantial obscurantism in Islam that would emerge sooner or later in violent spurts. Nourished by explanations developed in isolation, this essentialist thesis interpreted radical Islam exclusively through the hypothesis of a violence inherent in the Muslim religion with no consideration for the particularities of national histories. By focusing solely on visible expressions of extremist Islam, it fell into the trap of a stock rhetoric presenting a single-faceted religion, trustee of a fixed and exclusivist truth.¹ The Islam of the radicals has neither history nor territory, and is identical everywhere, any time; any analysis that is too generalised, even when it is a condemnation, ends up confirming the legitimacy of these theses.²

¹ This risk is perfectly summed up by Gabriel Martinez-Gros and Lucette Valensi who wrote concerning Islam's pseudo refusal of the modern world: "In general we do not realise the full implications of an interpretation so spontaneous and so widely shared by militant Islamists and Western observers that it does not seem to warrant discussion, when in fact it springs from a wide base of discourse that should be explained", *L'Islam en dissidence*, Seuil, Paris, 2004, p. 8.

² Thus the state of impasse of analyses that view Islam as "a sort of omniscient myth holding the key to the secrets of how Muslim societies operate, their history, morality, culture, politics, economy and future", rightly denounced by Burhan Ghalioun in *Islam et Politique, La modernité trahie*, La Découverte, Paris, 1997, 250 pp.

This book takes a totally different approach. It aims to present the recent history of the relationship between the *umma* (Islamic community) and its most extremist manifestations. Probing beyond the flowing white robes of the new censors, the army fatigues of jihad fighters or the turbans of the moral order militias, it aspires to depict the multi-faceted Indonesian Muslims. Heirs of a religious history unique to the Archipelago and products of diverse political and social traditions, their itineraries deserve much more than simplistic analogies with their fellow believers in the Middle East. Far from being the pathological outgrowth on a healthy religious body that has been contaminated by a mysterious foreign virus, Indonesian radical Islam should be examined in its own context. As such, the following chapters attempt to reconstitute the genealogy of the different networks of Indonesian radical Islam so as to understand its functioning and describe its ideology, while analysing the complex relationships the Indonesian Muslim community maintains with its extremist fringes.

Immediate history (or “histoire du temps présent”, history of the present³), our approach attempts to place events merely glimpsed in the course of the agitations of current affairs in their chronological context. This approach therefore endeavours to link different points of immediate history to other developments, national or international, such as the spread of Muslim reformism in the Archipelago, the formation of the Indonesian nation-state, the beginnings of the New Order or exposure to the networks of international Islamism. The milestones of this chronology demonstrate clearly how phenomena of a diverse nature have come together. This is true of 1967, the year that opens our period of study. In Indonesia it marked the birth of the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia, DDII), in which a section of reformist Islam with a sometimes-audacious liberal bent mutated into a sectarianism that closed in on itself. But more generally, 1967 was also the moment of an humiliating defeat for the Arab armies during the Six Day War, whose role in the genesis of an international Islamism is well known. Concomitances more than coincidences, these confluences between internal causes and more general developments demonstrate the plurality of causes involved and the diversity of expressions — very much the contrary to the “Islamic abstraction” that Georges Corm has denounced.⁴

³ See the distinction between the concepts made by Jean-François Soulet, *Histoire immédiate*, PUF, Collection Que sais-je?, Paris, no. 2841, 1994, 127 pp.

⁴ Georges Corm, *L'Europe et l'Orient*, La Découverte, Paris, 1989, 380 pp.

This complexity of causes corresponds, of course, to a multiplicity of expressions that cannot be easily encapsulated by a single vocabulary, which is in itself somewhat simplistic. We should therefore explain the vocabulary chosen for this work. Radical Islam — which we largely prefer to fundamentalism or Islamism — is a good indication of the dual nature of the movements described. Being extremist in nature since it calls for a total and uncompromised change, radical Islam is also an attempt to return to the roots and foundation of its religion. In Indonesia, this can be defined by a rejection of the status quo adopted after Independence. The preamble of the Constitution proclaimed at Independence elevated to the level of national ideology the five principles (*Pancasila*), of which the first, belief in one God, was supposed to guarantee a pluralistic religious identity. Although it did give the state a religious basis, it also placed Islam on an equal footing as the other religions. Accepted since by the overwhelming majority of Muslim organisations in the country, conscious of the constraints associated with the multi-religious dimension of the Archipelago, this principle was, however, opposed by a militant minority, the object of our study. This rejection was obviously rooted in older traditions. The radical manifestations of Indonesian Islam did not emerge with Independence, and the entire history of Islam in the Archipelago since its early spread till the rough period of Reformasi (the post-Soeharto period) should be reconsidered in this perspective. The very nature of the phenomenon of radicalisation lies at the heart of these events: neither a “maladie de l’Islam (disease of Islam)”⁵ nor an outgrowth with no links to the social body from which it has originated, radicalism seems more like a temptation to us. That of a simplistic explanation in response to a chaotic and complex world, of an immanent and unquestionable norm in a relativist world, but also the temptation of an instrumentalisation for social or political ends. All very human temptations which remind us that, beyond the eschatological gesticulations, the story of radical Muslims is above all a story of men and women.

⁵ According to the title of Abdelwahab Meddeb’s work, *The Malady of Islam*, trans. Pierre Joris and Ann Reid, Basic Books, New York, 2002, 221 pp., some analyses of which we share, notably that pertaining to the role of the “semi-literate” in the radicalisation process.

History of Islam in Indonesia: Between Acculturation and Rigour

Peripheral compared with the Middle Eastern centres of the Muslim world, Islam in Indonesia had never enjoyed a hegemonic position since its implantation in the Indonesian Archipelago around the thirteenth century. Confronted with the Hindu-Buddhist and animistic substrate of the great Classic Period in Javanese history and rivalled by Christianity, which reached the shores of the Archipelago shortly after, the history of Islam has been a complex one of syncretisms and ruptures that cannot be ignored here. Indeed, its history reveals diverse faces, varied horizons and, most of all, important fault lines of which an understanding is crucial to any study of radicalism. This Islamisation, which took place over a long period of time and is uneven depending on the region and social strata, is a key issue in Indonesia today, implicating not only debates over historical interpretation but more importantly, justifying or invalidating the hegemonic aims of a section of Indonesian Islamists.

I. A Late Entry via Old Commercial Routes

The oldest traces of an indigenous Muslim presence in the Archipelago occur relatively late. The first inscriptions indicating such a presence date back to 1082 on a tomb found in Leran, East Java. How much these inscriptions bear on the Islamisation movement remains debatable, and it is only at the end of the thirteenth century that we can identify with certainty the presence of a Muslim principality at Samudra-Pasai, in the North Sumatra region.¹

¹ According to Ludvik Kalus and Claude Guillot, the stela of Leran was most probably uprooted from its original cemetery somewhere “outside of Java and the Malay

Two principal traits characterise the spread of Islam in the Archipelago. The first is its arrival via Muslims of diverse ethnic and cultural origins, from Middle Easterners, Arabs and Persians, to Indians, the Cham (from present-day Vietnam) and even Chinese, all of whom followed the great commercial routes of the epoch. Islam — a cultural element amongst others — was thus part of the vast tide of exchange, treading the same path as Hinduism and Buddhism centuries ago. Like the faiths that preceded it, that of the Prophet gained a foothold in the Palatine societies of the Archipelago through the communities of traders dotting the antique maritime network between the Indian Ocean and the China Sea. Local rulers adopted the dominant religious, social and commercial culture of their time, thus assuring renewed prosperity for their principalities.²

The second important characteristic of this Islamisation was its duration. Far from the lightning conquests by the Arabs in the Mediterranean basin or in North India, here Islam came into contact with societies that were in part politically well structured and culturally coherent, such that it was obliged to make considerable adaptations. At the start of the sixteenth century, almost two centuries after the beginnings of Islamisation, the Portuguese voyager Tomé Pires described a limited Islamisation in coastal areas west of Sumatra, north of Central Java and in Eastern Java as well as in little pockets throughout the Moluccas. From then, it advanced very slowly from one post to another, notably in Java, centre of the great Hindu-Buddhist kingdom of Mahapahit, until the sixteenth century.³ The Majapahit kingdom could not withstand the growing strength of the Demak sultanate, which embarked on the conquest of Central Java and the Sunda region in West Java around 1526–1527, bringing the Hindu-Buddhist kingdom of Pajajaran to its end. Many of

world” for use as a ship ballast. “La stèle de Leran (Java) datée de 475/1082”, in *Archipel* 67, 2004. For a synthesis of the different theories regarding the Islamisation of the Archipelago, see W.J. Drewes, “New Light on the Coming of Islam to Indonesia?”, in Ahmad Ibrahim *et al.* (eds), *Readings on Islam in Southeast Asia*, Institute of Southeast Asia Studies, Singapore, 1985, p. 407, and Merle C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1200* (4th edition), Stanford University Press, 2008, 496 pp.

² The Aceh Sultanate experienced much prosperity when Melaka fell into the hands of the Portuguese in 1511 and Muslim merchants from Melaka settled in Aceh.

³ A Muslim presence was found within the court of the Hindu-Buddhist kingdom from as early as the fourteenth century, according to the work of the French epigraphist Louis-Charles Damais (*Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient [Befeo]*, Paris, various articles beginning from 1951).

the future bastions of Islam such as Madura, some of the small Sunda islands, Sulawesi and Kalimantan, were untouched by Islam till the end of the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. These were but the coastal areas. Progression towards the interior did not begin till much later: the grand sweep of Islam in the vast rice plains of Java only occurred in the nineteenth or even twentieth century.

Slow and belated, this Islamisation clashed against the Europeans, who were present in the region from the sixteenth century onwards. In the Moluccas, the Portuguese traders were succeeded by Catholic missionaries such as Saint Francis-Xavier, whose success was hampered by the new domination of the Dutch reformists. The latter adopted at a very late stage — only in the first half of the nineteenth century — a more favourable policy towards Catholic missionaries. Nonetheless, so as to avoid any conflict in these Muslim regions, the Dutch exercised a strict control over Christian movements in general till the end of the colonial period.

Therefore, on the eve of the Second World War, Indonesia presented a religious physiognomy characterised by a backdrop of highly active local religions and the presence of a very small minority of non-Muslim communities that nonetheless constituted the majority in numerous provinces in the east of the country: Nusa Tenggara was made up of an overwhelming majority of Catholics, northern Sulawesi and the Moluccas were mostly Protestant, and the western part of New Guinea was essentially animist but endowed with very active Christian missionaries. This uneven spread of the world religions created seams of cohabitation but also potential fractures and, most of all, pitted the notions of a unitary state and an Islamic state against each other.

On top of spatial geography came social geography. This latter was subtler and consisted of concentric circles of varying religious attitudes radiating from Islamised cells. In the 'centre' lie the most orthodox milieux, called *santri*, the principal agents of Islamisation. The term initially applied to students of Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) but was gradually stretched to encompass very devout Muslims. Going back as far as at least the sixteenth century, these learning centres played a capital role in the spread of Islam. Gathering tens or even hundreds of students around a religious master (*kiai* in Java), the *pesantren* became engines of change in the Archipelago. They led to the clearing of forests, assured minimum education for numerous young people and were one of the rare means of social ascension in a rigid society. Till today, most of the religious education taught outside of schools is dispensed by thousands of Islamic boarding schools (14,556, figure from the Ministry of Religions in 2004) to millions of students.

Another major institution of Islam in Indonesia, the Sufi brotherhoods (*tarekat*) played a complementary role, often in tandem with the *pesantren*. The majority of these brotherhoods originated from Arabia, the destination of many pilgrims from the Archipelago since very early on. The important orders of Indian origins such as Chattariyya and Naqshbandiyya were spread by Indonesians returning from Medina, and Qadiriyya wa Naqshbandiyya itself, though the only orthodox order founded by an Indonesian, retained its centre in Mecca.⁴ We still know little about the development of Sufism in the Archipelago before the nineteenth century, although the importance of some Sufi poets has been recognised in North Sumatra. From the nineteenth century onwards, these Sufi orders penetrated the social fabric more profoundly in some areas due to their role in anti-colonial movements. Subsequently, with the rise of Muslim reformism calling for greater 'purity', they occupied an intermediate position between the *santri* milieu of pure orthodoxy and the general population attracted by heterodox spiritual movements such as the Javanese *kebatinan* (Javanese mysticism). Combining with existing beliefs, the influence of Islam extended far beyond the classic Muslim milieu just described to create different layers of syncretic practices. There is abundant literature on the phenomena of acculturation. Without going into too much detail of these scientific debates, we shall point out the most obvious traits.

First, and in contrast to widespread opinion, these influences were not one-way, that is, it was not the case of a pure Islam moving from the centre in the Arab world towards the periphery in the Archipelago, where it would be broken down by contact with Hindu-Buddhist culture. In fact, some heterodox practices present in South-east Asia, such as certain divination rituals, originated from Egypt or even Arabia and were imported by Indonesian pilgrims.⁵ Whatever its origins, syncretism was undoubtedly cultivated in the Archipelago. The persistence of ill-defined

⁴ Martin van Bruinessen, "L'Asie du Sud-Est", in Alexandre Popovic and Gilles Veinstein (eds), *Les voies d'Allah. Les ordres mystiques dans l'Islam des origines à aujourd'hui*, Fayard, Paris, 1986, pp. 274–284; Werner Kraus, *Islamische Mystische Bruderschaften im heutigen Indonesien*, Institut fuer Asienkunde, Hamburg, 1990, 205 pp.; "Some notes on the Introduction of the Naqshbandiyya-Khalidiyya in Indonesia", in *Naqshbandis. Cheminements et situation actuelle d'un ordre mystique musulman*, Workshop papers Sèvres, 2–4 May 1985, 1990, Istanbul, Paris, pp. 691–706.

⁵ For examples of these exchanges, see Martin van Bruinessen, "Global and Local in Indonesian Islam", in *Southeast Asian Studies*, vol. 37, no. 2, Kyoto, September 1999: 46–63.

beliefs (generally called ‘animist’ for lack of a better term) amongst a large part of the rural, nominally Muslim population (following their ruler’s conversion), as well as the predilection of local elites for philosophical and mystical speculations strongly influenced by Hinduism and Buddhism, gave rise to a multitude of religious practices more or less linked to Islam. Particularly pregnant in Java, this propensity for syncretism led certain authors to identify a “religion of Java” to account for the scale of the phenomenon.⁶ More recently, the historian Merle Ricklefs defined and very convincingly described this “mystic synthesis”.⁷ More generally, in the *santri* milieu as well as in scientific studies, the term *abangan* was used to designate nominal Muslims who did not fulfil the minimal obligations of their religion and who maintained or developed *in loco* attitudes that were unacceptable for their more orthodox fellow believers. Some, for example, have long considered that thinking about the five daily prayers dispensed one of the obligation to actually accomplish the prayers, or that retiring to a place favourable towards meditation and tranquillity of the soul was the equivalent of a pilgrimage to Mecca.⁸ Highly diverse and covering a multitude of practices, this category of *abangan* originally designated only some Javanese Muslims. Today it has been extended to encompass all Muslims earlier known as ‘statistical’ in the Archipelago. Although highly contested, the *santri/abangan* dichotomy is useful to our study in pointing out important tensions pitting one section of the Muslim community, inspired by the *dakwah* (preaching) spirit, against fellow believers who often try to resist the former’s attempts to impose new ‘correct’ religious behaviour.

In spite of its multiple facets, Islam in Indonesia retained an important capacity for mobilisation throughout its history. The existence of currents critical of the established religion patronised by the sultans endowed Islam in the Archipelago with a revolutionary aspect, despite the quietism displayed by its elites. It served as a convenient outlet for most of the peasant upheavals, which were triggered by exasperation in the face of hunger, oppression and misery, articulating material demands in spiritual

⁶ Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java*, Illinois: Free Press, 1960, pp. XV–392, a much debated work. For a synthesis of critiques, see Koentjaraningrat, *Javanese Culture*, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1985, pp. XIV–550.

⁷ Merle C. Ricklefs, *Mystic Synthesis in Java. A History of Islamization from the Fourteenth to the Early Nineteenth Centuries*, EastBridge, Norwalk, 2006, XII–263 pp.

⁸ James L. Peacock, *Indonesia: An Anthropological Perspective*, Goodyear, Pacific Palisades, California: 1973, p. 168.

terms.⁹ With the advance of Dutch colonisation in the nineteenth century, these religious revolts acquired an increasingly clear political dimension. At the beginning of the 1820s, pilgrims returning from the Arab peninsula wanted to introduce Wahhabi puritanism, then popular in the sacred sites of Islam. The revolt of the *padri*¹⁰ in Minangkabau country in West Sumatra was directed against the population, then the local aristocracy, guilty in their eyes of practising an Islam that had strayed by its concessions to *adat* or local custom. This veritable civil war, which lasted until 1838, showed how then religion was already a catalyst in a conflict with multiple causes. The *padri*'s demands were economic (control of the coffee trade was one of the issues), political (riding on the theme of a legitimate battle against dishonourable rulers guilty of maintaining good relations with the Dutch, who went on to defend the local aristocracy) and cultural (consumption of tobacco, cockfights, traditional dances, dressing styles were questioned), but all the recriminations were expressed in religious terms.¹¹

The Java War of 1825–1830 led by Prince Diponegoro against the Dutch constitutes another example of the mobilisation process of followers. It also attests to the continuum that existed between Islam and pre-Islamic beliefs in this domain. Son of the Sultan of Yogyakarta and one of his concubines, Diponegoro led his revolt in the name of diverse causes. A Muslim with a *santri* religious education, he called for a battle against the infidels (the Dutch) and for the triumph of 'real religion'. However, in accordance with Hindu ascetic practices, for the majority of Javanese peasants who fought with him, he was also the *ratu adil* (just king), the reincarnation of Vishnu.¹² Far from contradicting each other, these religious justifications were mutually reinforcing, thus proving that syncretism did not exclude radicalism.

⁹ For an exhaustive list of these movements in Indonesia from the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century, see Raynaldo Iletto, "Religion and Anti-Colonial Movements", in *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia, vol. 3 (From c. 1800 to the 1930s)*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994, pp. 193–253.

¹⁰ The term derives from the expression "*orang Pidari*" (men of Pidari), in reference to those who embarked on the pilgrimage to Mecca from the Acehnese port of Pidie. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., E.J. Brill, Leiden, 13 volumes, 1960–2005, vol. 8, p. 237.

¹¹ Christine Dobbin, *Islamic Revivalism in a Changing Peasant Economy. Central Sumatra, 1784–1847*, Curzon Press, London-Malmö, 1983, pp. XII–300.

¹² Peter Carey, "The Origins of the Java War 1825–30", in *English Historical Review*, 91, 1976: 52–78.

This often dissenting role of Islam led the Dutch to suspect Muslim leaders. Contrary to the British in neighbouring Malaya, the Dutch did not always manage to obtain the support of Muslim rulers. Concerned above all with trade, they succeeded in associating with certain rulers, most of whom were Muslim (including the Sultans of Siak, east of Sumatra and of Pontianak, south-west of the island of Borneo, both *sayyid* Arabs of high descent), while suppressing recalcitrant sultanates who did not acknowledge Dutch pre-eminence. The last resistance movement led by traditional authorities in the name of Islam disappeared with the end of the Aceh War in 1903. Henceforth, the fight in the name of Islam would be situated on another level and would follow other modalities.

II. Reformist Mutation and the Beginning of Political Islam

As the last resistance movements against the Dutch — henceforth masters of the greater part of the Archipelago — were coming to an end on the brink of the twentieth century, Islam in Indonesia underwent a fundamental mutation. Following in the footsteps of India and the Middle East, Islam in Indonesia was influenced by a powerful reform movement that profoundly renewed its relationship with the West. The fathers of Muslim reformism such as the Indians Shah Wali Ullah (died 1762) and Sayyid Ahmad Khan (died 1898); the Persian Djamal al-Din al-Afghani (died 1897); and the Egyptian Muhammad Abduh (died 1905) acknowledged the undeniable technical superiority of Europe vis-à-vis the Muslim world and attributed this lag to a corruption of the divine message. According to this movement generally known as ‘Salafiyya’, the rigidity of the founders of the four schools of law (*mazhab*) when attempting codification between the eighth and ninth centuries had doomed Islamic societies to sclerosis and suffocation. Unable to adapt to modernity, these societies had been bypassed, then colonised by the West. To regain the paths of wealth and power, the reformists advocated a return to a Qur’an free of all obscuring commentary, the adoption of European technical progress, a combat against fatalism and the recognition of freedom and intelligence. They wished to see a reopening of the ‘door of *ijtihad*’ (independent legal reasoning) which would pave the way for new interpretations of the divine message, an indispensable condition for an Islamic reading of modernity. Muslim reformism has always had an ambivalent relationship with the West. Fascination with the West’s success engendered a wish to imitate it, leading Muhammad Abduh and the majority of ‘modernist’ thinkers to adopt the fundamentals of European philosophical and political principles and recommend that these be applied in their own countries. Nevertheless, it was unthinkable

for them that the principles of Islam be constrained in adapting to this modernity. Convinced of the superiority of the Muslim religion, they intended to seek the beginnings of the political liberalism of Enlightenment Europe in different Qur'anic concepts such as *ijma* (the consensus of the ulama) or *shura* (consultation). 'Concordism'¹³ or 'conciliatory apology'¹⁴ were the opposing perspectives, demonstrating the great potential for misunderstanding that already existed. Without realising it, these thinkers had positioned themselves close to the West's register of values and principles, inviting comparison and frustration. The fragile equilibrium between their desire to engage society in a process of modernisation and the necessity of maintaining the framework of their religion created tension and sparked numerous debates. From this perspective, all Muslim reform can be seen as a difficult exercise that aims to define what is eternal in Islam and what is no; what can and cannot be ceded in times of contingency. As the outcome of perilous equilibria and permanent compromises, advancement was regularly questioned since there was no central authority to take charge of acquired gains. This tendency was reinforced by the development of a fundamentalist current on the extreme end of reformism that was much more intransigent vis-à-vis the West. Inspired by Muhammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab (died 1791), this current aimed to restore Islamic teachings and dogma to their original purity while cultivating an absolute idealisation of primitive Muslim society. The question was no longer that of constructing new interpretations from the fundamental texts of Islam but simply of following the Qur'an to the letter. Gaining ascendancy with the dynasty of Ibn Saud in the land of Hejaz, which later became Saudi Arabia, Wahhabism resonated throughout the Muslim world (between 1804 and 1818, then as of 1924). Modernists and fundamentalists formed the two extreme poles of reformism. Both noted the decline of the Muslim world and the urgent need to react, but while the former intended to negotiate and build a compromise between Islamic principles and Western values, the latter established itself as a counter-model to this modernity.

The two currents sometimes converged. Some of those close to Muhammad Abduh were not indifferent to Wahhabi fundamentalism. The Syrian Rashid Rida, for example, pursued the analysis of his Egyptian master but added a certain radical inclination. His journal, *Al-Manar*

¹³ Using Maxime Rodinson's expression, *L'Islam: politique et croyance*, Fayard, Paris, 1993, p. 333.

¹⁴ For Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, Seuil, Paris, 1992, 251 pp.

(The Lighthouse), sometimes served as the vehicle for the rigid reflections of Ibn Hanbal, one of the ulama who inspired Wahhabism, and references to the conciliatory theologian al-Ghazali were replaced by the fundamentalism of Ibn Taimiyya, the most radical opponent of the medieval judicial schools (*mazhab*) and of Sufi ‘innovations’ (*bidah*). This doctrinal inflexibility developed from the interwar years through the birth of a political Islam conceived as a means to fight against Western imperialism. The Association of Algerian Ulama of Ben Badis, the Muslim Brotherhood of Hassan al-Banna in Egypt, then in the 1940s the Jama’at-i Islami of Mawdudi in India were milestones in the radical criticism of Western modernity that inspired radical Islamic movements decades later.

Islam in Indonesia was also affected by the different branches of the reformist movement.¹⁵ While Wahhabism, as we noted, reached the shores of the Archipelago from the first decades of the nineteenth century but did not experience any notable development in the decades following the *padri* war in West Sumatra, the modernist current¹⁶ was more successful due to Malay-language journals published in Singapore and Sumatra by pilgrims converted to the ideas of Muhammad Abduh and his disciples.¹⁷

¹⁵ On the Modernist Muslim movement, see Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900–1942*, Oxford University Press, London–New York–Singapore, 1973, pp. 129–161; Michael F. Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia: The Umma Below the Winds*, Routledge Curzon, London, 2003, XI–294 pp.

¹⁶ For convenience, we qualify as ‘modernist’ the branch of reformism open to the contributions of Western modernity. This current also had other aims, particularly, that of ‘purifying’ Islam of practices seen as heterodox. For this reason, it is sometimes labelled as the ‘purifying movement’ (*gerakan permurnian*). For a detailed analysis of the aspirations of this current, see Fauzan Saleh, *Modern Trends in Islamic Theological Discourses in the 20th Century. A Critical Survey*, Brill, Leiden, 2001, chapters 2 and 3. See also R. Michael Feener, *Muslim Legal Thought in Modern Indonesia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, XX–270 pp. On the influence of Javanese *haji* in the nineteenth century, see the work of Merle C. Ricklefs: *Polarising Javanese Society. Islamic and Other Visions (c. 1830–1930)*, KITLV Press, Leiden, 2007, p. 25 ff.; “The Middle East Connection and Reform and Revival Movement Among the *Putihan* in 19th-century Java”, in Eric Tagliacozzo (ed.), *Southeast Asia and the Middle East: Islam, Movement and the Longue Durée*, NUS Press, Singapore, 2009.

¹⁷ This was the case of Sjeich Muhammad Alkalali, native of Minangkabau, who, after a stint in the Middle East, settled in Singapore and edited from 1905 the publication *Al-Imam*, which spread in the Malay language the ideas of Rida’s *Al-Manar*.

The ideas spread by these journals first nourished the identity claims of some Muslim groups. They inspired a desire for emancipation as well as principles of organisation amongst the Hadrami — Arabs or descendants of Arabs from Hadramaut, who founded the first Muslim organisation in Indonesia in 1901.¹⁸ In 1912, a guild of batik (the traditional Javanese fabric) traders transformed itself into the Union of Muslim Traders (Sarekat Dagang Islam), which subsequently became the spearhead of Islam in Indonesia under the name of Sarekat Islam.¹⁹ The association's preoccupations were, in fact, more social, economic and political than religious. Its initial objective — the protection of a corporation's interests — were extended to the whole Muslim community, but its leaders, particularly its president H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto, injected the organisation with contemporary political ideas. Very much influenced by socialism, Tjokroaminoto intended to adapt Islamic principles to this new doctrine. Under these favourable conditions, Marxist influence grew considerably within Sarekat Islam until 1921, the year of the historic rupture when all the so-called 'red' sections of Sarekat Islam joined the newly created Indonesian Communist Party (PKI).

This divorce reinforced the formal alliance between Sarekat Islam and the other important reformist organisation of Indonesian Islam: Muhammadiyah. Founded in Yogyakarta in 1912 by the son of a religious civil servant, Muhammadiyah took off very well, widening its network of mosques, schools and charity associations. The majority of its members were also affiliated with Sarekat Islam, and one of them, H. Agus Salim, was responsible for the official rapprochement between the two organisations and the eviction of the Marxist domination within Indonesian Islam.²⁰

¹⁸ This organisation, Jami'iyah Khayr (Humanitarian Society), was soon torn apart by a violent quarrel between the conservative elite made up of *sayyid* families and the young leaders more open to modernity. One of them was a Sudanese who founded in 1915 a new organisation, Al-Irsyad, which exercised a great influence in the reformist milieu of Indonesia. The term *sayyid* (feminine *sayyida*, plural *sâda* or *sâdat*), which literally means 'chief' or 'master', is a honorific title accorded in Muslim societies to those who are reputed to descend from the Prophet Muhammad (see, for example, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., vol. IX, 1997, "Sharîf" article, § 3 "Sayyid and Sharîf", pp. 323–333).

¹⁹ For a history of Sarekat Islam, see the brilliant synthesis of Takashi Shiraiishi, *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912–1926*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca-London, 1990, 365 pp.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 218–219.

Despite its firm opposition to communism, Muhammadiyah represented the moderate tendency of the reformist movement, open to the world and to modernity. Another organisation, Muslim Union (Persatuan Islam or Persis), founded in 1923 in Bandung, represented the more radical tendency. Applying a legalistic, even literal reading of the Qur'an and of the Sunna, Ahmad Hassan, its principal theoretician, fitted Persis with a defensive outlook, one that was deliberately aggressive towards other faiths or other branches of Islam. Through their journal *Pembela Islam* (The Defenders of Islam), Ahmad Hassan and his collaborators squared off with the Ahmadiyya partisans of the Qadyani branch (an Islamic movement of Indian origins which they considered heterodox²¹), as well as traditionalist Muslims, some modernists accused of moral laxness and, of course, Dutch and Indonesian Christians, resulting in the journal being banned for several years.²² Despite its very limited size — numbering at the most hundreds of militants by the end of the 1930s — Persis gained a considerable audience. A prolix writer, Ahmad Hassan published more than 80 treaties and helped to spread Rashid Rida's ideas in Indonesia.²³ In a way, Persis made up one of the matrices of identity-based tensions, which developed at regular intervals in Indonesian Islam. Subdued in periods of prosperity when the Muslim identity of Indonesia was appeased, its vindictive and accusatory stance served as a convenient recourse in times of crisis. Intransigent and quick to blame Muslim leaders engaged in processes of negotiation and compromise, it egged on the religious conscience of fellow believers.

The quasi-monopoly of the public scene by leading Muslim reformist organisations during the first two decades of the twentieth century did not leave their compatriots indifferent. Two groups ended up liberating themselves from this guardianship at about the same time. The first was the traditionalists. Partisans of an Islam bound by a framework of rules as defined by one of the four schools of law (*mazhab*) — in the case of Indonesia, the Shafi'i school — the traditionalists were not spared the winds of change blowing through Indonesian Islam. Critical of some

²¹ The Ahmadiyah of the Qadyani branch are the most heterodox of the Ahmadiyah, considering their founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet, as opposed to the Lahoris, who consider him only as a renewer of the faith (*mujaddid*).

²² Howard M. Federspiel, *Persatuan Islam. Islamic Reform in Twentieth Century Indonesia*, Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1970, 247 pp.

²³ Syafiq A. Mughni, *Hassan Bandung, Pemikir Islam Radikal*, Pt. Bina Ilmu, Surabaya, 1980, XI–155 pp.

practices they deemed close to associationism (*shirk*),²⁴ they too intended to start a movement emphasising greater orthodoxy so as to enable a Muslim revival. They also wanted to open up education to the teaching of non-religious subjects then considered as 'Western'. However, they remained very attached to certain rites denounced as non-Islamic (innovation, *bidah*) by the reformists, in particular, prayers for the dead (*tablilan*, *talqin*), the cult of saints and the visiting of sacred tombs (*ziarah kubur*). These religious disagreements made for an uneasy relationship with the emerging Muslim reformist organisations. In 1926, the traditionalists decided to create their own association, symbolically named Renaissance of the Ulama (Nahdlatul Ulama, NU).²⁵

The second rival group that emerged was the secular nationalists, also called 'religiously neutral' (*netral agama*). Coming together as of 1927 in Soekarno's Indonesian Nationalist Party (Partai Nasional Indonesia, PNI), these activists wished to confine religion to the private sphere. Uniting a large part of the Westernised elite of the country but able at the same time to express popular resentment against the colonisers, these secularists soon exercised a great influence on the whole nationalist movement.

At a time when Soekarno's nationalism emerged as an alternative to an Islam-inspired nationalism, partisans of this latter were mired in infinite quarrels. Pulled in different directions by multiple currents and tugged between dominant personalities increasingly intolerant of Tjokroaminoto's authoritarianism and all wishing to play the leading role, the Islamic Association (Sarekat Islam, SI) split into several dissident movements.²⁶

²⁴ *Shirk*, literally 'associationism', is the sin of 'associating' someone with Allah, that is, equating the two by attributing qualities and powers belonging solely to Allah to the person. This applies not just to the association of men with God, but also, for example, to the attribution of powers possessed only by God to saints.

²⁵ Grey Fealy, *Ijtihad Politik Ulama, Sejarah NU 1952-1967*, LKiS, Yogyakarta, 2003, 437 pp., and Andrée Feillard, *Islam et armée dans l'Indonésie contemporaine, les pionniers de la tradition*, L'Harmattan et Association Archipel, Paris, 1995, 379 pp.

²⁶ In 1933, following an argument with Tjokroaminoto, Sukiman, one of the leaders of SI, was expelled from the party. The branches of SI that disapproved of this decision created a committee called Persatuan Islam Indonesia and associated with the Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia (PSII) Merdeka of Yogyakarta to create another party, the Partai Islam Indonesia (PARTII). In the ensuing years, two new movements separated from Sarekat Islam, thereafter moribund because of its leaders' obstinate refusal of any cooperation with the colonial government. 1936 saw the birth of the League to Make the PSII Conscious (Barisan Penyadar PSII). In December 1938, a new schism occurred within Sarekat Islam and Partai Islam Indonesia was formed. For the details of these quarrels and schisms, see Deliar Noer, 1973, pp. 129-161.

The interwar period thus saw the formation of two antagonistic traditions within Indonesian Islam: one of union and the other of rupture. The golden age of collaboration between Sarekat Islam and Muhammadiyah had nourished a powerful myth of unity for an entire generation, a myth that was subsequently often revived. However, during the same period, Muslim Indonesian leaders discovered the mirages of an illusory power that often they did not know how to share. The legacy of this period also included personal quarrels, divisions and schisms. Unable to manage disaccord within their organisations and arbitrating with difficulty conflicts between purely religious authorities and more political personalities, Indonesian Islamists used and abused the creation of new movements, often transient, setting a pattern that would influence political Islam till today.

The Japanese Occupation between 1942 and 1945 marked the history of Indonesian Islam in two major ways. First, it allowed for the reconstitution of the union. The need for a structured Muslim movement at their bidding in the subtle game of checks and balances they were playing between different currents of Indonesian nationalism, pushed the Japanese authorities to unite the Islamic organisations in the Archipelago under the Consultative Council of Muslims of Indonesia (Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia, Masyumi) in 1943. Most importantly, the Japanese authorised the creation of Hizbollah militias, thus allowing political Islam to become an armed revolutionary force. By forming and organising combat units for the defence of religious values, the Japanese widened the spectrum of expression for Islamic claims: political articulation was made possible through Masyumi and use of force through its militias. This was a mutation whose full implications were manifested at the moment of the declaration of independence.

III. Indonesian Islam between Muslim Democracy and Integral Islam²⁷

Between Independence in 1945 and the advent of the New Order in the mid-1960s, Indonesian Islam saw the emergence and then the failure of

²⁷ We use the term 'integral Islam' in reference to integral Catholicism as defined by the French sociologist Émile Poulat to describe a current which, at the beginning of the twentieth century, militated for the maintenance of Catholic truths as they have always been taught, without concessions to modernity or liberalism, as well as for the advent of a purely Catholic society. More recently in Indonesia, the term Islam *kafah* (Ar. *kaffah*) has appeared amongst Muslim groups calling for a total submission to religion.

a powerful and original phenomenon — a democratic Muslim current. Supported by the Masyumi party, which at one time federated over all Muslim organisations of the country, this project, and its failure, left a lasting imprint and supplied a clear lesson on the complex and fragile alchemy that can push a moderate Islamic approach favourable towards democracy and limited secularity, down the slope of intransigence and intolerance.

A Muslim Democracy Project

Created in November 1945, the Masyumi party was for a long time the main political formation in Indonesia and apparently also the largest Muslim party in the world. Within Masyumi was spelt out and defended the ideal of a Muslim democracy, one that substituted the simple demand of an Islamic state for political and parliamentary struggle. This project was initially undertaken jointly with the traditionalists of Nahdlatul Ulama, but the latter formed their own political organisation from 1952 onwards and Masyumi remained essentially the representative of reformist Islam.

The party's Muslim democracy ideals were not clearly defined until the late 1940s. It was then that a group of young leaders, heirs of the modernist current from the beginning of the century, took over the leadership of the Masyumi party and thus of the political Islamic community. Led by Mohammad Natsir, its members, amongst whom figured future prime ministers and ministers, were the products of the so-called 'ethical' policy implemented by the colonial government in the first decades of the century.²⁸ Educated in Dutch schools expressly established for locals, they received a Western education and were familiar with Enlightenment philosophy and the great European and American political thinkers of the nineteenth century. Drawing upon this background, they militated for a rereading of Qur'anic principles in the light of Western modernity, in line with the Muslim reformism of their predecessors.²⁹ Sidelined during the occupation by the Japanese, whose policy of exploitation of Islam depended more on the traditional figures of the Muslim community, they found themselves in 1945 in the best position to take up the challenge that Soekarno had issued to the leaders of Islam. In 1945, the future president of the Republic of Indonesia presented under

²⁸ For the effects of this policy, see R. van Niel, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite*, W. van Hoeve Ltd, La Haye-Bandung, 1970, X-314 pp.

²⁹ Deliar Noer, 1973.

the name of *Pancasila* the five principles that constitute till today the ideological base of the Indonesian state: nationalism (*kebangsaan*), internationalism or sense of humanity (*perikemanusiaan*), consensus democracy (*permusyawaratan*), social prosperity (*kesejahteraan sosial*) and belief in a unique god (*Tuhan yang maha esa*).³⁰ The last of these beliefs (belief in a unique God), which would soon take centre stage, led the leaders of the Muslim community to abandon all previous calls for an Islamic state and to orient their combat towards a democratic state. Founding Indonesian identity on its pre-Islamic past — the etymology of the term *Pancasila* and the principle of a unique god (*Tuhan yang maha esa*) is Sanskrit — the state ideology accepted by Masyumi was opposed to the idea of unquestioned Muslim government in the Archipelago. The absence of any direct reference to Arabic-Muslim concepts excluded it from the restricted field of Islamic references and as such was viewed by Muslims as an unwitting step towards a certain form of secularism. Most importantly, it stripped Muslim parties of any exclusive right of interpretation. During the delicate negotiations that preceded the adoption of the state ideology, Soekarno cunningly compromised on what he deemed less important, such as making the principle of a unique god the first of the five principles of *Pancasila*. But he and his nationalist friends were firm on what they held as essential. At the proclamation of independence on 17 August 1945, he thus refused to honour a compromise that they had arrived at a few weeks ago on the mention of “the obligation for Muslims to respect Islamic law”. This compromise, later named the Jakarta Charter, had created an automatic link between the status of a believer and that of a citizen, and was therefore unacceptable for the secular nationalists and worrying for the Christians.³¹

Imprecise as they were, none of the five principles contradicted the ideology of the Muslim party. Their universal character, which allowed for Islamic interpretations, made *Pancasila* seem like a step towards the Masyumist ideal. In his speech of June 1945, Soekarno indicated to Muslims that the path to take for the implementation of this Islamisation was participation in a Western-inspired parliamentary democracy. In

³⁰ For the genesis of the national ideology and its evolution, see Marcel Bonneff *et al.*, *Pantjasila, trente années de débats politiques en Indonésie*, Edition de la Maison des sciences de l’homme, Paris, 1980, VII–427 pp.

³¹ The Jakarta Charter became a central element of the Islamists’ claims. See Chapter Four.

sum, *Pancasila* seemed indigenous enough to tempt an Islamic party conscious of the need for a national identity. It also seemed sufficiently open to Muslim values to allow for a reading that would conform to Islamic ideals. Democratic confrontation, the price to pay for spreading these ideals, was even more easily accepted by the core of Masyumist leadership (centred around Soekiman and Mohammad Natsir) since it corresponded to their own profound convictions.

As of 1948, the eruption of the Cold War in Indonesian politics encouraged the democratic-Muslim current within political Islam. Hitherto Masyumi had willingly fought in the name of a revolutionary identity, in line with the Marxist groups, but little by little, as the influence of the communist party grew, its secularist doctrine and increasingly obvious alignment with the Eastern block worried the Muslim party. In September 1948, an uprising by the communists against the new agreements concluded with the Dutch government and violent confrontations between the communists and the Muslim militias in the Javanese town of Madiun led to the definitive rupture between the two currents.³² The gap widened further and communism came to be identified as the principal enemy of Indonesian Islam. On the contrary, the Western democracies came to be seen as reliable allies, and Masyumi launched major ideological and diplomatic efforts to seal this alliance, thus reinforcing its preference for a model of parliamentary democracy inspired by the West.³³

A third series of events encouraged, paradoxically, the moderation of the reformist current and its inclination towards parliamentary democracy. This was the emergence at its margins of a radical Islamic movement that refused to postpone the proclamation of an Islamic state. Between 1949 and 1963, armed movements operating under the name of Darul Islam (Abode of Islam) in various regions attempted to impose by force the Islamic State of Indonesia (Negara Islam Indonesia), as proclaimed by their leader Kartosuwiryo on 7 August 1949.³⁴ These movements in West Java, South Sulawesi and Aceh were led by leaders of Muslim

³² For this complex period, see the classic George Mc T. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1952, XII–490 pp.

³³ During this period, the leaders of Indonesian reformist Islam travelled more frequently in the West than in the Arab world. On reformism during the 1950s and 1960s, see Rémy Madinier, *L'Islam indonésien entre démocratie musulmane et islam intégral, Histoire du parti Masyumi*, Karthala, Paris, forthcoming.

³⁴ Cees van Dijk, *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam. The Darul Islam in Indonesia*, Nijhoff, La Haye, 1981, XV–409 pp.

militias who had defeated the Dutch during the so-called *revolusi fisik* (revolutionary fight) period and who had then refused — sometimes for economic and social reasons — to return power to the central government. For the political adversaries of Masyumi, Darul Islam became the symbol of a retrograde and violent Islam, incapable of constructive political engagement. As such, so as not to fuel these criticisms, the Muslim party distanced itself from the radical solutions advocated by the rebels and slowly abandoned simplistic mottos based on calls for the sharia and an Islamic state.

Thus propelled by the events that shook the country between 1945 and 1950, Masyumi disassociated itself from the doctrine hitherto dominant in Indonesian reformist Islam that made no distinction between politics and religion. This new ideological posture, which was an important step towards a form of secularism, marked Masyumi's actions while in power, as well as the formulation of its programmes.

The main party in the government between the end of the 1940s and the second half of the 1950s, the Muslim party under the leadership of Mohammad Natsir adopted a moderate and pro-West policy devoid of any religious sectarianism. During this period, its principal political allies were the Christian parties (Catholic and Protestant), and its political propositions, developed in the course of successive congresses, displayed a slow secularisation. Calls for an immediate application of Islamic law gave way little by little to a minimalist application of Islamic law, organised within a parliamentary framework. Leaders of the party applied themselves to expunging their propositions of all that could symbolise a retrograde Islam: equality between men and women in all areas was recognised and corporal punishment was explicitly rejected. Masyumi had no acknowledged model then. Its members were especially critical of the Gulf monarchies, considered as deplorable examples of backward Islamic government.

A fervent supporter of parliamentary democracy, Masyumi was one of the rare parties — along with the small Indonesian Socialist Party of Sutan Sjahrir (Partai Sosialis Indonesia, PSI) — to steadfastly oppose the 'Guided Democracy' of President Soekarno. As of 1957, Soekarno deemed too unstable the political situation of his country and wished to install an authoritarian regime founded on a social consensus of Javanese-inspired values of mutual aide. Several leaders of Masyumi, including its leader Mohammad Natsir, opposed this change in direction and from January 1958 onwards lent their support to a regional rebellion known as Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia (Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia, PRRI). Although supported by certain elements of Darul Islam, itself at loggerheads with the central power, PRRI's

rebellion did not signify a real break in the religious policy of the party. As of mid-1958, Mohammad Natsir and his companions found themselves ostracised. The revolt had just been wiped out militarily by the Jakarta government in spite of American logistical support. While hiding out in the Sumatran jungle, they founded a 'United Republic of Indonesia', an ultimate and derisory attempt to wrest control from Soekarno. Contrary to its name, it instituted a federation of 10 states, which were free to choose their mode of government 'according to their cultural specificities'. This project remained a chimera. Only the preamble of the Constitution was written, which shed much light on the intentions of its founders. Obviously inspired by *Pancasila*, it comprised five principles sketching out a parliamentary democracy open to the major religions.³⁵ Thus, from their position on the margins of political life and with all the latitude that clandestinity conferred upon them, the Masyumi leaders confirmed the values that had always guided their action: an open and tolerant religion and an unswerving attachment to parliamentary democracy and human rights.

The rebellion of PRRI failed definitively soon after. Its promoters were arrested and Masyumi was banned in August 1960 on the basis of the involvement of its militants. Masyumi's failure was complete: in trying to create a federal state, save parliamentary democracy and protect Indonesia from communist influence, the rebellion had instead strengthened the Jacobin centralised state, provided a pretext for Soekarno to install his 'Guided Democracy' and reinforced the influence of PKI in the government. Moreover, Masyumi leaders' all-out fight for a Muslim democracy left but few traces ultimately since the reformist current actually became increasingly intransigent and closed in upon itself.

Bitterness and Hardening of Attitudes

Important as they might have been, the steps taken by Masyumi towards a Muslim democracy were no less fragile. This ideological posture was the result of a choice made by the leaders under Mohammad Natsir, but it

³⁵ 1. Belief in one god as a unifying trait.
2. To guarantee and honour fundamental human rights.
3. A government based on consensus and democracy.
4. Organisation of society in a federal manner.
5. Solidarity with all nations of the world.

Busjairi Badruzzaman, *Boerhanoeddin Harahap Pilar Demokrasi*, Bulan Bintang, Jakarta, 1982, pp. 154–155.

was criticised by some within the party and was weakened considerably after the unexpected failure of the Muslim party in the 1955 elections. The majority of Indonesian observers expected these legislative and constitutional elections organised at the end of 1955 to consecrate Masyumi's victory, by the sheer fact that the population was predominantly Muslim. Its leaders thus approached the date with confidence. Their rupture with the traditionalists of Nahdlatul Ulama, who had broken away from Masyumi three years ago in 1952, did not cause them undue worry. Extremely sceptical of the political capacity of the ulama, they did not consider the party created by the latter a real challenge.³⁶ This proved to be a grave mistake. Winning only 20.9 per cent of the votes, Masyumi arrived in the second position behind its nationalist rival PNI, which obtained 22.3 per cent. Nahdlatul Ulama, which gathered 18.4 per cent of the votes, deprived Masyumi of a resounding electoral victory and, most importantly, dealt a fatal blow to its monopoly of political Islam. The communist party, its old foe, reaped 16.4 per cent of the votes.

The distribution of power resulting from the elections did not leave Masyumi with any alternative in the short term. Having long nursed hopes for exercising sole power, it found itself obliged to cooperate with its rivals instead. This unexpected situation brought about a sharp re-evaluation of the strategy it had adopted up till then. It forced the party into a sort of political schizophrenia that saw it defend a very Western conception of parliamentary regime in the face of Soekarno's 'Guided Democracy', while at the same time maintaining within the Constitutional Assembly an intransigent attitude on Islam more in line with Islamist radicalism.

This new stance of the party was particularly centred on the call to have the famous Jakarta Charter included in the preamble of the Constitution. This project imposed Islamic law on Muslims, establishing an automatic link between the status of a believer and the status of a subject of Islamic law, thus nullifying all efforts at liberating the political sphere from religion. The project defended by all the Muslim parties in the Constitutional Assembly between 1957 and 1960 was thus a democracy circumscribed by an immanent norm and in which the believer was granted a restricted political freedom. Faced with the equally intransigent

³⁶ Andrée Feillard and Rémy Madinier, "Entre traditionalisme et modernisme, l'expression politique de l'islam en Indonésie", in Françoise Cayrac-Blanchard, Stéphane Doyet and Frédéric Durand (eds), *Indonésie, un demi-siècle de construction nationale*, L'Harmattan, Paris, 2000, pp. 217–268.

supporters of *Pancasila*, this demand was repelled by 269 votes versus 199.³⁷ However, as it disposed of a blocking minority (to be adopted, the new Constitution had to be approved by two-thirds of the members), the representatives of Islam were caught in a political impasse. This encouraged Soekarno's authoritarian bent and in July 1959, the Constitutional Assembly was dissolved.

One of the key explanations for the contradictory positions taken on the ground and in the Constitutional Assembly was indubitably the fragile legitimacy of the reformist leaders within the party. The main leaders (Mohammad Natsir, Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, etc.) had taken advantage of circumstances to move away from a literal reading of the Qur'an and confer some autonomy to the political sphere but lacked the necessary religious authority to inscribe it in the doctrinal corps of their party. As such, when the mediocre election results of Masyumi during the elections and the development of the political situation in Indonesia seemed to confirm the failure of their policy, they fell back on a much more classic conception of the link between Islam and politics, based in particular on the call for the sharia — an advocacy all the more strident as it served to mask the absence of a well-conceived and unifying institutional project.

Repression

Seen as symbols of the resistance to President Soekarno's authoritarian streak by their supporters and as culprits of the rebellion that threatened national unity by their enemies, the Masyumi leaders paid a heavy price with the installation of 'Guided Democracy'. Despite promises of amnesty, the leaders involved in the PRRI revolt were confined upon their return to Java. Mohammad Natsir was placed under house arrest in Malang (East Java) in 1960. In 1962, he was transferred to the military prison at Keagungan Road in Jakarta. At this time, a large number of the senior leaders of the Muslim party, including some who did not support the rebellion, were confined. Others lived in semi-clandestinity. An informal network soon sprung up around the Al-Azhar mosque in the new district of Kebayoran, where preaching (*dakwah*) activities and themes (the denunciation of Christianity in particular) that would remain part of the Masyumist current for many years were developed. The key actor behind this fragile revival was the ex-member of Parliament from Masyumi,

³⁷ Adnan Buyung Nasution, *The Aspiration for Constitutional Government in Indonesia. A Socio-legal Study of the Indonesian Konstituante (1956–1959)*, Pustaka Sinar Harapan, Jakarta, 1992, XII–552 pp.

Hamka, who was part of the Muhammadiyah management. In spite of the protection of the head of the army, General Nasution, he was finally arrested in 1964.

Within a few years, the circumstances that had enabled the emergence of this powerful democratic-Muslim current — the communist threat, political recognition and the need to distinguish itself from Darul Islam — had disappeared. The advances made by the progressives, significant though they may have been, were never durably etched into the definition of the party's identity; in the face of an iniquitous repression and a blocked political horizon, a section of Indonesian Islam took the path of ideological hardening.

IV. Islam and the Birth of the New Order

The forces of political Islam entered the New Order with similar hopes: to be recognised for their role in the elimination of the communist threat. However, each group came to this period with a different past. Nahdlatul Ulama had remained active in Parliament, attempting to rival the PKI in its influence on the president and within the legislative system, while the reformist forces had been essentially marginalised for some years. Masyumi was dissolved in 1960 and the majority of its leaders imprisoned. Radical Islamism of the Darul Islam movements had just been dealt a physical blow by military operations: their principal leaders had been killed — Kartosuwiryo in West Java in 1962 and Kahar Muzakkar in Sulawesi in 1965.

With the disappearance of the two pillars of Indonesian secularism — the Communist Party and the Soekarnist left — during the violent transition of 1965–1966, the New Order regime, led by General Soeharto, started to rule in a drastically different political and religious situation. The regime took advantage of this vacuum to establish its own political party, the Functional Groups (Golongan Karya, popularised under its acronym Golkar), which went from electoral victory to victory between the years 1971–1997. Its early electoral successes can be attributed to the armed forces' manoeuvres and its support of the regime's candidates. Subsequently, its incontestable economic successes won the regime some popular support. Yet, the New Order still teetered between consensus and repression.³⁸ Major social, political and religious tensions were exacerbated throughout

³⁸ David Reeve, *Golkar of Indonesia: An Alternative to the Party System*, Oxford University Press, Singapore, 1985, XIV–405 pp.; Françoise Cayrac-Blanchard,

this period. This explains the violent end of the regime in the 1990s and the difficulties encountered in the transition to democracy.

The Islamic policy of the regime was dictated not so much by religious considerations — that is, the defence of Javanism against political Islam, as is commonly held — as it was by personal interests and the demands of an increasingly personalised rule, giving rise to an attitude towards Indonesian Islam that can be characterised as overwhelmingly opportunist and necessarily fluctuating. Indeed, a rereading of the major events of the 1970s and 1980s shows swings between distrust, repression and manipulation. Moreover, this policy was sometimes counterproductive: the president attempted to suppress political Islam in the 1980s but ended up promoting it; a few years later, when he tried to create a conservative and submissive Islam, he encouraged instead the renewal of a democratic Islam, as well as the birth of another reactionary but largely uncontrollable current.³⁹

Helping the Rise of the New Order

The New Order of General Soeharto was born of the failure and suppression of the “30 September 1965 Movement”, the day of the assassination of the main senior armed forces generals.⁴⁰ The regime was put in place gradually by the army, who worked hand in hand with the anti-communists in the first two years to eradicate the PKI and remove Soekarno from power. Traditionalist Islam played a crucial role in the first phase of the regime’s establishment.

The Javanese ulama, some of whom were major landowners, had already played a leading role in the battle against the implementation of the

L'Armée et le Pouvoir, L'Harmattan, Paris, 1992, 241 pp.; Adam Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, Allen & Unwin, St. Leonards (Australia), 1999 (1st edition: 1994), XII–533 pp.; Douglas Ramage, *Politics in Indonesia: Democracy, Islam and the Ideology of Tolerance*, Routledge, New York, 1995, XVII–272 pp.

³⁹ Robert Hefner, *Civil Islam, Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia*, Princeton University Press, Princeton-Oxford, 2000, p. 72.

⁴⁰ After 1998 Indonesian historians started researching on this episode that is as important as it is controversial. See Asvi Warman, *Subarto, Sisi Gelap Sejarah Indonesia*, Ombak, Yogyakarta, 2004, 205 pp.; Asvi Warman, *Pelurusan Sejarah Indonesia*, Tride, Yogyakarta, 2004, 315 pp. The responsibility of the PKI leader Aidit has not been questioned, but the decision to act seems to have stemmed from a very small group within the party. The speeches of Soekarno from 1965–1966 condemning the massacres were also published in 2004.

agrarian reform proposed by the communists. When the latter became the target of brutal repression after 1965, these religious dignitaries sometimes lent their backing to the massacres.⁴¹ Some ulama declared that the PKI was “*kafir harbi*” (infidels hostile to Islam, a term that implies a state of war and legitimises violence), as well as “*bughat*” (illegitimate rebel), proclamations that were rapidly relayed to militants.⁴² The protection accorded by certain dignitaries to communists notwithstanding, the involvement of the religious organisations was so extensive that even the army, itself the primary perpetrator of this violence, had to intervene in January 1966 to inject some restraint.⁴³

Aside from this participation in the anti-communist repression, what is rarely mentioned is the preponderant role played by Nahdlatul Ulama in the constitutional genesis of the New Order. As the only substantial political organisation still on the scene, the traditionalist Muslim party provided the Soeharto regime with an indispensable legitimacy in its early years. The PNI, divided into a left and right wing, had been discredited by its close association with Soekarno, “Father of the revolution”; Masyumi was still banned; and the PKI was battling repression. Out of the four big parties, only one, Nahdlatul Ulama, the traditionalist Islamic party that was mostly Javanese, was left standing against the army. Anti-communist, it complied with the ‘constitutional’ installation of a new regime, although its leaders quickly detected its authoritarian tendencies. These leaders thus played a leading role in the convocation of an extraordinary session of

⁴¹ As such, the editorial of the traditional Islam daily *Duta Masyarakat* called for the annihilation of the communist party: “The most legitimate and best judgement is to annihilate them [the communists], their roots, their accomplices, their supporters, and all who act openly or secretly for them.” Cited in Andrée Feillard, 1995, p. 64; *NU vis-à-vis Negara: Pencarian Isi, Bentuk dan Makna*, LKiS, Yogyakarta, Bekerjasama Dengan Asia Foundation, 1999, p. 72.

⁴² Greg Fealy, 2003, p. 338.

⁴³ This tragic episode in the history of Indonesian Islam has since become an important part of the heritage of the young Muslims of NU who call themselves “post-traditionalist”. They have attempted since 2000 to retrace the history of the massacres by interviewing survivors. By contrast, this process has not been undertaken by the “modernist” Muslims whose stance is far from auto-critical, despite the reported involvement of Muhammadiyah in the massacres. See Hasan Muarif Ambary, “Gerakan Islam di Masa Orde Lama, Orde Baru dan Reformasi”, in *Konferensi Nasional Sejarah Indonesia VII*, conference (Indonesia Hotel, Jakarta, 28–31 October 2001), p. 14, cited in Asvi Warman Adam, “Tragedi tanpa akhir”, in *Kompas*, 18 September 2004.

the Provisional People's Consultative Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara, MPRS), which relieved Soekarno of the presidency and named Soeharto president *ad interim*.⁴⁴

Another important player in the establishment of the regime was the 'modernising' intelligentsia, composed of secular, often socialist-minded intellectuals. These were mostly Muslims but also included Christians, Hindus and agnostics. In the aftermath of the bankrupt years under Soekarno, they focused on economic development, which was henceforth to be carried out with international support (the United States, but also Japan, Taiwan, Europe, etc.). The country was then in the throes of an economic crisis and suffered from soaring inflation rate. At the same time it was embroiled in a worsening conflict with the nascent Federation of Malaya, which was building itself up after a belated independence. Preoccupied by the urgent economic crisis, the theoreticians of the new regime wanted religion to remain in the private sphere. Convinced that it was parliamentary democracy that had led the country down the path of political and economic chaos at the beginning of the 1960s, they were persuaded that the people were not 'mature' enough for mass democracy. The ideologists of the New Order were but reviving the observation already established by Soekarno at the end of the 1950s as he set about installing 'Guided Democracy'; only later did they realise that this combination of progressive idealism and 'elitist avant-gardism' paved the way for the authoritarianism of Soeharto. In 1966, their priority was to rid Indonesian politics of its 'primordial links' (*ikatan primordial*). To this end, the party system had to be changed and Islam depoliticised without, however, reining in its growth as a religion. Together with the opportunism mentioned above, this strategy was to serve as the basis of all of Soeharto's policies from 1966 to the mid-1980s.

Javanisation or Islamisation?

Contrary to the legend hawked by contemporary Muslim radicals, from the start the New Order advocated policies relatively favourable to the five recognised religions. The leaders of the regime did not cede to the

⁴⁴ It was a member of NU, Achmad Sjaichu, who, while heading the parliament, supported a motion to call an extraordinary session of the Provisional People's Consultative Assembly (MPRS) to examine the role of Soekarno in the 30 September movement. It was yet another NU deputy, Nuddin Lubis, who made a motion in February 1967 requesting the convocation of the assembly (MPRS). See Andrée Feillard, 1995, p. 83; 1999, p. 96.

demands made by the young intellectuals of the daily newspaper *Mahasiswa Indonesia* (Indonesian Students) for real secularism in the New Order.⁴⁵ As early as 1966, the Provisional People's Consultative Assembly (MPRS) made religious education compulsory from primary to university level. The Ministry of Religions also grew in importance with its personnel swelling by 60 per cent, an increase that far outstripped the growth of other ministries at the time.⁴⁶ In certain PKI strongholds, indoctrination programmes were implemented. In West Java, southern Sulawesi and other regions, local officials enforced the sharia, in conformity with the Jakarta Charter but in opposition to the Constitution, which had not recognised its validity.⁴⁷ Even within the Ministry of Religions, Islamic law had its supporters: a draft law on the marriage of Muslims, submitted to Parliament on 22 May 1967, mentioned yet again the Jakarta Charter and affirmed that "laws in accordance with the sharia [could] be promulgated [specially] for Muslims".⁴⁸ Such a formulation flew in the face of efforts by jurists working on a civil code for all Indonesians. This draft bill was rejected.

Finally, contrary to the dominant Islamist discourse, Soeharto extended a very limited protection to traditional religious groups lying outside of the five recognised religions: during the first two years of the regime, more than 100 mystic organisations suspected of having links with the communists were banned.⁴⁹

The advent of the New Order seemed at first to install a renewed balance between, on the one hand, Muslims longing for public recognition for their religion (the *santri* Islamic circles) and, on the other hand, *abangan* Muslim leaders and non-Muslims who called for some form of secularism. However, this delicate balance was progressively tilted in favour of the latter. Distrust of political Islam grew rapidly within the regime. The modernising Muslims were the first on the receiving end but traditional Islam soon felt its effect too. Undoubtedly, Nahdlatul Ulama, an association of traditionalist ulama with proven anti-communist credentials,

⁴⁵ François Raillon, *Les Etudiants Indonésiens et l'Ordre Nouveau: Politique et Idéologie du Mahasiswa Indonesia (1966–1974)*, Maison des sciences de l'homme, Paris, 1984, pp. 36–37.

⁴⁶ Donald Emmerson, "The Bureaucracy in Political Context", in Karl D. Jackson and Lucian W. Puye (eds), *Political Power and Communications in Indonesia*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1978, p. 95.

⁴⁷ Robert Hefner, 2000, p. 80; François Raillon, 1984, p. 207.

⁴⁸ Andrée Feillard, 1995, p. 103; 1999, p. 129.

⁴⁹ Robert Hefner, 2000, p. 84.

was a partner of the regime, but the constant references to the Jakarta Charter within NU circles were worrying. Relations soured during the electoral campaign of 1971 when the Ministry of Religions, then in the hands of the traditionalist organisation, denounced the principle of loyalty of all civil servants towards Golkar. The army became increasingly critical of NU, which found itself marginalised. After the first elections of 1971, it lost the post of Minister of religions, considered vital by the ulama.

Traditionalist Muslims were not the only ones disappointed by this period of the New Order. Two other groups — the students and the democrats — saw their hopes rapidly dashed too. The new electoral law of 1969 opted to maintain the system of representation that concentrated power in the hands of the political parties, at the expense of local political forces; most importantly, it conferred upon the president the power to name 100 out of 460 MPs in the Parliament (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat, DPR), thus crushing any hopes of democracy. The profound bitterness that seized the modernist Muslims circles is crucial in understanding the process of radicalisation within Indonesian Islam.

The Mutations of Modernism

In the aftermath of the 1965–1966 crisis, the advent of a New Order opposed to Soekarno's regime had sparked off great hopes amongst the leaders of the former Masyumi. Deprived of their organisation, then mostly thrown into prison, they had envisaged occupying a leading role in the renewed political landscape, in the name of their martyr. These plans were never realised. The close similarity between the new regime's strategy in dealing with the two currents of political Islam, modernist and traditionalist, and that of 'Guided Democracy' revealed itself soon enough.

As early as December 1965, while the majority of the Masyumi leaders were still in prison, a committee for the coordination of Muslim activities was created to bring together Islamic organisations militating for a rehabilitation of Masyumi. Several army officers lent their support to this committee. They wished to see the influence of Nahdlatul Ulama diminished and felt that the modernist current could not be deprived of representation for much longer.⁵⁰ Soon, however, the party was reminded by the ruling power of its rebel past. On 26 January 1967, General Soeharto

⁵⁰ Allan A. Samson, "Islam in Indonesian Politics", in *Asian Survey*, December 1968: 1001–1017.

announced that the armed forces and the families of the soldiers who had suffered during the campaigns against Darul Islam and then the PRRI rebellion were not ready for a rehabilitation of Masyumi.⁵¹ By the middle of 1967, supporters who wished to see the return of the modernist Islamic group on the political scene found themselves in an impasse. Finally, abandoning all hopes of rehabilitating their party, the ex-leaders of Masyumi decided regretfully to undertake the foundation of a new political formation, the Party of Muslims of Indonesia (Partai Muslimin Indonesia, Parmusi). This was authorised by the ruling power in 1968, but only emerged later, on the express condition that ex-Masyumi leaders be barred from leadership positions.

The definitive neutralisation of the modernist group in politics was carried out in two stages. In 1969, the ruling power backhandedly stirred up trouble within Parmusi, then imposed one of its men, H.M.S. Mintaredja, as head of the party. Having lost all credibility amongst the old supporters of Masyumi, Parmusi won only 5.4 per cent of the votes in 1971 (from 20.9 per cent in 1955). The second stage of neutralisation was part of a larger political reorganisation designed to bring about the stability deemed necessary for economic development. Under the new law governing political parties, three groups were authorised. One of these was Golkar, which had institutionalised the idea of functional groups concretised under Soekarno. It was not strictly a political party but a grouping — this status allowed it to bypass restrictions imposed on other political formations, which were not allowed representation in villages.⁵² Two ‘opposition’ parties were to be artificially created to provide a semblance of democracy, including one that would gather all religious organisations (notably, Muslim and Christian) under one party. A product of the naiveté of the ongoing ‘political engineering’, this party ultimately comprised only Muslims under the fold of the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, PPP), but it was soon torn under the strains of personal quarrels, at times stoked by the ruling power. The Christian parties found a place within the other ‘opposition’ party, the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI), meant originally to rally the secular nationalist current (PNI and others).

⁵¹ K.E. Ward, *The Foundation of the Partai Muslimin Indonesia*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1970, p. 25.

⁵² According to the ‘floating masses’ concept developed at that time which portrayed illiterate villagers as prey for unscrupulous politicians and who thus had to be protected.

In addition to being eliminated from the political scene, the ex-leaders of Masyumi also had to face serious generational conflicts. They did not receive the support of the young Muslim activists who had played a leading role in the beginnings of the New Order. From 1964, harsh criticism of the major Muslim organisations started circulating in some modernised Islamic boarding schools in Java. The young *santri* directed their criticism as much against Nahdlatul Ulama, accused of opportunism, as against Masyumi, considered too Westernised.⁵³ Moreover, the main leaders of the Youth Movement of Masyumi (Gerakan Pemuda Islam Indonesia, GPII) — E.Z. Muttaqien, Soemarsono, Achmad Buchari, Anwar Haryono — had also been imprisoned following the arrests of their older members. Thus, they could not participate in the events of 1965–1966 and had left the field open to the Association of Muslim Students (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam, HMI). Though very close to the modernist circles, this association had always maintained a certain distance vis-à-vis the party of Mohammad Natsir. Following the advent of the New Order, some of HMI's leaders made it known that they regarded the leaders of Masyumi more as 'leftovers' of the old regime than as heroes who deserved a place in the new regime.⁵⁴

From this tense context of the late 1960s emerged a new generation of Muslim intellectuals. In 1967, a small discussion group known as Limited Group gathered regularly at the home of Professor H.A. Mukti Ali in Yogyakarta, of which the main moderators were Ahmad Wahib, Djohan Effendi and Dawam Rahardjo.⁵⁵ Sharing the same sympathies in Jakarta was Nurcholish Madjid, president of HMI since 1966 and great hope of the modernists. Often called 'Natsir muda' (the young Natsir), he maintained an excellent relationship with the ex-chairman of Masyumi, who saw in him the possibility of regeneration. The disillusionment of the ex-Masyumists was to be as deep as their hopes had been high. On 3 February 1970, Nurcholish Madjid gave a lecture before student organisations entitled "The necessity of renewal in Muslim thought and the

⁵³ Lance Castles, "Notes on the Islamic School at Gontor", in *Indonesia*, 1 April 1966: 30–45.

⁵⁴ K.E. Ward, 1970, p. 31.

⁵⁵ Marcel Bonneff, "Les intellectuels musulmans, le renouveau religieux et les transformations socio-culturelles de l'Indonésie", in Catherine Clémentin-Ohja (ed.), *Renouveau religieux en Asie*, École française d'Extrême-Orient, Paris, 1997, pp. 195–210; Greg Barton, "Neo-modernism: A Vital Synthesis of Traditionalist and Modernist Islamic Thought in Indonesia", in *Studia Islamika*, vol. 2, no. 3, 1995: 1–75.

problem of the integration of the *umma*⁵⁶. His analysis was based on the very harsh judgement that the Muslim parties were an utter failure. For Nurcholish, the leaders of Muslim parties had lost all credibility in the eyes of the public and the majority view within the Islamic community was “*Islam yes, Partai Islam, no!*”⁵⁶ This lecture was seen as a betrayal by the ex-Masyumists. Natsir and those close to him thundered against the *sekularisasi* (secularisation) called for by Nurcholish.⁵⁷ Indubitably, this polemic contributed to the bitterness of the Masyumist leaders and as such, to a radicalisation of their views.

An institution, the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia, DDII), played a capital role in this process of doctrinal hardening. Born in 1967 of a need for renewal within the Indonesian Muslim community, this organisation was a temporary solution for the ex-leaders of Masyumi. With Islamisation via politics henceforth impossible, the leaders of Masyumi thus decided to engage in politics via Islamisation. *Dakwah* became a central element of the Islamist discourse.⁵⁸

With hopes of seeing their former party rehabilitated progressively dashed, DDII became the refuge for Masyumist identity as well as the site of its mutation. The organisation launched a very active publication policy, particularly of the monthly *Media Dakwah*, which became the vector of a Wahhabi-inspired rigorism. Moderate, confident and remarkably open-minded in the 1950s, the Masyumist leaders, like the majority of Islamist movements worldwide, increasingly suffered from a siege mentality. The West, hitherto regarded as an ally against the communists, was now viewed as a threat, and there was a drastic change in tone towards Christians. During this period, reformist Indonesian Islam opened up considerably to international Islamist networks, not without implications for its ideological development.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Cited in Greg Barton, 1995. The text of Nurcholish Madjid’s lecture was published in the volume: Nurcholish Madjid, *Islam Kemodernan dan Keindonesiaan*, Mizan, Bandung, 1987, 344 pp.

⁵⁷ The reaction of the ex-members of Masyumi against this secularisation project was even more violent given that it was taking up the gist of the ideas developed by the Masyumi leadership before the elections of 1955, but which were never implemented because of their dismal showing at the polls.

⁵⁸ Yudi Latif, *Indonesian Muslim Intelligentsia and Power*, ISEAS, Singapore, 2008, pp. 350–352.

⁵⁹ See Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

V. Compromise, Manipulation and Repression

Disappointed with the development of the new regime, Islamic parties and organisations became one of the main opposition forces from the end of the 1970s. Secular students (with rather socialist leanings) were the first to rise up against the regime's corruption in numerous demonstrations against the New Order in 1974 and 1978, but they were soon brought to heel by strict regulations on campus. In the long term, it was political Islam that better resisted the regime's pressures.⁶⁰ The many occasions when the regime had to bend before the mobilisation of Islamic organisations leads us to rule out any univocal assessment of the period.

Gains from Mobilisation

In July 1973, the government proposed a bill on civil marriage aimed at protecting women's rights. It marked a not inconsiderable retreat for Islamic law in this domain: Muslim marriages had to be validated by civil registration; Muslim men seeking divorce or to take on a second wife could only do so with the authorisation of a civil court; a Muslim woman could marry a non-Muslim.⁶¹ This retreat of Islamic law led Islamic organisations to mount a powerful protest movement. Acting as a substitute for national representation, the army bypassed Parliament and directly engaged in negotiations with the ulama.⁶² The outcome of this most unorthodox procedure, a reworked bill, was finally submitted — and voted — in Parliament. The law, promulgated on 2 January 1974, fulfilled almost all of

⁶⁰ The demonstration in 1974 opposed the economic policy of the regime, the substantial power enjoyed by the private assistants of Soeharto, the leverage of Japanese capital, corruption, lack of democracy and the so-called *dwifungsi* ('dual function': military officers also occupying civil functions). In 1978, they demonstrated against the absence of democracy but also from this point on, against Soeharto himself. See Françoise Cayrac-Blanchard, 1992, p. 166; Robert Hefner, 2000, pp. 78–79, is a detailed analysis of the "Malari" affair, the acronym for *malapetaka lima belas januari* (Catastrophe of 15 January), which saw violent demonstrations in Jakarta, and whose suppression broke the spirit of "secular modernisers".

⁶¹ Azyumardi Azra, "The Indonesian Marriage Law of 1974. An Institutionalization of *shari'a* for social changes", in Azyumardi Azra and Arskal Salim (eds), *Sharia and Politics in Modern Indonesia*, ISEAS, Singapore, 2003, pp. 76–95.

⁶² Leo Suryadinata, *Military Ascendancy and Political Culture: A Study of Indonesia's Golkar*, Ohio University Center for International Studies, Athens-Ohio, 1989, pp. 66–69; Andrée Feillard, 1995, p. 145; 1999, p. 149.

the wishes of the Islamic groups: only Muslim marriages registered at the Ministry of Religions retained their validity; the article guaranteeing the possibility of inter-religious marriages disappeared;⁶³ and henceforth authorisation for polygamous marriages would be given by an Islamic court (in theory, only if the first wife's approval has been obtained and under specific conditions).

In subsequent years, numerous occasions arose when pressure from Muslim organisations caused the government to back down or, on the contrary, to inflect positive law according to their wishes. In 1978, in order, amongst other aims, to recognise the specificities of Javanese spirituality, the government proposed to the People's Consultative Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat, MPR) that local beliefs (*kepercayaan*) be accorded the same status as the five official religions (local burial and marriage rituals, for example, would no longer have to be conducted through the five recognised religions but would be officially valid in themselves). This initiative provoked an outcry in the militant Islamic milieu and the government had to back down once more.⁶⁴ In the same year, in response to a previous demand from Muslim organisations, the Ministry of Religions banned Christian missionaries from addressing persons of another faith. A second decree in 1979 elaborated on this ban and was also signed by the Ministry of the Interior. These two resolutions effectively put the brakes on Christian missionaries without appeasing the complaints of the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia, DDII), ready as ever to accuse the authorities of being lax in the implementation these decrees, in favour of Christianity.

These concessions aside, the regime steadfastly pursued its strategy of controlling political Islam. The early years of the 1980s were thus marked by fierce tension generated by the project to impose *Pancasila* as the bedrock (*asas tunggal*, literally 'sole basis') of all parties and social organisations in the country. Debate within the Islamic movements was particularly acrimonious because inscribing "the belief in a unique god", the

⁶³ This left the question of inter-religious marriages unresolved and dependent upon local civil authorities: such marriages were outlawed in Jakarta 12 years later and then elsewhere in Indonesia at the time of the *Kompilasi Hukum Islam* (Compilation of Islamic Law) (see Glossary) in 1991. The conversion of one of the spouses before marriage is thus required.

⁶⁴ Paul Stange, "Legitimate' Mysticism in Indonesia", in *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs*, 22, 2, 1986: 79–80; Andrée Feillard, 1995, pp. 150–154; 1999, p. 150.

first principle of *Pancasila*, as their founding belief was equivalent to forcing them to renounce their specificity. Nonetheless, subjected to immense pressure, the majority of movements acceded. Amongst the Islamic organisations, the Association of Muslim High School Students (Pelajar Islam Indonesia, PII), as well as a section of the Association of Muslim Students (Himpunan Mahasiswa Indonesia, HMI), which was close to the modernist Muslim milieu, refused to adopt the new status; the latter gave birth to a new clandestine organisation, the Association of Muslim Students-Council to Save the Organisation (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam-Majelis Penyelamat Organisasi, HMI-MPO).⁶⁵

By 1985, the government's ideological control of the entire political and social fields seemed complete. Nonetheless, some Islamic organisations adroitly adopted strategies to get round regulations such that the effect of the concessions they made was limited. The NU obeyed the *asas tunggal* injunction but kept the mention of Islam in its "objectives" and "faith" (*aqidah*). At the same time, aware that it could not play a major role within, it dispensed its members from supporting the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, PPP), the 'official' Islamic party. In so doing, it strengthened the governmental party Golkar but also and especially its own lobbying power: the ulama would henceforth be courted by all the political parties and by the government. The Muhammadiyah used the same ploy as the NU, while the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (DDII), not having the status of a social organisation but one of a 'foundation' (*yayasan*), was not affected at all by this *asas tunggal* regulation.

Indonesian Muslims look back on this policy of ideological homogenisation as proof of the tribulations political Islam suffered under Soeharto. Yet the impact of the formal concessions made by these organisations to the regime remains difficult to evaluate fully. One thing, however, is clear: it marked a turning point in the Islamic policy of the regime, which from then on made overtures to a political Islam it considered as tamed. While the concessions of the 1970s had been obtained through pressure, the ruling power would henceforth pre-empt the demands of Islamic organisations and attempt to draw closer to some of them. This signified the end of a dark period of oppression in the historiography of Indonesian

⁶⁵ Cees van Dijk, "Survey of Political Developments in Indonesia in the second half of 1984: The National Congress of the PPP and the *Pancasila* Principle", in *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs*, 19, 1, 1985: 177–202. The HMI-MPO was formed in 1985 and it remained clandestine till the fall of Soeharto.

Islam and the start of a period where the value of Islam would finally be recognised by the ruling power.

A Policy of Manipulation

Outside of this official policy, the Soeharto regime maintained a very ambiguous relationship with the radical Muslim milieu. The nature of these links is one of the biggest controversies in Indonesian Islam's recent history. From the end of the 1960s onwards, some within the new regime seem to have envisaged exploiting the old network of Darul Islam (DI), the Islamist rebellion which had ignited several regions of the Archipelago in the 1950s. The reach, if not the reality, of this act of manipulation remains highly debated. As it is still impossible to gain access to official sources, this subject has to be treated with the greatest prudence.⁶⁶

In fact, the question of which strategy to adopt in dealing with the supporters of an Islamic state in Indonesia was bitterly debated at the beginning of the New Order. The issue was complex, for if some of the DI lieutenants had reached a compromise with the ruling power, symbolised by the oath of loyalty (*Ikrar bersama*) taken by 32 DI officers, this was far from being the case for everyone, and the number of veterans in the DI was large: 12,000–15,000 men at the peak of rebellions between 1956–1957.⁶⁷

It would appear that one of the strongmen of the regime, General Ali Moertopo, third deputy director of the Office for the Coordination of Secret Services (Badan Koordinasi Intelijen Negara, BAKIN) and, most importantly, personal assistant of President Soeharto, proposed allowing ex-DI members to reorganise to a limited degree under the tight control

⁶⁶ The debate on the links between some officers of the secret service (BAKIN) with radical Islam was timidly launched in 2004. During a televised debate on Metro TV, the chief editor of *Tempo* Bambang Arimurti stated that these officers had simply “blown on the fire” (*kipas*) of DI. A discussion on the subject was also held at the Institute of Legal Assistance (Lembaga Bantuan Hukum) in Jakarta on 8 March 2004. Several works on this subject have been published, but their rigour has been questioned as they were written by militants or ex-Islamists such as Al Chaidar or Umar Abduh. See in particular: Umar Abduh, *Komspirasi Intelijen & Gerakan Islam Radikal*, CedSos, Jakarta, 2003, pp. IV–VIII, 173. The report by the International Crisis group, “Recycling Militants in Indonesia: Darul Islam and the Australian Embassy Bombing”, in *Asia Report*, no. 92, 22 February 2005, 21 pp., was the first to expose the exploitation by DI itself of General Ali Moertopo's tactics aimed at countering it.

⁶⁷ International Crisis Group, 22 February 2005, p. 3.

of the authorities. His then hierarchic superior and head of BAKIN, General Sutopo Yuwono, along with some others, were opposed to this approach, deemed too risky.⁶⁸ It seemed to have even incurred the wrath of some top officers in West Java who had fought against the Islamist rebellion for the last 13 years between 1949 and 1962, as it would weaken their past efforts at maintaining order.⁶⁹

Ultimately, General Moetopo's vision triumphed, and he launched his Special Operations Service (Operasi Khusus, Opsus) in the adventure of Islamism. Accounts and analyses differ as to the starting date of this operation, but most agree on the reality and varied motives of this operation: to fight against communism, use of these groups for electoral purposes, and the control and neutralisation of these very groups.

An Attempt at Political Co-optation: GUPPI

As we have seen, one of the key wishes of the New Order strategists was to create a new party, Golkar, as the political base of the regime. They observed from the 1955 elections results that entire segments of Muslim opinion could be swayed in their political choice by a few ulama. They then decided to attempt to capture this docile electorate by reactivating an old organisation of West Java, the Association for the Improvement of Islamic Teaching (Gabungan Usaha Perbaikan Pendidikan Islam, GUPPI). Thus from the 1970s, Ali Moertopo's men undertook a tour of Islamic boarding schools to propose a modernisation of their teaching, widened to include non-religious subjects, as well as disburse funds in exchange for supporting Golkar. This initiative was a huge success — the first GUPPI congress gathered more than 1,000 *kiai* (also often heads of Islamic boarding schools) and more than 5,000 in 1975.⁷⁰ GUPPI also benefited from the recruitment of 60,000 new religious teachers after 1966, when religious classes became compulsory in all public schools, a measure taken to counter the communist influence. GUPPI thus became one of the pillars of influence for the Ministry of Religions, particularly in the Islamic education system.⁷¹

Beyond potential electoral gains, GUPPI was also supposed to “modernise Islam”, which signified getting rid of the “spices” (*bumbu-bumbu*) of

⁶⁸ Interview with the general Sutopo Yuwono, Jakarta, 19 July 1991 in Feillard 1995, p. 97; 1999, p. 120; see also International Crisis Group, 22 February 2005, p. 6.

⁶⁹ Interviews, Jakarta, 1991 and 2004.

⁷⁰ Heru Cahyono, *Peranan Ulama dalam Golkar 1971–1980*, Pustaka Sinar Harapan, Jakarta, 1992, p. 86.

⁷¹ Heru Cahyono, 1992, pp. 78, 115.

Arab culture, which had penetrated Indonesia with the Islamic reform movement at the beginning of the twentieth century. The wearing of the headscarf and the ban on traditional Javanese ceremonies were thus cited as “Arab incursions” into Indonesian culture.⁷² Yet such objectives were far from the minds of the GUPPI ulama, being mostly very conservative rural people. As such, GUPPI was very unsupportive of the government’s draft bill on marriage (mentioned above) and, a few years later, of its attempt to legalise mystical Javanese beliefs, which the ulama regarded as a form of polytheism and condemned as ‘associationism’ (*shirk*, see Glossary) in Islam.⁷³

BAKIN’s game plan of using GUPPI was certainly risky and some religious officials with a moderating influence were placed in key positions so as to control the organisation, for example, K.H. Muhammadun, who had displayed his ability to appease Darul Islam from 1961–1962 and K.H.S. Qodratullah, an official agreeable to the secularisation policy.⁷⁴

According to Heru Cahyono, the first political use of the ex-members of Darul Islam took place in January 1974 during the riots known as Malari. These “anti-Japanese” student riots were actually a result of the internal rivalry in the army between the generals Moertopo and Sumitro. Cahyono argues that Ali Moertopo used the veterans of the Karawang (West Java) rebellions and the *kiai* in GUPPI, amongst others, to create trouble in the capital.⁷⁵ This adds another interesting perspective to the majority of analyses put forward thus far, which point to the use of these networks before the legislative elections of 1977 to “discredit, once again, militant Islam to prevent an eventual success of PPP”.⁷⁶

⁷² Heru Cahyono, 1992, p. 91.

⁷³ The ulama of GUPPI (who voted for Golkar) were, nonetheless, subject to pressure by the ulama of the traditionalist Islam party, Nahdlatul Ulama, who accused them in 1971 of “selling religion”. As of 1978, Golkar founded a Council for the Preaching of Islam (Majelis Dakwah Islam, MDI), which henceforth rivalled GUPPI in influence to the benefit of the minister of religions, Alamsyah Ratuprawiranegara (Heru Cahyono, 1992, p. 194).

⁷⁴ Heru Cahyono, 1992, p. 186.

⁷⁵ Heru Cahyono, 1992, p. 166 and p. 164, note 53.

⁷⁶ A report by the International Crisis Group indicated, without specifying the source of this information, that it was the fall of Saigon, followed by the approach of the 1977 elections in Indonesia, that led to the implementation of this plan of manipulation. International Crisis Group, “Al Qaeda in Southeast Asia: The case of the ‘Ngruki Network in Indonesia’”, in *Indonesia Briefing*, no. 20, 8 August 2002, p. 6. A later ICG report no. 92, 22 February 2005, showed that these special relations with DI dated from earlier on, that is, 1965–1966.

