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## Socialisation of the Islamic Terrorist: The Case of Indonesia

Joshua Snider

*University of Notre Dame Australia*

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Socialisation of the Islamic Terrorist: The Case of Indonesia

Presented for the degree of  
Master of Arts, University Notre Dame Australia

2008

By  
Joshua R. Snider

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary educational institution.

Joshua R. Snider

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I dedicate this thesis to my mother.

*Abstract:*

As the world's largest Muslim country, the resurgence of Islamist religiosity in Indonesia over the past 10 years has been a source of great concern for security and terrorism analysts. In an effort to shift away from the sort of discourse that explains violent Islamist religiosity in Indonesia as an offshoot of Middle East politics and the policy demands of the Global War on Terror, my specific field of interest in this thesis surrounds processes of political socialization and what exactly drives the transformation process from those nominally influenced by various kinds of revisionist conservative theology to those that become willing to commit acts of violence in Indonesia. Thus I will draw from the current situation in Indonesia to argue that the vast and complex trajectories involved in the radicalization processes of Islamist terrorists demands a level of discourse that transcends simple theoretical typologies. All too often analysis in this field of inquiry ascribes 'the drivers' of the radicalization process to rest in either societal grievances or a version of flawed theology.

Certainly, in the wake of attacks on western targets in Bali as well as the Jakarta Marriott and Australian Embassy bombings there was some justification for the assessment that Indonesia had the potential to become another violent flashpoint in the global war on terror. In addition to the attacks themselves, many cited the growing traction of various Islamist groups in the post New Order strategic environment as prima facie evidence that Indonesia was Islamizing (and thus radicalizing) at an alarming rate. But five years on there is a clear need to reassess both the traction of neo-fundamentalist Islamism and patterns of radicalization in Indonesia. While the Indonesian authorities deserve praise for the professional manner in which they have taken down Jemmah Islamiyah cells, the reason that flashpoint Indonesia hasn't evolved as some terrorism analysts predicted is because they fundamentally misunderstood the threat from the outset. Thus I will demonstrate that while the political socialization of the Islamic terrorist in Indonesia is tied to some extra-regional phenomena, the most potent dynamics driving violent transformation in the socialization process are in fact intimately tied to a well-established pattern of structural violence 'hardwired' into the political discourse of the nation-state.

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## Introduction

From radical preachers in London and Paris, to bloody insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan, to sporadic acts of Jihadist violence in Indonesia, the past decade has seen the contentious issue of hard line Islam and the radicalisation of young men enter the lexicon of public discourse with unprecedented interest. Whilst we see the end result, assessing the processes by which certain groups of people become willing and inspired to commit acts of violence presents many methodological problems and seems particularly vulnerable to politicisation by those looking to advance the idea of a civilizational confrontation between the west and Islamic worlds. In this thesis, I will draw from the current situation in Indonesia to argue that the vast and complex trajectories involved in the radicalisation processes of Islamist terrorist demands a level of discourse that transcends simple theoretical typologies. All too often, analysis in this field of inquiry ascribes 'the drivers' of the radicalization process to rest in either societal grievances or flawed theology.

Certainly, in the wake of attacks on western targets in Bali as well as the Jakarta Marriott and Australian Embassy bombings there was some justification for the assessment that Indonesia had the potential to become another violent flashpoint in the global war on terror. In addition to the attacks themselves, many cited the growing traction of various Islamist groups as prima facie evidence that Indonesia was Islamising (and thus radicalising) at an alarming rate. However, five years on there is a clear need to reassess both the traction of neo-fundamentalist Islamism and patterns of radicalisation in Indonesia. Whilst the Indonesian authorities deserve praise for the professional manner in which they have taken down Jemmah Islamiyah (JI) cells, the reason that flashpoint Indonesia hasn't evolved as some terrorism analysts predicted is because they fundamentally misunderstood the threat from the outset. They got it wrong in

several key areas. First, by engaging in an oversimplified understanding of the Islamist label as one that represents a monolithic set of means and ends, they fundamentally misjudged the culpability of Islamic religiosity in the radicalisation process. Second, there was a tendency to gloss over a series of complex local dynamics in favour of placing these local events into a global calculus. Beyond these core miscalculations the ground is shifting once again in the debate over processes of radicalisation, which requires a recalibration of scholarly attention. In Indonesia and elsewhere rather than seeing the manifestation of Islamism as a confrontational ideology to western hegemony the neo-fundamentalists, struggling to justify their own position, are shifting back to an agenda of domestic Islamisation. In case of JI, a report published by the International Crisis Group (ICG) indicates that the group has shifting from favouring western targets to a more localized policy agenda – including the targeting of judges who refuse to enforce Sharia law.

To unpack the theme of radicalisation in the context of the complex Indonesian environment this thesis will engage several different modes of analysis. Generally, in this thesis I will approach the theme of radicalization from the point of view of the complex relationship between the forces of Islam and the institutions of the nation-state. I take it as axiomatic that beyond specific types of theological interpretation, the role of the nation-state is of crucial importance in understanding at a macro level the process by which seeds of violent religiosity are sewn. To this end, the upcoming chapters will engage in an in-depth discussion on the role of the Islamism within the framework of the nation-state, first on a global level looking at the evolution of the Islamist expression as it impacted the discourses of nation-states in the Arab world and South Asia and then as it impacted the development of the Indonesian nation-state. This thesis will challenge the very common view that Islamist violence occurred in Indonesia in early 2000s solely within the framework of the post September 11 environment.



Through my discussion on linking Islamism to the project of Indonesian nationalism I will demonstrate the consistent presence of forces that maintain a project to Islamise the state. Moreover, I will highlight the co-optation and subjugation of Islamist forces at the hand of secular nationalist leaders who have seen using Islamism as an effective means by which to keep other ideological forces in check. From there, my discussion will shift to specific theoretical typologies of radicalisation and I will engage a case study of two leading Salafi-Jihadist groups.

Following a comprehensive methodology and literature review the second chapter of my thesis will specifically address the development of Islamism from both a theoretical and historical perspective. Given that the dominant field of literature on Islamic terrorism generally and processes of radicalization more specially, operate on the assumption that Islamism is a uniquely transformative terrorist ideology that inspires acts of violence, a comprehensive and nuanced discussion of the evolution of this phenomenon is necessary before I can begin to explore these dynamics in the Indonesian context. Thus, the second chapter will engage a broad discussion of the various manifestations of the Islamist revivalism and will analyse the phenomenon through four different styles of activism and will discuss at length the complex ideological and theological rifts within these waves of activism, ranging from the austere Salafism of the Arabian Peninsula to the style of Brotherhood that took root in Egypt in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In highlighting these distinct waves, this chapter will also discuss the role of the Islamist agenda within the nation-state in the late 19<sup>th</sup> to mid 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and demonstrate that whilst specific theology played a part in the evolution of Islamism, the evolution of Islamism as a violent vanguard movement, withdrawn from society occurred as the result of secular political processes.

Having established the ideological cleavages within the Islamist space globally, the third chapter will address the theme of Islamism from the point of view of the development of modern Indonesia. The first area of consideration in

this chapter will be the modes of transmission of Islamism from the Middle East into the region and the impact this had on stirring anti-colonial sentiment. In addition to discussing the connection with the Middle East, this chapter will also explore the complex delineations within the archipelago's Muslim space and highlight the multitude of complex debates over interpretations and the precise role of Islam in the affairs of the state. Following this, the third chapter will evaluate some of the major dynamics leading up to Indonesian independence and will assess the important role Islam played in that process. Specifically, I will address the Japanese radicalisation of the region's Islamist voice and their attempt to spurn anti-colonial sentiment by using forces and institutions of Islam. In addressing the role of Islam in the immediate post World War Two era, the analysis in the third chapter will delineate the complex role of Islam in the debate over the parameters of Indonesian nationalism and will further highlight the extent to which these questions have gone unresolved. The third chapter will more specifically evaluate the role and dynamics of the Islamist movement within both the Sukarno and Suharto regimes and how both regimes attempted, through a variety of means, to both harness and subjugate the power of Islam for their own ends and in so doing, set the tone for manifestations of violent religiosity later on.

The fourth chapter specifically addresses the complex role of Islam in the post Suharto period and raises a number of issues related to the integration of various Islamists movements into the broader pattern of structural violence that emerged throughout the New Order period. This chapter will evaluate the extent to which the conclusion that Islamist ideology in of itself is uniquely violent and transformative is problematic. The analysis raised in the fourth chapter will demonstrate the extent to which the forces of Islam have been co-opted and used by people with distinctly secular agendas to achieve and maintain certain power structures.