Opsus and Komando Jihad

GUPPI represented but the political face of a hidden instrumentalisation of the ex-members of Darul Islam. New revelations by members of the Darul Islam network, published in 2004, revealed that the reality of these operations was much more complex. The relationship between BAKIN and Darul Islam seemed to be one of mutual expedience, with each organisation trying to use the other to serve its own aims.

Thus we know today that as of 1965–1966, the rebellion leaders in West Java were offered arms in exchange for collaborating in the hunt against the communists. According to one of the DI leaders, Danu Mohammad Hasan, Ali Moertopo gained their confidence when he intervened vis-à-vis Soeharto to save the movement from annihilation, which would have been possible during the massacre of communists that marked the beginnings of the regime.⁷⁷ Danu, one of signatories of the *Ikrar bersama* pact would thus have ‘worked’ with (if not for) BAKIN, thanks to his personal relationship with Moertopo.⁷⁸

In the ensuing years, the desire of Kartosuwiryo’s former lieutenants to breathe life into DI coincided once again with the interests of the regime’s henchmen. Just as the group was seeking funds to organise a gathering of its ex-members, Danu Mohammad Hasan suggested turning to BAKIN, which in turn saw this as yet another way, in addition to GUPPI, to seize votes from DI in the upcoming 1971 elections. Danu thus offered his aid to Aceng Kurnia, a former bodyguard of Kartosuwiryo and key figure behind the organisation’s revitalisation. The Movement of Muslim Households (*Penggerakan Rumah Tangga Islam*, PRTI, literally, ‘activation of Muslim households’), a sort of committee working for the DI rebellion, received funds from BAKIN to organise a gathering of former DI members in Bandung in April 1971. Even as secret service officers were speaking in favour of Golkar, a process of consolidation was secretly being implemented. Several other such meetings followed, which allowed for the reconstitution of old networks, all under the benevolent eyes of Moertopo’s men.

⁷⁷ International Crisis Group, 22 February 2005, p. 3.

⁷⁸ According to Heru Cahyono, *Pangkopkamtib Jenderal Soemitro dan Peristiwa 15 Januari '74*, Pustaka Sinar Harapan, Jakarta, 1988, p. 195. General Moertopo had fought on the side of some of the leaders of Darul Islam (including Danu Mohammad Hasan) within the Hizbullah militia founded by the Japanese in 1944, which, under the control of Masyumi, played a big role in the fight against the return of the Dutch colonials in the subsequent years.

In 1974 a historic meeting of the leaders of the old bastions of DI (Aceh, West Java and South Sulawesi) took place, during which it was decided that leadership of this movement should be handed over to Daud Beureueh, who had presided over the Acehnese rebellion. According to ICG, two years later in 1976, Danu Mohammad Hasan and Gaos Taufik (military leader of the structure created in 1974) decided to form Komando Jihad (Commandos of the Holy War) to launch the revolution.⁷⁹ A few weeks later begun a series of bombings, notably in Sumatra — the first of several that would rock the country for many years to come.

The operation was uncovered in 1977–1978 when the Indonesian press reported the shocking arrest of 185 persons, presented as members of a new Komando Jihad.⁸⁰ The majority were put on trial at the beginning of the 1980s. While the Muslim press fiercely denounced this manipulation during the trial,⁸¹ the reality of the engagement of the activists concerned was not contested at first, apart from Islamist circles and human rights organisations.

Concerning this irrefutable upsurge in Islamist violence that rocked Indonesia at the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, it remains difficult to assess as much the reality as the influence, role and real impact of the provocations led by some elements of the regime. Did they also manipulate Imran, founder of the Council of the Islamic Revolution of Indonesia (Dewan Revolusi Islam Indonesia)? Too young to have participated in Darul Islam, this activist made a name for himself by attacking a police post in Cicendo, West Java before hijacking a Garuda DC 9 in Bangkok in March 1981.

What we do know for certain is that it was the very real discord over whether to work with BAKIN or not that partially led to the splintering of the DI into more or less rival factions — a phenomenon we shall examine later.⁸² In 1978, the rivalry between two potential successors to the imam of Negara Islam Indonesia ended with the triumph of Adah

⁷⁹ International Crisis Group, 22 February 2005, p. 7.

⁸⁰ In fact, the term Komando Jihad was used by the accused during the trial at the beginning of the 1980s, as well as Jemaah Islamiyah (literally ‘Islamic Community Group’), to designate the new organisation of DI from the 1980s onwards. International Crisis Group, 8 August 2002, p. 5.

⁸¹ ‘Gerakan kaum Machiavelli’, in *Kiblat*, 20 April–5 May 1978. The majority of the accused received more or less heavy sentences, but one of them, Abdullah Umar, was executed in 1989.

⁸² See Chapter Three.

Djaelani Tirtapradja (head of Jihad Fisabilillah, who had chosen this strategic alliance that would produce future jihadists) and with the assassination of his main competitor, Djadja Sudja'i, head of the rival faction, Jihad Fillah.⁸³

Of course, the tortuous operations of Opsus were not the cause of Muslim radicalism in Indonesia, of which the matrix was Darul Islam. It started recruiting in earnest throughout Java in 1976 through its Komando Jihad, and it was during subsequent trials that the names Abu Bakar Ba'asyir and Abdullah Sungkar (presumed founder of the Jemaah Islamiyah) emerged for the first time. They were first arrested in 1978 for their links to the new DI and for having carried out recruitment for the Jemaah Islamiyah or the Jemaah Mujahidin Anshorullah.⁸⁴

These events hardly troubled public opinion and capped in a way what seemed like a brilliant success of the regime's Islamic policy, crowned by the adoption in 1984 of *Pancasila* as *asas tunggal* by all Muslim organisations. Alternating adroitly between opportunistic concessions, authoritarian re-compositions and secret manipulations, the New Order also managed to encourage the representatives of a docile Islam while discrediting, even eliminating, potential supporters of an Islamic opposition. The previous year, the Komando Jihad episode had wound down with trials following the destruction of Adah Djaelani's Jihad Fisabilillah. During the trial in 1983, Danu Mohammad Hasan, ex-DI commander for Java and Madura and key figure behind the rapprochement with BAKIN, publicly accused Moertopo of having manipulated his group. The following day, he died of poisoning. In May 1984, it was the turn of the craftsman of this convoluted policy to die: Ali Moertopo was struck, so it was reported, by a heart attack.⁸⁵

Twenty years later, this apparent triumph of the regime needs to be, at the very least, qualified. Firstly, because some networks managed to regenerate and subsequently escape dismantlement and secondly, because the clever tactics of Opsus neglected to take into account one fundamental fact: radicalism, particularly Islamic radicalism, feeds on its own failure. In so cunningly entrapping the veterans of Darul Islam, Moertopo and his henchmen had unwittingly created a generation of martyrs with

⁸³ Abdul Syukur, *Gerakan Usroh di Indonesia, peristiwa Lampung 1989*, Penerbit Ombak, Yogyakarta, 2003, p. 21.

⁸⁴ International Crisis Group, 8 August 2002, p. 7. The two names seem to be used interchangeably in the trial documents.

⁸⁵ His death raised many questions, Abdul Syukur, 2003, p. 22.

whom new militants could later identify. Emerging evidence of manipulation ended up having a counter-effect, lending itself easily to Islamist propaganda. This was especially so because, on several occasions, the brutality of the clampdown provoked indignation well beyond the circles of militant Islam. In the same year of 1984, clashes broke out in the working-class district of Tanjung Priok (port of Jakarta) between ordinary citizens and military district guards (*babinsa*), who were accused of having entered the forecourt of a mosque to take down an anti-government poster without first removing their shoes. Several people were arrested. On 12 September, a demonstration was organised to demand their liberation, leading to a big march on the police post. The army opened fire on the crowd, causing 30 deaths according to official estimates. Very soon, it came to light that this figure was very much an underestimation and that the army had got rid of dozens of bodies. The obvious abuse of the repressive machinery made this affair one of the key episodes in the martyrdom of radical Islamism.⁸⁶

In the mid-1980s, the Islamic policy of the New Order was thus a mixed success. The initial objective of persuading public opinion that militant Islam represented a danger to the continuity of the regime had to a large degree produced a reverse effect: for many Muslims, it was actually the ruling power that now appeared to be a threat to Islam. This conviction spread throughout the Archipelago via the militant Islamic networks inspired by the methods of the Muslim Brotherhood, networks which enjoyed a monopoly in a good many places, paradoxically because of the tight control of the political sphere that it alone managed to escape. Their influence became even more important as Indonesia was then gripped by a powerful movement of religious revival which the ruling power, in an amazing turnaround of its Islamic strategy, decided to follow.

VI. A New Islamic Order: Mutation of the Soeharto Regime

Establishing with certitude the chain of events leading to the complete change in attitude of the New Order towards political Islam remains a delicate task. There were many factors at play. Firstly, as mentioned above, there was an unquestionable religious revival at work throughout the Muslim world that also affected the inner circles of government. Using

⁸⁶ The other key episode was that of Lampung (on this, see Abdul Syukur, 2003). On the Tanjung Priok affair and especially the subsequent trials of the regime's opponents — Islamists, but also secular nationalist opponents such as General Dharsono, see Tapol, *Indonesia: Muslims on trial*, Tapol, London, April 1987, 114 pp.

Malaysia as an example, some wished to compensate for the undeniable Westernisation of the country — an outcome of its rapid modernisation — by nurturing its Islamic identity, following the only model considered as being able to stand up to a homogenising globalisation. More prosaically, the souring of relations between General Soeharto and a section of the General Staff concerned with the growing hold of the presidential clan on the economy led the old dictator to seek other sources of backing to replace this weakening support. Finally and most importantly, this ‘re-legitimation’ movement of Islam as the social, cultural and political foundation of Indonesia generated its own dynamic. It encouraged normative changes to justify its growing role. Conspicuous piety became the new standard for social promotion, in government as well as in media circles.

A More Favourable Atmosphere

Numerous events attested to the change in attitude of the regime vis-à-vis Islam from the end of the 1980s. Indonesian law saw an increasingly obvious influence of Islamic law in very diverse fields. In 1991, the progressive Munawir Sjadzali, then Minister of Religions, failed to make the ulama accept the equal division of inheritance between boys and girls during debates about the law on Islamic courts and the Compilation of Islamic law (*Kompilasi Hukum Islam*). The project was initially aimed at reactualising Islamic law in the Indonesian context, protecting local tradition (*adat*) as well as women’s rights. But secularists complained that it ended up standardising the law in favour of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence).⁸⁷ That same year, the authorities withdrew the ban on the headscarf (*jilbab*)

⁸⁷ Andrée Feillard, 1995, pp. 277, 293; 1999, pp. 388–390. On the impact of the *Kompilasi*, see the excellent study of Euis Nurlaelawati, *Modernization, Tradition and Identity, The Kompilasi Hukum Islam and Legal Practice in the Indonesian Religious Courts*, ICAS publication series, Amsterdam University Press, 2010, pp. 97–111. Local tradition was given some space in the *Kompilasi*: property acquired during marriage became joint property, which reflects the institution of *harta bersama* or *gono gini* in Javanese, an institution common in this country where women earn an income from their multifarious activities. Second, the adopted child has a status equal to that of a biological child in Indonesian society. The *Kompilasi* ruled that an obligatory bequest be made between the adoptive parties. Third, the *Kompilasi* grants orphaned grandchildren a right to shares in their grandparents’ estates. The ulama complained of deviation from Islamic law on the last two points, while feminists in general complained of persisting gender biases.

in public schools. In 1993, it gave in to pressure by Islamic organisations and discontinued a very popular lottery.

Other measures such as the ban of the tabloid *Monitor* and the imprisonment of its editor for having featured the Prophet Muhammad in a poll, the posting of about 1,000 Muslim preachers to far-flung zones of the Archipelago thanks to funding by the Ministry of Religions, the establishment of an Islamic bank (Bank Muamalat Indonesia) and Soeharto's first pilgrimage to Mecca, together with his promise to help finance the construction and renovation of religious buildings, were seen as signs of the regime's willingness to build a closer relationship with political Islam.⁸⁸

Besides, Islam in its entirety benefited from this more favourable atmosphere: in drawing closer to the authorities, Nahdlatul Ulama thus obtained greater legitimacy, more freedom in preaching and a multiplication of subsidies for its schools.⁸⁹ As one of its leaders who had rejoined the government party explained:

“Preaching activities have grown tremendously since the reconciliation with Golkar. During the joint Golkar/NU religious study sessions (pengajian), followers who call themselves Muslims feel obliged to come as it is the village or district head (lurah) who invites them. This is the advantage of joining Golkar. There are 50 per cent more people in the pengajian, not only NU members, but also others, often nominal Muslims (abangan), those who still do not perform the prayers but who wish to learn the texts.”⁹⁰

During this period, Islamisation of the Archipelago escalated: many *abangan* (re)discovered their religion, at times either pressurised by other villagers or to gain greater access to the bureaucracy. This phenomenon, called the “santrisation” of the Javanese regions, even gave rise to ‘reconversions’: some Javanese who had converted to Christianity or Hinduism after 1965 returned to Islam in the 1990s.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Ahmad Iman Mawardi, “The Political Backdrop of the Enactment of the Compilation of Islamic Laws in Indonesia”, in Azyumardi Azra and Arska Salim (eds), 2003, p. 135.

⁸⁹ Andrée Feillard, 1995, p. 225–250; Azyumardi Azra and Arskal Salim (eds), 2003, 363 pp.

⁹⁰ Interview with Saiful Mujab, Yogyakarta, 12 August 1991, cited in Andrée Feillard, 1995, p. 243; 1999, p. 327.

⁹¹ Robert Hefner, 2002, p. 122.

ICMI or Islam at the Heart of Power

The most significant sign of this mutation in the regime was the creation of the Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals (Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim se-Indonesia, ICMI), which soon became the symbol and vehicle for the growing influence of the militant Islamists within the regime. Its creation in 1990 under the patronage of B.J. Habibie, then Minister of Research and Technology, was the linchpin of the subtle strategy implemented by the Soeharto regime to exploit the Islamic devout milieu. The modernist Muslims, who easily made up the majority within the association, pinned their hopes on it as the long-awaited instrument of their social and political recognition, or even, for some of them, of revenge against the traditionalists of Nahdlatul Ulama. However, at the same time, the association also encouraged the birth of a 'regimist' Islam, which — as much out of opportunism as out of support for a vacillating authority — engaged in the dangerous game of radicalism.⁹²

ICMI was born of the volition of two persons. The first, Imaduddin Abdurrahim, a charismatic Muslim intellectual, was the key organiser of the Salman group in Bandung. Rejecting both the scholastic arguments of the traditionalists and the exclusivity of the modernists, Imaduddin embodied both the Muslim revival in the student milieu and the profound desire for unity of a community tired of theological discord. His imprisonment lasting a few months (1978–1979) by the New Order regime also allowed him to join the haloed company of Muslim political prisoners.⁹³ In 1990 Imaduddin and a few other Muslim intellectuals keen to pull political Islam out of its isolation (including Dawan Rahardjo) found valuable backing from the ruling power. Two ministers were called upon to sponsor the new organisation: Emil Salim, a respected intellectual and Minister of the Environment, turned down the request. B.J. Habibie, Minister of Research and Technology, accepted. This brilliant engineer had built most of his career in Germany, where he had reached management level at Messerschmitt. Even if B.J. Habibie did not as yet possess the

⁹² It was the anthropologist specialising in Indonesia, Robert Hefner, who, to our knowledge, was the first to use this term in *Civil Islam, Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia*, 2000, XXIV–286 pp.

⁹³ On this episode and the mutation of Imaduddin from opposing martyr to an integral Islamist, see the scathing (and somewhat condescending) account by Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul, *Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions among the Converted Peoples*, Vintage Books, 1998, 439 pp.

reputation of a devout Muslim, he was a passionate visionary who personified a modern Islam, open to the latest in technology and capable of taking up the challenge of the West with projects worthy of an industrialised country, one of which was aeronautic construction (Industri Pesawat Terbang Nusantara, IPTN) at Bandung, and the other, naval construction (Penataran Angkatan Laut, P.T. PAL) at Surabaya. His position strengthened by the development of these industries, B.J. Habibie also advocated emulating Malaysia's development model, fascinated as he was by the technological Islamism fused with 'Asian values' of Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's New Economic Policy (NEP).

In the eyes of B.J. Habibie, patronage of ICMI offered another advantage: the political leverage that he lacked. Isolated within government, he owed his career solely to his status as the protégé of President Soeharto. The hefty funding that his risky "technological challenges"⁹⁴ required earned him much hostility in the inner circles: neither project was profitable in the long run but instead absorbed a sizeable portion of the state's finances. Thus in 1994, Indonesia discovered with stupefaction that a part of the reforestation funds (400 billion rupiah) obtained through the taxation of rich logging companies had been allocated to bail out the aeronautic construction of IPTN at Bandung.⁹⁵

The success of ICMI was probably due to the fact that Habibie was one of the few within the inner circle to take the 'return' of Soeharto to Islam seriously. The president's attachment to Javanese mysticism had been well known for 20 years, but it was only after his pilgrimage to Mecca in 1991 that the regime's mutation, in which ICMI would play a fundamental role, really left an impression. The new organisation was particularly welcomed in the *santri* Islamic milieu. Only a few independent personalities particularly critical of the government such as Abdurrahman Wahid, the leader of Nahdlatul Ulama, and intellectuals such as Djohan Effendi or Deliar Noer, refused to join.⁹⁶ Rapidly, however, the new organisation came to reflect the profound divisions cutting through the militant Muslim milieu. Three disparate groups fought over the moral leadership

⁹⁴ Using the title of a book by François Raillon, *Indonésie 2000: le pari industriel et technologique*, ETP-Comité Sud-Est asiatique du CNPF, Paris, 1988, 214 pp.

⁹⁵ The reimbursement of the Forestry Ministry by IPTN was supposed to have been carried out through the payment of 5 per cent royalties on the sale of each aircraft (*Tempo Interaktif*, 25 July 1998).

⁹⁶ All denounced this as a manoeuvre by the ruling power to exploit Islam for its own purposes.

of ICMI. The first comprised the technocrats of the regime, allies of B.J. Habibie or leaders of the official party Golkar. Within this group, Azwar Anas, Harmoko and Haryanto Dhanutirto hoped to use to their advantage the Islamic revival that Indonesia had experienced since the start of the 1980s to counter-balance the influence of the army. The second category comprised Muslim personalities such as the intellectual Nurcholish Madjid or the ex-minister Emil Salim, who represented a current then known as neo-modernist, moderate and eager above all else to see the social role of the values of Islam recognised.⁹⁷ Finally, the third group was made up of Muslim leaders (Amien Rais, Adi Sasono, Lukman Harun, etc.) who, on the contrary, wished to use ICMI as the vehicle for their political ambitions. They put themselves forward as the spokespersons of a Muslim community long bullied by the authorities and feeling victim of the increasing influence of the Christian minority in the country.⁹⁸ It was within the third group that a mostly fundamentalist theme was developed. Pressurised by radical thinkers such as Imaduddin, ICMI wanted to equip itself with the means to counter the influence that it felt was being exercised on public opinion by the Christians. It launched its own daily, *Republika* (The Republic), and set up a centre for studies: the Center for Information and Development Studies, CIDES, designed to challenge the analyses of the influential Center for Strategic and International Studies, CSIS, considered as biased towards Christianity and Javanese mysticism (*kejawen*).

In its early years, ICMI was an unquestionable success. It encouraged the normalisation of relations between the ruling power and militant Islam and helped convince organisations such as DDII, hitherto very hostile to the New Order, to adopt a much more conciliatory attitude. In return, it enabled some of its adherents or sympathisers to obtain ministerial posts through a new system of affirmative action in favour of Muslims. As such, after the 1993 elections, four of its members acceded to important ministries in the new government while the number of Christians diminished from six to three.⁹⁹ In Parliament (DPR), around 300 members

⁹⁷ Greg Barton, 1995.

⁹⁸ Robert W. Hefner, "Islam, State and Civil Society: ICMI and the Struggle for the Indonesian Middle Class", in *Indonesia*, no. 56, October 1993: 1–35; Adam Schwarz, 1999, pp. 176–177.

⁹⁹ Yet the most committed militants were not entirely satisfied with the composition of the government: according to Imaduddin, only the "bureaucrats" received the ministries, not the representatives of the "true ICMI". Adam Schwarz, 1999, p. 183.

were more or less linked to ICMI, a position that accorded multiple economic and political advantages.¹⁰⁰

These patent successes notwithstanding, ICMI ran soon enough into contradictions and misunderstandings inherent since its debut. Its communitarian, at times sectarian, outlook, which its local preachers lost no time in relaying to the most remote corners of the Archipelago, fuelled a deleterious atmosphere that sparked off the first inter-confessional confrontations.¹⁰¹ This image of intolerance alienated the most liberal of its personalities. On the political scene, the increasingly evident manipulation of the organisation by the ruling power and the way it was being made use of in offensives against the government's main opponents caused more and more embarrassment within its ranks and led some democrats, who had believed it was possible to maintain a certain autonomy vis-à-vis the regime while being involved with ICMI, to keep their distance.

One of the first political targets of ICMI, from within the Muslim community itself, was the chairman of Nahdlatul Ulama, an uncontrollable and iconoclastic opponent of the authorities. Son of an ex-minister, he was the archetypal product of a half-Western, half-Islamic education, an intellectual whose open-mindedness was partially due, no doubt, to his frequenting the cosmopolitan milieux of Jakarta since his childhood. Familiar with the writings of Karl Marx but also the medieval Muslim scholars al-Ghazali and al-Mawardi, who advocated moderation in politics, he married concern for the commoner (*rakyat*) with a propensity for political compromise. Grandson of the founder of Nahdlatul Ulama, Hasyim Asy'ari, a prominent landowner, he was discerning enough to be receptive to the interests of a certain *santri* bourgeoisie, but most of all, felt he should elevate his *kiai* heritage by attaining higher posts. Shortly after having refused to join ICMI, Abdurrahman Wahid clashed head-on with the Soeharto regime. In accepting to lead Forum Demokrasi, an organisation founded in opposition to the Muslim organisation, he denounced the exploitation of Islam by an authoritarian and increasingly contested government. The latter retaliated with attempts to discredit the ebullient leader. In 1994, when his mandate as the head of Nahdlatul Ulama ended, the ruling power pushed forward an opponent to challenge him, inaugurating a series of major political crises that would mark the last years of the Soeharto regime.

¹⁰⁰ Robert Hefner, 2000, p. 142.

¹⁰¹ See the declarations by Lukman Harun and Zainuddin MZ, in Adam Schwarz, 1999, p. 181.

More divided than ever, Indonesian Islam thus experienced in the mid-1990s an undeniable movement of revival whose most radical expressions now coincided with the interests of an increasingly desperate regime.

Founded in 1987, the Indonesian Committee for Solidarity with the Muslim World (Komite Indonesia untuk Solidaritas Dunia Islam, KISDI) was a good illustration of the mutations of Muslim reformism that led to the birth of this turbulent 'regimist' Islam. KISDI originated from the old Masyumi networks sheltered by the Indonesian Council for the Propagation of Islamic Faith (DDII). Mohammad Natsir himself, the ex-chairman of Masyumi and founder of DDII, led the inauguration ceremony of the movement. At that time, several former leaders of the Muslim party filled the leadership ranks of KISDI: K.H. Hasan Basri, head of the Council of Indonesian Ulama (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, MUI), H. Husein Umar, then secretary-general of the Council for Faith Propagation, and K.H. Kholil Ridwan, president of the Grouping of Islamic Boarding Schools of Indonesia (Badan Kerjasama Pondok Pesantren se-Indonesia, BKPPPI).¹⁰²

The head of the new organisation, H. Ahmad Sumargono, was then leader of the Preachers of Jakarta Corps (Korps Mubaligh Jakarta), another organisation close to DDII.¹⁰³ KISDI was formed to "defend the rights of Muslims wherever they are" and effectively, its international dimension dominated till 1993 with operations in aid of the Palestinians, the Moro in the Philippines, Kashmir and Bosnia. However, from the end of the 1980s, its leaders made their presence felt on the Indonesian political scene by intensive lobbying in Parliament on behalf of Islam. Ahmad Sumargono lobbied in particular for laws on religious courts and education, for the right to wear the headscarf in public schools (1991) and

¹⁰² Firdaus Syam and Ahmad Suhelmi, *Ahmad Sumargono, Dai & Aktivist Pergerakan Islam yang mengakar di Hati Umat*, Dyatama Milenia, Jakarta, March 2004, p. 227.

¹⁰³ Born into a Javanising (*kejawen*) and *priyayi* (minor Javanese aristocracy) family in Central Java on 1 February 1943, the young Ahmad was brought up in Jakarta by his uncle, a *betawi* (Batavian). *Betawi* children, as Sumargono told his biographer, must go through two traditions: learning to read the Qur'an (*ngaji*) and to fight (*main pukulan*). Thus he learnt the *kanugaran* martial arts but later rejected this period of his childhood as pagan (*jahiliyah*), a time when he "moved away from God". Attracted to religion from the time he started school, he was soon giving sermons at the mosque on Fridays. An admirer of Soekarno as his family was close to PNI, it was at the Faculty of Economics at university where he encountered the Association of Muslim Students (HMI), which would introduce him to the Masyumist milieu. See Firdaus Syam and Ahmad Suhelmi, 2004, pp. 19–51.

for the banning of gambling.¹⁰⁴ Very close to DDII, KISDI also attacked Sino-Indonesians (“unpatriotic business”), “*kristianisasi*” (the supposed Christianisation in all fields) and communism (reincarnated in the new and small Democratic Party of the People, *Parti Rakyat Demokratik*, PRD). Marginal at the beginning, KISDI, via its political actions, its organisation of major demonstrations and the thundering declarations of its leaders, weighed in considerably on public debate in the beginning of the 1990s. The organisation quickly seized the opportunities that had sprung up with the regime’s new attitude towards Islam. More than DDII, which was still very much affected by the trauma at the start of the New Order, KISDI was run by activists of the next generation — Ahmad Sumargono and Husein Umar, but also the lampoonist Adian Husaini — who unabashedly seized what they perceived as a historic opportunity. In the name of ‘threats’ to the interests of Muslims in the world, in general and particularly in Indonesia, they harnessed their troops to the wavering power of general Soeharto.

¹⁰⁴ H. Ahmad Sumargono, *Saya Seorang Fundamentalis*, Global Cita Press, Bogor 1999, p. VI.

An Archipelago Adrift: Radical Islam and Opportunities amidst Chaos (1996–2004)

In the middle of the 1990s, Indonesia, hitherto presented as a model of inter-religious cohabitation, seemed to plummet into inter-faith and inter-ethnic violence. The anti-Chinese riots that broke out in Medan in 1994 were reproduced in many places in Java in the following year.¹ In 1996, incidents took on a distinctively anti-Christian turn with the torching of 24 churches and Christian schools in a single day (10 October) in Situbundo. In December, riots broke out in Tasikmalaya where churches and Buddhist temples were vandalised. In the course of just one year, 1996, 71 churches were destroyed, burnt or damaged.² Incidents multiplied in the following years: 92 in 1997 and 134 in 1998, the year of the fall of Soeharto.³ The crisis seemed to culminate in the Moluccas, where confrontations between Christians and Muslims spread as of January 1999. Henceforth, mosques were also attacked.⁴ The Moluccas ‘cause’ soon

¹ Adam Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, Allen and Unwin, St. Leonards, Australia, 1999 (1st edition: 1994), p. 330.

² Thomas Santoso, *Peristiwa Sepuluh-Sepuluh Situbondo*, Lutfansah Mediatama, Surabaya, 2003, p. 1.

³ Paul Tahalele and Thomas Santoso (eds), *The Church and Human Rights in Indonesia*, Indonesian Christian Communication Forum (SCCF-ICCF), Surabaya, 1 January 2004, pp. 19–20.

⁴ The first incidents targeting mosques occurred far away from Java — in East Timor, where the conflict dates from the annexation of the Portuguese territory by Indonesia in 1975. In the 1990s, incidents spread to the cities: in 1991, during the infamous Santa Cruz incident, the army fired on a crowd in Dili, resulting in more than 200

ignited part of the Muslim community in Indonesia. On 7 January 2000, several hundred thousands of demonstrators gathered around the National Monument in Jakarta in a show of solidarity for the Moluccan Muslims. This demonstration, named “action of a million Muslims” (*aksi sejuta ummat*), during which calls for jihad were launched, quickly became the symbol for some of the *umma*’s noble mobilisation for its martyred brothers, and for others, of a worrying convergence of radical Islam militias and organisations hitherto considered moderate. In the same year, 2000, in the big cities of Java, Islamic militias such as Front of the Defenders of Islam (Front Pembela Islam, FPI) became increasingly visible and started to control entire urban districts.

Indonesian public opinion treated this explosion of violence with a mixture of worry that it would stir up other parts of the Archipelago and indecisiveness as to whom to blame. An instinct for communitarian solidarity caused each religious group to retreat into itself. A good number of moderate Muslim intellectuals accepted the principle of defence in the face of threats to the *umma* and tacitly supported the jihad Muslim militias. Sceptical after three decades of politico-religious manipulations, the great majority of Indonesian commentators refused to acknowledge the clear-cut responsibility of the radical Islamic circles. It was not until the Bali bombings of 12 October 2002 (with 202 casualties) and the bombing of the Marriott Hotel in Jakarta a year later on 5 August 2003 (with 12 casualties, the majority Muslim Indonesians) that these convictions were shaken. Right up till 2007, the region of Poso in Sulawesi remained a regular site of attacks aimed essentially at the Christian minority. Elsewhere in Indonesia, places of worship and Christian schools continued to be attacked at regular intervals: between 1990 and 2004, more than 500 Protestant and Catholic places of worship were attacked.⁵

This violent and confused maelstrom that Indonesia had plunged into and the boiling over of Islamist fever in a country long reputed for its religious tolerance left the majority of observers perplexed. An analysis of two series of events of different natures sheds light on this period. The

casualties. Accusations of forced Islamisation multiplied. In September 1995, anti-Indonesian riots broke out and more than ten mosques or prayer sites were destroyed. In 1998, in Kupang, a largely Protestant region located in the western part of the island of Timor, mosques were burnt in retaliation for the massacre of Christian Moluccans in Ketapang, Jakarta.

⁵ According to Franz Magnis Suseno, in *Suara Pembaruan*, 20 October 2004.

first bears witness to the slow degradation of the social fabric in Indonesia, enabling not only the sectarian views evoked in the previous chapter to flourish but also the eruption of religious quarrels within the military institution, which had since become incapable of fulfilling its traditional role of controlling society. The second series of events that encouraged the outbreak of radical Islam was the brutal economic and political crisis that offered significant opportunities for Indonesian Islamists to act.

I. Fissures in the New Order: The Islamisation of Confrontation within the Army

With about 300,000 men (excluding the police), the Indonesian army is modest in size in proportion to the vastness of the country. It is committed above all to the maintenance of order and the control of internal rebellions, more so than to the defence of the Archipelago against external enemies. Badly equipped, the Indonesian forces are of a moderate quality, with the exception of two units that have therefore always played a special role within the military institution and in the history of Indonesia. The first is the Army Strategic Reserve Command, Kostrad, led by Soeharto when he seized power in 1965–1966; the second is the Special Forces Command, Kopassus.⁶

Genesis of *Dwifungsi*

For decades, the Indonesian army enjoyed a special status accorded by its ‘dual function’ (*dwifungsi*) — military and political — a status partly inherited from the anti-colonial war when the army had continued to fight against the Dutch colonisers in 1948 while the civil government itself had accepted negotiations. The political ambitions of the army were clearly displayed in 1952, when General A.H. Nasution tried to force President Soekarno to dissolve Parliament when it attempted to reorganise

⁶ For a detailed history of the role of the army since independence, see Harold Crouch, *The Army and Politics in Indonesia*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca-London, 1978, 384 pp.; Ulf Sundhussen, “The Military: Structure, Procedures, and Effects on Indonesian Society”, in Karl Jackson and Lucian Pye (eds), *Political Power and Communications in Indonesia*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1978, pp. 45–81; Robert Lowry, *The Armed Forces of Indonesia*, Allen and Unwin, St. Leonards (Australia), 1996, XXIV–282 pp.

the army.⁷ A few years later, the regional rebellions (DI/TII, PRRI, Permesta), the impasse in discussions in the Constitutional Assembly and President Soekarno's desire to install 'Guided Democracy' paved the way for the army to come to the fore. It was in 1957 that General Nasution first mentioned, in a speech commemorating the first anniversary of the military academy of Magelang, the special 'function' that he felt should be exercised by the army. For him, the army should take the 'middle path' (*jalan tengah*) as it would guarantee the possibility of fulfilling this role. Rapidly, however, it appeared that the 'dual function' was above all the political means of endowing the army with a 'third function', this time economic. Already very much involved in the trading of raw materials in the regions — if nothing else, to meet the budget of the units — the army officially took over the control of Dutch enterprises after their nationalisation in 1959. This economic clout increased with the coming to power of General Soeharto: via charitable associations or by hiding behind figureheads, high-ranking officers profited immensely from the economic development of the country. A part of these profits went into the traditional funding of the units; another part enabled some New Order generals to build considerable fortunes.⁸

With much more at stake than merely military matters, the nomination of officers for important posts has always taken on a special political importance. In this respect, the evolution of the population pyramid in the army has long been the object of detailed analyses by the most informed observers.⁹ It is thus worthwhile to explore the recent history of this institution in order to understand the events of the 1990s. Competition for commander posts was particularly fierce for two cohorts, 1965 and 1968, recruited under very unusual circumstances.¹⁰ In 1962, Indonesia was preparing to take over West Papua, which was still in the hands of the Netherlands, and almost 200 new officer posts were created at the military academy for this war effort. The class of 1965 (after three years of studies) occupied the majority of army posts, but also those of

⁷ On this very complex affair of 17 October 1952, see Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1962, XX–618 pp.

⁸ See Harold Crouch, 1978, p. 273–303.

⁹ In particular, the numerous articles of the review *Indonesia* entitled "Current Data on the Indonesian Military Elite", Cornell Southeast Asia Programme.

¹⁰ Interview with Daud Sinjal, chief editor of the daily *Sinar Harapan* and specialist in Indonesian military affairs, Jakarta, 7 April 2004.

governors, vice-governors, regents and local heads of Golkar during the New Order. In the same year, Indonesia, then engaged in an offensive against Malaysia (Konfrontasi), threw open the doors of its military academy. The second class of 1968, also numbering around 500 candidates (among whom figured Wiranto and Agum Gumelar), penetrated the bureaucracy as well but only reached its acme much later — at the time of Soeharto's fall from power.¹¹ These two drastic increases in the number of officers led more than 20 years later to intense competition for commander posts, viewed as the requisite for a successful career. Escalating tensions encouraged the eruption of quarrels within the army and as such, contributed to the formation of alliances between radical Islamist groups and some officers in the army.

Emergence of a Contesting Group in the Army

Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces from 1984, General Benny Moerdani acquired very substantial political clout by incarnating a certain military opposition to the wheeling-and-dealing tendencies of the regime. Leader of a group within the army that was disgruntled with the increasing take-over of the economy by Soeharto's clan — encroaching even on territories hitherto reserved for the army — he represented as of 1987 an actual threat to the presidential family.¹² In 1988, a section of the army had openly defied the authority of the president by presenting another candidate, other than the one endorsed by Soeharto, for vice-president. Pressurised by the presidential entourage, the army-backed candidate, John Naro, head of the Islamic party PPP, finally withdrew from the race. But the session of the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR), tasked with the election of the head of state and his vice-president, was unusually stormy,

¹¹ General Wiranto only became head of the army in 1996 and Armed Forces Chief in February 1998. The cohorts increased from roughly 200 graduates to more than 400, before falling under the 1976 mark of 100. See also Takashi Shiraiishi, "The Indonesian Military in Politics", in Adam Schwarz and Jonathan Paris (eds), *The Politics of Post-Suharto Indonesia*, Council on Foreign Relations Press, New York, 1999, pp. 73–86.

¹² The power of decision-making for the purchase of armaments was taken away from the army and put in the hands of Sudharmono, minister of the State Secretariat and right-hand man of Soeharto. In choosing Sudharmono as vice-president, Soeharto wished to free himself of any checks on his power exercised by the army. Try Sutrisno was then the real candidate from the army for vice-president; Naro was only a pawn to counter the president.

the members of Parliament from the army having dispatched one of their own, Ibrahim Saleh, to the stand to publicly express their discontent. This was unprecedented in an assembly known for a high degree of formality and where decisions were reached by unanimity. This episode seems to have further convinced Soeharto of the need to search for new backing from political Islam circles in order to compensate for the flagging support from the army. This move dented but did not quash the influence of the officers aligned with Moerdani. In 1993, they finally managed to impose their candidate in the person of Try Sutrisno as vice-president.

Soeharto's reaction was swift: in the same year, General Feisal Tanjung was nominated as head of the armed forces, marking the start of the purge of officers close to the Moerdani group. The power struggle took a religious turn when Soeharto's circle decided to exploit the fact that Benny Moerdani was a Catholic. His faith had never influenced his actions as an army officer and later Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces. He participated in the bloody invasion of East Timor in 1975, a region with a Christian (in fact Catholic) majority.¹³ It was certainly during his leadership of the armed forces that the incident at Tanjung Priok occurred in 1984, but this coercive policy towards all forms of opposition to the regime had nothing to do with religion and was equally pursued by his Muslim successors. Thus commenced a violent military campaign in Aceh in 1989 and the installation of the 'military operation region' status. This brutal repression boosted the ranks of the Acehnese secessionist movement, and the armed forces, led by General Try Sutrisno from 1988 to 1993, and then by the conspicuously Muslim General Feisal Tanjung (from 1993 to 1998), began the systematic use of force in this bastion of Indonesian Islam.¹⁴

¹³ On East Timor, see James Dunn, *East Timor: A People Betrayed*, John Wiley & Sons Inc, 1st edition, 1983, XVI–365 pp.; John Taylor, *East Timor: The Price of Freedom*, Zed Books Ltd., New York, 248 pp. and *Indonesia's Forgotten War: The Hidden History of East Timor*, London: Atlantic Highlands, N.J., USA: Zed Books, Leichhardt, NSW, Australia: Pluto Press Australia, c1991; Gabriel Defert, *Timor-Est, le génocide oublié: droits d'un peuple et raison d'Etat*, L'Harmattan, Paris, 1992, 323 pp.

¹⁴ Geoffrey Robinson, "Rawan Is as Rawan Does: The Origins of Disorder in New Order Aceh", in *Indonesia*, no. 66, October 1998: 141. According to Amnesty International, the new repressive strategy would also be based on numerous exactions: rapes, tortures, arbitrary arrests and public executions. A group of Acehnese Youth (KMPA) accused Feisal Tanjung and Syarwan Hamid (Liliwangsa commander and operation commander for Aceh) of human rights violations soon after Soeharto's fall (Siar News Service, 12 August 1998).

To his detractors, Moerdani symbolised the political alliance between Christians, secular Muslims and nominal Muslims, called *abangan*. Secularism under the emblem of *Pancasila* was in fact the norm within the top hierarchy of the military.¹⁵ It was particularly rooted in the army, which had to confront an endless series of regional rebellions carried out in the name of Islam since 1948. As seen earlier, Moerdani followed in the footsteps of his mentor General Moertopo, a Javanese of *abangan* reputation who was adroit at manipulating the Islamist circles.¹⁶ In the middle of the 1980s, Moerdani thus became the black sheep of Muslim militant organisations, symbolising for them the oppression of political Islam and the secularisation process that they had been denouncing for years. This rancour was cunningly fanned by his rivals within the army to serve their own ambitions.

As a result of this conflict, after the creation of ICMI in the early 1990s, a 'green' faction (*ijo royo-royo*), that is, a Muslim faction whose flag bearers included amongst others the generals Hartono and Prabowo Subianto, was discernable within the Indonesian army. They opposed the 'red and white' (*merah-putih*) group — a reference to the colours of the Indonesian flag — symbol of a nationalism that transcends religious divisions, led by generals such as Edi Sudradjat and Try Sutrisno. The founding act of this 'red and white' group was, in a way, the challenge issued by the army to President Soeharto in 1988 when they backed their own candidate for vice-president and criticised the president at the stand. As a result, this contesting group became the target of regular attacks as much from Islamist circles as from the presidential entourage, both of which found room in this situation for very beneficial cooperation.¹⁷

¹⁵ Muslim officers only performed noon prayers during service.

¹⁶ Yet Moertopo participated in the anti-colonial fight amidst the Muslim militias Hizbullah, which were dominant in his region of Tegal, in Central Java. However, this affiliation does not mean anything because Hizbullah effectively dominated this region.

¹⁷ As Marcus Mietzner rightly highlights, the disagreement between the two currents stemmed from tactical rather than ideological differences. In other words, the question was the extent to which the army was ready to exploit the radical Islamist currents to defend the regime. Marcus Mietzner, *Military Politics, Islam and the State in Indonesia. From Turbulent Transition to Democratic Consolidation*, ISEAS, Singapore, 2009, pp. 112–113. See also Damien Kingsbury, *Power Politics and the Indonesian Military*, Routledge Curzon, London and New York, 2003, 280 pp.

The New Alliance: The ‘Green’ Generals

One man, General Prabowo Subianto, son-in-law of Soeharto, played a leading role in the rapprochement between the section of the army that remained loyal to the presidential clan and radical Indonesian Islam. Prabowo had already enjoyed a meteoric rise through the military hierarchy: having served throughout his career in the Special Forces (Kopassandha and Kopassus from 1976–1985, Strategic Reserve Command or Kostrad from 1985–1993), he acceded to the rank of general commander of Kopassus in 1996, before taking over as commander of the Strategic Reserve Command in March 1998. Taking advantage of the transfers that eliminated the ex-followers of Benny Moerdani (a movement called ‘*debennisasi*’), Prabowo managed to nominate his allies for important posts. Thus, on the eve of the fall of Soeharto, he could count on crucial support at the heart of the military machine: the commander of the military region of greater Jakarta, Major General Syafrie Syamsuddin, and especially the head of Kopassus, Major General Muchdi Purwopranjono.

It was also during this period from the mid-1990s onwards that Prabowo linked up with ICMI and even with the very radical Indonesian Committee for Solidarity with the Muslim World (Komite Indonesia untuk Solidaritas Dunia Islam, KISDI), created in 1987.¹⁸ According to Robert Hefner, he seems to have approached KISDI through the Center for Policy and Development Studies (CPDS), the army and ICMI-linked think-tank, in 1995 to propose his services.¹⁹ The head of KISDI, Ahmad Sumargono, indicated in an interview with the weekly *Tempo* that it was through Syafrie Syamsuddin (military commander of Jakarta in May 1998) that he made the acquaintance of the general.²⁰ At the same time, Prabowo appears to have made contact with the Indonesian Council for the Propagation of the Islamic Faith (DDII), inviting them to drop their opposition to the regime. The change in attitude of these two organisations towards the ruling power — a development already perceptible since the formation of ICMI²¹ — became clearer: in the matter of a few years,

¹⁸ See below.

¹⁹ Robert Hefner, *Civil Islam, Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia*, Princeton University Press, Princeton-Oxford, 2000, p. 201.

²⁰ Firdaus Syam and Ahmad Suhelmi, *Ahmad Soemargono, Dai & Aktivist Pergerakan Islam yang Mengakar di Hati Umat*, Dyatama Milenia, Jakarta, March 2004, p. 218, citing *Tempo*, 23 November 1998.

²¹ Already, right at the start of the 1990s, the head of DDII, the highly respected Mohammad Natsir, believing that President Soeharto finally intended to make a real

staunch opposition to the regime had given way to support that was barely tempered by some limited criticism during the early 1990s.

When this alliance between the regime and some Islamist groups yielded concrete results in the army, the first objections were raised. In 1994, the ascension of Major General Hartono to the post of ABRI Chief of Staff for Political and Social Affairs generated, for the first time, comments from some perturbed officers. Sharper criticism was voiced when Hartono replaced General Wismoyo Arismunandar as head of the army a year later. On 14 January 1995 the Minister of Defence, General Edy Sudradjat, issued a reminder in a speech that the Indonesian army should take the middle ground and “stand above groups”, and that retired nationalist-secular officers would not countenance the repeat of such “disorders” (*gangguan*). Supporters of the “green nuance” (*nuansa ijo-royo-royo*) then took the reins of the altercations. Sumargono condemned the words of the minister.²² Anwar Haryono, head of DDII, reminded all that Islam had always participated in the anti-colonial struggle and that the military was predominantly Muslim anyway — this “greening” of the army or its “santrisation” was thus not a real problem.²³ Even Amien Rais — still part of the leadership of ICMI — felt obliged to support the nomination of General Hartono by accusing his detractors of “Islamophobia”.²⁴

From this time on, Ahmad Sumargono did not seek to hide his privileged relationship with some army officers such as the generals Subagio, Muchdi, Syafrie Syamsuddin and Kivlan Zen.²⁵ The rapprochement between the head of KISDI and General Prabowo was probably carried out for more opportunistic reasons. Coming from a socialist secular milieu and a partly Christian family, the son-in-law of Soeharto had never before been involved with Islamist circles. Very likely it was the deep enmity between him and Moerdani, and perhaps his personal ambitions as well, that made him seize upon unreservedly the radical “thoughts-to-go”

place for political Islam, had adopted a much more conciliatory position. See Andrée Feillard, “Les Oulémas indonésiens aujourd’hui: de l’opposition à une nouvelle légitimité”, in *Archipel*, no. 46, October–November 1993: 103.

²² Ahmad Sumargono, *Saya Seorang Fundamentalis*, Global Cita Press, Bogor, 1999, p. 36.

²³ Firdaus Syam and Ahmad Suhelmi, 2004, p. 213, citing *Media Dakwah*, March 1995.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 212, citing *Republika*, 20 October 1995.

²⁵ The four officers in question were ex-members of Pelajar Islam Indonesia (PII), which was founded by Masyumi at the end of the 1940s and which, just like DDII, had undergone a very obvious ideological hardening in the 1970s. *Ibid.*, 2004, p. 216.

elaborated by his new friends. So well did the new 'student' absorb this sectarian thinking that Ahmad Sumargono suggested later that not only did his mixing with General Prabowo not bring about a moderation of his own stance "but perhaps quite the opposite".²⁶

Defence of the Regime

During the last months of the Soeharto regime, followed by the short-lived reign of his successor, B.J. Habibie, the alliance between a section of the army and some radical Muslim groups came to light and often took a dramatic turn. Pursuing increasingly incoherent policies to cope with the profound economic and social crises wracking the country, the dying New Order found in this strange alliance its last source of support.

Discounting the creation in 1991 of the Forum Demokrasi, whose influence was limited in the face of the dazzling progression of ICMI, we can date the birth of a structured opposition to the Soeharto regime to 1994. During this year, the ban on several major publications (*Tempo*, *Editor* and *Detik*) forced into semi-clandestinity dozens of journalists who then took it upon themselves to systematically criticise the wrongdoings of the Soeharto clan and the abusive violence of its armed forces. As initiators of the Alliance of Independent Journalists (Aliansi Jurnalis Independen, AJI), which soon published its own journal and, in particular, a crop of brochures and pamphlets distributed via the Internet, these pariahs of the official press played a part in politicising a generation of students thought to have become permanently inured to the regime's propaganda. In 1995, President Soeharto was booed by Indonesian demonstrators during a visit to Germany. A taboo was broken. The following year, a series of risky operations gave the opposition, if not a leader, then at least a flag bearer in the person of Megawati Soekarnoputri. The daughter of the proclaimer of independence was carried to the forefront of the Indonesian Democratic Party at the end of 1993. Aware of her popularity, the ruling power wanted to prevent her from being designated by her party as the candidate for the next presidential election. So in June 1996, it organised a special party congress in Medan and elected an ex-leader of the PDI, Soeryadi, in place of Megawati. Enraged, her followers set up a permanent forum in front of PDI's headquarters in Jakarta to speak out against the regime, refusing to cede to Soeryadi's supporters. On 27 July, the latter — or, according to some sources, thugs supervised by elements of the army — attacked

²⁶ *Tempo Interaktif*, 18 November 1998.

the occupied PDI premises and evicted Megawati's supporters, resulting in the death of at least five and the disappearance of dozens, according to the Indonesian Commission of Human Rights.²⁷ These tragic events so reinforced the popularity of the ex-leader of PDI that the ruling power decided to wave the old red flag of communist danger and laid the blame on a small group of activists, the Democratic People's Party (Partai Rakyat Demokratik, PRD), whom they accused of representing the resurgence of a Marxist trend in Indonesia.

At the very moment when opposition was first emerging, ICMI, symbol of the new Islamic policy, began to splinter over the question of support for the regime. Part of its leadership, "regimist" to use Robert Hefner's expression, rooted for an unquestioning support of manoeuvres by the president's men. The secretary-general of the association, Adi Sasono, thus launched a violent campaign of criticism against Megawati. She was criticised within some circles of ICMI for her *abangan* side, introducing the "bad Muslim" theme that would thrive three years later.²⁸ Some of those close to Habibie also gave their approval, jealous of the emergence of a potential rival to their champion.²⁹ But other leaders of ICMI openly displayed their embarrassment at the ruling power's behaviour. The liberals, in particular, who had joined the movement out of a conviction for an 'egalitarian' Islam — some in all innocence — left the movement one after the other, or were asked to go. Sri Bintang Pamungkas, who had participated in the demonstrations in Germany and who had called Soeharto a dictator, was expelled from ICMI and imprisoned. Upon his release, no longer harbouring any hope of a true accord between the values of Islam in which he believed and the New Order, he founded in May 1996 the Partai Uni Demokrasi Indonesia, a distant rejoinder of the Partai Demokrasi Islam of Mohammad Hatta, which was crushed in its infancy by the nascent regime at the end of the 1960s.

However, the most spectacular falling-out within the Muslim organisation, probably also the biggest reason the regime's policy of manipulating reformist Islam failed, was the expulsion of Amien Rais in 1997. Born in Solo in 1944 into a family of Muhammadiyah militants, the young Amien performed brilliantly in school and obtained a scholarship from an American foundation to pursue a PhD in political science from the

²⁷ Robert Hefner, 2000, p. 185.

²⁸ Adam Schwarz, 1999, p. 328.

²⁹ Robert Hefner, "Islam and Nation in the Post-Suharto Era", in Adam Schwarz and Jonathan Paris (eds), 1999, p. 40–72.

University of Chicago in 1981. His research was focused on the Muslim Brotherhood and he stayed in Egypt at the end of the 1970s. He started teaching at the prestigious Gadjah Mada University of Yogyakarta and quickly became a leading personality within Muhammadiyah, marrying solid theoretical knowledge with an undeniable political acumen.³⁰ He was elected to the management of Muhammadiyah in 1985 during the Congress of Solo. In 1988, he formed the Centre for Strategic and Political Studies (Pusat Pengkajian Strategi dan Kebijakan), a sort of Muslim intellectual forum in Yogyakarta. A fervent supporter of ICMI at the start, he became the main deputy to the chairman, B.J. Habibie, a few months after its foundation, before heading its “National Committee of Experts”. At the same time, he became vice-chairman of Muhammadiyah, then chairman upon the death of Ahmad Azhar Basyir in 1994. During this period, Amien Rais showed himself to be an efficient promoter of an anti-Western stance, sometimes coupled with an anti-Christian and anti-Semitic religious sectarianism that was developing amongst the modernist Muslim elite.³¹ Nonetheless, he has always insisted on a certain liberty in speech with regards to the ruling power. From 1996 onwards, his criticism of the country’s economic policy, notably the trifling stake Indonesia held in the exploitation of the copper mines (Freeport, Irian) and gold mines (Busang, Kalimantan), provoked the ire of the government.³² In 1997, it was his turn to be expelled from ICMI, prompting his switch to open opposition.

The forced departure of the Muhammadiyah chairman confirmed the failure of the strategy to manipulate political Islam through ICMI, at least

³⁰ His two models were Mohammad Natsir, whom he admired for his “uprightness” and Bung Karno (Soekarno) for his “rhetoric” and his rejection of “Western imperialism”. Interview with Amien Rais, Yogyakarta, 23 December 1993.

³¹ Amien Rais was for a long time the master of anti-Western thought. He supposedly declared on 7 November 1992 during a seminar organised by the young members of Persis (Pemuda Persis) at IPB Bogor: “America, pillar of the Western forces, has created and manipulated the United Nations, chiefly the Security Council in order to knock down each emerging Islamic force” (cited in Ahmad Sumargono, 1999, p. 92). Amien Rais subsequently moderated his stance against the West and Christianity. However, he remained staunchly anti-Zionist, relentlessly denouncing the conspiracies of the Jewish state against even Indonesia. See, for example, “Amien Rais: Waspadai Zionis-Zionis Indonesia”, in *Republika*, 13 October 2000.

³² Hamid Basyaib and Ibrahim Ali-Fauzi (eds), *Ada Udang di Balik Busang: Dokumentasi Pers Kasus Amien Rais*, Mizan, Bandung, 197, 475 pp.

on a national scale. Thereafter, neither of the two major Muslim organisations of Indonesia was represented within ICMI. This setback pushed the regime into an alliance with the most radical fringe of the Islamic movements. Deprived of the counterweight of the Muslim masses to fend off the disgruntled section of the army, the Soeharto clan jumped out of the frying pan into the fire. Two groups within Islam attempted to prop up the regime. The first comprised ICMI bureaucrats with their ambivalent speeches and references. Some of them had been educated in American or European universities and had imbibed Western culture. They played a key role in the old general's change in attitude towards the West. Having championed America's alliance with Southeast Asia for the past 25 years, Soeharto adopted a more critical stance towards the social model of his ex-mentors in the 1990s. This turnaround, supposedly built upon Islamic values, was perhaps just as much a reaction to the new — and much less indulgent — view his former foreign protectors had of the Indonesian regime. With Soviet communism no longer a factor in regional politics, Indonesia lost much of its indispensable role for the United States as a bulwark to a communist mainland Southeast Asia. As a result, Western countries in general, and the Americans in particular, had become much touchier on the subject of human rights violations in the Archipelago and the corruption of its leaders.³³ In response, so as to limit the reach of these criticisms, some ICMI bureaucrats took it upon themselves to spread the classic Islamist polemic on the decline of the West.

The second group that participated in the defence of the regime was not content with mere words. It gathered small radical, militant organisations such as KISDI, often run by former victims of the repressive policies under the New Order. Having shed their clandestine status thanks to the creation of ICMI, these radical Islamists made tacit pacts with those in the army who were prepared to take extreme measures to preserve their influence, particularly by remaining passive in the face of nascent tensions in the Archipelago or even by stoking these tensions. The strategy behind the creation of ICMI — restructuring the New Order on a large conservative Muslim base — had a good chance of survival in the long term, but this new approach using radical conservative Islamists was suicidal and could only thrive on chaos.

³³ As early as the end of the 1980s, the American ambassador Paul Wolfowitz, then on the verge of leaving his post, appealed for a political opening of the country and the installation of a real democracy.

II. A Profound Social Crisis

The last three years of Soeharto's rule were marked by a profound social crisis that begun even before Indonesia was affected by the collapse of the Southeast Asian economies in 1997. As of 1995, ethnic, religious and racial confrontations — known by the acronym SARA for *suku, agama, ras, antargolongan*³⁴ — multiplied in the Archipelago. Encouraged by the spread of hate speech and religious intolerance, raging crowds took it out on those whom popular opinion, itself often manipulated, had designated as the cause of their troubles. Two communities were especially affected: Indonesians of Chinese descent and Christians.

Chinese Indonesians: Scapegoats of Islamist Rancour

The disparity between the economic influence of Indonesians from the Chinese diaspora and their 'indigenous' compatriots (*pribumi*) has long been a concern of the authorities in the Archipelago. This dynamic community, within which a distinction has always been made between the *totok* (newly arrived, since the end of the nineteenth century) and the *peranakan* (more assimilated, descendants of several generations), has occupied a predominant position in commerce and finance, sometimes for centuries.³⁵ Their influence in these sectors often provoked reactions: Sarekat Islam, the first mass Islamic organisation, was founded in 1912 to protect batik merchants from European and Chinese-Indonesian competition;³⁶ later, in the 1950s, these latter were subject to specific legislation designed to aid the economic emancipation of *pribumi* entrepreneurs.³⁷

³⁴ *Suku*: ethnic group; *agama*: religion; *ras*: race; *antargolongan*: groups (a term that includes social classes).

³⁵ Linda Y.C. Lim and L.A. Peter Gosling, "Minority Status for Southeast Asian Chinese", in Chirot and Reid (eds), *Essential Outsiders*, University of Washington Press, 1997, pp. 285–317.

³⁶ Takashi Shiraiishi, *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912–1926*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca-London, 1990, p. 365.

³⁷ In 1959, the Indonesian government, in a renewal of old colonial practices, prohibited Chinese Indonesians from doing business in rural zones. See Ernest Utrecht, "The Muslim Merchant Class in the Indonesian Social and Political Struggles", in *Social Compass*, 31/1, Centre de recherches socio-religieuses, Louvain La Neuve, 1984, pp 27–55.

The coming to power of Soeharto's New Order marked a certain reversal in this policy.³⁸ The new regime used the competence and networks of Chinese Indonesians to develop the economy and to open it up to foreign capital. The new elite of the regime (particularly the military elite) was thus able to amass considerable fortunes thanks to lucrative associations with *totok* or *peranakan* entrepreneurs. This policy also allowed the regime to exercise some control over the private sector, which did not really challenge it, unlike the independent *pribumi* class. One of the most flagrant examples of this collusion was the dazzling success of the magnate Liem Sioe Liong. The Salim group, of which he was the main shareholder, dealt with foreign companies and expanded due to its expertise in technology, marketing and, most of all, its privileged access to the presidential palace. At its height, the sales of this company represented almost 5 per cent of Indonesia's GNP.³⁹ In exchange for these favours from the regime, Salim was invited to invest in strategic sectors such as steel and to participate in joint ventures with the presidential family.⁴⁰

The big losers in these accords were the businessmen from the *santri* circles, whose small businesses could barely withstand the competition from this new capital — which, incidentally, was not exclusively Chinese, but also American, Japanese, Taiwanese and European. Subsequently, the participation of this small Muslim bourgeoisie in the economic development was tied to its reconciliation with the regime. Thus in the 1970s, some of its members, often from the modernist circles, were able to regain some economic clout thanks to their association with Golkar. Later, in 1984, when Nahdlatul Ulama left the Muslim party (PPP) and warmed up to the advances of the government party, its leaders too benefited from

³⁸ For a debate on the status of the Chinese minority in 1967, see Charles Coppel, 1983, 16 pp.; for a reflection on this question after 1998, see Jamie Nackie, "Tackling 'the Chinese Problem'", in Geoff Forrester (ed.), *Post-Subarto Indonesia: Renewal or Chaos?*, KITLV Press-ISEAS, Netherlands-Singapore, 1999, pp. 186–196; Daniel Chirot and Anthony Reid (eds), *Essential Outsiders: Chinese and Jews in the Modern Transformation of Southeast Asia and Central Europe*, University of Chicago, 1997, 368 pp. See also John T. Sidel, *Riots, Pogroms, Jihad. Religious Violence in Indonesia*, NUS Press, Singapore, 2007, pp. 25 ff., which rightly emphasises that the economic rapprochement between the New Order and the Chinese Indonesian minorities was accompanied by a violent political repression within the framework of the anti-communist struggle, as well as a clampdown on Chinese culture.

³⁹ Adam Schwarz, 1994, p. 110.

⁴⁰ Linda Y.C. Lim and L.A. Peter Gosling, 1997, p. 315.

numerous commercial opportunities. Many ulama, activists or businessmen linked to Nahdlatul Ulama launched highly profitable enterprises, but of course, not yet on the same scale as those of the presidential family and its 'cronies'.

The high visibility of a few large Chinese-Indonesian conglomerates belied the fact that this system actually relied for a long time on a relative equilibrium. The *pribumi* bourgeoisie managed in effect to recuperate a portion of profits made thanks to its privileged access to nationalised enterprises on the one hand, and to the bureaucracy on the other hand. In this system of institutionalised corruption that characterised Indonesia, the distribution of profits depended on patron-client networks and on proximity to power. From the 1980s, however, this fragile equilibrium was shaken: the development of a (predominantly Muslim) middle class generated its own demands. Playing a unifying role in the cities, this new middle class efficiently relayed anti-Chinese propaganda, channelling the numerous grudges of the population in the sole release authorised by the regime. During the same period, the deregulation of the banking sector benefited the Chinese Indonesians above everyone else: they were the ones who created the majority of new commercial private banks and the portion of credits attributed by these latter increased considerably as compared to the 1960s and 1970s. Although this deregulation had the advantage of stimulating competition in the financial sector, its full benefits for the Chinese business class caused increased discontentment in the *pribumi* commercial and financial circles.⁴¹

Indonesians of Chinese descent then constituted around 4 per cent of the population (since no official figures were available, this is only a commonly used approximation). The Islamist press often reiterated that they controlled 70 per cent of the Indonesian economy. In fact, at the start of the 1990s, the share was about 65 per cent of private capital, outside of the agricultural sector.⁴² Amongst the Chinese Indonesians, some condemned this "70 per cent myth" and advanced instead the following

⁴¹ Robert Hefner, *Market Culture, Society and Morality in the New Asian Capitalisms*, Westview Press-Boulder, Colorado-Oxford, 1998, p. 229.

⁴² The agricultural sector remains very large in Indonesia and public enterprises represent between 30 and 35 per cent of the GNP, two sectors clearly occupied by the *pribumi*. Robert Hefner, 1998, p. 141; Richard Robison, *Indonesia: The Rise of Capital*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1986, XXV–425 pp., and "Industrialisation and the Economic and Political Development of Capital: The case of Indonesia", in Ruth Mcvey (ed.), *Southeast Asian Capitalists*, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, Ithaca-New York, 1992, pp. 65–88.

calculation: the private sector only accounted for 60 per cent of the national economy as the rest had been nationalised. Within this private sector, only 60 per cent was in the hands of Indonesian capital; foreign companies, multinationals or joint ventures controlled the rest. Moreover, given that a large part of their business was in distribution and trade, they claimed that their market share was well less than 25 per cent of national wealth.⁴³

Whatever the case, this very real economic predominance was criticised more and more openly in circles that had grown closer to the ruling power: ICMI's daily newspaper, *Republika*, thus accorded much space to anti-Chinese sentiments, and the leaders of the association advocated 'proportionalism', a sort of affirmative action that should be applied in the economic sector to compete against the Chinese Indonesians, but also in government and in the general administration to the detriment of *pribumi* Christians.

Soeharto's regime gave lip service to ICMI's demands while perpetuating an economic system that assured the prosperity of its allies. It reacted to this discontentment with paltry measures that were purely symbolic: in May 1991, it summoned the heavyweights of the Chinese-Indonesian business community and exhorted them to distribute shares from their companies to *pribumi* cooperatives. This call had little effect, due to the fact that it displeased the "donor" group of countries that were financially supporting Indonesia, which viewed it as a protectionist measure in disguise, quite the opposite of the opening of the economy that they were advocating.⁴⁴ Ironically, the most effective measure Soeharto undertook to contain the embarrassing success of Chinese-Indonesian businessmen was to promote the businesses of his own children, family and allies.⁴⁵ In spite of this presidential nepotism — or more likely so as to shield it from public disgruntlement — criticism of Chinese businessmen increased at the time of the financial crisis of 1997 and they were thrown to the lions of public opinion. They were accused of causing the collapse of the Indonesian economy by withdrawing their capital and placing it in China or Singapore — some Indonesian economists pointed out that

⁴³ Sofyan Wanandi, "The Post-Suharto Business Environment", in Geoff Forrester (ed.), 1999, p. 132.

⁴⁴ Linda Y.C. Lim and L.A. Peter Gosling, 1997, p. 315.

⁴⁵ According to well-placed sources, the Chinese minority would have seen its share of the economy reduced during the time of the 1997 crisis, when they became even more dependent on Soeharto's protection. This would have been the case for Prajogo Pangestu, the BCA and Bob Hasan. No data is available to confirm or deny this information.

the *pribumi* also participated in this flight of capital during the crisis. Radical Islam played a leading role in the construction of this very opportune propaganda that showed up the ‘bad’ citizens of Chinese descent, the culprits behind the fragile and unbalanced economy, against the *pribumi* Muslims, champions of an ethical and egalitarian alternative.

The Chinese Indonesians were not the only targets of this public prosecution encouraged by the thinkers and media of radical Islam. The Christian minority of the Archipelago also became the expiatory victims of these social tensions.

The Obsessive Fears of *Kristenisasi*

Neither the Dutch East India Company (VOC) nor the colonial administration, which took charge of the administration of the Archipelago in 1799, had shown much interest in the evangelisation of the natives for fear of affecting their commercial interests. Contrary to the Catholic Spanish who tried to convert the Philippines as early as the seventeenth century, the Dutch for a time were content to sign accords with some sultans, each agreeing not to convert each other’s population.⁴⁶ The only regions where the missionaries had free rein were in the non-Islamised (mostly eastern) parts of the Archipelago. In the nineteenth century, the Netherlands continued to restrain the movements of the Christian missionaries, whose egalitarian message appeared subversive in a colonial system built on injustice.⁴⁷ From the end of the nineteenth century to the end of the colonial period, Christian missionaries pressed the Dutch administration for a relaxation of these restrictions, invoking Hindia Belanda’s professed “religious neutrality”, while Islamic organisations argued in favour of maintaining restrictions on Christian missionaries.⁴⁸ The colonial authorities gave way only partially, but this step back enabled a rapid progression

⁴⁶ Karel Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam: Contacts and Conflicts 1596–1950, Currents of Encounter, Studies on the Contact between Christianity and Other Religions, Beliefs and Cultures*, GV, Amsterdam-Atlanta, 1993, p. 170; “Muslim-Christian Relations in the *Pancasila* State of Indonesia”, in *The Muslim World*, vol. 88, 1998: 322–352; “Patterns of Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Indonesia, 1965–1998”, in J. Waardenburg (ed.), *Muslim-Christian Perceptions of Dialogue Today, Experiences and Expectations*, Leuven, 2000, pp. 113–149.

⁴⁷ Theodore Van Den End, *Ragi Carita, Sejarah Gereja di Indonesia, th. 1500–1860*, Badan Penerbit Kristen Gunung Mulia, Jakarta, 1980, p. 207.

⁴⁸ *Berita Nabdlatoel Oelama (BNO)*, no. 20, year 8, 15 Aug 1939. It pertained to the suppression of article 177 of the Indische staats-regeling.

of the Christian religions in the first decades of the twentieth century and led to a growing resentment amongst the Muslim organisations. The unity of the different faith groups during the anti-colonial war (1945–1950) removed much of the rancour, especially amongst the elite, Westernised by their Dutch education. Then, during the Cold War, the fear of communism contributed to an *entente cordiale* between representatives of the Christian and Muslim communities. During the anti-communist repression after the events of 1965, Christians — as well as some Hindus in Bali — collaborated with Muslim groups to topple Soekarno. If the Christians appear not to have participated directly in the massacre of communist sympathisers, as did the Hindus in Bali and Muslim mainstream organizations in Java, their protection of these sympathisers was limited as they were caught between the army and the fiercely anti-atheist Muslim groups.⁴⁹

As we have mentioned, a movement of conversions occurred at the start of the New Order, contributing greatly to the degradation of relations between the two communities. First, President Soekarno was pressured by anti-communist sentiments at the start of 1965 to issue an anti-blasphemy law (UU No. 1/PNPS/1965) that named six religions (Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism) and implicitly excluded all others, including local beliefs. Under Soeharto, Confucianism

⁴⁹ Robert Cribb, a scholar who authored several works on the repression of 1965–1966 emphasises the following finer points: to his knowledge, there were no Catholic militias involved in these massacres. The Protestants seemed to have been more divided. In West Timor, a movement close to the liberation theology movement was also a victim of repression; in Minahasa (northern Sulawesi), on the other hand, the Protestants were anti-communists but the massacres in this region were carried out by the army. According to Franz Magnis Suseno, in Flores Island, the Church identified 900 Catholic casualties and formed reconciliation groups thereafter (interview, 13 May 2010). Communism's advances in Eastern Europe, Vietnam and China made the Catholic Church very wary, but it was also shocked by the direction of Sukarno's policies, for example, in the famine in Gunung Kidul then and the deterioration of the economic infrastructure. See too R.A.F. Paul Webb, "The sickle and the cross: Christians and Communists in Bali, Flores, Sumba and Timor, 1965–67", in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 17, no. 1, March 1986: 4–112. The Christian organisations acknowledged their part in the tragedy of 1965–1966 much more readily. The first mea culpa was issued as early as 1967 and Christian associations came to the assistance of families of the victims. With the Muslims, this acknowledgement only came at the start of the 1990s for some organisations such as NU, with declarations by A. Wahid, and remains a delicate subject within modernist Islam (Muhammadiyah).

was no longer one of the recognised religions and religious education was made obligatory at school.⁵⁰ Atheism was banned along with communism while animism, as well as any local creeds, was progressively made illegitimate. The Javanese *abangan* population then took two diverging paths: a minority converted to Christianity while a large majority ‘converted’ to the practice of the five pillars of Islam, and the so-called nominal Muslims became increasingly orthodox and religious.

From 1970 to 1980, figures showed a marked phenomenon of conversion to Christianity, seemingly of some hundreds of thousands of Indonesians, mostly Javanese. Thus, in the 1980s, in the two regions of Central Java and East Java, the Protestants won over many converts, their numbers multiplying by 2.5 and 2.3 respectively in just seven years.⁵¹ In some towns in East Java, the percentage of Christians in the population increased from 1 or 2 per cent in the 1950s to more than 10 per cent in the 1970s. These converts came mostly from the former bastions of communism, from populations traumatised by the massacres of 1966 and the involvement of some Muslim organisations in these.⁵²

The Javanese *abangan*, who had close links to mysticism, really seemed to have looked to Christianity for protection against anti-communist violence, the new Islamic orthodoxy and the rejection of animism, local mysticism and atheism at the end of the 1960s.⁵³ The intensification of religious practice by the other nominal Javanese Muslims, who became in a way the “neo-*santri*”, was, of course, not reflected in the statistics, which were silent on the details of religious practices; but in all evidence, these developments led to the formation of two distinct religious communities

⁵⁰ Pressured by political Islam, Soekarno issued this decree no. 1 in January 1965 which enabled the ulama to better control the numerous heterodox groups in the archipelago.

⁵¹ “Data Umat Kristen Protestan Menurut Propinsi dari Tahun 1980 sd 1984”, in *Data Keagamaan Kristen Protestan Tahun 1987*, Direktorat Jenderal Bimbingan Masyarakat (Kristen) Protestan Departemen Agama, Jakarta, 1987, p. 16. In Central Java, the number of Protestants grew from 388,501 to 997,007; in Jember (East Java), from 422,866 to 986,691.

⁵² Robert Hefner, “Print Islam: Mass Media and Ideological Rivalries among Indonesian Muslims”, in *Indonesia*, no. 64, October 1997: 84.

⁵³ “Numerous ex-communists and some Chinese sought refuge in Christianity at a time when the army and the Nahdlatul Ulama reacted excessively against the communists”. Interview with Kiai Muchith Muzadi, a senior ulama of Nahdlatul Ulama, in Jember (East Java), 6 March 1999, from various interviews within the Christian and Muslim circles in Yogyakarta.

with the passing years (some *abangan* becoming more orthodox Muslims, other *abangan* becoming Christians), whereas during the nineteenth century, the widespread *abangan* spirituality had united many Javanese. This totally new situation provided fodder for Islamist propaganda denouncing the illegitimate encroachment of Christianity into Muslim circles.⁵⁴ Thus, this obsessive fear of the “Christianisation” of the Archipelago was as much an expression of a malaise in the face of the conversion of Javanese deemed to be ‘belonging’ to the Muslim majority, as yet another expression of the defiance of some Muslim groups against the Chinese-Indonesian minority, which was in fact also increasingly turning to Christianity.⁵⁵ The administration attempted to contain the most visible aspects of this phenomenon by increasingly restricting the construction of new churches, whose numbers were boosted by the flowering of new Protestant denominations, especially after the 1980s. This policy led the Christian communities to transform residences into places of worship, in violation of Indonesian law, which radical Islamists could claim to be enforcing when they destroyed these buildings a few years later in the 1990s.⁵⁶

These ethnic-religious tensions were not limited to Java. Elsewhere, the results of transmigration also kindled tensions between communities.

Transmigration Tensions

The Dutch administration started a transmigration policy under the name of *koloniasi* from 1905. Lasting throughout the century, it was aimed at relieving the high demographic and tax pressure on Java, Madura and Bali by offering the inhabitants of these overpopulated territories the possibility of settling in other regions of the Archipelago. Intensified in the early 1970s, this policy allowed more than 5.5 million persons to migrate

⁵⁴ See Chapter Four.

⁵⁵ See the justifications in this sense of Adian Husaini, *Gereja-Gereja Dibakar. Membedah Akar Konflik SARA di Indonesia* (Torched churches, an analysis of the roots of inter-religious and inter-ethnic conflicts in Indonesia), DEA Press, Jakarta, 2000, p. 141.

⁵⁶ This fear probably prompted the prohibition of marriage between a Muslim man and a Christian woman without her conversion, as formulated in the family code of 1991 (*Kompilasi*), such marriages being suspected of being Christianisation tactics. Yet the Qu’ran actually allows such marriages, as some ulama have noted (Euis Nurlaelawati, *Modernization, Tradition and Identity, The Kompilasi Hukum Islam and Legal Practice in the Indonesian Religious Courts*, ICAS publication series, Amsterdam University Press, 2010, pp. 109–110).

in 25 years, mainly to Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes (Sulawesi), the Moluccas and Irian.⁵⁷ These government-organised displacements were soon accompanied by spontaneous migrations, which amplified the phenomenon and aggravated the ensuing problems. Very often, in modifying the fragile ethnic, religious, economic or social balance, these population displacements caused tensions in the 'outlying' islands, particularly in regions where the majority suddenly found themselves in the position of the minority. As soon as the economic and political interests of the previously dominant community were threatened, the potential for conflict became very real. This was the case of the southern Moluccas, where the arrival of Buton, Bugis and Makassar migrants altered the religious map of this bastion of Christianity. According to statistics, the Muslims, who were a minority in the Moluccas in 1971 (49.9 per cent), became the majority (55 per cent) in 1980.⁵⁸

The electoral and political impact of these demographic changes partly explains the emergence of conflicts. In Ambon, for example, the rule was that administrative posts would be shared equally between Christians and Muslims. The posts of governor and head of local government would traditionally be occupied by a Christian and a Muslim respectively. However, after 1990, the customary attribution of posts was upset by ICM's policy of affirmative action in favour of Muslims.⁵⁹ Thus the Pattimura University of Ambon was accused of employing more Christian teachers than Muslim ones and of giving more scholarships to Christians than to

⁵⁷ Muriel Charras, *De la forêt maléfique à l'herbe divine*, Editions MSH-Cahiers d'Archipel, no. 5, Paris, 1982, p. 341; Marc Pain, "Politique de peuplement en Indonésie, transmigration et migrations spontanées au centre des débats", in *Hérodote*, no. 88, 1998: 26–61; Muriel Charras and Marc Pain (eds), *Spontaneous settlements in Indonesia: Agricultural pioneers in Southern Sumatra*, ORSTOM, Paris, 1993, 430 pp.; K.J. Pelzer, *Pioneer Settlement in the Asiatic Tropics*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1945, XVIII–290 pp.; J. Harjono, *Transmigration in Indonesia*, Oxford University Press, 1977, XV–116 pp.; J. Harjono, "The Indonesian Transmigration Program in Historical Perspective", *International Migration* 26 (4), 1988: 427–439.

⁵⁸ International Crisis Group, "Indonesia: The Search for Peace in Maluku", Brussels, no. 31, 8 February 2002; Tri Ratnawati, "In Search of Harmony in Moluccas: A Political History Approach", in Chaider S. Bamualim *et al*, *Communal Conflicts in Contemporary Indonesia*, Pusat Bahasa dan Budaya IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah, The Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Jakarta 2002, 272 pp.

⁵⁹ Tamrin Amal Tomagola, "The Bleeding Halmahera of North Moluccas", conference papers, Oslo University, 5–7 June 2000, 11 pp.

Muslims, reproaches that were translated to action when unrest broke out: in 2000, the university was torched by rioters.⁶⁰

Accused by some of secessionism, the Christian Moluccans were little by little excluded by their adversaries from the collective memory of the Indonesian nation. That the famous Moluccan anti-colonial hero Pattimura had his Christian identity called into question and became rebranded as a Muslim is evidence.⁶¹ The interests of the Islamists and a section of the army found common ground in this ultra-nationalism that opposed Christian 'secessionism'.

All the tensions described above were aggravated by the spread of radical Muslim propaganda and by the agitation of provocateurs who encouraged the masses to take action. Certainly the discontent and frustrations that gave rise to these conflicts had already existed for several years. Here and there, confrontations had already broken out during the 1970s and 1980s. Neither radical Islam nor some groups aligned with the Soeharto regime can be singled out as the sole cause of the violence that spread through the Archipelago in the 1990s. Yet, in providing an outlet for the people's rage through their anti-Chinese and anti-Christian rhetoric, and in tolerating, even encouraging, these excesses that would have been severely reprimanded in the past, both contributed indubitably to the deterioration of the situation.⁶² At the end of 1996, two series of riots, one in Situbondo in October, and another in Tasikmalaya in December, bore out the processes at work.

The People's Rage

In October 1996, in Situbondo, East Java, 24 churches and Christian schools were burnt down in a few days. Five family members of a Protestant

⁶⁰ This Moluccan phenomenon is reminiscent of the situation in the south of Philippines where violence broke out in Lanao del Norte and Cotabato in 1970, two provinces where the "transmigration" had produced new Christian majorities (Lela Garner Noble, "The Moro National Liberation Front in the Philippines", in *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 49, no.3, Autumn 1976: 405–424.

⁶¹ Interview with M., 33 years old, member of Laskar Mujahidin, Yogyakarta, 10 October 2000. This re-examination was confirmed (and condemned) by some young traditionalist Muslims of NU in Yogyakarta and in Jakarta.

⁶² John Sidel notes that the multiplication of attacks against Christian places of worship actually increased at the start of the 1990s (between 1992 and 1997, 145 churches were destroyed or forced to close down), but in the middle of the decade, riots took place on another scale. John T. Sidel, 2007, pp. 72 ff.

pastor were killed in these fires. The region where these dramatic events occurred had been afflicted by fierce social tensions for some time now. In September, after a conflict with a neighbouring sugar factory, some farmers had uprooted almost 300 hectares of sugarcane to plant their own corn. In another trying episode, dozens of villagers in another village of the regency had just been expropriated to make way for the installation of a refinery that was a joint venture of Shell and Bimantara, a group controlled by one of President Soeharto's sons. Then in August, some 3,000 inhabitants of Panarukan had demanded compensation from the local government after a scam involving the running of a village cooperative.⁶³ Thus in October, social tension was at its highest, but it should be specified that the conflicts mentioned above concerned neither the Christian nor the Chinese-Indonesian minorities.

On-site accounts relate thus the events starting from 10 October, the day of the riots:⁶⁴ On that day, the public prosecutor handed down a five-year sentence to a certain Saleh for having committed a religious offence. This young man of 26 years of age was an assistant to the mosque administrator (*takmir*) in the neighbourhood. He was accused of having made blasphemous remarks, declaring that the ulama were liars, that the Qu'ran was poetry created by men and not a divine revelation, and that the sharia taught by the Prophet was false and that the five daily prayers were therefore not obligatory. The young man was said to have added that Kiai Asad Syamsul Arifin, one of the most venerated ulama of the region, deceased six years ago, had met a "bad" death (*takacer*), implying thus that he had perhaps not gone to paradise.⁶⁵ Kiai Asad's family, very influential in the area, was deeply offended, and some members of the family demanded that a death sentence be passed on Saleh. When the public prosecutor only meted out five years of imprisonment for Saleh, the students of Kiai Asad began to agitate. The crowd first tried to assault the accused, then when he was taken away by the police, took to torching cars and the courtroom. Rapidly, the riot took a twist: from targeting official

⁶³ Thomas Santoso, *Kekerasan Politik — Agama, Studi Historis-Sosiologis dan Wacana Tafsiriah atas Perusakan Gereja di Situbondo*, Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, 2000, p. 6.

⁶⁴ Interviews in Situbondo, between 13 and 16 November 1996, that is, one month after the incident.

⁶⁵ Thomas Santoso, *Peristiwa Sepuluh-Sepuluh Situbondo*, Lutfansah Mediatama, Surabaya, 2003b, pp. 12–16. Santoso suggests that Saleh could have been incited to sign a document "admitting" to these blasphemous remarks for purely economic (an inheritance tussle?) or political reasons.

buildings, the crowd started to attack churches and Christian schools in the surroundings, then turned on to Chinese businesses. The procession was largely composed of young students in uniform from the high school SMA Ibrahim, Kiai Asad's school, but some of the procession leaders came from outside the town.

The unfolding of the events soon raised many questions throughout the country. Provocateurs seemed to have played an essential role in the transformation of an incident involving at the outset the Muslim community and the judicial authorities, to anti-Christian and anti-Chinese riots. This 're-orientation' did not seem to have been a coincidence: anti-Christian slogans such as "the judge is a Christian", "Saleh was protected by a Christian" and "Saleh took refuge in the church" were heard during the procession.⁶⁶ All the graffiti found the following day were anti-Christian; none made any reference to the Saleh affair⁶⁷ and maps marking out with a red cross all the Christian buildings in the region were discovered at one of the sites.⁶⁸ Moreover, in a troubling coincidence, the mayors of the surrounding areas had been invited by the head of socio-political affairs of the district for a karaoke session on that day and were all holed up in the meeting room of the district.⁶⁹ There appeared to have been three men leading the mob, including Achmad Siddik (24 years old), the young head of the Nahdlatul Ulama martial arts organisation (Pagar Nusa) known for his 'anti-vice' activities in the region, notably against lottery games, and who was arrested. Siddik was apparently present at Saleh's trial, but his responsibility in the ensuing violence was not clear. The logistical preparation for the fires and the lack of protection for the security forces, which only intervened very late, raised many questions.

⁶⁶ Thomas Santoso, 2003b, p. 22.

⁶⁷ From the photos available at Situbondo on 13 November 1996, graffiti on the walls of churches showed: "*Kristen burik* (mangy Christian); *Hei Kristen buas, kau jika bangun gereja lagi kami umat islam akan marah besar* (hey, savage Christian, if you build more churches, we, Muslims, will get very angry); *Yesus TAE* (Jesus shit), *kebuyutan PKI* (descendants of the Communist Party); Islam is our religion. Don't meddle in people's affairs." (Notes taken on site, November 1996, photos taken on site by the inhabitants the day after the events). The mob cried out before burning the churches: "Long live the people! Long live Islam!", "It is permissible (*halal*) to burn churches!", "Better to burn churches than to kill Christians!" (Thomas Santoso, 2000, p. 7.)

⁶⁸ Interviews in Surabaya and Situbondo, November 2000.

⁶⁹ Thomas Santoso, *Mobilisasi Massa, Studi Kasus Kekerasan Politik-agama di Situbondo*, Lutfansah Mediatama, Surabaya, 2003a, p. 6.

Even more questions have emerged. According to witnesses' accounts gathered by a NU investigation and a young Indonesian researcher, Thomas Santoso, the accused were subjected to violent treatment in the hands of some elements of the army in an apparent attempt to exacerbate religious hatred: one of them was supposed to have brandished a crucifix in front of Siddik before beating him up. In addition, priests or pastors were summoned to the detention center before each interrogation, thereby implicitly linking them — in the minds of the accused — to the abuse that was to follow.⁷⁰ In mid-November, Achmad Siddik died from injuries inflicted during his interrogations. However, before dying he made a tape recording accusing a Balinese (thus Hindu) policeman of ill treatment. There were calls for retaliation within circles close to Nahdlatul Ulama but Abdurrahman Wahid, head of the traditionalist organisation, suspected that there was manipulation behind the scenes and ordered his militants to stay calm.