The fifth chapter will engage the theme of radicalisation in both a

theoretical and practical way. I will discuss at length two leading theories on radicalisation and will evaluate the applicability of these theories in the Indonesian context. Following this, I will discuss a new way of looking at the theme of radicalisation that engages a more regionally appropriate and nuanced view taking into account the basis of analysis established in the two preceding chapters. The theoretical typology I will propose, the five drivers approach, will argue that processes of violent transformation in the radicalisation process need to be analysed through a set of five independent socialising drivers, being social network, leadership, ideology, time pressure and criminality. The final area of consideration will be the presentation of a case study looking at two leading Salafi Jihadist organizations, Laskar Jihad and JI, two of the most effective and prodigious organizations that have adopted a violent discourse.

The theme of radicalisation and processes of violent transformation within that process are complex and above all else the analysis I will present in the upcoming chapters seeks to problematise the assumption that it is possible to ascribe processes of violent transformation on to either versions of flawed theology or societal grievance.

## **Chapter 1: Methodology and Literature Review**

The current state of scholarship on the radicalisation process of Islamists in Indonesia is fundamentally underdeveloped. Preferring to look at issues like network structure, global connectivity and funding streams, experts in the field have been slow to engage in a comprehensive examination of the radicalisation process itself. So, at its core the task of this research project is to contribute (albeit in a very limited capacity) to the field of scholarship by investigating the causal relationship between the dissemination of ultra orthodox theological revisionism and the increased number of Jihadi incidents across the Indonesian archipelago. In doing so, it is my intention to contribute to the development of a theoretical typology that assists in explaining the transformation of conservative Islamists into violent Jihadis.

From an empirical and methodological standpoint, current scholarship from western analysts on the theme of radicalism and the radicalisation process in Indonesia is underdeveloped. The most widely circulated research in the field has been focused very narrowly on understanding Jihadi cell structure and global connectivity associated with these cell networks. As a result, in the Southeast Asian region there exists a fairly well-traversed field of scholarship that has addressed virtually every aspect of Jemmah Islamiyah (JI). It is known, with some certainty how JI functions, its aims and motivations, how it recruits members and approximately how many members it counts throughout the archipelago. Thus, while a detailed understanding of one particular group has been gained, this understanding has been gleaned without looking at a far more complex set of issues in the radicalization process itself. The traditional security studies analysis isn't without merit, but its utility has clear limits. There has been an unfortunate conformity of opinion around the principle that we can smash cells without also engaging in a detailed analysis of the social contexts that transform religious conservatives in violent killers. The lack of nuance among many western

scholars may be due in some part to the fact that the dominant field of analysts in the field have come from emerging “terrorism studies” industry and lack a comprehensive social science approach to the subject. One could also postulate that the deficiencies in current research reflect nature and timeliness of the subject matter and has been specifically served the needs of policy practitioners for whom the complexities of the socialisation process of individual Jihadis have been peripheral to fighting a ‘global war on terror.’ Beyond the lack of scholarly nuance, we also have ‘levels of analysis’ disagreements among academics and analysts looking to justify their own research agendas to universities and governments. Despite the strides that have been made in understanding Islamism and root causes of radicalism, the major issue preventing the development of a consistent theoretical framework in this field is the continued presence of academic fiefdoms. Not only do fights between disciplines emerge, but fights within them. Thus, situations develop where thematic experts and political scientists are pitted against regional experts, usually anthropologists and sociologists. Regional specialists often reject outside comparison and hold firmly to the contention that only they have the depth of knowledge necessary to weigh in. Thematic experts, while not entirely dismissive of their regionalists colleagues, are by the nature of their specialty often reductionist in view, searching for a mechanism to order the realities of Indonesia (and the region) into a global calculus. Essentially, anthropologists, sociologists, theologians, psychologists, security studies and IR scholars and political economists are all arguing that their level of analysis is most fitting to assess the theme of violent transformation in the radicalisation process.

#### *Part 1: Research Methodology*

To unpack the complex trajectories involved in the violent transformation of Jihadists, in this thesis I will engage several different methodological typologies to explore the theme of radicalisation ranging from political history analysis to

theoretical, and a comparative group case study. In a field of inquiry as complex as radicalisation processes, it would be highly problematic to delve into this field without first engaging a broad discussion on the complex delineations within the Islamist rubric and its role in the evolution of Indonesia. To this end, the first several chapters of this thesis will employ a political history analysis on the theme of Islamism first, on a global level, and then the role of Islamism in the development of the Indonesian nation-state and in the post Suharto period. By presenting a detailed political history of Islamism, both in a global and Indonesian context, it is my intent to question some of the core assumptions that have come to dominate analysis in the field. In particular, I will use the levels of analysis presented in the first part of the thesis to question the assumption that there is a prima facie causal relationship between modes of religious expression and violent transformation.

Following the political history analysis presented in the second through to fourth chapters, the fifth chapter will engage the theme of radicalisation and propose a new framework for looking at this theme in the Indonesian context. To test the typologies of radicalisation I present a comparative case study on two leading Salafi-Jihadist organizations in Indonesia. In looking at a theme as complex as radicalisation, case studies are particularly helpful as they allow for the exploration of certain dynamics in a way that other analytic frameworks do not. Thus, from a methodological perspective I use the case study approach to highlight a series of practical examples that demonstrate the complexity of the radicalization problem. Moreover, a case study analysis will allow me to test both, the viability of the approach I propose, and to highlight the weakness of other major approaches discussed. The case studies will engage a broad set of comparative criterion such as background, aims/ideology, targets and current operational status and will not be evaluating the specific circumstances of individual terrorists.

My decision to direct the focus of the case study towards specific groups, rather than individuals, is borne from a number of realities including, most significantly, the lack of in-depth analysis and quality of the data on individual terrorists in Indonesia that would be necessary to construct comprehensive individual case studies. Thus, while there is no shortage of public statements from incarcerated Bali bombers, these data sets are not helpful in engaging a sound social science analysis on the theme of radicalisation because of their excessive focus on grievance and ideology, which are precisely the levels of analysis I wish to move away from. However, because the field of radicalisation is so under-theorised, the data available from open-source channels is not helpful data on the theme of radicalization and thus poses some inherent problems.

This project contains many structural limitations that are worthy of some clarification. First, I do not speak Bahasa Indonesia and as such have probably been unable to access important data. I am aware of this limitation and have attempted to work as best I can with publicly available research in English. Furthermore, the economic and time constraints of an MA thesis did not allow for either; the translations of books and documents into English, or for an extensive field work component. As a result, there will be poignant areas that this thesis does not address. In terms of data gathering I did not have access to classified material either through being in the direct employ of the government or through non-official channels. However, if I had had access to this sort of data, its use is highly problematical. The use of detention and interrogation records presents many ethical and methodological problems and reliability of any data gained under such circumstances is questionable, especially given that much of it is unverifiable and thus beyond scholarly critique. This reality reflects my choice to focus on a broad case study rather than upon in-depth individual case studies.

## *Part 2: Literature Review*

To date the depth of scholarship devoted to the general theme of radical Islam in Indonesia and specifically to the sociological radicalisation process of Jihadis has left much to be desired. Certainly, the rise of Islamism in different parts of the world coinciding with various acts of terrorism has given rise to significant amounts of scholarship, and while some aspects of this scholarship is helpful and innovative, the core issue of determining the tipping-point in the radicalization process remains fundamentally under-theorised by current scholarship.

Because of the many theoretical approaches that need to be employed to understand the radicalisation process, relevant scholarship in the field is varied, complex, and multidisciplinary and draws from fields spanning the social sciences. Thus, the relevant scholarship generally fits into several broad categories. The first examines Islamist thought at a global macro level and is represented most significantly by the father of political Islamism, Sayyid Qutb, with significant and relevant scholarly contributions from the likes of Olivier Roy and Gilles Kepel. The next important category of analysis examines theoretical typologies of modern terrorism and political violence on both a global and regional level and is represented by the likes of Bruce Hoffman, Mark Jergensmeyer, Rohan Gunaratna, Zachery Abuza and Greg Barton. On the theme of political Islam and the rise of radical Islamism in the context of the Indonesian nation-state Greg Fealy, Virginia Hooker, Giora Eliraz, Donald Porter, Robert Hefner, Jacques Bertrand and John Sidel and have all written important pieces of analysis worthy of review in this thesis. The final category of literature explores the theme of radicalisation, here analysis provided by David Wright-Neville, Fadhali Moghaddam, Ehud Springzak and various reports from the ICG all provide cogent levels of analysis that are worthy of further consideration.



### ***Literary Cluster 1: On the origins of political Islam***

Before we can examine the main literary works on Islamist discourse and the radicalisation process in the Indonesian context, it is first necessary to discuss the relevant literature on the evolution, growth and historical antecedents of global Sunni Islamism and the means by which this was transitioned into a “modernist” liberation ideology. Set against the backdrop of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and European Colonial occupation of Muslim lands, there emerged a cabal of thinkers from al-Azra University in Cairo that revolutionised the interpretation of Islamic theological doctrine from one of classical didactical jurisprudence to that of a modern socio-political liberation ideology. In this context, the works and discourse of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammed Abduh and later Sayyid Qutb are of prima-facie value. By way of a contextual caveat, it is necessary to stress that by discussing the influence of thinkers like Qutb and Afghani I am not implying that the neo-revisionist views of these men are wholly responsible for the rise of Islamist ideology in Indonesia. While it is clear that the “al-Azra thinkers” have influenced some elements of neofundamentalist movement (notably JI and Majelis Mujahideen Indonesia (MMI)), it is also clear that Dural Islam, the biggest Islamist movement in the Archipelago was inspired by the classic jurisprudence strain of Islamist thought advanced by the likes of academics as will be discussed in this thesis.

In the wake of the September 11 attacks the world’s gaze has turned to radical Islam and supposed project to ‘understand’ the terrorist mindset, as such an ever increasing amount of literature has captured the world’s imagination and a considerable amount of attention has been given to understanding and dissecting the work of Sayyid Qutb, the founder of Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood, and who was executed by the regime of 'Abd al-Nasr in 1966. While Qutb is often credited as the ‘father of radical Islam,’ many of his ideas were based on the on the project of two great Egyptian thinkers, Jamal Afghani and Muhammed Abduh.

Thus, before we can engage in a substantive discussion on Qutb, it is first necessary to analyse the project of Afghani. While Afghani's work has not been directly published in English, Nikki Keddie's "*Sayyid Jamal Ad-din Al-afghani: A Political Biography*" remains the most authoritative analysis of this work and provides an excellent guide to his life and ideology. In it, Keddie establishes Afghani's career as a thinker and activist and discusses the impact of his work on the Islamic world and how this continues to be a source of inspiration and controversy (Keddie, 2001). Afghani's project of Islamic modernism, developed in his lectures, polemics, short essays, and newspaper columns was based on the idea of finding a *modus vivendi* between traditional Islamic culture and the philosophical and scientific challenges of the modern West. Essentially, Keddie argues that Afghani took a middle position between blind Westernisation and its wholesale rejection by the traditional 'ulama', and that his basic assumption was shared by the whole generation of the 19th century Muslim thinkers and activists, being that modern Western science and technology are essentially separable from the ethos and manners of European nations and can and should be acquired by the Islamic world without necessarily accepting the theological and philosophical consequences emerging from their application in the Western context (Keddie 1984, Keddie2001). Afghani's call for the independence of individual Muslim nations has been a key factor in the development of the so-called "Islamic nationalism" and as such, Afghani became a major source of inspiration for such global revivalist movements as the Muslim Brethren of Egypt, Jama`at-i Islami and Hizbut ut'Tahrir of Pakistan.

In tracing the evolution of literature on the rise of Islamist thought, Sayid Qutb is, without question, the most talked about thinker to emerge in his generation. His first work '*Social Justice in Islam*' was published in 1949 after a sojourn in the United States. In it, Qutb discusses his perceptions of the persistence of gross socio-economic inequality in most Muslim societies, the need

for viewing Islam as a totality, imperatively demanding comprehensive implementation, and the depiction of the West as a neo-crusading force. Qutb's last and most influential work '*Ma'alim fi-I-Tariq (Milestones)*' published in 1964, would have the deepest impact on shaping Islamist thought. Whether Qutb intended it as the Islamist version of Lenin's '*What is to be done*' is debatable (Fealy & Bubalo 2006: 16). As an interpretive work, Adnan Mussallam's '*From Secularism to Jihad: Sayyid Qutb and the foundations of Radical Islamism*' is also noteworthy. Using the evolution of Sayyid life and writings, Mussallam argues that Qutb, and thinkers like him, seek philosophical refuge in the reactionary rejection of the present and fantasies of some Golden Age that probably never was. Moreover, Mussallam contends that Qutb and other al Azhar thinkers rely too heavily on ultra conservative Salafi (Deobandi) interpretations of the Quran to justify their claims which he claims are the "original" ones, but which many claim contradict the Quran itself – especially the Qutb interpretation on the significance of collective rather than personal Jihad.

In assessing the trajectory of neo-revisionist Islam, especially in the wake of September 11 and the ensuing Global War on Terror many analysts and have sought to link the project of Qutb to Wahhabism – the ultra orthodox Saudi state ideology as two functions of the same ideology – one the extension of the other. Terrorism analysts and al Qaeda 'experts' like Rohan Gunaratna and Zachary Abuza are purveyors of a typology of analysis that constructs a neat equation that casts Qutb's Islamic modernism as responsible for inspiring terrorists, while Wahhabism is somehow responsible for 'radicalising' Muslim subjects around the world. Certainly, the Saudis have used their vast wealth to export Wahhabism. It also true that Saudis gave refuge to various Islamist preachers from around the Arab world in the 1960s and 1970s, which one could argue further radicalised their own ulema. More convincingly, fifteen of the nineteen September 11 hijackers were Saudi nationals. Given this evidence, it is understandable how

analysts have reached the conclusion that the two streams must be working in collusion to advance a broad confrontation with western hegemony. Whilst convenient for policy makers and intelligence services that want actionable intelligence, this type of analysis represents a vast over-simplification of the facts. Here, the noted University of California professor of religious studies Hamid Algar has produced a substantive and accessible work in *'Wahhiabism a Critical Essay.'* In it, Algar deconstructs and challenges many of the theological premises of the Saudi State ideology and challenges the assumption that pure Wahhabism is inherently a terrorist ideology (Algar 2002). He argues that while links can be drawn between al Azra thinkers and Wahabbism these actors are more friends of convenience than real ideological travellers (Algar 2002).

On the development of Islamism in the context of the modern nation-states, *The Trail of Political Islam* by the noted French political historian Giles Kepel eloquently traces the history and failure of political Islam as a socio-religious ideology. Spanning from Morocco to Philippines, Kepel's work highlights the evolution of the Islamist agenda as a broad phenomenon and its attempt to act as a sort of ideological counter-weight to other political experiments (Kepel 2003). Most importantly, Kepel highlights the failure of Islamism as a movement for mass social change and argues that the inability of this movement to gain popular support combined with the policies of specific governments saw portions of the movement withdraw from mainstream political participation into violent activism (Kepel2003). In this context, Kepel argues that the emergence of violent manifestations of Islamism occurred as a direct result of its failure to gain popular mass support and justified, in the mind of thinkers like Qutb, that the reason for the failure of the movement resulted from the weakness of other Islamist leaders and their willingness to compromise with various secular agendas. As a result, Kepel argues that a number of people within the far-right of the Islamist space began to see themselves as an elite moral 'vanguard' with a God-given mandate to Islamise

society from the top down. Interpreted this way the use of violence can be justified against apostate Muslims and governments that do not abide by their agenda (Kepel 2003).

Picking up on a similar trend of analysis, Olivier Roy's influential *Globalized Islam: The Search for the New Ummah* is a seminal work and provides great insight into the development of Islamism in late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Similar to Kepel, Roy argues that violent Islamism arose out of the failure of a series of secular political agendas. However, where Kepel traces the evolution of Islamism as a historical movement, Roy addresses the phenomenon from a sociological perspective and maintains that while Islamism has its roots in the Arab world it has evolved into de-territorialised ideology without a geographic centre (Roy 2004). As such, he argues that the violence of Islamism as represented by the discourse of groups like al Qaeda must be understood outside the context of a unified set of social grievances and/or theological interpretations. Roy further proposes that the experience of volunteers in places such as Afghanistan saw the emergence of what he labels as 'Neofundamentalism agenda,' broadly combining the rejection of political discourse as advocated by the Saudi inspired Salafi ideology with the violent activism of the post Qubtist Muslim Brotherhood (Roy 2004).