As to who was behind these manoeuvres, suspicions soon narrowed to a few men in power. In a study of these events, Thomas Santoso states that their objective was purely linked to the elections approaching in a few months' time: the discrediting of NU would taint the Muslim PPP, and Golkar might then sweep up the votes of disappointed voters. General Hartono (a 'green' general, favourable towards political Islam, also a Madurese from the region) was then one of the leaders of Golkar. To support this hypothesis, Santoso pointed out that only the churches of the regency of Situbondo were affected and not those of Bondowoso, even though the latter were sometimes nearer to the city where the trial had taken place.⁷¹ But there seemed to be multiple motives at work. It appears that the fires were also started in retaliation for the anti-Indonesian demonstrations that occurred the previous year in East Timor (independent since 1999), where some mosques had been destroyed: indeed, some of the arsonists in Situbondo were supposedly Madurese chased away from Timor and displaced in the neighbouring town of Malang. Moreover, Monsignor Belo, the bishop of Timor, had just won the Nobel Peace Prize for his role in the defence of the Timorese people against repression and tensions were at their peak.

A few months later, in December, the riots in Tasikmalaya (West Java) repeated this strange combination of political and religious provocations.

⁷⁰ Thomas Santoso, 2003b, pp. 42–44; see also the white paper produced by NU: *Nahdlatul Ulama, Buku putih tragedi Situbondo*, Tim Pencari Fakta, GP Ansor, 1997.

⁷¹ Thomas Santoso, 2003b, p. 52.

In this case, the trigger was a confrontation between a Muslim teacher and two of his students, and the local police. The teacher and students were blamed for punishing the son of one of the police officers for petty theft in his Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*). They were summoned to the police station and severely punished. The students of several *pesantren*, numerous indeed in the region, organised a demonstration to protest against this treatment on 26 December, and this quickly degenerated into a riot. Joined by thousands of inhabitants, the students of the *pesantren* attacked police stations but especially businesses run by Chinese Indonesians, factories, banks, churches and Christian schools. Just as in Situbondo, the drama took place in a tense context. The anti-Chinese sentiments of the local population had been stirred up a few months earlier by a sordid housing affair that saw the closing down of almost 3,000 small shops to make way for a supermarket owned by a Chinese Indonesian.⁷²

Yet, in this case as well, rancour does not suffice to explain the systematic character of the exactions against the Christians and Chinese, especially since the mass violence was initially directed against the authorities. Insistent rumours of the presence of provocateurs and the strangeness of the investigation orientated towards the youth of NU (who were accused of belonging to a banned pro-democracy organisation), suggest once again other factors at work.

It remains difficult to determine the part played by different parties in the generation of these mass emotions. That these emotions rocked Indonesia in a period of economic prosperity (it was only in September 1997 that the Archipelago was hit by the crisis) most certainly demonstrates the failure of a regime that was henceforth incapable of controlling outbursts of public discontent. Tasikmalaya and Situbondo thus inaugurated a cycle of incidents that was soon aggravated by the economic crisis and the weakening of the regime. The Pandora's box of festering discontent was now open and this phenomenon would continue in the post-Soeharto period.

III. The Crisis and the Fall (1997–1998)

The brutal monetary crisis that hit Indonesia in August 1997 revealed the fragility of the rapid economic development that the country had experienced under the New Order. Transformed into a social crisis then a

⁷² François Raillon, "Indonésie 1996, les craquements de l'empire", in *Archipel*, no. 53, 1997: 207–222.

political one, it demonstrated the extent of the malaise evoked above and the incapacity of the regime, which was now determined to hold on to power at all costs.

An Ideological Management of the Economic Crisis

In May 1997, the legislative elections that imparted an air of democratic legitimacy to the regime every five years were particularly satisfying from its point of view. Golkar obtained a record 74.5 per cent of votes, PPP won 22.4 per cent and the new PDI, discredited by last year's manoeuvres and deprived of Megawati's presence, only garnered 3 per cent of the votes.

Thus the regime's future seemed secured for the next five years and the president able to look forward to a seventh mandate the following year. However, in July 1997, Thailand, followed by the whole of Southeast Asia was hit by a grave monetary crisis. After much evasiveness, Indonesia finally had to resign itself to asking for aid from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) at the end of October. But the institution's intervention was accompanied by requirements for reform, including the closing of 16 insolvent banks. This last measure — which the IMF admitted later was hasty and badly coordinated — provoked much panic and accelerated the flight of capital as well as a depreciation of the rupiah.

Nonetheless, it quickly became apparent that the main obstacles to the recovery of the Indonesian economy, as envisaged by the IMF, were political in nature. The international financial institution wished to revamp this system beset with corruption and nepotism, at the heart of which was the presidential family. Riding on the confrontation that erupted, Soeharto and his allies slyly glided from defending the regime to defending a clan: the old general's children became even more visible on the political scene.

In a gesture of defiance of the international community, Bambang Trihatmodjo, one of the president's sons, decided to reopen his bank a few days after its forced closure (it was on the list of 16 banks). He accused the IMF of trying to sully the reputation of his family so as to prevent his father from being re-elected. A few months later, the latter also showed just how little he took the recommendations of the IMF into consideration: in January 1998, Soeharto had Parliament vote in a totally unrealistic budget that pandered to the voters, leading one of the most respected Indonesian economists, Professor Mohammad Sadli, to declare that Soeharto had become a handicap to the resolution of the crisis. The rupiah fell by half of its value in a matter of a few days. The IMF proposed a 43-billion dollars aid programme that came with a list of conditions: the withdrawal

of subsidies for staple products, the abolition of cartels and monopolies such as IPTN, the aeronautic company that had been straining the national budget for many years. The public was glad to see that the presidential family had to cede to these austerity measures, but the abolition of subsidies for staples raised an outcry, especially since the falling rupiah had already caused prices to shoot up by 50 to 150 per cent.

Arguing that he would have “a revolution on his hands”⁷³ as a result of the withdrawal of subsidies, Soeharto resisted with even more audacity the IMF, which attacked in particular the system of economic protection reserved for the presidential family and its allies. He submitted only very partially to the clauses of the IMF memorandum, maintaining preferential treatment for the national car project (called Timor) of his son Tommy and maintaining the cartels in the plywood industries and the clove trade, then in the hands of his associates. He further defied the IMF by nominating B.J. Habibie, his Minister of Research and Technology, as vice-president. Habibie was responsible for the creation of the grandiose aeronautic projects, generally deemed unrealistic. This announcement caused another crash in the rupiah: from 2,400 rupiah against one dollar, it fell to 17,000. The president announced the creation of a Currency Board System, which would peg the rupiah against the American dollar (at 5,000 against one dollar) and considerably diminish the control of the Central Bank. This attempt to save the currency, based on the advice of an American economist, Steve Hanke, was just as unrealistic as the previous budget. Unlike Malaysia, Indonesia lacked both the economic credibility and the currency reserves to embark on such a policy.

Faced with the IMF's demands, Soeharto sought refuge in a new ideological stance that harked back expediently to the 1945 Constitution, which was collectivist and economically illiberal. As for the president's son, Bambang, he took on a Soekarnist tone and told the international institution “to go to hell” with their aid.⁷⁴ The presidential clan then started to play up the hypothesis of an international conspiracy aimed at destroying the Indonesian economy. This theme of Western neo-imperialism, which had disappeared from Indonesian political currency for more than 30 years, constituted an indisputable point of convergence between the regime and the radical Islamist groups.

⁷³ David Bourchier, “Face-off in Jakarta: Suharto vs the IMF”, *Asiaview*, April 1998.

⁷⁴ In reference to Soekarno's famous phrase telling the United States to “*mengotobellkan*”.

An Islamist Reinterpretation to Defend the Regime

The mass sentiments mentioned above had already been used by some radical Islamists in reports to support their theories. The events in Situbondo and Tasikmalaya had already been presented as manipulations aimed at “discrediting Islam”, at “bringing down the Soeharto government” and at winning the sympathies of the “Christian Westerners”.⁷⁵ The factors cited for the outbreak of violence included the socio-economic gap, the rampant Christianisation (it was claimed that out of 30 churches destroyed, only 4 had a real construction permit), the arrogance of a bureaucracy accused of “favouritism towards the Chinese” and political manipulations.

In this context of a showdown between the regime and the IMF, theories of an international conspiracy re-flourished. Intended to divert the accusations of the people towards foreign powers (the United States, the West, but also the Jews, Chinese and Christians) or towards their agents planted in the system, the most absurd rumours were propagated. General Prabowo seemed to have played an undeniable role in spreading these rumours. With the contacts he had established, in particular within the Indonesian Committee for Solidarity with the Muslim World (KISDI) and some of the most important martial arts associations in Indonesia, notably in Banten in West Java, he stepped forward to take charge of the regime’s defence. As of 1997, he spoke openly in circles close to DDII of the urgent need to rid Indonesia of the “tyranny of a minority”.⁷⁶ When the crisis broke out in Indonesia, he no longer hid his alliance with KISDI: on the evening of 23 January 1998, during the month of Ramadan, he invited some 7,000 members of the radical Islamist organisation to the general quarters of Kopassus to break fast together. That evening, Prabowo spoke vehemently of the necessity to act against the Chinese Indonesians and “other enemies of Islam”.⁷⁷ The chairman of KISDI, Sumargono, later congratulated himself that he had heard Prabowo cry out several times “*Allah u-akbar!*”, which he interpreted as the “symbol of his support” for Sumargono’s action in the fight to realise the “aspirations of Islam”.⁷⁸ After the public ceremony with the KISDI militants, Prabowo met a

⁷⁵ For an example of how these were used, see Adian Husaini, 2000, p. 200.

⁷⁶ Robert Hefner, 2000, p. 202.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 2000, p. 202; see too the report of this meeting in *Media Dakwah*, February 1998, pp. 41–45.

⁷⁸ *Tempo*, 23 November 1998, cited in Firdaus Syam and Ahmad Suhelmi, 2004, p. 217.

smaller circle of Islamist leaders and distributed amongst them a booklet of some 50 pages explaining the logic behind the economic crisis and the ongoing negotiations with the IMF.⁷⁹ Entitled “The Conspiracy to Overthrow Soeharto” (*Konspirasi Mengguling Soeharto*), the booklet asserted that the IMF, the United States, Israel, the Chinese Indonesians and the democratic movement had combined their efforts to topple Soeharto. In their eyes, the Indonesian president had two fundamental “flaws” that made him the choice target for his enemies: he was Muslim and “he had become too powerful for the cabal of Jews, Jesuits, Chinese and agents of MOSSAD-CIA, who controlled international capitalism”.⁸⁰ The author of the pamphlet was not announced, but some in the moderate Muslim quarters attributed it to the men affiliated to the former CPDS and now active in its successor, the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) and linked to some ‘green’ generals.⁸¹ Amongst other preposterous evidence presented as proof of this expansive conspiracy was the supposed assassination of Soeharto’s recently deceased wife, Tien Soeharto, by her doctor of Chinese descent, who had examined her on the eve of her death and had found nothing abnormal. The nationalist secularists in government were said to be behind this covered-up murder. These secularists, led by the minister of the State Secretariat Moerdiono (a sort of assistant to the president), and acting under the orders of the “clique of extremist Jesuit Catholics” of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), the hotbed of secularism at the beginnings of the New Order, were supposed to have given free rein to their hatred of Islam. They alleged that the conspiracy would be followed up by the assassination of President Soeharto, as always with the support “of the CIA, MOSSAD, the Vatican and overseas Chinese”.⁸² The entire history of the New Order was rewritten in light of this huge conspiracy targeting Indonesia, and the diatribe ended with these words: “The Muslim community also has to become aware, aware that power in this country cannot fall into the hands of Zionist agents or groups with a phobia toward Islam”.⁸³

⁷⁹ Robert Hefner, 2000, p. 202; Marcus Mietzner, “From Suharto to Habibie: the Indonesian Armed Forces and Political Islam during the Transition”, in Geoff Forestier (ed.), 1999b, p. 72.

⁸⁰ Marcus Mietzner, 1999b, p. 72.

⁸¹ See Hefner, 2000, p. 202 and Noorhaidi, *Laskar Jihad, Islam, Militancy and the Quest for Identity in Post New-Order Indonesia*, Cornell Southeast Asia Program, Ithaca New York, 2006, p. 98.

⁸² Robert Hefner, 2000, p. 203.

⁸³ Ibid.

The mobilisation organised by Prabowo ended up discrediting the ruling power in the eyes of uncountable moderate Muslims. If up to this point they had been seduced by the opening of the regime to Islam, many now understood that Soeharto and his entourage, determined to use violence and institutionalised sectarianism to maintain their position at the summit of the state, were playing with fire.

The Anti-Chinese Offensive

In the same month of January 1998 begun a cleverly orchestrated anti-Chinese campaign to which the army was more or less receptive. The head of the armies, General Feisal Tanjung, had contacted a dozen Chinese businessmen to ask for donations in order to implement Soeharto's monetary reform. One of the personalities contacted, Sofyan Wanandi, brother of one of the founders of CSIS, refused. He declared that he did not want to interfere with the reform launched by the Ministry of the Economy, and others soon followed suit. In retaliation, Sofyan Wanandi was then called up by Major General Syafrie Syamsuoddin, military commander of Jakarta and a pal of Prabowo. He was informed that he was suspected of supporting a bomb attempt on 18 January in Jakarta that was linked to the small leftist party, the Democratic People's Party (Parti Rakyat Demokratik, PRD). So improbable was any link between this rich businessman and the most left-leaning party in Indonesia that no one was taken in by these accusations.⁸⁴

The anti-Chinese campaign firmed up the following month. On 3 February Lieutenant General Syarwan Hamid took the floor at the large mosque of Sunda Kelapa in Jakarta. He was accompanied by B.J. Habibie's right-hand man, Adi Sasono, and by Husein Umar, secretary-general of DDII and member of KISDI. Without explicitly naming them, he targeted Chinese Indonesians: "these rats who take away the fruits of our national development and work for their own self-interest. Don't think the people don't know who these rats are. It's time to eradicate these rats".⁸⁵ The accusation was repeated by a hitherto unknown Foundation for Islam in the Twenty-First Century, which asserted in a statement that Sofyan Wanandi, ex-chairman of the Association of Catholic Students (Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Katolik Republik Indonesia, PMKRI), as well

⁸⁴ On this episode and the motivations behind it, see too Marcus Mietzner, 2009, pp. 114–115.

⁸⁵ Robert Hefner, 2000, p. 205.

as other Chinese businessmen, were at the root of the economic crisis that resulted from their conspiracy. On the same day, another KISDI leader, longtime Muhammadiyah activist and convert to the cause of the New Order at the end of the 1980s, Lukman Harun, echoed this theory and launched an appeal for a campaign against the ‘rats’ and ‘traitors’. On 8 February, KISDI’s website announced that Indonesia was ready to “expel these odious persons out of our beloved Indonesia”.⁸⁶ Yet this hateful campaign did not convince the pillars of the regime in its entirety. A section of the army rejected this conspiracy scenario even though it seemed to have been backed by Soeharto: the Chief of State of the Armies Wiranto thus offered his support to CSIS, which had become the target of demonstrations by students close to Prabowo.⁸⁷ This opposition at the head of the military hierarchy was apparently the outcome of a very prudent policy undertaken by the president: he had tried to handle with care the two main factions of the army during the last promotions. The elite units thus came under the control of supporters of regimist Islam: Prabowo had been nominated to the top of Kostrad while his ally, Major General Muchdi Purwopranjono headed Kopassus. However, at the same time, with the nomination of General Wiranto to Chief of State of the Armies, the opposing faction was able to regain control of the army.⁸⁸

A New Opposition

The numerous anti-Chinese riots and violence that broke out from the first week of February 1998 momentarily paralysed the opposition, but it soon regained its spirit. Amien Rais was the first leader on a national scale to call for the departure of Soeharto and became, for his admirers, the “father of Indonesian reform” (*Bapak Reformasi Indonesia*).⁸⁹ Flanked by

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Marcus Mietzner, 1999b, p. 73.

⁸⁸ According to Marcus Mietzner, Soeharto wanted to control the situation to his advantage by placing the two rivals in strategic positions, but he played his cards wrongly. It is arguable whether he really made a mistake as General Wiranto nonetheless ensured that Soeharto had a honourable enough exit — by ushering in Soeharto’s vice-president and friend B.J. Habibie, and by curtailing a too radical Reformasi that would have been to his disadvantage.

⁸⁹ Also Haedar Nashir, *Dinamika Politik Muhammadiyah*, Bigraf, Yogyakarta, 2000, p. 45.

authentic democrats, he tried to rid himself of his sectarian image.⁹⁰ Symbolising the departure of a section of the modernist intelligentsia from siege-mentality communitarianism, his conversion to pluralism (initiated after the Situbondo riots) left many in the Indonesian political scene sceptical, chief of whom was Abdurrahman Wahid, his adversary from the ‘santri’ camp.⁹¹ But Wahid was hospitalised in January 1998 after a stroke, giving his rival a free hand.

Opposition to the regime soon grew largely beyond the Jakarta establishment. In February 1998, student demonstrations calling for the overthrow of Soeharto multiplied in the big cities of the Archipelago. Upon the re-election of Soeharto by the People’s Consultative Assembly (with Habibie as vice-president), these demonstrations were revived. The president then fell back on his own clan. In March 1998, he formed a new government made up essentially of his own people: his eldest daughter Tutut (49 years old) became the Minister of Social Prosperity; his old associate, Bob Hassan (67 years old), a businessman of Chinese descent converted to Islam and manager of a plywood cartel condemned by the IMF, was given the trade portfolio; the post of Minister of Finance was accorded to Fuad Bawazier, another close friend of the presidential family (as the former General Director of Taxes, he had granted significant tax breaks to the youngest son of Soeharto, Tommy, for his national car project).⁹²

There was great disappointment within ICMI. Those who had hoped to see in the new cabinet the consecration of their support for the regime discovered that they had received nothing in return. Revenge was swift.

⁹⁰ His frequent caustic remarks on Chinese Indonesians, his participation in a few major KISDI events and his silence during Soeharto’s bloody takeover of the PDI headquarters in 1996 had rattled the democrats for a long time. As late as September 1997, he was present at a KISDI meeting that led a virulent campaign against the daily *Kompas* (of Catholic secular origins but whose editorial staff were more likely to be secular Muslims), after it had published an editorial criticising the Islamic Front of Salvation in Algeria (Robert Hefner, 2000, p. 267).

⁹¹ Subsequently Amien Rais held somewhat contradictory positions, demonstrating the complexity of his engagements, to which we shall return.

⁹² The rest of the cabinet was in keeping: The Minister of Food, Horticulture and Medicine, Haryanto Dhanutirto, for example, was a crony of B.J. Habibie, known for having dismissed the director of the company Merpati because he had refused to rent airplanes made by the national aeronautic construction company promoted by B.J. Habibie (David Jenkins, “Suharto Digs in with His All-Crony Cabinet”, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 March 1998).

This time the split between reformist Islam and the regime was definitive. Amien Rais threw his whole weight behind the anti-Soeharto campaigns that were going on in campuses. Even Adi Sasono, for a long time one of the Muslim personalities most engaged with the Islamic policy of the New Order, delivered fierce diatribes against the ministers of ICMI, whom he accused of being corrupted.

Neither could the president hope for any support whatsoever from the important moderate Muslim organisations: neither Nahdlatul Ulama nor Muhammadiyah intended to counterbalance the weight of a disappointed and offended ICMI. Only a section of the intransigent Islamic groups were swayed by Prabowo's promises of a thriving Muslim society under his leadership.⁹³ Even then, support for the old president was not unanimous within this group. At DDII, it was Anwar Haryono who had the last say in favour of Soeharto.⁹⁴

The Last Days of Soeharto

After having resisted the demands of the IMF for so long, the president ceded suddenly to its requirements. He had hoped that the rigour of the measures announced would generate a nationalist reflex that would turn to his advantage but in fact, he only hastened his own fall. The scrapping of petrol subsidies at the start of May 1998 plunged the country into chaos.⁹⁵ Riots broke out in Medan and Chinese shops were looted. Demonstrations then spread throughout the country.

But it was the close allies of Soeharto who delivered the coup de grâce and orchestrated his fall, particularly the chairman of Parliament, Harmoko, an official from Golkar known for his sectarianism, and General Syarwan Hamid, one of the most active 'green' generals in the regime and also vice-president of Parliament.⁹⁶ ICMI overrode Habibie's opposition and called for an extraordinary session of the MPR. Putting on a

⁹³ On these ambitions, see the various interviews in *Asiaweek*, 1997 and 1998; Marcus Mietzner, 1999b, p. 76.

⁹⁴ On 21 May 1998, the chairman of DDII seemed to have had another discussion with Amien Rais about his support for the "Komite Reformasi" project proposed by the president. The two men supposedly decided to "take different routes" (*berpisah jalan*) (Ahmad Sumargono, 1999, p. 144).

⁹⁵ In Indonesia, the price of petrol determines the prices of all the staple products.

⁹⁶ David Jenkins, "How Suharto Fell on his Sword", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 May 1998.

calm front, President Soeharto left Indonesia on 9 May to visit Egypt. He cut short his visit to return on 15 May to a regime on its last legs.

Three days earlier, on 12 May, four students who had occupied the Catholic University of Trisakti in Jakarta had been killed by elite snipers. The origins of the shots were unknown. The police came under suspicion but maintained that the uniforms corresponded to some stock stolen a while back and the spotlight turned to Kopassus, the army special forces command, already suspected of kidnapping a dozen young activists in January (this was subsequently confirmed). The funerals for the four Trisakti students inaugurated three days of extremely violent riots in the capital, evidently encouraged by provocateurs. On 13 and 14 May, Jakarta was besieged by pillaging mobs; the Chinese districts were especially rampaged. Several shopping malls were burnt (sometimes trapping the looters) and about 100 Chinese Indonesian women were abused or raped.⁹⁷ The attitude of a section of the security forces raised an outcry even within the army: the majority of the troops that could have intervened — under the command of Prabowo's allies — were apparently removed from the areas where riots were rife.⁹⁸ These events constituted a lasting traumatism for the Chinese Indonesian community: the number of victims was never established but as Sofyan Wanandi wrote later: "The Chinese Indonesians never felt so fragile and vulnerable. The sentiment that the government had permitted the violence and that certain sections of the government were even behind these campaigns against the Chinese Indonesians became widespread."⁹⁹

The outbursts of these two days obliged a section of the army to shed its neutrality: the Chief of State contacted Nurcholish Madjid to propose a peacemaking mission. The Muslim intellectual submitted a plan for

⁹⁷ The ad hoc committee formed by Habibie's government to investigate these events counted 66 such incidents (*Jakarta Post*, 8 November 1998). However, the estimates of NGOs have been much higher.

⁹⁸ Wiranto apparently ordered Syafrie Syamsuddin, who was close to Prabowo and commander of the military garrison of Jakarta, to deploy his troops on 13 May but Syafrie refused, deploying his troops instead to areas where there were no riots. Adam Schwarz, 1999, pp. 356–357. Other versions of the events that are kinder to Prabowo have surfaced: a White Paper (*Buku putih*) and more recently the work of Fadli Zon, *Politik Huru-hara Mei 1998*, Institute for Policy Studies, Jakarta, 2004, 168 pp. Marcus Mietzner, 1999b, p. 78 underlines, on the contrary, the responsibility of Soeharto's son-in-law in this unrest.

⁹⁹ Sofyan Wanandi, 1999, p. 133.

political reform to Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (chief of staff for social-political affairs in charge of socio-political affairs in the army), which called for elections in 2000 and required that Soeharto seek pardon for his errors and return to the state his illegally amassed fortune.¹⁰⁰ A Mandatory People Council (Majelis Amanat Rakyat) was then set up, comprising notably Amien Rais and the father of Prabowo, the reputed economist Sumitro Djojohadikusumo.

In spite of the efforts expended by General Prabowo, almost all the Islamic organisations henceforth refused to lend their support to Soeharto. The Indonesian Muslim Student Action Union (Komite Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia, KAMMI) declared its preference for a presidency under Amien Rais. Actually, the founders of this powerful organisation created in March 1998 had nursed hopes that the president would amend his ways and embark the country on real reforms.¹⁰¹ On Monday, 18 May, ICMI asked Soeharto to step down. Nine personalities of very diverse backgrounds who had been invited to meet the president refused to stay during the announcement of his plan for reform. In the face of threats by Prabowo, Amien Rais, who had emerged more than ever as leader of the opposition, cancelled a large-scale demonstration that was planned for 20 May at the Merdeka Square. Nonetheless, the pressure on Soeharto was mounting: on 19 May, the chairman of Parliament, Harmoko declared that it was in Soeharto's interests to cede his position; shortly after, 14 ministers announced their resignation since none wished to be part of this 'Committee for Reform' that the president had promised in a final, desperate attempt to survive the crisis. In the evening of 20 May, Soeharto announced that he was relinquishing the presidency. On the morning of 21 May, Vice-President B.J. Habibie was sworn in as president.

IV. The Habibie Moment: An Aborted Islamist Transition?

In the eyes of Indonesian Islamist groups, the accession of B.J. Habibie to the presidency seemed for a while like a 'divine surprise'. The former chairman of ICMI, who incarnated the Muslim revival of the New Order, was a legitimate bearer of the hopes of those who had worked for years

¹⁰⁰ Marcus Mietzner, 1999b, p. 80. Prabowo was said to have called this proposition "crazy".

¹⁰¹ Richard G. Kraince, "The Role of Islamic Students Groups in the Reformasi Struggle: KAMMI (Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia)", in *Studia Islamika*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2000: 1–50.

to see Islam recognised at the highest level of the state. However, the Habibie presidency turned out to be largely disappointing for them. Caught between the contradictions of his loyalty towards the New Order and the clamorous demands of the militant democrats, the former engineer was, in some ways, Molière's 'bourgeois gentleman' of the Reformasi. During his mandate, he undertook some of the most decisive reforms of the period — the organisation of free elections, self-determination of East Timor, restoration of the freedom of the press — while giving the impression of being subjected to these changes instead of initiating them. He also revealed, underneath his progressive talk, connections with a corrupted and outdated system, condemned by an overwhelming majority of his compatriots.

For radical Islam, this period was the age of possibilities. After decades of clandestine battles, underhand repressions and political/insider intrigue, they were now free to speak and act. This moment of truth forced the elements of militant Islamism to reveal themselves in all their diversity. They had hitherto appeared unified — or at least were not easily differentiated — in their rhetoric, and were as confused as they were radical. Henceforth they had to make choices in taking action, revealing, if not their true nature, then at least a clear hierarchy of their objectives.

The Mutations of Regimist Islam

The grace period for Habibie only lasted for as long as his acceptance speech. In the first hours of his mandate, the new president already had to deal with a show of might by General Prabowo. A few hours after the swearing-in ceremony, Habibie received the former president's son-in-law at his residence. In compensation for his supporters' backing, Prabowo submitted a list of specific requests to Habibie: his promotion as Head of the Army and that of his ally, General Subagyo, as Armed Forces (ABRI) Chief of Staff.¹⁰² The new president was then brought to the palace under tight surveillance and spent his night there. The following day, Friday 22 May, Habibie and General Wiranto decided to dismiss Prabowo as Kostrad commander. The latter was furious but was unable to see the president at the palace. A few hours later, he was stripped of his command of the Army Strategic Reserve Command (Kostrad) and demoted to director of a military school. A few weeks later, Lieutenant General

¹⁰² Adam Schwarz, 1999, p. 368.

Prabowo was brought to trial. A 'Military Honour Council' delivered a finding of culpability in the abduction, torture and disappearance of activists in 1997 and early 1998 for Prabowo, Kopassus's head Major General Muchdi Purwopranjono, and Kopassus Group IV head Colonel Chairawan. The council recommended that Prabowo be court-martialled, although he was merely honourably dismissed from the army. Muchdi and the colonel were dismissed, and ordered never again to serve in active command.¹⁰³ In the meantime, most of his allies within ABRI (Generals Muchdi Purwopranjono, Syafrie Syamsuoddin and Kivlan Zen) were removed from their positions.¹⁰⁴

The fall of the Prabowo faction did not, however, signify the end of the instrumentalisation of radical Islamist groups by the ruling power. Whether out of legalism, loyalty to Soeharto or out of pure opportunism (he did not hold the vice-president in high regard and felt he could manipulate him), General Wiranto had facilitated the rise to power of B.J. Habibie. Although his rival had been sidelined, he did not clearly side with the nationalist faction of the army but left the field open to radical Muslims who now made Habibie their champion.

As of 22 May, the students who were still occupying Parliament to protest against the nomination of Habibie were assaulted by a large Islamist demonstration. The crowd arrived after the Friday prayers brandishing banners in support of Habibie in the name of "constitutional reform", their new motto. There were also placards asserting a link between opposition to Habibie and opposition to Islam.¹⁰⁵ The majority of Islamist activists close to the Soeharto regime were present: Ahmad Sumargono of KISDI; Fadli Zon, a young intellectual close to Prabowo; Toto Tasmara, a businessman close to Tommy Soeharto; and Eggy Sujana of CIDES. It seems that DDII and KISDI played a key role in this demonstration.¹⁰⁶ Fadli Zon later explained that no fewer than 43 Islamic groups gathered at KISDI's quarters in the centre of Jakarta before converging on Parliament. At the site, clashes broke out and the reformist students were separated from the pro-Habibie demonstrators by troops from the Marines and the army and were later chased away from the MPR.¹⁰⁷ The previous

¹⁰³ Damien Kingsbury, 2003, p. 165; Marcus Mietzner, 1999b, p. 90.

¹⁰⁴ Adam Schwarz, 1999, p. 371–372.

¹⁰⁵ Richard G. Kraince, 2000, p. 30.

¹⁰⁶ Loren Rytter, "The Morning After ...: Notes from the Fields", in *Inside Indonesia*, 56, October–December 1998b: 94–98.

¹⁰⁷ Adam Schwarz, 1999, p. 368–369.

day, the students of KAMMI, having accepted Habibie's nomination as president, had left Parliament and gathered at the Al Azhar mosque in the south of Jakarta.

In the following months, the collusion between the new strong men of the country and some radical groups was confirmed on several occasions. Amongst the numerous militias created, some received backing from both the Islamists and the inner circle of power. This was particularly true for the Islamic Defenders Front (Front Pembela Islam, FPI), an organisation we will touch on later.¹⁰⁸ Created in August 1998, its main founders were religious figures of Arab descent called 'Habib' who wished to attack the 'places of perdition' that they viewed as an insult to Islamic morale. This militia benefited, if nothing else, from a certain indulgence on the part of the authorities. According to the website <http://www.Laksamana.net>, reputed then for its reliability, FPI was backed by three high-ranking officers: General Djaja Suparman, military commander of Jakarta, Police General Nugroho Jayusman, head of the Jakarta police and finally General Wiranto himself.¹⁰⁹ Funds were supposedly supplied by Habibie's brother-in-law, Mochsin Mochdar, of the Citra Harapan Abadi group, via the humanitarian foundation Yayasan al-kautsar (which also financed a few months later another militia, Pam Swakarsa). The allies of the former president were equally implicated: his son, Bambang, who controlled the Bimantara group, of which two of Mochsin's brothers were shareholders; Fuad Bawazier, ex-Minister of Finance of the fallen president and still very active in the background; Tommy Winata, a businessman close to Soeharto's family; and finally the humanitarian foundation of the army, the Yayasan Kartika Eka Paksi.¹¹⁰

Ahmad Sumarsono, the fierce leader of KISDI, revealed for his part that Wiranto had proposed to him the role of expert in a new militia called

¹⁰⁸ See Chapter Three.

¹⁰⁹ "Radical Islam: Suharto Proxies or Al Qaeda?", in <http://www.laksamana.net> www.laksamana.net, 25 September 2002.

¹¹⁰ Ibid. Businessman Tommy Winata would also have been involved in the financing of the Laskar Jihad militia, which would proceed to fight in the Moluccas in 2000. Other funds were said to have been diverted from the Bosnian Solidarity Fund PNSMB (Panitia Nasional Solidaritas Muslim Bosnia, National Committee for Solidarity with the Bosnian Muslims), chaired by Probosutedjo, Suharto's step-brother. Damien Kingsbury and Clinton Fernandes, "Terrorism in the archipelagic Southeast Asia", in Damien Kingsbury (ed.), *Violence in Between, Conflict and Security in Archipelagic Southeast Asia*, Monash Asia Institute, Clayton, ISEAS, Singapore, 2005, pp. 16–17, 25.

the Red and White Youth militia (Garda Muda Merah Putih, GMMP), led by a lawyer, Adhyaksa Dault.¹¹¹ Sumargono stated on this occasion that he considered General Wiranto as “close to the Islamic group”. Returning a few months later to the subject of the rivalry between the ABRI Chief of Staff and his protector, General Prabowo, he asserted that, from an ideological and strategic point of view, the two (Wiranto and Prabowo) could “become partners”.¹¹² Apart from the obvious wish to be in the good books of the ruling power, these declarations — and most importantly the ensuing actions — demonstrated the shifting frontiers between the nationalist and Islamist groups within the armed forces. In this period of uncertainty when the regime’s future seemed to be determined by events in the street, high-ranking military officers often allied themselves with the radical Muslim organisations out of political opportunism. The students who opposed Habibie were themselves supported by a “nationalist-secular” group of retired generals and nationalist personalities, called National Front (Barisan Nasional, BARNAS). In threatening to “destroy” (*sikat habis*) the demonstrators, Sumargono’s KISDI was but transposing to the street the confrontation already taking place in the higher ranks of the military.¹¹³

Those who wanted to see a sweeping Reformasi instead of just a transfer of power to Habibie were not intimidated and did not give up the fight: they mobilised again a few months later during the Special Session of MPR convened to confirm Habibie’s presidency. To arm itself against these demonstrators, the ruling power appealed once more to the radical Islamist groups and contributed to the creation of an Islamic Community Forum for the Defence of Justice and the Constitution (Forum Ummat Islam Penegak Keadilan dan Konstitusi, FURKON). This new organisation, officially created in the Istiqlal mosque under the patronage of the Council of Indonesian Ulama (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, MUI), clamoured their support of Habibie. Trotting out the old communist bogeyman, its leaders warned fellow countrymen of the manoeuvres by communist agents who had infiltrated the reformist organisations to destabilise the country.¹¹⁴ In the run-up to the Special Session of MPR, the

¹¹¹ Firdaus Syam and Ahmad Suhelmi, 2004, p. 220. Adhyaksa Dault became Minister of Youth and Sports in Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono’s government in 2004.

¹¹² Firdaus Syam and Ahmad Suhelmi, 2004, p. 221, citing their interview with Sumargono, 30 December 2003.

¹¹³ “Kalau Barnas Turunkan Massa, Kita Akan Sikat Habis”, *Detik*, cited in Firdaus Syam and Ahmad Suhelmi, 2004, p. 171.

¹¹⁴ Richard G. Kraince, 2000, p. 41.

leaders of FURKON and the president's allies recruited almost 120,000 persons, mostly members of Islamic youth groups, to "safeguard the capital".¹¹⁵ Called "Pam Swakarsa Umat Islam" (an abbreviation of Pasukan Pengamanan Swakarsa Umat Islam, literally, private security troops of the Muslim community), legend would have it that these youths were pious Muslims who spontaneously rallied to the cause of the government in its struggle towards an institutional and democratic transition. The truth was much more banal: most of them admitted to having been paid for giving their support. They took over the entire Parliament district and savagely attacked the demonstrators who rejected Habibie's right to hold this Special Session, calling instead for a *Reformasi total*. So violent were they that even Pemuda Pancasila, the regime's usual militias which were also supportive of Habibie, had to cede the grounds to them. The attitude of the Pam Swakarsa infuriated the population of the occupied areas, who had to vacate the streets of the capital after a few days, but not before a few of them were beaten to death by youth groups.¹¹⁶

The closing of the Special Session of MPR could be savoured by regimist Islam as a triumph: Soeharto's successor had been enthroned according to the institutional rules. Just like Ahmad Sumargono, then known as the "king of demonstrations" (*raja demo*), Habibie's supporters adroitly made use of religious arguments (these street gatherings "were part of religious practice, *ibadah*") and also political arguments (these demonstrations were "normal in a democracy, including Western countries"¹¹⁷). However, for these Islamist militants, the victory of their champion failed to bring about the outcome they had anticipated: Habibie was well aware of the fragility of his source of support and he embarked on a policy that would disappoint them.

¹¹⁵ Besides President Habibie and the leaders of FURKON (Komaruddin Rahmat, Faisal Biki), other personalities and organisations had also backed the formation of Pam Swakarsa: MUI, ICMI and KISDI. Adi Sasono, Habibie's close counsellor and founder of CIDES, played an important role. Richard G. Kraince, 2000, p. 43. Amongst the military officers, General Faisal Tanjung, then Minister of State in charge of political affairs and security, as well as the former Major General Kivlan Zen (who was at the same time an ally of Prabowo and thus discharged from the army along with his mentor), was also instrumental in this affair, to the great displeasure, incidentally, of a section of the Armed Forces. Cf. Harold Crouch, "Wiranto & Habibie, Military-Civilian relations since May 1998", in A. Budiman, B. Hatley and D. Kingsbury, 1999.

¹¹⁶ Loren Rytter, "Pemuda *Pancasila*: The Last Loyalist Free Men of Suharto's Order?", in *Indonesia*, no. 66, October 1998a: 45–73.

¹¹⁷ Firdaus Syam and Ahmad Suhelmi, 2004, pp. 154–155.

A Reluctant Reformer?

Having seen as early as the end of May how weak his backing from the army and the population was, and propelled by the spirit of Reformasi, surrounded as he was by a few determined intellectuals, B.J. Habibie embarked on an impressive series of reforms.¹¹⁸ In the space of a few months, he had freed the majority of political prisoners, repealed texts that limited freedom of the press, limited the political role of the army (the famous *dwifungsi*) by forcing officers who occupied civilian posts to give up their military positions or to return to the ranks of the army (with the exception of ministers¹¹⁹).

KISDI, which had mobilised in the president's favour on numerous occasions, was equally critical of his policy. Certainly, it recognised the validity of the liberalisation of the political system and hoped to take advantage of it. KISDI also purported to support the fight against nepotism, particularly the suppression of the powers enjoyed by Soeharto's foundations, which ate into the salaries of civil servants for "humanitarian" purposes (aid for the construction of mosques¹²⁰). But the radical organisation deplored Habibie's prudence when it came to supporting Islam, claiming it would "sink his image as a Muslim leader worthy of his name". Habibie remained silent on the Tanjung Priok affair, he did not prioritise the liberation of Muslim political prisoners, he had yet to rehabilitate the Masyumi political party, banned since 1960, and he did not bestow the title of national hero on its former leaders, Mohammad Natsir and Syafruddin Prawiranegara — all of which were measures KISDI had expected of the president. Ahmad Sumargono also flayed the president for his tolerance of "vice" (alcohol, pornography, adultery) and towards the separatist movements in East Timor and Papua (former Irian Jaya).¹²¹ In addition, he blamed Habibie for the marginalisation of KISDI's former allies within the army (mainly Prabowo and Major General Kivlan Zen) and invited Habibie, "symbol of Islam", to be the guarantor of Soeharto's policy, "who, since 1993, had formed 'green' cabinets (*ijo royo-royo*,

¹¹⁸ According to Marcus Mietzner, 1999b, p. 88, Habibie initially ignored blueprints for political reform suggested to him, notably by Nurcholish Madjid.

¹¹⁹ François Raillon, "Chronique du temps présent, Indonésie 1999: désintégration", in *Archipel*, no. 59, Paris, 2000: 207.

¹²⁰ Ahmad Sumargono, "Evaluasi 47 Hari Kepemimpinan B.J. Habibie", in *Saya Seorang Fundamentalis*, Global Press, Bogor, 1999, p. 111. Ahmad Sumargono's speech on 6 June 1998 at the grand mosque Al Azhar of Jakarta.

¹²¹ Ahmad Sumargono, 1999, pp. 112–113.

that is, Islam-friendly)". In the face of his opponents, who represented the "anti-Islam" group in power "from 1966 to 1990", the new president was expected to show a firm stance.¹²²

Following the example of militant Islamism, none of the diverse forces in the Indonesian political scene wished to give their full backing to Habibie. The major moderate Islamic organisations chose to remain in the background. Relations between Habibie and NU were lacklustre, as the president did not accord them the post of Minister of Religions, a post much coveted by the traditionalist religious organisation. Relations with Muhammadiyah were much warmer but its chairman, Amien Rais, kept his distance in view of the promised elections. Even ICMI was divided in its evaluation. The most political members had been rewarded with a large presence in government, but the more high-profile intellectuals of the group — the only ones capable of influencing public opinion — were kept away from ministries and positioned outside of the influential government circles. Moreover, in looking to distinguish himself from a specific religious organisation and prove his neutrality in religious matters, Habibie further disappointed some of his staunchest supporters.¹²³

Political Openness and the Emergence of a Moralising Islamism

Political Islam, which had supported the accession of Habibie without hesitation, became a vital issue in his dealings with the military officers. ABRI felt that by not imposing any limits to the creation of religion-based parties, the new president had made too many concessions to Islam. As for Habibie, what he desired was for a Muslim party to underpin his renewed power. Ultimately, both ABRI and the president were overtaken by the chain of events: the army could not prevent the proliferation of Islamic parties and none of them could be pinned down by Habibie. Confronted with the powerful democratic current coalescing around the version of the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI-P, with the P added for *Perjuangan*, 'Struggle'), they could only seek refuge, together, under the protection of the only political force that still seemed able to protect their influence: Golkar.

The authorisation enabling political parties to be freely formed set Indonesia back by many decades, to the period before General Soeharto

¹²² Firdaus Syam and Ahmad Suhelmi, 2004, pp. 171–182.

¹²³ Marcus Mietzner, 1999b, p. 89.

and his New Order reorganised with an iron hand the somewhat unbridled political scene. After more than 30 years of strong-armed rule without free elections, every party felt it represented a current within Indonesian society and could legitimately present itself before voters. Between July 1998 and the elections of June 1999, several hundred parties were created. Amongst these, several dozens claimed to represent Islam in one way or another. What the major parties had in common was their opposition to the president. Their popularity signalled the end of Habibie's supporters' hopes to harness political Islam for his cause, as was the case with ICMI. Abdurrahman Wahid's Party of National Renaissance (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa, PKB) and Amien Rais' National Mandate Party (Partai Amanat Nasional, PAN), supported by NU and Muhammadiyah respectively, claimed to represent the values of a pluralist Islam and were credible alternatives to the reigning power. From the radical Islamic wing, only the Crescent Star Party (Partai Bulan Bintang, PBB), a spin-off from DDII and KISDI, was a potential source of backing for Habibie. But Ahmad Sumargono's criticism of the president's feebleness, the ambitions of Yusril Ihza Mahendra who claimed to be the disciple of leading figure Mohammad Natsir and most of all, the small following of this party, put paid to this project.

One of the most significant consequences of these unfulfilled hopes was the mutation of KAMMI. This powerful organisation of young Muslims, administered by devoted militants from the student milieu, could have constituted a solid base for Habibie's new political career. Although it had always drawn upon an intransigent religious rhetoric, KAMMI had consistently distanced itself from the violence that characterised the other radical Islamist organisations (KISDI, HAMMAS, FURKON). Initially supportive of the Habibie presidency, KAMMI subsequently aligned itself with pro-Reformasi student organisations such as the Forum Salemba (FORSAL), named after one of the campuses of the big Indonesian university. On 6 November, a few days before the Special Session of MPR, these organisations participated in collective demonstrations and issued an ultimatum appealing to the government not to use this session to legitimise an extension of its term.¹²⁴ Definitively converted to the democratic cause in the weeks after the fall of Soeharto and unable to identify itself and fit in amongst the radical organisations that supported Habibie, KAMMI represented the emergence on the Indonesian political scene of what can be called a 'moralising Islamism', issued

¹²⁴ Richard G. Kraince, 2000, p. 39.

from the *usroh/tarbiyah* movement. They were not the only ones to incarnate this pro-democracy Muslim current: well before them, the Muslim students of the HMI Muslim associations (modernists), PMII (Nahdlatul Ulama) and IMM (Muhammadiyah), long present on campus, had struggled along within the strict conditions imposed by the New Order. But these organisations were progressively overtaken by KAMMI, which possessed an unprecedented capacity for mobilisation and was highly visible thanks to the systematic wearing of religious symbols by its militants.

Among the parties identifying with Islam, KAMMI militants initially supported Amien Rais' PAN, symbol of the opposition to the fallen regime. However, when PAN was opened up to non-Muslims, they wanted a properly Islamic party and, following Fahri Hamzah, their chairman, rallied en masse to the Justice Party (Partai Keadilan PK), founded in August 1998.¹²⁵

Deprived of efficient intermediaries and obliged to fall back on Golkar, B.J. Habibie and his followers failed to shake off their image as successors of the New Order and be seen as representatives of an Islam of tomorrow. The legislative elections of June 1999, the first authentically free elections since 1955, consecrated the opposition's victory. Megawati Soekarnoputri's PDI-P gathered more than 33.7 per cent of the votes and obtained 154 out of 500 seats in Parliament. As for Golkar, it only got 22.4 per cent and 20 seats. All the other major parties were more or less aligned with Islam but were hesitant in proclaiming their religious identities: Nahdlatul Ulama's PKB obtained 51 seats in Parliament; PPP, the Islamic party of the former regime, 58; Amien Rais' PAN, 34. PBB and PK, the only two parties that unambiguously proclaimed their Islamist and pro-sharia leaning, respectively obtained 13 and 7 seats with 1.9 per cent and 1.36 per cent of the votes. Two well-known leaders of radical Islam entered Parliament: Ahmad Sumargono of KISDI for PBB, as well as A.M. Fatwa for PAN.

During the 16 months that he was in office, Habibie turned out to be the most reformist president of the period. Aside from the liberalisation of the political system mentioned earlier, a pivotal law on regional autonomy was adopted and, most importantly, East Timor was given the right to decide on its own future. Just like most of the other measures taken by Habibie, this one provoked the ire of his supporters yet did not win him any gratitude amongst his opponents: the vote in favour of

¹²⁵ Richard G. Kraince, 2000, p. 32.

independence in East Timor at the end of August 1999 (78.5 per cent) plunged the narrow territory into extreme violence. Encouraged by some elements within the army, the *pro-integrasi* militias (who were in favour of remaining within Indonesia) provoked veritable massacres resulting in almost 2,000 deaths. Moreover, the reforms proposed by ICMI ministers were regarded by the opposition as mere window-dressing: the Minister of Labour, Fahmi Idris, had no doubt ratified Convention 87 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) guaranteeing the right of association, but repression against workers on strike continued in factories.¹²⁶ Finally, a series of scandals (including the Bank Bali incident in which 70 million dollars were embezzled by a company owned by Golkar's vice-treasurer), as well as the tacit protection given to Soeharto during the corruption trials, sank any hope of re-election Habibie might have nourished. He could no longer present his candidacy.¹²⁷

V. Reformasi, Land of Opportunity for Radical Islam

Although some of the most important reforms in Indonesia were undertaken during Habibie's presidency, his tenure came across mainly as an interregnum or a period of transition. For those who sought a total rupture with the New Order, real Reformasi could only begin with the designation of the first president voted in by a democratically elected parliament in the history of Indonesia.¹²⁸ For the radical Islam militants, the upcoming period was above all a time when the Archipelago seemed to be plunged into generalised chaos, which they very much intended to exploit to advance their own cause.

Abdurrahman Wahid or Iconoclastic Islam in Power

Embroided in financial scandals, deprived of the support of the New Order loyalists, who blamed him for abandoning East Timor, and persistently rejected by the democrats, B.J. Habibie had no chance at all of remaining in office in October 1999. Pending the Special MPR Session to appoint a successor to the presidency, one woman, Megawati Soekarnoputri, seemed

¹²⁶ Vedi R. Hadiz, "Reformasi Total?", in *Indonesia*, no. 66, October 1998: 122.

¹²⁷ On the causes of the fall of Habibie, see too François Raillon, 2000: 207.

¹²⁸ Even Soekarno's presidency never benefited from an election in due form by an elected parliament, although there were free legislative elections in 1955.

assured of the seat occupied by her father three decades ago. The clear victory of her party, PDI-P, at the legislative elections made her a favourite for the presidential elections to be organised by MPR in October 1999.

Yet, after PDI-P's victory in June, opposition to her candidacy arose within political Islam. The validity of electing a woman to the highest function in the state was questioned, planting the sharia in the heart of public debate in Indonesia for the first time in a long while. In fact, one of the main reproaches made of Megawati and her party was that they had given too much space to the Christian candidates on their electoral lists — something not unusual as the latter had indeed been allies of the secular nationalists within the PDI since 1971. To effectively block her election, her main adversaries mounted an alliance called the Central Axis or *poros tengah*, whose aim in the name of Islam was to “prevent the secular nationalist groups from attaining their political objectives”.¹²⁹ By aligning itself with Golkar and ABRI's representatives in Parliament, this coalition stripped PDI-P of the advantages of its victory at the legislative elections and distributed power amongst the partners: Amien Rais from PAN was elected chairman of MPR, Akbar Tanjung of Golkar was made Speaker of the House of Parliament (DPR), and Abdurrahman Wahid of PKB was elected president of the Indonesian Republic. So as to appease Megawati's supporters, Abdurrahman Wahid very astutely offered her the post of vice-president on the very day.

The establishment and success of this union of political Islam was a unique event in the history of Indonesia. The last successful union of Muslim parties dated to 1959, when they voted in the Constitutional Assembly for a state founded on the application of Islamic law. However, this coalition occupied only 43 per cent of the seats and failed to overturn the opposing bloc.

Political Islam had started its manoeuvring from February 1999, even before the legislative elections of June. All the leaders of Islamic parties — from the most moderate such as Abdurrahman Wahid and Nurcholish Madjid, to the most radical such as Ahmad Sumargono and A.M. Fatwa — gathered at the home of the artist Setiawan Djodi.¹³⁰ The radicals thought much of this ‘central axis’ and, waxing lyrical, Ahmad Sumargono commented that Indonesian Islam was finally ready to “form

¹²⁹ Firdaus Syam and Ahmad Suhelmi, 2004, p. 180.

¹³⁰ An astonishing scene was witnessed at this meeting: Sumargono of KISDI and Wahid of NU embracing like friends. Firdaus Syam and Ahmad Suhelmi, 2004, p. 187.

a sort of beehive, with many cells but all under one roof". The "king of demonstrations" delighted at the formation of a solid coalition against the "anti-Islam group" made of "leftists, Protestants, Catholics, socialists and the *abangan*", united in their "Islamophobia".¹³¹

However, this united front so longed for by the Islamists quickly turned out to be but an expedient grouping devoid of political substance. Still very immature, the young Indonesian democracy was lost in these '*combinazione*' in which each clan intended to carve out its share of power. After 30 years of New Order rule during which ministers came exclusively from Golkar or were non-partisan experts and professionals, these other parties finally had access to positions that could be very lucrative indeed. And if the blundering presidency of Abdurrahman Wahid was a disappointment to the democrats, it was even more of a letdown for radical Islam.

At the start of his mandate, Wahid proposed re-establishing ties, if only commercial ones, with Israel. Shortly after, he evoked the possibility of engaging the former prime minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew (a Chinese) as economic counsellor. These propositions were highly symbolic and considered by the radical Islamist press (*Sabili, Suara Hidayatullah*) as veritable provocations. This reaction was understandable as the new president was demonstrating to this group, for whom Jews and Chinese alike were anathema, the pluralism for which he was known.

Irreproachable in his principles, Wahid was less so in his actions: the Indonesian democrats were critical of the lightness with which he treated the ethnic-religious conflicts that were fanning through entire regions of the Archipelago and which were a veritable godsend for the radicals. He was often abroad on official visits and seemed to underestimate the gravity of the situation, especially in the Moluccas. Gus Dur, as Abdurrahman Wahid was nicknamed, was quickly overtaken by a conflict that he had unfortunately entrusted to his vice-president, Megawati, who was not regarded by Muslims as an impartial arbitrator but as the darling of the Christian camp. Most importantly, she dealt with this problem with remarkable inefficiency. He was finally reduced to advising the Ambonese to solve their problem by themselves and failed to prevent the conflict from becoming an internal political problem. In December 1999, clashes of an unprecedented violence broke out. The Christian Ambonese demanded the presence of foreign observers, convinced that a faction

¹³¹ *Ummat*, no. 30, 8 February 1999, an interview with Sumargono cited in Firdaus Syam and Ahmad Suhelmi, 2004, p. 183.

of the Indonesian army was actually stoking tensions instead of trying to reduce them. In January 2000, in an ‘action of a million Muslims’, Islamic groups speaking in the name of the Muslim community mobilised en masse for the stepping down of Gus Dur and Megawati. Amien Rais, chairman of MPR, was present at this demonstration on the side of other leaders of Islamic parties and organisations (PPP Chairman, Hamzah Haz and KISDI’s Sumargono), demanding that the government stop the ‘agitators’, while calls for jihad were heard among demonstrators.

Faced with this mobilisation, Abdurrahman Wahid used and abused his usual *bons mots*. Even as new militias were forming (Laskar Jihad, Laskar Mujahidin, Laskar Islam), he commanded the army to prevent them from reaching the Moluccas: “Whether it’s jihad or *jahit* (sewing) that they want to do, Muslims or Christians, stop them all!” On this occasion, as on others, his governing style contributed to the weakening of his authority. The military commander of the Surabaya region did not stop thousands of *laskar* departing for the Moluccas, where they were greeted on arrival at the port by soldiers giving out automatic weapons.¹³²

A few weeks later, in July 2000, Gus Dur named those he considered the agitators of these ethnic-religious riots by their initials, which all Indonesians could guess, targeting “regimist” Islam and some “green” generals.¹³³ However, the president’s henceforth resolute opposition to the radical Islamic groups no longer had much effect.

He was increasingly criticised for his style of government said to be more becoming of an adulated and omnipotent *kiai* of a *pesantren* than as a head of state. Who still doubt his *barokah*, his divine election and protection? Yet he made unfortunate choices in the nomination of some ministers and aides, whom he did not hesitate to dismiss subsequently. His blindness rendered him dependent on information whispered over the course of visits, with some claiming to come from supernatural sources. The prodigious power of the *kiai*, combined with the tremendous hopes pinned on the democrat, was at times an advantage that he capitalised on with audacity: he nominated in succession two men with a reputation of

¹³² Noorhaidi Hasan, “Between Faith and Politics: The Rise of the Laskar Jihad in the Era of Transition in Indonesia”, in *Indonesia*, no. 73, April 2002: 148. See too from the same author, *Laskar Jihad, Islam, Militancy and the Quest for Identity in Post New-Order Indonesia*, Cornell Southeast Asia Program, Ithaca New York, 2006, 226 pp. and *Laskar Jihad, Islam Militansi dan Pencarian Identitas di Indonesia Pasca-Orde Baru*, LP3ES-KITLV, Jakarta, 2008, particularly pp. 274–321.

¹³³ Firdaus Syam and Ahmad Suhelmi, 2004, p. 187.

integrity for the post of attorney-general (B. Lopa and M. Simanjuntak), although the nomination of a democrat who was not affiliated to the parties, in the case of the latter, angered the members of NU and of his party, PKB. He also managed to marginalise General Wiranto, who was ejected from government. Yet he never learnt how to manage the army to his advantage, not daring to go all the way in his support of reformist generals such as Agus Wirahadikusumah and Saurip Kadi. His sensational and always spontaneous declarations bewildered the average Indonesian accustomed to 30 years of aseptic official-speak. Two scandals provided his detractors with ammunition to discredit him. As early as the middle of 2000, he was confronted with a mounting revolt within Parliament. His clumsy response — he resorted to asking the army for its support in the dissolution of the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR), carried out by presidential decree in 2001 — alienated him from the entire political class. On 23 July, at the end of a grotesque institutional battle, he was impeached in quasi-unanimity by MPR. Vice-president Megawati acceded to the supreme function of the country's presidency.

The startling presidential fate of Abdurrahman Wahid weakened, at least temporarily, the hopes of Indonesian liberal Islam.¹³⁴ The disorganised audacity of a constantly active religious thinking was succeeded by a cautious status quo between the secular nationalist group and the least reformist groups of Islam.

The Megawati Presidency: From Prudent Status Quo to Constrained Engagement

In its October 1999 issue, *Media Dakwah*, the magazine of DDII and principal media of intransigent Islam, enumerated all the good reasons for not electing Megawati as president: she was “pro-communist, she was the daughter of Soekarno, she did not fight for the people, she had dictatorial, militarist-fascist tendencies, she was in fact anti-Reformasi and also

¹³⁴ On Wahid's presidency in general, see Marcus Mietzner, “Abdurrahman's Indonesia: Political Conflict and Institutional Crisis”, in Grayson Lloyd and Shannon Smith (eds), *Indonesia Today: Challenges of History*, ISEAS, Singapore, 2001b, pp. 29–44; Martin van Bruinessen, “Back to Situbondo? Nahdlatul Ulama Attitudes towards Abdurrahman Wahid's Presidency and his Fall”, in Henk Schulte Nordholt and Irwan Abdullah (eds), *Indonesia: In Search of Transition*, Pustaka Pelajar, Yogyakarta, 2002, pp. 15–46; Andrée Feillard, “Indonesian Traditionalist Islam's Troubled Experience with Democracy (1999–2001)”, in *Archipel*, no. 64, 2002: 117–144.

anti-Islam.¹³⁵ Less than two years later, Megawati acceded to the presidency with the assent of this same group.

The first signs attesting to the evolution of this rigorist Islam towards Megawati dates to March 2001. Several of its leaders — including Ahmad Sumargono of PBB — went on their own initiative to greet the vice-president upon her return from Sampit (Central Kalimantan), where some 400 Madurese migrants had just been massacred by Dayaks.¹³⁶ President Wahid had not grasped the urgency of the situation and had not cancelled yet another of his numerous trips abroad to visit the trouble spot.

Megawati was elected president of the Indonesian Republic in July 2001 and took as vice-president the chairman of PPP, Hamzah Haz, the man who had voiced his opposition to a woman as president and one of the few notorious polygamists of the Indonesian political world. KISDI defended its acceptance of a female presidency “under urgent circumstances”.¹³⁷ When Megawati’s cabinet was announced, KISDI congratulated itself that “fourteen of the ministers were former members of the Association of Muslim Students (HMI)” and that the two non-HMI ministers (Kwik Kian Gie and Laksamana Sukardi) were not from the Indonesian secular National Student Movement (Gerakan Mahasiswa Nasional Indonesia, GMNI).¹³⁸ Substantial guarantees had indeed been given to political Islam: Yusril Mahendra of PBB was Justice Minister, Malik Fajar of PAN was Minister of National Education and the Minister of Religions, Said Agil Munawar, was a rather conservative ulama of Nahdlatul Ulama.

The cohabitation between radical Islam and the secular nationalists went mostly well, and not a word was heard from Megawati about the previous misogynistic arguments that had preceded her election.

¹³⁵ *Media Dakwah*, October 1999, pp. 53–55, cited in Firdaus Syam and Ahmad Suhelmi, 2004, p. 196. The barrage against Megawati was similarly strong in traditionalist Islam circles: a petition by 60 ulama against Megawati’s presidency circulated in Pasuruan, East Java (Firdaus Syam and Ahmad Suhelmi, 2004, p. 198).

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 199. The Dayaks are natives of Kalimantan who hardly profited from the exploitation of the province’s forests as the lumber industry often employed Madurese. The Dayaks are animistic; a certain number of them became Christians, a small proportion became Muslim (they often preferred to call themselves *melayu*, or Malay).

¹³⁷ What saved Megawati in the eyes of radical Islam was the presence of her husband, Taufik Kiemas, at her side. He was certainly “nationalist” but also “Masyumist” via his father who was the assistant of Kasman Singodimedjo (*Ibid.*, p. 200).

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

Undoubtedly Indonesia gained in stability. The economic ministers under Megawati continued their work, forming a rather more competent team than that under Gus Dur, including notably Finance Minister Boediono. Numerous obstacles remained: the volume of debt, difficult privatisations and growth that was indeed rising (4.8 per cent at the end of 2004) but still unable to absorb the some nine million unemployed who could potentially swell the ranks of radical groups.¹³⁹

The eruption of international terrorism on the Indonesian scene with the bombings of Bali in October 2002 obliged the president to implement vigorous security measures. However, she made very few pronouncements on this subject and gave the impression of not wanting to apply a systematic policy against radical Islam. She authorised the meeting of the Second Congress of Mujahidin in August 2003 and refused to ban Jemaah Islamiyah, thus going against the wishes of her ASEAN partners. One of the rare snags between militant Islamism and PDI-P concerned the willingness of the latter to rehabilitate President Soekarno, as well as the removal of electoral prohibitions on former communist political prisoners or sympathisers, who were henceforth eligible for Parliament.¹⁴⁰

A New Alliance

The legislative elections of April 2004 were a brutal slap in the face for the president's party: votes for PDI-P fell from 33.7 per cent to 18.5 per cent. That often painful austerity measures were implemented while the government showed no real desire to tackle the rampant corruption explains the voters' disappointment to a large extent. The most unpopular decision taken by Megawati was probably the acquittal of the former

¹³⁹ Official figure of Indonesia's Central Bank for 2003, but Megawati's Minister of the Economy mentioned a raised figure of 30 million for the same year 2003, including the under-employed.

¹⁴⁰ In an interview with a Dutch radio station, Sumargono explained his rejection as such: "...make no mistake about it, Soekarnoism and communism were 'brothers'" (Radio Nederland, 14 July 2003, Firdaus Syam and Ahmad Suhelmi, 2004, p. 201). For the KISDI chairman, given "the extreme backwardness" of Indonesian society, these ideologies would bring about conflicts and could "modify the vision of Muslims" (*pandangan hidup seorang muslim*). He cited the story of a Muslim student who, from reading *kitab kuning* (ancient 'yellow' textbooks) in Islamic boarding school, had gone on to Marxism, and was now reading the novels of Pramoedya Ananta Toer (Firdaus Syam and Ahmad Suhelmi, 2004, p. 202).

chairman of Golkar, Akbar Tanjung. These failings allowed moralising Islam, mentioned earlier, to find its niche, and it soon became the main battleground for the young Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan-Sejahtera, PKS). During the presidential elections of October 2004, it very sensibly chose to support the candidate of 'change' (*pembaruan*), General Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, head of the new Democratic Party (Partai Demokrat, PD). Although together they only obtained less than 15 per cent of the votes in the legislative elections of July, PKS and the Democratic Party managed to score for Yudhoyono a grand victory in the duel opposing him and Megawati. For its support of Yudhoyono, the head of PKS, the young Hidayat Nur Wahid clinched the chair of MPR. He won the sympathies of the public right from the start, who discovered at the same time this young political party which had only got 1.3 per cent of the votes five years earlier in 1999. Through a few symbolic acts such as turning down some of the privileges that came with his position (a luxury limousine and a room in an expensive hotel for the duration of the sessions), this young leader who converted from intransigent Islam to moralising Islam made a remarkable entry into the Indonesian political scene.

Since its foundation, PKS has undergone an evolution that encapsulated the recent mutations in Indonesian Islam but also represented a classic path in the Islamist movement. Like its Turkish counterpart, REFA and subsequently AKP, the party moderated its demands and gradually gained credibility as it became closer to the authorities. Abandoning the facile demands of unruly radicalism for the more subtle claims of a moralistic reformism, it contributed to a more general evolution discussed in Chapter Five.

The Islamist Cluster: Organisation and Functioning

The resurgence of Muslim radicalism in Indonesia from the end of the 1960s is schematically the outcome of three successive developments that affected the religious outlook of the country. The first was an identity politics movement that arose from the failure of various attempts to Islamise the country from the top. Darul Islam, through a series of rebellions, and Masyumi, via the democratic route, had both sought to create an Islamic state. In both cases, this quest failed when confronted by the alliance between the secular nationalists and the army. Thus the successors of Masyumi, like those of Darul Islam, retreated from the political arena in their own ways. The second stage of this radicalisation was part of a wider evolution, that of international Islam. In 1973, the Arab defeat by Israel in the Yom Kippur War and the ensuing oil shock gave the little kingdom of Saudi Arabia legitimacy and unprecedented wealth, boosting its religious foundations and the aid it extended to different preaching movements in the world, with Saudi universities throwing open their doors to scholars from poor countries. These two developments meant that from the mid-1970s, Indonesia was the receptacle of rigorist Wahhabi propaganda, which led to the conversion of a section of the modernist groups to radical neo-fundamentalism. This movement, generally known as Salafism,¹ fuelled the Afghan jihad networks, and a section of the Indonesian fighters subsequently plunged into a nihilistic terrorism. The third

¹ *Salaf* designates the first three generations of Islam (the Prophet's generation and the following two) deemed to embody the original perfection. They are distinguished from *khalaf* (successors), the inevitably 'decadent' succeeding generations. See *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 13 volumes, 2nd edition, 1960–2005, vol. 8, 1995, p. 900, the entry "SALAF wa KHALAF". The Salafist communities want to revive and imitate the exemplary life of the Prophet Muhammad and his pious followers, the *salaf al-salih*

juncture of radicalism occurred around the time of the fall of Soeharto's regime and the democratic renewal of Indonesia. This period, as we have seen, stimulated the growth of extremist movements that benefited from the encouragement of New Order supporters as well the political vacuum of a nascent Reformasi.

Each of these moments defined above saw the emergence of a new generation of militants whose thinking and mode of operation remained marked by the circumstances of their beginnings. But beyond certain differences, the radical Islamist movement on the whole shared some common traits, which contributed to its success in the Archipelago but also limited its development.

An Inward-looking Movement

As political Islam adapted to the reality of a New Order that constrained its political expression — as the regime did for leftist ideologies be it socialism or Marhaenism — the majority of political Islam's militants chose the path of preaching, predication or *dakwah* (*da'wa*).² This new type of militancy gave rise to organisations such as the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (DDII), which was a major influence on the evolution of Indonesian Islam (see Chapters One and Two). Apart from these big *dakwah* movements, smaller, marginal groups were formed. These were even more inward-looking than DDII and had more sectarian tendencies.

The 'internal Hegira', both modus operandi and cause of radicalisation, had its origins in the 1960s and 1970s (see Chapter One).³ Religious isolates purported to embody virtue and fidelity to religion in the

and the 'pure' Islam they practised. They borrow from eighteenth-century Wahhabism (see Chapter One), setting out to fight any *bidah* (blameable innovations), including Sufism, superstitions and un-Islamic behaviours, as well as from the nineteenth-century Salafiyya (see Chapter One), notably its anti-Western sentiments, which they also share with other twentieth-century Islamist movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood (see Noorhaidi Hasan, *Laskar Jihad, Islam, Militancy and the Quest for Identity in Post New-Order Indonesia*, Cornell Southeast Asia Program, Ithaca, 2006, pp. 138–139, 160–161).

² There are two types of *dakwah*: *dakwah bi-l-hal*, spreading the faith through practical activities and *dakwah bi'l lisan*, through oral preaching.

³ See Chapter One. The rejection by Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia of any sort of collaboration with the Dutch colonisers was already qualified as Hegira (a reference to the Prophet's settling in Medina in 622).

face of an impious and corrupting power and a society 'perverted' by modernity. Within these very closed communities that took the form of either political groups or Islamic boarding schools flourished the conviction that they alone upheld the sole truth and a legitimacy that rivalled the states.

***Pesantren*, Islamic Villages and Salafi Networks**

The 'Reconversion' of Darul Islam

As mentioned above,⁴ the execution in 1962 of S.M. Kartosuwiryo, founder of the Darul Islam movement and emir of Negara Islam Indonesia (NII), did not lead to the disappearance of his movement. Some of his lieutenants managed to reach a compromise with the authorities, thus preserving a certain capacity for mobilisation. After many failed attempts to revive DI, the militants tried very early on to reconstruct the rebellion unit through Daud Beureueh, the only leader of the movement who had not been executed, by exploiting the manoeuvrings of the secret service, BAKIN, to their advantage. These manoeuvrings caused the first scission in 1971, after which the unit was dismantled due to the arrests linked to Komando Jihad between 1974 and 1978. In spite of the successive arrests of its imams (Daud Beureueh was placed under house arrest and Adah Djaelani was imprisoned) and in spite of its divisions (seven, later nine, regional commands that developed into groups agitating in the former strongholds of the movement), DI stayed on course and even expanded in the 1980s. The battle for the leadership of the imamate intensified, with two men fighting for the position:⁵ Abdullah Sungkar and Ajengan Masduki. Both recruited abundantly through intensified *dakwah* activities, particularly in Jakarta between 1983 and 1987; the escape of Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir in Malaysia in 1985 did not stem the recruitment activities by way of *dakwah*.

⁴ See Chapter One.

⁵ Atjeng Kurnia's faction covered the region of Bogor, Serang, Purwakarta and Subang; that of Ajengan: Masduki, Cianjur, Purwokerto, Subang, Jakarta and Lampung; Abdul Fatah Wiranagapati's encompassed Garut, Bandung, Surabaya and Kalimantan; Ali Hate controlled southern Sulawesi; and lastly Abu Toto alias Syech Panji Gumilang's faction constituted the regional command IX (Komandemen Wilayah IX), which covered greater Jakarta (S. Yunanto *et al.*, *Gerakan Militan Islam di Indonesia dan di Asia Tenggara*, 2003, p. 35). See also International Crisis Group, 22 February 2005, p. 2.

For a long time, it was difficult to pin down the effective operations of these movements in the 1980s and 1990s. Numerous rumours circulated about these operations; the occasional written material that surfaced were by former discontented militants and consequently not without a strong tinge of partiality.⁶ More light has since been shed on these networks thanks to the investigations conducted after the 2002 bombings in Bali attributed to Jemaah Islamiyah. They seemed to conclude that, given the lack of structured organisations, numerous former supporters of Darul Islam partially transmitted the memory of their struggle through the *pesantren* they created.

A few of these establishments played a major role in the radicalisation of young Indonesian Muslims who were later recruited by terrorist organisations. Long-standing organisations, the Islamic boarding schools had the advantage of blending naturally into the social and educational landscape and operating under very loose controls.

The Ngruki Network

One of these *pesantren*, which has since become the symbol of ideological training in terrorism, was founded by two ex-leaders of the Youth Movement of Masyumi (Gerakan Pemuda Islam Indonesia, GPII),⁷ both of Yemeni origins: Abu Bakar Ba'asyir and Abdullah Sungkar. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir was part of Al-Irsyad, the organisation created at the beginning of the twentieth century with the aim of providing a modern education for the Hadrami community (the Arab community that had migrated from Hadramaut, south of the Arabian peninsula) of the Archipelago. Its founder — Ahmad bin Soorkati — as we have seen, was himself a religious scholar from Sudan (Africa), a disciple of Rashid Rida, and nowadays derided as having been too tolerant of “non-Salafis”.⁸

Along with this generation of modernists condemned to abandoning politics, they also fell back, as did a section of the groups close to the former Masyumi, on *dakwah*.⁹

⁶ For example, Al-Chaidar, a young Darul Islam militant (born in 1969) and prolific author who relentlessly denounced the diversion of his movement's ideals by a handful of leaders led by S. Panji Gumilang.

⁷ GPII was close to Masyumi.

⁸ International Crisis Group, “Indonesia Backgrounder: Why Salafism and Terrorism Mostly Don't Mix”, in *Asia Report*, no. 83, 13 September 2004, p. 6.

⁹ Abdullah Sungkar was the leader of the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (DDII), originating from Masyumist circles, for Central Java. Martin van Bruinessen, “Genealogies of Islamic Radicalisation in Post-Suharto Indonesia, in *South East Asia Research*, 1 July 2002, vol. 10, no. 2, p. 3.

In 1967, they started a clandestine radio station called Radio Dakwah Islamiyah Surakarta, then founded in 1971 their *pesantren* Al-Mukmin at Ngruki, in the vicinity of Solo (Surakarta). Although they never belonged to Darul Islam in its heyday (they were perhaps too young then), they became close to the new leaders of the movement. In 1976, they were presented to Haji Ismail Pranoto ('Hispran'), leader of Komando Jihad in East Java, and were supposedly sworn in (*bai'at*) to DI. They were arrested in November 1978 as a result of these contacts. According to the indictment report revealed during their trial, Sungkar was said to have been made the military commander of the Islamic State of Indonesia (NII) for Central Java and the leader of an organisation called Jemaah Mujahidin Anshorullah in February 1977 — all of which he denied. He did, however, admit to having come to an agreement with an ex-militant of Darul Islam in 1976 to form an 'Islamic community' (*jemaah*) in view of fighting against the communist threat, whose influence was increasingly felt in the region since Vietnam had joined the Soviet camp. Sungkar exhorted the population not to recognise the Indonesian Constitution, a 'product of Man, not God'. The other major accusation held against the leaders of the Ngruki *pesantren* was the distribution of a pamphlet by one of the teachers in the school, Abdul Qadir Baraja. Entitled *Jihad dan Hijrah* (Jihad and the Hegira), it called on fellow believers to rebel against "the enemies of Islam" who resisted the application of Islamic law.¹⁰ The DI-Ngruki network thus stretched to Central Java and after its dismantling in this region, continued to develop in Jakarta. With the passing of the years and the travels of its mentors, it nonetheless grew into several Islamic boarding schools. The most prestigious of these schools — Al-Muttaqien in Jepara and Dar us-Syahadah in Boyolali, both in Central Java; Al-Islam in Lamongan, East-Java; and Lukmanul Hakiem in Johor, Malaysia — played a capital role in the formation of new jihadists. Within its closed walls were nurtured some of the most active militants of the clandestine organisation.¹¹

Aside from the *pesantren* linked to Ngruki, several other networks using a similar approach of closing ranks and expanding through isolated communities linked up to each other, contributed to the birth and development of radical Islam in Indonesia.

¹⁰ International Crisis Group, 8 August 2002, pp. 6–7.

¹¹ For a detailed description of the JI members trained in this *pesantren*, see International Crisis Group, "Jemaah Islamiyah in South East Asia: Damaged but Still Dangerous", in *Asia Report*, no. 63, 26 August 2003, p. 26 ff.

The Hidayatullah Network

In 1971, five young preachers stripped of their hopes of seeing political Islam rehabilitated after 1965 under the New Order, decided to set up a community in Gunung Tembak, a secluded spot about 30 kilometres from Balikpapan, administrative centre of the province of East Kalimantan. The leader of this small group, Abdullah Said (sometimes also called Mushin Qahhar) was an ex-militant of the Indonesian Student Action Front (Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Indonesia, KAMI),¹² a multi-confessional organisation that played a crucial role in the fall of Soeharto. Abdullah Said was an admirer of Kahar Muzakkar, the Darul Islam leader in Sulawesi, and was also a student of Aceng Kurnia, one of the instigators behind DI's revival in West Java in 1967. The desire for autarchy was evident at the creation of this community called Hidayatullah. Occupying an entire village, its members administered diverse institutions devoted to preaching and religious teaching, but also to the economic survival of the movement.¹³

As of the mid-1980s, Hidayatullah started to propagate its model. In 1986, a group of students from the Institute of Technology of Surabaya (East Java) opened a *pesantren* affiliated to the headquarters and operating under the same principles.¹⁴ In Sulawesi it expanded by attracting those close to the former Darul Islam movement. The Hidayatullah *pesantren* of Makassar was thus created by Abdul Aziz Qahhar Muzakkar, son of Kahar Muzakkar, a former Darul Islam rebel leader.¹⁵ In the early 2000s the organisation had branches in dozens of Indonesian cities and in 2003 it was pointed out that a network of 127 *pesantren* was affiliated to it.¹⁶ The monthly *Suara Hidayatullah* (The Voice of Hidayatullah), inaugurated in 1986 and with a circulation of 35,000 copies, was an efficacious tool in the promotion of its Salafism-inspired ideas. As of 1998, this monthly

¹² This 'army-inspired' organisation was created in the aftermath of 30 September 1965 to bring together the main student organisations, amongst which the Association of Muslim Students (HMI) was the most important.

¹³ International Crisis Group, 22 February 2005, p. 3.

¹⁴ Noorhaidi Hasan, "In Search of Identity: The Contemporary Islamic Communities in Southeast Asia", in *Studia Islamika*, vol. 7, no. 3, 2000: 86.

¹⁵ Abdul Aziz Qahhar Muzakkar later headed the Organising Committee for the Preparation for the Implementation of Islamic Law (Komite Persiapan Penegakan Syariat Islam, KPPSI), whose militia, Laskar Jundullah, one of the most active in Poso, was led by Agus Dwikarna, a partner of the Ngruki network. International Crisis Group, 8 August 2002, p. 27.

¹⁶ International Crisis Group, 26 August 2002, p. 27.

was an active channel of the radical Islamic movement's anti-Christian themes. Hidayatullah was often mentioned in investigations on Jemaah Islamiyah: its networks were purported to have sheltered bombers on several occasions and served as a passageway towards the organisation's camps in Mindanao.¹⁷

The FKAWJ Pesantren Network

The case of the Followers of the Sunna and the Community of the Prophet (Forum Komunika Ahlu Sunnah wal-Jama'ah, FKAWJ) attests to the remarkable influence that some Salafist *pesantren* networks exercised on the mobilisation of the radical fringes of Islam in Indonesia. Indeed, it was from FKAWJ that emerged the Laskar Jihad group, which played a major military and media role in the Moluccas conflict (1999–2002). In 1994, Ja'far Umar Thalib, a Salafist leader to whom we shall return, founded the Jam'ah Ihya al-Sunnah *pesantren* in Kaliurang, not far from Yogyakarta. An informal network of Islamic boarding schools and organisations led by former students of Ja'far gradually materialised, structuring itself in February 1999 during a huge manifestation in Solo that marked the end of a series of *tabligh akbar* (big-scale gatherings featuring popular preachers) which had been taking place over the past months. The objective of these gatherings was to lend support to President Habibie who was under attack, and to prepare the *umma* to defend itself against the machinations of the 'infidels' (the conflict in the Moluccas had just begun). Henceforth regrouped within FKAWJ, Ja'far's supporters opened branches in the quasi-totality of Indonesia's provinces. In 2004, close to 80 *pesantren*, mostly situated in Central and East Java, but also in the Moluccas, East Kalimantan, Sulawesi and the Riau Archipelago, were affiliated to the network.¹⁸

These few examples are a good illustration of the diversity of the origins of the Salafist (and not Salaf) *pesantren* (see Glossary). Originating from different organisations — Al-Irsyad in the case of Ba'asyir in Ngruki, KAMI for Abdullah Said in Hidayatullah, Persis and Al-Irsyad for Ja'far Umar Thalib of FKAWJ — a new generation of militants, with or without direct links to the movements connected to Darul Islam, were able to extend its influence thanks to its new Islamic boarding schools.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 22.

¹⁸ For a list of the most important of these institutions, and their activities and leaders, see International Crisis Group, "How the Jemaah Islamiyah Terror Network Operates", in *Asia Report*, no. 43, 11 December 2004, pp. 32–39.

Clandestine in the beginning, this movement grew rapidly from just a few *pesantren* in the early 1980s to close to 80 some 20 years later.¹⁹ From these have emerged networks centred on charismatic personalities.

The development of these networks linking *pesantren* and ‘charity’ foundations were due largely to more open organisations that worked efficiently for *dakwah* in a challenging context. One branch played a preponderant role: that of uniting DDII with the Institute of Islamic and Arabic Studies (Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam dan Arab, LIPIA) and the universities of Saudi Arabia. But *dakwah* also and especially progressed because of the introduction of Muslim Brotherhood’s organisational method, adopted by student groups as well as *pesantren* linked to Darul Islam.

Usroh, Tarbiyah: Clusters of Young Militants and Students

The *dakwah* movement that developed under the New Order sprung forth essentially from two traditions: Darul Islam fighting for an ‘Islamisation from the top’ (the creation of an Islamic state) at the risk of a confrontational relationship with the authorities, and the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia, DDII), advocating an ‘Islamisation from below’, which would eventually give rise to a new political society. These two traditions sometimes joined forces, with some of the groups plunging into violence while others engaged in politics, and yet others maintaining a distance from all non-religious activities.

Dakwah and Clandestine Action

As early as the end of the 1960s, Mohammad Natsir, former chairman of Masyumi and head of DDII, proposed to his supporters to steer their efforts in three directions — *pesantren*, mosques and the campus — future

¹⁹ Nobody in Indonesia seems to be able to provide an exact figure. The most detailed information on this subject comes from the International Crisis Group, which for the first time in September 2004 compiled a list of *pesantren* or Salafist humanitarian organisations, including 28 *pesantren* with links to Ja’far Thalib’s group (FKAWJ), the most intransigent and intolerant of non-Salafist Muslims, as well as 27 non-FKAWJ Salafist *pesantren*, which lean towards jihadist ideas (International Crisis Group, 13 September 2004, pp. 10, 36). For a history of the development of Salafism in Indonesia, see Jamhari and Jajang Jahroni (eds), *Gerakan Salafi Radikal di Indonesia*, Raja Grafindo Persada, Jakarta, 2004, 252 pp., and Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006.

bastions of the religious revival he felt was necessary. Hoping to reach out all at once to these three milieux, DDII implanted its first Islamic boarding schools near to the universities.²⁰ As of 1968, it permeated campuses in order to train a young generation of teachers (for religion and non-religious disciplines). A training programme for cadres was implemented and meetings in Jakarta were held at low costs in the official premises of pilgrims departing for Mecca. Then in 1974, its efforts targeting the student milieux were systemised under a programme called Bina Masjid Kampus (Management of Campus Mosques), which led to the building of mosques in about 15 university centres in the Archipelago, from Jakarta to Padang, Semarang and Ujung Pandang. Several future cadres of Islamism emerged from this programme: Abdul Qadir Djaelani (imprisoned for many years and subsequently a member of the People's Consultative Assembly after the fall of Soeharto) and especially Imaduddin Abdulrahim, who made the Salman Mosque of the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) one of the bastions of the militant Islamic revival. The three-day course called Training of Preacher Combatants (Latihan Mujahid Dakwah, LMD), organised by Imaduddin was a great success. The students who underwent this training, including Zaenal Muttaqien, future chief editor of *Sabili*, then introduced these training sessions into the prestigious University of Indonesia in Jakarta, followed by other universities. Subsequently these religious training programmes took off in a remarkable way. In the space of about ten years, they had spread throughout all the universities in the Archipelago.²¹ But they suffered a first setback with the arrest of Imaduddin in 1978, the ban of LMD and tighter control by the regime under the slogan of the Normalisation of Campus Life (Normalisasi Kehidupan Kampus, NKK).

In the meantime, Mohammad Natsir had used his contacts with some intellectuals from the Middle East to obtain scholarships, notably in three universities: Madinah al Munawwarah and Ibnu Saud in Saudi Arabia, as well as al-Azhar in Egypt. Upon their return, the students were

²⁰ Aay Muhamad Furkon, *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, Ideologi dan Praksis Politik Kaum Muda Muslim Indonesia Kontemporer*, Teraju, Jakarta, 2004, pp. 125–126. Two *pesantren* were established in Bogor, in the Jakarta suburbs, close to two universities, including the Bogor Agricultural University (IPB).

²¹ This was due in particular to a kind of 'multi-level marketing' system whereby each trained militant had to 'train' five new members. Aay Muhamad Furkon, 2004, p. 133. This system was also in place in the government services.

tasked, especially by DDII, to translate from Arabic numerous works by the Muslim Brotherhood, whose ideology was relatively unknown to the Indonesian authorities at that time. These translations were a means to evade the restrictions imposed on DDII militants.²² Little by little, training on campus was done directly via the literature of the Muslim Brotherhood, henceforth abundant in the Indonesian language, while the model of Imaduddin Abdulrahim's Salman Mosque, more 'Indonesian' in its objectives and methods,²³ lost its influence in some universities, notably the University of Indonesia.²⁴ Neighbouring Malaysia also had a decisive influence. Study trips to Malaysia were common and the influence was reciprocal. Many expressed their admiration for the Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement (Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia, ABIM) and its leader Anwar Ibrahim, himself a disciple of Mohammad Natsir.²⁵

It seems then that the methods of the radical faction of HMI led by Imaduddin gave way, on the one hand, to the moderate wing of HMI led by Nurcholish Madjid (already predominant in the Islamic universities) and, on the other hand, to increasingly clandestine networks operating on campus using the methods of the Muslim Brotherhood. Potential sympathisers were invited to participate in increasingly secretive training sessions called *tarbiyah* (education) or *halaqah* (circle). The most motivated amongst them were then regrouped within a cell (*usroh*, 'family' in Arabic), under the direction of a leader, the *naqib*. The *usroh* constituted an informal network of mini-communities attempting to live entirely by the rules of Islam. They were supposed to be as homogenous as possible and

²² Aay Muhamad Furkon, 2004, pp. 126–129. Eighteen of their works were translated throughout the 1980s. One of the first translations was Yusuf Al-Qaradhawi's book, *Pendidikan Islam dan Madrasah Hasan al-Banna* (Islamic Education and Madrasahs, according to Hasan al-Banna) in 1983.

²³ According to the model of the Association of Muslim Students (HMI), of which he was a leader.

²⁴ Aay Muhamad Furkon, 2004, p. 132.

²⁵ One of the first promoters of the concept of *usroh* in Indonesia was the chairman of the Association of Muslim High School Students (Pelajar Islam Indonesia PII), Mutammimul Ula, who had discovered it during an "international camp of Muslim student leaders" organised in Kuala Lumpur in 1982. Upon his return, he expressed his admiration in the Indonesian press for this concept developed by the Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement (ABIM) to deal with the "repressive" government under Mahathir. Abdul Syukur, *Gerakan Usroh di Indonesia, Peristiwa Lampung 1989*, Penerbit Ombak, Yogyakarta, 2003, pp. 37–38, quoting a declaration by Ula in *Kiblat*, no. 22, 1983, pp. 29–31.

comprised about ten persons of the same sex, age and level of education. Through mutual aid (*takaful*), understanding (*tafahum*) and knowledge (*ta'aruf*), members were supposed to forge a Muslim character (*syaksiyah al-Islamiyah*) and together form a Muslim family (*usroh al-Islamiyah*), thus prefiguring a Muslim society (*ijtimaiyah al-Islamiyah*), an Islamic state (*daulah al-Islamiyah*) and finally an Islamic caliphate — a general union of all Muslims in the world (*khilafah al-Islamiyah*).²⁶ This reference to the caliphate was a distant ideal, envisaged as the establishment of a world order rivalling that transmitted by the United Nations, perceived as dominated by the Christian West. The classic conception of a caliphate seemed to have won followers, especially for Hizbut Tahrir, which also carried out recruitments on campus in the 1990s (see Chapter Four). The activities of these *usroh* were generally financed through *zakat* donations (2.5 per cent of salaries) and by jointly run commercial activities.

Paradoxically, this movement ultimately benefited from the Normalisation of Campus Life (NKK) decreed by the New Order regime in 1978: by banning all political activity in universities, the authorities contributed to the growth of religious activities, as they were the only pursuits tolerated. Campus mosques became the sole venue for students to socialise: increasingly Islam became a vehicle of protest and protestation was thus Islamised.

In time, the movement extended beyond the university and reached the level of secondary education: two organisations close to the DDII movement, Nurul Fikri and Lembaga Pendidikan Islam al-Hikmah, proposed to help college students prepare for entry to university. Initially concerning themselves only with general subjects, these institutions considerably increased the proportion of religious teaching in their programme to give it equal prominence from the mid-1990s onwards. Their success was indubitable: from 1997–1998, one out of four students entering the University of Indonesia was supposedly a former student of Nurul Fikri.²⁷ The majority of them also became efficient transmitters of *dakwah* in the student circles.

Thus the irreversible transformation of Indonesian campuses occurred over three decades: from LMD, which were but simple training sessions

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 37–38; Ali Said Damanik, *Fenomena Partai Keadilan, Transformasi 20 tahun Gerakan Tarbiyah di Indonesia*, Teraju, Jakarta, 2002, pp. 88–90.

²⁷ Ali Said Damanik, 2002, pp. 155–156. Each year, around 8,000–10,000 students were trained by Nurul Fikri in 29 cities, mainly in Java. According to Damanik, non-Muslims also joined in because of the quality of the lessons dispensed.

for preaching in the 1970s, steered by the radical but fundamentally 'Indonesian' movement of HMI, they came under the influence of a more international ideology, that of the Muslim Brotherhood, in the mid-1980s. Loosely structured, the *dakwah* centres on campuses (Lembaga Dakwah Kampus, LDK) soon became the setting for a renaissance of political Islam. As of 1994, these new *dakwah* cadres succeeded in being elected into senates representing students at the University of Indonesia and kept their seat in the ensuing years.²⁸

Four years later, in March 1998, during the Tenth Forum of Lembaga Dakwah Kampus in Malang, representatives of some 60 universities and institutes of higher learning formed the Indonesian Muslim Students' Action Committee (Komite Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia, KAMMI), which played a decisive role in the birth of the Justice Party (Partai Keadilan, PK) soon after.²⁹

The *usroh* linked to LDK and later to KAMMI were thus relatively well structured. The teaching dispensed was inspired by the puritanical and often sectarian ideology promoted by DDII and the rigour was a reproduction of that of the *pesantren*, previously unknown to these students now in search of more reassuring certainties.³⁰

Negara Islam Indonesia and Usroh in Universities

Nonetheless, here too, heterodoxy took root amongst some of these *usroh*, notably those linked to the hatching of a multitude of small groups claiming to be followers of Kartosuwiryo's Islamic State (Negara Islam Indonesia, NII or 'N sebelas', [N eleven], according to the terminology adopted by the young recruits) and his ideology of the Islamic State of Indonesia. These small groups adopted totally heterodox attitudes at times, using NII simply as a label. This propensity of some DI militants to compromise with the pillars of Islam (notably the five daily prayers), under the pretext that the Republic of Indonesia was not yet an Islamic

²⁸ Ali Said Damanik, 2002, pp. 180–182.

²⁹ See Chapter Two.

³⁰ Thus the lesser success, on the contrary, obtained up till then by the *tarbiyah*, later KAMMI, in the State Institute of Islamic Studies (IAIN), frequented by students who had attended Islamic boarding schools for many years, where they had lived by very strict religious rules since their childhood (interviews with former students of *pesantren* who went on to IAIN, 2004). The creation of non-religious faculties (psychology, medicine) in the Islamic universities in the mid-2000s seems to have changed this perspective.

state, was also found outside the campus and provoked growing scissions with the stricter Salafists.³¹

Within the universities, Islamic militancy sometimes sheltered very profane occupations. For example, Fachrully Rachmayati, student at the Islamic University of Yogyakarta and ex-member of one of the networks, never felt that she was militating for Islam. Aside from her participation in a lucrative business, which we shall examine later, she felt like she belonged more to a sect than to a political movement.³² The investigation carried out by the weekly *Tempo* in the region of Bandung in March 2000 confirmed this analysis: the sectarian aspect of these movements characterised by secrecy, members' devotion to a charismatic member and the difficulty of leaving the group, spurred deviation. The student groups claiming to be from NII encouraged their members to cut themselves off totally from their family and to revolt against their parents who were presented as bad Muslims, while squeezing large sums of money from them. Once the membership oath — a refusal to recognise the Republic of Indonesia as long as it was not an Islamic state — had been taken, any attempt to leave these groups became a very tricky matter.³³ These small clandestine groups grew considerably at the approach of 2000 because of their millenarist character. Miftah Faridl, head of the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI) in the West Java province and religious teacher at Bandung Institute of Technology, thus confirmed that in his province alone, several hundreds of thousands of students were affected by this phenomenon.³⁴ The management of the Institute of Technology (ITB) also received several dozen complaints from parents who were worried about the indoctrination of their children by NII for the Islamic state cause. Some well-known Muslim intellectuals also expressed their fears at the growth of this phenomenon.³⁵

³¹ International Crisis Group, 22 February 2005, p. 19.

³² Interview, Universitas Islam Yogyakarta, 22 August 2000.

³³ *Tempo*, 5 March 2000. The weekly cited the case of a student of Bogor Agricultural University (IPB) who had to change universities in order to escape the influence of the NII cell of which he was a former member. In spite of this, he continued to receive death threats.

³⁴ *Ibid.* An obviously exaggerated estimate, but it shows the distress of the authorities in the face of this phenomenon.

³⁵ Ali Said Damanik, 2002, p. 88, cites the highly respected Muslim intellectual Kuntowijoyo who in 1993 was worried by the “subversive” tendencies of the *usroh*, with their “secretive” character and their “sectarianism”.

Usroh and Darul Islam

Darul Islam was one of the beneficiaries of the new methods of organisation originating from the Middle East. These methods were also taken up outside of the university, fulfilling the same function in the only space where dissident political expression was still untouched.

In the mosques established outside of campuses, where young people were grouped within associations (Remaja Masjid), the *usroh* methods were utilised namely by the Communication Body for Indonesian Mosque Youth (Badan Komunikasi Pemuda Masjid Indonesia, BKPMI). Founded in 1976, this organisation was said to be one of the first to adopt the methods of the Muslim Brotherhood and was even ahead of the Salman Mosque in the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) campus. These groups did not subscribe unanimously to Darul Islam but included some supporters, notably amongst the Association of Muslim High School Students (Pelajar Islam Indonesia, PII) and the Youth Movement of Masyumi (Gerakan Pemuda Islam, GPI).³⁶

Muslim Brotherhood methods were adopted most effectively by Darul Islam in Yogyakarta, where some leaders were able to optimise its utilisation even as the movement was suffering a great setback because of Komando Jihad-related arrests. Abdullah Sungkar's disciples in Ngruki adroitly exploited these methods for recruitment purposes.³⁷ One of them, Irfan Awwas, who later became head of the Indonesian Council of Mujahidin (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia, MMI), confessed that the *usroh* methods proved to be "very efficient" for training cadres "in the very repressive political conditions of the 1980s".³⁸ The networks of the *usroh* close to Darul Islam were very compartmentalised. Cell members took turns to host meetings in their homes, and only the leader could contact the other members of the group.

The method was optimised for yet another type of teaching — the *pesantren kilat* (literally, 'accelerated Islamic boarding school', or intensive three-day religious classes). The name seemed to indicate that these schools were dispensing traditionalist Islam teachings but they were, in fact, giving free rein to anti-Soeharto sentiments. To systemise these teaching

³⁶ As of 1983, BKPMI training conveyed the notion that the *usroh* was a 'second family' that could resolve the problems that the 'first family' could not. Subsequently the second family often became a substitute for the first. International Crisis Group, no. 92, 22 February 2005, p. 12.

³⁷ On the creation of these networks, see Aay Muhamad Furkon, 2004, p. 136.

³⁸ Cited in Aay Muhamad Furkon, 2004, p. 136.

methods, a special body was created, the Body for the Development of Muslims of Indonesia (Badan Pembangunan Muslimin Indonesia, BPMI), which were also very successful.³⁹

This combination — *pesantren*, then *usroh* and *pesantren kilat* — was adopted by the Indonesian Salafist movement as the flexibility of these structures brought together individuals of varying degrees of engagement. They helped to identify the most committed militants to whom was handed the task of expanding the network within their own milieu.⁴⁰

Ideologically, the Iranian Revolution as model boosted the popularity of the movement, which apparently inspired not only sweet dreams of the fall of Soeharto but also, according to Indonesian courts, several plans to assassinate Soeharto between 1982 and 1983. All these attempts came to naught and dreams of revolution crumbled when the first arrests of *usroh* militants of Central Java started at the end of 1983.⁴¹

These *usroh* militants of Central Java thus spent the rest of the 1980s in prison — depriving them of the Afghan experience — but those of Jakarta survived clandestinely in the refuge of the big city where Sungkar had already established connections. The criminalisation of DI's funding, started by Warman (see Biographies), increased when some mosques in Jakarta became the hideout of petty criminals targeted by a campaign of summary executions called '*petrus*', short for *pembunuhan misterius* (mysterious killings). It was only in 1986 that the movement was discovered to be still alive in Jakarta, when a businessman who backed the movement was assassinated. The round-up that ensued sparked off a flurry of activities: some joined Sungkar and Ba'asyir in Malaysia; others continued to fight in East Jakarta under a certain Broto, who started recruiting for Afghanistan; yet others flocked to join a former leader, Nur Hidayat, resulting in an aborted rebellion attempt in Lampung in 1989.⁴² The army laid siege to this community after an officer was killed during investigations, leading apparently to some 100 casualties.

³⁹ International Crisis Group, 22 February 2005, p. 12.

⁴⁰ For numerous examples of these expansion strategies, see Sabarudin, *Jama'ah at-turats al-islami di Yogyakarta*, Laporan Penelitian Individual, Proyek Perguruan Tinggi Agama IAIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 1999/2000, Chapter Three, pp. 33–72.

⁴¹ Documents of the law court of Malang cited in International Crisis Group, 22 February 2005, pp. 13–14. For details on inspiration by the Iranian model, see p. 13.

⁴² On Lampung, see Abdul Syukur, 2003, pp. 46–52; International Crisis Group, 22 February 2005, p. 15.

It was the wish to dissociate themselves from these DI *usroh*, often linked to criminal acts such as those of Komando Jihad, that pushed the student *usroh* movements advocating Islamisation from below — and thus patience — to detach themselves by taking on the name of *tarbiyah* (education).⁴³

A Breeding Ground for Violent Action

The Salafist movement, although itself very divided on the use of violence, contributed greatly to the growth of Islamic radicalism in Indonesia. The majority of the leaders of Salafist movements certainly maintained their condemnation of all violence exercised in the name of religion (except in the case of legitimate defence — a very subjective concept as we shall see, especially in the Moluccas). Moreover, the majority of Indonesian Salafists can be qualified as “purists” as opposed to “Salafi-Jihadists”,⁴⁴ who are but a very small minority fringe group within the Salafist cluster. However, it is indisputable that the separatist tendencies, intransigence and hate-filled views in Salafist *pesantren* was an element that encouraged the inter-faith violence at the turn of the twenty-first century.

In this regard, two factors explain the crossover into violence: ties with the Darul Islam movement and integration into the networks of the Islamist Internationale struggle. In fact, it was the regions where Darul Islam had been influential three decades ago that showed the clearest tendencies towards violence within the *usroh* movement. In the vicinity of Banten (West Java), Imam Samudra, the Bali bombings organiser who passed through Malaysia and Afghanistan, was the promoter of numerous *halaqah* (groups) in state Islamic senior high schools (*madrasah aliyah negeri*) and in *pesantren* headed by former sympathisers of Negara Islam Indonesia (NII). After 1999, students were invited to meetings where they were shown videos of atrocities supposedly committed by Christians in the Moluccas and in Poso in central Sulawesi. These videos had been made by KOMPAK (Komite Aksi Penanggulangan Akibat Krisis) or Action Committee for Crisis Response, a Muslim charity established in 1998 under the DDII. The most motivated of the participants were then invited to sessions of intensive training, where the teachings of Abdullah Sungkar, founder of Jemaah Islamiyah, were inculcated. It was these *daurah* (circle of ‘cadres’) that constituted the hotbed of recruitment for the terrorist movement. Gradually, calls to jihad became more concrete

⁴³ Aay Muhamad Furkon, 2004, p. 140.

⁴⁴ According to the distinction established by International Crisis Group reports.

and training took on a more practical nature: little by little the handling of arms and the making of bombs superseded theology lessons.⁴⁵

Opening Up to the Networks of International Islamism

The political manoeuvrings of President Soeharto's entourage and the heritage of Darul Islam were not the sole motors of the radicalisation of Indonesian Islam. The political frustration of ex-members of Masyumi, as we have seen, was another. This took on a special dimension when the inward-looking intolerance of former cadres of the Muslim party converged with the financial means of Wahhabi propaganda. Mohammad Natsir, ex-chairman of Masyumi, was the principal architect of this internationalisation. Vice-president of the World Islamic Congress (Mutamar al-Alam al-Islami, based in Karachi, Pakistan) since 1967, he became a member of the World Islamic League (Rabithah al-Alam al-Islami, based in Jeddah in Saudi Arabia) two years later. This latter organisation rapidly became the proselytising instrument of the Saudi monarchy on a large scale and was endowed with considerable means after the oil shock of 1973. The Saudi monarchy used Islam as an instrument to combat the influence of Arab nationalism and then in 1979, the Iranian Revolution.⁴⁶ Within this structure, DDII, representative of the World Islamic League in Indonesia since 1973, was one of the essential vectors of Wahhabist propagation in the Archipelago.⁴⁷ The ties between networks of the former Masyumi, one of the most liberal parties in the Muslim world, and supporters of a fossilised and retrograde Islam contributed greatly to the conversion of some of its cadres to an Islamist rhetoric that blended identity politics with an anti-Christian perspective.⁴⁸

This movement was somewhat echoed in the student circles by the International Islamic Federation of Student Organisations, IIFSO, whose

⁴⁵ International Crisis Group, 11 December 2002, p. 48.

⁴⁶ Gilles Kepel, *The Trail of Political Islam*, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2002, 464 pp.; *Jihad, Expansion et déclin de l'islamisme*, Gallimard, Paris, 2000, pp. 70–71.

⁴⁷ Even though DDII itself could not be considered as totally Wahhabi or Salafist, Salafists occupied the highest positions. However, its diversity is such that its theological method has been called "of all directions" (*manhaj sanasini*) (International Crisis Group, 13 September 2004, p. 22). The legacy of flexibility inherited from the Masyumi of the 1950s probably explains why personalities found within DDII mirror the pluralism of former members.

⁴⁸ See Chapter Four.

secretary-general, Imaduddin Abdurrahmin, was close to Mohammad Natsir.⁴⁹ DDII was charged with giving out scholarships generously allocated by the Islamic League to Indonesian students to pursue their studies in the Middle East.⁵⁰ In the early 1970s, it opened an office in Riyadh to facilitate links with Saudi Arabia, and when the Riyadh-based Imam Muhammad bin Saud University decided to open a branch in Indonesia some ten years later, Mohammad Natsir supported this project enthusiastically. Founded in 1980, the Institute of Islamic and Arab Studies (LIPIA) bankrolled the undergraduate education of thousands of Indonesians at the prestigious Saudi Institute, where the best students were also invited to further their studies.⁵¹ Apart from its involvement in teaching, the DDII and LIPIA network also played a pivotal role in the distribution of funds from major Salafist foundations in the Gulf countries and Saudi Arabia. Several hundred mosques were financed through this channel, thanks to funds from Kuwaiti foundations such as Bait al Zakat and Haiyah Khairiyah Islamiyah or Syarikah al-Rajhi in Saudi Arabia.⁵²

Not all the Indonesian students who benefited from the largesse of these diverse institutions turned to radical Salafism.⁵³ Nonetheless, by allowing them access to the major universities in the Gulf and more

⁴⁹ Ali Said Damanik, 2002, p. 92; Noorhaidi Hasan, "Between Faith and Politics: The Rise of the Laskar Jihad in the Era of Transition in Indonesia", in *Indonesia*, no. 73, 2002: 156, citing the PhD thesis of Asna Husin, "Philosophical and Sociological Aspects of Da'wah: A Study of Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia", Columbia University, 1988, p. 168.

⁵⁰ One of DDII's brochures published in 2004 claims that it has sent nearly 500 students overseas. Four universities in particular (Islamic University of Imam Muhammad ibn Saud in Riyadh, Islamic University in Medina, Ummul Qura University in Mecca and Punjab University in Lahore) have formed several Indonesian Salafists. International Crisis Group, 11 December 2004, p. 7.

⁵¹ LIPIA had educated 3,726 students by 1998 and counted almost 5,000 ex-students in 2004. International Crisis Group, 13 September 2004, p. 8.

⁵² For a list of projects conducted in the 1990s, see International Crisis Group, 13 September 2004, p. 22, citing Lukman Hakiem and Tamsil Linrung, *Menunaikan Panggilan Risalah, Dokumentasi Perjalanan 30 Tahun Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia*, Jakarta, 1997, p. 35.

⁵³ Some former students of LIPIA such as Ulil Abshar-Abdalla, head of the Liberal Islam Network, even chose an opposing path. Ulil voluntarily interrupted his course and thus never went on to complete his studies in the Middle East, to which he would definitely have had access given his intellectual capacity.

importantly, enabling them to follow the teachings of the leading Salafist ulama of Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Pakistan, DDII and LIPIA facilitated the emergence of a new generation of Islamist leaders at the start of the 1990s. For these latter, the prestige of an education acquired in the Arab world, and what more, from former mujahidin who had fought in Afghanistan, inspired them to be charismatic leaders. Profoundly marked by their experience in the heart of the sacred sites of Islam and convinced of their greater legitimacy compared to their former mentors, these Indonesians often failed to find a place for themselves within the traditional religious hierarchy in their own country, leading them to start their own movements.

A New Generation of Islamists

Two different routes illustrate perfectly how these international channels contributed to the reconsideration of traditional legitimacies within Indonesian Islam. The first is that of Abu Nida, founder of the Jamaah at-Turats al-Islami movement in Yogyakarta.⁵⁴ Chamsaha Sofwan (his real name) was born near Gresik (East Java) in 1954 into an ordinary Muslim family. Unimpressed by the quarrels between reformism and traditionalism, his parents sent him to a Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) *pesantren*, then to a Muhammadiyah school devoted to the training of religious teachers. He distinguished himself by his dynamism and joined a DDII programme training preachers for the distant regions of the Archipelago. Upon graduation, he was sent to Kalimantan along with one of his friends. This initial contact with the *dakwah* was challenging. His companion fell ill, “hit by the black magic of which the Dayaks were ardent followers”. Abu Nida also faced strong competition from Protestant missionaries, who were endowed with more means (which he exploited on occasions to enter the most inaccessible zones). He then joined the cluster of organisations close to DDII, particularly the networks of the former Youth Movement of Masyumi (Gerakan Pemuda Islam Indonesia, GPII) under Abdul Qadir Djaelani.⁵⁵ He used his contacts to go to Saudi Arabia with the financial support of the World Islamic League. In Riyadh, he divided his time

⁵⁴ These biographical details are mostly drawn from the excellent study by Sabarudin, 2000.

⁵⁵ Gerakan Pemuda Islam Indonesia is the former organisation of the Masyumi youth, whose legacy is cultivated by DDII groups. It survived the ban on Masyumi under the name of Gerakan Pemuda Indonesia (GPI).

between the local branch of DDII and his studies at the Ibn Saud University, where he was taught by the leading ulama of the Salafist movement. Like many others, he made a detour to Afghanistan before returning to the Archipelago. Together with two compatriots he had met in Riyadh, he joined the mujahidin of Sheik Jamil ul Rehman.⁵⁶ Upon his return to Indonesia in 1985, he rallied the *pesantren* Al-Mukmin in Ngruki, near Solo, cradle of the future Jemaah Islamiyah, then got married and started a business. However, he maintained his interest in *dakwah* and continued to teach in a *pesantren* (Ibnul Qayyim) in Yogyakarta. Thanks to Saefullah Mahyudin, professor of political science at the Gadjah Mada University and head of the local DDII branch, Abu Nida penetrated the student circles. He made himself known amongst the Ja'ma'ah Salahudin activists and from there, the Association of Muslim Students (HMI). Little by little he increased his influence in the faculties of exact sciences and built up a small core of activists. His prestige and capacity for mobilisation were due largely to the links that had been woven between groups of international radical Islamism. He was thus asked by the World Islamic League to help the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (DDII). In Yogyakarta, he was assisted and supported in this task by his former course mates in Saudi Arabia (Ahmas Fais, Rofik, Asmuji). Thanks to these contacts, he managed to organise and finance overseas trips for his young recruits. He thus sent Shaleh Su'aidi, with whom he had become friends, to his previous Pakistani mentor, Jamil ul Rehman. Over the years, the small group led by Abu Nida became more structured, set itself up on the route of Kaliurang at the exit of Yogyakarta and took on the name of *at-turats* (heritage), in reference to the Kuwaiti organisation Jum'iah Ihya at-Turots al-Islami (Revival of Islamic Heritage Society, often designated by its acronym RIHS).⁵⁷

By organising *halaqah* (circles) and *daurah* (cadre meetings), the organisation's influence grew in the region. In 1992, it was bolstered by a

⁵⁶ Maulavi Jamil ul Rehman (his real name was Maulavi Hussain but he later adopted the name Jamil ul Rehman) was a Pashtoun Safi (a tribe that only converted to Islam at a later stage and was never really subdued but was very rigorist) from the province of Kunar (Nuristan). Claiming to be Salafi and strongly opposed to the cult of saints, he was not close to the Talibans, who are radical Deobandis very much attached to Hanafism and to the cult of saints. Communication from Mariam Abu Zahab, French academic specialising in Pakistan, 4 July 2004.

⁵⁷ Although it maintained that it was independent, the Abu Nida movement represented the Kuwaiti organisation in Indonesia, which also funded other structures in the region. International Crisis Group, 13 September 2004, p. 9.

new recruit of some leverage, Ja'far Umar Thalib, another leader of Arab descent. This latter, founder of FKAWJ, the parent organisation of Laskar Jihad, was born in Malang in 1961, into a family of Arab origins — his father was a militant of the Al-Irsyad organisation.⁵⁸ Ja'far had initially followed the classic path of the pious Muslim bourgeoisie with reformist tendencies. Educated in a school that trained teachers for public religious education (*pendidikan guru agama*), he went on to the *pesantren* of the Islamic Union (Persis, Persatuan Islam) in Bangil. This prestigious Muslim organisation had for a long time represented the most radical wing of Indonesian reformist Islam while remaining legalist. In Bangil, Ja'far attended the classes of Abdul Qadir Hassan, a grandson of Ahmad Hassan, thus continuing an old family tradition.⁵⁹ He left Bangil for Jakarta where he attended courses given by LIPIA. Three years later, funded by DDII, he left for Ibn Saud University in Riyadh. Attracted for a while by the Muslim Brotherhood, Ja'far Umar Thalib ended up detaching himself from the movement and joined instead one of the thinkers behind the Afghan jihadists, Jamil ul Rehman. In 1987, he decided to join the Islamist Internationale fighting against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, rallying the movement of his new mentor, Jama'at al-Da'wa ila al-Quran wa Ahl-i Hadith, which was close to the Pakistani movement Ahl-i Hadith.⁶⁰ Like many of his fellow combatants, Ja'far absorbed during this period a rigorist and Manichean doctrine, one in which the jihad authorised the most extreme forms of violence. Later, his experience in Afghanistan would greatly inspire the devotion of his disciples.

Jemaah Islamiyah, Paradigm of the Islamist Internationale

Since a series of arrests in August and December 2001 by the security services of Malaysia and Singapore, and more importantly, since the Bali bombings of October 2002 and the bombing of the Marriott Hotel in Jakarta in August 2003, one organisation, Jemaah Islamiyah has personified the deepest fears concerning the internationalisation of Indonesian radical Islamism. Through the relations of some of its members with the Al Qaeda network, the contacts other members have established with

⁵⁸ For a biography of Ja'far (and the FKAWJ foundation), see Noorhadi Hassan, 2002, p. 151.

⁵⁹ Ja'far's father, Umar bin Thalib, was himself the student of Ahmad Hassan, the founder of Persis. Interview with Ghazie Hassan, grandson of the founder, in Bangil, 16 October 2000.

⁶⁰ *Forum Keadilan*, 23 April 2000.

various Islamist movements in the region, and most of all because of its supposed desire to create a *daulah islamiyah nusantara*, a regional Islamic state, Jemaah Islamiyah quickly became portrayed as the missing link in an analysis that views the radical Islamist organisations in the region as so many national avatars of the Al Qaeda hydra. This combat at the regional level thus became at the end of 2001 the pressing priority of countries that followed in the footsteps of Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines in aligning themselves with the United States in the ‘war on terrorism’, which had become the defining element of US foreign policy. By contrast, the cooler attitude of Indonesia, which initially refused to arrest Abu Bakar Ba’asyir, portrayed as the emir of Jemaah Islamiyah, earned it international finger-pointing as the weakest link of the ‘camp of freedom’, made vulnerable by the workings of Islamist networks from within.

This vision dispensed with complex social and political explanations and with national particularities that are difficult to grasp, offering instead a reassuring solution: by undermining the organisation that supposedly controlled a large section of the Islamist movements of the region, the whole problem could hopefully be circumvented. Yet, the origins of Jemaah Islamiyah actually necessitate the delineation of a more complex picture of the regional and international connections of Indonesian radical Islam and the roles played by different countries in its evolution. Jemaah Islamiyah sits, in fact, at the crossroads of several narratives.

The first is that of the leaders of the Ngruki movement, evoked earlier. Sentenced to nine years of imprisonment in 1978 for their links with the Darul Islam networks, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba’asyir were freed in 1982.⁶¹ The Court of Appeal had in fact reduced their sentences to three years and ten months, that is, the duration of their detention. Three years later, in 1985, upon learning that the Supreme Court had confirmed their initial sentences and would be sending them back to prison, they decided to escape to Malaysia. In the meantime, they had organised a series of *usroh* in Central Java, mentioned above, which they were to exploit. Dismantled by the authorities between 1983 and 1985, this network nonetheless became the breeding ground in Indonesia of the future Jemaah Islamiyah. Upon reaching Malaysia, they were joined by several activists who considered them as the spiritual heirs of the struggle for Darul Islam.

⁶¹ It was actually during their first trial that the term ‘Jemaah Islamiyah’ (literally ‘Islamic communities’) cropped up. The Indonesian authorities viewed it as a politicised organisation and not as the informal aggregation of simple prayer groups, as maintained by the accused.

Abu Bakar Ba'asyir and Abdullah Sungkar ended up settling in the small town of Sunggai Manggis, some ten kilometres to the south of Kuala Lumpur. During their exile the two radical preachers took advantage of the favourable conditions enjoyed by Islamist militants in Malaysia then. Having already launched a policy of conspicuous piety a few years ago, the Malaysian authorities hoped that by accompanying and encouraging the Islamic revival in the country, the Malay (that is, Muslim) community could somewhat catch up with the Chinese and Indian communities, which although only the minority (representing 45 per cent of the 22.8 million population), dominated the country's economy. This policy achieved part of its aims, but it also had unwelcome effects, as former Prime Minister Mahathir acknowledged on the eve of his exit in December 2003. It helped to create a veritable caste of Muslim clerics educated in universities in the Middle East who, once back in Malaysia, spread a deep hatred of the West and the 'corruptions' of the modern world wherever they had planted themselves (particularly in Islamic boarding schools and universities). Hundreds of religious schools promoting ideas similar to the values of the most intransigent Salafist groups flourished throughout the country. One of them became a veritable hotbed for the recruitment of the future Jemaah Islamiyah: the Al-Tarbiyah Lukmanul Hakiem school situated in the city of Johor, where many young leaders of the JI organisation were trained.⁶²

Most of all, the encouraging conditions in Malaysia in the 1980s and 1990s made it a real haven for radical Islamist militants of diverse origins and enabled many networks to develop and flourish. Sungkar, Ba'asyir and company mingled freely with Muslim activists from all over the world. Soon they started espousing the ideals of a holy war designed to unite the Muslim world and aspired to participate in its first stage — the jihad launched in Afghanistan against the Soviet empire with the participation of Indonesian recruits. The majority of these recruits were already not far from the exile track, either because their political activities had made them cross the Soeharto regime, or because they were on study trips in Islamic institutes in Malaysia, Pakistan or the Middle East.⁶³

⁶² The school was run by Ali Ghufron alias Mukhlas. Among the students of this school was Abdul Aziz, alias Imam Samudra, who would go on to train in Afghanistan and become the mastermind of the Bali bombings.

⁶³ This was affirmed by, amongst others, Abdullah Hehmahuwa, former chairman of the Association of Muslim Students (HMI), who went to Afghanistan as early as 1979 (*Tempo*, 2 October 2001).

In total, slightly more than 200 recruits from these networks were thought to have undergone training in the Pakistani camps, that is, almost all of the Indonesian recruits; those who had trained in Afghanistan were generally designated as ‘Movement of 272’ (Gerakan 272).⁶⁴ Upon arriving in Peshawar, Pakistan, the young recruits were welcomed to Maktab al-Khidmat, a centre run by Abdullah Azzam, a Jordan-Palestinian and ideologist of the jihad who greatly influenced the Jemaah Islamiyah members.⁶⁵ Then they went to the Saddah camp, a training site in Parachinar, close to the Afghan border. This camp was run by a colourful personality, Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, leader of a Salafist group close to the Saudis and to Osama bin Laden called Islamic Union for the Liberation of Afghanistan (Ittihad-i Islami Bara-yi Azadi-yi Afghanistan). Sayyaf played a leading role in the birth of terrorist networks in Southeast Asia.⁶⁶ The camp was divided into *qabilah* or tribes, with everyone from Southeast Asia placed in one camp. Indonesian, Malaysian, Thai and Filipino combatants trained together, using a mixture of Malay and English to communicate. For many Indonesians unaccustomed to the climate and food, this period proved to be a real trial. As a report by the Pakistani secret services noted very prosaically, diarrhoea was a common occurrence.⁶⁷ Soon after, Sayyaf positioned their training in a perspective that transcended the Afghan jihad. He oversaw the involvement of his Southeast Asian recruits with great care, explaining to them that they would be more useful if they carried the holy war over to their respective countries than if they were to die on Afghan soil.⁶⁸ The Indonesian combatants were good students — not a single one of them was on the list of martyrs fallen during the anti-Soviet war. The majority lent their talent to the jihad, be it within Ajengan Masduki’s Darul Islam or Jemaah Islamiyah, founded in 1993 after the scission in Afghanistan in 1992 between two

⁶⁴ Lily Zubaidah Rahim, “The Road Less Travelled: Islamic Militancy in Southeast Asia”, in *Critical Asian Studies*, vol. 35, no. 2, June 2003.

⁶⁵ His works were translated in Indonesian and published by Pustaka al-Alaqa, a publisher in Solo associated with the Ngruki *pesantren*. One of the main accused of the Bali bombings, Ali Gufron (alias Mukhlis), acknowledged that Azzam was a major influence and that he met Osama bin Laden through Sayyaf. See Jamhari and Jajang Jahroni (eds), 2004, p. 47 ff.; International Crisis Group, 26 August 2003, p. 3.

⁶⁶ In honour of Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, Abubakar Janjalani named his organisation in Mindanao after him.

⁶⁷ Cited by Zachary Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia. Crucible of Terror*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, London, 2003, p. 11.

⁶⁸ International Crisis Group, 26 August 2003, p. 4.

men: Masduki, of NU training with Sufi tendencies, and Sungkar, a “purist Salafist” according to the ICG terminology.⁶⁹

Almost all leaders underwent training in Sayyaf’s camp. Riduan Isamuddin, alias Hambali, the future head of operations of Jemaah Islamiyah made contacts there that earned him his selection as head of operations of Al Qaeda for Southeast Asia.⁷⁰ Zulkarnaen, formerly of Ngruki then head of the armed section (*markaziyah*) of JI, and potential successor of Hambali, is said to have acquired great prestige in the eyes of the Indonesians while in Afghanistan. Abu Rusdan, who briefly replaced Abu Bakar Ba’asyir as emir of JI in October 2002 after the latter’s arrest, as well as Mukhlas, one of the alleged organisers of the Bali bombings, and many other second-rank leaders, were all from this Sayyaf branch.

After the camps were closed in 1995, the organisation moved its training centres to Mindanao in southern Philippines.⁷¹ There, some armed groups claiming to be from the Abu Sayyaf movement and some members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) provided logistic help to the organisation.⁷² Then, as we will see, the leaders of the JI networks took advantage of the conflicts that East Indonesia was embroiled in as of 1999 to install training bases.⁷³

Between the end of 1999 and the end of 2001, the jihad conducted in the Moluccas and in Central Sulawesi, in the region of Poso, allowed the organisation to train numerous combatants. According to security services, they numbered almost 2,000 by the end of 2003, two-thirds of whom were Indonesians; foreign experts, however, prefer a more conservative estimate of some hundreds of militants, since no accurate figures are available.⁷⁴ The crackdown following the Bali bombings (October

⁶⁹ International Crisis Group, 22 February 2005, p. 22. Children whose parents were Masduki loyalists left Ngruki for the Nurul Salam *pesantren* in Ciamis.

⁷⁰ In particular Hambali was suspected of having taken under his charge two of the hijackers of the American Airlines jet that crashed into the Pentagon on 11 September 2001 during their stay in Malaysia (Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006, p. 21).

⁷¹ International Crisis Group, 26 August 2003, p. 16.

⁷² For its links with Mindanao, see International Crisis Group, 26 August 2003, p. 16–22; “Southern Philippines Background: Terrorism and the Peace Process”, in International Crisis Group, *Asia Report*, no. 80, 13 July 2004, 38 pp.

⁷³ The idea that a safe territory, a home base was necessary was never far from their minds, and until the arrest of some of the JI leaders in 2003, many considered that Poso in Sulawesi could have been ideal for such a base (International Crisis Group, 22 February 2005, p. 6).

⁷⁴ *Tempo*, 11 November 2003.

2002) and the Marriott Hotel (August 2003) led to the arrest and sentencing of more than 100 persons (including three — Imam Samudra, Amrozi and Ali Gufron — who were sentenced to death and executed in November 2008). The main bomb makers, the Malaysians Azahari Husin and Noordin Mohammad Top, as well as the Indonesian Dulmatin, managed to shake off tight pursuit and near arrests on many occasions to organise another suicide bombing in September 2004, this time in front of the Australian Embassy in Jakarta. One year later, on 1 October, Bali was shaken by three more bombings, resulting in 23 casualties and more than 150 injured persons. At the end of 2005, one of the bomb makers, Azahari Husin, was killed in a shootout while Noordin Mohammad Top and Dulmatin continued to flee from the police forces of the Archipelago. The double suicide bombings which struck two luxury hotels in the Indonesian capital on 17 July 2009 showed that, in spite of significant advances by the security forces in the past years, some of the networks more or less linked to Jemaah Islamiyah remained operational. Amongst these, the dissident group organised around Noordin M Top (called Anshar el-Muslimin or Thoifah Muqotilah) seemed to be behind these two attacks that resulted in seven casualties (including the two suicide bombers). The investigation after the attacks confirmed the fears of the specialists — since his breakaway from the principal current of the JI in 2004, Noordin M Top had managed to gather the most radical fringes of several jihadist movements. He had at his disposal networks of support spread out throughout the archipelago and was able to recruit for ‘martyrdom’ young candidates unknown to the police.⁷⁵ The dragnet operated by the special Department 88 (densus 88), in charge of the anti-terrorism fight, led to the dismantling of several new cells. A plan to assassinate President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was foiled, and on 17 September 2009 Noordin M Top was shot by the police after a manhunt that kept the country in suspense for two months. In March 2010, it was the turn of the Afghan-trained Dulmatin to be killed in a raid south of Jakarta (see Biographies).

Yet Indonesia had not seen the last of terrorism. In late February 2010, the discovery of a training camp in Aceh revealed the alarming capacity of former Jemaah Islamiyah networks to spread and reorganise

⁷⁵ “Indonesia: Noordin Top’s Support Base”, International Crisis Group Asia Briefing, no. 95, 27 August 2009.

themselves.⁷⁶ Led by Dulmatin, this group gathered several currents that were disappointed by the inactivity of Jemaah Islamiyah and Noordin M Top's lack of vision. Long active in Mindanao, Dulmatin had started a new project called *lintas Tanzim* (inter- or cross-organisation) with the aim of recreating a sanctuary from which combatants for Islam could launch an attack on the Indonesian state. Their installation in Aceh (under the name of Al-Qaida Indonesia Wilayah Serambi Mekkah) was, however, a failure: supported by the local branch of FPI, it did not manage to gain the cooperation of the local population. The police was tipped off soon after and proceeded to make a number of arrests. Dulmatin and several of his sidekicks were killed, and dozens of others were questioned. At the end of June, Abdullah Sunata, Dulmatin's presumed successor, similarly trained in the Philippines, was also questioned. The police revealed that many bombings targeting foreign embassies (in particular, that of Denmark, because of the affair of the cartoons), as well as the police district, were in the making.⁷⁷ A plan to hit the highest state bodies on 17 August, Indonesia's National Day, was also uncovered, thereby confirming the latest terrorist strategy of attacking the authorities in the most direct way. But what was most worrisome was the fact that many of those arrested had already been imprisoned before for similar acts. Their involvement in the new organisation showed very clearly the limitations of the 'deradicalisation' programmes implemented in prisons for many years now by the anti-terrorist authorities.⁷⁸

The Jemaah Islamiyah, its leaders and the personality of its alleged spiritual leader, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, have been at the centre of much debate, one that constantly returns to the question of how much influence the 'terrorist network' — to use the dedicated expression — had on Indonesian Islam. Often muddled and distorted by reciprocal fantasies, these debates should be refocused around three issues. The first is the responsibility of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir in the bombings committed by Jemaah Islamiyah, which heralded the crossover to violence for several of his disciples. Sentenced to four years in prison by a court in Jakarta in 2003,

⁷⁶ "Indonesia: Jihadi Surprise in Asia", International Crisis Group, *Asia Report*, no. 189, 20 April 2010.

⁷⁷ *Kompas*, 25 June 2010.

⁷⁸ International Crisis Group, *Asia Report*, no. 142, 19 November 2007 and the updated but unpublished version, "Prison deradicalisation and disengagement: The Case of Indonesia", November 2009.

an appeal two months later resulted in the shortening of his sentence to three years when the court rejected charges of heading JI, treason and terrorism and retained only the charge of an infraction of immigration law and the falsification of administrative documents. The Supreme Court finally reduced his sentence to 18 months and he was freed in April 2004, but was immediately re-arrested by the police based on fresh evidence of his leadership role in the JI organisation. A second trial led to his sentencing in March 2005 to two-and-a-half years of imprisonment. This new sentence surprised many countries and reflected the weakness of the Indonesian judicial system whose reform was controversial even within the judicial administration. The rejection by the Constitutional Court to apply a retroactivity of the anti-terrorist law prevented the courts from sentencing Ba'asyir as the 'mastermind' of the Bali bombings. The elements put forth to prove the direct implication of Ba'asyir in the bombings of the Marriott Hotel (committed after the anti-terrorist law came into effect) were insufficient in Indonesian law for a heavier sentence to be passed.

The confessions of several of his former students and disciples (except Imam Samudra), as well as the investigations led by Indonesian researchers into the *pesantren* of the Ngruki movement, have nonetheless brought to light the overwhelming moral responsibility of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. Paradoxically the most limpid works on the intellectual and moral responsibility of Ba'asyir have been produced by lecturers in state Islamic universities (Universitas Islam Negeri, UIN), who represent a young and educated traditionalist class trained in the *pesantren* of Nahdlatul Ulama.⁷⁹ Two researchers from Jakarta, Jamhari and Jajang Jahroni, have analysed the teachings delivered in the *pesantren* of the Ngruki network. Their research has clearly revealed the hate-inciting atmosphere in these

⁷⁹ His intellectual responsibility has been rejected by, amongst others, the New Zealander Tim Behrend, specialist in Indonesian literature, who in December 2002 was quoted by the Islamist press in Indonesia: "[Ba'asyir] does not publicly advocate political violence or the forced conversion of non-Muslims; in fact he openly preaches against these extremist positions in both commercial and underground media", in *Sabili*, 28 December 2002. Strangely, however, Behrend mentions Ba'asyir's 'autobiography' *Saya Teroris? Sebuah 'Pleidoi'*, Penerbit Republika, Jakarta, May 2002, VII–136 pp, written by his right-hand man, Fauzan al-Anshari and published before his arrest. In this book, Ba'asyir explains in clear terms the significance of jihad and military strategy: "We are convinced that, without jihad in God's path, the consolidation [*dienuh*] of Islam cannot be attained" (p. 63). He also recommends the formation of training camps for war. He does not name the enemy in these pages but preaches suicide as a way to attain martyrdom and sings the praises of Osama bin Laden (p. 115).

schools. One of the textbooks used in Ngruki⁸⁰ opposes, for example, real Muslims (*muslim sejati*) and “devils in human guise” (*syetan manusia*), including: the “infidels” of course but also bad Muslims of all sorts, the *munafik* (hypocrites who refused the teachings of Muhammad in its beginnings), the *zalim* (those who do evil), the *musyirik* (*mushrik*, those guilty of associationism, polytheist) and those who belong to parties or organisations that “wish to destroy Islam”. As the “demons in human guise” prepare their troops for war, it is necessary to “do likewise”. “It is for this reason that Allah commands Muslims to wage war upon them until the *fitnah* (chaos) created by their actions are totally erased and the truly valid rules on earth are none other than the law of Allah”.⁸¹ Likewise, translated works of Middle-Eastern authors inciting violence and jihad are present in the *pesantren*.⁸² The two researchers demonstrate how those who cross over into violence are marching in tune to the propaganda of their teachers, foremost of whom is Abu Bakar Ba’asyir.⁸³

Another more hefty work by several lecturers in the State Islamic University (UIN) of Yogyakarta, entitled *Negara Tuhan, The Thematic Encyclopedia*,⁸⁴ notably comprises a comparative analysis of the documents from the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia, MMI) and those of Jemaah Islamiyah,⁸⁵ which highlighted their curious similarity. The author of this analysis, Agus Maftuh Abegebriel, thus rejects the opinion voiced by Ba’asyir’s lawyers that JI was simply an ‘Islamic community’ and not an organisation with a combat ideology. He cites in particular an interview with Abdullah Sungkar where the latter confessed to being the “emir” of an “Islamic group” wanting to build an Islamic state (*daulah islamiyah*), an objective that is not new since “its embryo was the movement of DI/TII created on 7 August 1945 to counter the Dutch

⁸⁰ *Materi Pelajaran Aqidah IB*, PP Islam Al-Mukmin, Solo (no date), cited in Jamhari and Jahroni (eds), 2004, pp. 61–66.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 64, citing the booklet p. 38.

⁸² For example, the work of Said Hawwa, *Jundullah Membasmi Penyakit Ummat* (God’s Soldiers Eliminate the Disease of the Umma), 1986 and that of Abdullah Azzam, *Tarbiyah Jihadiyah* (Teaching of Jihad).

⁸³ Jamhari and Jajang Jahroni (eds), 2004, p. 47 cf. and ff.

⁸⁴ A. Maftuh Abegebriel and A. Yani Abeveiro, *Negara Tuhan, The Thematic Encyclopedia*, SR-INS Team, Penerbit SR-INS Publishing, Jakarta Selatan-Yogyakarta-Semarang, 984 pp.

⁸⁵ These documents were of a very varied nature (constitution, theory, organisation, combat guidebook, the diary of terrorist Omar al-Faruq, a Kuwaiti linked to JI). They were mostly found during police investigations following the attacks.

infidels and the secular Indonesian regime".⁸⁶ It would use three strategies to create a *daulah islamiyah*: force of the Faith (*quzzatul aqidah*), force of fraternity (*quwwatul ukhuwwah*) and military force (*quwwatul musllaha*). As such, for Agus Maftuh, Jemaah Islamiyah was definitely not a vague network of believers but a hierarchical and structured organisation from its beginnings in the mid-1990s.⁸⁷ Thus, in sum, Ba'asyir's attitude towards terrorist action was highly ambiguous but also perfectly representative of the opportunistic way in which the extremists at the fringes of Islamism operated. As we shall see, Majelis Mujahidin was created in August 2000 with the intention of offering a political window for the JI networks at a time when there were many chances of being heard. Ba'asyir's advice to his followers against using blind violence was not a condemnation of violence in principle but an evaluation of the outcome of bombings. In fact, on several occasions — notably during a highly publicised visit to the imprisoned bombers behind the Bali attacks of December 2007 — he accorded the status of martyr to all those involved in terrorist attacks.⁸⁸ Moreover, investigations carried out since February 2010 on the training camp discovered in Aceh have revealed that it was funded by Jama'ah Anshorut Tauhid (JAT), the new organisation founded in July 2008 by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir after his falling out with MMI, debunking the idea that the former ideologue of the radical movement had stopped supporting terrorism.⁸⁹

The second issue surrounding Jemaah Islamiyah is its ties with Al Qaeda. The investigations carried out after the Bali bombings leave little doubt as to the reality of these links, tenuous as they might be.⁹⁰ In some

⁸⁶ Agus Maftuh Abegebriel, 2004, p. 871, cited in the magazine *Nidaul Islam*, no. 17, February–March 1997.

⁸⁷ This was for a long time the central argument of the defence by Ba'asyir's lawyers, an argument that was repeated during the Second Congress of Mujahidin in August 2003.

⁸⁸ Syafudin Zuhri, *Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia; Ideology, Militancy and Politics*, MA Thesis, Leiden University, 2009, Chapter One.

⁸⁹ *Kompas*, 4 June 2010, see also International Crisis Group, *Asia Report*, no. 107, 6 July 2010.

⁹⁰ The reports of the International Crisis Group, supervised by Sidney Jones and published regularly since August 2002, were the first to report openly and in great detail on the complexity of the links. Sidney Jones is a specialist on Indonesia, known for her work in advancing the respect of human rights, including those of political prisoners linked to DI in the early 1980s.

way, the organisation born of the activism of Sungkar and Ba'asyir is inherently linked to Al Qaeda: at the outset, neither was a terrorist organisation but a grouping of networks allowing foreign combatants to join the Afghan jihad. This battle against the Soviets was an initiation to armed struggle that bred a sentiment of omnipotence. It was a formative experience for its participants, Arabs and Southeast Asians alike. Convinced that the Soviet Union had been defeated in their hands and no longer willing to return to a classic militancy stance, some of them sought refuge in a nihilistic terrorism — a common trait of networks that emerged after the dispersion of the Afghan jihad. Thus the Jemaah Islamiyah should not be described as the regional branch of Al Qaeda; rather it is a local variant of the now-classic scenario of combatants wishing to recoup (and transmit) the emotions of their initiation to armed struggle in the name of God. By opening up other territories to jihad — Bosnia, the Philippines or the Moluccas — these organisations hoped to perpetuate themselves by engaging in training camps and Manichean battles in alliance with 'fellow believers threatened with extermination'. The failure, or at least the relative lack of success, of these offshoots made them orphans of a concrete war. They then slid into an even more phantasmagorical register, taking on the world in a battle of good versus evil, with no palpable objectives or even precise demands but leaving in their wake very real victims.

Aside from this shared mentality, links with Osama bin Laden's organisation were limited to a few individuals.⁹¹ Hambali alias Riduan Isamuddin, who had joined Sungkar and Ba'asyir in Malaysia, was presented at the time of his arrest in August 2003 as the only non-Arab member of an Al Qaeda-led body, its regional *shura* (council). Along with Abu Jibril (Mohammad Iqbal Rahman), he is said to have activated the network that was to become Jemaah Islamiyah from 1993 to 1994. An organiser without peer, he is said to have won the admiration of Al Qaeda

⁹¹ As Carlyle Thayer rightly notes, "Al Qaeda is best conceived as a small hard-core whose influence globally and in SEA was limited in time (1996–2001) and space (Afghanistan)." Thus neither JI nor the Abu Sayyaf groups can be considered as branches or affiliates of Al-Qaeda. What characterises Southeast Asian terrorism is that it is "regionally networked, with international intermittent linkages, capable of conducting high profile attacks using conventional explosives, resulting in scores, if not hundreds, of casualties". Carlyle Thayer, "New Terrorism in Southeast Asia", in Damien Kingsbury (ed.), *Violence in Between: Conflict and Security in Archipelagic Southeast Asia*, Monash Asia Institute, Clayton, ISEAS, Singapore, 2005, p. 72.

leaders, notably for his strict management of the budget.⁹² The Bali bombing, of which he was one of the masterminds, was thus cited within the terrorist organisation as an exemplary operation that delivered devastating results at a low cost. It should be added that when the combatants trained by JI in Afghanistan left for other training sites in the mid-1990s, they benefited from the help of Afghan networks in the Philippines, those of MILF and others installed by Mohammad Jamal Khalifa, a brother-in-law of Osama bin Laden.⁹³

The third question pertaining to Jemaah Islamiyah is its influence and capacity to mobilise other Islamist networks in Indonesia as well as in Southeast Asia. This is a subject that has at times been simplified by the media, resulting in multiple errors. We have seen that Jemaah Islamiyah, in its history and organisation, shares the same outlook as the Al Qaeda movement. With its resolute and perfectly trained members, it indisputably constitutes a significant danger to Indonesia and beyond that, to the entire region. Yet it may be somewhat of an overstatement to have attributed the role of regional coordinator to JI upon the discovery of its odd project to create a ‘Nusantaran’ Islamic state (*daulah islamiyah nusantara*). A glance at the history of the region would show the implausibility of this plan: none of the rebellions led in the name of Islam in Southeast Asia since more than half a century ago has had as objective the transcendence of colonial borders, which subsequently became nation-state borders. JI’s project would be a novelty because struggles have always been situated in a much more modest perspective of regional rebellions. In the Sunda region (West Java), in Sulawesi and in many other regions of Indonesia, the Darul Islam movement tried to establish an Islamic state to rival the regime presided over by Soekarno by tapping

⁹² Jemaah Islamiyah leaders obtained funding from supposedly charitable organisations such as KOMPAK (an offshoot of DDII, created in 1998), which was itself supported by big Saudi foundations such as the Islamic International Relief Organisation, the Medical Emergency Relief Charity or Al-Haramain. As such, Agus Dwikarna, one of the heads of Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia and head of one of the militias of the Jemaah Islamiyah movement was both representative of Al-Haramain at Makassar and head of the local branch of KOMPAK. International Crisis Group, 13 July 2004, 38 pp.

⁹³ This latter was sent to Mindanao as early as 1988 to recruit combatants for Afghanistan. Having married a local girl, he was able to penetrate fighting organisations in southern Philippines. On the complex relations with the Philippines, see International Crisis Group, “Southern Philippines Backgrounder: Terrorism and the peace process”, in International Crisis Group, 13 July 2004, 38 pp.

into regionalist sentiments.⁹⁴ In the Philippines and in Thailand, the southern regions demanded recognition of their Islamic identity through independence or a large degree of autonomy. In spite of their simultaneous occurrence and geographic proximity, these struggles never joined hands. Similar demands did not constitute a united cause and the Islamist guerrillas of the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand never envisaged a common destiny. Until today, the perspective of an Islamic state covering the entire Malay world has never been in any way the dominant theme in the rhetoric of Southeast Asian radicals. The idea of a *daulah islamiyah nusantara* seems to be an extrapolation of scattered data about the effective presence of JI's regional commands, the *mantiqi*, which covered parts of Southeast Asia. JI documents examined by Abegabriel Maftuh make no mention of any *daulah islamiyah nusantara*, which would, in a way, go against the grain of this organisation that does not recognise borders — national or regional — in its vision of a worldwide caliphate.⁹⁵ The regional dimension of Jemaah Islamiyah seems to relate more to its operations than to any programme: beyond the somewhat utopian ideal of a caliphate, the real focus for JI members was on the building of an Islamic state in Indonesia first. Of course this did not necessarily appeal to non-Indonesian members.⁹⁶ Be that it may, the idea that JI would one day be able to impose its leadership over a common regional political project sounds rather unrealistic in light of the history and ideology of Southeast Asian Islam. Nonetheless, it is certain that some JI members did cultivate links with other combatant Islamist organisations of Southeast Asia, particularly in the Philippines, which lent them logistic support on many occasions.

Within the Archipelago itself, the influence of Jemaah Islamiyah remained relatively limited. The numerous political and religious dissensions within the radical Salafist movement make it incapable of envisaging any common action over the long term, even if diverse movements did work together very efficiently in carrying out acts of terrorism. These divisions, to which we shall return, had very real consequences for the

⁹⁴ On these rebellions, see Cees van Dijk, *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam; The Darul Islam in Indonesia*. Martinus Nijhoff, La Haye, 1981, X–409 pp.

⁹⁵ Agus Maftuh Abegebril, 2004, p. 875, cites the document “Nidhom Asasi” where Daulah Islamiyah is stated to be “the base for creating once again the caliphate” (*khilaafah ‘Alaa Minhajin Nuhuwwah*).

⁹⁶ We would like to thank Sidney Jones for these remarks on how Daulah Nusantara's appeal differed for Malaysian and Indonesian JI members. See also International Crisis Group, 3 February 2004, pp. 2–3.

financing of Indonesian movements and also affected their allegiances. The conflicts that broke out between Laskar Jihad and Laskar Mujahidin during the Moluccas conflict bear this out.⁹⁷ This is evidenced too by the failure, aside from gaining considerable media coverage, of the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (MMI), founded by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir in the hope of uniting all the Islamist callings. Contrary to what 'terrorism expert' Rohan Gunaratna asserted, neither Jemaah Islamiyah nor Al Qaeda succeeded in really penetrating the dominant political parties of Indonesia through the MMI.⁹⁸

In August 2000, the First Congress of Mujahidin succeeded in gathering the pro-sharia political forces in Indonesia, which were still very much a minority. On this occasion, the Ngruki network managed to give itself a legal showcase by seizing most of the posts in the new organisation: Abu Bakar Ba'asyir was proclaimed as the "amir ul-mujahidin" of his Council of Government (Halli wal 'Aqdi), Abdul Qadir Baraja was nominated to the fatwa division, and Abu Jibril to the executive committee in charge of resources.⁹⁹ Many members of the *usroh* movement of Ngruki, some of whom had been imprisoned in the 1980s, received high posts. Irfan S. Awwas thus became head of the executive committee of the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia, MMI) and remained one of its main spokesmen. Publisher in the early 1980s of the periodical *Ar-Risalah* (The Bulletin), which propagated the ideals of the Iranian Islamic Revolution in the Archipelago, he took over the Yogyakarta branch of the Coordinating Body of Indonesian Mosque Youth (Badan Koordinasi Pemuda Masjid, BKPM). It was in this capacity that he published the minutes of Sungkar and Ba'asyir's trials, earning him great prestige in the activist milieu but also 13 years of imprisonment.

For a while, MMI seemed to incarnate the cohesion of an Islam mobilised in the face of secularist demands from dominant new political forces (PDI-P in 1999). As such it attracted personalities known as

⁹⁷ After a short period of collaboration in 2000 between Laskar Mujahidin and Laskar Jihad, the relationship went downhill at the beginning of 2001. International Crisis Group, "Indonesia Backgrounder, Jihad in Central Sulawesi", in *Asia Report*, no. 74, 3 February 2004, p. 6.

⁹⁸ Cited by Maria A. Ressa, *Seeds of Terror, An Eyewitness Account of Al Qaeda's Newest Center of Operations in Southeast Asia*, Free Press, 2003, p. 52. The bombing of the Marriott greatly reduced the aura MMI enjoyed in its early days and its support in Indonesian 'mainstream' Islam.

⁹⁹ For a more complete list of the members of the Ngruki network enlisted in MMI, see International Crisis Group, 8 August 2002.

moderates, such as the academic Deliar Noer, and consolidated itself in the months following its creation. The gathering in Solo on 7 and 8 August 2000 of almost 1,800 representatives from 24 provinces of Indonesia and several dozens of delegates from overseas Islamic organisations was a real media coup, imparting an impression of legitimacy. But the Bali and Marriott bombings, and the investigations that incriminated the networks of Ba'asyir in these bombings, dealt an undeniable blow to this fleeting unity. The encouragement of militias tasked with imposing a moral order and sending combatants to the Moluccas fitted in with the discourse of a militant Islam fossilised in a paranoid defence of its values. But the blind and directionless terrorism of Ngruki's foot soldiers only provoked embarrassment and incredulity, even within the circles of militant Islam. From this moment on, the Indonesian Mujahidin Council had to fall back on the limited network from which it emanated and never became the political vehicle that the radicals had dreamt of, even if it remained for some years still a relatively efficient pressure — and at times intimidation — group.

This relative failure was certainly an important factor in the rift that occurred within the organisation in July 2008: Abu Bakar Ba'asyir resigned from his position as the emir of the movement and founded a few weeks later a new organisation, Jamaah Ansharut Tauhid (JAT). The split was caused most of all by the falling out of Ba'asyir with his right-hand man Irfan S. Awwas over the strategy to adopt in order to impose their practice of Islam in the country. No doubt disappointed by the lack of results from the involvement of his movement in politics, Ba'asyir insisted in a book written during his stay in prison on the necessity of returning to the method of the Hegira and the construction of a counter-model of society, rather than a counter-state.¹⁰⁰ Unable to refocus Jamaah Islamiyah on this primordial objective, he decided to start a new organisation and contributed thus to the weakening of a movement already in decline in a society that was starting to recover its bearings.

Legitimacy Arising from Substitution

During the so-called Reformasi period starting from 1998, a new generation of Islamist organisations came on the scene, more numerous and

¹⁰⁰ Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, *Catatan dari Penjara untuk Mengamalkan dan Menegakkan Dinul Islam* (Notes from Prison to Uphold and Establish Islam), Depok, Mushaf, 2006, cited in Syaifudin Zuhri, "Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia; Ideology, Militancy and Politics", MA Thesis, Leiden University, 2009, Chapter One.

active than before. If some of them still drew inspiration and even funding from international networks of radical Islamism, the majority of them flourished due to the political and social mutations taking place in the Archipelago. The ouster of General Soeharto, the presidency of B.J. Habibie, the legislative elections of June 1999, followed by the curtailed mandate of Abdurrahman Wahid, gave these groups many chances to be in the public eye. Their simplistic views reverberated through a population disoriented by the scale of the ongoing political, social and economic crisis. These organisations also stepped up on recruitment, thus enlarging the narrow circles in which Muslim radicalism had been confined thus far.

As we have seen earlier, this radicalism was defined by the actions of these movements positioned as representatives of religious values and a rival of the Indonesian republican state. This legitimacy arising from substitution was sometimes inscribed in the theoretical foundations of these movements. The groups acting in the name of Negara Islam Indonesia thus asserted that they did not recognise any other authority than that of a hypothetical Islamic republic and considered themselves exempt from existing laws before its advent. But the majority of the other groups in the Islamist movement, even though desirous of an Islamic state, did not directly contest the legitimacy of the country's institutions. Nonetheless some of their initiatives clearly challenged the legality of the Republic. These organisations confiscated the sovereign functions of the state, which they justified through the inaptitude of the authorities in defending Islamic values they considered fundamental. For them, respect of standards conforming to Islam should take precedence over adherence to laws set down by a government — even if it had been voted in. Therein lies the very clear distinction between, on the one hand, Muslim legitimist organisations that, on occasions, called on the authorities to better defend the interests of the Islamic community and, on the other hand, the radical groups that substituted themselves for the state in this task.

This process of substitution was patent in two domains: the defence of an Islamic moral order and participation in the bloody conflict in the Moluccas and in Sulawesi.

The Moral Order Militias

Between 1998 and 2002, at the height of the political, economic and social crisis, several cities in Indonesia witnessed the swarming of their streets at regular intervals by groups of threatening men, spotting dubious uniforms and jostling, destroying and sometimes even torching all that

incarnated vice and temptation in their eyes. From the smallest stalls to bigger complexes, drink stalls, gambling joints and brothels were wrecked in numerous cities. This phenomenon has declined considerably: between 2002 and 2006, the few militias still active operate mostly during the month of Ramadan and, as we shall see, their action has since been taken over by the local authorities in many cases.

The most well-known movement that challenged the state in its control of public order was born in 1998 under the name of Islamic Defenders Front (Front Pembela Islam, FPI). Its founder and chairman, Habib Rizieq Shihab, was himself also of Arab descent. After a year of studies at LIPIA in Jakarta, he attended classes at the Imam Muhammad ibn Saud University in Riyadh between 1983 and 1990 with the help of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OCI). Holder of the equivalent of a Bachelor's degree (after six years of studies), he returned directly to Jakarta without passing through the Afghan jihad, which was then in its last phase. The legitimacy derived from his stay in the heart of the holy land of Islam was especially important for him since he was returning to his roots. Habib Rizieq was in fact from a family of *sayyid* — Muslims who are reputed to descend from the Prophet (see Glossary). In 2000 he received visitors under a huge drawing of a family tree that identified him as the thirty-eighth generation after Muhammad.¹⁰¹ His origins and his knowledge of Arabic, which he shared with his disciples during long blessing sessions, greatly enhanced his aura in the working-class district where he lived. Habib Rizieq was not the only example of a *sayyid* descendent playing a key role in the creation of FPI. There were several others, including Sayyid Ali Baaqil, who was close to Tommy Soeharto, the ex-president's son.¹⁰²

The case of Sayyid Ali Baaqil also hints at the ambivalent ties between FPI and the New Order regime. The path of another of its founding members, Cecep Bustomi is significant in this regard. Born in 1959, he launched into proselytising at the start of the 1980s by founding Majelis Hikmatul Huda. In 1988, he was arrested and imprisoned for incitation of religious, racial and ethnic hatred, based on the evidence of recordings of his sermons. He pursued his proselytising activities in

¹⁰¹ During our visit in August 2000, he sat enthroned on wonderful rose-coloured satin cushions and regularly rang a series of bells placed at his feet that sent a horde of eager assistants running.

¹⁰² Sayyid Ali Baaqil's name was often cited in the investigation of the wave of bombings that hit Indonesia in 2000. Noorhaidi Hasan, communication at the Euroseas Congress, London, September 2001.

prison by taking over the Preaching Council of the Cipinang Penitentiary until his liberation in 1992. Two years later, in 1994, he founded the first Islamic militia to fight against vice. Under the banner of his Front Hizbullah, his supporters carried out raids on 'places of bad living'. His actions were nonetheless restricted to the area of Serang (West Java), and they were not approved of by local Muslim leaders.¹⁰³ In 1998, Cecep Bustomi helped create FPI and became its second vice-president, but continued to administer Front Hizbullah and lead its militias. The activities of one of these militias seem to have led to his assassination in May 2000. During a marriage held in a suburb of north-eastern Jakarta, several dozens of Front Hizbullah members went on a rampage and expelled the guests, cutting short festivities which had included popular Jaipong dances. A member of the family who was part of the armed forces tried to intercede and was killed. The following day, Cecep Bustomi was called up to the headquarters of the Special Forces Command (Kopassus) and was shot in the street as he left the interrogation. Since then, FPI has cited this incident as proof that it did not get along with military networks close to the former regime,¹⁰⁴ a denial that is all the more pressing given the close relationship between these militias and the New Order that they defended to the end. Several personalities linked to the Soeharto regime took part in the funeral of Cecep Bustomi, particularly Hamzah Haz, chairman of PPP, the only Islamic party of the New Order (he later served as Megawati's vice-president), as well as Noegroho Djajoesman, ex-commander of the Jakarta police force.¹⁰⁵ FPI itself was a product of militias created by regime loyalists to counter the student opposition against President Habibie in November 1998. This was denied by its leaders for a long time, but General Kivlan Zen acknowledged the operation during the electoral campaign of 2004.¹⁰⁶ Upon the defeat of its champion, B.J. Habibie, FPI retreated from the political scene and transformed itself into a militia safeguarding public morality. Under the slogan of 'Live honourably or die as a martyr', it attacked the 'vice dens' (*tempat maksiat*) likely to turn Muslims in the big cities of Indonesia away from the virtuous path.

¹⁰³ An ulama of Banten thus declared to the weekly *Tempo* that Front Hizbullah's activities in the region "soiled" (*mencoreng*) Islam's name (*Tempo*, 6 August 2000).

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Habib Rizieq, Jakarta, August 2000.

¹⁰⁵ *Gatra*, 5 August 2000.

¹⁰⁶ Kivlan Zen, *Konflik dan Integrasi TNI-AD*, IPS, Jakarta, 2004, 178 pp. On the militias known as *pamswakarsa*, see pp. 122–123; Jamhari, "Mapping Radical Islam in Indonesia", in *Studia Islamika*, vol. 10, no. 3, 2003: 10–11.

At its height, in 2000, FPI counted thousands of members — not quite the several millions claimed by its founder. This sort of patent exaggeration was common in radical Islam circles and was always exposed during the various protests organised by the FPI, which gathered thousands at most.¹⁰⁷

Apart from Front Pembela Islam and Front Hizbullah, local organisations that received less media attention such as Amphibi of Lombok (east of Bali) also launched into the defence of moral order. These militias had the same *modus operandi*, portraying their actions as an attempt to moralise districts by destroying vice dens. Like Habib Rizieq, their leaders claimed that they were only compensating for the shortcomings of the authorities. They explained that their street raids were only undertaken after they had asked the provincial parliament (DPRD) and the regional government (Pemerintah Daerah) to enforce the law. It was only when the police failed to act that their men stepped in to “solve the problem”.¹⁰⁸ This line of argument, which implicitly acknowledged the republican law as the standard to follow, was not without logic when the places targeted were clandestine gambling joints or brothels disguised as karaoke bars. But it was a stretch of reason when raids were carried out against simple drink stalls or billiard rooms (authorised by the law) or when threats were issued to Muslims who did not fast during the month of Ramadan. Then the reference became the sharia, regardless of whether it was recognised institutionally. The mere invocation of the Islamic principle — “the preservation of good and the battle against evil” (*amar mâruf nahi mungkar*) — was justification enough to take action.

The militias’ activities provoked different reactions amongst the population. In Jakarta, the so-called informal sector of street side vendors objected to these violent interventions: one did not know when nor where the militias would strike, and when a soup stallholder found himself in a problematic zone (an area where alcohol or lottery was being peddled), he could be affected and preferred to close shop at certain times, notably on

¹⁰⁷ It was in fact a committee set up to promote the implementation of the sharia in Indonesia that was presented as evidence of the organisation’s success: it was purported that 15 million members were recruited by FPI in 18 provinces. This figure is totally unreliable as it is not backed up by any statistics. Protests organised by FPI alone seemed to have gathered only hundreds of persons, but it was habitual to organise joint events. Nonetheless, it is certain that the influence of the *habib* (religious persons of Arab descent) network is especially strong in the *betawi* community, the first inhabitants of Jakarta.

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Habib Rizieq, August 2000.

Fridays. Taxi drivers, too, felt that their business dipped whenever there were rumours of possible raids. Though less affected, the chic districts of the capital were not spared and some fashionable ‘cafes’ paid the price, much to the displeasure of the Muslim bourgeoisie. In spite of these protestations, the conservative Indonesian press repeatedly reported that people living in areas where raids took place approved of such actions, especially when they led to greater security. According to *Gatra*, this was the case in Mataram (on the island of Lombok), where the Amphibi militia played the role of supplementing the forces of law and order. Dressed in orange and sporting a badge with the picture of a crocodile, members patrolled the villages armed with machetes. For months, the police tolerated and even encouraged their actions by proposing to provide them with legal training.¹⁰⁹ In fact, Amphibi represented a certain institutionalisation of a very widespread tradition of popular justice. Under the cover of a popular and misleading expression, “to play judge” (*main hakim sendiri*), lynchings were frequently carried out when thieves were unfortunate enough to be caught by the crowd before the intervention of the police. The incompetence of the latter was largely blamed for the phenomenon. Apparently the people preferred to call on Amphibi, in exchange for some petrol or money, rather than to complain to a police force whose services were just as expensive and less effective. Sometimes, the police themselves cooperated with the militias.¹¹⁰ Numerous militias thus saw their actions either as a substitute for or a supplement to that of the forces of law and order. They often hoped for, if not collaboration, then at least tacit approval from the police. Aa Gym, head of Daarut Tauhid, who also participated in coercive morality for a while, was open about his affinity with the military. Being unable to join the army as he fell short of the height requirement by five centimetres, he declared in 2000 that he was working closely with the local command. According to him, the fight against drugs, which he made the priority of his movement, received the backing of the military. The members of his militia, Santri Serba Guna, benefited from training at the local military academy while the military gained a more respectable image in the eyes of the public. Aa Gym claimed that his efforts to “convert” the local authorities to the

¹⁰⁹ In an interview with the weekly *Gatra* of 5 August 2000, H. Jony Yodyana, head of the police for the province of West Nusa Tenggara, acknowledged some form of collaboration with these groups and asserted that they were the reason behind a decrease in the crime rate.

¹¹⁰ *Gatra*, 5 August 2000.

moral order were a great success. He declared that he “moved to tears” an assembly of some 1,500 officers before whom he spoke of his combat.¹¹¹ He also claimed to have persuaded the Bandung Municipality to “build mosques in place of brothels and to relocate the prostitutes to Islamic boarding schools”.¹¹²

But the relations between the moral order militias and the forces of law and order were not always as edifying as what Aa Gym recounted. In many cases, these operations merely used religion to cover up the protection extended by the forces of law and order to various gambling joints in the suburbs of the big conurbation, in return for payment. During these big punitive expeditions, the ‘anger of the masses’ often proved to be very selective, varying according to how much the owners of these vice dens paid in exchange for ‘protection’ by hooligans linked to these organisations.

In many cases the local police was quite simply overwhelmed. In October 2000, in Jepara, a small industrial city in northern Java, a representative from PKB, a moderate Muslim party, accused a local militia, the Group of Young Muslims Concerned with Vice (*Gerakan Pemuda Islam Peduli anti-kemungkaran*) of terrorising the population.¹¹³ Masked men on motorbikes with hidden licence plates attacked shops selling alcohol and gambling dens. These actions benefited the mafia milieu, as *preman* (thugs¹¹⁴) of all sorts were hired to protect threatened establishments. There was also a political aspect to the riposte: the muscled men close to PKB were mobilised to react against these militias, which were considered as allies of PPP, one of PKB’s rivals. For several months, traditional leaders as well as the police had to relinquish the streets to these rival clans, contributing to the sense of abandonment felt by a large part of the population.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ This effusiveness of emotions was to be capitalised on in the following years.

¹¹² Interview with Abdullah Gymnastiar, in *Asian Wall Street Journal*, 11 April 2000.

¹¹³ These groups were baptised ‘*sadigo*’ by the population, an acronym for ‘*salah sedikit digorok*’ (‘a small mistake and they’ll cut your throat’). Numerous interviews in Yogyakarta and Jepara, October 2000.

¹¹⁴ The Indonesian term for hired hand or gangster, *preman*, comes from the English word *freeman*. Soeharto’s anti-crime campaign at the start of the 1980s had, as we have seen, pushed petty criminals to the mosques, a place of refuge where they were “taken care of” by Darul Islam. Abdul Syukur, 2003, p. 48.

¹¹⁵ According to one political leader we met in Jepara on 8 October 2000 who wished to remain anonymous, the police did not dare to intervene as each crackdown would bring on even more militias.

Since 2002, the operations of these ‘militias of virtue’ have become rarer. To demonstrate that the Indonesian government was acting against radical Islam, Habib Rizieq was arrested on October 2002, shortly after the Bali bombings. He was released and placed under house arrest a few weeks later, after FPI announced its intention to suspend raids against vice dens. But in April 2003, Habib Rizieq left his residence for a supposed humanitarian mission in Iraq. He was re-arrested, released by his supporters then went back himself to prison. Sentenced in August to seven months in prison, he put his FPI activities into cold storage. In October 2004, his organisation launched some highly publicised raids during the fasting period, but these were opposed by the forces of law and order as well as the population of the affected districts.¹¹⁶ In August 2005, FPI went so far as to threaten the headquarters of the liberal intellectual Muslims of Utan Kayu. Later, the relative quietening of moral militias seemed to indicate contradictory developments. Less tolerated by a population tired of their excesses, they also received much less media attention, thus depriving them of the crucial element in dramatising the formal requirements of the Islam they represent. However, feared by local leaders in search of symbolic measures and shopkeepers worried about their livelihood, they also contributed to the installation of a moral Islamic order — their *raison d’être* — particularly during the Ramadan period.

In the following years, FPI tried to concentrate its attacks on targets already exposed to public condemnation by organisations with a less choleric reputation. The raids carried out during the Ramadan period decreased considerably and have almost disappeared since 2007. On the other hand, Habib Rizieq’s organisation benefited from the debates surrounding the anti-pornography law to take aim at the people behind the Indonesian edition of *Playboy* magazine. FPI was especially active in the fight against the Ahmadiyah movement, which the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI) in 2005 labelled as heretic in a fatwa, and which was prohibited by a joint decree of June 2008 by the Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Religions and the Public Prosecutor from spreading its beliefs. For some years now, the Ahmadiyah mosques have been subject to regular raids, often driven by FPI, and it has kept up its attacks sporadically.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ The information website <http://www.laksamana.net> reported many such incidents on 26 October 2004.

¹¹⁷ In December 2009, a house in the south of Jakarta where Ahmadiyah members resided was attacked by men who claimed they were from FPI. The members of the sect had to be placed under police protection. *Jakarta Post*, 11 December 2009.

However, the leaders of FPI seemed to have made a serious political miscalculation by attacking on 1 June 2008 a peaceful protest by prestigious Muslim intellectuals demonstrating, in the name of Pancasila, against the joint decree then in the midst of preparation. Public opinion was shocked by the degree of violence, which left several dozens of people injured. The authorities, who were trying to find a legal framework for the growing intolerance for the Ahmadiyah, were obliged to clamp down on it. Demonstrations of force and intimidation tactics by its supporters notwithstanding, Habib Rizieq Shihab was condemned, after a highly publicised trial in November 2008, to 18 months of prison. As we shall see, this measure, along with the nomination of the officer in charge of the investigation (General Bambang Hendarso Danuri) as head of the national police force signalled the authorities' new attitude, at least at the national level, towards radical movements, henceforth deprived of the pre-emption of legalised violence that had allowed them to flourish. However, the case of the violent disruption of a wayang show by militias calling themselves Laskar Jihad in Central Java in October 2010, highlights the power Islamist vigilants continue to exercise in the regions and their trouble-making potential, especially in some places in Java.¹¹⁸

The Moluccas, Land of Jihad

Violent confrontations broke out on 22 November 1998 in Ketapang, a working-class district in central Jakarta, where Habib Rizieq, the leader of FPI had delivered a long sermon in the Khairul Biqa' mosque the previous day. That morning, a fight broke out between two Ambonese gangs of *preman* (thugs), one Muslim and the other Christian, attracting parking attendants close to the district's lottery stalls.¹¹⁹ Some 14 Christians were hacked to death with machetes while 27 Christian buildings were destroyed. Much remains murky about the event but it seemed that the Muslim gang was linked to FPI militias and that the Christian attendants were close to a certain Milton, companion of the notorious *preman* Yoris Raweyai of Pemuda Pancasila, both groups being close to the Soeharto family.¹²⁰ This massacre sparked off other incidents in many regions of the Archipelago almost immediately. On 30 November, a demonstration

¹¹⁸ *The Jakarta Globe*, 23 October 2010.

¹¹⁹ *Tajuk*, third trimester, second year, 1999.

¹²⁰ A book published in June 2004 by General Kivlan Zen suggests that the violence in Ketapang could have arisen from the political mobilisation of the militias. According

of solidarity for the victims turned into a riot in the city of Kupang, in West Timor. But very quickly, the epicentre of this interfaith violence shifted to the Moluccas whence originated the first victims. In Ambon, the arrival of the Jakarta *preman* incited violence, at a time when tension was already high over an incident on 16–18 November when the military clamped down on a student demonstration against the army's 'dual function', killing three.¹²¹ As early as December 1998, violence broke out in the south-east of the Moluccas. The first riot in Dobo, in the south of the Archipelago, on 14 January 1999 caused eight deaths. Clashes also occurred in Mataram (Lombok), a stronghold of radical Islam on 17 and 19 January.¹²² At the same time, on 19 January, the last day of Ramadan, a small quarrel between a Christian minibus driver and a Muslim Ambonese grew into a pitched battle that enflamed the whole bus terminal of Ambon, capital of the province carrying the same name.¹²³

The conflict spread rapidly to the rest of the city and the security apparatus made no attempt to end the violence until the fourth day of the conflict.¹²⁴ The two camps armed themselves to the best of their abilities (iron rods, bamboo sticks, explosives used in fishing and locally made

to him, Ketapang was an act of vengeance for the killing on 13 November of four Muslim Ambonese who were militia members (*pam-swakarsa*) hired by the army to support the election of President Habibie at the Special Session of the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR). These *pam-swakarsa* had been rejected and sometimes even driven away by the population. These revelations explained, six years later, the passivity of the police during the massacre at Ketapang, a passivity that had raised many questions indeed. Kivlan Zen, 2004, pp. 122–123. See also Aditjondro George Junus, "Guns, Pamphlets and Handie-Talkies: How the Military Exploited Local Ethno-Religious Tensions in Maluku to Preserve their Political and Economic Privileges", in Ingrid Wessel and Georgia Wimhofer (eds), *Violence in Indonesia*, Abera, Hamburg, 2001, p. 112.

¹²¹ Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006, p. 105.

¹²² Kivlan Zen, 2004, p. 123.

¹²³ There are many versions of this incident. Some report that the Muslim tried to extort money from the Christian bus driver, while others claim that he was simply trying to recuperate the amount owed to him for renting the bus. Cees van Dijk, *A Country in Despair: Indonesia between 1997 and 2004*, KITLV Press, Leiden, 2004, pp. 385. The publication of Kivlan Zen's book in 2004, however, opens other perspectives, as it is noteworthy that clashes also occurred in Mataram on the same day. This makes the spontaneity of the incidents in Ambon very doubtful and could confirm the oft-heard hypothesis that the violence on 19 January was not totally spontaneous.

¹²⁴ Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006, p. 103.

firearms), organised themselves into district-based militias identifying themselves thus: red for the Christians, white for the Muslims. In a matter of weeks, the whole of the Southern Moluccas province was embroiled in violence. In the neighbouring islands of Seram, Saparua, Haruku and in the Banda Islands, the conflict pitched one village against another depending on the composition of their populations. In July 1999, a second wave of riots broke out in Ambon, this time in a middle-class district. The Catholics, who had been relatively spared up till then in a conflict that pitched Muslims against Protestants, were badly hit. From this period onwards, Ambon and the surrounding islands were separated into two zones — Christian and Muslim — and battles were waged to eliminate enclaves. Ambon became a sort of tropical Beyrouth with almost airtight demarcation lines, zones of no man's land and lucrative trafficking. The Moluccas degenerated into an apartheid situation that even caused the national maritime company Pelni to organise its dealings between this province and the rest of Indonesia on religious lines in order to avoid confrontations.¹²⁵ In August 1999, the province of Northern Moluccas was in turn affected. Within a few weeks, the conflict played itself out according to modalities different from those in the south.

In all, the war in the Moluccas has resulted in thousands of deaths (5,000–8,000 according to estimates) and the exodus of hundreds of thousands of people.¹²⁶ Indonesia was especially hard hit since the devastating effects of this war were accompanied by a similarly bloody conflict in the neighbouring island of Sulawesi. In the region of Poso, in the centre of Sulawesi, clashes between the Christians and Muslims caused almost 2,000 deaths between 1999 and 2001. These conflicts were similar in nature and ended with the fragile Malino 1 and 2 accords, signed by representatives from different religious communities under the auspices of the Indonesian government in December 2001 and February 2002. In the following years, there were almost no major outbreaks in the two regions but sporadic confrontations occurred. In the Moluccas, almost two-thirds of the refugees were able to return to their original villages at the beginning

¹²⁵ Gerry van Klinken, "The Maluku Wars: Bringing Society Back In", in *Indonesia* 71, April 2001: 1–26.

¹²⁶ In August 2004, the minister of social prosperity mentioned that almost 300,000 persons were still living in refugee camps across the country and that an estimated 1.3 million Indonesians had already returned to their homes after having been displaced. A huge majority of these refugees were originally from the Moluccas. *Jakarta Post*, 28 August 2004.

of 2004. In Poso, where the radical Islamist militants were more deeply entrenched, the situation was tenser and several massacres of Christians occurred again in 2004 and 2005, including the decapitation of three female college students at the end of 2005.