### ***Literary Cluster 2: On Terrorism and Political Violence***

Contributing in a more general way to the field of terrorism research is Bruce Hoffman's *Inside Terrorism*, a seminal text on the phenomenon of modern terrorism and political violence. Whilst not concerned specifically with al Qaeda or Southeast Asia, but perhaps more insightful than many a book authored on both subjects. Hoffman's analysis on the historical evolution of terrorism and the terrorist mindset is flawless, and accurately captures the essence of the internationalisation of global terrorism in the 1960s and 1970s. Rather than

conducting a global tour the way Abuza and Gunaratna did, he uses a variety of case studies to explore a range of topics including, the effectiveness of suicide terrorism, the scourge of theologically driven terrorism, the use of new media and new technologies by terrorist organisations, and potential use of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Hoffman is the director of the RAND Corporation's Washington DC operations and an adjunct professor of security studies at Georgetown University and has clearly pitched his work at the informed policy practitioner who may not be an expert in the field of terrorism. For this reason, he captures an effective balance of insight and accessibility.

Equally impressive and significant in the study in religious violence is Professor Mark Juergensmeyer's, *'Terror in the Mind of God.'* He argues that the violence associated with religion is not an aberration but comes from the fundamental structure of the belief system of all major religions. In the first half of the book, he examines case studies from fringe elements all of the world's largest religions justifying violence. He was able to obtain access to some of the most radical religious sects in the world, which significantly increased the potency of the case studies he employed. In the second half of the book he examines some of the sociological and philosophical themes that run common to religious violence around the world. Throughout the book, Juergensmeyer is trying to demonstrate several key concepts: how religious ideas and the sense of religious community have been endemic to cultures of violence from which terrorism has sprung; how the drama of religion has been especially appropriate to the theatre of terror; how images of martyrdom, satanisation and cosmic war have been central to religious ideologies; and how these images and ideas have been agents of social empowerment, personal pride and political legitimisation. He demonstrates all of these points successfully. Like Hoffman's work, *Terror in the Mind of God* is a seminal text in the field of religious violence, and while I do not necessarily agree with all of his findings the book has made a large contribution to my research.

On the theme of Islamist terror generally, and the al Qaeda organization specifically, Rohan Gutaratna's *'Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror'*, is a populist tour de force, and probably the most authoritative account on the global connectivity of the al Qaeda organisation on the market. Gutaratna deserves much credit as an analyst and researcher, he saw and wrote about the threat posed by al Qaeda long before anyone in the intelligence or academic community was interested. What Gutaranta brilliantly captures is the extent to which al Qaeda has latched itself on to various local Muslim grievances across the world, and how these local grievances have become part of the global agenda. He takes the reader on a grand survey and provides a brilliant general picture for the novice reader on how al Qaeda generally functions. He does not spend much time on Indonesia specifically, so there is not a lot of new and relevant data in that regard. Scholarship is split on the continued relevance of al Qaeda. Many argue that without freedom of movement in Afghanistan its operational capacity has been severely limited. Thus, al Qaeda has morphed from that of a multinational terror corporation into that of a franchise operation. Where, once bin Laden was the President and CEO of "Terror Inc.", he is now the figurehead inspiring like-minded groups. Nevertheless, for anyone wanting to understand globalised radical Islam, *Inside al Qaeda* is a must read. Like many scholars engaged in the field I would argue that Gunaratna is too concerned with 'counting guns and bombs' and not concerned enough with exploring the deep political and sociological complexities involved in the radicalisation process and the development of the Islamist world view.

Zachary Abuza's *'Militant Islam in Southeast Asia; Crucible of Terror'* fits squarely in the first category of scholarship. Currently the most populist and accessible work specifically devoted to the theme of radicalism in Southeast Asia, Abuza takes the reader on a country by country tour of Islamic radicalism in Southeast Asia, discussing the organisations, players, means and motivations at

work. While *Crucible of Terror* represented an important innovation in terrorism related scholarship in Southeast Asia it is hard to get past its many deficiencies. First, Abuza presents a wealth of fascinating data related to terror financing and recruiting techniques but his sources are, in too many cases, unverifiable. There is some speculation in the academic community that he was fed information by various intelligence agencies, which may not be necessarily bad or inaccurate just academically unverifiable. Second, there are many minor inaccuracies, which can be forgiven based on the fact that the book is now several years old and new information comes to light all the time. However, my fundamental issue with *Crucible of Terror* has nothing to do with data, these are minor points, my main issue has to do with thematic inference. Many agree that radical Jihadism is a major issue and globally integrated and very sophisticated organisations must be faced. However, Abuza paints a picture (albeit subtly) that any expression of a Muslim identity is tantamount to advocating Salafi Jihadism, missing many complexities and potentially giving the wrong impression. While the reader can not help but be impressed with this work, one also cannot help but be left with the impression that this work has been infused with a healthy dose of neo-conservative paranoia.

More specifically devoted to the theme of radicalism in the region, Greg Barton's *Indonesia's Struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the Soul of Islam* is a small but authoritative volume on the threat posed by JI. Written in the wake of the Bali bombings, Barton traces the religious, cultural and political development of JI and argues that it has important features in common with al Qaeda. Based on extensive research in Indonesia, the book assesses the level of support for JI and examines the Indonesian government's success in dealing with the threat it poses. Barton argues that, while the Indonesian authorities reacted well to events in Bali their subsequent response has been not as effective as commonly assumed. Whilst it could be argued that some of the content presented is dated, in



my view Barton presents a concise 'snapshot' on the many of the complex regional realities driving Islamism in Indonesia.

### ***Literary Cluster 3: Islamism and Indonesian Nation-State***

On the broad theme of Islam in Southeast Asia, Dr. Greg Fealy and Dr. Virginia Hooker (both of the ANU) have recently compiled and edited *Voices of Islam in Southeast Asia: A Contemporary Sourcebook*. This work presents a broad range of primary source translations from across the region and explores in depth such themes as: expressions of faith across the region; the role of Sharia, Islam, the state and governance; gender; and the family, and devotes considerable attention to the theme of radicalism and Jihad. Due to the broad cross-disciplinary nature of the content covered it is hard to critique its content consistently as the themes addressed vary dramatically. But for those of us who are interested in the region but do not speak or read fluent Bahasa and Malay, *Voice of Islam* presents an excellent opportunity to read translated primary sources from the region's leading Muslim thinkers and political leaders. While much of its content does not really pertain to my area of interest it certainly helps one understand Islam's dynamics in the region. On the theme of Islamism and its connection to the traditions and ideologies that emerged in the Middle East, Gioraz Eliraz's *Islam in Indonesia: Modernism, Radicalism and Middle East Dimension* is particularly helpful. Eliraz traces the complex history of the connection between Islamist movements in the Middle East and Indonesian and the dissemination of discourses between the two regions (Eliraz 2004). His work is useful for the purpose of my analysis because he problematises many of the conspiratorial levels of analysis that dominate the field of scholarship. Moreover, Eliraz challenges the assumption that a mysterious cabal of Islamists from the centre of the Muslim world dominate the trajectory of Islamism in Indonesia and his analysis highlights the complex process of indigenisation that takes place between the ideas that emerge in the Middle East and their dissemination into the archipelago.

Thus, he argues that rather than accepting the discourse of Middle Eastern Islamism on a wholesale basis, ideas from the centre of the Muslim world have been adopted in Indonesia through a distinctly local framework.

On the theme of Islamism in the unfolding of Indonesian nationalism, Jacques Bertrand's *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia* and Bob Hefner's *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia* are particularly useful.

Hefner's work broadly traces the role of the Islam in the democratisation of the Indonesian nation-state and outlines the role that various Islamist factions have in the project of Indonesian nationalism (Hefner 2000). Hefner's work is important because he highlights the complex variations that exist within the conservative Islamist space in Indonesia and problematises the hypothesis that there is uniformity amongst the plurality of actors that maintain an agenda to Islamise the Indonesian nation-state. Bertrand's work similarly addresses the theme of nationalism but rather than using religion as the primary level of analysis, he broadly discusses the evolution of the nation-state and the complex set of ethno-political and religious dynamics that were negotiated in arriving at the parameters of Indonesian nationalism and then the conflicts that emerged from lack of consensus on a number of issues. In this context he highlights Islam as one of the key ideological fault lines in the development of post-colonial Indonesian nationalism and the extent to which it has been a source of violent challenge to the state (Bertrand 2004). Bertrand's analysis is important not only because it details the role of Islam in ethno-political dynamics of inter-communal relations, but also because he demonstrates how leaders for distinctly secular ends have used the forces of violent Islamism.