Economic and Social Bitterness, and Religious Violence

The wars that ravaged the Moluccas and central Sulawesi had similar causes and developments. These were conflicts that broke out in extremely tense contexts as a result of deep demographic and social imbalances, in regions that attracted generally spontaneous migration. We have seen that in the Moluccas, the influx of migrants from regions with a Muslim majority had altered the religious makeup in the 1980s. Figures from the Central Bureau of Statistics showed that Muslims made up 49.9 per cent of the population in 1971 and 56.8 per cent in 2000. Protestants and Catholics respectively accounted for 41.5 per cent and 5.4 per cent in 1971, and 36.9 per cent and 5.8 per cent in 2000. This shift in the religious majority had significant consequences for the institutional equilibrium.

In Ambon, the resentment felt by the native Moluccans was targeted against the 'BBM' (Butonese, Bugis and Makassarese), hailing from the three southern regions of Sulawesi. Mostly Muslim, the 'BBM' had made their mark as successful small-scale traders, undermining local businessmen.¹²⁷ Throughout the 1990s, the fragile status quo of inter-community relations was challenged. The privileging of Muslims on a national level, supported by the new Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals Association (ICMI), encouraged Muslims to demand a more prominent position within the administration, which the Christians saw as the start of their imminent marginalisation. In Ambon in 1999, the domination of Muslims in the bureaucratic sector was such that they comprised 74 per cent of the first echelon, 69 per cent of the second and 53 per cent of the third.¹²⁸ All nominations were henceforth examined by the yardstick

¹²⁷ Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006, p. 104. They took over the majority of stalls in the main traditional markets at Batumerah, Mardika and Pelita. In the months leading up to the explosion in Ambon, graffiti with '*usir* BBM' (expel the BBM), calling for the expulsion of the Butonese, Bugis and Makassarese, the ethnic groups making up the new migration, multiplied on walls in the town (Cees van Dijk, 2001, p. 385).

¹²⁸ According to Sinansari Ecip (*Menyulut Ambon — Kronologi Merambatnya berbagai Kerusuhan Lintas Wilayah di Indonesia*, Mizan, Bandung, 1999, pp. 69–70, cited in Gerry van Klinken, 2001, p. 19); Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006, p. 105.

of religious identity. Pattimura University in Ambon was accused of having too many Christian lecturers, who were themselves accused of reserving too many scholarships for their fellow Christians.¹²⁹ Everywhere the situation degenerated. Moluccans who had returned from afar after settling in other regions of Indonesia were particularly sensitive to the changes in society. Moluccan society in Ambon had a long tradition of friendly interfaith coexistence in separate villages (*negeri-negeri*) but this started to disintegrate irrevocably. The ambience of neighbourliness broke down starkly after the fatwa issued by the Council of Indonesian Ulama in Jakarta calling upon Muslims to keep away from Christian celebrations.¹³⁰

A factor of identity amongst others, religion was never at the root of these clashes and became a key issue only as the confrontations developed. The religious element was the glue that effectively held together different threads of cohesion, allowing for a simplistic reading of complex conflicts. Put in place by exterior elements — particularly by the radical press¹³¹ — it was quickly imposed on the protagonists of the conflicts, who were viewed on the basis of their religion regardless of their

¹²⁹ See Chapter Two.

¹³⁰ A Muslim Ambonese confided in us about the differences that struck him upon his return home in 1992 after ten years of study in Java: “In the streets, I saw Muslims with Muslims and Christians with Christians; we did not mix anymore. Ever since the Council of Indonesian Ulama had officially called upon Muslims not to wish ‘Merry Christmas’ to Christians (the 1981 fatwa), things have changed. Previously, in school, we all sang Christian songs together, and we Muslims knew them as well as the Christians. Then one day, a teacher pointed out Christians to sing these songs but not the Muslim students, who felt picked on. We ran into problems for the ceremonies in honour of the national hero Pattimura: 50 per cent of the committee for the preparation of the celebrations had to be Christians, and the rest Muslims. We hardly spoke anymore between Christians and Muslims. When I went to look for my Christian friends, I had to bear with rebukes from my Muslim friends: ‘Don’t hang around them, they are Christians!’ When the Christians obtained a permit for building a church, the Muslims would build a mosque, purely out of retaliation, even if the mosque had no reason to be built in the area. Competition was fierce. Protestants were accused of being arrogant and Muslims were just as bad. Everyone put on a show of being religious. Christians displayed crosses around their necks more frequently, or got tattoos, and more stickers of ‘Follow the Lord’ could be seen. This was during the 1990s, one could feel the mounting sectarianism.” Interview, Jakarta, November 2000. See also Judo Poerwowidagdo (ed.), *Menuju Rekonsiliasi di Halmahera, Pusat Pemberdayaan untuk Rekonsiliasi dan Perdamaian (PPRP)*, Jakarta, 2003, p. 104.

¹³¹ See Chapter Four.

actions. As demonstrated by the turmoil in West Kalimantan during the same period, this conflict was essentially socio-ethnic in nature and need not have turned into a religious confrontation.¹³²

Intra-religious solidarity was kindled after the first confrontations by the spread of terrible rumours. The islands close to Ambon were seized by a phenomenon of mass fear from March 1999. Two symmetrical sinister legends made their rounds, each feeding upon the other. Tales of savage murders, dismembered bodies and massacres of women and children left no one indifferent and stirred calls for revenge, which were in turn distorted, thus fuelling the infernal cycle.¹³³

These rumours played a key role in the mobilisation of Islamic solidarity outside of the Moluccas.¹³⁴ Throughout 1999, these stories were spread first by the Islamist press (*Sabili, Hidayatullah*), then by the conservative Muslim press (*Media Dakwah*). Later the Moluccan Christian press lost half of its readership to a more audacious and sometimes sensationalist press.¹³⁵

¹³² Indeed, in this case, it was ethnic solidarity rather than religious identity that dominated. On 17 January 1999, at Parit Setia (West Kalimantan, Kecamatan Jawai), some Malays (Muslims) beat up a Madurese (Muslim) accused of burglary. On 19 January (day of Idul Fitri), some 200 Madurese descended upon Parit Setia in revenge and killed three Malays. On 16 March, after a Christian Dayak (Martinus Amat) was stabbed — supposedly by a Madurese, though the Madurese leaders denied this — Dayaks became involved on the side of the Malay Muslims. The violence increased tenfold and spread to the whole of Sambas, forcing the Madurese to flee to Kuching, Pontianak and Madura. In spite of two years of peace in West Kalimantan, they were still unable to return to Sambas. Interview with Glenn Smith, specialist in the Madurese and in the conflict, June 2004. For a multi-dimensional look at these conflicts, see Dewi Fortuna Anwar *et al.*, *Violent Internal Conflicts in Asia Pacific, Histories, Political Economies and Politics*, Obor, Lipi, Lasema-CNRS, KITLV, Jakarta, 2005, 416 pp.

¹³³ That children — called *agas* (jungle mosquito) and reputed to possess magic powers and to be invincible — were used as arsonists in this conflict contributed to this special atmosphere. Gerry van Klinken, 2001, p. 4.

¹³⁴ In 2000 and 2001, for example, visitors to the DDII headquarters in Jakarta would have walked past a wall of photographs showing the savagery of Christian combatants.

¹³⁵ In 2001, the circulation of *Suara Maluku* declined from 10,000 to 5,000, losing out to *Siwalima*. For example, *Suara Maluku* did not expressly name Laskar Jihad, using instead the term “*perusuh*” (troublemakers). While the village was Muslim, the term used was “majority group”. Eriyanto, *Media dan Konflik Ambon*, Kantor Berita Radio 68H, Jakarta, 2003, p. 98.

The case of Northern Moluccas illustrates well the inexorable escalation from ethnic and economic antagonism to a bloody religious war. For Chris Wilson in his remarkable study of the conflict in the north, “economic opportunism, political inequality, high-level political competition, insecurity, ethnic and religious antagonism, territory and natural resources all played no inconsequential roles”.¹³⁶ It is worth recalling here briefly Wilson’s account of this escalation as it highlights the complexity of how conflicts arise.

In North Moluccas, tension was heightened by unusual political decisions when, in 1999, President Habibie decided to proceed with the division of the Moluccas province into two. The question of stakes in the administration became a sensitive point. The conflict started when a new subdistrict was created in Malifut without consultation of the local population, the ethnic Kaos. This was a politically expedient measure pushed by the ethnic Makian elite before the June 1999 elections. The Kaos, residents of this peninsula to the north of Halmahera, were mostly Protestant, while the Makian, hailing from the island of the same name situated in the south of Ternate, were mostly Muslims who had been settled in Malifut in 1975 by the Indonesian authorities after the threat of a major volcanic eruption in their region. A gold mine was recently discovered in the disputed territory, adding an economic dimension to the dispute.¹³⁷ The Makian lobbied in Jakarta to have the mine included in a new subdistrict that was originally part of the Kao district and to have the capital moved from Tobelo to Malifut, something all the more unacceptable for the Kao since the recently passed decentralisation law had given 80 per cent of the royalties to the region.

The inclusion of five Kao villages in the new Malifut subdistrict was the first cause for protest, with the Kao rejecting this ethnic partition. On 18 and 19 August, Sosol and Wangeotak, two of the five Kao villages at the centre of the controversy were wrecked by the Makians in a surprising show of violence after a dispute erupted at a party.¹³⁸ The father of the village head of Sosol, Yordan Moumou, was killed, another casualty followed, then the whole community fled and had to be evacuated by boat. The entire villages of Sosol and Wangeotak, viewed as

¹³⁶ Chris Wilson, *Ethno-Religious Violence in Indonesia, From Soil to God*, Routledge Contemporary Southeast Asia Series, London & NY, 2008, p. 195.

¹³⁷ Farsijana Adeney-Risakotta, “The Politics of Ritual and Ritual of Politics in the Moluccas”, paper presented at a Euroseas Congress (London, 5–6 September 2001).

¹³⁸ Wilson, 2008, p. 62.

posing “the greatest obstacle to the viability of the new sub-district”, were destroyed, including the church and the school.¹³⁹ The north Moluccan administration in Ternate failed to react: there was neither prosecution nor an effort at rehabilitation for the two villages, leading the Kaos to end their attempts at conciliation, putting their fate instead into the hands of a respected and feared Kao leader Benny Bitjara. After a second incident on 25 October involving Christian and Muslim Kaos on one side and Muslim Makians on the other, Bitjara and some 5,000 armed Kaos attacked Malifut, whose population had already escaped over the preceding weeks, with mostly men (5,000) remaining. Three persons were killed and all the houses of 16 villages were destroyed while schools and mosques were left intact, with the intention of showing that the conflict was “not about religion” (Muslim Kaos also participated in the attack).¹⁴⁰ The Kaos repeated their demand that the Makians be evacuated from Kao territory and the remaining Malifut population was moved to Ternate.¹⁴¹

It was in Ternate and Tidore, the political centres of the new province, that the conflict took a religious turn. So far, much more than religion, it was ties to the land and the conviction of being legitimate inhabitants of the territory with rights to the land that nurtured bonds and subsequently led to what Chris Wilson qualifies as “identity-interest spiral”.¹⁴² A key element in the new cycle of violence was the arrival of Makian refugees in the context of the political rivalry opposing the sultans of Ternate and Tidore for the post of governor of the new province of Northern Maluku. This rivalry was exploited by the Makians, who tried in vain to provoke anti-Christian rioting in a bid to gain the support of the whole Muslim community in the conflict that pitted them against the Kaos.¹⁴³ Besides terrible stories of the carnage in Ambon spread via North Moluccans based in Ambon and back home, a significant trigger in this religious turn of Ternate and Tidore was the circulation of a spurious letter that fuelled theories circulated by the Islamist press of a systematic (and unilateral) massacre of Muslims (*pembantaian umat islam*). In early November 1999, photocopies of this letter dated July 1999, which carried the letterhead of the synod of the Protestant Churches of the Moluccas (Gereja Protestan Maluku, GPM), and which evoked a

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 66.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 141.

¹⁴² Ibid., p. 192.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 71.

grand plan to kill and expel the Muslims from Halmahera, was circulated in Tidore, much to the distress of the local authorities. The forgery was evidenced by the signature “Semi Titaley” (for Sammy Titaley) whereas it should have been “Pdt S.P. Titaley” (pdt for *pendeta*, the title of a Protestant priest).¹⁴⁴ In Tidore, on 3 November, a local pastor, Arie Risakotta, was summoned to the local government office and forced to read the letter. In spite of his explanations and denial, the pastor was punched, chased and hacked to death with machetes as he ran from the office, his corpse set ablaze.¹⁴⁵ Riots followed immediately and churches were destroyed in Indonesiana and Soasio on Tidore Island. In the space of one night, 35 Christians were killed, 3 churches were burnt and all 260 houses belonging to the Christians on the island were destroyed. The rioters were said to have been mainly Makians from Ternate and from Tomalou in Tidore, where there was a strong Makian community.¹⁴⁶ Many in the crowd were said to have arrived with petrol cans, suggesting premeditation. Tensions spilled over to neighbouring Ternate where red crosses were found painted on the walls of the houses of Christians. But the Christians stayed, confident in the protection of the sultan. On 6 November, Ternate was touched by the riots: 31 people were killed and large numbers injured, and 6 churches and 353 houses were destroyed. The 12,763 Christians fled to the police and military bases as well as the sultan’s palace, where they were protected by his troops Pasukan Kuning, and then on to Tobelo and North Sulawesi. Ternate was left with only 30 per cent of its teachers, while the influx of Muslim refugees weighed increasingly on the system. The violence, the killing of a pastor and the destruction of churches, facilitated by Machiavellian elites, further aggravated the situation: violence spread to almost every area of North Maluku and the two faiths faced off in a bloody confrontation.

The apex of violence occurred in the subdistricts of Galela and Tobelo, the main Christian centre in North Maluku where thousands of Christian refugees from Ternate and rural areas of central Halmahera had taken refuge. Weapons and bombs were used on both sides. Numerous other incidents occurred in the area, contributing to a weakening of ethnic ties, a phenomenon already apparent from the 1980s.¹⁴⁷ The decision by unknown Muslim leaders to commission the tailoring of jihad

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 84.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 86.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 88.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 101–108 for details.

white robes exacerbated tensions. Rumours of a “bloody Christmas” led some officials of the Protestant church of Tobelo to ask for outside aid to protect the church and its surroundings during the Christmas celebrations. The security reinforcement came — a truck with 40 villagers wearing red headbands and holding spears, and was taken as evidence of a Christian plan to attack Muslims.¹⁴⁸ On 26 December, some young Muslims threw stones at the house of a retired Christian Ambonese police officer in Gosoma, Tobelo City, provoking within the next hour fighting on the streets between hundreds of Muslims and Christians. During the night of 26 December, senior Christian community leaders called on Benny Bitjara in Kupa Kupa, who mobilised thousands of Christian Kaos to travel to Tobelo.¹⁴⁹ By mid-morning of 27 December, the central area of Tobelo had come under Muslim control. In the evening, Bitjara galvanised his troops and launched an attack early the next morning. Approximately 100 Muslims died in this attack and the main mosque was destroyed. Over the next few days, more died in surrounding villages (90 in Gorua, 160 in Popilo, 250 or 300 in Togoliua). Calls for retaliation against Christians resonated amid tales by refugees arriving in Ternate of “unprovoked Christian attacks” resulting in “the deaths of hundreds of defenceless people in mosques”. The Muslim militias of Tidore and Ternate, now called Pasukan Jihad, united to expel Christians in Malifut and in the Galela subdistrict.¹⁵⁰ In the last two weeks of December 1999, the violence that raged in the region caused more than 2,000 deaths.¹⁵¹ The war had definitely become religious and was a cause for mobilisation outside the region.¹⁵² On 27 December, the leaders of the Protestant churches called for international intervention.

In South Moluccas, the conflict continued to rage and grab national and international attention. National television retransmitted images of the grand church of Silo in Ambon that was torched on 26 December.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

¹⁵⁰ Wilson, 2008, p. 186. In retaliation, in May 2000, three Christian villages were razed in Galela, killing 700 Christians. Eriyanto, 2003, p. 124.

¹⁵¹ See Gerry van Klinken, 2001, p. 7. Wilson explains the brutal violence with a confluence of factors: the religious sensitivity of both communities and the involvement of Protestant pastors in the violence increased a sense that the violence was divinely sanctioned. The Christian militias sought to expel Muslims from the subdistrict before they could regroup and ally with sympathetic security personnel. They also tried to deter Muslims from returning to the area.

¹⁵² Wilson, 2008, p. 187.

The international press also published poignant accounts of a few Christian survivors who escaped carnage on the neighbouring island of Buru where on the morning of 23 December, about 100 Christians were killed in a plywood factory.¹⁵³

At the end of 1999, demonstrations were organised in different cities in Indonesia at the instigation of organisations such as KISDI. On 7 January 2000, a big gathering was held in the centre of Jakarta and calls for jihad were heard. This was the famous 'action of a million Muslims' (*aksi sejuta ummat*).¹⁵⁴ Mobilisation on this day extended well beyond radical Islam with even Amien Rais, leader of Muhammadiyah and chairman of the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR), giving a speech. A sentiment of Islamic solidarity, combined with patriotism fuelled by persistent rumours of foreign support for a Republic of the Secessionist South Moluccas (Republik Maluku Selatan, RMS), united the crowd gathered around the Monas, the obelisk built to commemorate Independence in Merdeka Square.¹⁵⁵

The fantasy of a Western conspiracy aimed at breaking up the Archipelago was widespread not only amongst the population but also amongst the Indonesian elites. To understand the extent of this fantasy, one has to place it in the context of the East Timor crisis, which saw the

¹⁵³ *Christian Science Monitor*, 24 January 2000. Some 8,000 persons escaped and hid in the jungle for weeks.

¹⁵⁴ After Friday prayers on 7 January 2000, between 100,000 and 300,000 persons gathered at Lapangan Merdeka (Independence Square) in the centre of Jakarta, calling on the government to intervene on behalf of the Muslims of the Moluccas. Amien Rais, chairman of MPR and PAN; Hamzah Haz, PPP chairman; and Ahmad Sumargono of PBB and KISDI addressed the crowd. In the midst of calls for jihad, several Islamic organisations began to sign up warriors ready to leave for the Moluccas. International Crisis Group, 8 February 2002.

¹⁵⁵ At the beginning of the 1950s, a group from the Moluccan section of the Royal Dutch East Indies Army (KNIL) that wished to remain in the Federal Republic of Indonesia, which was part of East Indonesia, rebelled against the nascent Republic of Indonesia. They refused to integrate and proclaimed instead the Republik Maluku Selatan (RMS). The conspiracy theory evoking RMS involvement in the Moluccan conflict first appeared at the national level on 28 January 1999 in a press conference organised by two hard-line Muslim groups, the Indonesian Committee for the Solidarity of the Muslim World (KISDI) and the Indonesian Muslim Workers Union (PPMI), led by Ahmad Sumargono and Eggy Sudjana respectively. Noorhaidi Hasan, "The Radical Muslim Discourse on Jihad and the Hatred of Christians", paper presented at the "International Symposium on Christianity in Indonesia, Perspectives of Power", University of Frankfurt (Germany, 12–14 December 2003).

territory leaving the bosom of Indonesia as an outcome of a referendum for independence organised under international pressure. The trauma was even greater in the light of revelations of exactions committed by the Indonesian army over a period of more than 30 years in Timor and especially Aceh. In the case of the Moluccas, these rumours of a Western conspiracy enabled the spectre of disintegration from within (once again the threat was foreign) to be exorcised and justified a nationalist reading of events ensuing from the East Timor crisis. The circulation of these rumours ruled out any international intervention, in spite of urgent calls made by dozens of Indonesian NGOs and the Association of the Protestant Churches of Indonesia (Persekutuan Gereja-Gereja di Indonesia, PGI).¹⁵⁶

This unusual context partly explains the aggravation of the Moluccan conflict, which was also caused by the inability of the security apparatus to take the measure of the conflict and contain it. The army could not wrestle back control of the situation. The forces of law and order were accused by both camps of not intervening in time during riots and worse, of participating in them. Indeed, a number of the police officers in Ambon, who were mostly from old Moluccan families, and were generally Christian, were implicated in the confrontations — either while on service or by abandoning their post.¹⁵⁷ As for the soldiers, they were often Muslims from other regions of Indonesia and as such, wary of the Christians suspected of irredentism. Many units were particularly swayed by rumours linking the movement for a Republic of the South Moluccas (RMS) to a fundamentalist project for which RMS signified ‘Republic of Christian Moluccas’ (Republik Maluku Serani), implying a policy of ethnic cleansing to wipe out Muslims. The authorities themselves finally implicitly acknowledged the implication of the troops and units from regions known for their strong Islamic identity, such as those from southern Celebes (Kostrad of Unjung Pandang), were replaced by Javanese Marinir battalions, said to be less influenced by Islamist propaganda.

Accusations levelled against the soldiers went well beyond just impartiality: several observers suspected the presence of agents provocateurs

¹⁵⁶ On this subject, the speech by Paul Gardner, former ambassador of Papua New Guinea, before the US Commission on International Religious Freedom in February 2001 is illuminating. He showed how the least gesture made by the United States in the region, including the simplest routine exercises of the 7th Float in the South China Sea, was immediately construed of as proof of imminent meddling in the Moluccan crisis.

¹⁵⁷ It is estimated that Christians made up 70 per cent of the police force. International Crisis Group, 8 February 2002.

who had been ordered to inflame the conflicts. The army should not be taken as a homogenous whole but as a reflection of the tensions that were tearing Indonesian society apart then. The dual hierarchy that was seen at work in the 1980s and 1990s (with regional commands and Kopassus taking their orders directly from Jakarta) were, once again, at the heart of this polemic. On many occasions, Kopassus members were seen with Muslim militias.¹⁵⁸ Several important political leaders (including Abdurrahman Wahid and Amien Rais) repeatedly denounced the actions of those who wished to ignite the Archipelago. High-ranking military officers were rumoured to have funded Laskar Jihad activities in Ambon to retaliate against their sacking from key positions in the army by President Wahid.¹⁵⁹ Resentment simmered amongst the military elites as the president attempted to reduce the army's supremacy. He separated the police from the military by bringing it under presidential control, dissolved the Coordinating Board for the Assistance of the Maintenance of National Stability (Bakorstanas) and the Board for Special Investigation (Litsus), and rejected General Wiranto's plan to reorganise the military territorial units. Finally, Wahid made Wiranto, a four-star general, resign as minister coordinator of political and security affairs. The military elite was aware of Wahid's intent on placing pro-reform generals in top positions — a project he ultimately abandoned.¹⁶⁰ As months passed and the conflict spread, the accusations were narrowed down to military circles led by some officers such as Rusman Kastor, named by the signatories (Muslims, Protestants and Catholics) of the Malino 2 Accords as being one of those behind the spread of the civil war to Ambon.

Given the importance of rumours in this conflict, one should be careful in giving credence to these accounts, which are, nonetheless, corroborating.¹⁶¹ One of the few tangible elements of this sensitive dossier is

¹⁵⁸ From military sources. Interview with General Saurip Kadi, Jakarta, August 2000.

¹⁵⁹ Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006, p. 107, citing Marcus Mietzner 2002, "Politics of Engagement: The Indonesian Armed Forces, Islamic Extremism, and the 'War on Terror'", *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, 9, 1, (Spring 2002): 78.

¹⁶⁰ Noorhaidi Hasan, 2008, pp. 106–107.

¹⁶¹ On the role played by elements of the Indonesian military in the Maluku conflict, see Damien Kingsbury and Clinton Fernandes, "Terrorism in Archipelagic Southeast Asia", in Damien Kingsbury (ed.), 2005. See also International Crisis Group, 8 February 2002, pp. 8–9; Aditjondro George Junus, "Guns, Pamphlets and Handie-Talkies: How the Military Exploited Local Ethno-Religious Tensions in Maluku to Preserve their Political and Economic Privileges", in Ingrid Wessel and Georgia Wimhofer (eds), 2001.

the testimony of a leader of a group of young Protestant thugs who were responsible for several cases of arson that sparked off new outbreaks of violence. They testified to having acted — for a fee — on the orders of Kopassus officers.¹⁶² Increasingly research carried out on site inclines towards the possibility that provocateurs played a role in aggravating the crisis, but the paralysis of the armed forces can be attributed above all to their disorganisation. In March 1999 soldiers and *brimob* (mobile brigades, a militarised unit of the police) only numbered 5,300 — clearly insufficient for a territory with two million inhabitants spread over hundreds of islands. Even with the substantial beefing up of numbers (14,000 men in June 2000), the forces of law and order failed to control the situation and even found themselves on many occasions in an alarming position. In North Maluku, fear of large local militias also played a role at times, as did political competition because the security forces were reluctant to antagonise potential provincial power-holders. However, while not in itself a cause of violence, in almost all cases, Wilson concludes, “the response of the security forces determined whether violence occurred, and to what extent.”¹⁶³

The Moluccan conflict evolved in nature between 1999 and 2000. From the outbreak of complex antagonisms arising from political, economic and social rancour, this miniature Indonesia had become the land of jihad for fighters from elsewhere.

God's Warriors

In April 2000, following a big religious demonstration (*tabligh akbar*) that saw some 10,000 persons gathering at Senayan Stadium in the centre of Jakarta,¹⁶⁴ dozens of members of the Laskar Jihad militia, sporting long white tunics, turbans and long swords, penetrated Parliament to demand speedy intervention on behalf of Muslims caught up in the civil

¹⁶² Members of a Protestant Moluccan gang called ‘Coker’ have admitted that they were paid by Kopassus to organise a series of 11 bombings since 2002, including one that caused 4 deaths in a stadium. Kopassus apparently furnished them with arms, explosives and instructions on how to use them. They have confessed to being behind all the bombings since the peace accords of February 2002 (*Tempo*, no. 46, 19 January 2003).

¹⁶³ Wilson, 2008, pp. 187–189.

¹⁶⁴ Ja’far Umar Thalib announced plans for jihad before some 10,000 persons at this demonstration. According to him, the audience included those who had experience in Afghanistan, Bosnia and the Philippines (AFP, 9 April 2000).

war that had been raging in the Moluccas for more than a year now. The lawlessness of their act — penetrating the Assembly while bearing arms — was not questioned by the authorities. Major General Nurfaizi, head of the Jakarta police, declared that he understood their feelings and explained to journalists that the sword was “the customary accessory of warriors of a holy war”.¹⁶⁵ The Laskar Jihad then proceeded to the presidential palace, where President Abdurrahman Wahid received their delegation. It was a short and stormy meeting. After attempting in vain to reason with them, the president dismissed them brutally. Barely out of the palace, Ja’far Umar Thalib, leader of FKAWJ, issued an ultimatum to the authorities: If, in the weeks to come, they were not allowed to leave for the Moluccas, they would carry out their jihad in Java.¹⁶⁶ The recruitment of volunteers had begun a few days earlier and a training camp had been started at Bogor, some dozens of kilometres away from the capital. In early May, hundreds of Laskar Jihad members managed to depart from Surabaya for the Moluccas. President Abdurrahman Wahid had personally ordered the armed forces to prevent anyone from leaving; yet nothing had been done to stop them. These volunteers — unarmed — had embarked on regular Pelni lines, and their fighting equipment was shipped separately without any difficulty. Laskar Jihad’s first mission met with success: they were welcomed by soldiers who immediately presented them with AK-47 and SS-14 guns.¹⁶⁷

Given its numbers and the arms it possessed, the intervention of Laskar Jihad tilted the balance considerably. It constituted the most significant episode of a phenomenon that was already several months old: the intervention of fighters foreign to the region. As early as February 1999 news had been circulating of the arrival in Ambon of some 50 Indonesian or foreign fighters who had trained in Afghanistan or in the Philippines (see below). One rumoured incident known as *Tragedi subuh berdarah* (the bloody tragedy of the morning prayers), the supposed attack by Christians on Muslims praying at the mosque on 1 March, boosted mobilisation outside of the Moluccas.¹⁶⁸ Numerous demonstrations were organised

¹⁶⁵ *Siar*, 12 April 2000.

¹⁶⁶ *Forum Keadilan*, Forum Utama, 9th year, 23 April 2000.

¹⁶⁷ Noorhaidi Hasan, 2002, p. 148, citing an interview with one of the members of the first convoy, Jakarta, December 2000; see also Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006, p. 190.

¹⁶⁸ According to an independent Muslim Ambonese source: “The massive killings at the Al Fatah mosque did not take place as recounted by the people in Jakarta who wanted to legitimise the jihad. There was indeed an incident outside the mosque.

throughout the Archipelago by groups such as KISDI, KAMMI, HMI-MPO and PII. GPI and some movements in Sulawesi started recruiting for supposed humanitarian missions (see below).¹⁶⁹ The demonstrations started since mid-March 1999 questioned the “indifference” of Indonesians and asserted the necessity of waging jihad against Christians. By then, recruiting booths had already been started by several Muslim organisations (including KAMMI, PII, FPI) to send volunteers to the Moluccan islands.¹⁷⁰ The conspiracy theories proposed by hard-line Muslims and their presses included Christian irrendentism, cleansing of Muslims and Zionist destabilisation of Indonesia.¹⁷¹ Within most Islamic organisations as well as in Muslim public opinion, the idea of an ethnic, or rather, religious cleansing started to gain ascendance little by little. The massacres in Kao and then Tobelo in December 1999, described above, when seen out of the context of civil war, seemed to confirm the radical Islamist press’ vision of a unilateral massacre of Muslims by Christians.

Laskar Jihad used the major demonstration organised in Jakarta at the beginning of January 2000 (the famous *aksi sejuta ummat*) to declare their legitimacy faced with a government they saw as deficient. However, they were resolutely opposed to any notion of democracy and never made any claim to a popular mandate,¹⁷² offering instead other sorts of justifications for their intervention in the Moluccas. This intervention was in fact preceded by a series of contacts made with various muftis of the Salafist movement from the Arabic Peninsula, who lent their theological support to Laskar Jihad’s operations. ‘Abd al-Mushin al-‘Abbad, a religious dignitary from Medina, thus issued a fatwa declaring the legality of armed assistance to the Moluccan Muslims, insofar as these latter were in a defensive position and that the intervention did not harm other Muslims. Even more strikingly, Muqbil ibn Hadi al-Wadi’i, a Salafist mufti from Yemen, declared that jihad in the Moluccas was an individual obligation (*fard’ain*) for Indonesian Muslims and a collective obligation (*fard kifayah*) for Muslims outside of Indonesia. No fewer than seven fatwas

Someone had fired, and afterwards the bodies were transported to the mosque. Later, rumours circulated that it was the police who had shot at people praying in the mosque but that was not true. When someone from the police tried to clarify the situation, he was almost killed.” Interview, November 2000.

¹⁶⁹ Cees van Dijk, 2001, p. 388.

¹⁷⁰ Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006, p. 109.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² See Chapter Four.

were published by the magazine *Salafy* in support of armed engagement.¹⁷³ It is noteworthy that several of these fatwas justified their positions with the illegitimacy of the current government. Ahmad al-Najm, member of the High Committee of Saudi Ulama, thus declared that holy war in the Moluccas was obligatory if the following option were exhausted: Indonesian Muslims should choose representatives to meet the authorities. If these latter accepted to take their demands into consideration, they should be obeyed. Otherwise, Indonesian Muslims could legitimately rebel against the authorities in aid of their oppressed brothers. At the end of a very formal process — characteristic of radical Islamist movements' attempts to obtain legitimacy — all the measures taken by Laskar Jihad before their departure for Ambon were validated by Muhammad ibn Hadi al-Madkhali, a Salafist mufti from Medina. His fatwa considered that the *tabligh akbar* of April, followed by the meeting with Abdurrahman Wahid and finally the training at the Bogor camp had sufficiently ensured the legitimacy of their struggle.¹⁷⁴ During the first months of their intervention, Ja'far Umar Thalib portrayed Laskar Jihad's actions firmly in religious terms. For him, the war in the Moluccas opposed Muslims and Christians, evidenced by the fact that the Christians, called *kafir harbi* (infidels warring against Islam), pursued their operations in Ambon in spite of the flight of Butonese, Bugis and Makassarese migrants.¹⁷⁵

For the first few months, Ja'far Umar Thalib's men (but also other militias from Java such as Laskar Mujahidin) were well received by part of the Muslim population and benefited from the eager collaboration of local Islamic militias.¹⁷⁶ In Jakarta, however, moderate traditionalist Islam continued to oppose their departure, foreseeing serious problems ahead. The Minister of Religions, Tolhah Hassan, expressly demanded that the police ban the Ahlu Sunnah wal Jama'ah Forum because of its dubious intentions: "We have observed that the situation is improving and that these people would only create new problems."¹⁷⁷ As weeks passed, the arrogance of these fighters from Java and their criticism of the religious beliefs and practices of local Muslims were hardly compensated by socio-religious activities such as garbage disposal, the opening of a dozen

¹⁷³ International Crisis Group, 13 September 2004, pp. 16–17; Noorhaidi Hasan, 2002, p. 163. These fatwas were also put on the website of Laskar Jihad, <http://www.laskarjihad.or.id>; Noorhaidi Hasan, 2008, pp. 116–121.

¹⁷⁴ Noorhaidi Hasan, 2002, pp. 163–164.

¹⁷⁵ Interview with Ja'far Umar Thalib, Jakarta, 10 August 2000.

¹⁷⁶ Interview with the signatories of the Malino 2 Accord, Paris, April 2002.

¹⁷⁷ *The Jakarta Post*, 11 April 2000.

primary schools and numerous Qur'anic centres.¹⁷⁸ Their military prestige was gravely diminished when Wahid declared the Moluccas a civilian emergency zone in August 2000 and ordered TNI to send 'joint battalions' (Yon Gab), composed of elements from the special forces of the three branches (Kopassus from the army, Marines and Paskhas, and the special forces of the air force) as of September 2000. Better organised and able to launch massive attacks rather than scatter their forces, Yon Gab inflicted heavy losses on Laskar on many occasions,¹⁷⁹ henceforth on the defensive and more focused on imposing a religious order in the regions under their control rather than on new conquests.

Little by little, the authorities regained control of the situation. On 30 April 2001, it ordered the arrest of Alexander Manuputty, the main leader of Maluku Sovereignty Front (Front Kedaulatan Maluku, FKM), a separatist organisation with a Christian majority, formed on 18 December 2000. Then on 4 May, it was Ja'far Umar Thalib's turn to be summoned. Of the two charges leading to his arrest, only the second was retained. The charge of inciting racial hatred, although evident, was dismissed. He was tried instead for having attempted to substitute the sharia for Indonesian state law in the zones under his control, in the case of a militia member who was stoned to death for engaging in illicit sexual relations.¹⁸⁰ Ja'far's imprisonment provoked a real outburst of solidarity even from without his own organisation: the majority of Muslim parties (PPP, PBB, PK) and even the Yogyakarta section of PAN protested strongly against it. The secretary-general of MUI, Din Syamsuddin, also vice-chairman of Muhammadiyah, even stepped in to offer protection for the prisoner, and in early August 2001, shortly after his release, Ja'far was received by the vice-president Hamzah Haz. After this setback, Laskar Jihad changed its tack: waging war against Christians (*nasrani*) guilty for massacring Muslims would take a backseat to the perennial theme of fighting against national disintegration.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸ Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006, p. 197.

¹⁷⁹ The Yon Gab, accused this time of pro-Christian favouritism, was replaced in November 2001 by units from Kopassus. But these latter showed that they were just as firm towards the militia of Ja'far Umar Thalib. International Crisis Group, 8 February 2002.

¹⁸⁰ *Tempo*, 20 May 2001. In 2002, within the moderate Islamic circles, the reassuring explanation put forward was that the guilty party had asked for this punishment himself, out of a wish to submit to Islamic law.

¹⁸¹ See, for example, the declarations of Laskar Jihad lawyer, Wirawan Adnan, to AFP, Jakarta, 30 April 2002.

As we have seen, Laskar Jihad was neither the sole nor the first external militia to descend on the battlefield of the Moluccas and of Poso; however, as it was the largest one and could seemingly count on great support, attention has long been focused on it. In fact Laskar Jihad arrived well after many other groups which were already operating there, including Mujahidin KOMPAK, an organisation for 'freelance' mujahidin from all over Indonesia.¹⁸²

The Mujahidin KOMPAK militia had been put in place by Arismunandar, a former student of Ngruki and head of the Solo branch of KOMPAK, a Muslim charity under the DDII. He was reportedly supported by some Jemaah Islamiyah militants, but JI itself decided to intervene only six months after the conflict had started in June 1999. Its hesitation in sending men to Ambon was due to divergent views on the Moluccan conflict (the Java-based JI suspected political manoeuvring) as well as on timing (the Malaysia-based JI, being removed from the Indonesian context and more influenced by the Afghan experience, wished to wage jihad soon after the fall of Soeharto in 1998 while Indonesians argued for a long-term strategy¹⁸³). JI's intervention in Ambon after June 1999 was first carried out by military trainers who set up a three-month camp on Buru Island for Mujahidin KOMPAK. ICG estimates that JI itself may never have had more than 20 people in Ambon at one time, but their impact was a major one. The recruitment of foot soldiers continued via the intermediary of Mujahidin KOMPAK, which became a real "catch-all force" (to use the expression of the International Crisis Group), reaching out to all the young men who had come from everywhere — mostly *pesantren* in Java, Sulawesi and Kalimantan or local *pesantren* — to "save their brothers".¹⁸⁴

Seven years after the 1992 scission between Sungkar and Masduki in Afghanistan, Darul Islam itself finally rallied to the cause of these mujahidins. New groups also emerged, including the Abu Bakar Battalion, which united some veterans of Afghanistan and Mindanao. A campaign of burglaries based on the *fa'i* system (the principle that condones burglary for a good cause) was conducted, and so numerous were the recruits that the battalion became a veritable organisation, Nusantara Islamic Mujahidin Force (Angkatan Mujahidin Islam Nusantara, AMIN). AMIN managed to go to war in the Moluccas as early as December 1999.¹⁸⁵ This

¹⁸² International Crisis Group, 3 February 2004, p. 5.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁸⁵ International Crisis Group, 22 February 2005, p. 25.

movement also sent men to the region of Poso in Central Sulawesi,¹⁸⁶ where the fighters were also known as Laskar Jundullah, the name of a militia formed by the Organising Committee for the Preparation for the Application of Islamic Law (Komite Persiapan Penegakan Syariat Islam, KPPSI), under the command of Agus Dwikarna.¹⁸⁷

Little by little, in the Moluccas and in Sulawesi, the term Laskar Mujahidin ended up designating a coalition of ideologically close forces that might have included men from JI and DI, as well as Mujahidin KOMPAK and some local groups, but which excluded those of Laskar Jihad. Unity reigned amongst them for a while, as we have seen, and Laskar Jihad was quite well received in April 2000 when they arrived in Ambon. The two militias conducted joint operations including the 21 June attack on the police complex (*brimob*) in Ambon, from which they recuperated many arms, as well as attacks on Christian villages in October. The production of videos for recruitment and funding purposes was also undertaken jointly with Laskar Jihad. However, relations broke down at the start of 2001 when the latter, not as discreet, were sometimes arrested for acts committed by Laskar Mujahidin. Whether in Sulawesi or the Moluccas, Laskar Mujahidin adopted strategies that were much more offensive than those of Laskar Jihad. Considerably smaller in strength but better trained and armed, they were said to have played a key role in the attack of Christian villages. The Laskar Mujahidin, though not numbering more than 300, including a dozen foreigners from France, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Saudia Arabia and Algeria, appear to have been much more effective than the 7,000 Laskar Jihad combatants. Noorhaidi Hasan attributes this to the sophisticated weapons they received from abroad but also to the poor tactics and strategy of Laskar Jihad that often nullified other militias' efforts. The Mujahidin also played an important role in teaching local Muslim militias how to assemble bombs.¹⁸⁸

Sentiments vis-à-vis the mujahidins hardened in the course of 2001: Ja'far Thalib was menacing towards their supposed leader, Abu Jibril, alias Fikiruddin, whose path he had crossed on several occasions in the

¹⁸⁶ On the Poso conflict, see Lorraine V. Arragon, "Communal Violence in Poso, Central Sulawesi: Where People Eat Fish and Fish Eat People", in *Indonesia*, no. 72, October 2001; International Crisis Group, 3 February 2004.

¹⁸⁷ Another less important movement also went by the name of Laskar Jundullah (Army of Allah) in Java and in the Moluccas, thus creating some confusion. International Crisis Group, 11 December 2002, p. 24.

¹⁸⁸ Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006, p. 196.

Middle East and in Afghanistan.¹⁸⁹ On their website, Laskar Jihad accused them of belonging to NII (Negara Islam Indonesia).

Other divergences, this time between KOMPAK and JI, disturbed the fraternity built at the start of jihad. KOMPAK was a well-established organisation founded in 1998 by DDII to help Muslim victims of natural disasters, conflicts and poverty. KOMPAK — and particularly KOMPAK Solo — played an essential role in the Moluccan and Sulawesi conflicts. Initiator of the first militias, the organisation channelled funds for jihad activities. It also took over the purchase of arms, production of videos showing victims of violence and the recuperation of funds from overseas Muslims, “partly with the help of men linked to Al Qaeda”.¹⁹⁰ KOMPAK Solo distributed the recuperated funds equally between its mujahidins and Jemaah Islamiyah until 2000, when an audit requested by some donors was formally rejected by JI.¹⁹¹

By this time, JI had already extended its activities to Java, with the assassination attempt on the Philippines ambassador and the bomb attacks of Christmas 2000, as well as to the Philippines, with the 30 December Rizal Day bombings. The Bali bombings followed two years later, leading to the first arrests. For almost two years, from 2000 to 2002, the organisation was able to grow and spread, recruiting and waging its jihad in Indonesia, under the distracted eye of the authorities and “almost all the observers of Indonesia”.¹⁹² JI’s system of recruitment was uncovered by some documents during the arrests of 2003.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁹ International Crisis Group, 11 December 2002, p. 22. Abu Jibril was detained by the Malaysian authorities in June 2001. Laskar Jihad ended up calling Laskar Mujahidin ‘KGB’ (Khawarij Gaya Baru, new-style Kharijite). Ja’far Thalib is even said to have declared that once they had defeated RMS, he would attack Laskar Mujahidin. International Crisis Group, 3 February 2004, pp. 6–7.

¹⁹⁰ International Crisis Group, 3 February 2004, p. 4, citing Moritz Kleine-Brockhoff, “An Entry in the Diary of Reda S.”, *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 17 November 2002, p. 4.

¹⁹¹ The employees of oil companies in East Kalimantan had requested an audit of the donations and dispatched an expert who asked JI to account for a sum of 40 million rupiah. International Crisis Group, 3 February 2004, p. 10.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 18, citing Program Kerja Wakalah Uhud Periode Jumadil Akhir s/d Dzul Qoidah 1423H, photocopy dated from February 2002. Recruitment should be carried out in this order: 1) *dakwah* in a mosque or *pesantren* without revealing one’s identity; 2) formation of small groups (*halaqah*) to which potential candidates are invited; 3) candidate taken under the charge of an instructor or *murobbi*; 4) preparation of the candidate in four stages: preaching (*tabligh*), lesson (*ta’lim*), education (*tarbiyah*) and

Jl's struggle in the Moluccas and in Poso was certainly aimed at protecting the local Muslims, but in such a way as to bring about an "extension of the perception of the enemy" amongst them. Darul Islam members who had received Jl teachings there said they had read Abdullah Azzam, who opined that "the best education is to be found during a time of jihad". The Moluccan conflict was the occasion to initiate Indonesians who had not undergone the Afghan jihad to wider, more international causes than the establishment of an Indonesian Islamic state.¹⁹⁴ Encounters with veterans of Afghanistan and the Philippines, along with fighters from the Arab world, Europe and Kuwait, were supposed to inspire and make of Ambon and Poso the new stepping stone in worldwide jihad.

In sum, the conflicts in Moluccas and Poso were no different, in their first phase, from ethnic conflicts that erupted in Kalimantan. "In each case," as Gerry van Klinken highlighted, "ordinary people felt moved to action by the politics of fear, while local elites made their calculations on the basis of the politics of opportunity."¹⁹⁵ In a context of important administrative reforms, these elites mobilised the crowds around ethnic or religious issues in order to preserve or even extend their control over institutions that provide privileged access to the state and its resources. The conflicts were of even greater significance in the cities outside of Java, where the state traditionally played an important role yet was no longer capable of controlling this political instrumentalisation of violence.¹⁹⁶ The evolution towards confrontation along religious lines took place in regions where the different religions were in relative equilibrium, with no one religion dominating the other, thus rendering futile any mobilisation of the minority. As such, after the creation of the province of Northern Moluccas (85 per cent Muslim), the Moluccas province was only 49 per cent Muslim in 2000. As for the Poso region, the population was 56 per cent Muslim (while Muslims made up 78 per cent of the population of the entire Central Sulawesi province).¹⁹⁷ In contrast to mobilisation along

training (*tambis*), after which the candidate is given a *dakwah* mission to test his ability. If successful, he will gain entry to Jl and must take an oath (*baiat*). Sound religious knowledge is also a requisite for this last step.

¹⁹⁴ International Crisis Group, 3 February 2004, p. 5.

¹⁹⁵ Gerry van Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia, Small Town Wars*, Routledge Contemporary Southeast Asia series, London & NY, 2007, p. 143.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

¹⁹⁷ John T. Sidel, *Riots, Pogroms, Jihad. Religious Violence in Indonesia*, Singapore, NUS Press, 2007, p. 190.

ethnic lines, the religious factor brought about the intervention of exterior players and as such, the persistence of problems long after the resolution of socio-economic conflicts that were at the root of the crisis. Thus, up till 2008, the presence of militias linked to Jemaah Islamiyah in the region of Poso represented a very real threat.¹⁹⁸

Several factors contributed to the duration of the Moluccan and Sulawesi conflict six years after it started. According to ICG's report published in August 2005, each group continued to demand justice for the massacres committed. Against a backdrop of widespread violence, a new killing sparked off the hunting down of Muslim villagers by Christians.¹⁹⁹ These villagers took refuge in an Islamic boarding school named Walisongo, where a hundred of them were massacred on 28 May 2000. Three Christians were sentenced to death for these massacres but some called for more to be sentenced. The massacre of Walisongo in Poso (in 2000) led to the bombings in Tentena (2005). It became increasingly difficult to carry out justice in some regions: in Poso, a Christian public prosecutor was assassinated during a trial of jihadists in 2004. A particular difficulty arose from the fact, as demonstrated by two bloody incidents (Tentena, 22 dead and 53 injured; Ceram, six dead in 2005), that the mujahidins were not the only guilty ones; according to ICG, local officials and gang leaders were sometimes equally implicated.

The Functioning of the Radical Cluster: Recruitment at the Fringes and Quarrels Amongst Leaders

Recycling at the Fringes: From Heirs of the Old Guard to *Abangan* Neophytes

The Islamist organisations did not all recruit from the same milieu. The diverse traditions evoked earlier gave rise to different branches and recruitment methods. Thus we should distinguish between networks linked to the heirs of Darul Islam, former militants close to Kartosuwiryo ("*pak* Imam"),

¹⁹⁸ See International Crisis Group, "Indonesia: Tackling Radicalism in Poso", *Asia Briefing*, No. 75, 22 January 2008.

¹⁹⁹ The ICG distinguished three phases in the Poso conflict: from December 1998, Phase I involved the burning of mostly Christian homes. Phase II began in April 2000 and resulted in further casualties and damage to mainly Christian communities. Phase III was a series of attacks on Muslims in May and early June 2000 that left more than 200 dead (the worst incident was a massacre at the Walisongo *pesantren*). International Crisis Group, 3 February 2004, p. 2).

as some still call him, according to Abdul Syukur) and movements that emerged later in universities during the 1980s, which had more in common with the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood. To these, we can add a third category of militiamen — less militant family men who, in the name of a moral Islamic order, took upon themselves the responsibility of ensuring the security of their neighbourhood. This was a common practice during the New Order and was carried out by an official territorial organisation, but it has since come to be at the call of a *habib* or charismatic ulama and has taken on a religious aspect. For all these different types of profiles, however varied, the radical Islamist organisations seemed to have provided a path of integration within their social groups. The prospects for recognition, even fame, increased considerably during the 1990s. Hitherto marginal and often clandestine currents suddenly acquired respectability, enabling them to substantially increase their strength and to benefit from this. For the Salafist followers of Jafar Thalib, notes Noorhaidi, the jihad was an endeavour to shore up their image as the most committed defenders of Islam: “The entire campaign can be conceptualized as the politics of recognition pursued by the Salafis in order to gain a place in the transnational Salafi Dakwah network and register themselves on the map of Indonesian Islam”.²⁰⁰

With regards to their recruitment, the radical Islamic organisations fulfill an obvious social function. They allow for individuals in search of ideals, religiosity and a moral compass in a corrupt universe to integrate into marginalised but welcoming networks.

The campus phenomenon itself is particularly interesting as it seemed to have touched a new category of the population. Hoping to ‘become good Muslims’ (*jadi Muslim yang baik*), young Javanese whose parents are or were not practising Muslims found themselves sucked into networks that cut them off from their origins. The student milieu was especially affected by this phenomenon, as much via the Negara Islam Indonesia (NII) cells as via the *usroh/tarbiyah* movement mentioned above.

These small model cells multiplied especially in the major non-religious universities of the country such as Gadjah Mada in Yogyakarta, Unpad in Bandung or the University of Indonesia in Jakarta, and within the scientific and technological departments, where under the cover of an initiation into preaching (*dakwah*), radical Islam thinkers trained generations of students. As we have seen, the prestigious Association of Muslim Students (HMI), modernist and assimilated into the establishment, if not

²⁰⁰ Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006, p. 220.

the ruling power, lost its influence in the face of new and more audacious groups, often gathered under the banner of *dakwah* institutes on campus (Lembaga Dakwah Kampus). In the 1980s, the militancy of these new movements and the pressure they exerted on new students drastically narrowed the field of possible attitudes in the universities. On one side were students who were attracted by modernity and who smoked and mixed with the opposite sex; on the other end of the spectrum were youth, often from less cosmopolitan milieux, who became increasingly attracted to the strict way of life advocated in the Islamist discourse.²⁰¹ The campus mosque became a refuge, a place where one could find oneself 'amongst students mindful of Muslimness' (*orang yang peduli keislaman*). But the 'virtuous' path led some to encounter an invasive fundamentalism, much removed from the Islam of their childhood, and even further from that of their parents. Many became estranged from their background and some even gave up their studies. The small radical groups in the student milieu were very critical of the big Islamic organisations, more so of Nahdlatul Ulama than of Muhammadiyah. These big organisations embodied a religiousness well integrated into the traditional social structures and were seen as old-fashioned. They were reproached for having collaborated with a contested social order, if not a downright dishonoured political regime. Above all, they were accused of having 'cut the Islamic community into parts' (*mengotak-ngotakkan umat islam*) and weakened it through its inability to unify the community. They were also blamed for not protecting the young militants who gathered in groups of mosques (*remaja masjid*) under a repressive and corrupt Soeharto regime. The opening of Indonesia to the grand causes of Islam (Bosnia, Kashmir, India in general and Iraq) was also a powerful motor for the mobilisation of students. When the Bosnian crisis erupted, unprecedented crowds of militants demonstrated around the major mosques of Jakarta and the Al-Azhar Mosque to the cries of '*Allah u-Akbar!*'

Integration into different networks of sociability of the dominant culture was mostly carried out through a very strict religious practice that broke with the prevailing laxity. The *usrohl tarbiyah* movement was, in this sense, essentially a puritan movement, as is its political extension today, the PKS. However, as we have seen, this severance with the surrounding milieu led some isolated groups to very different practices indeed.

²⁰¹ For these observations and subsequent ones, we thank Abdul Syukur, whose unusual background (student in an Islamic boarding school, journalist then student in the 1990s at the Islamic University, followed by a stint as history student at the secular University of Indonesia) has given him a unique perspective.

Some radical organisations tapped well beyond student angst and specialised in recruitment at the fringes of society. One of the greatest successes of Habib Rizieq, leader of the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), was how he restored pride and a sense of purpose amongst the bad boys of Jakarta's suburbs. FPI initially recruited from the *preman* milieu, that is, amongst hired hands and even gangsters, but cast its net further to include the disadvantaged of all sorts, who, in exchange for payment or sometimes out of pure conviction, joined in its punitive actions. As mentioned earlier, the supposed moralisation of the nightlife of the big cities was often nothing but a reorganisation of the racket to line the pockets of FPI. But it also persuaded a number of the excluded that they were better able to effect a cleansing of society than the authorities and that they could take their lives into their own hands. This probably explained the beatific admiration of Habib Rizieq's followers and the support he seemed to enjoy in the district where he had settled.

Finally, a word must be said about the strictly religious motivations that could have led to the success of the recruitment policies. These motivations were evidently at work for the volunteers who left to fight in the Moluccas. The remuneration that was sometimes given out — ranging from simply paying for the equipment to paying the member's family up to hundreds of dollars in the event of death — does not suffice to explain why thousands of youths from Java and Madura were willing to risk their lives to fight in a place hundreds of kilometres away from their villages. It seems that many were recruited from *abangan* milieux, amongst those who had recently 'reconverted' under the influence of new preachers. Noorhaidi Hasan's exhaustive study of Laksar Jihad (2006) points to the "simple rural background" of most students engaged in the Laskar Jihad missions to the Moluccas. The Salafi recruits, he writes, were "generally young militants from small towns or villages in the countryside who had an *abangan* background".²⁰² Migration to the big cities to pursue higher education or seek jobs exposed these students to a modernised world offering social ascension but in which they saw mostly rampant corruption and the failure of the New Order to distribute public goods. But it was also a case of orthodox Islam being introduced to remote rural areas by preachers attached to Muslim organisations, a development that created in turn a demand for Islamist activists prepared to organise secret cells or build Islamic teaching centers. Noorhaidi shows that this

²⁰² Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006, pp. 160–161, 219. A number of the radicals (Mujahidin) departing for jihad we met had parents from a secular nationalist party (PNI) background with minimal religious knowledge.

was the case for the Dieng Plateau in Central Java.²⁰³ Some radical Salafis came from the reformist *santri* families, mostly from Muhammadiyah,²⁰⁴ and much more rarely, it seems, from traditionalist Islam circles. Coming from the middle class and often having attended technical schools or science faculties (including communication studies), they were particularly mindful of the dangers that they felt weighed on their fellow believers, but also of the martyr status that was promised them should they die in combat.

As for the leaders of Jemaah Islamiyah and Darul Islam, they also often came from the educated middle class while the foot soldiers were recruited from the poorest milieux, where children are often educated in Islamic boarding schools.²⁰⁵

A Prolific and Antagonistic Movement

The challenges faced by any study of the radical Islamic movement in Indonesia are clear: a multitude of organisations often characterised by sectarianism and headed by leaders with a remarkable propensity to split up.

Between 1999 and 2003, each bout of Islamist fervour led to a surge in new organisations that were sometimes as short-lived as the outburst of anger that gave rise to them. In August 2000, for example, the First Congress of Mujahidin gathered several dozens of organisations calling for the implementation of the sharia. Hitherto unknown militias carried out demonstrations of force. The Santri Militias (Laskar Santri), Militias of the Divine Army (Laskar Jundullah), Badr Company (Kompi Badr), Taliban Brigade or Commando Troops of Mujahidins (Pasukan Komando Mujahidin) paraded in very unusual uniforms, armed with swords and sticks. During this period, an investigation by the weekly *Gatra* listed more than 41 radical Islamist groups on the island of Lombok alone.²⁰⁶ Barely one year later, anti-American demonstrations saw numerous organisations emerge from nowhere: at the end of September 2001, some thousands marched for several days in the streets of Jakarta. Alongside well-known organisations such as FPI, KAMMI or GPI were members of

²⁰³ Ibid., p. 169.

²⁰⁴ ICG acknowledges that “persons formerly from Muhammadiyah are well represented amongst the *Salafis* today”. It thus qualifies Muhammadiyah as “more progressive than puritan, more modernist than fundamentalist”. International Crisis Group, 13 September 2004, p. 5.

²⁰⁵ International Crisis Group, 22 February 2005, p. 31.

²⁰⁶ *Gatra*, 5 August 2000.

the Anti-Zionist and Anti-America Movement (Gerakan Anti-Zionis dan Amerika, GAZA) or the Inter-Campus Association of Muslim Students (Himpunan Mahasiswa Muslim Antar-Kampus, HMMAK).²⁰⁷ This phenomenon of proliferation was accentuated at the local level. In Central Java, for example, numerous organisations were created after the outburst of emotion at the American bombing of Afghanistan. The Forum of Solidarity with the Muslim World of Magelang and the Committee of Muslim Solidarity of Purbalingga made a noisy show of their disapproval. On 23 September, in Solo, Laskar Jundullah, Laskar Santri, Laskar Hawariyah, Sunan Bonang Hizbullah Corps and the Surakarta Muslim Youth Front conducted a series of raids on downtown hotels for American citizens. These operations were carried out more for show than with any real intention to do harm. Their aim was above all to create a stir in the media, but some groups, notably those with links to homosexuals, came under attack in Yogyakarta. The strength and diversity of these mobilised organisations gave the operation a semblance of legitimacy, which was indispensable given the participation of mere hundreds of individuals.²⁰⁸

Apart from the desire to gain strength in numbers, the multiplication of movements was also due to an old tradition of social structuring. It is rare for an individual to express independent ideas during a demonstration. The legitimacy of his combat comes rather from his belonging to a group. Even if this group comprises but a handful of persons and does not exist legally, the mere act of wielding a banner is enough to encourage the most timid person. The decline of traditional networks of authority during this turbulent period further increased the need for new sources of legitimacy. Similar sentiments explained the call by these groups for the implementation of the sharia, the norm par excellence to take refuge in. The majority of these movements compensated for the illegitimacy of their action with excessive formalism. Thus Laskar Jihad and Front Pembela Islam were particularly productive in churning out all sorts of forms and complex procedures. In their unrestrained use of stamps, they resembled the most nit-picking bureaucracy. Uniforms also played a big role in this process of legitimisation. The referents ranged from the army — black trellises for Daarut Tauhid — to the Arab combatants from the early days of Islam as they appeared in the imagination of Indonesians. Thus Laskar Jihad members wore on grand occasions the turban and long tunic. Only the sword was not curved in the Middle-Eastern way, but the Javanese *kris* was also missing.

²⁰⁷ *Tempo*, 2 October 2001.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

Most importantly, the proliferation of diverse movements demonstrated their disorganisation on a national level and their inability to unify. As there was a limited range of attractive names, very often totally disparate organisations used the same name. Thus in northern Moluccas existed a militia by the name of Front Pembela Islam that had no link whatsoever with Habib Rizieq's organisation. By the same token, the Front Hizbullah in Mataram was a local creation and had nothing to do with its homonym in Jakarta. Founded around a charismatic figure, most of these groups displayed growth figures that were as impressive as they were far-fetched, boasting of branches in most of the cities in the country. This triumphalism was due in fact to intense competition amongst the radical movements, whose divisiveness had descended into bitter rivalry. Herein lies the essence of Indonesian Muslim rigour: since each movement was born of the indignation of its initiators with regard to the practices of other groups, the progression of each movement could only be accomplished at the price of a progressive dispersion of the movement as a whole.

Reasons for splitting up abounded, including accusations and permanent suspicions of being puppets of the ruling power or of being funded by the Indonesian secret service. This was especially so in the case of groups linked to former members of Darul Islam, which was infiltrated very early on. Thus, at the launch of a book by a famous Islamist, Umar Abduh, a former member of the Imron group, which was accused by Abduh of having links with the army, confronted him in fury before leaving the hall in a group. The audience was relieved to have narrowly escaped a fierce fight.²⁰⁹

One of the most virulent organisations is an institute with links to Saudi Arabia — the Institute of Research and the Teaching of Islam (Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengkajian Islam, LPPi), which diligently published works lambasting movements it considered as “deviationist”.²¹⁰ Thus targeted were: Shiites, Ahmadiyah, Indonesian movements formerly known as “*sempalan*” such as the Dakwah Institute of Indonesian Islam (Lembaga Dakwah Islam Indonesia, LDII — no links with DDII), also called Islam Jama'ah, which was itself not linked to Jemaah Islamiyah but was an old, very sectarian yet non-violent movement used by Golkar

²⁰⁹ Notes of the authors at the launch of the book: Umar Abduh, *Konspirasi Intelijen & Gerakan Islam Radikal*, Center for Democracy and Social Justice Studies, Jakarta, November 2003.

²¹⁰ Amin Djamaluddin, *Capita Selecta Aliran-Aliran Sempalan di Indonesia*, Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengkajian Islam (LPPi), South Jakarta, August 2002.

as early as the 1970s, as well as groups of former activists of Darul Islam orientation who had chosen less orthodox paths such as the al-Zaytun *pesantren*. On the other hand, conspicuously missing in Amin Djamaluddin's book was any mention of the Ngruki group and Jemaah Islamiyah, and the Darul Islam outside of Zaytun. Amin Djamaluddin's influence grew considerably in the mid-2000s when he became a member of the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI).

Moreover, the purist-Salafist Indonesia dakwah movement itself is opposed to all other Islamist groups and accused of *hizbiyya* (sectarian-political deemed to foster unbelief). For them, the *ikhwani* (close to the Muslim Brotherhood) label was regularly invoked to discredit an organisation or individual accused of dividing the Muslim community through political engagement that necessitates compromises, which is prohibited by principle.²¹¹

'Islamic Business': The Role of the Economy

Involvement in the economy constitutes one of the essential aspects of the radical Islam cluster in Indonesia. For some movements, economic success was at times a key factor in their sustainability and in the recruitment of new members. Yet, as illustrated by the cases of Daarut Tauhid and the Al-Zaytun *pesantren* in very different registers, the wish to sustain and extend economic activities sometimes moderated to a significant degree the discourse of an organisation.²¹²

Several foundations amongst those examined here sought from the time of their creation to develop activities that would enable them to meet their needs without having to depend solely on sponsors, foreign for the most part. The Hidayatullah *pesantren* thus remade itself into a pioneer agriculture front, clearing the Borneo forest in order to develop land for cultivation. In Central Java, At-Turats organised a few workshops for motorcycles and cars, in addition to its agricultural activities. All this remained limited, however, and the organisation is said to survive on funds from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.²¹³ In this, At-Turats is an exception.

²¹¹ On this subject, see International Crisis Group, 13 September 2004, pp. 12–14.

²¹² See Greg Fealy, "Consuming Islam: Commodified Religion and Aspirational Pietism in Contemporary Indonesia", in Greg Fealy and Sally White (dir.), *Expressing Islam: Religious Life and Politics in Indonesia*, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University, ISEAS, Singapore, 2008. pp. 15–39; Gwenaël Feillard, "Insuffler l'esprit du capitalisme à l'*Umma*: la formation d'une éthique islamique du travail en Indonésie", in *Critique Internationale*, no. 25, October 2004, Paris: 93–116.

²¹³ Noorhaidi Hasan, 2000, pp. 91–94.

Many other organisations were flush with money, to the point where economic preoccupations often seemed to take precedence over religious or moral motivations. Thus Hidayatullah transformed itself from a simple Islamic boarding school to a veritable conglomerate. Little by little, it bought a series of companies that allowed it to control the entire chain of distribution of its agricultural products. A small processing industry was established and, with the founding of the Sakinah Group in Surabaya, the organisation moved into distribution, from retail shops to supermarkets. Hidayatullah next took control of a maritime company (CCM Cargo) and a public works company (Citra Cipta Madina). Its sole activities with any real links to Islam were a travel agency specialising in the organisation of pilgrimages to Mecca (Intan Travel) and a small Islamic bank, Mashraf al-Madina.

There is also the remarkable case of the Daarut Tauhid community, which illustrates the moderating influence that Islamic business can exert. In its early years, this organisation demonstrated an inward-looking mentality similar to the movements mentioned above. This small community can trace its origins to the Islamic Student Group for Entrepreneurship (Kelompok Mahasiswa Islam Wiraswasta, KMIW) founded in 1987, near Bandung, by Abdullah Gymnastiar, a personality very much in the news in the early 2000s. Then aged 25, Gymnastiar (who owes his name to a fitness fan of a father), was an ex-student of the Pajajaran University (he was enrolled in the business administration faculty but did not complete his course) and of a small local university that belonged to the army (Akademi Teknik Jendral Ahmad Yani) in Bandung, where he was noted for his rhetorical skills and his poetic talents, all while running a business so as to survive. He did not obtain any degree, but his oratorical skills made him very popular amongst his faculty mates and later assured large numbers of recruits for his organisation. KMIW developed in the field of education and religion and established itself as a foundation in 1990 under the name of Daarut Tauhid. Enriched by various commercial enterprises, Daarut Tauhid started expanding in 1997 in the vicinity of Gegerkalong (West Java), a district that was truly devoted to the organisation's activities.²¹⁴ KMIW was quite a closed organisation initially but became known to the public at the end of the 1990s through the actions of its militias against the gambling houses and prostitution spots of Bandung. Then in 2001, Abdullah Gymnastiar carried out an astounding strategic repositioning. Known henceforth as A.A. Gym, he opened up his

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 88–91.

organisation and embarked on a new career as a consensual preacher, much removed from his initial rigour.²¹⁵

Abdullah Gymnastiar's Daarut Tauhid grew substantially thanks to its economic success: sewing workshops, a supermarket, a publishing company and a hotel were built in Gegerkalong at the start of the 1990s. Subsequently the foundation, which considered economic development as the first pillar of religion, extended its activities to commerce (food and electronics) as well as to cottage and service industries. Its capital was estimated to be more than USD 700,000 in 2005 and it maintains close links with the Indonesian business community. Several trained engineers sit on its consultative council, one of whom is the general director of Astra International, one of the principal conglomerates in Indonesia. Many other enterprises of a national scale (Bumi Daya Bank, Dharma Bhakti, Maspion) have signed deals with Daarut Tauhid.²¹⁶ These are mostly from the education and training sector, favoured by Islamist organisations as it allows for the reconciliation of financial interests and recruitment.

Of the direct heirs of Kartosuwiryo, those grouped behind Syeh A.S. Panji Gumilang were accused by some of their former fellow disciples of embezzling funds collected for their struggle.²¹⁷ Indeed, its headquarters, the al-Zaytun *pesantren* in Indramayu, was flourishing. According to former Darul Islam militant Al Chaidar, this empire is estimated to be worth several billions of dollars. In addition, Syeh A.S. Panji Gumilang is accused by Al Chaidar of having abused the *infak* system to amass land. He manages a foundation that controls the making of oil and soap, sawmills and rice fields.

The sessions organised by Daarut Tauhid were not strictly about the religious sciences but presented an Islamisation of individual or collective psychological methods taken from the Anglo-Saxon world. It thus proposed training sessions called 'achievement motivation training', 'team building training' or 'heart management training'. This type of activities was part of a much wider current aimed at recuperating, in the name of the legitimacy of Islam, markets ranging from the control of ritual slaughter to communication and the supply of computers to giant Indonesian conglomerates. One of the organisations that participated in the

²¹⁵ See also Abdullah Gymnastiar, *Aa Gym, Apa Adanya*, MQ Publishing, Bandung, 2003.

²¹⁶ *Asian Wall Street Journal*, 11 April 2000.

²¹⁷ Accusations were levelled principally by Al Chaidar, a prolific author and the commander of Darul Islam for the district of Bekasi Barat between 1991 and 1996.

Congress of Mujahidin in August 2000 specialised in the ‘halalisation’ of the economic sector. The Muslim League of Indonesia (Liga Muslimin Indonesia, LMI), created in 1992 by Budi Santoso, ex-student of the Bandung Institute of Technology and political science graduate, presented itself as the basis of a “Muslim communitarian development”. To fund its various activities, particularly in the field of education, it developed “profit-making centres” dedicated to electronic commerce and information technology. According to its founder, LMI won important contracts with two of the major conglomerates in the country, Bapindo and PTP4 (forestry).²¹⁸ The validity of the religious dimension of the Indonesian Muslim League was questionable, as was its real strength, which seemed far smaller than the 500,000 members proclaimed. Nonetheless, it illustrated perfectly how these groups created in the 1990s exploited the Islamic label.

It was amongst the movements founded in 2000 calling for an Islamic State of Indonesia (NII) that the most obvious links between religion and money were to be found. The clandestine cells of N Sebelas (NII) set-up throughout universities recruited students from the upper-middle class. As their first mission, the new recruits had to obtain ever increasing sums of money from their parents, from some thousands of rupiah at the start to hundreds of thousands. The movement also organised a sort of pyramid selling of hygiene products (soap, toothpaste), which allowed it to use its network for commercial purposes. Each member was obliged to buy its products on a regular basis, which were to be sold in turn to his/her entourage.²¹⁹

These varied economic activities are crucial in understanding the success of these diverse new Islamic groups, which advanced as such not only a new discipline of life but also economic resources similar to that proposed by the state — that is, a often badly paid bureaucracy or an informal business sector already saturated and offering little social prestige.

Almost four decades after its military defeat, Darul Islam thus remains an essential matrix of radical Indonesian Islamism. Its supporters perpetuate, in diverse regions of the Archipelago, the tradition of those who never accepted the Republic of Indonesia as it was proclaimed in 1945. Various events occurring since 1967 enabled the networks of the 1950s to preserve this unusual resilience.²²⁰ The ambiguous relations that

²¹⁸ Interview with Budi Santoso, August 2000.

²¹⁹ Interviews with several former N-Sebelas members, Yogyakarta, August 2000.

²²⁰ According to the International Crisis Group, 22 February 2005, p. i.

the New Order nurtured with some of these movements encouraged the maintenance of old solidarities. Contact with the armed Islamist Internationale in Afghanistan also linked some Darul Islam elements with networks operating on an international level. Finally, the decline of the Soeharto regime and the beginnings of Reformasi raised great hopes, only for them to be dashed, paving the way for a new intransigence. The proliferation of radical organisations — linked or not to Darul Islam — was largely due to this deleterious atmosphere in which the simplistic ideologies presented by these organisations promised reassuring remedies.

Blackmail with the Sacred: The Ideology of Radical Islam

Radical Islamism is today one of the few ideologies to operate on a worldwide scale. From Morocco and Thailand to the Muslim communities of Western countries, it proposes a universal, simple and reassuring frame of reference for populations despairing over their destiny and that of the world. The product, or rather the by-product par excellence of globalisation, it harnesses media channels and is nourished by an analogous uniformity that disregards local substrates.¹ At work everywhere in the Muslim world are identical mechanisms of associating specific problems with universal evils and desperate quests for ‘solutions’ backed by the absolute authority of the sacred.²

The biggest Muslim country in the world is no exception to this rule. In spite of their delayed penetration into international Islamist networks, Indonesian Muslims too have experienced this curious acculturation of a Manichaeian vision of the world, revisiting their national history in the light of this universal radicalism. Most of the classic authors of militant Islamism have been translated into Indonesian: Ahmad Ibn Taimiyya, the rigorist theologian of the fourteenth century; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, his student, and especially, Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab (died 1792), who gave his name to Wahhabism and who was the founding father of

¹ On the link between radical Islamism and globalisation, we refer the reader to the stimulating analyses of Oliver Roy, *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah* (CERI Series in Comparative Politics and International Studies). Translated from *L'Islam mondialisé*, Seuil, coll. La couleur des idées, Paris, 2002, 209 pp.

² See in particular Abdelwahab Meddeb, *The Malady of Islam*, trans. Pierre Joris and Ann Reid, Basic books, New York, 2003. Translated from *La Maladie de l'islam*, Seuil, coll. La couleur des idées, Paris, 2002, 221 pp.

the contemporary Salafist current.³ The thoughts of these three authors, promoted widely throughout the Archipelago, formed the foundation of the teaching dispensed in the meetings, workshops or circles of the Salafist-inspired groups.⁴ However, these sources were mostly read via the more recent works of master thinkers of contemporary Islamism: the Egyptian Hassan al-Banna (died 1949), founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, his disciple Sayyid Qutb (executed in 1966), the Pakistani Abdul A'la al-Mawdudi (died 1979), or the Syrian Sa'id Hawwa (died 1989).⁵ Contrary to Marxist books, the works of these thinkers were not affected at all by censorship, despite the regime's wariness with regard to militant Islamism: their works were translated into Indonesian as early as the start of the 1980s. One of the first translators of the works of the Muslim Brotherhood was Abu Ridho, a bursary student sent to the Middle East with funds transmitted through the Ministry of Religions.⁶ During the 1980s, the publishing house of the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (DDII) printed some 20 titles that spread the thinking of the Muslim Brotherhood, of which seven were translated by Abu Ridho.⁷

³ Militant Islamism that very frequently proceeded to a skewed and decontextualised reading of these authors, particularly in the case of Ibn Taimiyya.

⁴ The university *usrob* (often closer to the Muslim Brotherhood) showed a predilection for Taimiyya while the Salafists outside of campus preferred Abd al-Wahhab.

⁵ For an overview of these authors' ideas, see Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*, trans. Anthony F. Roberts (1st edition), Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2002. Translated from *Jihad, expansion et déclin de l'islamisme*, Gallimard, Paris, 2000, pp. 25–34. For a more detailed presentation of the thinking of Sa'id Hawwa, see Itzhak Weismann, "Sa'id Hawwa: The Making of a Radical Muslim Thinker in Modern Syria", in *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 29, 1993: 601–623; Noorhaidi Hasan, *Laskar Jihad, Islam, Militancy and the Quest for Identity in Post New-Order Indonesia*, Cornell Southeast Asia Program, Ithaca New York, 2006, 226 pp.

⁶ Abu Ridho alias Abdi Sumaithi was sent by DDII to the Middle East, DDII having been tasked by the Ministry of Religions with the selection of the scholars. Ali Said Damanik, *Fenomena Partai Keadilan, Transformasi 20 tahun Gerakan Tarbiyah di Indonesia*, Teraju, Jakarta, 2002, p. 95 and note p. 107. In fact, the close relationship between DDII and the ministry was very much the result of DDII's central position in accessing Saudi resources, especially through the distribution of grants (Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006, p. 43).

⁷ Furkon cites the name of 18 authors translated between 1980 and 1999, including Yusuf Al-Qaradhwai, Musthafa Masyhur, Musthafa as Siba'i and Sa'id Hawwa. Abu Ridho created a publishing house especially for ideas of the Muslim Brotherhood, Al-Ishlahy Press (Aay Muhammad Furkon, *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, Ideologi dan Praksis Politik Kaum Muda Muslim Indonesia Kontemporer*, Teraju, Jakarta, 2004, pp. 129–130).

In addition, the radicalisation of Indonesian Islam was also nourished by major contemporary Salafist ulama who inspired the Afghan jihad. Salih ibn Fauzan al-Fauzani, important commentator of the work of al-Wahhab; Jamil ul Rehman, leader of Jama'at Da'wa ila al-Qur'an wa Ahl al-Sunnah; Syaikh Muqbil ibn Hadi al-Wadi'i or Abdullah Azzam, a Jordanian-Palestinian ideologue of international jihadism, were discovered by the Indonesians during their studies in the Gulf countries and especially when they passed through the training camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan.⁸ Their works and opuscles were available as early as the 1980s, initially within a restricted circle.⁹ The Indonesian authorities almost never stopped such publications, in spite of their otherwise rigorous censorship. Only a few magazines such as *Al-Ikhwān* and *Ar-Risalah*, published in Yogyakarta at the start of the 1980s, were banned. During this decade, several works by Sayyid Qutb were sold freely while the novels of Pramodya Ananta Toer, considered as leftist, could only circulate under ground. Then, beginning in the 1990s, the slight easing of the Soeharto regime's attitude towards radical Islam allowed this current to promote its ideas not only through books but also through the press. The bimonthly *Sabili*, which would soon become the leading title of this virulent Islamism, was founded in 1988. It was officially banned in 1993, by which time its circulation had multiplied 20 times over (from 3,000 to 60,000 copies).¹⁰ It continued nonetheless to be published under another name, *Intilaq* (from Arab, meaning 'departure').¹¹ In 1998, under the presidency of B.J. Habibie, it reappeared under its initial title. *Sabili's* circulation exceeded 100,000 copies the following year, corresponding to more than 430,000 readers in Indonesia. In effect, under Reformasi, all censorship was abolished and the most violent works could be published freely. Several publishing houses even specialised in such books. The catalogues of Al-Kautsar (Jakarta), Gema Insani Press (Jakarta), Pustaka Manthiq

⁸ Noorhaidi Hasan, "Laskar Jihad, Jaringan Islam Radikal di Indonesia", report written in preparation for the book *Les Musulmans d'Asie du Sud-Est face au vertige de la radicalisation*, IRASEC-Les Indes Savantes, Bangkok-Paris, 2003, 146 pp. See also his excellent monograph *Laskar Jihad, Islam, Militancy, and the Quest for Identity in Post-New Order Indonesia*, 2006.

⁹ The writings of Abdullah Azzam were translated and published by a publishing house close to the Islamic boarding school of Ngruki, Pustaka al-alaq. International Crisis Group, 26 August 2003, p. 3.

¹⁰ Interview with Zaenal Muttaqien, chief editor of *Sabili*, 17 November 2000.

¹¹ As confessed by an ex-seller of the magazine, a radical Islamist militant then.

Press (Solo) and Hidayatullah Press (Yogyakarta) publicised works that denounced Jews, Christians and other “enemies of Islam”.¹² Indeed, aside from the Internet, the crucial vector in spreading the ideas of radical Islam was, without doubt, magazines: numerous titles such as *Media Dakwah*, *Saksi*, *Suara Hidayatullah*, *Salafy*, and most of all, *Sabili*, representing a total circulation of several hundred thousands of copies, contributed to the widespread promotion of these extremist ideas.¹³

I. In the Face of Conspiracy: Indonesia, Microcosm of a Worldwide Confrontation

Radical Islam in Indonesia is sited in urgency and in the absolute. The urgency is that of the Muslim cause, long overridden and henceforth endangered. Its reactions are based on the absolute, which shapes its responses to this great challenge. For the theoreticians of the extreme, the world can be read in a binary way. It is the setting for an age-old, worldwide battle of titanic dimensions and ceaselessly renewable forms, pitting good versus evil, authentic Islam versus the atheist and the infidel. Against the forces of darkness that have gripped the world, Man can only fight back through a total submission to Allah. Yet only a section of humanity is convinced of the urgency of this sacred union; the other camp, eaten away by decadence, blinded by power and money, attempts instead to jeopardise the efforts of the true believers. For the Indonesian radical Islamists, the Archipelago is one of the sites of this universal confrontation between Allah’s supporters and the “demons in human form” (*syetan manusia*) mentioned earlier.¹⁴ The essence of their discourse lies in convincing their compatriots of the reality of a vast conspiracy to prevent the legitimate triumph of Islam and its laws in the country. This positioning of themselves as martyrs has led to a complete reinterpretation of the contemporary history of Indonesia, emphasising the deleterious role played by the non-Muslim communities, accused of betrayal in the service

¹² Wihdah Press and Hidayatullah Press are some of the most active. Wihdah is controlled by the Indonesian Mujahidin Council and managed by Irfan S. Awwas.

¹³ According to a survey conducted by A.C. Nielsen, in 2002, *Sabili* was the most widely read publication in Indonesia after the young women’s magazine *Gadis*. Ali Said Damanik, 2002, p. 160.

¹⁴ According to the expression by Abu Bakar Ba’asyir in his speech read out at the Second Congress of the Mujahidin in Solo in 2003 (*Pidato Amanah Amirul Mujahidin Ustadz Abu Bakar Ba’asyir*, p. 4).

of a vast international Christian-Zionist coalition, thus justifying the turn towards violence.

A Manichaean Reinterpretation of the History of Indonesia

Although very widespread today, the conspiracy theme is relatively recent in the history of Islamic thought in the Archipelago. Until the 1970s, the movements inspired by Muslim reformism advocated a renewal necessitated by a sclerosis of the Islamic world. Some values of the West — for example, individualism — were certainly denounced, colonialism was similarly condemned and the fate of Islam in Indonesia was often decried; yet these grievances were not totted up as irrefutable proof of a systematic attempt to destroy Muslim culture.¹⁵ Even Persatuan Islam (Persis), the most intransigent Muslim organisation between the two world wars, never descended into rhetoric comparable to the hostile tirades of its contemporary epigones. Its main theoreticians did assail the activities of Christian missionaries in Indonesia and engaged in vigorous theological quarrels with priests and pastors regarding the position of Jesus in the Bible or Christianity's capacity for the moral regulation of society.¹⁶ However, these polemics were often in reaction to discourse that Denigrated Islam.¹⁷ Thus they arose from indignation and were based on arguments that were intended to be rational. The Christian missionaries were accused of taking advantage of the colonial government's encouragement to proselytise and of participating in a political plan to turn Indonesia into a state with a Christian majority, one that would be more easily governable for the colonial authorities who were highly suspicious of Muslims. The explanations forwarded arose from political reasoning that

¹⁵ Some local sections of Sarekat Islam nonetheless developed a discourse that combined millenarism and anti-colonialism. See Azyumardi Azra, "Muslimin Indonesia: Viabilitas Garis Keras", in *Gatra*, special edition 2000, p. 44, cited in Khamami Zada, *Islam Radikal, Pergulatan Ormas-Ormas Islam Garis Keras di Indonesia*, Penerbit Teraju, Jakarta, 2002, p. 145. On the theme of millenarism, see Sartono Kartodirdjo, *Protest Movements in Rural Java, A Study of Agrarian Unrest in the 19th and Early 20th Century*, Oxford University Press, Singapore-New York, 1973, pp. XVIII–229.

¹⁶ Howard M. Federspiel, *Persatuan Islam. Islamic Reform in Twentieth Century Indonesia*, Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University, Ithaca, 1970, 247 pp.

¹⁷ For a synthetic description of these quarrels, see Ismatu Ropi, "Describing the Other Faith: A Bibliographical Survey of Indonesian Muslim Polemics in Christianity", in *Studia Islamika*, vol. 6, no. 1, 1999: 77–111.

could be discussed by all.¹⁸ Moreover, far from demonstrating a simplistic anti-Christian stance, the leaders of Persis expressed admiration on occasions for the missionaries' work in education and development. Soon the debate on nationalism ceased to be framed by religion. In the years preceding the Second World War, the birth of the first Christian parties and their firm support for independence, as well as the increasingly explicit acknowledgement by Muslim organisations of a struggle for a multi-confessional Indonesia, led to the permanent disassociation of Christianity with the colonial powers.¹⁹

At the time of the declaration of independence in August 1945, the representatives of Islamist groups, as we have seen, had to abandon all hopes of seeing an Islamic state proclaimed. By signing the Jakarta Charter two months prior to Independence with the representatives of so-called 'secular' nationalists, they had accepted that obligations linked to the application of the sharia be limited solely to Muslims. In thereby excluding Christians from the application of the Islamic law that called for a 'protégé' but inferior status (*dhimmi*), they were de facto recognising Christians' legitimacy as citizens, on a par with Muslims. In spite of these concessions, the Muslim personalities who decided on the final text of the Constitution accepted the withdrawal of this explicit reference to Islamic law as they feared the Christian regions would not join the Republic. *Pancasila*, placed in the preamble of the Constitution, thus contented itself with affirming the religious foundation of the state, without any particular mention of Islam. At that time, this compromise respecting the rights of minorities was not really contested within the Muslim community, which agreed, along with Masyumi, to pursue its struggle in the framework of a parliamentary democracy.

It was only a few years later that the Darul Islam movement, breaking away from the main Muslim organisations, wanted to put an end to the status quo and proclaim an Islamic state.²⁰ Nonetheless, Kartosuwiryo and his disciples did not dwell on the past martyrdom of Indonesian Islam, preferring instead to indulge in illusions of a radiant future. Nor did the dominant current of political Islam, represented by Masyumi, cede to the

¹⁸ The Islamic organisations thus demanded that Article 177 of Indische Staatsregelung be kept and that Article 178 on schools be suppressed (*Berita Nahdlatol Oelama*, 15 April 1939, no. 12, 8th year).

¹⁹ Martin Muskens, *Partner in Nation Building. The Catholic Church in Indonesia*, Missio Aktuell, Verlag Aachen, 1979, 327 pp.

²⁰ This thereby marked the birth of a radical Islamist current in Indonesia. See Chapter One.

theme of historical grievances until the end of the 1950s. The tone was more one of critical introspection. Taking up one of the major themes of reformism, the theoreticians of the Islamic party felt that if the Muslim world in general showed such a great lag behind the West, it should look within itself for answers. Colonisation by a more advanced Europe was the consequence, not the cause, of Islamic civilisation's lag. For it to regain its grandeur and independence, one had to look to the principles spelt out in the Qu'ran and the Sunna in the light of a modernity exemplified by the West. The majority of its leaders, formed within the colonial educational system and nurtured by the classics of political literature, dug into the history of European nations for lessons in the political construction of their young country.²¹ Moreover, the Western world was not perceived of as a monolithic block: in particular, the United States, which had exerted pressure on the former colonial powers in favour of Indonesia's independence on numerous occasions and which constituted the surest bulwark against atheist communism, was regarded as a benevolent power. In effect, the militants of political Islam felt, as early as the late 1940s, that atheist Marxism was the greatest threat for their community. It was for this reason that Christians and Christian parties (Parkindo and Partai Katolik) were loyal allies of Masyumi, supporting the governments they led and the majority of the projects they presented. The failure of the party in the elections of 1955, its unyielding defence of democratic ideals to the point of rebellion and finally the banning of the party in 1960 created, as we have seen, the political conditions for its radicalisation.²² The brutal fall of the Indonesian reformist leaders from respected personalities at the beginning of the 1950s, to hunted pariahs less than ten years later, led them to view the recent history of Indonesian Islam in a new light. Their sense of betrayal stemmed from this period of repression and persecution, fears and injustices. Latent at the start of the 1960s, it became an obsession after the beginning of the New Order when years of imprisonment were succeeded by tremendous hope pinned on the leaders of the party. With the fall of Soekarno and the wiping out of the communist enemy, all seemed to point towards their being hailed as heroes. Instead, the

²¹ On the sociology of the leaders of Masyumi and its consequences, see Rémy Madinier, "Le Masjumi, parti des milieux d'affaires musulmans?", in *Archipel*, no. 57, 1999: 177–189.

²² A hardening was already perceptible in the Constitutional Assembly in 1958–1959 when all the representatives of Islam (mainly Masyumi and NU) refused to cede to the demands of the secular nationalists.

new regime's distrust of political Islam made them pariahs. Deprived of all political activity and frustrated at the silence surrounding their role in the fight against communism, some of these reformists fell back on the plaintive discourse of the hurt and betrayed, a discourse that spread gradually in Indonesia through the publications of the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (DDII).²³ Through a rereading of the recent history of Indonesia, this generation, and those claiming to be their heirs, began their mutation towards religious intransigence.

The discourse on the oppression of Indonesian Islam advanced tirelessly for almost three decades now is founded on a supposedly unshakeable postulate: representing almost nine-tenths of the Archipelago's population, Muslims have the right and the duty to live under the rule of the sharia. As such, each page of the revisited history of independent Indonesia describes in minutia the imagined baseness, traps and betrayals carried out by the enemies of Islam to obstruct the legitimate advent of Islamic law. The key episode of this martyrdom, one that never fails to crop up in every defence of radical Islam and one which has spawned its own literature, is of course the abandonment of the Jakarta Charter.²⁴ Jettisoned by the dominant group of political Islam at the end of the 1940s, calls for the institutional recognition of Islamic law resurfaced in public debate during the Constitutional Assembly in 1957. Then, faced with the unbending attitude of secularist *Pancasila* supporters, the representatives of Islam spoke out and started to develop the theme of unfulfilled promises.²⁵

In July 1959, the debate was temporarily wound up by a presidential decree establishing that the Jakarta Charter had "inspired" the 1945 Constitution. This solution, which left out the famous seven words,²⁶ was

²³ William Liddle, "Media *Dakwah* Scripturalism: One Form of Islamic Political Thought and Action in New Order Indonesia", in Mark R. Woodward (ed.), *Toward a New Paradigm: Recent Developments in Indonesian Islamic Thought*, Arizona State University, Tempe, 1996, pp. 323–356.

²⁴ H. Endang Saifuddin Anshary, *Piagam Jakarta 22 juni 1945 dan Sejarah Konsensus Nasional antara Nasionalis Islami dan Nasionalis "Sekular" Tentang dasar Negara Republik Indonesia, 1945–1959*, Perpustakaan Salman ITB, Bandung, 1981, pp. XXVI–238.

²⁵ See the discourse on this theme by the most intransigent representatives of Masyumi, Z.A. Ahmad and Isa Anshary, *Tentang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia dalam Konstituante*, vol. 1, Bandung, Pustaka, 1958, 448 pp.

²⁶ The seven words of the Jakarta Charter, suppressed on 18 August 1945, would make it a duty for Indonesian Muslims to apply Islamic law. No specification was provided, rendering it open in theory to all applications.

considered a failure by the representatives of Islam, who then tried at the start of the New Order to ensure that the Charter was more clearly inserted in the preamble of the Constitution. However, the army refused to include this issue in the agenda of the Assembly debates that took place between 1966 and 1967 and continued to oppose any fresh discussion on this subject in the following years.²⁷ With the passing of years and accumulation of disappointments, a section of the reformist Muslims adopted an increasingly aggressive discourse. The theme of unfulfilled promises gave way to that of betrayal and conspiracy.²⁸

Within the groups that were increasingly radicalised, this rhetoric grew inordinately: “the removal of the Jakarta Charter”²⁹ became little by little the cause of all the troubles plaguing the Muslim community of Indonesia since Independence. One of the most striking examples of this reconstruction of history is the first chapter of a pamphlet published under the title *Islam Diadili*.³⁰ This publication is the reworked translation of a long investigation published in London in 1987 by a “committee for the defence of political prisoners” (Tapol) defending the Islamist militants then embroiled in several trials. Characteristic of the sleight of hand typically employed in radical Islamist circles, the semantic shift of the title adopted for the translation — *Islam on Trial* — as a substitute for *Indonesia: Muslims on Trial* attested to the spread of the martyrdom theme in the 1980s. Returning to the abandonment of the Jakarta Charter on 18 August 1945, which in their eyes caused the transformation of “the victory of Islam” to a “humiliating defeat”, the work stigmatised the secularist (*sekular*) leaders led by Soekarno, blaming them for this catastrophe. For the authors of the Indonesian version, herein lay the cause of

²⁷ B.J. Boland, *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia*, Marinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1982, pp. 100–101.

²⁸ Robert W. Hefner, in *Indonesia*, 64, October 1997.

²⁹ According to the expression of Abu Bakar Ba’asyir at the First Congress of the Mujahidin (Solo, August 2000). Ba’asyir is one of the most emblematic representatives of this generation of former Masyumi sympathisers who had swung to extremism.

³⁰ *Islam Diadili* is a slim book of 82 pages, presented as the translation into Indonesian by Benny Muhammad of Tapol’s report, *Indonesia: Muslims on Trial*, London 1987. On its cover, this report is attributed to “Amnesty International ’87, Liga Indonesia Baru”. It comprises seven chapters on various trials of the 1980s. It was re-edited in 2002 by Teplok Press, Jakarta, without any author mentioned on its cover but with the name of Tapol beneath the title on the inside. The preface, dated May 2002 in London, was signed by Carmel Budiardjo, Liem Soei Liong and Dorothy Perkins of Tapol. The semantic shift from “Muslims” to “Islam” did not seem to have been noticed by Tapol.

the bloody conflicts that had ensnared the Archipelago at the end of the 1990s. Henceforth, the Darul Islam militants on trial and their epigones a decade later were no longer perceived as troublemakers but as courageous opponents of a policy consistently implemented by the two successive regimes after Independence aimed at suppressing Islam.

This rhetoric of paranoia, describing Indonesian Islam as a long-suffering victim of the sly manoeuvres of those in power, has since been taken up regularly. It was, for instance, the central theme of a work entitled *The Tragedy of Muslims in Indonesia, 1980–2000*, first published on 16 July 1998, then completed and re-edited five times over the next two years. The book, authored by Al Chaidar and supported by a mysterious “Tapol assistance team” as well as “Amnesti International”, tried to ride on the legitimacy of the prestigious human rights organisation and the Indonesian investigation committee of political prisoners (Tapol) mentioned earlier.³¹

The Tragedy of Muslims in Indonesia, 1980–2000 also revisited the recent history of Indonesia by adopting ad nauseam the thesis of a vast conspiracy against Islam, hatched by the collaborators of Soeharto, who was himself conveniently spared of the accusation. The authors alleged that this machination, first led by General Moertopo, then by Benny Moerdani, the Christian general presented as one of his heirs, was organised to discredit the Islamist militants fighting to defend their fellow believers. The authors linked, with a semblance of logic, Opsus’ manoeuvres during the 1970s and the Tanjung Priok incident in the early 1980s, with the exactions committed in East Timor and in Ambon in 1999. Their revisionist interpretation presented the latter events as evidence of the pursuit of this terrible conspiracy.

Innumerable works and articles expanded on the myth of a united Islamic community, victim of its devotion to the nation. Taking great care to never evoke the defeat of Muslim parties in the 1955 elections, the spokespersons of radical Islam relentlessly juxtaposed the Muslim

³¹ Al Chaidar, Team Peduli Tapol and Amnesti International, *Bencana Kaum Muslimin di Indonesia, 1980–2000*, Wihdah Press, Yogyakarta, 5th edition, 2000, 424 pp. In fact, one reads on p. 4 that the work is a translation from Arabic of *Mibnatul Islam Fi Indonesia* by Iddatu Askhas Amiliu Li Hisabi Tapol (assistance team of Tapol, 1985), a book that was published in Cairo in 1989 by Zahratif, and that the Indonesian version was “translated” by Muhammad Thalib, with Irfan S. Awwas as “publisher”. Amnesty International, whose reports were partially reproduced, was not contacted with regards to this book, and even less to its name appearing on the cover.

majority of the country and the impossibility of having Islamic law recognised. Thus Abu Bakar Ba'asyir declared in 2000:

It has been 55 years since Indonesia gained independence and the Islamic community had its rights usurped and manipulated. This shows that something strange is happening in Indonesia, a country where the rights of the majority are overridden by a minority. The Muslim community has become a “*dhimmi* majority” as its right to implement its religion, to carry out the obligations of its faith are ceaselessly blocked by its minority citizens. This is such an obvious fact that even a child in primary school would be able to see the injustice done to the majority citizens of this country.”³²

The Indonesian Archipelago, Paradigm of the ‘Clash of Civilisations’

The Indonesian radicals were not content to denounce the acts of those in power: in progressively widening the target of their Manichaean remonstrances from their country to the world, they made Indonesia but one of the sites of a worldwide and centuries-old confrontation between good and evil.

In an article entitled “The persistently betrayed Islamic community” published in May 2000 in the Laskar Jihad’s bulletin, Husein Umar relooked at the twentieth century and endeavoured to show how, despite the key role Muslims had played in the fight against colonialism, some “minority groups’ unscrupulously took advantage of the circumstances to deprive Muslims of the right to enforce their (Islamic) law.”³³ In the same vein, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir’s speech at the Second Congress of the Mujahidin in August 2003, read out by Irfan S. Awwas (Ba'asyir was then in prison), reminded all of the “devils in human form” (*syetan manusia*)

³² “Sambutan Ketua Ahlul Halli wal Aqdi: Ust. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, Seruan ke Arah Tathbiquq Syari'ah”, in Irfan Suryahardi Awwas (ed.), *Risalah Kongres Mujahidin I dan Penegakan Syari'ah Islam*, Wihdah Press, Yogyakarta, 2001, pp. 137–138 (Abu Bakar Ba'asyir’s speech at the First Congress of Mujahidin in 2000).

³³ “Umat Islam Selalu Dikhianati”, in *Bulletin Laskar Jihad*, 5th edition, 2000. The contribution of this direct heir of Masyumi, general secretary of the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (DDII) to the periodical of a militia responsible for the aggravation of the bloody conflict in the Moluccas illustrates well how this reinterpretation of the history of the Muslim party could help create an environment conducive to the exercise of physical violence.

who had prevented the enforcement of divine law in Indonesia — the European colonisers, of course, but also their allies, the “secularists and crusaders, even more perverse (*licik*) than the colonisers”.³⁴

Further widening the perspective, H. Hartono Ahmad Jaiz’s book, *In the shadow of Soekarno-Soeharto. The political tragedies of Indonesian Islam, from the Old Order to the New Order*, published in 2001, situated the misfortunes of Indonesian Muslims in a more extensive history, one of a succession of conspiracies against “true” orthodox Islam.³⁵ A textbook representative of this new generation of radical thinkers (he was born in 1953), the author was a member of KISDI and a journalist at *Media Dakwah*, the organ of the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council. For a few years now, he has produced many hate-filled pamphlets, for instance, the above work which meticulously listed the phases of a world-wide and centuries-old plot, starting from the betrayal of the Shiites in the early ages of Islam, to the machinations of the “secularist Westerners and their accomplices” in Indonesia in the twentieth century.

Churned out tirelessly, the theme of the unjust Western hegemony constitutes, in some ways, a refashioning of the reformist ideas from the beginning of the twentieth century. Noting the lag of the Muslim world, the leaders of this current — Arabs, Indians or Indonesians — saw it, above all, as a reflection of the internal weaknesses of Islamic societies and proof of the necessity of rethinking Islam. Almost a century later, Indonesian radicals present the end of legitimate Muslim domination over the world as the result of cunning and brutal intrigues, from the time Napoleon landed in Egypt until the suppression of the caliphate in 1924, alongside the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire by Europe and the actions of Kemal Atatürk, a “Zionist freemason born of a Jewish mother”.³⁶

³⁴ Speech written by Abu Bakar Ba’asyir, read at the Second Congress of the Mujahidin, Solo, 10–12 August 2003 (“Oknum-oknum Bangsa Indonesia yang Berpaham Sekuler dan Tokoh-tokoh Salibis”, literally, “Individuals of Indonesian nationality who are secularists and the crusaders”).

³⁵ Hartono Ahmad Jaiz, *Di Bawah Bayang-Bayang Soekarno-Subarto. Tragedi Politik Islam Indonesia dari Orde Lama hingga Orde Baru*, Darul Falah, Jakarta, 2001, XVII–218 pp.

³⁶ Speech by General Z.A. Maulani at the Second Congress of Mujahidin, Boyolali, 10–12 August 2003. This ex-head of the secret services during Habibie’s presidency (1998–1999) was one of the symbols of the collusion between some military circles and radical Islamist groups.

This almost hysterical search for proof that the international conspiracy against Indonesian Islam dated from a long time ago often produced great contradictions. Ahmad Mansyur Suryanegara, presented as a historian by the magazine *Sabili*, explained with the utmost seriousness that the United States had organised the fall of Soekarno because he was the “champion of freedom and of Islam in the Asian and African countries”. His analysis was in flagrant opposition to the classic (and common) Islamist vision of Soekarno as the advocate par excellence of secularism and an avowed admirer of Kemal Atatürk, and concluded just as absurdly that American imperialism was responsible for the failure of the Indonesian IPTN public enterprise because this pharaonic project of the Indonesian aeronautic industry supported by B.J. Habibie attested to the vigour of Islam and threatened the West’s technological hegemony.³⁷

The propaganda, developed one or two decades ago, proclaiming the oppression of Indonesian Muslims by the West, thus represents a major ideological turnaround within the Islamist movement. Perceived in the 1950s and 1960s as a necessary ally in the fight against communism, the Western world became the symbol of a dangerous moral corruption in the 1970s. After the fall of the Soviet Empire, it was seen as the principal enemy of Islam, seeking, together with its Zionist ally, domination of the Muslim world. By inscribing Indonesia’s recent history in the struggle against this new incarnation of evil and by situating it in a series of tragedies that had befallen Muslim countries in recent years, the radical Islamist press of Indonesia put forth a simplistic and efficacious reading of the painful events that had marked the Archipelago since 1996. Southeast Asia was henceforth implicated in this vast conspiracy that included the massacres of Bosnian Muslims by the Orthodox Serbs and Catholic Croats, with the at least passive complicity of the West,³⁸ and the renewal of Jewish repression against Palestine. The aim — amongst others — was to separate the Christian regions from the rest of Indonesia so as to install Australian (or American, depending on whose version of this preposterous story) military bases. The independence of East Timor, presented as the centre of Muslim persecution for years, was viewed as the first successful step of this lethal project whose aim was to spark off a series of secessions in the east of the Archipelago. The next stages would be the Moluccas and Central Sulawesi, where — in the eyes of the radicals — the conflicts

³⁷ *Sabili*, 6 October 1999.

³⁸ “Kezaliman Kaum Minoritas”, in *Sabili*, 23 December 1998.

started by the Christians amounted to the beginnings of declarations of independence. Bali, whose Hindu population and tourism-generated wealth could encourage its detachment from the motherland, was also cited as a potential target.

Owing to its important role in East Timor's accession to independence in 1999, Australia was generally seen as the principal organiser of this terrible machination. The Australian Chief of Staff wanted to install military bases in Indonesia so that in the event of a war with China, the battle will be fought there instead of on its own soil.³⁹

The conspiracy theory was thus largely in place by the end of the Soeharto regime and its instrumentalisation continued under Reformasi, sustained by insinuations and deceptions. Rumour is omnipresent and solid investigations and indisputable proof are lacking. Readers' forums of newspapers were often resorted to, allowing newspapers to spread the most fantastical news without having to bear full responsibility. The publications close to the radicals thus threw their columns open to pure prattle from unidentified sources. By using phrases as varied as "*sudah diketahui bahwa*" (we know that), "*kata orang*" (it is said) or questions feigning naiveté, for example, this declaration by a reader of *Suara Hidayatullah* in June 2000: "There are signs (*indikasi*) showing that numerous problems affecting Indonesia are caused by foreigners", the worst accusations could be cunningly propagated.⁴⁰ Photos — including close-ups of torn bodies from the Moluccan conflict — were frequently used as evidence of the dangers menacing the Muslim community, but more insidiously, also to designate the enemies of Islam. As an accompaniment to a lengthy dossier in October 1999 on the dangers of Christianity to Indonesia, *Sabili* used a photo of Pope John Paul II receiving the bishop of East Timor, Monseigneur Belo. The full implications of this apparently ordinary photo were only revealed in the caption: "The Vatican's conspiracy".⁴¹

These rumours were widespread in Indonesian society. At times they were even repeated at the highest political level: after the assassination of three United Nations representatives in East Timor in September 2000,

³⁹ For a description of one of these far-fetched plans, see the views of Rustam Kastor, one of the most active militants in the Moluccan conflict. Rustam Kastor, *Konspirasi Politik RMS dan Kristen Menghancurkan Ummat Islam di Ambon-Maluku*, Wihdah Press, Yogyakarta, 2000, XXXVI–320 pp.

⁴⁰ "*Ada indikasi bahwa masalah-masalah yang terjadi di Indonesia ini dipengaruhi oleh pihak asing*".

⁴¹ *Sabili*, 6 October 1999.

Abdurrahman Wahid's Defence Minister, Muhammad Mahfud, evoked in the press a "certain country", which he could not name for 'ethical reasons', thus indirectly blaming Australia or the United States for this incident which actually involved pro-Indonesia Timorese militias.⁴²

Finally, as we saw earlier with *The Tragedy of Muslims*, imposture surrounding the authorship of pseudo-scientific works was also frequent. This unwittingly revealed the ambiguity in the relationship between the radical Islamist movement and the West. That NGOs and American or European academics, generally presented as pure agents of imperialism, frequently had their good name usurped, attested in fact to the credibility they enjoyed within these groups. This was why the publication in September 2003 of the translation into Indonesian of the controversial book *L'Effroyable Imposture*⁴³ by French author Thierry Meyssan, on the September 11 attacks, was welcomed with enthusiasm by many Muslim Indonesians, from the most radical to the most moderate.

Through the publication of numerous works and articles in the press, the theoreticians of radical Islam in Indonesia plunged their readers into a binary world where the opposition between good and evil was embodied in a struggle between Islam and the West. This explains the particular insistence on the theme of the crusades as an unchangeable framework for analysing the behaviour of Christian nations since the eleventh century.⁴⁴ The events following the September 11, 2001 attacks fitted perfectly into this ideological system. For several Indonesian commentators, the attacks organised on this day by the enemies of Islam (Americans, Jews, or both, depending on whose version⁴⁵) had but one aim, that is, to discredit Islam and to justify American intervention in Afghanistan and Iraq, which had been planned way in advance.⁴⁶ The bombings organised in Bali and Jakarta in October 2002 and August 2003 (later also 2004

⁴² AFP, 14 September 2000.

⁴³ Thierry Meyssan, *L'Effroyable Imposture*, Editions Carnot, Paris, 2002, 251 pp.; *9/11 The Big Lie*, Carnot USA Book, 2003. Translated into 28 languages.

⁴⁴ "Kristenisasi dan Sejarah Gerakan Zending", <http://www.hidayatullah.com>, 7 May 2003.

⁴⁵ In his speech at the Congress of Mujahidin in August 2003, General Z.A. Maulani cited a number of counsellors under President Bush who, he alleged, had both American and Israeli nationalities (Wolfovitz and Feith). Speech written by Z.A. Maulani, distributed at the Second Congress of Mujahidin in 2003.

⁴⁶ For such an interpretation of the war against the Taliban regime, see Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, "Amerika Musuh Ummat Islam", in *Khutbah Jum'at*, no. 256, October 2002.

and 2005) by the Jemaah Islamiyah networks were also slotted into this absurd rhetoric, providing for many radicals additional evidence of the attempts by the CIA and/or MOSSAD to discredit the Muslim world. The wildest rumours and the most improbable experts and sources were cited to confirm this theory: Z.A. Maulani, former head of the secret services, declared that the type of explosives (C4) used were made only in the United States.⁴⁷ In a similar article published by *Republika Online*, one read that the United States itself was likely to have been behind the bomb because “not a single American life was lost”.⁴⁸ (In reality, several Americans were killed.) A researcher from the prestigious Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia (LIPI, National Centre of Research) also took up the conspiracy theory: Reza Sihbudi, specialist in Middle Eastern politics, wrote eight days after the Bali bombings that it was the work of the “secret service of the United States, the CIA, in collaboration with the Israeli secret service, MOSSAD, and perhaps, Indonesian elements”.⁴⁹ Within a few weeks, the rumour of a nuclear — and thus foreign — micro-bomb was so widespread that the Council of Ulama had to ask a team of Indonesian physicists to investigate and deny the allegations.⁵⁰

Confronted with evidence unearthed gradually by investigations, these conspiracy theories all but abandoned the terrain of bombings. Yet the radicals’ paranoia did not cease and subsequently found many other outlets for expression. For example, the issue of ‘deviating groups’ (*aliran sesat*) was a recurrent mobilising theme. The various movements considered as non-conforming to Sunni orthodoxy (Ahmadiyah, Lia Eden, Qu’ran Suci, Qiyadah) are accused not only of religious deviance but also of affecting national unity — enough of a threat to suspect the hand of ‘foreign intelligence’ (*intelijen asing*) behind their actions.⁵¹ In effect, all bad news affecting from afar or near the Indonesian Muslim community

⁴⁷ In short, the force of the bomb was equal to that of dozens of 108 mm grenades combined and the culprit was certainly a demolition expert. According to the former head of the secret services, the bomb was of the C4 or Claymore model. “This explosive was not produced in Indonesia. Only the United States can produce it,” declared Maulani (*Jawa Pos*, 10 October cited in *Republika Online*, 15 October 2002).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* “The United States wanted to shape public opinion such that Indonesia would be seen as a real nest of terrorists and a refuge for anarchists.”

⁴⁹ *Koran Tempo*, 18 October 2002, p. B7, entitled “Bom Bali, Al-Qaidah, dan CIA”, accompanied by an illustration; reproduced on www.hidayatullah.com on 21 October 2002.

⁵⁰ *Detikcom*, 27 November 2002.

⁵¹ *Aliran sesat ancam NKRI*, *Sabili*, 29 November 2007.

is liable to be reinterpreted and integrated into this Manichaean vision of the world. Thus the wildest rumours circulated when Indonesia was in the grip of the bird flu epidemic in 2007–2008: for example, *Sabili* revealed that the strain of virus sent by the United States in order to develop a vaccine was treated by the national laboratory of Los Alamos in New Mexico. This being the same body that had assembled the first atomic bomb in history, the newspaper ‘logically’ wondered if, on the pretext of researching a vaccine, the United States was not actually trying to develop chemical weapons with this Indonesian strain.⁵² A recent interview by Soeripto, head of the PKS board of experts, illustrates well the cumulative effect of these cleverly distilled rumours. This former intelligence officer (BAKIN, Badan Koordinasi Intelijen Negara) revealed a programme aimed at “destroying the Muslim countries in 2010”.⁵³ Listing all the problems in the world, this ‘intelligence specialist’ explained how the Zionists were behind most of these troubles and warned his compatriots gravely that after Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, Indonesia was next in line. Exploiting the chronic backwardness of the Muslim world (which was aggravated by organising, for example, the fall of the Century Bank), the enemy, under the pretext of assistance, had penetrated to the heart of the community and its structures (*pesantren*, mosques, etc.). It seeks to weaken the representation of Islam by sowing discord amongst the Islamic parties and breaking up their union where necessary. Responsible for the fratricidal wars between Sunnis and Shiites elsewhere, in Indonesia, it attempts to pit the followers of Wahhabism against those of liberal Islam. The Zionist enemy tries to undermine the country by targeting its youth and encouraging them along the slippery slope of decadence such as “entertainment” (in English in the text) or drugs. A mechanical historic reconstruction implacably integrating events as and when they occurred, these descriptions of a merciless conspiracy were intended to attest to the magnitude of the threat and gravity of measures to be taken. They also signalled the emergence of new agents of betrayal.

Traitors and Enemies

To complement the themes of permanent conspiracy and oppression, the notion of betrayal was also developed progressively. Its function became

⁵² “Konspirasi di balik flu burung”, *Sabili*, 20 March 2008.

⁵³ “2010 Program Menghancurkan Negeri Islam”, *Sabili*, 21 January 2010.

clearer in time: to deflect outside of the Muslim community responsibility for its problems. Initially, the ‘bad Muslims’, ignorant of the basic duties of their religion, were blamed for the failure to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia. Thus an entire literature developed around the theme of the *abangan*, guilty of syncretism.⁵⁴ However, for the Islamist militants, this vision was not without its weakness: likening unorthodox believers who maintained links with former religions, animism, Hinduism or Buddhism, to quasi-infidels, could cause the *umma* to lose its majority status and the legitimacy of its demands for imposing the sharia. Thus emerged, alongside attacks against secularists, the figure of the bad counsellor who, from the most obscure village of the Archipelago to the summit of the state, tried to turn the good Muslim away from his duties. This character was for a long time embodied by the communist, the non-believer who pushed the believer into atheism. The PKI, as we have seen, was singled out by the entire spectrum of political Islam as the enemy and the cause of its downfall. After the fall of Soekarno and the bloody anti-communist repression that accompanied the advent of the New Order, the traitor took on a new face. A virulent anti-Christian discourse, totally opposed to the alliance between Masyumi and the Catholic and Protestant parties in the 1950s, started developing within modernist Islam. This rhetoric took off with rumours of mass conversions of Muslims to Christianity.⁵⁵ It was channelled from the start of the 1970s through the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council (DDII), which played up in its publications the theme of the Muslim community’s victimisation in the hands of a New Order regime colluding with the Christian minority.⁵⁶ The memory of the 1950s was reconstructed during this period with the discourse of tolerance towards Christians eclipsed by incessant reminders of the battles during the colonial period (when the Christians were also the oppressors) and by the denunciation of sinister manoeuvres attributed to Christians under the New Order.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ See, for example, the first chapter of *Islam Diadili*, which puts the blame on the “secular leaders” and the syncretic Javanese.

⁵⁵ See Chapter One.

⁵⁶ William Liddle, 1996, pp. 323–356.

⁵⁷ As attested by the selection of Mohammad Natsir’s work for the book *Islam dan Kristen di Indonesia* published by *Media Dakwah* for the first time in 1969. In the fourth edition, published a few months after the death of Mohammad Natsir were 21 articles dating from before 1945, only two from the period 1945–1960 and eight from the period 1967–1974.

Up till the 1990s, this anti-Christian rhetoric was relatively contained due to censorship. However, with the emergence of new media from radical Islam such as *Sabili*, *Suara Hidayatullah* or *Bulletin Laskar Jihad*, it degenerated into a peculiar hysteria and helped fan the inter-religious conflicts that multiplied as of 1996. Henceforth Christians, and missionaries in particular, were blamed for far more sinister acts. In the 1970s, they were accused above all of unfair competition — taking advantage of their dominant economic situation to spread their religion and using their money to attract converts. Twenty years later, the radical Islamist press denounced actions that were much more criminal. *Sabili* and *Suara Hidayatullah* were filled with sordid accounts of kidnappings, drugging, hypnosis or blackmail where medication was used in order to gain converts, leaving broken families and abandoned children in its wake. *Sabili*, for example, dedicated a dossier in 1999 to an alleged vast plan to have young Christian men seduce Muslim girls for the sole purpose of bearing Christian children.⁵⁸ Descriptions of these grand plans also detailed the supposed new methods employed by the missionaries in line with their new ambitions. While their predecessors had acted on the margins of the *umma*, the new missionaries' ultimate objective was the disappearance of the Muslim community in Indonesia through a complete conversion to Christianity. According to *Sabili*, one of the first steps of this vast plan targeted the Sundanese region (West Java). Called Jericho 2000, this project aimed to detach the entire region from Islam.⁵⁹ Faced with this threat, the radical press welcomed certain initiatives such as the improbable Forum in Anticipation of Apostasy (Forum Antisipasi Kegiatan Pemurtadan), which for some months systematically denounced all attempts at reconciliation between religions as mere manoeuvres aimed at bringing about more conversions.⁶⁰ The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq gave the Indonesian Islamist militants greater reason to mobilise. Adian Husaini reminded the militants that they should not be lulled into letting their guard down by these “crude acts” (of the United States) but should

⁵⁸ It was literally an ‘impregnation’ (*hamilisasi*) plan, “*Kristenisasi Jilid Dua*” (Christianisation, Chapter Two), in *Sabili*, 28 July 1999.

⁵⁹ “Mega Projek Kristenisasi”, in *Suara Hidayatullah*, February 2000.

⁶⁰ Forum in Anticipation of Apostasy thus conveyed a warning to the public entitled: “Evidence for the Muslim community of the dangers of Christianisation”, which listed the principal “underhand” methods of the missionaries. This text was accessible on the Laskar Jihad website for a long time.

be wary of the even more sinister attempts at conversion closer to home by the missionaries in Indonesia:

Physical terror, like that of American fragmentation bombs launched at Iraq, easily provokes much reaction. Muslim activists descend by the thousands to the streets to voice their opposition to the American offensive in Iraq. But in reacting to “terror of speech” camouflaged by “love”, Muslims generally react too late.⁶¹

Anti-Christianisation has remained one of radical Islam’s favourite themes for mobilisation in the last years. Taking advantage of the extreme difficulty Christians have in legally building new places of worship in regions where Islam is the majority religion, the Islamist press has an easy time denouncing the unauthorised building of temples or Catholic churches. Encouraging popular protests, it constantly denounces the hidden agenda of Indonesian Christians whose intentions, it alleges, spill beyond mere worship.⁶² In this regard, the radical thinkers manage to integrate into their speeches clearly contradictory trends. While announcing triumphantly, based on an American survey, “the collapse of Christians in the world”⁶³ and the “return of the grandeur of Islam”, *Sabili* also warns Indonesian Muslims about the new methods of Christianisation. Henceforth targeted by the “papists” (*kaum papah*, a term that designates Protestant churches as well, and even the West) are the excluded and the marginalised, be they the blind, orphaned or victims of natural disasters, that is, potential victims of Western NGOs.⁶⁴

For many radical Muslims, the Christian Indonesian had thus changed in status. From a dishonest competitor in the 1970s and 1980s, he has become a willing partner in the vast Judeo-Christian conspiracy to annihilate Islam. Thus inserted into this centuries-old confrontation described earlier, he is a likely target of a holy war.

Jihad’s Search for Legitimacy

The radical Indonesians’ discourse on holy war reflects above all a desire to legitimise their actions. Emphasised is the global dimension of this

⁶¹ Adian Husaini, “Teror kata Berkedok ‘Kasih’ ” (The Terror of Speech Using the Mask of ‘Love’), <http://www.hidayatullah.com>, July 2003.

⁶² See, for example, “Lembah karmel jadi pusat gerakan politik” (The Carmel of the valley has become the centre of a political centre), *Sabili*, 7 May 2009.

⁶³ “Runtuhnya Kristen di Dunia”, *Sabili*, 7 May 2009.

⁶⁴ *Sabili*, 7 January 2010.

jihad *fi sabilillah* (combat in God's path) that, by suppressing innovations (*bid'a*), impiety (*kufri*) and vice (*maksiat*), should allow believers to live out fully their faith in Allah. This does not automatically necessitate the use of force but it becomes necessary, indeed, obligatory, when obstacles arise in the path between the Muslim and his God. The extent of the field of application of this violence, which radicals want legalised on their terms, has been subjected to much nitpicking.

Ja'far Umar Thalib, the commander-in-chief of Laskar Jihad, reminded all that legitimate use of force within the sharia falls into two categories. The first is *thalabi* (offensive) jihad, which offers infidels the following alternatives: convert, pay a tribute or be subjected to war. This solution is, however, strictly regulated by the law; it cannot be carried out by an individual but is to be undertaken under the direction of a leader who has the support of the whole community.⁶⁵ This explains why it was the second type of holy war, the *difa'i* (defensive) jihad, that was invoked by the Laskar Jihad and a few weeks later by the leaders of the Council of Mujahidins. Where believers are subjected to aggression, war is a collective obligation (*fardhu kifayah*) for the entire community. It may even, under certain conditions, become an individual duty (*fardhu'ain*) falling upon the shoulders of each Muslim.⁶⁶ Behind this meticulous legitimism was a barely veiled threat to some of the Muslim leaders whom the radicals felt were too mild. Quoting Ibn Taimiyya, Ja'far Umar Thalib reminded them that even if they fulfilled their religious duties, the sheer fact that they failed to impose the sharia was enough for them to be condemned as infidels and thus become potential targets of a holy war.⁶⁷ To meet the requirements of the defined legality, Laskar Jihad's intervention

⁶⁵ S. Yunanto *et al.*, *Gerakan Militan Islam Di Indonesia dan di Asia Tenggara*, The Ridep Institute, Friederich-Ebert-Stiftung, Jakarta (2nd edition: December 2003), pp. 73–74.

⁶⁶ If a Muslim leader so declares, if the Muslim troops are confronted by infidels, if these latter wage war on a Muslim state and if the force and support of Muslims are needed — these were the justifications invoked by Laskar Jihad in the Moluccas conflict. See Humaidi Hamid, "Pandangan Doktrinal dan Respon Terhadap Konflik Agama, Studi atas Laskar Jihad dan FPIS", pp. 55–59, cited by S. Yunanto *et al.*, 2003, note 4, p. 97. Also Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006, pp. 116–121.

⁶⁷ Ja'far Umar Thalib, *Buku Petunjuk Pengiriman Laskar Jihad ke Maluku*, DPW FKASWJ, Malang, 2000, cited in Noorhaidi Hasan, *Laskar Jihad, Jaringan Islam Radikal Di Indonesia*, report written in preparation for the book *Les Musulmans d'Asie du Sud-Est face au vertige de la radicalisation*, 2003.

in Ambon was preceded by a series of consultations that was spelt out on the Forum Komunikasi Ahlus Sunnah wal-Jama'ah (FKAWJ) website throughout the Moluccan war. As we have seen, no fewer than seven fatwas were issued by just as many muftis, Saudi and Yemenite, confirming the right of fighters in what was to become the war in the Moluccas.⁶⁸ Yet, two years later, Ja'far himself was condemned by a number of sheikhs in Medina for having divided the Muslim community with "political games that benefited the Muslim Brotherhood".⁶⁹ The strict Salafists disliked the way Ja'far was becoming a mediatised and politicised personality, and criticised him for advantaging the Brotherhood. The aim was thus not to delegitimise the jihad but the divisions it provoked within the Indonesian Muslim community. Ja'far Umar Thalib, who was himself suspected (wrongfully, it appears) of links with Al Qaeda, further rose up against Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, qualified by some Salafists as the "new KGB" (Khawarij Gaya Baru [new-style Kharijite]).⁷⁰

Advocates of a truly offensive jihad — this time not only in the Moluccas but also in the Archipelago — made open declarations after the Bali bombings, for example, the confessions of Ali Gufron alias Mukhlas, or those of Imam Samudra.⁷¹ These "jihadists-Salafists" (to use the ICG term) differentiated themselves from the 'purist' Salafists in many ways: they considered that it was legitimate to rebel against a government, even a Muslim one, and to organise themselves under a distinct structure.⁷²

⁶⁸ Noorhaidi Hasan, "Between Faith and Politics: The Rise of the Laskar Jihad in the Era of Transition in Indonesia", in *Indonesia*, no. 73, 2002: 145–169; International Crisis Group, 3 February 2004, pp. 16–17; Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006, pp. 116–121.

⁶⁹ International Crisis Group, 13 September 2004. In particular, the arguments by Sheikh Rabi' in Medina against Ja'far Thalib in 2002 on p. 18. For a large section of the Salafist movement, all political involvement is to be condemned as a source of division. Several Indonesian Islamist movements, particularly Ja'far and his Laskar Jihad, were thus accused of "*hizbiyah*" or *hizbiyya*, being involved in politics, literally, "in the manner of a party" (which is divisive because of the necessary compromises).

⁷⁰ Muhammad Umar Sewed, "Sururiyyah Terus Melanda Muslimin Indonesia", 2 March 2004, <http://www.salafy.or.id>, cited in International Crisis Group, 13 September 2004, p. 19.

⁷¹ Imam Samudra, *Aku Melawan Teroris!*, Jazêra, Solo, 2004, pp. 189–190. He wrote his autobiography in prison. On the bombing in Bali, he explains: "There is no legal obstacle for Muslims to wage an offensive jihad against infidels and not just for self-defence."

⁷² See Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006, pp. 148–152 on the different definitions of jihad between FKAWJ and other Islamist groups.

Radical Indonesians often invoked an underlying right to legitimate defence, though not always as detailed as that put forth by the FKAWJ leaders, which justified a resort to violence. Discourse on terrorism was characterised by a fundamental ambiguity in subscribing to two levels of the conspiracy theory. Generally, fatal bombings, such as the September 11 attacks, were proof in the eyes of the radicals of a vast machination against Islam to unfairly inculcate Muslims and further repress them. But when pressed with evidence and in confessing to their crimes, some perpetrators of the Bali bombings tried to justify their acts by citing the threat hanging over the Muslim community, from Ambon to Kashmir and the Philippines, in an international conflict waged under the flag of holy war. When it became obvious that the terrorism committed by Jemaah Islamiyah was largely counter-productive in the eyes of the Indonesian public (something that became very clear in 2009), the radical Islamist press adapted its discourse. It started to attribute the veering off of some groups to external interventions including Zionist or Western ones. Most of all, it denounced vehemently the “unjust repression” suffered by radical milieux closely or loosely linked to terrorist movements.⁷³ Naively, it expressed indignation that the police should be investigating the *pesantren* where these terrorists were educated whereas the education of other types of criminals was never questioned.⁷⁴

Aside from the menace of the secret services and armed forces that the Muslim community had to face, the theoreticians of Indonesian Islamism also denounced the more sinister influence exercised by the West over society in the Archipelago. This “Western toxification” (*westoxikasi*) described by Din Syamsuddin was producing a modern version of the *jahiliyyah*, the godless society that had preceded Islam and which should be kept at arm’s length.⁷⁵ To this end, the radicals described and sometimes attempted to implement the utopia of a perfect imitation of the Prophet’s society.

II. A Retrograde Societal Utopia

Called “*Manhaj Ahlu al-Hadits*” (method of experts in Traditions) or “*Manhaj Salafi*” (method of the elders), the path advocated by radical

⁷³ “Awas Rezim Otoriter Bangkit Lagi” (Careful that an authoritarian regime does not arise again), *Sabili*, 27 August 2009.

⁷⁴ “Kampanye Publik Anti Gerakan Islam”, *Sabili*, 24 September 2009.

⁷⁵ Din Syamsuddin, *Islam dan Politik Era Orde Baru*, Logos, Jakarta, 2001, XX–201 pp.

groups was, for them, the only one that was true to the teachings of Islam. It is for this reason that some wish to appropriate terms such as *ahlus sunnah wal jamaah* (*ahl al-sunna wa al-jamâ*, the people of the Sunna and of the community) proclaimed by other more moderate organisations as well.⁷⁶ Ja'far Umar Thalib, commander-in-chief of the Laskar Jihad militia and leader of FKAWJ, explained that this name could no longer be applied to mainstream organisations such as Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah because they had betrayed the ideals of Islam and had made compromises with the forces of decadence and corruption.⁷⁷

This incessant resort to the Islam of the early times is one of the salient aspects of the ideology of radical Indonesian Islam. It serves diverse functions and allows us to discern their retrograde social project.

Imitating the Prophet

The paradigm constructed by the deeds of the Prophet and his immediate successors is an unquestionable source of legitimacy and an absolute model of society for the majority of Indonesian radicals. These new theoreticians of Islam only recognise three sources in their religion: the Qu'ran, the Sunna, and the words and deeds of the Prophet, his companions and the first two generations of Muslims (the 'pious predecessors' or *salaf* who gave their name to the Salafist current). For them, the very notion of society or civilisation cannot be envisaged outside of these models and they dismiss anything else as belonging to the dark ages of barbarianism.⁷⁸ The life of the Prophet, as described in the Qu'ran and the *Sira*, naturally constitutes their principal source of inspiration. Abdullah Said, central figure of the Salafist *pesantren* Hidayatullah, explains that every Muslim should in his own life closely imitate the five phases of life that Muhammad underwent: orphan, shepherd, merchant, husband and mediator in the

⁷⁶ In the beginning, this expression referred to the followers of the Sunni 'orthodoxy' in accordance with ash'arism, which emphasised the Sunna and the virtuous community at the start of Islam, that of the *salaf* or pious elders. The use of this expression has become a call for orthodoxy.

⁷⁷ Greg Fealy, "Inside Laskar Jihad", in *Inside Indonesia*, no. 65, January–March 2001: 28–29.

⁷⁸ This is contrary to the first tenets of the Salafiyya, which tried at the beginning of the twentieth century to reconcile Islam and modernity. On the vision of Indonesian Salafists, see, for example, Ahmad Hatta, "Peradaban yang Bagaimana? Rincian Misi Negara Tauhid Madinah", in *Suara Hidayatullah*, July 2001.

Hira cave. These five phases are described in the five Suras of the Qur'an (al-'Alaq, al-Qalam, al-Muzzammil, al-Muddathir and al-Fatihah), a guide for a path that the believer has to follow step by step.⁷⁹ But on certain points not clarified by the Qur'an, the imitation of the *salaf*, the immediate successors of Muhammad, with no heed to the historical or cultural context, is the only way to prepare oneself for an Islamic life in accordance with the *manhaj nubuwwah*.⁸⁰ This desire to return to the original purity of the *salaf* was already underlying, in very diverse ways, the Muslim reformisms from Ibn Hanbal (780–855), Ibn Taimiyya (1263–1328) to the vast modernist movement at the end of the nineteenth century initiated by Jamal al-Din al-Afghani. All of these currents are sometimes known as Salafiyya. The term 'Salafist' is a more direct reference to the contemporary neo-fundamentalist movements of which some of the radical Indonesians studied here are the epigones.

The first function of this falling back on early Islam is to reassure believers of the legitimacy of their practices. By miming as closely as possible the founders of their religion, some Indonesian Muslims, not well versed in theological subtleties, hope to minimise the risks of deviation from the right path. They are encouraged by the Salafist leaders' fierce attack on 'local tradition' in the name of divine unicity (*tauhid*), which they interpret as a complete uniformity of religious practice.⁸¹ The anathemas launched against the multiple and insidious forms of *shirk* (associationism), which could lead the honest Muslim astray from the true faith, can be avoided by a fidelity to the *manhaj salafi*.⁸²

For the followers of these movements, the ostensible imitation of early Islam is also a tangible sign of the strength of their faith, an externalisation of their piety that allows them to isolate themselves from a corrupting environment. By forming islands of virtue in a decadent world and by embodying true religion, they set out to be the rallying points of Indonesia's renewed conversion to Islam. But most of all, they afford their believers relief from the world, its temptations and its channels of

⁷⁹ Noorhaidi Hasan, 2000, p. 87.

⁸⁰ Noorhaidi Hasan, *Laskar Jihad Jaringan Islam radikal Di Indonesia*, report written in preparation of the book coordinated by Stéphane Doyet and Rémy Madinier, 2003, 146 pp. See also Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006, pp. 31–33.

⁸¹ Sabarudin, *Jama'ah at-turats al-islami di Yogyakarta*, Laporan Penelitian Individual, Proyek Perguruan Tinggi Agama IAIN Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta, 2000, p. 72.

⁸² *Shirk*, literally 'association' is the sin of 'associating' someone or something with Allah.

information (for which they substitute their own). Like the followers of other sectarian movements, the believers are emotionally and culturally dependent. They lose the other aspects of their identity and are no longer Javanese, Sudanese or Madurese. A common phenomenon in Salafist currents around the world, this characteristic is particularly striking in Indonesia. As we have seen, this led to the emergence of a new generation of leaders who tapped into their links with the Arab world for legitimacy — either from their Yemenite origins or their studies in Middle Eastern universities.

Finally, in wanting to reproduce the Arab society of the first century of the Hegira (seventh century CE), the Salafists return to the broad question of the forms of universality in Islam and lend a radical response to this age-old debate in the Archipelago. Structured around the notions of cultural (or substantialist) Islam as opposed to formalist (or integral or literal) Islam, this controversy pits, through interposing publications, partisans of a civil society of a secular inspiration and defenders of a scripturalist approach to the past. The question of the historical and theological status of early Islam in particular is articulated around a semantic opposition between ‘civil society’ in the general sense of the word (or its moderate Muslim version, *masyarakat madani*, from the Arab ‘city’) and ‘Medina society’ (*masyarakat Madinah*), which insists on an unerring imitation of the social organisation of the holy city governed by the Prophet.⁸³

Expression of a Desire for Rupture

Aside from these debates, which are inaccessible to the majority, the desire to return to the beginnings of Islam is also expressed through the way of life adopted by some radical movements which try to reproduce the most visible aspects of this imagined ideal society. Thus the communities based on this model cleverly act out the first age of Islam, creating veritable living tableaux dedicated to the edification of the masses. This alternative mode of ideological communication appeared in the 1970s and spread in the following decade. It had the advantage of not being bound by limits placed on political activities and in this regard, was part of the larger fall back on the *dakwah* operated by the former members of Masyumi at the end of the 1960s. Consequently, the local branches of the Indonesian

⁸³ For a (very biased) summary of these debates, see Al-Chaidar and Hardi Sahrasad, *Negara Madinah. Refleksi tentang Agama, Pluralisme*, Madani Press, Jakarta, 2000, iii–92 pp.

Islamic Propagation Council were particularly active in the diffusion of this kind of experiences.⁸⁴

Several movements of diverse inspirations strove to realise this ideal Islamic society in daily life. First came the isolated Islamic communities, often arising from the Darul Islam movement, that were cushioned by their autarkic mode of functioning.⁸⁵ One of these pioneer villages developed around the Islamic school Hidayatullah, started in East Kalimantan since the early 1970s. Subsequently this type of community developed in other regions of Indonesia in different ways, each with its own particularity: in Yogyakarta, Jamaah At-Turats Al-Islami founded several such communities as early as the end of the 1980s; in 1985 collaborators of Abdullah Sungkar started an autarkic community in the vicinity of Lampung (South Sumatra) around a certain Warsidi who found them work in the coffee and pepper plantations. The Lampung community illustrates well the intentions of the instigators of such isolated communities. More than Warsidi, who was but an organiser of the terrain, it was Nur Hidayat who was their ideological leader in the absence of Sungkar, who had since moved to Malaysia. During his trial in Jakarta in 1990, he explained his project to separate his fellow believers from infidels who were inclined to “abandon themselves to vice, sinning, wickedness, rage and oppression”:⁸⁶

At the beginning, Muslims must practise conceptual *hijrah* (departure) or *hijrah* in religion by quitting the *kafir* (infidel) political parties or the parties of *syetan* (demon), they have to proclaim that it is *haram* (forbidden) to choose as leaders *kafir*, *thogut* (those who violate the Islamic law), *syetan*, and they have to proclaim that it is *haram* to pronounce the law according to the pagan law, and *haram* to obey orders of *kafir* with love.⁸⁷

But isolation did not always imply geographical distancing. Inspired by the doctrine of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, the *usroh* movement, as we have seen in Chapter Three, spread the ideal of social rupture

⁸⁴ See, for example, the role played by Saefullah Mahyudin, professor of political sciences at the Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta and leader of the local branch of the DDII, in the foundation of the Al-Turats Salafist movement, which put into action this sort of discourse (Sabarudin *et al.*, 2000, p. 42).

⁸⁵ See Chapter Three.

⁸⁶ Plea by Nur Hidayat, pp. 188–189, in Abdul Syukur, *Gerakan Usroh di Indonesia, Peristiwa Lampung 1989*, Penerbit Ombak, Yogyakarta, 2003, p. 103.

⁸⁷ Nur Hidayat, pp. 200–201, in Abdul Syukur, 2003, p. 103.

in Indonesia. Organised in small groups of a dozen members, often recruited through mosque youth associations (*pemuda masjid*), which were themselves federated within the Coordinating Corps for Mosques Youth in Indonesia (Badan Koordinasi Pemuda Masjid Indonesia, BKPMI), the militants were encouraged to let religion seep into every aspect of their lives. As seen earlier, these small multiplying cells contributed to the slow extension of a radical Islamism at the crossroads between networks of former supporters of Darul Islam and circles of young militants recruited in the universities.

Until the 1990s, the geographic or social isolation of these communities was not implemented for solely ideological reasons: it was also a way to escape surveillance by the authorities.⁸⁸ During the last years of the New Order and especially with the Reformasi, these rigorist models were promoted openly. For many militias that strove for a strict adherence to religious norms, reference to Islam's past, source of their legitimacy, was generally transmitted through their adopted dressing, supposedly inspired by traditional Arab clothing: long white tunics worn over wide pants, with thick turbans as headgear. These outfits, rather incongruous with the humid tropical climate, marked their wish to break away from the Indonesian environment. It was also a physical manifestation of their discourse, visible and accessible to the greatest number, a dramatisation of their desire to change society. The high point of the First Congress of Mujahidin, held in Yogyakarta in August 2000 to demand the adoption of the Jakarta Charter, was a march of militias from the various groups represented. Clad in diverse uniforms according to their affiliation, some with trellises, others with white tunics worn over pants, they made for a spectacular sight, thus assuring the congress much media coverage. At the movement's second congress in August 2003, taking place soon after the Marriott bombing, the atmosphere was less theatrical and more oppressive: the majority of the small group of militias were in trellises and amongst them, a few had their faces wrapped in cheches that covered all but their eyes.

A Frozen and Retrograde Project

The discourse that succeeded these images took on millenarist accents, describing a crumbling world that reserved a terrible punishment for all who did not respect the commandments of Islam. For example, at the

⁸⁸ The authorities were concerned at times about these groups, for example, in Lampung in 1989 (see Abdul Syukur, 2003).

Second Congress of Mujahidin, Ismail Yusanto, representative of Hizbut Tahrir in Jakarta, expounded on the theme of divine punishment. Supported by statistics falsely attributed to the World Bank, his speech painted a picture of a society in plain decline with almost 100 million Indonesians (60 per cent of the population) living under the poverty threshold, exploding criminality (1,000 per cent increase in the province of Central Java), a 400 per cent increase in divorces, a 300 per cent increase in the number of incarcerations and 60 times the number of suicides.⁸⁹

The imminent collapse of this decadent world should incite Indonesian Muslims to follow scrupulously the teachings of true Islam, which alone can distinguish between infidels and hypocrites. In line with reformist movements but infused with a renewed vigour, the Salafist-inspired groups oppose all traditional religious practices, abundant in Indonesian Islam. Ceremonial meals (*selamatan*); ascetic practices that impart supernatural power (*ilmu kekebalan*); 'superstitions' (*khurafat*) or certain rites such as *tablilan* (the repetition of litanies and various readings from the Qur'an before and after the burial) and *talqin* (reminding the dead during the burial of the answers to give to the angel); *dzikiran* (litany); and *yasinan* (the reading of the Surah Yasin) were fiercely opposed, sometimes with forceful interventions.⁹⁰

As to be expected, most of these groups distinguished themselves very early on by a particularly rigorous practice of what they considered as the duties of the good Muslim. For example, the Warsidi *usroh* at Lampung imposed various practices that went beyond the classic obligations (prayers five times a day) and the strict fast during the months of Ramadan: children under training were also subjected to the *tabajud*, the most difficult prayer usually considered as optional, at two or three in the

⁸⁹ According to the World Bank (end 2004) and official statistics, 16 per cent of the population lived under the poverty threshold (officially fixed at less than one dollar per day) in 2002 and 2003. At the end of the 1960s the figure was indeed 60 per cent. It reached 11 per cent in 1996 just before the Asian financial crisis, then rose to 26 per cent in 1997–1998 and climbed down again to 16 per cent in 2003. According to the official census, which takes place every ten years, the percentage of divorces was 2.67 per cent in 1980, 2.06 per cent in 1990 and 1.25 per cent in 2000. The increase in criminality was certainly noticeable, but it was only officially 12 per cent in the big cities.

⁹⁰ Sabarudin *et al.*, 2000, p. 88 *ff.* At the 31st Nahdlatul Ulama Congress in November 2004 in Boyolali, one NU delegate from Ambon complained about threats he had received from about 100 Laskar who still resided in the Moluccan city. They ordered him to abandon the traditional prayers for the dead (*tablil* and *talqin*), an old point of contention between reformists and traditionalists.

morning, as well as to fasting every Monday and Thursday — a rarity at the time, even amongst the practising milieu.⁹¹

These Indonesian Salafist phalansteries set out to create the most faithful reproduction possible of what they imagine Medina society in the mid-seventeenth century to have been. By maintaining a permanent clash between values and environment, and motivated by the conviction that in recreating the latter, values would automatically be respected, their leaders are in fact trying to erase almost 14 centuries of social evolution. Lacking confidence in human nature, they try to protect their disciples from all temptations that could potentially make them stray from their faith. All entertainment (dance, music, theatre) and all 'pleasure spots' (cafes, discotheques) are relentlessly banned. The majority of these groups condemn sources of information and exposure to the world such as cinema, television and even photography.⁹²

In the community, women are perceived as fragile beings in need of protection. The obsession of separating men and women is reflected in their dressing, of course, but also in very strict rules banning women from all contact with men without the presence of their husbands or a *muhrim* (Indonesian term derived from the Arabic *mahrom*, designating family members whom a girl cannot marry). These restrictions greatly complicate the lives of women in these groups, especially in the Indonesian environment which largely ignores the separation of sexes: the At-Turats community thus made arrangements such that female members could go to the neighbouring boutiques without crossing any men.⁹³ Aside from these rules enforcing the strict separation of sexes, the role of women in society provokes divergent opinions in radical Islam. All were united in their fierce opposition to the accession of Megawati Soekarnoputri to the presidency in 1999 but concerning the militant engagement of female members in their groups, views are divided, reflecting the profound differences in sensibilities. At the Second Congress of Mujahidin in August 2003, female militants objected vigorously when an orator, Muhammad Thalib, declared that it was illicit (*haram*) for a woman to engage in politics. Why deprive the campaign to implement Islamic law of their energies, they asked? Bouncing back, the right-hand man of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir,

⁹¹ Abdul Syukur, 2003, pp. 56, 60.

⁹² For the Forum Komunikasi Ahlu Sunnah wal-Jamaah, see the fatwas issued on these subjects and published in *Salafy*, 24, 1998. The ban on images was sometimes justified by the fear of seeing the souls being retained on the day of the Last Judgement. For At-Turats, the ban on television seems less strict and some members of the community possess a set (Sabarudin, 2000, p. 121).

⁹³ Sabarudin, 2000, pp. 100–102.

Irfan S. Awwas announced a change in strategy: henceforth women would be the driving force behind the attainment of the mujahidins' aims and their work would start "from below", in the smallest mosques.⁹⁴

At the end of the day, the extent and diversity of expression of these efforts to return to the original Islamic society call for several remarks. The first is that it touches on an ontological vision of Islamic radicalism and, without doubt, its limits as well. Such a rigid imitation of the first Muslim communities reveals a very pessimistic vision of human history — perceived in effect as a process of degradation since the illumination of the Revelation. Reference to early Islam compensates for the absence of structured programmes and deflects reflection and discussion by proposing a simplistic reproduction of a society considered as perfect. But it also puts paid to any hope of a compromise between Islam and Indonesian identity, on the one hand, and between Islam and modernity on the other. The utopia of an in-depth re-Islamisation of the Archipelago through the multiplication of these Salafist communities thus clashes, once past the issue of sectarianism, with agents of modernity as well as those of Indonesian tradition. No doubt conscious of the limits of this type of action, part of the radical Islamist movement thus wishes to enlarge its base by investing in the political field.

III. Ambiguous Link to Politics

The question of the political engagement of radical Indonesians harks back to one of the essential aporias of militant Islamism: the call for, in the name of a democratic principle (the rule of the majority), the abandonment of democracy. Faced with this contradiction, some movements, such as Ja'far Umar Thalib's FKAWJ, declare their wish to fulfil the objective of an Islamic society while prudently keeping away from the political scene, while others, mostly from the Darul Islam movement or those close to the Muslim Brotherhood, do not shy away from joining politics.⁹⁵ All, nonetheless, were united in their unrelenting call for Islamic law and violent criticism of parliamentary democracy.

⁹⁴ Notes, Second Congress of Mujahidin, 10–12 August 2003; Feillard, "Les Moudjahidines d'Indonésie en congrès à Solo", in *Les Cahiers de l'Orient*, no. 78, second trimester 2005: 27–40.

⁹⁵ Ja'far Umar Thalib opposes the objective of an Islamic state (*Negara Islam Indonesia*) desired by the militants close to Darul Islam, as well as the restoration of the caliphate demanded by the Hizbut Tahrir. It was for these reasons that he often clashed with other radical organisations (see Sabarudin *et al.*, 2000, 128 pp.; Noorhaidi Hasan, 2002, pp. 137–140; ICG, *Asia Report*, no. 83, 13 September 2004; Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006.

Fragile Man: Finding Refuge in the Sharia

Considered by radical Indonesians as the apex of the struggle for Islam, the call for the sharia is an omnipresent theme in their rhetoric. Islamic law plays a complex role within the Islamist cluster. It is above all a symbol, a flag around which they can assemble to help each other and gain strength in numbers. It has an almost sacramental function; its mere invocation seems to be a means of approaching Allah. Virtues verging on magical, or thaumaturgic in any case, are ascribed to it: the sharia, if applied rigorously, would cure all of humanity's ills.⁹⁶ It allows mankind to surpass itself and is thus a "fundamental need for humanity, which only functions at 10 per cent of its capacity when the sharia is not in place."⁹⁷

Refusal of All Interpretations

The sharia's uncountable virtues have given rise to an almost palpable adoration. Thus Islamic law has been the object of a veritable cult, an absolute contradiction of the very notion of *tauhid* (*tawhid*, the Oneness of God) so dear to radicals.⁹⁸ A tangible objective, an accessible stand-in for a god that cannot be represented, it is above all a well-delineated path for a fragile and stumbling humanity. This explains why the zeal for the sharia is inversely proportionate to the confidence that its advocates have in Man: while the liberals see it as a topic for discussion and adaptation, the most radical subject it to a scriptural reading and call for its uncompromised application.

Thus the at-Turats movement explicitly refuses any process of interpretation (*takwil*, *ta'ihil*, *takyif*, *tamtsil*) that might shed light on the Holy Book.⁹⁹ Its founder, Abu Nida, denounced after weighty demonstrations

⁹⁶ See the Charter of Yogyakarta adopted in August 2000 by the Congress of Mujahidin, which stipulated that "the Sharia is the only solution for the social, political and human crises that human beings face" (Kongres Mujahidin, 2001, p. 181).

⁹⁷ Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, "Sambutan Ketua Ahlul Halli wal Aqdi: Ust. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, Seruan ke Arah Tathbiquh Syari'ah", in *Risalah Kongres Mujahidin*, 2001, pp. 137–140 (Ba'asyir's speech at the First Congress of Mujahidin, 2000).

⁹⁸ A veneration of Islam instead and as a replacement of the veneration of the god of Islam that Daniel Rivet also finds in radical Islamism in the Middle East: Daniel Rivet, "D'Ankara à Rabat, entre religion, civilisation et sécularisation", *Vingtième siècle*, no. 82, April–June 2004.

⁹⁹ In particular, one finds long digressions arising from the principle of divine unicity (*tauhid*). See Sabarudin, 2000, pp. 72–78. *Takwil*: paraphrase with a widening of the meaning; *ta'ihil*: make an abstraction of; *takyif*: imagine, project something on; *tamtsil*: demonstration through an example.

“the audacity and vanity” of any rational approach to the Qu’ran and condemns all attempts at pluralism in this domain. Similarly opposed is Ja’far Umar Thalib of FKAWJ, who rejects the so-called *mutasyabbih* verses of the Qu’ran, which may contain different meanings. For them, only God knows what He wanted to say and to try to clarify His words is tantamount to trying to substitute Him.¹⁰⁰

Other than its intrinsic qualities, the sharia also presents two advantages for the Indonesian militants. The first is that it enables the militant Islamist movements to form a loose base of common interests, upon which, it is hoped, future coalitions can be built.¹⁰¹ It is a tangible historical reference and a call for the sharia, together with the Jakarta Charter, sounds more neutral than that for Negara Islam, an Islamic state, which remains associated for many Indonesians with Darul Islam’s rebellion.¹⁰² Indeed, the Congress of Mujahidin, which managed in August 2000 to attract some personalities of moderate Islam such as Deliar Noer, took care to distinguish between the two themes.¹⁰³ The implementation of the sharia by Muslims can thus be a step in the construction of an Islamic state that many think impossible to realise in the immediate future. The introduction of the Jakarta Charter in the preamble of the Constitution would be, for its advocates, a guarantee that *Pancasila* would be justly interpreted and that it would no longer be opposed to Islamic law as it was in the past.¹⁰⁴

For the radicals the second advantage the sharia theme confers is that it allows them to confront moderate Muslims with their own religious contradictions and shortcomings. The Islamist discourse is full of faux-naïve questioning of the “phobia” some Indonesian Muslims have

¹⁰⁰ Sabarudin *et al.*, 2000, p. 74 *ff.*

¹⁰¹ It was in this perspective that several organisations such as the Committee for the Implementation of Islamic Law in South Sulawesi (Komite Penegak Syariat Islam Sulawesi Selatan), together with Agus Dwikarna, tried to bring together at the local level various movements calling for Islamic law.

¹⁰² The majority of Islamist militias remember the repression against the NII militants and say they do not wish for an Islamic state. The Front of Defenders of Islam in the Moluccas (no direct link with the organisation of the same name in Jakarta) explained that an Islamic state was unnecessary; what was important was to implement the sharia. S. Yunanto *et al.*, 2003, p. 95.

¹⁰³ Deliar Noer, “Syari’ah Islam Bukan Negara Islam” (The Sharia Is Not the Islamic State), in *Risalah Kongres Majelis Mujahidin*, 2001, p. 331.

¹⁰⁴ This was one of the arguments developed by PPP and PBB when they tried twice (in 2000 and in 2001) to make the MPR pass an amendment to this effect.

of what should be considered as “their” law and their preference instead for Western legal notions that “stink of colonialism”.¹⁰⁵ The Muslim who does not want to implement the sharia is thus an apostate (*murtad*) and a traitor to his country. Thus the frequent warnings such as the one issued by Abu Bakar Ba’asyir in his opening speech at the First Congress of Mujahidin. After protesting against the argument that the application of Islamic law would inevitably lead to the breaking up of the Archipelago, the suspected “emir of Jemaah Islamiyah” reminded his fellow believers that they did not have any choice but to “implement Islamic law or die in the path of Allah”.¹⁰⁶

A pillar of Muslim identity, Islamic law is, in the eyes of militants, a crucial point of contention between the Muslim world and the pagan West. America and its allies work to distance Muslims from their religion, interfering and preventing the reign of this law. To enforce its application thus becomes an act of resistance and populations that embark on this audacious path would be “emancipated from the colonial yoke”.¹⁰⁷ Militating for the enforcement of the sharia proves the sincerity of one’s engagement and enables one to contribute to the group’s strength. The radical Islamist organisations insist that they are capable of implementing the law, particularly the most spectacular and thus most publicity-generating penal aspects. Thus we see FPI attacking “*tempat maksiat*”, vice dens responsible for luring some Muslims to drink, gamble or frequent prostitutes. Ja’far Umar Thalib also ordered, after a mock trial, the stoning of a male member of the militia in Ambon on the grounds of *zina* (illicit sexual relations; in fact it was a rape but to be perfectly in line with the Qu’ranic prescription that condemns rape as extra-marital relations, it was specified in the explanation of the condemnation that the perpetrator was married).¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Muhammad Umar As-Sewed, “Syarat Islam Dihujat”, in *Bulletin Laskar Jihad Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama’ah*, 7th edition, June 2001.

¹⁰⁶ “Sambutan ketua Ahul Halli wal Aqdi: Ust. Abu Bakar Ba’asyir, Seruan ke Arah Tathbiqu Syari’ah”, in *Risalah Kongres Mujahidin*, 2001, p. 139. On this theme, Hartono Ahmad Jaiz explains that “no historical proof exists of the dangers of Islamic law”, in particular concerning the risk of Indonesia breaking up (S. Yunanto *et al.*, 2003, pp. 88–89).

¹⁰⁷ S. Yunanto *et al.*, 2003, pp. 88–89.

¹⁰⁸ Noorhaidi Hasan, 2002, p. 167. Ja’far was arrested for the first time in 2001 on this basis. He was freed a few weeks later. Some moderate Muslim intellectuals justified this sentence with the argument that it was the rapist himself who had asked for this punishment and that he should not be turned down (Yogyakarta, notes,

An Imprecise Project

Behind these thundering demands and the façade of unanimity amongst the Islamists lies an ill-defined project. The Indonesian radicals struggle to establish the modalities for implementing what they call for. Cacophony reigns even over issues as symbolic as the *hudud*, these corporal punishments that symbolise the harshness of Qu'ranic prescriptions. When asked in the summer of 2000, at the very moment when their representatives in parliament were supporting an amendment to the Constitution to recognise the Jakarta Charter, the Partai Bulan Bintang (PBB) leadership was incapable of furnishing the details of its implementation.¹⁰⁹

This wavering may have been one reason for convening the Congress of Mujahidin in August 2000. Apart from its highly publicised demands for an immediate application of the sharia, it also created a permanent body (Badan Majelis Mujahidin), composed of two councils, to define the modalities of this implementation. The first, called Ahlul Halli Wal'Aqdi, a sort of committee of experts on religion designated by the congress, was charged with codifying the Islamic law "in all domains of life" and to issue fatwas necessary for its application. The second, named Lajnah Tanfidziyah, nominated by the former, was entrusted with the implementation of the committee's decisions with the help of regional delegations.

Four years later, the institutions designated by the Congress of Mujahidin had produced several texts. Aside from some brochures created by the Markas Mujahidin of Yogyakarta, which fell outside of the legitimate delegation's procedures, the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (MMI) composed a proper Islamic penal code very close to that produced by the Negara Islam Indonesia (NII) group.¹¹⁰ The Second Congress of Mujahidin (August 2003) openly lamented the lack of cooperation of moderate Muslim leaders, who were denounced, along with the other Muslims who had rejected the sharia, as "infidels in their faith" (*kufur*

November 2002). See also Noorhaidi Hasan, 2006, pp. 197–199. The suspect's last wish was to kiss the hand of Thalib, which he did while Thalib ordered his fighters to start the stoning.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Anwar Shaleh and Yasin Ardhy, President and Vice-Secretary of PBB, Jakarta, 24 August.

¹¹⁰ See, for example, MMI, *Usulan Amandemen UUD'45 Disesuaikan dengan Syariat Islam*, Markaz Pusat Majelis Mujahidin, Yogyakarta, 2001, 56 pp.; MMI, *Undang-Undang Hukum Pidana Republik Indonesia disesuaikan dengan Syari'ah Islam*, Markaz Pusat Majelis Mujahidin, Yogyakarta, 2002, 54 pp.

i'tiqadi).¹¹¹ Without power, however, nothing is feasible, and responsibility for the implementation was thus thrown back to the public authorities. As one of the speakers, Muhammad Thalib, declared: “The obligations of the sharia cannot just be asserted individually or collectively as it is necessary to have a strict framework to control its application so as to create a life of prosperity and security. Logically speaking, this implies the existence of an institution wielding a strong authority over individuals and society and which possesses the capacity to apply by force the legal precepts generated. The institution meeting these criteria is the state and the government.”¹¹²

Rejection of Democracy

There is much contention between radical Islam and Indonesian democracy. In spite of having benefited amply from the political liberalisation that made their discourse accessible to the greatest number, the Islamist movements show little gratitude to the political system. Most criticise democracy violently, some even condemn it categorically, blaming the groups that participate in the parliamentary game of sacrificing their Islamic virtue. This rejection derives from a syllogistic observation: Muslims are a majority in Indonesia, the Republic has never recognised the leading role of Islam, therefore democracy is the worst regime.

Product of the Imperialism of the Infidels

One of the first criticisms levelled against the democratic system is its flawed birth. The theoreticians of radicalism often emphasise its Greek origins and its growth in Europe during the nineteenth century, anchoring it to the West and thus rendering it incompatible with the universalism it is supposed to embody. For them, the spread of democratic values in Muslim countries is closely linked to colonialism, marking it indelibly with the notion of constraint and constituting by its nature a non-native political culture. Irfan S. Awwas, head of the executive committee of the Council of Mujahidins, declared that the founders of the Republic of Indonesia were all mere products of the Dutch system, influenced by

¹¹¹ *Tempo*, 24 August 2003, p. 102. See also Feillard, 2005.

¹¹² Speech by Muhammad Thalib, “Pelebagaan Syariat Islam dalam Keadaan Bernegara”, at the Kongres Mujahidin II untuk Penegakan Syariat Islam (Second Congress of Mujahidin), 10–12 August 2003, Boyolali.

Western culture.¹¹³ For him, democracy is nothing but a crude camouflage for imperialism and the underhand channel through which the West tries to pursue its domination over the Muslim world. For some radicals, the triumph of these dangerous liberal ideas is a recent phenomenon in world history: as Habib Rizieq, President of the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), reminded, democracy arrived well after Islam. The length of time separating the birth of Adam from that of Aristotle is the basis of Islam's superiority and this means that Islam cannot possibly adapt itself to democracy unless it betrays itself.¹¹⁴ Observing grudgingly the unquestionable popularity of the leading values of democracy amongst their compatriots, the radicals are fond of reminding them that the majority of the democratic principles, such as "consultation (*shura*), justice (*al-addalah*), a sense of responsibility (*masulliyah*)", are of Islamic foundation and were later taken up — and sometimes betrayed — by democracy.¹¹⁵

Beyond these historical and geographic considerations, Indonesian radicals have countered democracy with arguments of a theological nature — democracy is essentially opposed to divine law. For them, sovereignty lies exclusively in the hands of Allah while in a democracy, it lies with the people and its representatives. Some, like the representatives of Hizbut Tahrir, even explain that sovereignty should be returned to the sharia, as the right to set laws cannot belong to men who are but the slaves of God.¹¹⁶ Ba'asyir has declared that freedom is necessarily more limited in Islam than in "Western" democracy as the rules in life have already been fixed by Allah. Consultation (*musyawarah*) can only be carried out on questions that have not already been regulated by the sharia. So, for example, the lawfulness of the consumption of alcohol cannot be decided upon by people.¹¹⁷ This is a matter of principles but also one of common sense: Islamic law cannot contain errors whereas humans are fallible. They can thus, as reminded Irfan S. Awwas, be mistaken into

¹¹³ *Risalah Mujahidin*, 10 February 2001.

¹¹⁴ Khamami Zada, 2002, p. 136.

¹¹⁵ S. Yunanto *et al.*, 2003, p. 84.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 84–90.

¹¹⁷ Interview with Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, Solo, 14 June 2002, cited in S. Yunanto *et al.*, 2003, p. 88. In fact, this position is not very different from that of the most conservative ulama of Nahdlatul Ulama with one important exception: so far the latter have accepted partial application of the sharia in Indonesian society, limiting it to questions pertaining to personal status. They also recognise parliamentary democracy.

going against God's truth, for example, by authorising prostitution when it is forbidden by Islam.¹¹⁸

Whereas traditionalist ulama mostly apply these rules to precise ethical questions pertaining to family law that have been forwarded to them, and whereas they accept the state's prerogatives and the laws voted in Parliament, the radicals apply them to the political field in general. Their conception of power attests once again to the little confidence they have in Man. For Habib Rizieq, decisions must come from the authorities and consultation is allowed only in very rare cases. Ja'far Umar Thalib also excludes turning to the majority to rule. He calls on a collegial government composed of ulama and *umara* (for him, experts in different economic and social fields) whose legitimacy is derived solely from their respect for Islamic law. It is within this theocratic caste, and not through election, that the head of the executive, would be chosen. However, how these authorities should be designated is not explained at all.

The same principle was adopted during the Congress of Mujahidin with the formation of the *ahl al-hall wa al-'aqd* council.¹¹⁹ Other than in the domains of codification and the control of Islamic law, its competence was not well spelt out, and only a list of personalities who were supposed to sit on the council was distributed: Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, as well as Deliar Noer, Mochtar Naim, Mawardi Noor, Ali Yafie, Alawi Muhammad, Ahmad Syahirul and A.M. Saefuddin, mostly from the modernist group of the former Masyumi.

An Incantatory Counter-Model

How these envisaged institutions are to function is never specified. As is often the case, hiding behind incomprehensible Islamic jargon dispenses the need to clarify for the Indonesian masses. In the radical Islamist utopia, the organisation of power can be named but not defined. Good

¹¹⁸ The issue of prostitution is one of the favourite arguments of the radicals. According to Irfan S. Awwas, one of the ills of democracy is that "everyone is equal, be it prostitutes or ulama". Interview on 28 October 2001, cited in Khamami Zada, 2002, p. 133.

¹¹⁹ "Those who have the power to loosen and bind". This concept is linked to that of *shura* or consultation, founding element of democracy in the usual Islamist literature. This concept can be interpreted as a rejection of authoritarianism. It makes the community the source of executive power; the question is who represents it and through which procedures (see Ahmad S. Moussalli, *Moderate and Radical Islamic Fundamentalism: The Quest for Modernity, Legitimacy, and the Islamic State*, University Press of Florida, Gainesville, 1999, p. 121. Cited in Noorhaidi Hasan, 2002, p. 150).

governance is the product of the incantation of tautologies and not of rules that organise in a precise manner the distribution of competences. Thus, good government (*ulil amri*) is one that implements the “enjoining of good and the eliminating of evil” (*amar mar’ûf nahi mungkar*). Noble intentions are referred to other noble intentions in a series of seemingly endless iterations. The statutes of the Islamic Defenders Front explain that, in conformity with the principle spelt out, the accomplishment of good should be achieved by incitation, drawing on the wisdom acquired through knowledge and experience; by judicious counsel; and by well-conducted discussion. As for the eradication of evil, this shall be carried out through authority, speech and sentiments.¹²⁰

Apart from these formulas, the political project of Indonesian radical Islam seems very vague. A counter-model above anything else, it delights in opposing and confers the right of the Muslim people to insurrection should the governing powers take liberties with religion.¹²¹ For Ba’asyir and Fauzan Al-Anshari, it is useless to draw up an alternative system. Men shall have only limited powers as they can rely on the strict and precise character of Islamic law, unlike “secularist” democracy, deemed incapable of controlling men and bringing about justice.¹²²

All these considerations result in a political posture that breaks with the dominant group within reformist Islam. While Masyumi and other groups claiming to be its heirs had always situated themselves in a position of compromise, trying to establish bridges between Islam and democracy through various means (analogy, concordism, etc.), the discourse of radical Islamists invariably stands up against “Western-style democracy” (that is, the 50 per cent plus one system) or “secularist” democracy, but does not propose a concrete form of “Islamic democracy”. For some years now, however, the liberalisation of the Indonesian political scene seems to have weighed on the ideological evolution of militant Islamism. A large section of the movement still delights in the denunciation of a democracy to which, paradoxically, it looks for protection, but discordant voices have

¹²⁰ Statutes (*anggaran dasar*) of the Islamic Defenders Front, Chapter One, Article 4.

¹²¹ These barely masked threats are nonetheless tempered by pragmatic considerations: the people can overthrow a government considered *kafir* if there are leaders capable of steering it along this path without inciting even greater unrest. According to one of the ten principles of Islam in politics spelt out by Ja’far Umar Thalib. See Khamami Zada, 2002, p. 134 ff.

¹²² Fauzan Al-Anshari, *Saya Teroris? Sebuah ‘Pleidoi’*, Penerbit Republika, Jakarta, 2002, p. 72.

been heard from within even the inner circles of radical Islam. The Second Congress of Mujahidin obtained permission to assemble in August 2003, a few days after the Marriott bombing, despite the supposed links between the Indonesian Council of Mujahidins (MMI) and Jemaah Islamiyah. Some delegates protested, in the name of democracy, against the fact that Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, who was then awaiting his trial in prison, was not permitted to attend the congress of the organisation he chaired. Others proposed that democracy be declared 'forbidden' (*haram*) and advocated war (*berperang*) as the only solution after the obvious failures of the Islamic state in Algeria and Pakistan.

Faced with such declarations, some of the speakers played a moderating role. General Z.A. Maulani prudently replied that "the 50 per cent plus one system certainly does not constitute a consensus in accordance with Islam", but one had to leave it to the decision of the ulama as democracy "can have its benefits (*manfaat*)". DDII's Husein Umar was even less ambiguous and defended democracy as opening up the possibility of an Islamisation from below:

Habibie opened the road to the application of the sharia by suppressing the decrees of the Consultative Assembly (MPR) that grievously hurt Muslims such as the "sole principle" obligation [all mass organisations had to base themselves on the *Pancasila* ideology] or the law on political parties [carrying the same obligation]. Henceforth, we have a more propitious atmosphere that we must manage through dialogue, while the sharia can be applied starting in the small mosques.

Of course, the sincerity of these conversions to the virtues of democracy remains to be seen. Like the evolution of the Justice Party (PK, now Prosperous Justice Party, PKS) towards a more moderate Islamism, this lies at the heart of the difficult evaluation of the place Islamic radicalism occupies in Indonesian society.

Religious Revival or Intolerance? The Hold of Radicalism on Indonesian Society

In the eyes of most observers, for the past ten years or so, Indonesian Islam has been torn between contradictory tendencies emanating from the opposition between moderate and radical Muslims. Leading historian Merle Ricklefs commented in 2001, “No one can say who will win the global struggle within Islam. But in Indonesia the creative thinkers of tolerant Islam have powerful positions and are determined to defeat extremist views.”¹ The American anthropologist Robert Hefner believes in the civic-pluralist tradition of Indonesian Islam but cautions that “... at both the national and regional level, the civilian and military elite no longer enjoys the ideological cohesion it did at the height of the New Order”. He adds: “Unfortunately, rather than being good news for civil society, the result has been largely bad. It has allowed uncivil alliances of state actors and sectarian groupings to rule the day, draining great portions of the social capital for civility and tolerance for which Indonesia has long been justly renowned”.² Finally, political scientist William Liddle wrote in 2002 that the probability of seeing an Islamic state emerge from Indonesia was largely over-estimated. This exaggeration was due, he felt, to the distorted perception that a great schism exists between Muslims

¹ *International Herald Tribune*, 27 April 2002.

² Robert Hefner, “Globalization, Governance, and the Crisis of Indonesian Islam”, in *Conference on Globalization, State Capacity and Muslim Self-Determination*, proceedings of the conference, Center for Global, International, and Regional Studies, University of California-Santa Cruz, 7–8 March 2002, n.p., p. 25.

and non-Muslims; in reality, a schism does exist but within the Muslim community itself — between the conservative modernist Muslims, on the one hand and, on the other hand, the liberal modernist Muslims who are allied with the syncretistic and traditionalist Muslims as well as with non-Muslims.³

A global evaluation of the attitudes of the Muslim community of Indonesia should not, however, be reduced to the confrontation between well-defined currents. Certainly, there are unyielding personalities camped on both ends of the Muslim spectrum — the intransigence of some of the Congress of Mujahidin leaders clash against the forward-looking attitudes of the Liberal Islam Network (Jaringan Islam Liberal, JIL) — but, as diametrically opposed as they are, these organisations share the fact that they exist on the margins of a highly diverse community. Thus, to grasp the real weight of the temptation of radicalism in Indonesian Islam, one must plunge into the heart of the ambivalences that characterise the Indonesian *umma*, torn between antinomic identity demands and whipped by stormy debates that spare neither the major organisations nor the inner circles where Indonesian Islamic thinking is formulated.

I. Apparent Contradictions of the Indonesian *Homo Islamicus*

The Muslim community of Indonesia seems to be tugged in opposite directions: what it clamours for in opinion polls, it rejects at the voting urn. It comes down harshly on radicals who have strayed into politics, yet is not indifferent to the themes they develop.

³ William Liddle and Saiful Mujani, “The Islamic Challenge to Democratic Consolidation in Indonesia”, in *The Challenge of Democracy in the Muslim World*, proceedings of the conference, Jakarta, 2002, n.p. Liddle’s distinction between conservatives and liberals is partially valid, but it seems to limit the conservatives to the ranks of reformist Islam (Muhammadiyah, Persis, DDII, Al-Irsyad) when the conservative current also crosses over to the two big organisations of traditionalist Islam, Nahdlatul Ulama and — to a greater extent — Perti in Aceh and West Sumatra. In a more recent paper, “Indonesia: Islamism Contained?”, presented at a conference on “Democratization and Authoritarian Retrenchment in the Muslim World”, San Diego CA, September 2004, Liddle takes into account the emergence of PKS and writes that, given the trend toward *santrinisasi*, “a much larger percentage of Indonesian Muslims, much closer to the full 88%, may be open to an Islamist message in the future, particularly if packaged in the clean and caring PKS style.”

Political Failure of Rigorist Islam

Elections organised since the return of democracy to Indonesia show a persistent rejection by a large majority of the electorate of parties calling for the establishment of an Islamic state and the imposition of the sharia.⁴ In 1999, ten Islam-based political parties made it to Parliament: PPP (United Development Party), PBB (Crescent and Star Party), PK (Justice Party) and seven small parties which obtained each less than 1 per cent of the votes. Together they garnered about 16 per cent of the votes (17 million votes). Five other parties, PKB (National Awakening Party, NU-linked), PAN (National Mandate Party, Muhammadiyah-linked), and three other parties with less than one per cent of the votes, which we can call “pluralist Islamic parties”⁵ as they endorsed a Muslim identity without making Islam the sole basis of their political action, gathered 22 per cent of the votes (23 million). Their programmes revealed a desire to maintain the status quo symbolised by *Pancasila*, that of an open and tolerant Islam where minorities are respected. Debates over the application of Islamic law during legislation confirmed the dissent between these two currents. Starting in 2000, PPP, PBB and PK proposed many times that the famous Jakarta Charter obliging Muslims to apply Islamic law, be inscribed in the preamble of the Constitution of 1945. The champions of a more open Islam, along with other political groupings, opposed these attempts.