On the role of Islam within the framework of the nation-state Donald Porter's *Managing Politics and Islam in Indonesia* and John Sidel's *Riots, Pogroms and Jihad* are both works worthy of some consideration. In understanding the complex role of Islam within the context of the New Order,

Porter's work is particularly valuable and he succinctly establishes the processes by which Suharto both co-opted and suppressed the forces of Islamism for his own end (Porter 2005). In addition to highlighting the role of Islam in the New Order, Porter also provides a sophisticated theoretical analysis of the "corporatised framework" of the Indonesian nation-state under Suharto and processes by which various groups were used to effectively manage one another to ensure the longevity of the regime. Similar to Porter, Sidel's work engages an analysis that juxtaposes the unfolding of Indonesian nationalism with the upsurge religiosity in the late New Order period (Sidel 2006). He proposes that the prevalence of Islamist violence in the immediate post New Order period occurred as a result of a semi-organised effort on the part of secular elites to maintain legacy power structures in the context of growing social and political change. As a structural Marxist, Sidel is primarily concerned with modes of wealth distribution and maintains that in post New Order Indonesia legacy elites feared the rise of socialism and used forces of Islamism to keep its influence in check (Sidel 2006). Based on this, Sidel questions the applicability of much of what the current field of security and terrorism studies has to offer on the subject of violent religiosity. Rather, he claims that it is problematic to view Islamism in Indonesia as part of a globalising trend and instead argues it needs to be viewed in the context of series of local phenomena (Sidel 2006).

#### ***Literary Cluster 4: Radicalisation***

The field of current literature on the processes of Islamist radicalisation is thin on the ground both in terms of general theoretical typologies and research that addresses the specific dynamics in Indonesia. In terms of general typologies on the radicalisation process, the fifth chapter of this thesis will engage the contributions of several well known analysts including, the likes of Fadali Moghadam and Ehud Sprinzak.

On the theme of radicalisation in the Indonesian context several works are worthy of consideration. Neville-Wright's 2004 article 'Dangerous Dynamics' in *Pacific Review* attempts to construct a sort of theoretical typology of Islamist activism in the Southeast Asian region through a categorisation of various types of Islamist activism, ranging from activist, radical and terrorist. While his work makes an important contribution to the field of literature of processes of radicalisation, his categorical distinctions pose many problems. While there are clear delineations in modes of expression adopted by the different types of Islamist organisations, attempting to understand Indonesian Islamist religiosity through a rigid categorical framework that breaks the Muslim space into four distinct spaces - moderate, conservative, radical and terrorist, is problematic. Not only does his theoretical typology not address processes of transformation, his categorical delineations do not take into account the complex and often fluid relations that exist between different types of activism.

In terms of specific data on terrorist groups in Indonesia the many reports of the International Crisis Group (ICG) headed by Sidney Jones represent the forefront of practical research and have contributed much to our understanding of groups like JI. As big an impact as Jones's scholarship and the ICG reports have made there are limits to the relevance of its applicability. While the reports provide a good background, they lack depth and context and while Jones has done much to dispel some of the editorial style analysis that exists in the field, her work does not adequately address processes of violent transformation.

The radicalisation of nationalism, theology and ethnic discord, be it in Indonesia, Sri Lanka or South Asia, has countless drivers that can be analysed on many levels. At its core, my research seeks to harmonise and retool the existing literature from many disciplines to present a theoretical typology that contributes to the understanding of the radicalization process.

## Chapter 2: Manifesting the Ummah - Rethinking Islamism

To attempt to engage with a subject as multifaceted and complex as the socialization process of Islamist inspired terrorists, it is logical that I begin by engaging the theme of global Islamism, its evolution, and its impact on Indonesian political discourse. Since the attacks of September 11 2001, there has been a considerable amount of attention paid to the linkages between the propagation of Islamist ideology and increasing cadence of violent attacks from groups that claim allegiance to some form of the Islamist cause. Viewed this way, Islamist inspired terrorism represents more than a mere law enforcement dilemma but rather views Islamism as an ideological and existential threat to the Westphalian state system. To reinforce this message, it has become *de rigueur* to argue that Islamists in Indonesia and elsewhere reject democracy and liberalism and want to redraw the geopolitical boundaries of the modern nation-state to either conform more narrowly to the dictates of Islam or in the extreme re-establish the Caliphate on either a global or regional basis. While the Islamist label is broadly accurate in identifying certain groups of people who are committing to Islamising their societies, this is a very broad category that is unhelpful as a discrete categorical division and really does not say much of substance in regards to the radicalization process of those who are committing acts of violence in the name of Islam. Moreover, engaging in deductive logic that casts Islamism as a globally unified predatory force, radicalising seemingly peaceful Muslim youth paints an overly simplistic and problematic picture of the evolution and effects of the Islamist ideology.

In essence, the Islamist label is an umbrella term used to describe a similar but somewhat divergent set of revivalist theological interpretations of Islam that emerged in the Middle East and Persian Gulf from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Thus, before we can assess the radicalising capacity of Islamist ideology in the Indonesian context, we must first understand the evolution of

these Sunni revivalist movements and the many historical and current divisions that exist within the Islamist rubric and the role that these movements played in the evolutions of nation-states in post colonial period. By developing a more nuanced understanding of Islamist thought, we can more accurately assess its role in the radicalisation process.

While I do not believe it is possible to completely de-link Islamist ideology (in its various manifestations) as a *prima facie* driver in the radicalisation process in Indonesia and elsewhere, its terms of reference are so fundamentally misunderstood, under-theorised and over politicised that some in-depth discussion on the use of specific terms is required before we can discuss either the role of Islamism in the evolution of the Indonesia nation-state or the radicalisation process of specific violent Jihadists. Essentially, this chapter will engage several lines of discussion. First, I will introduce some broad definitions of Islamism and the various streams that exist within the rubric of the Islamist worldview. Here I will examine role of revivalism in Islam and then address the evolution of the major revivalist movements in Islam, most notably the puritanical *Wahhabi* movement that emerged in the Arabian Peninsula, the *modernist and neo-revivalist* movements that emerged in the Middle East and South Asia in 19<sup>th</sup> Century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as the emergence of the diverse *Neofundamentalist movements* of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Of further consideration will be the use of descriptive short-hand terms like '*moderate*', '*conservative*' and '*radical*' and an evaluation of the extent to which these categorical short-hands reflect accurately the complex delineations that exist within the evolving global Islamist 'space.'

#### *Part 1: Streams Of Sunni Theological Revivalism*

While all major religions serve as a sort of blueprint for social order, the pervasiveness of Islam as a complete system is worthy of some discussion

before we look more specifically at various stream of revivalism. In analysing this phenomenon, the noted sociologist of religion, Ernest Gellner (1979), argues that two fundamental conditions favoured the greater social pervasiveness of Islam compared to either Judaism or Christianity: its rapid and early political success, and the idea that the divine message is complete and final (2). Gellner further maintains the first inhibits the handing over of some sphere of life to non-religious authority, while the second makes it that much harder to offer rival versions of the blueprint (2). Thus from the outset, one could argue that in a society ordered on these principles, the inherent relationship between the individual and government is fundamentally different to societies where the blueprint of a theologically inspired social order is less pervasive. While Gellner did not focus on Indonesia as such, his insight about the connection between post colonial quest for authentic modernity and radical expressions of theology bear as much relevance in our analysis of Indonesia as his did in French N. Africa.

For analysts and scholars looking at the phenomenon of religiosity and processes of radicalisation, Gellner's insight raises three important and potentially controversial questions. First, is there something unique in Islam that, by its very nature, possesses the ability to inspire violent religiosity? Second, is the transition from simple revivalism to violent religiosity more likely to gain traction within the boundaries of a society whose socioreligious blueprint are unmovable? And third, is there a causal relationship between the pervasiveness of Islam as a complete system of temporal and worldly authority and its manifestation through some groups as a violent liberation ideology bent on redrawing the political map in its image? I will leave the first question to theologians, philosophers and newspapers columnists and attempt to engage the second and third questions by analysing the role of history of the main Sunni revivalist movements.