A very marked chasm thus appeared in the Muslim political scene, separating, in a way, an identity-based Islam from a project-based Islam. The former drew voters who supported parties such as PKB or PAN, which could be considered as Islamic on account of the large number of Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah cadres within their respective leadership, but whose programmes very much resembled that of the secular parties. On the other hand, project-based Islam, represented by PBB, PK and some elements of PPP, arose from more radical currents. It drew political inspiration from the Islamism of Mawdudi or of Sayyid Qutb and wished to install a ‘more Islamic’ Indonesian state in which the sharia would be applied, at least to Indonesian Muslims. In 1999, the former current was obviously dominant. Even if we were to overlook this rift,

⁴ The legislative elections of 1999 were the first free elections since 1955.

⁵ To borrow Greg Fealy’s expression, “Islamic Politics: A Rising or Declining Force?”, in Damien Kingsbury and Arief Budiman (eds), *Indonesia: The Uncertain Transition*, Crawford House Publishing, Australia, 2001, pp. 119–136.

it can be observed that more than half of the voters of Muslim faith (50 out of 87 per cent) refused to vote for a party with any links — close or distant — to Islam, preferring to support organisations without an Islamic identity (PDI-P, Golkar). Thus a clear majority of Indonesian Muslims wished to keep religion separate from politics.

The elections of April 2004 confirmed, *mutadis mutandis*, this overwhelming trend. The parties claiming to be representative of Islam in some way or other obtained almost 38 per cent of the votes. Amongst these, the moderate Islamic parties (PKB, PAN, PBR, PNUI) saw their support decline slightly (20 per cent of the votes compared with 22 per cent in 1999), while the more conservative ones (PPP, PKS, PBB) improved their standing in the same proportions (18 per cent of the votes versus 16 per cent in 1999).⁶ Amongst these, the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS, ex-PK) made a remarkable breakthrough, improving its standing from 1.36 to 7.3 per cent. This irrefutable electoral success was undoubtedly the outcome of an efficient organisation, but can also be attributed to a very distinct moderation of its approach: unusually for a radical organisation, Hidayat Nur Wahid's party abandoned its determined calls for the installation of Islamic law even before the start of campaigning, emphasising instead the richness and particularities of Indonesian Islam. Championing the anti-corruption cause — a very popular theme in the country — it considerably toned down calls for the implementation of Islamic law. Thus in 2002, it proposed that the Jakarta Charter be replaced by a new concept called the Medina Charter (*Piagam Madinah*), where each religion would receive equal treatment and would apply its own religious law (including the sharia for the Muslims). This semantic shift did not go down well with the other Islamist parties (PBB, PPP). Accused of betraying the sharia cause, PKS' defence was that it was not at all renouncing the Islamic law but, "out of a concern for justice", it was proposing that citizens be asked to obey the religious laws of their respective religions.⁷

⁶ For an analysis of the elections, see Lance Castles, *Pemilu 2004 dalam Konteks komparatif & histories*, Pustaka Pelajar, Yogyakarta, September 2004, V–97 pp.

⁷ S. Yunanto *et al.*, *Gerakan Militan Islam Di Indonesia dan di Asia Tenggara*, The Ridep Institute, Friederich-Ebert-Stiftung, Jakarta, (2nd edition December 2003), p. 76; Tate Qamaruddin, *Beginilah Partai Keadilan Sejahtera Menegakkan Syari'at Islam, Klarifikasi Fitnah Piagam Jakarta*, Pustaka Tarbiatuna, Jakarta, August 2003, p. 62. In addition, the leader of PKS, Hidayat Nur Wahid, was also fiercely criticised for his rejection of the Caliphate ("Catatan Terhadap Pernyataan Hidayat Nur Wahid", by Amin RH, 5 January 2005, in <http://www.hayatulislam.net>).

So in 2004, as in 1999, only a small minority of Indonesian voters supported coalitions promising a concrete Islamic project. On the contrary, more than 80 per cent of them unambiguously reaffirmed during this election their backing for the moderate secularism of *Pancasila*.

The 2009 Elections

The legislative elections of June 2009 turned out to be a bitter disappointment for the organisations representing Islam. The nine parties in the running only gathered a modest 29 per cent of the votes, which amounted to a loss of almost one quarter of their support as compared to 2004. The ranking of the various groupings was also overturned. Although far from hitting its target of 20 per cent of the votes, PKS's performance did improve slightly and it became the top Muslim party of Indonesia with 7.9 per cent of the votes. PAN declined very slightly (6.2 per cent) while both PPP (5.3 per cent) and PKB (4.9 per cent) literally crumbled.

Many reasons can be advanced to explain this slide at the polls. The weakened ties between the major Muslim organisations and the parties claiming to represent them led to dissent and loss of credibility. These parties provided identity bearings for the disorientated sympathisers of NU and Muhammadiyah, recently re-engaged in politics thanks to Reformasi. The return to a stable democracy and, most of all, the implication of political leaders in activities incompatible with Islamic morale (internal rifts but also corruption scandals) eroded this support and loosened the link uniting sympathisers of the major organisations and those who voted for these representative parties. This was particularly true in the case of NU, whose internal split resulted in the formation of no less than three parties, each claiming political legitimacy for itself, and a drop of more than half of PKB's share of voters, from 10.57 to 4.9 per cent. PAN's minute loss (from 6.4 to 6.2 per cent) indicates a greater stability despite the disappointment of Muhammadiyah cadres after the eruption of a corruption scandal involving 38 PAN provincial members of Parliament in West Sumatra, and their relative slighting by PAN, eager to look for suitable candidates outside the ranks of Muhammadiyah.

The second explanation is linked to the successful capturing by the secular parties of political Islam's campaign themes. Given the undeniable Islamisation of Indonesian public life in the past few years, almost all the political parties in the country were obliged to make a sometimes big show of championing Islamic values. As we shall see, this resulted in a very obvious advancement of these themes in Indonesian law. Moreover, parties that had hitherto placed themselves squarely in the nationalist

camp also started during the 2009 campaign to push to the fore their Muslim identity. On the contrary, with hindsight gained from past elections, some Islamist parties preferred to reassure potential voters. PKS thus pursued the policy of openness and moderation that could be said to have enabled its breakthrough in the 2004 elections. Its campaign slogan, “Clean, Responsible and Professional (*Bersih, Peduli, Professional*)” made no particular reference to Islam. The party started to present itself as religious as well as nationalist (*agama dan nasionalis*). During its congress — held symbolically on the Hindu territory of Bali — in February 2008, PKS even flirted with the possibility of transforming itself into a party open not only to non-Muslim voters but also to non-Muslim candidates, something hitherto carried out only in Christian areas without publicity.⁸ As proof of the new mentality of openness, many of the party leaders (Hidayat Nurwahid and Surachman Hidayat) even visited Hindu temples. PKS’s Islamic identity was finally (and not surprisingly) confirmed at the end of this congress, as was respect for the religious plurality of Indonesia and the opening up towards other communities. Given the wide media coverage of these debates, party members were justified in thinking that they had truly advanced in their desire to recruit beyond the narrow circle of militant Islamism.

Nonetheless, the election results reveal that the ideological criss-crossing between nationalist secular parties and Islamic parties benefited mostly the former. With the blurring of the frontiers that had structured political life for decades, voters were free to vote for candidates who showed great respect for Islamic values while avoiding Islamic parties.

II. A ‘Sharia-isation’ of Mentalities?

This evaluation of Muslim public opinion as revealed by the election results should nonetheless be revisited in the light of a series of polls conducted by the Centre of Research on Islam and Society (Pusat Penelitian Islam dan Masyarakat, PPIM) at the Islamic University of Jakarta. These polls of thousands of Indonesians carried out in 2001, 2002 and 2007, show a picture of the Muslim community that is very different from the

⁸ Ahmad-Norma Permata, “Prosperous Justice Party and the Decline of Political Islam in 2009 Elections in Indonesia”, in Rémy Madinier (ed.), *Islam and the 2009 Indonesian elections, Political and cultural issues: The case of the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)*, IRASEC, Bangkok, 2009. Interview with PKS Central Java cadre, Arif Awaluddin Sh, 5 December 2008.

political evolution just described but which may explain the apparent contradictions between a proclaimed attachment to Islamic values and the weak Muslim vote.⁹

The majority (58 per cent) of those polled in 2001 and 2002 declared their support for an "Islamic government, based on the Qu'ran and the Sunna and led by religious experts". Sixty-one per cent of this majority proclaimed that they hoped the authorities would oblige Muslims to apply the sharia (tantamount thus to a return to the Jakarta Charter). A considerable minority declared themselves in favour of very strict punishment in accordance to Muslim law: 42 per cent favoured the whipping of persons found guilty of fornication, and 29 per cent favoured the amputation of the hands of thieves (only 50 per cent was not in favour). Similarly, propositions that constrained women were popular: 44 per cent of those polled felt that the wearing of the veil for women should be mandated by the law, and 41 per cent felt that women should not be allowed to socialise alone with men who are not members of their family (*mahram*).

Logically then, Islamist organisations advocating such measures would thus enjoy much support: 46 per cent of those polled declared that efforts by movements such as the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), Darul Islam or Indonesian Council of Mujahidins (MMI) to apply the sharia should be encouraged.

In spite of the massive support for democracy (only less than 3 per cent of those polled in 2002 disagreed that democracy was the best political system for Indonesia), Indonesian public opinion for the most part was still scarred by the intolerance resulting from the joint efforts of New Order propagandists and those of radical Islam. The greatest victims of this state of mind were the communists, held by all at arm's length from the political scene: only 5 per cent of those polled accepted their participation in elections, 22 per cent accepted that they should be allowed to hold meetings, and 24 per cent accepted that a member of the communist party be allowed to teach in a public school. By contrast, the Christians seemed much better tolerated: only 3 per cent of those polled were opposed to Christians (compared to 67 per cent in the case of the communists). But flying in the face of the democratic values voted for in the polls, this leniency towards the Christians did not extend to the political domain. The Christian influence was perceived as a threat and

⁹ The PPIM polls were carried out according to international norms amongst 2,500 residents in 312 villages or districts throughout all the provinces of Indonesia.

measures that appeared to contain this influence were welcomed: only slightly fewer than one out of two persons polled (44 per cent) opposed the barring of Christians from teaching positions in secondary schools, 45 per cent opposed the conduct of Christian ceremonies (mass) close to their homes, and only 37 per cent objected to a law banning the construction of churches in their vicinity. Given the intent to build a multi-religious state in 1945 and the spirit of cooperation that united Christians and Muslims in the 1950s, these results demonstrate a veritable change.

By 2007 public opinion seemed to have changed significantly on political issues: an overwhelming majority of those polled (85 per cent) affirmed their loyalty to a united republic of Indonesia founded on *Pancasila* and not Islam (*NKRI berdasarkan Pancasila = bukan Negara Islam*), and only 23 per cent were in favour of plans by organisations, such as DI/TII, MMI and others, to make Indonesia an Islamic state. On the other hand, there was a lingering intolerance towards religious minorities, particularly towards Christians: 62 per cent were against the idea of a non-Muslim head of state (permitted by the constitution), 33.5 per cent remained opposed to Christian teachers in public schools, and close to 52 per cent were still against the building of churches in their neighbourhood.

As we have seen, this seeming inclination for Islamic law and the open display of a very real religious intolerance did not translate into the triumph on the political scene of parties whose programmes best corresponded to these aspirations. This apparent paradox, whose origins we shall analyse, did not, however, prevent an incorporation of principles stemming from Islamic law into Indonesian law, accelerating a process that had been in the works for several years now.

A Progressive Islamisation of Indonesian Law

A quick analysis of the evolution of Indonesian law from 30 years ago would show how deceptive discourse aside, Islamic norms have gained ground in Indonesian law.

Although debates on Islamic law were considered taboo during the first two decades of the New Order, the Muslim religious authorities knew how to make themselves heard, often with success, in all of the major debates that stirred Indonesian society.¹⁰ Thus in 1974, the law

¹⁰ On these debates, see Andrée Feillard, *Islam et Armée dans l'Indonésie contemporaine, les pionniers de la tradition*, L'Harmattan and Association Archipel, Paris, 1995, pp. 143–156; *NU vis-à-vis Negara: Pencarian Isi, Bentuk dan Makna*, LKiS, Yogyakarta, Bekerjasama Dengan Asia Foundation, 1999, pp. 187–208.

on marriage institutionalised polygamy with some limits and confirmed the validity of religious marriage.¹¹ In 1989 the law on Islamic courts extended its jurisdiction to encompass inheritance and donations matters throughout the Archipelago, putting an end to protracted efforts by secular jurists to lay out a civil code for all the religious communities. Without much fanfare, the ‘religiously neutral’ Indonesia of *Pancasila* had come to include some elements of the sharia in its positive law. The presidential instruction on *Kompilasi Hukum Islam* and the ministerial decree on legal almsgiving (*zakat*) of 1991, the establishment of Bank Muamalat in 1992, and finally the abolishment of the national lottery (SDSB) constituted an undeniable progress in the implementation of Islamic law although it was never spelled out as such. Until the fall of Soeharto, these insertions of elements of Islamic law into Indonesian law that were the outcome of the state negotiating between nationalist and Islamist groups, had been limited by two principles: the private nature and optional aspect of these insertions.¹² However, the political loosening up that occurred after the fall of the New Order encouraged the recognition of Muslim norms in Indonesian law. Several symbolic projects supported by the Islamist parties but also by some secular parties testified to this oneness in the wave of Islamic piety that no one dared to openly counter.

On the national level, many laws adopted in the past few years have been denounced by religious minorities as well as human rights activists for pandering to conservative Islam and its values. In 2003, a new law on education specified that religious education (already compulsory) in public and private schools had to be dispensed by teachers of the same faith as the students concerned. This law was greatly contested in Christian

¹¹ The 1974 marriage law gave religious courts the formal authority to deal with Muslim family issues and extended the jurisdiction of the religious courts over marriage and divorce. But religious courts were still required to submit their decisions to the civil courts for confirmation. See Nurlaelawati, *Modernization, Tradition and Identity, The Kompilasi Hukum Islam and Legal Practice in the Indonesian Religious Courts*, ICAS publication series, Amsterdam University Press, 2010, pp. 54–56.

¹² The optional aspect is curbed in litigation cases. Such as in matters of inheritance, in the event of a litigation between members of a family, the religious court favours Muslim law. The daughter will thus receive one share of the inheritance while the son receives two. Moreover, a Christian child in a Muslim family will not enjoy the same rights as his Muslim brothers or sisters, and is dependent on the goodwill of the latter. See also Arskal Salim and Azyumardi Azra (eds), “The State and Shari’a in the Perspective of Indonesian Legal Politics”, in *Sharia and Politics in Modern Indonesia*, ISEAS, Singapore, 2003, pp. 1–16.

schools as it clearly sought to limit the religious influence that these schools had on their Muslim students. More recently, in October 2008, the parliament adopted a so-called anti-pornography law (RUU-AP). This law, which had been discussed in parliament for almost five years, provoked heated arguments between its proponents and opponents. The former argued that it was necessary to protect Indonesian society from moral corruption stemming from the West. The latter highlighted, rightly, that the extremely ambiguous definition of pornography (any representation or attitude likely to arouse desire) would affect artistic creation to a large extent, and would leave women at the mercy of all sorts of censorship. Indonesia already had an arsenal of laws to safeguard public morale, reminded the opponents, who were equally disturbed by calls for the public to intervene, which could provide radical organisations with a justification for their vigilantism.

The law was finally adopted by a large majority since all parties, with the exception of PDI-P and the tiny dissenting Protestant party PDS, supported it. This new law, a potential threat to liberty, showed the Islamists-inspired moral panic that often gripped the secular parties. Yet, a year and a half after its adoption, the new law was never really applied: several governors of provinces with a non-Muslim majority (Bali and North Celebes in particular) made it known that they refused to implement this law in their region and, to our knowledge, by April 2010, that is, more than one year after its adoption, a performance by nude dancers in a bar in Bandung on the night of 31 December 2009 had been the only case prosecuted under the RUU-AP law.¹³

The Acehese Exception

In the hope of turning the population away from the separatists of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM), successive Indonesian governments have since 1999 prepared a law authorising special statutes that are dispensed from Central State law and in which the sharia officially received greater room for implementation. Law Number 18 on the autonomy of Aceh (which mentions the right to legislate on the implementation of the sharia) was finally voted on during the presidency of Abdurrahman Wahid and ratified by his successor, Megawati, in August 2001. These autonomy laws hoped to break up the separatist movement by courting the ulama. The local authorities were effectively totally free to define the modalities

¹³ *Jakarta Globe*, 5 March 2010.

of its application. The provincial rulings (*qanun*) voted by the provincial parliament were drawn up by a commission composed of parliamentarians who were experts in religion and not by the plenary session, which gave rise to a very rigorist conception in their implementation. *Qanun* No. 11 of 2002 was thus the first triumph for the conservative current: it laid out punishments as extreme as public whipping or six months' imprisonment for anyone guilty of three consecutive absences from Friday prayers at the mosque.¹⁴

The implementation of this new legislation was accompanied by the creation of a 'sharia police' (*wilayatul hisbah*, WH), tasked with its application. Since then patrols have been carried out throughout the province to root out what is considered as deviant behaviour: alcohol consumption, gambling, but also 'illicit' meetings between men and women (*Qanun Khalwat*, 15 July 2003). These patrols also pushed the women of Aceh to veil themselves, the men to go to the mosque for Friday prayers, and for fasting during Ramadan. Ill-educated and sometimes brutal, this squad quickly became unpopular amongst the population and its patrols were sometimes set upon by angry crowds.¹⁵ Its behaviour and efficacy were often questioned: it managed to make the life of women who did not wear the veil and that of young illegitimate couples very difficult indeed, yet failed to drive the men to the mosque on Fridays. In particular, the *Qanun Khalwat* forbidding proximity of unmarried men and women was wildly implemented by small groups in the population. As for corporal punishment, it was driven not so much by the wish to inflict physical suffering than by the desire to publicly humiliate and warn: no physical injury must arise from the cane lashings dispensed during grandiloquent ceremonies.¹⁶

¹⁴ A professor at the Islamic University of Aceh (IAIN) already noted then the irresolvable problems posed by this law "which we had not asked for": he estimated that about half of the men in his area did not go to the mosque on Fridays. A top leader in the sharia office who had participated in the elaboration of the *qanun* declared that the local parliament had gone beyond the concept furnished by the governor's office when it obliged parents to give their children a religious education (*qanun* 11, Chapter III, Article 4, Clause 2) (Interviews in Banda Aceh, 3 December 2002).

¹⁵ In January 2010, three members of the patrol were accused of rape by a 20-year-old student who was caught in the company of her boyfriend. Over the following days, several patrols of the squad were attacked by the population. *Kompas*, 16 January 2010.

¹⁶ Between 2005 and 2009, about a dozen people were publicly caned. *Jakarta Globe*, 28 December 2009.

Nonetheless this penalisation of Islamic morale in Aceh underwent a significant turn in September 2009. A few days before separation, the regional assembly effectively adopted a *Qanun Jinayah*, paving the way for a series of very controversial new punishments in Indonesia. The new code introduced a hierarchy of highly questionable sanctions: 60 lashings for gambling, 100 for homosexuality as well as sexual relations outside of marriage, 400 for the rape of a child. Most of all, it laid the grounds for the whipping to death of anyone guilty of adultery. Adopted by a small majority, this new law was immediately condemned by Irwandi Yusuf, ex-leader of GAM who had become governor of the province, and who declared that he would not be applying it.¹⁷ The law is technically valid but the governor has severely reduced the budget of the sharia police (*wilayatul hisbah*, WH), which is now under police management (SatPol) and is no longer linked to the Sharia Office (Dinas Syariat Islam, DSI). The latter has also had its budget cut and is not headed by ideological Islamists. Thus the sharia police has been less active in the last two years, except in some local jurisdictions where authorities are more sympathetic to their agenda.¹⁸ This episode confirmed belatedly that the concession of Islamic law in Aceh stemmed above all else from a desire to weaken the separatist movement, which, more nationalist than Islamist, had not announced that it aimed to implement the sharia.¹⁹ This incident also demonstrated the unbridled Islamist one-upmanship often seen on the local level in the past years.

Islamisation and Decentralisation: The Phenomenon of *Perda Sharia* (Sharia By-Laws)

As the first exception to the unitary law of Indonesia, the Aceh case had important repercussions on the national scale. Regional leaders clamoured for Aceh parliamentarians to “teach them their methods”.²⁰ Taking advantage of decentralisation laws adopted as of 1999 — which did not, however, grant them any jurisdiction in religious matters — several local

¹⁷ *Kompas*, 9 October 2009.

¹⁸ We thank Michael Feener, on a research visit in Aceh mid-2010, for these updates.

¹⁹ And this is even though at the local level, some leaders made it known that independence could be accompanied by its implementation, ICG, *Asia Report No. 117*, 31 July 2006, “Islamic Law and Criminal Justice in Aceh”.

²⁰ Interviews at the local parliament (DPRD) of Banda Aceh, December 2002.

collectives (provinces, departments or municipalities) issued by-laws that obliged those under their charge to obey Islamic law.²¹ The *perda sharia* (*perda* being the acronym of *peraturan daerah*, regional law) numbered 78 on the regency level (*kabupaten*) and in the big towns (*kotamadya*), but more than 1,000 if one includes the small towns and villages.²² Studies conducted on this phenomenon of *perda sharia* have shed light on many characteristics of the Islamisation of Indonesian law, and more generally, on certain aspects of the religious revival.

The first characteristic is that this wave is mostly driven by a desire for the moralisation of society. Out of the 78 decrees (adopted by 52 local collectives) studied by Robin Bush, 45 per cent are based on the respect of public morale. These anti-vice laws (*perda anti-maksiat*) mainly target prostitution, gambling and the consumption of alcohol. They sometimes fall in line with certain prescriptions in Islam but do not always make a reference to religion. Only slightly more than half (55 per cent) of the new by-laws are concerned strictly with Islamisation. They seek to promote by force religious knowledge (for example, by controlling the religious education of students, local civil servants and couples-to-be), the wearing of 'Muslim' clothes (the veil for women, *baju koko* for men), and legal almsgiving (*zakat*).²³

The second characteristic of these sharia-inspired by-laws is that they blurred the lines between Muslim parties and secular ones. On the local level, the *perda sharia* were initiated more frequently by secular parties such as Golkar and the moderate Muslim parties like PAN than the Islamist parties (PKS, PBB, PPP) because the former were in charge of more localities. Thus PKS, which actually militated for the Islamisation of Indonesian law, could still declare recently that it had not brought about the adoption of any such law in the local collectives

²¹ Not all laws were, however, linked to Islam. The Manokrawi department in Papua New Guinea, with its Christian majority, adopted a law to limit the building of mosques and the wearing of the Muslim veil. Robin Bush, "Regional Sharia Regulations in Indonesia: Anomaly or Symptom?", in Greg Fealy and Sally White (eds), *Expressing Islam: Religious Life and Politics in Indonesia*, ISEAS, Singapore, 2008, pp. 174–191. Such cases were highly isolated but were of course pointed out by the press and Muslim organisations. See, for example, "Perda Kota Injil Bisa Picu Perpecahan Bangsa", *Republika Online*, 5 April 2010.

²² Conference by Maria Farida Indarti, judge for the Constitutional Court, Mahkamah Konstitusi, EHESS, Paris, 25 May 2010.

²³ Robin Bush, 2008.

under its control.²⁴ Hidayat Nur Wahid, one of its main leaders, also declared in August 2007 that “demands to implement sharia ... should not refer to the implementation of Islamic law, but instead focus on moral enhancement.”²⁵ Nonetheless, PKS often lent its support to the actions of other parties. For example, in the Pandeglang district of Banten, the Chief of Police, Dimiyati Natakusumah, a PPP member, adopted several measures inspired by Islamic law: the wearing of the veil by female members of the administration and the separation of girls and boys in schools. He even ordered that all the buildings under his administration be repainted in the colour green (the colour of Islam). In protest, PDIP left the coalition that brought the Chief of Police to power. The latter was, however, supported by the local branch of PKS.²⁶

A study of the geographical distribution of *perda sharia* as well as the chronology of their adoption allows one to fashion an explanation for the involvement of secular parties such as Golkar. The majority of decrees were adopted in regions where the Darul Islam movement, which militated for an Islamic state, was very active in the 1950s.²⁷ These regions (West Java, Aceh, South Sulawesi, South Kalimantan) were, of course, marked by a strong Muslim identity, but religion was not the only factor: apart from Java, Darul Islam had developed in regions where resentment at the confiscation of power by the central power was deeply ingrained.²⁸ Yet, as noted Sindhunata, the beginnings of Reformasi was characterised by a process of ‘de-Javanising’ Indonesian politics. Insofar as “New Order politics was Javanese politics, closed and centralist (*Politik Orde Baru adalah politik Jawa, yang tertutup dan sentralistik*)”, post-Soeharto politics experienced an anti-Javanese backlash (*gejala anti Jawa*).²⁹ In regions

²⁴ In October 2009, however, Nur Mahmudi Ismail, PKS mayor of Depok, a Jakarta suburb, announced that he was going to ban all karaoke bars in his area because they were often hotbeds of prostitution. *Jakarta Globe*, 6 October 2009.

²⁵ “Sharia Should Stress Morals, Not Law: Hidayat”, *Jakarta Post*, Bandung, 30 August 2007, cited in Robin Bush, 2008.

²⁶ *Jurnal Perempuan*, 60, p. 127.

²⁷ Fifty of the seventy-eight decrees studied by Robin Bush had been adopted in the former bastions of the Islamist movement.

²⁸ Therein the link between Darul Islam and the PRRI rebellion in West Sumatra at the end of the 1950s. Cf. Chapter One. *Perda sharia* was also common in West Sumatra.

²⁹ Sindhunata, “‘De-Jawanisasi’ Politik Indonesia”, *Kompas*, 22 July 1999. Cited by François Raillon, “The Return of Pancasila: Secular vs. Islamic norms, another look at the struggle for state dominance in Indonesia”, in Michel Picard and Rémy Madinier, *The Politics of Agama in Java and Bali, Syncretism, Orthodoxy and Religious Contention*, Routledge, forthcoming.

marked by strong anti-Javanese feelings, the declaration of a religious identity contradicting the status quo established on the national level thus constituted, for a large section of the political class, a way to signal to the voter loyalty to Islam, specificity and distance from the capital.

Examining the chronology of the adoption of these *perda sharia* seems to confirm this analysis: the majority were adopted in the first years after decentralisation laws had been implemented.³⁰ Once these had come into effect and the regions had benefited from a new redistribution of jurisdiction and resources, the urgency to manifest particularism through religious laws diminished. Moreover, in many cases, this policy of Islamic one-upmanship carried out by politicians who felt they lacked religious credentials (that is, politicians from secular parties) did not yield the intended results. As of 2005, the election of local executives (*pilkada*) by direct voting penalised this type of manoeuvres and removed its political necessity.³¹ With the exception of Aceh, almost no new law based on Islamic law was adopted after 2006. There has been a drop in *perda sharia* since, although it is hard to obtain an overall picture since there could be many such by-laws at the city or village level, and they could still crop up as electoral strategies in the future.³²

Finally, the phenomenon of *perda sharia*, limited in time and parameter, reflected on the local level what we have observed on the national level — that the Islamist one-upmanship had more to do with an affirmation of identity than with a real desire by the population to see the rigours of the sharia applied. Here, too, a great disparity appears between the affirmed adhesion to the values and norms of Islam, and the votes for candidates proposing their implementation. In other words, if Muslim Indonesians overwhelmingly favour propositions related to the implementation of Islamic law when polled, these propositions are not a priority when they make their choices as voters. There are two possible explanations for this paradox. First, the politicians who come up with *perda sharia* are not — far from it — always identified with the values

³⁰ The number of *perda sharia* grew tremendously between 1999 and 2003 but have dropped drastically since then. Robin Bush, 2008.

³¹ See the conclusion of a study by Wahid Institute, “Kalau Agama Ikut Pilkada”, *Nawala, The Wahid Institute Bulletin*, No. 3, Th I, August–November 2006, cited by Robin Bush, 2008.

³² Interview with Maria Farida Indarti, judge at the Indonesian Constitutional Court, Paris, 25 May 2010.

they claim to promote.³³ Second, these issues are very minor compared with the problems encountered on a daily basis that the population would rather have their representatives address. This is what Ahmad-Norma Permata emphasises, based on a series of surveys conducted by the International Foundation for Election System (IFES) between 2001 and 2005. Respondents were asked to reply to the question “What is the greatest problem your community faces?” on both the national and local level. In both cases, the answers were similar and remained largely unchanged during the period in question. In decreasing order of importance, they worried about: the increase in the cost of basic necessities, difficulty in finding jobs, cost of healthcare and education, lack of security and political instability. Nothing related to religion or morale was spontaneously cited by more than 1 per cent of the population.³⁴

The political leaders were just as hypocritical as the public in this affair: pushed by radical organisations and believing that it was what the people wanted, some of the local leaders adopted restrictive by-laws with a religious basis. Their lack of conviction, as well as fear that the silent majority might be unhappy, meant that they merely paid lip-service and these laws were but rarely implemented. While easy to apply in public administrations, it was almost impossible to do so in the streets.³⁵ The relative loss of influence of the radicals and the ideological revival in favour of *Pancasila* also contributed to this evolution.

Nonetheless, the anxieties expressed by feminist groups (often the foremost opponents of *perda sharia*)³⁶ and human rights organisations have not ceased. Even though they are not always implemented, these religious by-laws are an undeniable testament to the curtailment of individual liberty and most of all, to the decline of the rule of law enshrined at the highest level. Although these by-laws obviously lay outside the jurisdiction of local collectives, the Supreme Court refused to rule on

³³ Robin Bush also reveals that some of these laws were put forward by politicians hoping to arm themselves against accusations of corruption levelled at them. Robin Bush, 2008.

³⁴ Ahmad-Norma Permata, “Perda Syariat Islam, Rekayasa Institusional dan Masa depan Demokrasi”, *Ijtihad*, Vol. 7, No. 1, June 2007.

³⁵ Interview with Guntur Romli, who was in charge of the special issue of *Jurnal Perempuan* on the *perda sharia*, Jakarta, 4 December 2008.

³⁶ See especially the special issue of *Jurnal Perempuan*, “Awat Perda Diskriminatif”, September 2008, Jakarta. Feminists were involved in this fight because these laws targeted women above all. Interview with Maria Farida Indarti, Paris, 25 May 2010.

their legality. Such a decision encouraged the spread of the idea that religion-based by-laws stood outside of the classic hierarchy of law and thus could be imposed outside of all legal structures. More than the *perda sharia*, it is this ambivalence that undoubtedly contributed most to the prevalence of Islamic norms in Indonesia of late. For example, the veil has become compulsory in schools in many localities even though there is no by-law regulating the wearing of the veil. Its adoption as part of the school uniform often obliges students to put it on once they step into the school compound.

III. The End of the Big Organisations?

Having long shaped Indonesian Islam, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah are indisputably the main victims of the break-up of Muslim representation in Indonesia. Threatened since the end of the 1990s by the emergence of numerous lively radical organisations that contest their legitimacy to defend the interests of the Indonesian *umat*, these grand dames of Indonesian Islam are also weakened by internal conflicts opposing conservatives and reformists, as well as supporters and opponents of political engagement.

Muhammadiyah: Between Rigour and Reformism

While of a much more modest size than its traditionalist rival, Muhammadiyah (or Path of Muhammad) continues to exercise a great influence in Indonesia. Indeed, the profile of its members (more urban and better educated than that of NU) gives it easier access to influential posts and a bigger presence in debates on ideas.³⁷ After the disappointment of Abdurrahman Wahid's presidency and the momentary discouragement amongst the young generation of traditionalists, moderate Muslims looked to Muhammadiyah.

³⁷ A national survey conducted by Lembaga Survey Indonesia in January 2009 showed that out of a total of 89 per cent of the Muslims asked (equivalent to the proportion of Muslims in Indonesia), 41 per cent identified with Nahdlatul Ulama but only 5 per cent with Muhammadiyah. The percentage identifying with another organisation was 3, while 50 per cent did not identify with any organisation. We can thus estimate the number of NU sympathisers to stand at more than 60 million versus only 8 million for Muhammadiyah. However, Muhammadiyah holds a certain authority and is very mediated even if its members proper are not that numerous.

That it should incarnate the hopes of these moderate Muslims may appear surprising at first sight: the reformist organisation was founded in 1912 with the aim of ‘purifying’ Islam of customs and religious practices considered as pre-Islamic and straying from the Middle Eastern model.³⁸ Muhammadiyah wanted to recover a religious way of life that conformed to Islam at its origins and fought against deviant ritual practices and heretic tendencies. To this effect, it opposed, sometimes violently, the worship of saints, which was condemned as *shirk* (associationism), and relentlessly attacked popular Islam’s belief in spirits and in superstition. This desire for purification was the primary motivation behind its credo of *tajdid* (renewal), but this notion took on a wider interpretation in the reformism of theologian Muhammad Abduh (died 1908), which sought to apply Islamic teachings to modern times. This modernising objective led Muhammadiyah to open, right from the start, schools that emphasised non-religious learning.

The organisation led by Ahmad Syafii Maarif up to July 2004, and thereafter by Din Syamsuddin, thus inherited a sometimes-contradictory line of thinking. Schematically, there seems to be two major currents of thought within the organisation. The first is of fundamentalist inspiration, emphasising a return to original Islam and Arabisation. The second is a more direct heir of the so-called ‘modernist’ tendency, close to Western rationalism. Over the past years, the doctrinal line of Muhammadiyah has largely derived from the evolution of the equilibrium between these two groups.

After 1965: Muhammadiyah Rocked by ‘Santrisation’

The period after the start of the New Order saw profound changes in the sociological composition of Muhammadiyah. When it came to power in 1965, General Soeharto’s regime set two goals for itself: to create a new political and economic order, and to rid Indonesian society of the influence of communist ideology. It thus adopted the strategy of implementing compulsory religious education, which (apart from in Bali) contributed to the progressive elimination of local religions in favour of the ‘religions of the Book’, that is, Christianity and Islam. Followers of

³⁸ According to his biography, the two thinkers who most influenced Ahmad Dahlan, founder of Muhammadiyah, were Muhammad Abduh and Ibn Taimiyya (see Yusron Asrofi, *Kiai Ahmad Dablan: Pemikiran dan Kepemimpinanya*, Yogyakarta offset, 1983, XII–118 pp.)

mystic or animistic tradition, up till then nominally Muslim (*abangan*), were increasingly led by the government to 'return to their original religion', that is, to one of the five officially recognised religions: Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism and Buddhism. Religious education from primary to university level was made compulsory. This policy caused the conversion of a few millions of Javanese to Christianity.³⁹ It also gave rise to a process called 'santrisation' — the adoption of stricter practices within the Muslim community.⁴⁰

The history of Muhammadiyah in the district of Wuluhan (the reGENCY of Jember in East Java), as revealed by Abdul Munir Mulkhan's study, illustrates perfectly the extent of the transformation undergone by the organisation during this period.⁴¹ As a result of the measures mentioned above, thousands of new recruits, mostly *abangan* peasants, swelled the ranks of Muhammadiyah. This success was all the more surprising given that the youth movement of the reformist organisation had in 1966 committed acts of vandalism in the region, destroying sacred tombs (*kramat*),⁴² symbols of the pre-Islamic legacy, and had participated in the massacre of villagers accused of being communists.⁴³

This flood of new members who were still very attached to pre-Islamic traditions and rituals forced the 'purifying' group of Muhammadiyah (*al Ikhlās*) to come to terms with tradition and the TBC (*tabayul, bida, churafat*: belief in spirits, innovations and superstitions) practices that they condemned. Subsequently it was also obliged to compromise on several occasions, moderating its teachings to accommodate students

³⁹ Supra Chapters One and Two.

⁴⁰ Pierre Labrousse and Farida Soemargono, "De l'islam comme morale de développement: l'action des bureaux de propagation de la foi vue de Surabaya", in *Archipel*, no. 30, Paris, 1985: 219–228; Robert Hefner, "Islamizing Java? Religion and Politics in Rural East-Java", in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 46, no. 3, August 1987: 533–554; Pranowo, "Islam and Party Politics in Rural Java", in the conference "Asean Moslem Social Scientists" (Grand Hotel Lembang, West Java, 21–24 August 1991); Robert W. Hefner, "Where have all the *abangan* gone? Religionization and the decline of non-standard Islam in contemporary Indonesia", in Michel Picard and Rémy Madinier, *The Politics of Agama in Java and Bali, Syncretism, Orthodoxy and Religious Contention*, Routledge, forthcoming.

⁴¹ Abdul Munir Mulkhan, *Islam Murni Dalam Masyarakat Petani*, Yayasan Bentang Budaya, Yogyakarta, 2000, pp. 173, 409.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 175.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

who had followed a general curriculum in parallel and toning down its political demands in order to approach Golkar, the party of the government.⁴⁴

These sociological and political changes arising from the beginning of the New Order were succeeded by an intellectual revival in the 1980s and 1990s whose effects are felt till today.

The 1990s: The Beginnings of a New Reform

During the 1980s, the reformist organisation was severely criticised by the general press, which accused it of stagnating while Abdurrahman Wahid of Nahdlatul Ulama tried to revamp Indonesian traditionalist Islam.⁴⁵ It was in the mid-1990s that appeared the first clear signs of internal reform within Muhammadiyah. During the congress at Banda Aceh in 1995, the organisation proclaimed the implementation of a 'spiritualisation of the sharia' (*spiritualisasi shari'a*) movement, expressing in a way a recognition of the mystical dimension of Islam and the rigidity of the sharia. The new Muslim intellectuals who initiated the movement declared that this was not a breakaway from the early spirit of the organisation but, on the contrary, a return to the intention of the founder, Ahmad Dahlan, as it proposed a mixture of "reason and pure heart".⁴⁶ According to the renowned intellectual Kuntowijoyo, it was necessary to unite "Sharia and Sufism"⁴⁷ and to "embellish Islam" (*menghias Islam*) so that it does not become a "poor, dry, dreary, vulgar and unattractive" religion.⁴⁸

In 1995 too, Amin Abdullah, one of the leaders of this new current within Muhammadiyah⁴⁹ who had become rector of the Islamic State

⁴⁴ NU was not able to gain as much ground amongst the Javanese peasants during the post-1965 political vacuum because of the extreme violence committed by its youth movement Ansor, notably in East Java. See Abdul Munir Mulkhan, 2000, p. 157.

⁴⁵ Two texts published on the Negara Islam in the journal *Nuansa* (of which a sole issue appeared in 1983) by the leaders of Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama illustrate this stagnation: while Abdurrahman Wahid was already developing a line of thought very much liberated from the classic confines of political Islam and which was extremely critical of the notion of an Islamic state (which he calls a Utopia that fails to take into account the evolution of the world), Ahmad Syafii Maarif was still very much marked by the Constitutional Assembly debates of the late 1950s and held a very pessimistic vision of the Indonesian secular tradition.

⁴⁶ *Dengan akal dan hati suci* (without prejudices).

⁴⁷ Abdul Munir Mulkhan, 2000, p. XIX.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. XX.

⁴⁹ Amin Abdullah, born in 1953, is a former student of the *pesantren* at Gontor and of IAIN in Yogyakarta (1982), where he studied theology (*ushuludin*) and comparative

University (Universitas Islam Negeri, UIN) of Yogyakarta, published a work that marked a new stage in the process of internal reform. Entitled “Theological Philosophy in the Era of Post-Modernism”,⁵⁰ Amin Abdullah’s essay declared that post-modernism should be the vector of a relativism that will inevitably reinforce religious pluralism in Indonesia.⁵¹ He felt that classical Muslim theology (*kalam*) could not solve contemporary problems and called for the inclusion of “modern psychology, sociology, history of religions, contemporary Western philosophy”. Such an approach would resolve some of the current issues stemming from “democratisation, religious pluralism, human rights, ecology to the fight against poverty”.⁵² Already widely circulated in the institutes of superior Islamic studies (IAIN) in Java, Amin Abdullah’s ideas also started to influence their counterparts outside of Java, in regions that are much more conservative and less familiar with these sort of liberal ideas.⁵³ Strengthened by these successive reforms, Muhammadiyah currently attempts to articulate a discourse to counter the rhetoric — often very adroit — of the radicals.

Debates after 2000

In 2000, Amin Abdullah’s profile in the intellectual Muslim milieu was raised even further by his direction of a collective work entitled “The Thematic Interpretation of the Qur’an in Relation to Inter-religious Relations”,⁵⁴ which advocated tolerance between religious communities and condemned all sectarianism. This work, published by the Council for the Development of Islamic Thought of Muhammadiyah (Majelis Tarjih),⁵⁵ enjoyed a quasi-official status. Apprehensive of the violent reactions that such a liberal message might provoke, the authors took many

religions. A scholarship enabled him study in Turkey with Fazlur Rahman and obtain a PhD in philosophy at the faculty of arts and sciences of Middle East Technical University (METU) in Ankara (1985–1990). Member of Majelis Tarjih in Muhammadiyah, he occupied a key position in the orientation of the organisation’s thinking.

⁵⁰ M. Amin Abdullah, *Falsafah Kalam di Era Post-modernism*, Pustaka Pelajar, Yogyakarta, 1995, XII–296 pp.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 95–107.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 89.

⁵³ Hartono Ahmad Jaiz’s work, *Ada Pemurtadan di Iain* (Apostasy in the Islamic University), Pustaka Al-Kautsar, Jakarta, March 2005, 244 pp., is in itself a homage by the radicals to the success of the liberals in the state Islamic universities.

⁵⁴ Majelis Tarjih dan Pengembangan Pemikiran Islam PP Muhammadiyah, *Tafsir Tematik al-Quran tentang Hubungan Sosial Antarumat Beragama*, Pustaka SM, Yogyakarta, 2000, XXIV–220 pp.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

precautions, warning that theirs was a “reflective essay” open to criticism and detailing their method and the sources used in the commentaries (*tafsir*) of the Qur’an.⁵⁶ In spite of these precautions, Amin Abdullah’s worries were not unfounded and the work was torn apart — even within the reformist group. Leaders of the extremely rigorist Persatuan Islam (Persis) condemned the Marjelis Tarjih on 7 October 2001 for a *tafsir* they considered as too secular (*sekuler*).⁵⁷ Many senior members of Muhammadiyah and more than 300 persons followed this tense debate led by the radicals, including Muhammad Thalib, a local Persis leader.

This controversy marked an important point in the history of Muhammadiyah’s ideology. Clashes that had erupted over the Moluccas conflict — Ahmad Syafii Maarif, president of Muhammadiyah, had condemned the Laskar Jihad militias’ attack against the Christians while the more conservative members reserved comment — became clearer than ever.

The publication of this book under the direction of Amin Abdullah (who was close to Ahmad Syafii Maarif) gave Persis the opportunity to throw its weight behind the most conservative elements of Muhammadiyah and to reassert its long-held influence over the large modernist organisation. The moderates were attacked first of all for their “wrong interpretation” of the references used to justify religious tolerance. For instance, the book explained that the surat *al Baqarah* (2) 148, according to which “Each person possesses his *kiblat* (prayer direction) to which he turns”, implied that Islam recognised other religions. This was contested by Muhammad Thalib, for whom the rest of the *tafsir* by Ibn Abbas (w. 68/687): “... and the *kiblat* of Allah is that to which Muslims turn” ruled out such liberal tolerance for other religions. The debate then turned to the nature of Muhammadiyah’s heritage, with each camp invoking the thoughts of Muhammad Abduh in order to support its theory.⁵⁸ Scientific rigour, another legacy of the pioneers of reformism, was also held up by the two sides: Thalib labelled Muhammadiyah’s work as a

⁵⁶ In addition, Amin Abdullah frequently referred to the Egyptian reformer Muhammad Abduh, precursor of the modernist movement.

⁵⁷ The meeting was held in the big hall at the Association of Hajis of Indonesia (Persaudaraan Haji Indonesia, PDHI), near to the public square of the Yogyakarta Palace.

⁵⁸ The radicals contested the moderates’ opinion that the founder of Muslim reformism had considered the Christians as “the people of the Book”. At the end of the meeting, Amin Abdullah spoke out with emotion: “If we do not take on this task of interpretation (*ijtihad*), whose heirs are we? Do we not claim to be heirs of Muhammad Abduh?” Personal notes of the authors at the meeting, 7 October 2000.

“scientific tragedy”, unworthy of an institution as honourable as the Majelis Tarjih, and declared that close to “100 pages” of the book (out of a total of 220 pages) were erroneous and disrespectful of the rules of *tafsir* (*kaidah penafsiran*). Others argued that it was a betrayal of the Qur’an and called for it to be banned.

Confronted with the intransigent rigidity of the ultra-conservatives, the moderates, supported by a large section of the intellectual elite and the elders of Muhammadiyah, highlighted instead the historical context of the sacred texts. Amin Abdullah presented his own *tafsir* as a necessary updating (“If we, adults, do not want it, well then, the book shall be for our children.”). His supporters also underlined the necessity of returning to Muhammadiyah’s own tradition of intellectual production in the 1930s and condemned the conservatism of the radicals in the context of new political liberty.⁵⁹ This debate illustrated yet another important change in Indonesian Islam: the increasingly frequent alliance between long-time rivals, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, in defence of a moderate and tolerant Islam. As such, on the day of the meeting, to shore up the religious credentials of their interpretations, a young NU ulama, Chamim Ilyas, a former student of the famous *pesantren* of Tambakberas in Jombang, was presented to the audience as a participant of this controversial *tafsir*.⁶⁰ Henceforth a section of Muhammadiyah has become closer to Nahdlatul Ulama while distancing itself from the more inflexible Persis, its long-time associate within Masyumi. This is yet another momentous change.

Without an undisputed arbitrator, the debate came to a standstill. The polemic re-erupted a year later in July 2002 when Amin Abdullah was once again censured, this time by a local branch of Muhammadiyah. His attackers charged that Abdullah was mistaken in proposing that the Qur’an recognised the possibility of salvation outside of Islam, because non-Muslims were “infidels, residents in hell, enemies of Allah, of his Prophet”.⁶¹ The protest ended with the accusation that the authors of

⁵⁹ Amin Abdullah thus declared: “Let’s not go backwards, to the Soeharto regime’s tradition of banning books it considered harmful.”

⁶⁰ Chamim Ilyas declared that Muslims are indeed “people of the Book, as are followers of Hinduism, Shintoism and Christianity”.

⁶¹ Transcript of debates organised by the Forum of Muhammadiyah members for the Sharia on 14 July 2002 in Yogyakarta (*Hasil transkripsi silaturahmi dan dialog terbatas Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah, Majelis Tarjih dan pengembangan pemikiran Islam*, Pimpinan pusat Muhammadiyah, Majelis Tarjih dan pengembangan pemikiran islam pimpinan wilayah Muhammadiyah DIY, Forum warga Muhammadiyah Peduli Syari’ah, Yogyakarta, 14 July 2002, p. 3).

this condemned *tafsir* bordered on apostasy. During this new altercation, Amin Abdullah received the backing of Syafii Maarif, as well as H. Syamsul Anwar, director of Majelis Tarjih and the development of Islamic thought, but this did not stem the invective against him. Faced with the pressures exerted by the radical current, Majelis Tarjih seemed to have momentarily halted the printing of the moderate *tafsir* although it was still being photocopied.⁶²

The Sharia Issue

In the face of demands by radical Islam as of August 2000 at the First Congress of Mujahidin in Yogyakarta, the moderate leaders of Muhammadiyah articulated their opposition to the introduction of the sharia in the Indonesian Constitution. Their position was roundly attacked and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir urged Syafii Maarif to explain himself. A debate between the two men was organised in October 2001. Syafii Maarif recounted it for us:

It is certainly a good thing to apply the sharia, but not to introduce it in the Constitution.... I asked Ba'asyir what he understood by the sharia. Ba'asyir replied: "Islamic law". I retorted that his interpretation was wrong because sharia means religion (*din*), and to claim that the sharia designates Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) was an error. I advised them to do their homework because I know better than them. This is a subject that I had studied for many years for my PhD thesis. I also asked them how they envisaged applying the sharia. Through a revolution? By a vote in the Consultative Assembly? In the Assembly, there would be at most 8–10 per cent of votes in support of the idea. What would they look like then? Did they intend to fight to be the losers (*rebut piala kekalahan*)? They told me that in any case, they would fight for its application. Let them do it! For me, people will then say: this is truly the failure of political Islam.⁶³

The Muhammadiyah leader feared that calls for the sharia would become a political instrument and that the only outcome of this would be the discrediting of Islam. As proof, he held up the inconsistent attitude of the Islamic party PPP, which had in 1999 rejected the election of a female to the presidency of the republic, only to accept shortly after

⁶² Interview with Amin Abdullah, who no longer sits in Majelis Tarjih but who was in 2004 still one of the deputies of Muhammadiyah (Yogyakarta, 1 November 2004).

⁶³ Interview with Ahmad Syafii Maarif, Yogyakarta, 30 March 2002.

the nomination of Hamzah Haz as Vice-President of Megawati, whom the same Assembly elected as president in the end. For him, the radicals' view that the current crisis was caused by the absence of the sharia was untenable. Citing the negative example of Pakistan, Syafii Maarif expressed his concerns about the application of Islamic law in Aceh. For Muhammadiyah, he said, the idea of an Islamic state dates to only the twentieth century and is, in fact, "not mentioned within the organisation". According to him, since its founding, Muhammadiyah had encouraged *ijtihad* (independent legal reasoning, see Glossary), which implies an adaptation to modernity rather than a strict application of the sharia in the context of an Islamic state.

Triumph of the Conservative Group?

Confronting Syafii Maarif and the liberal Amin Abdullah was the more conservative branch of Muhammadiyah, led then by Din Syamsuddin whose influence had been reinforced by his accession to the post of secretary-general of the Council of Indonesian Ulama (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, MUI) and, after July 2005, to that of its vice-president. After narrowly missing the Muhammadiyah leadership in 2000 (he had obtained 1,048 votes versus 1,282 for Syafii Maarif), he was finally elected to the head of Muhammadiyah in July 2005.

The liberals in Muhammadiyah hoped that his election to the top of the reformist organisation would see him toning down his discourse, which had radicalised over the past years (an attempt, suggested his critics, to erase his past as a militant with Golkar, Soeharto's party).⁶⁴ Indeed this turned out to be the case — Din Syamsuddin did take the middle ground between conservatives and moderates on some crucial issues. For example, he has since his election consistently denounced radicalism in Indonesian Islam. In November 2008, he opposed those who wanted to give the Bali bombers the title of martyrs after their execution, reminding them instead of the 'misuse' of Islam. More recently, in March 2010, he

⁶⁴ According to the resolutions of the 44th Congress of Muhammadiyah, elections for 13 members of the managing office resulted in 1,282 votes for Syafi Maarif, 940 for Amin Abdullah and 910 for Dawam Rahardjo — in other words, 3,132 for the three liberal candidates versus 8,920 votes for the first nine candidates (official document of PP Muhammadiyah, Yogyakarta, 8–11 July 2000). The resolutely moderate group represented about 35 per cent of local branches. In July 2005, Din was elected with 1,718 votes to the 13-member electoral college, while Amin with only 600 votes was no longer considered a possible candidate for the leadership.

called on Indonesian Muslims to welcome President Obama, arguing that the anti-American sentiments of the Bush era were no longer justified. On many occasions, he also spoke up against the very conservative stance of Majelis Ulama Indonesia (of which he was nonetheless the secretary-general for a long time) regarding yoga, Facebook and abstention during the 2009 elections. Despite his conservative past, Din Syamsuddin has remained close to the progressives in the organisation who have grouped within the Network of Young Intellectuals of Muhammadiyah (Jaringan Intelektual Muda Muhammadiyah, JIMM).⁶⁵ However, he has also had to face the more conservative elements of Muhammadiyah, who are very well represented within Majelis Tabligh (Preaching Council). The presence within this council of personalities such as the writer and polemist, Adian Husaini, representative of a current extremely indulgent towards Muslim extremism, certainly helped legitimise the radical tendencies of a section of the Muhammadiyah grassroots.

The unmistakable progression of a militant conservatism within Muhammadiyah also led to an increasing hold by PKS on the modernist organisation. Several militants are members of both organisations and many leaders of the Islamist party occupy positions within Muhammadiyah: Tifatul Sembiring and Zulkiflimansyah are Majelis Tabligh members. Over the past years, Muhammadiyah cadres have been concerned with the influence PKS exercises on the organisation's structures. An increasing number of Muhammadiyah mosques and even schools — through the political participation of a majority of their teachers — have, in fact, become controlled by PKS. The latter is also very active through its charitable organisations (*amal usaba*), traditionally the domain of the reformist organisation.⁶⁶ Fearful that it would lose control of its political engagement, the central direction of Muhammadiyah solemnly called upon its members in 2006 to “liberate itself” of PKS influence.⁶⁷ Even though this concern has been somewhat mollified of late (PAN, the traditional party of Muhammadiyah has resisted very well during the 2009 elections), this remains a sensitive issue: Haidar Nasir, who represented the progressive group during the elections for the organisation's presidency in July 2010, built his campaign on this theme.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Interview with Andar Nubowo, JIMM member, Paris, 8 May 2010.

⁶⁶ This is particularly so for the Yogyakarta region. Interview with Andar Nubowo, JIMM member, Paris, 8 May 2010.

⁶⁷ Surat Keputusan Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah No. 149/KEP/I.0/B/2006.

⁶⁸ Interview with Andar Nubowo, JIMM member, Paris, 8 May 2010.

More than ever, Muhammadiyah seems torn between its purifying identity, which places it at the forefront of the conservative revival, and its reformism, which puts it, alongside Nahdlatul Ulama, at the centre of national and international hopes for a renewal of moderate Islam. The congress for the hundredth anniversary of the organisation (according to the Muslim calendar), held in July 2010, did not bring about any decisive change in the equilibrium between the two groups. Dominated by the issue of political participation, in spite of an appeal by the female as well as younger members to open up the organisation, the congress concluded with the re-election of Din Syamsuddin as head of the organisation. The progressive wing continues to be represented within the new leadership through Haedar Nasir, but Yunahar Ilyas of the conservative current has also been re-elected.⁶⁹

Nahdlatul Ulama: Paying the Price of Power

Long personified by Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur), grandson of the founder of NU and heir of the traditionalist group, who valiantly opposed the Soeharto regime and became the disorganised president of a republic in crisis, Nahdlatul Ulama is a complex organisation that symbolised, especially during the 1980s and 1990s while under the charge of its charismatic leader, the resistance of Indonesian Islam to the temptations of radicalism. Composed of diverse groups — Javanese, non-Javanese, East Javanese, Central Javanese, apolitical men of religion and parliamentarians — and made up of activists of different stripes, members of Parliament, ministers, PKB militants but also those of PPP and Golkar, Nahdlatul Ulama was weakened by the impeachment of Abdurrahman Wahid in 2001. The marginalisation of this born leader, who had long exercised undivided authority over the movement, generated speculations about the future influence of the different groups within the traditionalist movement.

Gus Dur, or the Decline of an Iconoclastic Figure of Liberal Intellectualism

Abdurrahman Wahid was the first Indonesian Muslim leader of a certain stature to warn his compatriots against the risks of radical Islamism in the Archipelago. At the start of the 1990s, he sent a letter to this effect to President Soeharto, cautioning him that his laxity vis-à-vis some of

⁶⁹ Partially educated in Saudi Arabia, this former student of the liberal Amin Abdullah is very close to PKS.

the groups would lead one day to a situation similar to Algeria's.⁷⁰ The NU leader also spoke up frequently against the possible introduction of the sharia in the Constitution, opining that religious obligations should remain in the private sphere. Wahid was then in the habit of saying that while he respected the sharia, it should not be imposed, mentioning, for example, that he did not drink alcohol even though it was permitted by Indonesian law. Feminists appreciated Wahid as he pushed them to fight for their rights and spoke up against polygamy. In the 1990s, he became the leading opponent of Soeharto but refused to join ICMI, creating instead the Forum Demokrasi, and later became the political ally of Megawati Soekarnoputri when her party was subject to intimidation and aggression by the regime.

However, in October 1999, with the support of Islamic parties, Wahid defeated Megawati in the bid for presidency, thus breaking up the alliance that had so contributed to the weakening of the New Order. During his first months in power, many of the measures he proposed, such as the strengthening of economic ties with Israel and the suspension of the ban on communism, provoked violent protests from militant Islam. However, as of March 2000, some of his political decisions seemed to take into consideration the sway of radical Islam. Wahid met Eggy Sujana, an Islamist militant well known for his radicalism, and agreed to inaugurate in Medan a meeting of Muslim workers' unions led by Sujana. In April, the president made a statement banning the departure of Laskar Jihad for the Moluccas but stopped short of sanctioning those within the state apparatus who allowed members of the militia to leave for Ambon, charged some democrats.⁷¹ Finally, in 2001, Wahid approved the application of the sharia in Aceh, a concession granted to win over the ulama and appease a very tense situation following his refusal to organise a referendum on self-determination.

These decisions were driven above all by political motivations and did not signify the abandoning of liberal ideas by a president who was subjected to enormous pressure.⁷² So on 7 April 2000, he did not hesitate

⁷⁰ Adam Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia's Search for Stability*, Allen and Unwin, St. Leonards, Australia, 1999 (1st edition: 1994), p. 192.

⁷¹ Including the military commander in Surabaya. Interview with Munir of Kontras, the NGO for the defence of human rights, Paris, 6 February 2001.

⁷² About 1,000 armed demonstrators came by lorry to Jakarta, broke into Parliament and threatened to "carry out jihad in Java and attack Christians" if they were not allowed to leave for the Moluccas. Ayip Syafruddin, President of Forum Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamma'ah Forum (AFP, 12 April 2000). See Chapter Three.

to harshly dismiss Ja'far Umar Thalib, the supreme commander of the Laskar Jihad who had come to the presidential palace to reproach him for "neglecting the suffering of Muslims, thousands of them victims, while the dead Christians only numbered five or more" and of "defending the Indonesian Communist Party by allowing it to build itself up again".⁷³ In the following months, between January and April 2000, Abdurrahman Wahid found himself once again at odds with the radicals while losing the support of Muslim parties (PBB and PAN, led by the MPR leader Amien Rais). Very soon after, the 'central axis' of Muslim parties, which had been formed to carry him to power, became the meeting point of those who condemned his disorganised politics and his sometimes audacious or inconsistent statements. His impeachment by the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) in July 2001 confirmed the premonition of the senior ulama of NU: less than two years ago, they had tried in vain to dissuade Abdurrahman Wahid from accepting the post of president for fear of the impact on the reputation of NU should he fail.⁷⁴ PKB, which had been NU's instrument of political influence, fell into disarray. Some of its leaders who had joined in the impeachment of Wahid were expelled and they organised a congress that initiated a scission. Riding on his popularity within traditionalist Islam, Gus Dur managed, nonetheless, to be appointed as a candidate for the 2004 presidential elections. But he failed to have his candidacy ratified by the electoral commission on account of his ill health and blindness. Hasyim Muzadi, his successor as leader of NU, presented himself as candidate and chose to ally himself with Megawati.⁷⁵ Abdurrahman Wahid then pushed for the candidacy of his younger brother Solahuddin (who associated himself with General Wiranto on this occasion) only to declare ultimately that he would join the Golput (the white group or those who chose to abstain). This wrangling at the top of the hierarchy caused much bitterness within the traditionalist organisation and gave rise to a new

⁷³ Interview with Ja'far Thalib, Yogyakarta, 7 November 2002.

⁷⁴ On the internal debate about Abdurrahman Wahid's candidacy as president, see Andrée Feillard, "Indonesian Traditionalist Islam's Troubled Experience with Democracy (1999–2001)", in *Archipel*, no. 64, 2002: 117–144.

⁷⁵ His explanation, circulated on CDs, for choosing Megawati instead of Wiranto or Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, was his longstanding ties with the former. According to his inner circle, another (more logical) reason was that as vice-president to a female president, he could broker more power for NU than if he were to partner an army general. Interview with a NU militant close to Wiranto, 25 September 2004.

expression by Hasyim's supporters: their champion headed the "republican" group (NU-*republik*) as opposed to the "monarchic" group (*kerajaan*) under Abdurrahman Wahid.⁷⁶

Subsequently Gus Dur became one of President Yudhoyono's critics even as his party, PKB, joined the presidential coalition. The political discredit suffered by Abdurrahman Wahid, criticised for the disastrous way his mandate ended as well as for his authoritarianism and dynastic tendencies, whetted the appetite of many who hoped to inherit NU's political legitimacy. This fragmentation of the representation of traditionalist Islam was one of the causes of PKB's political decline in 2009. Four parties claimed to represent this current in the last elections: PKB and PPP (each saw a major slide in their standing, obtaining only about 5 per cent of votes each) and two new parties in 2009, Partai Kebangkitan Nasional Ulama (1.5 per cent) and Partai Nahdlatul Ulama (0.14 per cent).

Evidently his political defeat contributed much to the erosion of Gus Dur's influence within his own organisation. While still venerated as a 'saint' (*wali*) in the Javanese countryside, as evidenced by the emotions on display during his funeral in January 2010, he was unable to recover his leading role in Nahdlatul Ulama. In November 2004, his candidate for the position of head of the executive, Masdar Ma'sudi,⁷⁷ was rejected by the 31st Congress of Nahdlatul Ulama, which re-elected instead Hasyim Muzadi, who had held out against the president in 2001 and paved the way to the transition to Megawati. The regional delegates, NU cadres, were naturally better disposed towards Hasyim, a conservative favoured by the ordinary militant. As for the older generation of ulama, hitherto always supportive of their former master's grandson, they did not mobilise themselves this time such that Gus Dur was obliged to grant amazing concessions so as to obtain the backing of the ultra-conservative, his enemies of old.⁷⁸ In spite of this, he suffered a crushing defeat during the

⁷⁶ Interview with a young NU militant close to Wiranto, Malang, 25 September 2004. The argument for egalitarianism was often spouted by Hasyim's supporters during NU's 31st congress.

⁷⁷ At the opening of the congress, the former Indonesian president and grandson of the founder of NU was seated at the back, without any honours, setting the tone for the tension between the two camps and the incidents that were to arise.

⁷⁸ During a meeting where he was surrounded by a dozen of these ulama, he tried to reassure them that he was "neither Mukti Ali nor Munawir Sjadzali", renouncing two former Ministers of Religion and intellectual liberals to whom he was very close. One of the ulama supportive of Wahid even proposed an explicit rejection of the young liberal current (JIL).

election for the *rois aam* (supreme chief), head of the Syuriah, the body in charge of the religious supervision of NU. He only managed 75 votes versus the 363 votes in favour of Kiai Sahal Mahfudh. For the past 25 years, the Syuriah of NU had been spared from internal conflicts but it now found itself at the heart of the organisation's quarrels. In the tradition of NU — we should recall that the majority of the ulama are also linked by family ties since marriages within the organisation are very common — Gus Dur was nonetheless named *Mustasyar*, or Grand Counsellor, of the traditionalist organisation.

The political disputes and electoral defeats that ensued were certainly one of the reasons for which a 'return to *pesantren*' (*kembali ke pesantren*) was often proclaimed by candidates for the leadership during the 32nd congress in March 2010. NU was also conscious of the moderating role it was expected to play in society: the slogan of Said Aqil Siraj, the elected NU executive who replaced Hasyim Muzadi, was 'Dari Pesantren untuk Indonesia' (From the *Pesantren* for Indonesia).⁷⁹ NU, like Muhammadiyah, was indeed criticised for having over-invested in politics and neglected its basic missions while allowing intolerance to develop within even its own ranks.⁸⁰

Post-Gus Dur: A Legacy of Tolerance?

Until his death in December 2009, Gus Dur remained a respected figure despite his political defeat and continued to incarnate, in Indonesia and the world, an open and tolerant Islam. After his impeachment, Christians, always closer to Megawati, feared losing the protection of the big traditionalist organisation. While NU's militia, Ansor, had often protected the churches in East Java after the riots in Situbondo in 1996. But before Wahid's impeachment in May 2001, a nineteenth-century church in Pasuruan was torched during an anti-impeachment demonstration.⁸¹ Similarly, during a closed-door inter-religious meeting in Surabaya, Gus Dur surprised his Christian friends when he made some unusual remarks (which remain confidential), declaring the superiority of the Qu'ran over the Bible, equating the Old and New Testament to the Traditions (Hadith) of the Prophet Muhammad.

⁷⁹ Notes of the authors at the 32nd NU congress, Makassar, March 2010.

⁸⁰ See, for example, the criticism of the dean of the faculty of political sciences at State Islamic University of Jakarta, Bachtiar Effendy. *Kompas*, 12 March 2010. On the 32nd NU congress, see Martin van Bruinessen, "New leadership, new policies?", *Inside Indonesia*, no. 100, April–June 2010.

⁸¹ <http://www.mail-archive.com/eskolnet-l@linux.mitra.net.id/msg01484.html>.

The Christmas bombings of 2000 and the Bali bombings in October 2002 tightened the temporarily loosened ties between the Christians and NU: subsequently Ansor watched over churches under bomb threats during Christmas masses and Gus Dur recovered his traditional role as protector of religious minorities. On numerous occasions, sick and feeble as he was, the elderly Gus Dur did not hesitate to bring to public attention violations of religious liberty as well as of women's rights. In a context where being 'Islamically correct' was the norm and audacity was rare, he was often the last resort of militants of human rights and of feminists. He made a welcome appearance at the hearing of Goenawan Mohammad, founder of the *Tempo* news magazine, who was on trial for defamation, a *Tempo* journalist having called the businessman Tommy Winata, a "preman" (thug) in an article published by *Koran Tempo* on 12 March 2003. In 2004, he came to the defence of a Catholic school blocked by radical Islamist groups in the Jakarta suburbs. He also joined the feminists and artistes in their combat against the anti-pornography law between 2006 and 2008, and in the last year of his life, against the anti-blasphemy law of 1965 that restricted religious liberty.

Unanimously respected in the liberal milieu for these acts, Gus Dur also created two foundations, the Wahid Institute (headed by his daughter Yenni) and LibForAll, which militated against religious extremism.

Abdurrahman Wahid's inclination towards tolerance and greater openness clearly bore fruit within Nahdlatul Ulama. Even though he was of a more conservative background, Hasyim Muzadi, Wahid's successor, managed to maintain the traditionalist organisation in its role as mediator between supporters and opponents of the West. A frequent guest in the United States, he often pleaded against the simplistic anti-Americanism prevalent amongst the leaders of Indonesian Islam. That did not prevent him, however, from vehemently denouncing American intervention in Iraq; he also shared with a number of his countrymen an irrational paranoia about the American Jewish lobby and Zionism in general.⁸²

Most of all, a whole new generation of militants has taken up the role of the liberal thorn-in-the-side long occupied by Gus Dur. Activists from organisations such as Syarikat (which investigates the exactions levelled against the communists by the Nahdlatul Ulama militias from 1965–1966) or LKiS (Lembaga Kajian Islam Social, Institute for the

⁸² He was not indifferent either to various Zionist conspiracy theories circulating in Indonesia. Speech to pilgrims leaving for the *umroh*, a small-scale pilgrimage to Mecca, Jakarta, September 2003.

Study of Islam and Society) attempt to counter the propaganda of the radicals. In 2003, for example, LKiS launched the magazine *Syir'ah* (literally, 'The Path' — understood as towards God — a term that has a certain consonance with sharia but with an altogether different meaning). *Syir'ah* was attacked by conservatives from all sides for its liberalism, which was imputed to its Western sponsors, and disappeared after a few years. The influence of these NGOs was, however, limited to the most progressive margins of the Indonesian Muslim community and, as acknowledged by these organisations themselves, they suffered from the fact that their funding came almost exclusively from Western foundations.

In spite of the vitality and inventiveness of this progressive group, the conservatives seem to have made considerable advances within NU. This phenomenon, somewhat hidden by the highly publicised activism of Gus Dur, is more visible now. At the end of 2008, a study by a researcher at the Islamic University of Bandung revealed that, amongst the directors of Islamic boarding schools in West Java, adoption of a NU identity did not necessarily equate to an adhesion to values of tolerance and moderation advanced by leaders of the traditionalist organisation. Of those interviewed, 81 per cent claimed to be close to Nahdlatul Ulama, yet 86 per cent declared that Muslims should not accept the construction of churches in their region, 81 per cent felt that Muslims should not be allowed to wish Christians a merry Christmas, 77 per cent were against the election of a non-Muslim president, 55 per cent were in favour of amputating the hand of a thief, and 75 per cent of stoning as punishment for adultery.⁸³

During the 32nd congress in March 2010, the most conservative elements of the traditionalist organisation were also more outspoken and audacious in debates. Commissions set up to examine jurisprudence issues declared that female circumcision was recommended and that child marriages (*kawin dini*) of girls below 16 years of age were valid from a religious point of view. During these discussions, the liberals in the movement lost to the conservatives and were accused of having "sold out" to their (Western) sponsors.⁸⁴ The intellectual elite of NU itself seemed somewhat taken aback by these public stances, attributing them to the fact

⁸³ See the summary by the coordinator of this study financed by The Malindo Institute for Social Research and Islamic Development, *Jakarta Post*, 9 December 2008.

⁸⁴ This was the case in particular of Fatayat, a NU organisation of young women who sought to have female circumcision banned.

that political issues had hogged the limelight for too long, to the detriment of religious debate.⁸⁵

Of late, however, this unbounded conservatism has been accompanied by a realisation of the dangers militant Islamist organisations pose to NU. During the 32nd congress, this theme was brought up by several delegates concerned with the influence of movements such as PKS, Hizbut Tahrir (HTI) or Jemaat Tabligh. The Yogyakarta representative thus warned of the risk NU ran in neglecting internal affairs, which led in his region to the “disappearance of dozens of mosques” into the hands of “transnational Islam with substantial financial resources”. In a rather surprising manner in an otherwise mostly consensual atmosphere, this delegate spoke calmly but plainly of the “religious colonisation (*kolonisasi keagamaan*) by the Wahhabis, the transnationals (HTI and Jemaah Tabligh), Jemaah Islamiyah and the Muslim Brotherhood”, but also of a “domestic colonisation (*kolonisasi kebangsaan*) by leaders concerned only with their political career and negligent of the misery of the people”.

The leaders elected during the 32nd congress seem to indicate that the traditionalist organisation has become aware of the need to refocus on religious affairs and to reaffirm its support of religious tolerance. Although the most liberal wing of the organisation did not manage to get its leaders (Ulil Abshar-Abdalla and Masdar Mas’udi) elected to the top positions, a few progressive militants have penetrated the executive board. Hasyim’s successor as head of Nahdlatul Ulama, Said Aqil Siraj, is well known for his rather broad-minded and pluralist ideas — which won him the support of liberal candidates (Masdar Masudi, Ulil Abshar Abdalla) at the final ballot. In November 1999, while he was jostling with Hasyim Muzadi for Abdurrahman Wahid’s position as head of NU, Said Aqil Siraj was accused of being pro-Shite and pro-Christian. On the walls of the Islamic boarding school of Kediri, the venue of the congress, was scrawled: “Do not vote for a candidate who frequently enters churches”. Siraj was a student at the Ummul Quro University in Mecca but paradoxically became an admirer of Khomeini, whose portrait was on display in the living room of his residence, right next to that of Abdurrahman Wahid, with whom relations soured for a time. Holder of a doctorate from Saudi Arabia, Siraj was Wahid’s protégé during the 1990s. However, Siraj’s opinions are more nuanced than Wahid’s, making him more acceptable to conservatives, if only because of his impressive knowledge of the Hadith. Contrary to some Christians who see in Siraj a protector, Muslim

⁸⁵ Interviews with Kiai Husein Muhammad and Kiai Muchith Muzadi, Makassar, March 2010.

feminists complain that his position on women is ambiguous. In 1997, he did plead for the access of women to the Republic's presidency but requested in return that polygamy be maintained.⁸⁶ Siraj has declared that unlike his predecessor, he will not be involved in politics. This new line seemed strengthened by the re-election of Kiai Sahal Mahfudh (72 years old) to the position of *rois aam* of the Syuriah Council (president of the honorific council) over Hasyim Muzadi.⁸⁷ The choice of Mustopha Bisri (65 years old) as Syuriah's deputy is also seen as a positive sign that the "the slide towards fundamentalist and anti-liberal religious views is unlikely to continue under the new board and it may even be reversed".⁸⁸ At least it could be stemmed because Gus Mus, as he is fondly called, a poet and a *kiai*, shares many of his old friend Wahid's audacious liberal ideas as well as his concern about new Islamic radicalism. Before his death on 30 December and ahead of the upcoming congress, Gus Dur reportedly travelled to Central Java to ask Mustopha Bisri to lead NU's supreme body, the Syuriah.⁸⁹

Held just a few months after the death of Abdurrahman Wahid, this congress undoubtedly turned a page in the history of the traditionalist organisation. Of a slightly liberated conservatism but cognisant of the dangers of extremism, NU has also freed itself somewhat from the dynastic legitimacy of its founders, as demonstrated by the defeat of Gus Dur's younger brother, Solahuddin Wahid. Less detached from recent evolutions in Indonesian Islam, NU should now try and recover the original religious and social bases that were its strengths in the previous decades.

After decades of rivalry, it is striking to witness how the same fate has befallen the two great organisations of mainstream moderate Islam. Discredited by over-involvement in politics, challenged by new movements, both are rocked by internal conflict between progressives and conservatives. The future of Indonesian Islam lies in part in the turn that will take this confrontation. Nonetheless, the relative loss of influence of these

⁸⁶ At the NU Congress in Mataram, Lombok, 1997.

⁸⁷ However, some observers raised the point that Said Aqil Siraj, elected to the executive post of Hasyim, was responsible for the creation of PKB and the Muslim wing of PDI-P (Baitul Muslimin).

⁸⁸ Bruinessen, 2010.

⁸⁹ Interview with Abdurrahman's wife, Shinta Nuriyah, Jakarta, 16 March 2010. In NU tradition, it would be considered indecent to compete against the incumbent *rois aam*, but the deputy position is deemed crucial given Sahal's frail health. On this NU Congress, see also the report by Bruinessen, 2010.

organisations necessitates an examination of other movements playing important roles in these debates.

IV. The New Battlegrounds of Confrontation

Aside from these two pillars of Indonesian Islam — Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah — several other organisations are key in leading and representing the Muslims in the Archipelago. Amongst them two occupy a preponderant place in the debates discussed here. The first, the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI), symbolises the radical temptations of the most conservative elements of Indonesian Islam; the second, the Network of Liberal Islam (JII), represents, on the contrary, the most developed expression of an old tradition: that of the milieu of liberal intellectual Muslims.

The Council of Indonesian Ulama, a Bastion of Conservatism

The first ‘Local Council of Ulama’ was formed in the 1950s in West Java, but it was only in 1975 that the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI) first appeared on a national scale. For Soeharto’s New Order, it served as an influential representative within the Muslim community, providing enlightenment but also serving as an informal intermediary for the New Order’s religious policy and reconciling the sometimes-contradictory positions of the big organisations, especially on the issue of the start of the Ramadan. Funded by the state but independent of the Ministry of Religions, MUI found an important source of complementary funds as of the mid-1980s: the attribution of the halal label to producers.⁹⁰ The most influential organ within MUI is the Fatwa Commission, which meets almost on a weekly basis. Currently branches of MUI exist in each subdistrict.

Since its inception, MUI has always been rather conservative. With the ‘greening’ of the government body Golkar and the government at the end of the 1980s, limits on religious intolerance hitherto imposed by the Soeharto regime have gradually ceded, and the Council of Indonesian Ulama has led the way in this, condemning inter-religious marriages in 1980 and banning Muslims from wishing Christians a merry Christmas the following year. During this period, MUI also lent its invaluable support to the regime when it implemented important development reforms such as the policies on transmigration or family planning.

⁹⁰ It almost lost this right in 2009 when a bill to create a body under the Ministry of Religions to oversee this certification was proposed but finally abandoned.

One might be forgiven for thinking that MUI's influence would have waned with Reformasi but nothing of the sort has happened. It continues to be the official embodiment of a conservative policy of Islamist one-upmanship that is often at odds with the values of the Indonesian state. In July 2005, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono opened the organisation's seventh congress proclaiming that it was necessary to "place MUI in a central role in matters regarding the Islamic faith, so that it becomes clear what the difference is between areas that are the preserve of the state and areas where the government or state should heed the fatwa from the MUI and ulama."⁹¹

It was at this congress that MUI adopted two of its most controversial fatwas: the first pronounced the Ahmadiyah movement (see Glossary) heretical and its members apostates. The Council recommended that the government ban the movement's teachings and force it into inactivity. This fatwa gave rise to a joint decree by the Ministry of Religions and the Ministry of the Interior, and provided radical organisations with a pretext for attacking Ahmadiyah mosques and members on a regular basis. The other fatwas condemned pluralism, secularism, shamanism and liberalism.

Subsequently MUI has on many occasions fervently espoused the purification of practices considered as un-Islamic, often following in the footsteps of Malaysia. For example, in 2009 it condemned yoga because of its Hindu origins.⁹² The radical movements that multiplied during the post-Soeharto period were quick to grasp the advantages of supporting MUI as it provided official channels denied them by voters. Shortly after the congress of 2005, they created the Forum Umat Islam (FUI) in order to exert some influence on MUI. Dominated by FPI, Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, KISDI, Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia and DDII, this organisation also comprised some NU and Muhammadiyah elements.⁹³ PKS also used MUI to circulate its messages. In 2009, worried that abstention might diminish its anticipated success at the polls, PKS president Tifatul Sembiring asked MUI to declare that the Golput (*golongan putih*, or 'white group', the abstainers) was *haram*, which MUI promptly did, to the indignation of a section of the political class.

⁹¹ ICG, "Indonesia: Implications of the Ahmadiyah Decree", *Asia Briefing*, no. 78, 7 July 2008.

⁹² This issue arose at the same time in Malaysia.

⁹³ ICG, "Indonesia: Implications of the Ahmadiyah Decree", *Asia Briefing*, no. 78, 7 July 2008.

Very soon MUI's ultra-conservative position earned it acerbic criticism from a number of Islamic figures who questioned its legitimacy.⁹⁴ In the 1980s, wanting to take back from MUI an authority 'usurped' from the big organisations, Abdurrahman Wahid described it as an 'NGO amongst others'. In the 1990s, he was joined in his sharp criticism and proposal of banning MUI by Said Aqil Siraj, his right-hand man at that time (and head of NU since March 2010). Yet, during his stint as president of the Republic, Gus Dur was unable to curtail the activities of MUI. His impotence vis-à-vis this institution was due, ironically, to the fact that it sheltered many ulama from Nahdlatul Ulama, including Kiai Sahal Mahfudh, who was then also the 'supreme chief' (*rois aam*) of NU.⁹⁵ Yet Kiai Sahal Mahfudh was not reputed to be a conservative militant. He was a pioneer in the contextualisation of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) and even backed some very liberal ulama;⁹⁶ however, he was not very active in MUI and willingly left the day-to-day running of the organisation to his deputies, who were more rigorist and most of all, very critical of Wahid. Amongst these were conservative ulama such as Ma'aruf Amin in the fatwa commission and the secretary-general Ichwan Syam.

With the passing years, more voices joined Gus Dur's in the criticism of MUI for its conservatism. Syafi'i Anwar, director of the International Center for Islam and Pluralism (ICIP), wrote regularly in the press on this issue. He highlighted in particular that MUI played on the ambiguity of its status as a semi-governmental organisation to assume a religious authority it did not really possess. Reproaching MUI for making pronouncements on issues without any real consideration beforehand, he reminded Indonesian Muslims that a fatwa is simply a legal opinion emitted by one or many ulama, and may be accepted or rejected by each Muslim.⁹⁷ More recently, criticism of another sort has emerged:

⁹⁴ Yet there were occasions when MUI adopted less retrograde positions in the post-Suharto period, such as in 2009 when it adopted a fatwa condemning under-aged marriages, thus aligning itself with Indonesian law instead of the sharia.

⁹⁵ MUI secretary-general Ichwan Syam said ironically: "Gus Dur had forgotten something. His master Kiai Sahal Mahfudh, the current *rois aam* of NU, was active in MUI for 25 years. So when Sahal said to stop uttering nonsense about MUI, people shut up."

⁹⁶ On Kiai Sahal Mahfudh, see Feener, *Muslim Legal Thought in Modern Indonesia*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007, pp. 167–172.

⁹⁷ See, for example, his column regarding MUI's condemnation of yoga in *Jakarta Post*, 13 February 2009.

MUI was accused of corruption in the attribution of the *halal* label for commercialised products in Indonesia. An investigation by Transparency International Indonesia brought to light the quasi-systematic bribery that goes on in order to obtain these coveted door-openers.⁹⁸

MUI's role and exclusively religious approach to problems undoubtedly encouraged a certain rigorist one-upmanship amongst its members. By proceeding according to a reading of the world through the narrow prism of what is authorised (*halal*) and what is not (*haram*), the institution distanced the ulama from a pragmatic approach necessary under some circumstances. Din Syamsuddin is a very good example of this: champion of the conservative current in Muhammadiyah while he was secretary-general of MUI, he had to considerably moderate his discourse and even became a frequent critic of MUI after his election as head of the reformist organisation.

Largely discredited in Indonesian public opinion, MUI has nonetheless preserved a non-negligible influence, particularly through its status as the official representative of religious leaders and through its links with the government. It is different from Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, which have a tradition of independence rooted in their long histories. As such, on many occasions, MUI has served as a guarantee for radical Islamist organisations in their perpetual quest for legitimacy.

A Militant Fringe: Reckless Attempts by Liberal Islam

In March 2001, a group of young Muslim leaders, including some from the Islamic boarding schools of Nahdlatul Ulama, decided to create the Network of Liberal Islam (JIL or Islib). Faced with the multiplicity of interpretations of Islam and the confiscation of Muslim discourse/representation by the radicals, Ulil Abshar-Abdalla, one of the chairmen of Lakpesdam, an NGO linked to NU, and his companions started a sort of pressure group to condemn literal approaches of the Qu'ran and Sunna, and proposed on the contrary "the opening of the doors of *ijtihad*"⁹⁹ in all its aspects".¹⁰⁰

Since its foundation, the Network of Liberal Islam has put itself forth as the spokesman for liberal Muslim thinkers in Indonesia with the

⁹⁸ *Kompas*, 21 February 2010.

⁹⁹ Independent legal reasoning (see Glossary).

¹⁰⁰ The group advocates a "rational approach to Islamic texts" in the theological domain (*ilabiyat*) as well as with regards to ritual (*ubudiyat*) and social relations (*muamalat*). Amongst the founders of the group were Luthfi Assyaukanie and Hamid Basyaib.

aim of helping them to popularise their ideas. To this end, they broadcast a weekly talk-show on Radio 68H, which has become the largest radio news agency in Indonesia,¹⁰¹ serving 700 stations in 9 countries throughout Southeast Asia.¹⁰² JIL's programme, entitled "Religion and Tolerance", is played by numerous private radio stations and subsequently printed in a few dailies belonging to the large press group *Jawa Pos*, which is present from Riau to Kalimantan. JIL also publishes books or translated works addressing religious pluralism, a website.¹⁰³

If we were to measure JIL's reach through the strength of the resistance generated, then it seems to be a real success. Since its founding, JIL has incurred the wrath of numerous conservative and radical movements. In April 2002 was published a booklet entitled "The Danger of Liberal Islam" (*Bahaya Islam Liberal*), which unhesitatingly bashed the 'liberals' whose names were listed at the back of the booklet. Peddled in public transport in 2002 and reprinted for the fourth time in 2004, it opened with a perturbing call to violence, a citation of the traditionist Bukhari:¹⁰⁴

"At the end of time will appear a group of young men with evil morals. They will speak in the name of Allah although they have left Islam like the arrow gliding away from its bow. In reality, their faith does not extend beyond their throats. Whenever you encounter them, kill them. Because, in truth, those who kill them will be rewarded at the moment of the last judgement."¹⁰⁵

In November 2002, the Forum of Ulama of the Muslim Community of Indonesia (Forum Ulama Umat Indonesia, FUUI) accused Ulil Abshar-Abdalla, the young liberal Muslim from Nahdlatul Ulama, of deliberately attacking the foundations of Islam, that is, God, the Prophet Muhammad, the ulama and the Muslim community, and proclaimed that he deserved to be sentenced to death.¹⁰⁶ Confronted by this group of barely known ulama with little credibility, it was, paradoxically, from the president of

¹⁰¹ Located in the *Tempo* complex, the major progressive weekly of Jakarta.