Revivalism in Islam and the "Islamist ideologies" that followed were born from central the idea that the Islamic world was in decline and should be

somehow reformed. The concepts of renewal (*tajdid*) and reform (*islah*) are fundamental doctrinal precepts in the practice of Islam rooted in both the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet. *Islah* is a Quranic term (7:170; 11:117; 28:19) used to describe the reform preached and undertaken by prophets when they warned their sinful communities and called upon them to return to God's path by realigning their lives as individuals and communities within the norms of Sharia (Esposito 2008: 117). *Tajdid* is based on a tradition of the Prophet: "God will send to his *umma* (the Muslim community) at the head of each century those who will renew its faith for it" (Voll 1994). The re-newer (*mujaddid*) is sent at the beginning of each century to restore true Islamic practice and thus regenerate communities that tend, over time, to wander from the straight path (Esposito 2008: 117). The two major aspects of this process are first, a return to the idealism revealed in the Quran and Sunna; and second, the right to practice *ijtihad*, to reinterpret the source of Islam (Rippin 1990). Despite the general tendency in Sunni Islam after the tenth century to (*taqlid*) the consensus of the community, Esposito (2008) notes that great reformers or revivalists such as *Abd al-Wahhab* and *Ibn Taymiyya* in the Arabian Peninsula and *Shah Wali Allah* in India, all claimed the right to function as *mujtahids*, practitioners of *ijtihad*, and thus to reinterpret the word of the Prophet to purify and revitalize their societies (117). In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, these first wave revivalists engaged in a fundamentally internal project, that is, they were primarily concerned with theological renewal and criticised both excesses of the ruling Sufi class and also the prevailing *ulema*'s interpretations of Islamic law and belief, and held the view that these doctrinal miss steps were to be corrected by subordination to true and pristine Islam (118).

#### *Wahhabism – the 'first wave'*

The Wahhabi movement is without question the best known and most influential of



the first wave revivalist movements. Its founder, Muhammad Abd al-Wahhab (1703-92), was trained in law, theology, and Sufism in Mecca and Medina where he was drawn to the Hanbali School, the strictest of the Sunni law schools, and to the writing of the thirteenth century Hanbali jurist, Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328), (Esposito 1988: 118). Recognising his talent for Quranic study, Wahhab's father sent him to study with the disciples of the Shah Wali Allah, a noted Indian theologian who had waged a revivalist campaign against the subcontinent's Sufi population (Aslan 2006: 241). Wahhab's main concern was what he saw as the weakening of Islam by pre-Islamic tradition and the local practices of the Bedouin tribes of central Arabia. For Wahhab, Islam's normative period was the time of the Prophet and early community, and post-Prophetic developments and interpretations of the *ulama* and the law schools were subject to review and re-evaluation in the light of Islam's fundamental sources (Esposito 1988: 118). It is often noted that because he was in Arabia, Wahhab's mode of revivalism was a more literalistic recreation of the life and customs of the early Medina community, a return to the 'pious predecessors' – *as-salaf as-Salih* – the first three generations of the Prophet's followers. Here, Wahhab placed particular emphasis on the central Islamic tenant of monotheism (*tawhid*), and promoted a strict and literal reading of the Quran and Sunna. His goal was to purify Islam of what he saw as innovations (*bid'a*), blind imitation (*taqlid*) and idolatry (*shirk*) – in practice this equated to a virtual assault on mystical and popular Islam – notably Sufism and tradition of saint worship - and Shi'ism (Bubalo & Fealy 2005: 11). For Wahhab, this also included the veneration of Pirs, the intercession of Imams, the commemoration of most religious holidays, and all devotional acts centred on the Prophet Muhammed and sought to outlaw certain rituals that had crept into Islam as it spread out of the tribal confines of the Arabian Peninsula to be absorbed by disparate cultures in the Middle East, Central Asia, Europe, India and Africa (Aslan 2006: 242). The Wahhabis purposefully connected their movement with the first

extremists in the Muslim world, the *Kharijites*, and like their fanatical predecessors, focused their wrath inwards against what they considered to be the failings of the Muslim community.

In addition to Wahhab's ecclesiastic dialectic, his project fundamentally questioned the dominant social and political order of the Arabian Peninsula; challenging both the loyalty of Bedouin tribesmen to their leaders and the religious orthodoxy vested in the Ottoman Sultanate. The noted Islamic historian, Hamid Algar (2002), argues that had it not been for the extraordinary circumstances under which Wahhabism emerged, it would have "passed into history as a marginal and short lived sectarian movement." Aslan (2006) notes that not only was Wahhabism a spiritually and intellectually insignificant movement founded principally on spiritualism and intellectualism, the supposed revivalism Wahhab was advocating was not even considered true orthodoxy by a majority of Sunni Muslims (243). Thus, despite the success of his missionary zeal, it is quite likely that Wahhab's reform movement would have remained no more than one of many messianic movements present in this era if it were not the confluence of geography and patronage. In terms of geography, however, the Wahhabi movement had the good fortune to emerge in the sacred lands of the Arabian Peninsula, where it could lay claim to a powerful legacy of religious revivalism (Aslan 2006: 243). Moreover, his strategic linkage with local tribal chief, Muhammed Ibn Saud, is of incalculable importance in understanding the transition of Wahhabism from a smalltime revival ideology to a politicised state dogma.

The al-Saud – al-Wahhab relationship would eventually evolve into a win-win alliance where the latter would legitimise and help expand Ibn Saud's political authority over the unruly Arabian tribes, while the former would help spread Wahhab's hard line puritan theology (Hourani 2007: 37). Here, religious zeal and military power were united in a religiopolitical movement that waged holy war on the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula conducted by Wahhabi missionary warriors

who referred to themselves as the *Ikhwan* or Brotherhood. The *Ikhwan* destroyed sacred tombs in Mecca and Medina, including those of the Prophet and his companion, and also destroyed the tomb of the Shaiia martyr, Husayn, at Karbala, a coming source on tension between Sunni and Shiia communities (Esposito 1988:199). By the early twentieth century, the consolidation of Arabian tribal families under the al-Saud banner along, with the enmeshment of the Wahhabi or *Muwahidun* (as they call themselves) ulema priestly classes into the ruling elites through marriage, was complete. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was declared first in 1908 and after a brief fit of resistance from the flagging Sultanate, its independence was enshrined in 1932 after Abdul Azziz al-Saud established diplomatic relations with the United Kingdom. The coming petro wealth of the al-Saud family and vast influence this would yield to their Wahhabi ulema brethren would, in the coming decades, shape both the unfolding of global geo-politics and evolution of Islam in every corner of the world – and ostensibly drive the Saudiisation of the global neofundamentalist agenda.

#### *Modernism – the “second wave”*

While pre-modern revivalist movements such as the Wahhabis of the Arabian Peninsula were primarily internally motivated, Islamic modernism was a response to both continued internal weakness and to the external religio-cultural threat of colonialism (Esposito 1988: 125). Thus the response of modern Islamic reformers in the later 19th and early 20th centuries to the impact of the West on Muslim societies, resulted in substantial attempts to reinterpret Islam to meet changing circumstances where, for the first time, much of the Muslim world had lost its political and cultural sovereignty to Christian Europe (Esposito 1988: 126). This process was of course highlighted most famously symbolised by the collapse of the Ottoman Sultanate. Although the Muslim world had endured the Mongol conquests, in time the conquerors embraced Islam (ibid). Colonial rule,

however, eclipsed the institutions of an Islamic state and society – the Sultan, Islamic law and *ulama* administration of education, law and social welfare. For the faithful, this state of affairs raised a series of existential questions on the nature of their own societies like: What had gone wrong in Islam? Was the success of the West due to the superiority of Christendom, the backwardness of Islam or the faithlessness of the community (Esposito 1991: 126) A variety of responses emerged to this state of affairs, ranging from adaptation and cultural synthesis to withdrawal and rejection. Secularists blamed an outmoded tradition and advocated the separation of religion and politics and the evolution of secular nation-states. Thus for the great modernist thinkers of this era - Jamal al-Din-al-Afghani (1839-1897), Mohammed Abduh (1849-1905), and Rashid Rida (1865-1935), the question was how to reposition Islam as western civilisation encroached on its territory.