¹⁰² See <http://www.kbr68h.com>.

¹⁰³ See <http://www.islamlib.com>.

¹⁰⁴ Bukhari (born 816 in Boukhara) is one of the most influential traditionists, that is, the compilers of the traditions (Hadith).

¹⁰⁵ Hartono Ahmad Jaiz, *Bahaya Islam Liberal, Sekular dan Menyamakan Islam dengan Agama Lain*, Pustaka Al-Kautsar, Jakarta, 2002, p. 7.

¹⁰⁶ Suratno, "The Flowering of Islamic Thought: Discourse, Activist and Activism of Liberal-Progressive Islam in Contemporary Indonesia", IRASEC discussion paper, IRASEC, Bangkok, forthcoming. See also <http://www.detik.com>, 12 December 2002.

Muhammadiyah, Syafi Maarif, that Ulil found the greatest source of support.

The radicals used legal means to oppose JIL's messages. In August 2002, the secretary of the Council of Indonesian Mujahidin (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia, MMI), Fauzan Al-Anshari, sued two television stations for broadcasting an advertisement paid for by JIL. This advertisement promoted "a multi-coloured Islam" ("*islam warna-warni*"), an Islam rooted in local culture opposed to the Arabisation of the religion as espoused by the conservatives.¹⁰⁷ As a result of these lawsuits by MMI, these advertisements were pulled out.¹⁰⁸

In the following years, the radicals continued to try and mobilise JIL detractors. Thus in 2003, as he was passing through Jakarta, the very controversial Tariq Ramadan¹⁰⁹ called these liberal militants "Muslims without Islam"¹¹⁰ and in 2005, the fatwa issued by the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI) condemning liberalism was obviously directed against JIL.

But the audacity of JIL and its recognition by the Western media also attracted criticism from beyond the radical Islamist milieu. A movement called Islam of the Left (*Islam kiri*), increasingly influential within the NU-linked association of students (Movement of Muslim Students of Indonesia, Pergerakan Mahasiswa Islam Indonesia, PMII) thus distanced itself from Ulil Abshar-Abdalla and company. While highlighting their own anti-sharia stance, this new group accused them of being an "agent" of "international capitalism, which is only interested in the accumulation of capital". For them, JIL represented "the religion of Western liberalism" while the fundamentalists represent "the religion of the Middle East".¹¹¹ Similarly, Ulil's candidacy for the presidency of NU in March 2010 met with violent opposition within the traditionalist organisation for various

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ After the Bali bombings, however, the government itself endorsed this position, with televised spots showing representatives of the five religions in Indonesia spouting the same message of tolerance. Avoided, however, was the question of tolerance between the various currents within Islam. For example, Islib tolerates Ahmadiyah but MMI does not.

¹⁰⁹ A Swiss citizen, Tariq Ramadan is the grandson of Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood. Close to the Union of Islamic Organisations in France, he has often been accused of doublespeak by his detractors.

¹¹⁰ *Sabili*, no. 2, TH XI, 14 August 2003, p. 53. He added: "These are but Muslims who live with a pagan culture (*jabil*), we should be careful with such groups."

¹¹¹ Umraddin Masdar, *Agama Kolonial, Colonial Mindset dalam Pemikiran Islam Liberal*, KLIK.R, Yogyakarta, 2003, p. 223.

reasons. The progressive current itself accused him of splitting the forces of moderate Islam and of weakening the most plausible candidacy of the progressive Masdar Mas'udi, who was supported by Wahid in 2004.

Other than these incidents of antagonism and the indisputable courage of its members, how large JIL's audience was remains uncertain. Apart from a small urban intelligentsia capable of understanding its messages, as well as some radical Islamists bent on flaying them, the impact of JIL's actions seems limited. Still, notwithstanding the fact that their arguments are not unanimously accepted, the growing renown of its leaders make JIL a sort of moral avant-garde of a much wider, solidly implanted group in Indonesian Islam.

'Substantialist' Islam: A Powerful Movement of Contextualisation

Labelled as 'neo-modernist', 'substantialist' (*substantialis* as opposed to *normatif*), or as representatives of an 'inclusive' (*inclusif*) or cultural (*kultural*) Islam, a new generation of intellectuals initiated a profound renewal of Indonesian Muslim thinking at the beginning of the 1970s. Circulated by the State Institutes of Islamic Studies (IAIN), then via some Islamic boarding schools, their ideas were taken up at the start of the 1990s by a new generation of activists.

Founded in Jakarta during the Japanese Occupation, then transferred to Yogyakarta during the Independence War, the Superior School of Islam (Sekolah Tinggi Islam, later PTAIN) gave rise to a network of State Institutes of Islamic Studies (IAIN), followed by State Islamic Universities (UIN). It was within these institutions that developed the first current favourable towards an interpretation of the founding texts of Islam within a contemporary Indonesian context. Several personalities participated in this endeavour. The first, Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy, was an ulama hailing from an important Acehnese family reputed to be descendants of the first caliph, Abu Bakr al Siddiq. Dean of the Sharia Faculty of the Yogyakarta IAIN, this former Masyumi member translated the works of great Egyptian reformist thinkers such as Mahmut Syaltut and Muhammad Mustafa al-Maraghi (died 1904). Influenced by their ideas, he proposed a re-reading of Muslim tradition, differentiating between the Hadith that were legally binding and those that were not.¹¹² This

¹¹² Feener, 2007, pp. 63 ff., and Euis Nurlaelawati, *Modernization, Tradition and Identity, The Kompilasi Hukum Islam and Legal Practice in the Indonesian Religious Courts*, ICAS publication series, Amsterdam University Press, 2010, pp. 76–78.

distinction was supposed to allow Indonesians to free themselves of a pointless imitation of what he saw as an essentially Arab way of life. He then published an introduction to the science of *fiqh*, using a historically contextualised approach receptive towards reinterpretations necessitated by contemporary conditions and the creation of a specifically Indonesian *fiqh*. His effort echoed that of Hazairin (1906–19750), a lecturer at Universitas Indonesia who was educated in customary law (*adatrecht*) during the Dutch era. Hoping to see a new generation of religious officials working in a specifically Indonesian framework, Hazairin campaigned for the creation of a national *madzhab*. The two men tried to create within IAIN an institution to oversee this project. It did not take flight but their ideas had a profound influence on Islamic law studies in Indonesia.¹¹³

Two other personalities played a major role in the propagation of liberal ideas through the IAIN network and ought to be mentioned here. The first, Mukti Ali, was the rector of the Yogyakarta IAIN and then minister of religions (1973–1978). He reformed the curriculum of these institutions, encouraged pluralism and sent the best students to Western universities to pursue their studies, especially to McGill University in Montreal. One of these students, Harun Nasution (1919–1998), left his mark on the teaching of Islam in Indonesia. First as a teacher at the Jakarta IAIN upon his return to Indonesia in 1969, then as director of the PhD programme of the same institutions, he tried in his many works to rehabilitate Mutazilism (a rationalist Muslim current originating in the eighth century) in Indonesia, raising the hackles of thinkers close to DDII.¹¹⁴

Aside from IAIN, the progressive liberal current of Indonesian Islam also developed around a group subsequently labelled neo-modernist, which we have evoked earlier.¹¹⁵ Its main personalities were from the ‘Limited Group’, formed at the end of the 1960s and revolving around Mukti Ali. Bringing together intellectuals such as Dawan Rahardjo, Djohan Effendy and Ahmad Wahib, its influence extended well beyond the narrow circle of the reformist intelligentsia. In 1981 Djohan Effendy and Ismed Natsir published a journal by Ahmad Wahid that became the symbol of the

¹¹³ Feener, 2007, p. 75.

¹¹⁴ On Nasution, see Luthfi Assyaukanie, *Islam and the Secular State in Indonesia*, ISEAS, Singapore, 2009, pp. 143–144; Fauzan Saleh, *Modern Trends in Islamic Theological Discourses in 20th Century Indonesia. A Critical Survey*, Brill, Leiden, 2001, Chapter Four. On Mukti Ali, see Feener, 2007, pp. 132, 147.

¹¹⁵ Cf. section “The Mutations of Modernism” in Chapter One. See, too, Luthfi Assyaukanie, 2009, pp. 140–151.

open-mindedness of this group for which no subject was taboo.¹¹⁶ Djohan Effendy himself had a brilliant career: civil servant in the Ministry of Religions where he was director of research, then minister and state secretary, Abdurrahman Wahid's right-hand man during his presidency (2000–2001). He went on to start an influential think-tank, the International Conference on Religion and Peace (ICRP).¹¹⁷

Esousing ideas similar to that of the 'Limited Group' was Nurcholish Madjid, the other pillar of this renewal of liberal Islamic thinking in the 1970s. A prolix author, he remained until his death in August 2005 as head of the powerful foundation Paramadina, which he created in 1986.¹¹⁸ Through seminars, conferences and publications, this institution spread a so-called 'inclusive' Muslim theology, as expounded in the book *Fiqh Lintas Agama* (Interfaith Islamic Jurisprudence), published in 2004.¹¹⁹ In 1998, the foundation created the Paramadina University, very popular amongst the youth of Jakarta. This establishment has campaigned courageously for a liberal practice of Islam, going so far as to organise inter-religious marriages (without demanding the conversion of one of the spouses), blatantly bypassing the Bureau of Religious Affairs (Kantor Urusan Agama, KUA). The pressure exerted by the ultra-conservatives triumphed over these reckless attempts in 2005, but Paramadina University remains one of the bastions of liberal thinking in Indonesia.

Amongst the influential liberal Muslim intellectuals of the 1990s, one must mention Jalaluddin Rakhmat, the man who re-legitimised Indonesian Shiism. Born in 1949 and educated in a generalist university, then in the United States, Jalaluddin is a sort of free agent in contemporary Muslim thinking. Converted to Shiism, he frequently refers, nonetheless, to Sunni authors and remains close to reformists of Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, the latter being more sympathetic towards Shiism. Initially very critical of neo-modernists such as Nurcholish Madjid, he ended up moving much closer to the Islamic Renewal (*pembaharuan*) they advocated. He also promoted a more open Sufism that is very fashionable amongst the new urban classes of Indonesia.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ *Pergolakan Pemikiran Islam: Catatan Harian Ahmad Wahib*, LP3ES, 1981.

¹¹⁷ Suratno, forthcoming.

¹¹⁸ On the history of Paramadina, see Andi Faisal Bakti, "Paramadina and Its Approach to Culture and Communication", in *Archipel*, no. 68, 2004: 315–341.

¹¹⁹ Mun'im A. Sirry (ed.), *Fiqh Lintas Agama: Membangun Masyarakat Inklusif-Pluralis*, Yayasan Wakaf Paramadina, Jakarta, 2004, 274 pp.

¹²⁰ Feener, 2007, pp. 128–129.

Confined for a long time to a narrow milieu, the liberal renewal of Indonesian Islam was spread throughout Indonesian society through two major channels besides IAIN: *pesantren* linked to NU and the numerous NGOs that had sprung up to fight for Reformasi.

As we have seen, over the last decade Nahdlatul Ulama has also been affected by the progress of a religious conservatism that has spared almost none of the sectors of Indonesian Islam. This phenomenon overshadowed somewhat efforts made within the organisation to promote a progressive theology, which slowly trickled down to a large number of the *pesantren* affiliated with NU. As of the mid-1980s, many ulama of the traditionalist organisation, heeding the call of neo-modernists and under the considerable influence of their liberal guru/mentor Abdurrahman Wahid, sought to redefine the components of Aswaja (acronym for *Ahl al-sunna wa'l-jama'a*, the people of the tradition [of the Prophet] and of the community), the foundation of Sunni orthodoxy. In 1997, for example, Said Aqil Siraj (who was elected as president of the executive of NU in March 2010) highlighted in his book the essentially moderate nature of Aswaja, the product of a balance between normative texts and human reason, and denounced the “fanaticism of the *madhhab*” as a pitfall to be avoided.¹²¹ Similarly, Kiai Sahal Mahfudh, once very close to Abdurrahman Wahid but later heavily criticised by the liberals for his inaction as the head of MUI, had also campaigned for the Indonesian *fiqh* to be more open. He had proposed to review the study of the *kitab kuning* (the compilations of *fiqh* that serve as the basis for teaching in the *pesantren*) such that they would be taught in a less normative way than in the past. His speaking out in favour of a contextualised approach and his criticism of ulama who ignored the evolution of contemporary society undoubtedly made him very popular within the progressive milieu at the start of the 2000s.¹²²

Thanks to the large network of *pesantren* affiliated to Nahdlatul Ulama, these efforts to reinterpret texts gradually reached a greater audience. During the 1980s, the movement structured itself around several NGOs created for the purposes of research and publication, such as P3M, Lakpesdam and LKiS, within which Kiai Sahal Mahfudh, Masdar Mas'udi and, of course, Abdurrahman Wahid played important roles.

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 156.

¹²² On Kiai Sahal Mahfudh, see Feener, 2007, pp. 167–172. He had notably written the preface to a work by the liberal and gender-friendly KH Husein Muhammad, *Fiqh Perempuan, Refleksi Kiaia atas Wacana Agama dan Generasi*, LKiS, Rahima, The Ford Foundation, Yogyakarta, 2001.

With the Reformasi, this movement grew in an unprecedented way and several foundations, often transcending the traditionalist-modernist divide, now strive to promote a religious pluralism based on a new approach to Islamic sources. Other than JIL, and the aforementioned Wahid Institute, ICRP (International Conference on Religion and Peace) and Paramadina, noteworthy too are ICIP (International Center for Islam and Pluralism), JIMM (Network of Young Intellectuals of Muhammadiyah, led by Moeslim Abdurrahman who promotes a ‘transformative Islam’), and the Ma’arif Institute. Far from being limited to Jakarta, this phenomenon also spread to other regions of the Archipelago, with organisations such as Syarikat or Rifka Annisa in Yogyakarta, Fahima in Cirebon, LKAS in Surabaya, Resist in Malang, LAPPAR in Makassar and LK3 in Banjarmasin.

Apart from the question of democracy or religious pluralism, women’s rights and the place of women in society has been one of the arenas in which the theological renewal has been especially fertile. This subject takes on in Indonesia a special significance because it symbolises the clash between two traditions — the more liberal tradition of the Archipelago versus that conveyed by Middle-Eastern Islam. Many personalities have engaged in the fight for the recognition of women’s rights by using arguments based on religion, notably the IAIN-educated feminists Lies Marcoes and Musdah Mulia, but also Kiai Husein Muhammad, who advocated an audacious “women’s *fiqh*” (*fiqh perempuan*).¹²³ Several NGOs also work in this domain.

The association Rahima, for instance, was founded in 2000 to promote women’s rights and to refute the arguments of conservatives in this matter. Through its publications (in particular, the magazine *Swara Rahima*), but also through many appearances in Islamic boarding schools, Rahima strives to foster a new generation of Muslim leaders, capable of disseminating progressive message to every level of society. The organisation also endeavours to mobilise women against the *perda sharia* detrimental to their liberty by inviting them to denounce through forums and demonstrations the male chauvinism underlying these decrees.¹²⁴

V. The End of a Cycle? Nationalism and Islamic Identity

Subject to contradictory influences and propositions, the Indonesian Muslim community should not be considered as divided into two by

¹²³ Feener, 2007, p. 188.

¹²⁴ Suratno, forthcoming. The association Fahmina also set up a crisis centre for women within the Pesantren Dar al-Tauhid Arjawinangun in Cirebon, West Java.

a fault line separating the moderates from the radicals. The evolution between openness and intransigence takes place rather as a continuum, shifting continuously according to circumstances. Transformations in Indonesia in the past few years have led to a definite decline in the sway of radical Islamist elements, while the currents advocating the status quo of the *Pancasila* have experienced a revival. However, this is accompanied by an undeniable revival of religious conservatism and a more ostentatious and less tolerant practice of Islam.

As we have seen, the radical temptations of Indonesian Islam stem from three phenomena: the repression of political Islam from the end of the 1950s, the instrumentalisation of the religious revival by the New Order and finally, and especially, the political, moral and security void caused by the quasi-disappearance of the state at the end of the Soeharto era and during the first years of the Reformasi. Throughout these different episodes, the religious revival experienced by Indonesia since the 1970s assumed the victim mode with a persecuted complex, one that justified the most extreme propositions. In a more appeased Indonesia where the Muslim religion has recovered its central position, it is harder to pull off this victim narrative. Religion (and in the top spot, Islam) is henceforth an essential element of national identity and has been integrated at all levels of the state. It is no longer credible to depict the Indonesian Muslim community as oppressed.¹²⁵ Instead it is the religious minorities who encounter enormous difficulties in exercising their right to worship.¹²⁶

On the political front, Islam as a mobilising element has, to a large degree, been appropriated by nationalism, into which it has partially dissolved. As demonstrated by the latest elections, the nationalist revival that accompanied the return of stability in the country drew largely from the Islamic repertoire. But it did so by confining religion in a moral, conservative and rather quietist register, far from the radical questioning of the extremists. Historically, the nationalist current has in fact been very attached to the religious status quo adopted at the time of Independence, perceived as a founding element of the nation. It is for this reason that in the past few years, we have observed an obvious rapprochement

¹²⁵ Alongside the loss of credibility of this victim narrative is a decline in the opinion of the Islamist utopia, which presents the Muslim religion as a global panacea for all the problems Indonesia faces. Luthfi Assyaukanie, 2009, p. 223.

¹²⁶ The Setara Institute reports 185 cases of violation of freedom of worship in 2007, 265 in 2008 and 200 in 2010. The prime target is the Ahmadiyah sect, while Christians mostly have difficulties in obtaining permits to build churches. *The Jakarta Globe*, 3 February 2010.

between the advocates of an open and contextualised Islam as described above and the pro-*Pancasila* movement. Two examples are the National Alliance for the Freedom of Religion and Worship (Aliansi Kebangsaan untuk Kebebasan beragama dan Berkeyakinan), and the book *Ilusi Negara Islam* (The Islamic State Illusion), jointly published by two foundations representing moderate Islam (Maarif Institute and Wahid Institute) under one nationalist denomination, Gerakan Binnheka Tunggal Ika (Movement of Unity in Diversity).¹²⁷ During 2010, the anti-terrorist fight was able to mobilise opinion in the name of a moderate Islam, but it also took on nationalist overtones during the hunt for Noordin M. Top, whose Malaysian nationality was highlighted. This new mood was concretised in July 2010 with the creation of a National Counter-Terrorism Agency, an upgrading of the Counter-Terrorism Coordinating Desk allowing for better coordination between the army, the police and other state agencies. This was a long-awaited measure.

However, there remains a domain where the affirmation of a strong Islamic identity and its corollaries (Islamist one-upmanship, more ostentatious practice, proclamation of support for the sharia) maintains a leading identity role — culture, henceforth globalised. In effect, faced with globalisation, very largely perceived as the harbinger of Western hegemony, Islam proposes, for lack of an alternative, a mode of appropriation.¹²⁸ The more Indonesian society westernises, the more it exteriorises its belonging to the *umma* in a movement that is not as contradictory as it may appear. In terms of mass consumption, but also in the cultural sector and the world of finance, the adoption of behaviour and procedures inspired by the West is often accompanied by an Islamisation of their expression.¹²⁹ This phenomenon is not unique to Indonesia, but

¹²⁷ Threats by the radicals have prevented *Ilusi Negara Islam* from finding a distributor but the authors have offered a free download of the work.

¹²⁸ As Azyumardi Azra accurately highlights, the influence of the phenomenon of globalisation is of course not new in the history of Indonesian Islam. See Chapter 13, “Globalization and Indonesian Muslim Movements”, in *Indonesia, Islam and Democracy. Dynamics in a Global Context*, The Asia Foundation, Solstice, ICIP, Jakarta, Singapore, 2006, pp. 180–197. Nonetheless, the extent of cultural challenges brought about by this globalisation exceeds what previous generations have experienced.

¹²⁹ On cultural issues, see, for example, Najib Kailani, “Muslimising Indonesian Youths: The Tarbiyah Moral and Cultural Movement in Contemporary Indonesia”, in Rémy Madinier (ed.), *Islam and the 2009 Indonesian, Political and Cultural Issues*, Occasional paper no. 12, IRASEC, 2009, pp. 71–93. For economic issues, see Fealy, 2001.

it has taken on in the Archipelago a remarkable dimension since hitherto piety was relatively not exteriorised.

In all, the Muslim revival experienced by Indonesia for about three decades now — which could have led to the beginnings of a radical socio-political counter-project — seems to have settled into a more identity-based posture. In spite of an increased conservatism that is also present within the state apparatus, this evolution has allowed more diversity in modes of expression and has allowed the authorities to reaffirm the irrevocable character of *Pancasila*.

Conclusion

Filled with compromises — more often than not practised but not formulated — Indonesian Islam with its different traditions was for a long time at odds with a purifying reformism that explained away contemporary problems through the liberties many inhabitants of the Archipelago took with Sunnite orthopraxy. During the first decades of the century, while the myth of a remaking of society that linked the perspective of a new nation-state with radical societal change was still alive, the condemnations were based above all on the necessity of adapting to the modern world. Often paternalistic, sometimes derisive, reformism emphasised the theme of sclerosis rather than that of betrayal. Propelled by a new urban elite composed mainly of intellectuals whose political engagement started from an early age, this Muslim nationalism was confident that its modernising project would preside over an overall renewal. This inexorable social and political, but also cultural and religious, *aggiornamento* would sweep away the vestiges of an Islam led astray by superstitions from another age or by too close a contact with a syncretic religious substrate. A few decades later, at the end of the 1960s, that the remaking had failed on the political level was patent. The banning of Masyumi as well as the political and economic marginalisation of a large section of modernising reformism's proponents were grim reminders of their inability to carry any weight. The Indonesian army, strengthened by its alliance with the technocrats, had confiscated any perspective of modernity and henceforth employed a condescending tone towards reformist Islam — the very condescension that the Reformists had displayed towards representatives of traditionalist Islam two decades ago.

Embittered, a section of the old Muslim elite then adopted a discourse of blame that associated the themes of martyrdom — of a Muslim community ceaselessly betrayed — with sinning. Falling back on *dakwah*, its networks saw to the spread of an intransigent Islam far removed from the openness and compromise it had demonstrated up till then, creating an unmistakable hotbed of a new intolerance. The tension over identity was not the only issue at hand. The old rebellions of Darul Islam (DI) had sustained here and there a tradition of religious violence whose resurgence

was encouraged by the muddled politics of the New Order. The spectre of civil war (Darul Islam and the Sumatran PRRI) raised by General Soeharto in 1967 had allowed the authorities to prevent a renewal of political Islam, and they could not resist the temptation of repeating this operation in the following decade. At the risk of encouraging the growth of extremist Islam, the authorities played up its threat, hoping thereby to thwart the resurgence of a religion-based opposition and any new calls for the sharia. This short-sighted policy severely curbed the political space for Muslim militancy and contributed to its clandestine radicalisation. And when there was an opening up from the beginning of the 1990s, this was once again carried out on a mode of exploitation. The authorities did not hesitate to sacrifice at the altar of Islamic revival the Christian and Chinese minorities who had largely contributed to its prosperity for 30 years.

In the meantime, the marginalisation of political Islam and the channelling of all its energies towards predication had the effect of exposing Indonesia to the international networks of a militant Islam wracked with deep hatred of the 'impious West'. At times bitter rivals in their countries of origin, the Wahhabi-inspired networks and those of the Muslim Brotherhood had cumulative influences in Indonesia. The works of Sayyid Qutb were translated and spread within networks close to the Saudis, and the training of radicals was carried out almost as much in Cairo as it was in Medina. Indeed the promotion of these ideas played a key role in this new dimension of extremist Islam from the mid-1980s. With the conflict in Afghanistan and the vestiges of DI, all this converged in the training of more than a hundred militants who hoped to transform Indonesia into a new ground for jihad.

At the end of our account, it thus appears that the radicalisation of Indonesian Islam has as its essential matrix its own political failure. In this respect the Reformasi period that emerged in 1998 after the fall of Soeharto indisputably marks the end of a cycle. Over and above the unexpected boost it gave to radical movements in the tumult accompanying its birth, the renewal of democracy in Indonesia reopened a political space that had been out of bounds to Islam for several decades. In so doing, it highlighted two clearly demarcated tendencies within radical Islam: the first, following in the footsteps of Darul Islam and its foundational rejection of the Republic of Indonesia, is to not budge regardless of the perspectives opened up by Reformasi. This is the case of some (very strict Salafists) who seek refuge outside of their own era by running modest fundamentalist phalansteries that imitate Islam of the early times. These endeavours are essentially devoid of any political

project. Others (Salafists-Jihadists) hope to create through bombings the “salvation cataclysm”¹ that would herald a new dawn. Unlike the first tendency, this movement aims to take advantage of the opening up of the political field. Some parties (PBB and PPP) questioned the religious status quo adopted at the time of Independence and clung to their call for the Jakarta Charter. Somewhat discredited by their collaboration with the authorities in the last years of the New Order, they failed to seize upon the moral exigency that the Islamic revival had brought about and did badly during the last elections. This is not the case for the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), which on the contrary has managed to anchor itself in the political landscape of the country. Thanks to a moral rigour that has gained recognition, particularly in its fight against corruption, PKS embodies the political aspirations of those striving for conspicuous piety — a trend perceptible in Indonesia for some years now. Making no bones about the foreign sources of its inspiration (mainly the Muslim Brotherhood), it took up more or less openly the classic discourse of radical Islam on the ‘impious West’ and the dangers of atheist materialism, and worked assiduously towards the establishment of a new moral order. For some years now, however, its strict respect of democracy and its evolution towards a greater political pragmatism, following the lead of Masyumi in the 1950s, has confined it to the role of boosting the ruling coalition’s Islamic credentials.

In the last years, militant Islamism’s position on the public scene has evolved in two directions. A conservative current, morally rigorist and often intolerant of religious minorities, has seen its influence grow within Muslim organisations and beyond. The manifestation of a religious revival at work for two decades now, but also the reflection of a consumerist conformism amongst the new middle classes, this current is partly a reassuring appropriation of globalisation. It allows for the affirmation of an identity distinct from that of the West, whose lifestyle has meanwhile largely been adopted, and has thrived because of its ability to label products of mass consumption, as well as cultural habits and social behaviours. Politically quietist, it has inaugurated an appeasement between Islam and nationalism that was very visible during the elections of 2009. In this way, this conservative Islam contributes to the second striking change witnessed in the past few years — the marked decline in the destabilising capacity of radical Islamist groups. Confronted with the return of the

¹ According to Gilles Kepel’s expression, *Fitna. Guerre au cœur de l’islam*, Gallimard, Paris, 2004, p. 337.

state, these movements have seen their legitimacy challenged in the name of national unity and no longer benefit systematically, as they did in the past, from indulgence by the forces of law and order and from public sympathy.

If Muslim conservatism has somewhat eclipsed radicalism since Indonesia emerged from the economic, social and political crisis in 1997, it also seems to stave off the audacious Islamic liberalism that is one of the particularities of Indonesia in the Muslim world. Still confined within a narrow ideological and religious margin, this liberalism has a hard time renewing the traditional open-mindedness of the Indonesian population in matters of religion. On its ability to reformulate — and promote — in modern Muslim terms a tolerance somewhat demonetised by the tightening of inter-faith boundaries and the decline of syncretic forms of religions, depends the future of Indonesian Islam.

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Biographies

These are selected biographies of the main personalities of Indonesian radical Islam. It includes jihadists charged with various bombings that shook Indonesia between 2000 and 2009, and men wanted for suspected involvement in crimes committed by jihadists and still on the run. Also included are some of the founders of Darul Islam from 1940–1950, with or without connection to the Jemaah Islamiyah, as well as activists who merely militate for the implementation of the sharia by constitutional means.

Abdul Aziz alias Imam Samudra

The brains behind the Bali bombings of October 2002 (202 casualties) and coordinator of the operation, Abdul Aziz was born on 14 January 1970 in Serang, in the region of Banten, West Java. His parents were fervent activists with Persis (Persatuan Islam), an organisation promoting a rationalist but also ‘purifying’ Islam of Wahhabi inspiration. Educated in religious schools (madrasahs), he was a good student and graduated from the Aliyah Negeri madrasah (an Islamic public high school) with honours in 1990. Subsequently he led a madrasah association in Banten (West Java) and came under the influence of the radical Kiai Saleh As’ad, a former Darul Islam militant. He was also influenced at the age of 16 by Abdullah Azzam’s book on the jihad in Afghanistan. He went there via Malaysia in 1990, where he participated in combats and met Osama bin Laden, as he declared during his trial. He was also indicted for the four church bombings of Christmas 2000 in Batam, south of Singapore. According to the International Crisis Group, he was simultaneously a member of Jemaah Islamiyah and of Ring Banten, another group linked to the Indonesian Darul Islam. Arrested shortly after the Bali bombings, he was sentenced to death on 10 September 2003. He expressed no regrets for his actions, which he considered as noble and a pathway to paradise. He managed to publish a book legitimising his ideological path to jihad during his time in prison. He was executed on 9 November 2008.

Abdul Qadir Baraja

He was a member of the inner circle of Ngruki and a religious teacher in the *pesantren*. Hailing from the island of Sumbawa, he is said to have been active in the Darul Islam of Lampung (Sumatra), where he lived during the 1970s. He wrote a book entitled *Jihad dan Hijrah*, inciting Muslims to wage war against the “enemies of Islam” who resisted the application of Islamic law. He was arrested for his participation in the group Teror Warman and was imprisoned for three years. Upon his release, he returned to Lampung where he was re-arrested in 1985 after the bombings of the Buddhist monuments of Borobudur (Central Java) and of Malang (East Java). He was accused of having supplied explosives to Hussein Ali Al-Habsyi (Baraja had sent a letter informing Al-Habsyi of the price of explosives in Lampung). Baraja defended himself by saying that he was only responding to Al-Habsyi’s request and was not aware of the latter’s intentions. He was condemned to 13 years’ imprisonment, increased to 15 years after appeal. His son was supposedly one of the members of the Warsidi group killed in Lampung in 1989. Baraja reappeared in Yogyakarta at the First Congress of Mujahidin in 2000, during which he recounted the efforts of Kartosuwiryo to reestablish the caliphate, which had been destroyed in 1924, he said, by a “Western conspiracy”. Since then, Baraja has been in charge of the fatwa department at the Indonesian Council of Mujahidins (Majelis Mujahidi Indonesia, MMI).

Abdullah Sungkar

Co-founder of the Islamic boarding school of Ngruki (*pesantren* Al-Mukmin), situated in the vicinity of Solo (Central Java), as well as the Pesantren Luqmanul Hakiem in Johor, Malaysia. Born in 1937 to a family of Yemeni origins, important batik merchants based in Solo, he is said to have joined Darul Islam in 1976. He was briefly imprisoned in 1977, then again in 1978, with Abu Bakar Ba’asyir, for his involvement in the violence committed by Komando Jihad and Darul Islam. He started some *usroh* — small Islamic circles formed along the lines of the Muslim Brotherhood and devoted to the cause of the Islamic state or law — in Jakarta in 1983, but fled to Malaysia in 1985. In 1987 he took charge of international relations for Darul Islam, then founded Jemaah Islamiyah in 1993. He died a month after his return to Indonesia in 1999.

Abdullah Umar

Religious teacher born in Lamahala (Flores) in 1949. Educated in the *pesantren* of Gontor (East Java), he started out in the Komando Jihad in

Sumatra between 1976 and 1977. He took refuge in Ngruki at the time of the multiple arrests of 1977. He was arrested in 1979 after the murders carried out in Solo by the group Teror Warman and was executed in 1989.

Abu Bakar Ba'asyir

Without a doubt the most emblematic — and the most controversial — figure of Islamic radicalism in Indonesia after Abdullah Sungkar. Of Yemeni origins, he was born on 17 August 1938 in Jombang (East Java). He lost his father at the age of ten and interrupted his studies two years before graduating from high school. Like Sungkar, he was an activist of Gerakan Pemuda Islam Indonesia (GPII), a youth organisation close to Masyumi, the large Muslim party banned in 1960. Ba'asyir was equally active in the Al-Irsyad organisation, an Islamic structure that draws mainly the Indonesian Arab community. In 1959 he entered the big 'modernist' *pesantren* Gontor, where he studied until 1963. Then he pursued — but did not complete — his studies in the preaching field (*dakwah*) of the religious university Al-Irsyad in Solo. It was during his stay in this city in the 1960s that he became close to Abdullah Sungkar. In 1967 the two men created a religious radio station, Radio Dakwah Islamiyah Surakarta, then in 1971, the *pesantren* Al-Mukmin, which moved to Ngruki, at the periphery of the city in 1973. In 1975 the radio station was banned by the authorities. Ba'asyir was arrested along with Sungkar in 1978 for his links with Komando Jihad and Darul Islam, arrests that sparked off a wave of violence including the murder of the vice-rector of the University of Solo and break-ins justified by the Islamic concept of *fa'i* (robberies authorised for the cause of jihad). Ba'asyir was condemned to nine years of prison for subversion, but in 1982 his sentence was reduced to three years and ten months, the equivalent of the time he had spent in detention. He was thus free until the Supreme Court overturned the ruling of the Court of Appeals. Before he could be re-arrested, however, he fled to Malaysia in 1985, staying for 13 years and only returning to Solo in 1999, after the fall of Suharto. In Malaysia he organised a Darul Islam structure. Ba'asyir was apparently involved in the creation of the International Association of Mujahidins (Robitatul Mujahidin, RM) at the end of 1999. Upon Sungkar's death, the task of leading Jemaah Islamiyah reportedly fell to him. He subsequently became the emir of the Council of Mujahidins in Indonesia in August 2000. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir was arrested in mid-October 2002 after the Bali bombings. After his first trial, which started in April 2003, he was condemned to four years of imprisonment for "subversion, with the intention of overturning the government" and not "as the leader of a subversive movement, nor for starting a subversive project".

The court recognised his membership in JI but considered the evidence of his involvement as “head” of JI insufficient. In November 2003 his sentence was reduced, upon appeal, to three years, which retained the legal offence of immigration and the falsification of administrative documents. In March 2004 the Supreme Court further reduced the sentence to 18 months. Upon his release, he was re-arrested immediately by the police on the strength of a new dossier built on numerous investigations carried out since the Bali bombings. However, the Constitutional High Court rejected the retroactivity of the new anti-terrorist law, which meant that it could not be applied to the Bali bombings. Unable to act on the evidence gathered for Bali, the police had to fall back on the more recent Marriott bombing. He was sentenced to 30 months of imprisonment and was released in June 2006. He has been giving well-attended public religious lectures ever since but was finally re-arrested in August 2010 for his implication in the creation of a terrorist training camp in Aceh through his new organisation, Jemaah Anshorut Tauhid (JAT).

Abu Dujana alias Ainul Bahri

Born in Cianjur, West Java, on 20 August 1969. He attended state schools and went to Afghanistan in 1989. He is said to have led the Torkham camp until 1995 and in 1999 became instructor in Mindanao. It is believed that he became a JI military leader after the arrest of Abu Rusdan, from 2005 until June 2007. He was arrested in June 2007, accused of heading JI special forces and of providing arms to Poso. He was condemned to 15 years in jail in April 2008.

Abu Rusdan (Rusydan) alias Thoriqudin alias Hamzah

An important figure in JI and an Afghanistan veteran. During his trial he declared that he had been asked in April 2002 to replace Abu Bakar Ba’asyir as the leader of Jemaah Islamiyah in Indonesia but only stood in for him during a very short period in October 2002, thus implying that Ba’asyir is indeed the emir of Jemaah Islamiyah. However, he denies any link between the organisation and terrorist activities. Born in Kudus (Central Java), son of an ex-fighter of Darul Islam and Hizbullah, Haji Moh. Saleh, he was arrested in the 1980s for his involvement in Komando Jihad. According to ICG, he was in charge of military affairs for Mantiqi II. After his arrest, Hambali apparently declared that Abu Rusdan had obtained the green light from Ba’asyir to carry out the Bali bombings. He was arrested in August 2003 and sentenced to three-and-a-half years’ imprisonment on 25 February 2004.

Agus Dwikarna

Businessman active within the Indonesian Council of Mujahidins (MMI). He was arrested in the Philippines in March 2002 for illegal possession of bombs and suspected participation in the bomb attacks of Jakarta and Manila — based on the information provided by Fathur Rahman al-Ghozi, also arrested in the Philippines. Dwikarna was an activist of HMI-MPO, the association of Muslim students most vehemently opposed to Soeharto on the *Pancasila* issue. After the fall of Soeharto, he became an active member of PAN, Amien Rais' Islamic party with a modernist reputation. In 2000 he became the secretary of MMI. He was also in charge of the KOMPAK branch in Makassar, an Islamic charity whose office in Solo financed the Mujahidin KOMPAK which fought in Ambon and Poso. It also produced videos of atrocities (committed, they allege, by Christians) in Poso and Ambon, used for recruitment purposes.

Ali Imron bin Nurhasyim

One of the three brothers (together with Amrozi and Ali Gufron) involved in the Bali bombings. Born in 1970 and educated in the Muhammadiyah madrasah, he went to Pakistan in 1991 for six months, then to an Abu Sayyaf camp in Afghanistan in 1992. He is a graduate of the Luqman al-Hakiem *pesantren*. He drove the car used in the bombing and rigged up the bombs in the car with Azahari, as well as Iqbal's explosive vest. Unlike his brothers, however, he expressed regrets and pleaded for mercy from then President Megawati. He received a life sentence in September 2003.

Amrozi bin Nurhasyim

Known as the 'smiling bomber', he was arrested in November 2002, less than a month after the Bali bombings. Brother of Ali Imron and Ali Ghufron, he was one of the first suspects arrested after the attacks, thanks to the identification of the car used. Born in 1962 in Tenggulun (East Java), Amrozi bin Nurhasyim did not finish his studies at an Islamic high school and left to work in Malaysia for six months. He returned to Malaysia in 1992, where he studied in the Luqman al-Hakiem *pesantren* in Johor, then returned to Indonesia in 1997. Abdul Azis alias Imam Samudra contacted him in 2000 to assemble the bombs, which he did with chemicals bought using the haul from the break-in of a jewellery shop in Serang. He also supplied the vehicle that was used in Bali. Amrozi made a full confession during his trial. He was sentenced to death in August 2003 and executed in November 2008.

Azahari Husin alias Adam

The maker of explosive engines used in the bombings of Bali and Jakarta and known for their devastating effects, he was nicknamed 'the demolition man'. A Malaysian citizen, he studied mechanical engineering in Adelaide University, Australia then furthered his studies at University Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) from 1979 to 1984. In 1990 he obtained a doctorate (in property valuation) from Reading University, UK. He returned to Malaysia in 1991 and taught at UTM. In 1996 he lived in Jakarta, then returned to Malaysia, where he was part of the management of the Lukmanul Hakiem *pesantren* (Johor). He became a military trainer in Mindanao in 1999 and specialised in the fabrication of bombs in Afghanistan in 2000. He was wanted by the police for his involvement in the Christmas 2000 bombings in Batam, the Bali bombings of 2002, the Marriott bombings in 2003 and the bombings in Australia in 2004. Ali Imron testified at the trial that Azahari had assembled the explosive engines in Denpasar (Bali). In May 2003 he was interrogated for hours in Sumatra, but the police did not recognise him and released him shortly after. Topping the list of wanted persons by CIA and security forces in Southeast Asia, he was tracked down by Indonesian police in November 2005 and was killed in a shootout in Batu, Malang, East-Java.

Danu Muhammad Hasan

Kartosuwiryo's partner in Darul Islam in the 1950s, he was one of the DI commanders for Tasikmalaya (West Java). He was part of the group of combatants who surrendered to the Indonesian authorities in 1962 and who signed the oath of loyalty to the non-Islamic republic. Accused of being involved in Komando Jihad in the 1970s, he apparently also had links with the Indonesian secret services (BAKIN), whose facilities he shrewdly used to reunite the veterans of Darul Islam, the difficult political context notwithstanding. Imprisoned for his involvement in Komando Jihad, he died under mysterious circumstances after leaving prison.

Daud Beureueh

Leader of Darul Islam in Aceh in the 1950s. After Kartosuwiryo's execution in 1962, he is said to have taken over the leadership of Darul Islam and to have been inducted as imam in 1974. He was arrested in May 1978 and placed under house arrest. He died of old age in Aceh in 1993.

Dulmatin alias Joko Pitono, alias Ahmad Noval

Ex-student of Ngruki, born in 1970 and trained in Afghanistan, he went to Malaysia in 1992 and returned to Indonesia in 1995. Wanted for his

participation in the Bali and Marriott bombings, he was also involved in the Christmas bombings of 2000 and, according to Amrozi, in the attack against the ambassador of the Philippines in Jakarta in 2000. After Hambali's arrest in Thailand, he is said to have become one of Jemaah Islamiyah's leaders. The Afghan veteran was killed in a raid in Pamulang, south of Jakarta in March 2010. According to the police, Pamulang was a meeting point for an alliance of terror cells from Banten, West Java and Aceh, formed by Dulmatin.

Fathur Rahman al-Ghozi

Son of a former militant of Indonesian Darul Islam and born in Madiun (East Java), this ex-student of the Ngruki *pesantren* received military training in Afghanistan in 1990 and was a member of Jemaah Islamiyah, tasked with setting up a military training camp for JI in Mindanao in 1995. He was also an instructor at the Hubaibiyah camp in Mindanao from this period. He was arrested in Manila in January 2002 for the illegal possession of arms and for complicity in the Rizal Day violence in the Philippines on 30 December 2000. He was also involved in the assassination attempt of the Philippines ambassador in Jakarta in 2000 that killed two Indonesians and injured 20 people, including the ambassador. Ghozi is said to have named Abu Bakar Ba'asyir as the head of JI. His father, Zaenuri, had served time for his involvement in Komando Jihad, then went on to work in Malaysia, near the Lukmanul Hakiem *pesantren* in Johor. His younger brother, Muhajir, also an Afghanistan veteran, is said to be involved in the Christmas 2000 bombings in Mojokerto. Ghozi was sentenced to 17 years in prison, but his sentence was commuted to 6 years and he escaped on 14 July 2003. He was caught and killed by the Philippines army in October 2003, three months after his escape.

Fikiruddin alias Abu Jibril

Hailing from Lombok, this preacher well known in Yogyakarta in the 1980s is the elder brother of Irfan Awwas Suryahadi. Born in 1957, he is thought to have worked for Ring Condet of Darul Islam in Jakarta between 1984 and 1985. In 1985 he fled to Malaysia and from there, to Afghanistan. Supporter of a specifically Indonesian Darul Islam, Abu Jibril was initially opposed to the idea of an international caliphate but is believed to have come round to the idea after his passage to Afghanistan. He made many trips in and out of Indonesia. A video clip shows him recruiting volunteers to fight in the Moluccas. He has been a member of the executive organ of the Indonesian Council of Mujahidins (MMI)

since its inception in 2000. Abu Jibril was arrested in Malaysia in 2001. He is accused of trying to establish a Daulah Islamiyah Nusantara, of destabilising Malaysia by preaching jihad and martyrdom, of having led into jihad Malaysian militants who went on to receive military training in the Moluccas. He was released in August 2003 but was detained again for violating immigration laws. Deported to Indonesia in May 2004, he was sentenced to five-and-a-half months in prison and was subsequently freed. Operating under the name Abu Muhammad Jibril Abdurrahman, he is in charge of the department of increasing resources for mujahidins (Departemen Peningkatan Sumber Daya Mujahid) at MMI. His son, Mohammad Jibril, was arrested in August 2009 on suspicion of having helped fund the 17 July 2009 Jakarta bombing.

Hambali alias Riduan Isamuddin

Considered as the operator of Al Qaeda in Southeast Asia, Hambali is purportedly the key figure in the Jemaah Islamiyah network. He was born in the village of Kapung Pabuaran (West Java) on 4 April 1964. The second in a family of 11 children, he completed his studies in a madrasah in Cianjur in 1984. He became active in GPI, a Muslim youth group in Cianjur, then left for Malaysia where he met Abdullah Sungkar and became his protégé. He spent the years 1987–1989 in Afghanistan. He was supposedly at the helm of Jemaah Islamiyah in Singapore and Malaysia as well as Mantiqi I, but was replaced by Muchlas alias Ali Gufron in this capacity at the end of 2002. Hambali then purportedly became head of operations of Al Qaeda for Southeast Asia. He was arrested in Thailand in August 2003, then detained by the United States. He declared to the American services that he had received 30,000 USD from Al Qaeda to finance the Bali bombings. After its ‘success’, he claimed to have received a donation of 100,000 USD from Al Qaeda: 54,000 USD for JI, 15,000 USD for the families of prisoners and 35,000 USD to finance future terror operations. He is allegedly responsible for 38 bombings in Indonesia in 2000. The police also consider him as the Al Qaeda-linked mastermind of the Bali bombings.

Hispran (acronym for Haji Ismail Pranoto)

A Darul Islam combatant right till the end, he never surrendered and became one of the most active DI veterans in the reactivation of the movement starting from the late 1960s. Born in Brebes (East Java), he initiated the rebuilding of links between the DI of West Java and Daud Beureueh in Aceh, then recruited new members between 1975 and 1977 in Central Java and East Java, amongst whom were Abu Bakar Ba’asyir

and Abdullah Sungkar in 1976, according to the ICG. He was arrested one year later and sentenced to death in 1978 for subversive activities within Komando Jihad. He died in prison in Cipinang, Jakarta before his execution.

Irfan Awwas Suryahardy

One of the most active militants for the implementation of the sharia in Indonesia, he was one of the co-founders of the Indonesian Council of Mujahidins (MMI). Born on 4 April 1960 in the village of Tirpas-Selong, on the eastern side of the island of Lombok, Irfan Awwas studied at the prestigious *pesantren* of Gontor. Brother of Fikiruddin alias Abu Jibril, he created in Yogyakarta, at the start of the New Order, the Coordinating Body of Indonesian Mosque Youth (Badan Koordinasi Pemuda Masjid, BKPM), one of the most active *dakwah* groups, which soon adopted the organisational model of the Muslim Brotherhood. In 1981 he published a journal, *Ar-Risalah* (The Bulletin), which was distributed at the Sudirman mosque of Yogyakarta and combined acerbic criticism of Soeharto with interviews of ex-leaders of Darul Islam and citations from Ayatollah Khomeini. Also published were minutes of the trials of Ba'asyir and Sungkar alongside commentaries by human rights activists. His audacity made him a hero amongst the 'anti-Soehartoist' students. He was arrested in 1984 and sentenced in 1986 to 13 years of prison for subversion, but he would only serve 9 in all. He was thus in prison when his brother Fikiruddin left first for Malaysia then Afghanistan. He has been the president of the executive committee of the Indonesian Council of Mujahidins (MMI) since 2000.

Kahar Muzakkar

Leader of the Darul Islam rebellion in South Sulawesi in the 1950s, he was born in La Domeng, Luwu (South Sulawesi) on 24 March 1921. Son of a wealthy farmer from the middle aristocracy class, he graduated from a training school for religious teachers run by Muhammadiyah in Solo (Central Java) in 1940. He then returned to Luwu to teach in a Muhammadiyah school but was rejected by the traditional leaders he had accused of feudalism and exiled on an island. An orator who has been compared to Soekarno, he returned to Java in 1943 and engaged in the anti-colonial struggle. He was sent to South Sulawesi in June 1950 to negotiate with the guerrillas but ended up joining them. Having failed in his efforts to incorporate the entire guerrilla in the army (Korps Cadangan Nasional) in 1951, he then led the rebellion and proclaimed Sulawesi as part of the Republik Islam Indonesia in 1952, thus associating

with Kartosuwiryo's Darul Islam but in the name of a 'Republic'. It was only in August 1953 that he declared his movement as an integral part of the movement for an Islamic State of Indonesia (Negara Islam Indonesia, NII). He was killed in 1965 in a raid led by Mohamad Yusuf, also from Sulawesi and who later became Soeharto's defence minister. Kahar Muzakkar's legacy is alive in Sulawesi: his son, Abdul Aziz Muzakkar, is active in Makassar, where he has created the Committee for the Implementation of the sharia (Komite Persiapan Penegakan Syariat Islam, KPPSI), whose objective is to continue Darul Islam's fights by constitutional means. The young Muzakkar also runs a *pesantren* in Makassar, an important branch of the Hidayatullah network.

Kartosuwiryo alias Sekarmadji Maridjan

Founder of the very first rebellion movement in support of an Islamic State of Indonesia (Negara Islam Indonesia, NII), which he proclaimed in 1949, Kartosuwiryo was born on 7 February 1907 in Cepu (Central Java). His father was a civil servant in the Dutch colonial government, which enabled him to attend a Dutch school reserved for the elite. He embarked on medical studies but was expelled because of his political activities. Like Soekarno before him, he lived in Surabaya under the roof of Omar Said Tjokroaminoto, leader of Sarekat Islam (SI), whom he served as private secretary from 1927 to 1929. It was a period when SI was very much weakened by the departure of communist militants and a secularist national movement was emerging under the guidance of Soekarno. Kartosuwiryo was thus somewhat a casualty of the great unfulfilled hopes of SI, whose influence was further reduced by the rise of religious organisations such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama. He entered Jong Islamieten Bond, a splinter organisation of Jong Java, as he rejected the latter's rootedness in Javanese culture and tradition. He was therefore active in SI from a very early period and separated from the Party of the Islamic Association of Indonesia (PSII) of Agus Salim, when the latter accepted integration into the system of representation proposed by the Dutch in 1935. He displayed the same intransigence in 1939 when PSII, led this time by Abikusno Tjokrosujoso, joined an association of Indonesian political parties (Gabungan Politik Indonesia, Gapi). He was expelled and founded a second PSII. But the political situation in Europe was already rendering any political organisation a delicate matter. While he received a Dutch education, his religious education was provided by the founder of SI, Tjokroaminoto, then by two very conservative minor ulama with tendencies towards mysticism in Malangbong, in the Sunda region. It was there that he trained political cadres in his Institut Suffah

and led the Hizbullah militia, which was created during the Japanese Occupation. Member of the central committee of the Association of Muslim Organisations (MAI), he was in the important position of collecting legal alms (*zakat*) up to October 1945. At the time of agreements between Indonesia and the Netherlands in 1948, Kartosuwiryo decided to pursue the struggle against the Dutch and subsequently against the Indonesian Republic. He proclaimed the Negara Islam Indonesia (NII) in 1949: Muslims must follow Islamic law and the supreme authority must be the Qu'ran and the Hadith. His movement extended not only to West Java but also to Aceh, South Sulawesi and South Kalimantan. Efforts by Mohammad Natsir and Ahmad Hassan, leaders of Masyumi and Persis respectively, to bring Kartosuwiryo round to the cause of the non-Islamic republic were in vain, and the bloody rebellion was a serious obstacle for the young republic for 14 years. Kartosuwiryo was captured and executed in 1962.

Muchlas/Muklas alias Ali Gufron, alias Huda bin Abdul Haq

One of the perpetrators of the Bali bombings and eldest brother of Ali Imron and Amrozi, he was the leader of Mantiqi I of Jemaah Islamiyah at the time of the Bali bombings and was arrested on 3 December 2002. Born in Tenggulun (East Java) in 1960, he graduated from Ngruki in 1982. He was apparently fluent in Arabic and more pious than most students, going so far as to pray even at night and fast every Monday and Thursday. Muchlas hardly spoke during his interrogations, unlike Imam Samudra and Amrozi. He left early for Malaysia (some time after 1983) and joined the jihad in Afghanistan, returning to Indonesia only after the fall of Soeharto. According to an interview given in 2000 before his arrest, he was in full battle in Afghanistan for four years (1985–1989), fighting for a longer period and more ardently than many others. He might even have led foreign troops against Iranian Shi'ite incursions in Afghanistan and became quite rich from his share of the spoils of jihad. He took over the leadership of Mantiqi I of Jemaah Islamiyah from Hambali, covering Malaysia and Singapore. He was found guilty of raising the funds for the Bali bombings, of receiving USD 30 500 from Hambali, via the Malaysian Wan Min Bin Wan Mat, of recruiting commando members, and finally of persuading Iqbal to die as a martyr in Bali. He was sentenced to death on 2 October 2003 and executed on 9 November 2008.

Muchliansyah alias Solihin, alias Muklis

A very active preacher close to Ba'asyir in the 1980s in Yogyakarta, he participated in the creation of the journal *Ar-Risalah*. He assisted Abdullah

Sungkar in the creation of some *usroh* in Jakarta. He fled to Malaysia with Sungkar and Ba'asyir in 1985–1986 and did not return until 1999. Arrested in 2003 for violating immigration laws, he was released and went on to manage a *pesantren* in Pulau Baru (South Kalimantan). He has headed the department of financial resources of mujahidins (Departemen Peningkatan Sumber Daya Mujahid) at the Indonesian Council of Mujahidins (MMI) since 2000.

Noordin Mohammad Top

Malaysian member of Jemaah Islamiyah born in 1968 in Johor, he is accused of being the mastermind of the suicide bombings in 2003 (Mariott), 2004 (the Australian Embassy), 2005 (Bali II) and 2009 (Mariott). A graduate of Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) in 1995, he became the director of the Luqmanul Hakiem *pesantren*. A bombs expert, Noordin Mohammad Top became the head of a violent wing of Jemaah Islamiyah. He was killed in a police raid in Solo on 17 September 2009, following the July 2009 suicide bomb attacks in Jakarta, in which 11 people were killed, including the suicide bombers, and 53 were wounded.

Omar al-Faruq alias Mohamad Assegaf

A Kuwaiti citizen, he was arrested in Indonesia in June 2002 by the Indonesian authorities on the basis of tapped telephone conversations between him and Agus Dwikarna, an Indonesian citizen who was himself arrested in Manila. Omar al-Faruq was handed over to the American authorities shortly after his arrest. He apparently confessed to the existence of an Islamist network in Southeast Asia, Jemaah Islamiyah, connections to Al Qaeda, as well as to the central role played by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. He also named JI as being behind the series of bombings in several Indonesian cities during the Christmas of 2000. His accusations have been refuted by the Indonesian Islamists, who claim in turn that al-Faruq is an agent of the American secret services. He also maintained that JI's operations in Southeast Asia are financed by the al-Haramain foundation, headquartered in Saudi Arabia.

(Habib) Rizieq Shihab

Leader of Islamic Defenders Front (Front Pembela Islam, FPI), a militia active in Jakarta specialising in anti-vice (*anti-maksiat*) raids targeting bars, massage salons, gambling joints, cafes and billiard parlours.

Timsar Zubil

This former militant of Komando Jihad in Sumatra, Medan and Padang was born in Payakumbuh (West Sumatra). Arrested in 1977 for planting

bombs in a Methodist church and a cinema in Medan (West Sumatra). Handed a life sentence, he was freed in 1999 and resurfaced in August 2000 at the Congress of Mujahidin in Yogyakarta. He is supposedly active in the Indonesian Council of Mujahidins (MMI) in North Sumatra.

Ja'far Umar Thalib

Founder and leader of the militia Laskar Jihad active in the Moluccas conflict in 2000–2002. He was born in Malang on 29 December 1961 and is of Yemeni origins. After two years of studies at the Persis *pesantren* in Bangil (East Java), he ventured to the capital where he studied Arabic at LIPIA, a foundation financed by Saudi Arabia. He took part in the combat in Afghanistan at the end of the 1980s, where he supposedly met Osama bin Laden. He returned to Indonesia at the start of the 1990s and taught at the *pesantren* of Al-Irsyad in Salatiga, an organisation run by Indonesians of Arab origins. Al-Irsyad reportedly found Ja'far too radical. After many stays in Yemen and Pakistan, he settled down in Indonesia and founded his own Islamic boarding school near to Yogyakarta (Central Java), followed by FKAWJ (Forum Komunikas Ahlu Summah wal-Jama'ah, Followers of the Sunna and the Community of the Prophet). In 1999 he created a militia called Laskar Jihad, whose combatants left for the Moluccas in April to fight the Christians. Arrested in 2001 for organising the whipping of a Laskar Jihad member who had raped a woman, he was released a few weeks later and acquitted in 2003. Since the disbanding of Laskar Jihad in October 2002, Ja'far Thalib has taught in his *pesantren* in Yogyakarta. After the Bali bombings, he categorically distanced himself from Osama, whom he accuses of being a khariijite (member of an extremist group in early Islam).

Umar Patek

One of the masterminds of the 2002 Bali bombings, this Jemaah Islamiyah member worked with Dulmatin in Mindanao where he sought refuge with the Abu Sayaf group in 2003. The U.S. government has placed a bounty of USD 1 million on his capture. From their experience in Mindanao, he and Dulmatin have gained extensive knowledge of setting up camps in the middle of the jungle. He has survived intense manhunts by the Filipino security forces and the US military.

Warman Musa

Darul Islam militant active at the end of the 1970s, he was born in 1929 in Garut (West Java). This ex-soldier sought refuge in Lampung, southern Sumatra in the 1950s, where he was recruited for Komando Jihad

operations, including burglaries in the name of jihad (*fa'i*). His group was nicknamed 'Teror Warman' and he was responsible for several crimes, including the murder of the vice-rector of the University of Solo, who was supposedly behind the arrest of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir and Abdullah Sungkar. He was captured and killed in 1981.

Warsidi

Leader of the first Islamic community created after the *usroh* model of the Muslim Brotherhood, an autarky operating out of a hamlet in the province of Lampung (South Sumatra) and associated with the Darul Islam of Jakarta. Warsidi was a key figure in the tragedy of Lampung. After the assassination of the local military commandant by the group in 1989, the hamlet was attacked and destroyed by the army, causing a dozen deaths or more depending on sources.

Zulkarnaen alias Daud, alias Aris Sumarsono

Some witnesses at the Bali bombings trials have claimed that this Afghanistan veteran was involved in the conception of the Bali bombings and played an important role in Jemaah Islamiyah. Born in 1963, he attended the Ngruki *pesantren* in 1975. He was a member of the first Indonesian mujahidin groups sent to the Saddah camp in Afghanistan in 1985, led by Abu Sayyaf, where he took over the training of recruits from Southeast Asia. Zulkarnaen is thought to have participated in battles in Afghanistan in 1987. Upon his return to Malaysia, he apparently took over the leadership of the armed section of JI in this zone. Together with Upik Lawangga and Umar Patek, Zulkarnaen is one of the three suspects still at large. Some analysts believe that he is now the highest ranking leader of Jemaah Islamiyah and heads a squad of militants called Laskar Khos, a special force made of Indonesian militants trained in Afghanistan and the Philippines.

Glossary¹

A

- Abangan* (J) [red]: usually designates in Indonesia Javanese inclined towards mysticism or *kejawen*, that is less inclined to Islamic orthodoxy than the *santri*.
- Adat* (A) [habit]: by extension custom; as a source of law, *adat* or custom is different from *hukm* (pl. *ahkam*), rules revealed in the Qur'an or the Traditions.
- Ālim* (pl. *ulamā'*) (A): see Ulama.
- Al-Irsyad: Reformist movement founded at the beginning of the twentieth century by Ahmad bin Soorkati, a Sudanese, specialising in education for the Hadrami community.
- Aliyah* (A): *madrasah aliyah* is an Islamic school at senior secondary school/high school level.
- Amir (A): military leader of a community; designates by extension the political head of an organisation or a party that claims to be Islamic. In Indonesia, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir held the title *amir ul-mujahidin* of his governing council (Halli wal 'Aqdi) in the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI).
- Asas tunggal*
[sole principle]: President Soeharto's policy of ideological uniformisation. He imposed the national ideology of *Pancasila* in 1985 as the sole foundation for political parties and social organisations. *Pancasila* itself consists of five principles, including the belief in one God.

¹ The etymology of the terms cited in this glossary is indicated in parentheses: J = Javanese, A = Arab, S = Sanskrit.

B

- Badan Komunikasi Pemuda Masjid Indonesia (BKPMI, Coordinating Body of Indonesian Mosque Youth): organisation founded in 1976. Known as BKPM at the regional level.
- Badan Koordinasi Inteligen Negara (BAKIN): coordinating agency of the Indonesian secret services under Soeharto.
- Baraka, barokah* (A): religious charisma transmitted by a saint to his descendants and followers.
- Barisan Nasional (National Front): 'nationalist-secularist' group of retired generals and nationalist personalities created as a bulwark against the 'greening' of the state apparatus in the 1990s.

C

- Center for Information and Development Studies (CIDES): a think tank close to ICMI.
- Center for Policy and Development Studies (CPDS): a think tank close to the army and political Islam in the 1990s.

D

- Dâ', dai* (A): Muslim preacher.
- Dakwah* (A) [invitation]: invitation to accept the word of God, Islam. In the twentieth century, the term is used in the sense of proselytisation and preaching activities.
- Darul Islam (DI, Abode of Islam) (A): name given to the Muslim movement led by Kartosoewiryo in West Java that declared an Indonesian Islamic State (Negara Islam Indonesia) on 7 August 1949, and by extension, to the ensuing rebellion in Aceh, South Sulawesi and Kalimantan.
- Darul Islam-Tentara Islam Indonesia (DI-TII, Abode of Islam, NII army): Darul Islam rebel army.

- Daulah islamiyah* (A): Islamic territory, Islamic state. Term used by the Jemaah Islamiyah, different from the Negara Islam of Kartosoewiryo, which recognised the existence of frontiers.
- Daurah* (A): circle of *usroh* cadres in which members participate in lessons and discussions on religious and political themes.
- Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia (DDII, Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council): large predication movement founded in 1967 by the reformist Muslims of Masyumi. DDII is a conservative Islamist movement. Its press organ, *Media Dakwah*, emphasises the superiority of Islam and the threats surrounding it in a world dominated by undercover anti-Islamic forces. Headed by Mohammad Natsir until his death in 1993.
- Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (DPR): Parliament that votes in laws. Composed of 560 members from political parties elected through legislative elections every five years. There are local parliaments at the provincial level (DPRD I) and district level (DPRD II).
- Dhimmi* (A), *dhimmi*: member of non-Muslim communities 'inferiorised' but 'protected' by the Islamic state.
- Dwifungsi*: after 1965, the armed forces institutionalised the theory of *dwifungsi* (dual function), which replaced the 'Middle Way' of General Nasution such that officers may occupy civil posts. Non-military positions for members of the armed forces have been recognised by the Assembly since 1966 and were subsequently legalised. The abolition of *dwifungsi* was one of the clarion calls of the Reformasi.

F

- Fatwa (pl. *fatâwâ*) (A): a jurist's pronouncement on a point of Muslim law (see *mufiti*). In Indonesia, fatwas are pronounced by various religious organisations but have no legal authority.

- Fiqh* (A): jurisprudence in Islam. Legal prescriptions pertaining to civil law and the family, inheritance, property, criminal and constitutional law.
- Forum Demokrasi (Group for Democracy): founded in 1991, presided by Abdurrahman Wahid.
- Forum Komunikasi Ahlus Sunnah wal-Jama'ah (FKAWJ, Followers of the Sunna and the Community of the Prophet): religious group formed by Ja'far Umar Thalib in Yogyakarta, foundation for the militia of Laskar Jihad.
- Forum Ummat Islam Penegak Keadilan dan Konstitusi (FURKON, Forum of the Islamic Community for the Defence of Justice and the Constitution): a new organisation officially created at the Istiqlal Mosque under the patronage of the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI), which actively supported President Habibie in 1998.
- Front Pembela Islam (FPI, Islamic Defenders Front): militia (vigilante group) founded in 1998 by Habib Rizieq Shihab, its president.

G

- Gabungan Usaha Perbaikan Pendidikan Islam (Guppi, Association for the Improvement of Islamic Education): Islamic organisation under the influence of Golkar since the start of the New Order.
- Gerakan Pemuda Ansor/Ansor: name of the traditionalist Islamic youth movement linked to the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU).
- Gerakan Pemuda Islam Indonesia (GPII, Youth Movement of Masyumi): former youth organisation of Masyumi whose legacy DDII circles try to maintain. After the ban on Masyumi, it survived under the name of Gerakan Pemuda Indonesia (GPI).

Golongan Karya (Golkar,
Functional Groups):

governmental party formed under the New Order. It obtained 60–70 per cent of the votes in the legislative elections between 1971 and 1998. After Reformasi, its share dropped to 22 per cent in the first free elections of 1999. It rebounded to become the main political party in the elections of 2004 with 21.6 per cent of the votes, descending again to 14.5 per cent in 2009, second after President Susilo's Partai Demokrat.

H

Hadith (A):

traditions recounting the actions or words of the Prophet or his tacit approval of words or acts effected in his presence.

Haji (A):

title of one who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Hajj (A):

the pilgrimage to Mecca, one of the five pillars of Islam.

Halaqah (A):

literally 'circle'. Meetings for religious and sometimes political debates.

Hidayatullah:

network of *pesantren*, founded in East Kalimantan at the beginning of the 1970s.

Himpunan Mahasiswa
Indonesia (HMI, Association
of Muslim Students):

influential modernist Muslim student association. Himpunan Mahasiswa Indonesia-Majelis Penyelamat Organisasi (HMI-MPO, Association of Muslim Students-Council to Save the Organisation): a scission of HMI as MPO rejected Soeharto's 1985 policy of ideological uniformisation.

Hizbullah (A):

Muslim militia formed during the Japanese Occupation of Indonesia, armed wing of the Masyumi party during the fight for independence.

Hizb-ut Tahrir, Hizbut Tahrir
(Liberation Party):

appeared in Indonesia in the early 1980s. While not officially the Indonesian branch

of the international organisation with the same name based in Jordan, it shares a common central objective: the establishment of a new caliphate uniting the entire Muslim world. Operating underground for more than 20 years, Hizb-ut Tahrir developed within the *tarbiyah* movement, especially in the universities and institutes of technology. Since 1998, it has organised regular mass demonstrations and was particularly active in the mobilisation against the war in Iraq. It has retained a certain penchant for covertness, no doubt out of fear of the suppression that several homonymous movements in the Muslim world have faced.

Hudud (sg. *hadd*) (A)
[limit]:

punishment laid out by Islamic law for specific crimes considered as offences against Allah, such as for fornication (flagellation) or for theft (chopping off of the hand).

I

Īd al-fitr, idulfitri (A):

celebration to mark the end of Ramadan.

Ijmāʿ (A) [consensus]:

the third source of Muslim law after the Quʿran and the Sunna. Consists traditionally of the consensus of the ulama.

Ijtihad (A):

in Islamic law, the use of individual reasoning; use of the method of reasoning by analogy. The scholar qualified to do so is the *mudjtahid*. It was al-Shafiʿi (d. 820) who rejected the use of discretionary reasoning in religious law and who identified the legitimate function of *ijtihad* with the use of *qiyas*, which consists of drawing conclusions by the analogy method or by systematic reasoning based on the Quʿran and the Sunna of the Prophet. Towards the middle of the ninth century AD, the idea that only the scholars of the past had the right to practise *ijtihad* was instilled.

- Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim se-Indonesia (ICMI, Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals): founded in 1990 by B.J. Habibie, President of the Republic of Indonesia from May 1998–October 1999.
- Ikhwan Muslimin (A) (Muslim Brotherhood): Islamist transnational organisation founded in Egypt.
- Ikhwânî*: an organisation close to or similar to the Muslim Brotherhood.
- Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN, State Institute of Islamic Studies): Tertiary-level institution of higher Islamic learning dependent on the Ministry of Religions and where teachers are civil servants. The first IAIN was created in 1952. The four largest IAIN have been transformed to State Islamic Universities (Universitas Islam Negeri, UIN).
- International Crisis Group (ICG): independent organisation based in Brussels, working towards conflict resolution in the world with analysts present in more than 30 countries. ICG has offices in more than 12 countries including Jakarta. It is financed by many governments and humanitarian organisations throughout the world.
- Islam Liberal (Islib): See Jaringan Islam Liberal (JIL).

J

- Jâhiliyya* (A): state of ‘ignorance’ prior to conversion to Islam.
- Jakarta Charter [*Piagam Jakarta*]: controversial accord of the 1945 Constitution between representatives of secularist nationalism and leaders of political Islam. Suppressed at the last minute on 18 August 1945, it carried mention of the obligation for Indonesian Muslims to obey the sharia, with no other specification other than “in accordance with the principles of a just and civilised humanity”.

- Jaringan Islam Liberal (JIL, Liberal Islam Network): a liberal Islam network grouped around the intellectual Ulil Abshar-Abdalla, amongst others.
- Jemaah Islamiyah (A):
- 1) term designating in general a community of Muslims;
 - 2) terrorist organisation responsible for several bombings in Bali and in Jakarta (the JW Marriott, the Australian Embassy) between 2002 and 2005. The bombing in 2009 of the JW Marriott and Ritz-Carlton hotels in Jakarta was organised by a JI splinter group.
- Jilbab* (A): veil covering the head clasped under the chin, an innovation of the late 1970s.
- K**
- Kafir* (A) [ingrate, miscreant]: term applied to non-Muslims, but sometimes also to Muslims considered too liberal by Indonesian radical Islam.
- Kantor Urusan Agama (KUA): Office of Religious Affairs.
- Kejawen* (J): from *jawi* (Javanese), the essence of Javanese culture, all Javanese conceptions and attitudes. For lack of a better alternative, often translated as ‘Javanese philosophy’ (Lombard) or merely ‘Javanism’.
- Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Indonesia (KAMI, Indonesian Student Action Front): anti-communist organisation active after 1965, supported the army during the change in power.
- Kharijite: an Islamic sect that emerged in the late seventh century AD contesting the succession of the caliphate.
- Kiai (J): title given to Muslim scholars or Sufi sheikhs in Java, or to respected personalities with religious charisma. Use of the term was

- recently expanded to include charismatic Muslim persons not necessarily with religious knowledge.
- Kitab kuning* (A)
[yellow books]: classical texts of the various Islamic disciplines, literally 'yellow books', from the colour of the paper of the first editions that reached Indonesia from the Middle East.
- Komando Jihad
[commando of holy war]: small groups formed in the 1970s by ex-militants of Darul Islam attempting to revive the ideology of an Islamic Indonesian state. Infiltrated by the Indonesian secret services.
- Komando Pasukan Khusus
(Kopassus): elite troops in the Indonesian army.
- Komite Aksi Mahasiswa
Muslim Indonesia
(KAMMI, Indonesian
Muslim Students' Action
Committee): student organisation formed after the fall of President Soeharto that found political expression via Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS).
- Komite Indonesia untuk
Solidaritas dengan Dunia
Islam (KISDI, Indonesian
Committee for Solidarity
with the Muslim World): founded in 1987 by militants from the most conservative wing of DDII and of Muhammadiyah.
- Kompilasi Hukum Islam:* term designating the codification of Muslim law (concerning mainly the family) undertaken during the 1980s in Indonesia and implemented in 1991.

L

- Laskar Jihad: FKAWJ militia led by Ja'far Umar Thalib, especially active in the Moluccas conflict from 2000–2002.
- Laskar Mujahidin: general term designating militias other than Laskar Jihad that fought in the Moluccas from 2000–2002.

- Latihan Mujahid Dakwah (LMD): training for preachers implemented in the 1970s by Imaduddin Abdurrahmin at the Salman Mosque of the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB), one of the bastions of militant Islamic revival. The three-day training was called 'training of preacher combatants'.
- Lembaga Dakwah Kampus (LDK): *dakwah* centres on campus where political Islam re-emerged in the 1980s. As of 1994, these new *dakwah* cadres succeeded in being elected to senates representing students at the University of Indonesia.
- Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia (LIPI, Indonesian Institute of Sciences): National Research Centre of Indonesia.
- Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam dan Arab (LIPIA, Jakarta Institute of Islamic and Arabic Studies): institute of learning linked to the Al-Irsyad Indonesian reformist movement and to Saudi Arabia.
- M**
- Madhhab, mazhab* (A): school of Islamic law. There are four schools in Sunni Islam: Shafi'i, Hanafi, Maliki and Hanbali.
- Madrasah (pl. *madaris*) (A) [seminary]: in the Muslim world, institution of learning in theology and law catering to many levels and training various types of staff for judicial and religious institutions of Muslim communities. In Indonesia, a Muslim school (public or private). After 1975, most have adopted the syllabus of non-religious public schools with, in addition, religious education mostly accounting for 30 per cent of the syllabus.
- Majelis Dakwah Islamiyah (MDI, Council of Islamic Predication): predication body created in 1978 and supported by the government.

- Majelis Islam A'laa Indonesia (MIAI, Supreme Islamic Council of Indonesia): federation of Muslim organisations formed in 1937 which subsequently became Masyumi.
- Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI, Indonesian Council of Mujahidins): organisation of Indonesian Islamist militants who came together in August 2000 to struggle for the implementation of Islamic law in Indonesia. It was headed by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir.
- Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (MPR, People's Consultative Assembly): assembly tasked with electing the president and vice-president and voting the main policy outlines for the Executive and the Parliament (DPR). Under normal circumstances, it is convened every five years.
- Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara (MPRS, Provisional People's Consultative Assembly): name given to MPR assemblies held during the post-1965 period of transition.
- Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia (Masyumi Muslims of Indonesia): created in 1943, it became the political party of modernist Muslims until its ban by Soeharto in 1960.
- Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI, Council of Indonesian Ulama): semi-official Council of Indonesian Ulama.
- Malapetaka lima belas januari (Malari, the Catastrophe of 15 January 1974):* term designating the violent demonstrations that broke out on this date in Jakarta against corruption, abuses of authority by the government and Japanese control over the Indonesian economy.
- Malino: accords that ended — or at least considerably reduced — the conflict in the Moluccas (1999–2002).
- Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF): armed group fighting for independence and an Islamic state in the south of the Philippines.

- Mufti (A) [jurist]: one authorised to deliver fatwas (*fatâwâ*).
- Muhammadiyah: Muslim organisation founded in 1912 with a ‘reformist’ dimension — purifying the practice of Islam in Indonesia (of customs and Sufism) in line with Wahhabism — and also a ‘modernist’ dimension, multiplying its schools and according more importance to non-religious subjects, thus contributing to the integration of strict Muslim milieux into the national education system. Muhammadiyah’s vote is divided between Islamic parties such as PAN, PPP, PBB and PKS, as well as Golkar.
- Mushrik* (A): polytheist.
- N**
- Nahdlatul Ulama (NU): association of ulama formed in 1926 in East Java to defend traditionalist Islam practices, initially in Arabia where Wahhabism exerted its influence, but also in Indonesia where new reformist Muslim movements tried to cleanse Islam of Sufi practices and challenged the traditionalist’s authority over text interpretations. NU was not resistant to the modernisation of education. One of the co-founders of NU was Hasyim Asy’ari, grandfather of Abdurrahman Wahid who became President of Indonesia from October 1999–July 2001. The political party closest to NU was PKB in 1999, 2004 and 2009, but NU members also vote for PPP and Golkar, amongst others.
- Negara Islam Indonesia (NII, Islamic State of Indonesia): declared by Kartosoewiryo in 1949. After the execution of its founder in 1962, this Darul Islam movement re-formed covertly under the New Order. In the 1990s the term NII or N sebelas (N eleven) referred to an Islamist grouping.

- Ngruki: name also given to Abu Bakir Ba'asyir's *pesantren* Al-Mukmin, after the village where it is located on the periphery of Solo (Central Java).
- Normalisasi Kehidupan Kampus* (NKK, Normalisation of Campus Life): designates the increased control over political expression on Indonesian campuses after 1978.
- O**
- Orde baru [New Order]: regime under Soeharto that progressively replaced the 'Guided Democracy' under Soekarno, Orde lama (Old Order) from 1965 to 1968, and which ended with the fall of Soeharto in May 1998.
- P**
- Padri: designates the Muslim Reformists involved in the war of Minangkabau in West Sumatra in the first half of the nineteenth century. The term comes from the expression '*orang Pidari*' or 'men of Pidari', in reference to the port of Pidie from where pilgrims left for Mecca.
- Pam Swakarsa Umat Islam (or Pamswakarsa, abbreviation of Pasukan Pengamanan Swakarsa Umat Islam, private security groups of the Muslim community): militias put in place during President Habibie's rule and which were particularly active in November 1998, during the convening of the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR).
- Pancasila* (S): national ideology since 1945, from the Sanskrit *panca* (five) and *sila* (principles). The latest version of *Pancasila* comprises:
- 1) belief in one God,
 - 2) just and civilised humanity,
 - 3) Indonesian unity,
 - 4) democracy conducted with wisdom in accord and representation,
 - 5) social justice.

- Partai Amanat Nasional (PAN, National Mandate Party): close to Muhammadiyah in the post-Soeharto period.
- Partai Bulan Bintang (PBB, Crescent Star Party): close to DDII, calls for the implementation of the sharia. A very minor but vocal party.
- Partai Demokrasi Indonesia (PDI, Indonesian Democratic Party) and Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (PDI-P, Indonesian Democratic Party-Struggle): one of the political parties that pushed for Reformasi. Minority party under the New Order and heir of nationalist, secular and Christian parties forced to merge in 1973, it gained in strength after the election of Megawati Soekarnoputri as its leader in 1993. Megawati's PDI later took on the name of PDI-P, adding the P for *Perjuangan* (Struggle).
- Partai Demokrat (PD, Democratic Party): new party created before the elections of 2004 under the guidance of General Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, who became elected Indonesia's President in 2004 and 2009.
- Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS, Prosperous Justice Party): new name of Partai Keadilan (PK, Justice Party). Emerged from the *usrohl tarbiyah* movement. Its share of votes (then PK) went from 1.3 per cent in 1999 to more than 7 per cent in 2004 and 2009.
- Partai Muslimin Indonesia (Parmusi, Indonesian Muslim Party): modernist Islamic party founded in 1968 after the government refused to rehabilitate Masyumi, which was banned by Soekarno in 1960. Muhammadiyah disengaged itself from Parmusi in 1970.
- Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP, United Development Party): sole Muslim party authorised under the Soeharto regime.
- Partai Rakyat Demokratik (PRD, Democratic People's Party): small leftist party in 1999.

Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia (PSII, Indonesian Islamic Association Party):	heir of Sarekat Islam (SI, Islamic Association), the first and largest mass Muslim nationalist organisation. In 1973, it had to integrate with PPP and took up its old name, Sarekat Islam.
Pelajar Islam Indonesia (PII, Association of Muslim High School Students):	Muslim high school and college students' association.
Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia (PRRI, Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia):	opposition government that arose against Soekarno and the rising Communist Party in 1958 in West Sumatra. It was suppressed within a few months.
Pergerakan Mahasiswa Islam Indonesia (PMII, Muslim Students of Indonesia Movement):	student organisation of Nahdlatul Ulama.
<i>Pesantren</i> (J):	Islamic boarding school founded by a kiai, initially in villages far from the cities. The students, <i>santri</i> , are boarders and used to take charge of the housekeeping and cooking themselves.
<i>Pesantren kilat</i> (J):	intensive religious class dispensed over a short period, often during the month of Ramadan.
Persatuan Islam (Persis, Islamic Union):	created in 1923 in Bandung, this radical reformist movement to which Mohammad Natsir, Prime Minister in 1950, belonged, wielded an important influence on Indonesian Islam.
Piagam Jakarta:	see Jakarta Charter.
Piagam Madinah:	Medina Charter, concept proposed in 2002 by PKS to replace the Jakarta Charter, which accords each religion equal treatment and allows it to implement its own religious law, including the sharia for Muslims.

President of the Republic: the 1945 Constitution introduced a presidential regime but the president's powers have been considerably reduced since 1999. The MPR has the power to strip the president of his powers — as it did on 23 July 2001 when it cut short Abdurrahman Wahid's mandate.

Pribumi (J): 'son of the soil' or native Indonesian, used in particular to discriminate against Chinese Indonesians.

R

Reformasi: name given to the 'reform' movement that arose in 1998 in Indonesia, encompassing not only a change in government but also a long-term reform of institutions, moving towards greater democracy.

Remaja masjid [youth of the mosques]: groups of youths rallied around a mosque.

Rois aam (A): supreme leader, the highest position within Nahdlatul Ulama.

S

Salaf (A) [old]: in Indonesia, older type of *pesantren* where non-religious education is absent or minimal.

Salafiyya (A): movement of the modern era born in the nineteenth century that aimed to reconcile Islam and modernity and advocated a return to Islam of the beginnings — that of the Prophet and his companions (*salâf*). It was highly critical of theologians and Sufi practices. In the past decades, the term 'Salafism' or 'Salafist' denotes rather the most strictly puritanical Salafists.

Santri (J): student of *pesantren*, Islamic boarding schools in Java; practising Muslims (as opposed to *abangan*).

- Sarekat Islam (Islamic Association): nationalist movement created in 1912 in Surabaya, evolving from Sarekat Dagang Islam, an association of Muslim merchants and traders. It later became a political party and merged with other parties within PPP in 1973. See Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia (PSII).
- Shafi'i school of law: according to the jurist Shafi'i, one of the four major theological and law schools of Sunni Islam, largely the majority in Indonesia and present in all of Southeast Asia and in the Northern Caucasus (Daghestan). Characterised by a certain literalism and puritanism. Also called Shafi'i School.
- Sharia (A): Islamic law, that is, the rules revealed in the Qu'ran and the Traditions forming the basis of Islamic law, thus a general term to designate divine law in its entirety. Islamists sometimes use it in the narrow sense of 'punishments' (*hudûd*).
- Sheikh (A): in Sufism, spiritual authority heading a mystic Muslim order or one of its branches.
- Shirk* (A): associationism or association of God with other divinities or with Man, condemned by Islam as being contrary to the principle of monotheism (*tauhid*).
- Shûrâ* (A): the principle of consultation.
- Sunna (A): normative custom or precedent based on the example of the Prophet Muhammad, consigned by the traditionists after the death of the Prophet. Imam al-Shafi'i introduced its acceptance as the basis of Islam after the Qu'ran.
- Syuriah (A): supreme council of Nahdlatul Ulama, composed exclusively of ulama with recognised religious knowledge.

T

- Tafsir* (A): commentary of the Qu'ran.
- Tablilan* (A): prayers recited for the deceased.
- Tanfidziyah (A): executive body of some Muslim organisations (NU, MMI).
- Tarekat* (A):
 1) 'path' that leads to God through mystic knowledge;
 2) religious brotherhood or mystic order.
- Tasawwuf* (A): the act of devoting oneself to the mystic life, of becoming a Sufi.
- Tauhid, tawhid* (A): uniqueness of God, monotheism.
- Transmigrasi*
 [Transmigration]: government programme to displace populations from overpopulated islands such as Java to less densely populated islands (Sumatra, Kalimantan, Irian Jaya, etc.).

U

- Ulama: Muslim scholar mastering Islamic religious sciences. sing. *'ālim*. In Indonesian, 'ulama' is both singular and plural.
- Umma*: the entire Muslim community (in Indonesian, *umat islam*).
- Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN, State Islamic University): name given after 1998 to major institutes of higher Islamic learning, previously called IAIN.
- Usroh* (A) [family]: organisation concept based on the Muslim Brotherhood model where militants learn to live fully in accordance with the rules of Islam in small groups of 10–15 persons.
- Ustad* (A): religious teacher, title often given to non-Javanese ulama or to new religious preachers or teachers trained outside of a traditional *pesantren*.

W

Wakaf, waqf (A): property donated for religious purposes, which cannot be sold or transferred.

Wali (A): designates a saint in Islam. One who is 'close to God'.

Z

Zakat (A): religious tax due annually at a rate of 2.5 per cent of the disposable income.

Zinâ (A): sexual relations considered illicit by Islamic law, including adultery, fornication, prostitution, homosexuality and all extra-marital sexual relations.

Ziarah, ziyârâ, (A): (non-canonical) pilgrimage, generally to the tomb of a saint.

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