At the height of British colonialism, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani was fundamental in calling for internal reform to stem the tide of Western influence in the Muslim world and attempted to bridge the gap between secular modernists and religious traditionalists. He believed that Muslims could repel the west, not by ignoring or rejecting the sources of Western strength (science and technology), but instead by reclaiming and reappropriating reason, science and technology, which, he maintained, had been integral to Islam and the great accomplishments of Muslim civilisations (Esposito 1988: 128). Like the Wahhabis of the Arabian peninsula, Afghani rejected the passivity, fatalism and otherworldliness of popular Sufism together with the western secular tendency to restrict religion to personal worship. He countered by preaching an activist, this-worldly Islam: (1) Islam is a comprehensive way of life, encompassing worship, law, government and society; (2) the true Muslim struggles to carry out God's will in history, and thus seeks success in this life as well as the next (Esposito 1988: 128). Unlike the Wahhabis, however, Afghani argued that Islam was a religion of both faith and

science - a dynamic, progressive and creative force capable of responding to the demands of modernity (Donohue & Esposito 1982: 22). Afghani rarely spoke of Islam solely in religious terms and thus, his greatest contribution to Islamic political thought, was his insistence that Islam, detached from its purely religious associations, could be used a socio-political ideology to unite the whole of the Muslim world in solidarity against imperialism (Aslan 2006: 230). While a member of the Educational Council of the Ottoman Empire, Afghani came into contact with a group of intellectuals dubbed the “Young Ottomans” and with this group, developed a reform agenda based on fusing western democratic ideals with traditional Islamic principles. The result was a supranationalist project, commonly referred to as *Pan-Islamism*, whose principal goal was the encouragement of Muslim unity across cultural, sectarian and national boundaries under the banner of a single, centralised, and obviously Turkish, Caliphate (Aslan 2006: 230). In 1871, bolstered by Pan-Islamist agenda, Afghani accepted a position at Cairo’s prestigious Al-Azhar University and while there, befriended Muhammed Abduh, also a student at Al-Azhar University. Under the tutelage of Afghani, Abduh published a number of books advocating a return to the unadulterated values of the *Salafs* (“the pious forefathers) who founded the first Muslim community in Medina. The two founded what would be called the *Salaffiyah* movement. Like Afghani and his revivalists counterparts in the Gulf, Abduh’s immediate focus was on past and the supposed ‘pious forefather.’ Also like the Wahhabis, he advocated the necessity of *Ijtihad* and argued that the only path to Muslim empowerment was to liberate Islam from the grips of the Ulema and their traditionalist interpretations of the Shariah (Aslan 2006: 232). Also like Afghani but unlike Wahhabis, he tried to show that the change and modernity symbolised by the west’s ideas and power were not only compatible with true Islam, they were its necessary implications (Hourani 2007:139). While Abduh did not believe that there needed a division in Islam between the religious and secular realms, he

rejected categorically the possibility of placing secular power in the hands of religious clerics, whom he deemed to be unqualified to lead the Muslim community into a new century (ibid). Instead, he advocated a recalibration of traditional Islamic ideals such that the average citizen could understand and derive practical meaning from. Here, he redefined *shura*, or tribal consultation, as representative democracy; *ijma*, or consensus, as popular sovereignty; and *bay'ah*, or the oath of allegiance, as universal suffrage (Aslan 2006: 232). Thus it could be argued that he envisaged an elite, intellectually driven movement, but wanted to see the evolution of a mass social movement that could meet the aspirational goals of a broad spectrum of Muslim society.

Following the death of Afghani, Abduh joined forces with Rashid Rida (1865-1935). While not considered an intellectual giant of the Islamist movement, Rida was better known as a tactician and strategist. Following Abduh's death in 1905, he took the *Salafiyyah* movement in a decidedly more conservative direction. An admirer of the Wahhabi movement in Arabia, Rida's dialectic was more inclined to focus on the self-sufficiency and comprehensiveness of Islam. Here Rida's conservatism reflected a more restricted understanding of the term *Salaf*, where for Abduh it was a reference to the early Islamic centuries; Rida followed the Wahhabi interpretation that referred specifically to first generation of Muslims and more specifically to the companions of the Prophet (Esposito 1988: 133). Where Abduh and Afghani sought to resolve the inconsistencies between the perceived differences between westernisation and Islam, Rida cast his reformism as the idiom of a defense of Islam against the dangers of the west (Esposito 1988: 134). In this sense, Rida's conservatism of the Salaffiyah movement along with his total rejection of western liberalism as a suitable ideology for the Muslim Ummah, made his brand of Islamic Modernism quite attractive to contemporary thinkers of the Muslim Brotherhood.

While the Pan-Islamist movement of Afghani and Abduh did become a

social movement of sorts, it possessed a number of problems that fundamentally hindered its chances of becoming a viable governing alternative with mass appeal. First, from a structural perspective, the *Salafiyyah* or Pan-Islamist agenda was exceedingly difficult to implement because the spiritual and intellectual diversity that had characterised the Muslim faith made the prospects of achieving religious solidarity across well established sectarian lines very problematic (Aslan 2006: 233). Secondly, the Modernist movement as envisioned by Afghani and Abduh fell victim to historical circumstance, as Egypt, and the Arab world generally, struggled with the collapse of the Ottoman Sultanate, colonisation and the perceived cultural subjugation brought on by British rule. Both the left and right flanks of Egyptian society effectively cannibalised the Pan-Islamist movement for their purposes. At one end of the spectrum Wahhabi activists, who sought to strip Islam of its cultural innovations, rejected the spirit of innovation that Afghani and Abduh had envisaged. At the other end of the spectrum, increasingly large number of secular nationalists throughout the region found the religious ideology of the *Salafiyyah* movement specifically, and Islam generally, to be incompatible with the principal goals of modernisation: political independence, economic prosperity and military strength (Aslan 2006: 233). Ideologically, the biggest challenge to the modernist ideology of Afghani and Abduh would come from the Neorevivalist challenge from groups like the Muslim Brotherhood.

#### *Neo-revivalists – the third wave*

It was in the shadow of the failure of the *Salafiyyah movement* that the Neo-revivalist movement gained prominence. Where the modernist Pan-Islamist movement failed to gain mass appeal, the Neo-revivalists movements, typified by Hasan al-Bana's *Society of the Muslim Brotherhood* in Egypt and Mawlana Mawdudi's *Jamaat – I – Islami* (Muslim Society) in Pakistan, sought to address the challenges faced by the Islamic community in a different way. Like the modernist

movement of Afghani and Abduh, the Neo-revivalists saw the Islamic community of the 20<sup>th</sup> century at a critical crossroads and they acknowledged the internal weakness of their own communities, the external threat posed by westernisation and also the inherent value of science and technology (Esposito 1988: 149). Unlike the modernists, however, the neo-revivalists were more sweeping in their condemnation of the west and assertion of the total self-sufficiency of Islam, and argued that Capitalism and Marxism were man made secular paths and thus alien to the God ordained, “straight path of Islam” (Esposito 1988: 149). Ideologically, the movement blended the world views that informed the activism of the pre-modern revivalist groups like the Wahhabis, with the holistic vision of Islam articulated by the modernist movement of Afghani and Abduh (Esposito 1988: 154). The result was a world-view that espoused Islam as a timeless faith with a transcendent message equally valid in this world and the next.

Muslim Brotherhood is without question the era’s prototypical Neorevivalist organisation. Founded by Hasan al-Bana (1906-1949), an Egyptian schoolteacher in the Suez Canal town of Ismailiyya in 1928, who like the thinkers of the *Salafiyyah movement*, was also concerned with the decline of Islam and corruption of Egyptian secular society (Shadid 2002: 49). For al-Bana the Muslim world’s decline was symbolised by its acceptance of western forms of government and laws and in particular the separation between religious and political authority (Bubalo & Fealy 2005: 13). The answer to this state of affairs lay not in intellectualism of the modernist movement but in *da’wa* or direct activism with a view to spread a message of revival in such a way that persuaded Muslims to obey Sharia and apply its precepts to everyday life (Shadid 2002: 53). Thus, for al-Bana, the creation of an authentic ‘Islamist space’ from within would lead to the gradual Islamisation of society through the spiritual transformation of society. The movement’s vision, however, was about more than providing an answer to Egypt’s legacy of colonialism, apostasy and



corruption; al-Bana's concept of the Islamic nation transcended the boundaries of the secular nation-state and held as a *prima facie* goal of restoring the Caliphate. While al-Bana did advocate the peaceful and gradual Islamisation of society, he maintained that the Brotherhood would only assume power after the community had come closer to true and brought about a devout Islamic community themselves from within (Shadid 2002: 54). Al-Bana also argued that to bring about a change in government before society itself was renewed would be dangerous and would cause the movement to fail.

Many analysts have commented that the genius of the Brotherhood lay not in its ecclesiastic critique but in its ability to organise followers quickly and also provide for their needs. The basic unit of organisation within the Brotherhood was the cell or 'family' (*nizam al-usar*) of ten members with a leader (Bubalo & Fealy 2006: 13). Each was a member of a successfully larger unit of organisation, reinforcing group loyalty and providing a tightly knit chain of command. In creating an 'Islamic space', the Brotherhood developed into a massive political and social machine that operated at virtually every level of Egyptian society, from health clinics and sporting clubs to small factories and school. Al-Bana's goal was to demonstrate through action that he could create a complete Islamised space within Egyptian society as an ideological alternative to that posed by the British or their pretenders. Here, Al-Bana and his disciples were more adept than their Modernist predecessor at politising the message of the *Qu'ran* to meet the needs of an urban Colonial society and fundamentally raised the standard of 'Islamic modernity' as an alternative to the 'modernity' of Europe (Kepel 2002: 28). The vision of Islamic modernity proposed by al-Bana entailed a complete and total blend of society, state, culture and religion. As such, entities like political parties, and trade unions were frowned upon because their quarrels disrupted the unity of the Community of the Faithful, thus weakening its struggle with the enemies of Islam (Kepel 2003: 28). This view put the Brotherhood in good stead with two

important constituencies in Egyptian society, the working poor and King Farouk's Court. For the poor and often newly literate, the Brotherhood's message served as a type of liberation ideology that transcended the staid and over-ritualised traditionalist theology of the national Ulema. The King, on the other hand, saw the Brotherhood as a useful counterweight to the secular nationalists who were challenging his authority with greater cadence (Kepel 2002: 28).

In under two decades, the Brotherhood transformed from a small revival movement to a mainstream and massive social movement that became the articulator and standard bearer of Egyptian societies' grievances, claiming a membership base of over 500,000 members across 2,000 branches in Egypt in alone (from just four branches in 1929) (Lapidis 2002: 522). In addition to Egypt, the Brotherhood spread its message across the region and opened chapters in Jordan, Syria, Palestine, Kuwait, Yemen and Sudan. While the organisation was gradualist in its approach to the Islamisation of society, its activism in other areas put it in the crosshairs of the successive Egyptian governments, which led ultimately to the assassination of Al-Bana at the hands of Egyptian police in 1949 (Lipidis 2002: 522). The ascendancy of Col. Gamal Nasser's "Free Officer" regime in July of 1952 would once again shift the dialectic of the Islamist space within the Arab world and beyond. While initially welcomed the by the Brothers, who saw an opportunity in Nasser's agenda and trusted the military as a stabilising institution that would excise the corruption and nepotism that permeated Egyptian society,] the honeymoon between the neo-revival agenda of the Brotherhood and Nasser's Pan-Arabist socialism was destined to be long-lived. Friction between the two groups began to surface in the early months after the revolution when it became apparent that the Brothers' pronouncements of the need to establish a government in Egypt on Islamic precepts were not the liking of the policy arm of Nasser's regime and the two camps found themselves competing for the same grassroots support among the urban lower middle classes. (Kepel 2002: 30,

Mussallam 2005: 138). The struggle between the Nasser regime's Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) and the Brotherhood came to a head on the 12<sup>th</sup> of January 1954 at the University of Cairo, when members of the Brotherhood attacked government negotiations with Britain over the Suez and Sudan, describing them as a betrayal of national aspiration and further called for Jihad against Britain (Mussallam 2005: 143). Here, the Brothers' comments on Egyptian-British relations provided the pretext the RCC was looking for to ban the group based on that they were a political party and thus subject to the January 1953 law that banned such entities (Mussallam 2005: 143). Following an attempt on Nasser's life in 1954, the group was summarily banned and a bulk of its leadership structure was imprisoned, deported or executed.

The ascendance of the Free Officer regime and the subsequent banning of the Brotherhoods precipitated a number of fundamental shifts in both the unfolding of the Brotherhood's agenda as well as the general trajectory of Islamism as an effective mass social movement across the Muslim world. First, the Nasser regime was successful in co-opting the support of the urban poor and working class away from the Brotherhood. While the Brotherhood's neo-revivalist movement gained considerable traction under the British occupation, it struggled to keep its momentum under the tides of secular nationalism that were sweeping across the postcolonial Arab world in the 1950s. In the face of powerful and authoritarian socialist leaders like Nasser in Egypt and Hafez al-Asad in Syria, the Brothers, like their modernist predecessors, struggled to shake the charge that their ideology represented anything more than a regressive Orientalist anachronism with a fading place in a modernising society (Kepel 2003: 30). While the effects of the suppression on the Brothers by the Nasser regime are still a matter of some debate, the synergistic effect of both being banned and losing grassroots support forced the Brothers, or a subset there of, to recast their agenda in such a way that abandoned the incrementalist approach of al-Bana in

favour or a more immediate and more confrontational agenda. In addition to the changed dynamics brought on by the exclusion of the Brothers from the Egyptian polity, the death of al-Bana eschewed another set of inter-group leadership dynamics that saw the Brotherhood split along ideological lines. The first post al-Bana leader of the Brotherhood, Hassan al-Hodeibi, a judge by trade, sought to reintegrate the Brotherhood into the political system and end the group's "special section" that carried out violent attacks (Shadid 2002: 55). The crackdown of 1954 and the onset of Brotherhood's "prison era" set the rank and file members, especially those behind bars, on a different course – one that saw the radical ideologue Sayyid Qutb emerge as the group's leader. While contemporary interest in Qutb has been driven by the perceived links between himself and ideology of al Qaeda, Qutb is a character worthy of examination for a variety of other reasons that transcend the mere causal connection between Brotherhood thought and the current wave of Islamist inspired violence. Qutb fundamentally turned Islamism into a modern political ideology and one could argue further, set his interpretation of Islamism as less a framework for theological revivalism and more a post-colonial liberation ideology that competed in the marketplace of ideals along side those of Mao, Marx and Lenin. While it is impossible to pin specific acts of violence to his project, his polemic certainly opened the doors to a type of ideological discourse that advocated a direct confrontation between secular and ecclesiastic forces within the public sphere of Muslim nations.

Like many of the leaders of the other revivalist movements, Sayyid Qutb (born 1906) displayed an early gift for Quranic study. He eventually found work in Egypt's Ministry of Education and in his spare time developed his skills as a poet, essayist and social commentator. His transformation into a religious leader occurred while on a study trip to the United States in 1948 where he was deeply troubled by the country's law, immorality, materialism, sexual promiscuity and racism. After returning to Egypt in 1951, Qutb joined the Brotherhood and in 1952

was elected to the group's Guidance Council. He then succeeded as the group's propaganda director (Shadid 2002: 59). Following Nasser's 1954 crackdown, Qutb was jailed and remained behind bars until 1964. He was released due to ill health but then was quickly re-arrested and executed in 1966. Mussallam (2005) maintains that a key juncture of Qutb's radical transformation occurred on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 1957 when 21 Brotherhood members with whom he was incarcerated, were executed for failing to report for daily labour duties (151). The barbarism of this act convinced Qutb that the Nasser regime had lost any of its remaining Muslim values and that the agenda of the Brotherhood needed to shift. While in prison, Qutb penned five works, the best known of which, *Signpost Along the way*, is often called the Islamists' version of Lenin's '*What is to be done?*' This work in particular represented a clear break with traditional Brotherhood thought and cast the groups' idiom in a decidedly radical direction. Like al-Bana, Qutb held the belief that an Islamic state would be the first step on the bigger project to establish the Caliphate. Qutb and his Brotherhood compatriots, however, differed significantly on the acceptable process by which society should be Islamised and who should take the lead in this process. For Qutb and those influenced by his work, the postcolonial development of Arab nationalism had no inherent value and to them represented an unacceptable continuation of the European colonial project (Kepel 2002: 25). To elaborate this theory, Qutb drew from the Pakistani Islamist thinker, Abu al-Mawdudi, who argued that the Subcontinent's Muslims did not need a state of Muslims but rather an Islamic state, ruled according to and by those steeped in the principles of Islam (Bubalo & Fealy 2005: 17). For Mawdudi, a truly Islamic state was one that recognised only the sovereignty of God, worshipped God alone, and implanted God's will – *the Shari'a*; and anything short of this was *jahiliya* - a term used to refer to the historical period of ignorance, or barbarism, that existed prior to the preaching of the Prophet's word (Bubalo & Fealy 2002: 17). Thus *jahiliya* can be further defined as a state in which Islam is

not applied or as a society that fails to adhere to its, laws, ethics, morals and values (Shadid 2002: 59, Shepard 2003). Just like the pagan Arabs that worshipped idol, before the revelation of the Prophet's word in the seventh century AD, Qutb saw the Muslims of the post colonial nationalist era as ignorant of Islam since they worshipped symbolic idols such as the nation, the party and socialism (Kepel 2002: 25). Thus it was not just Qutb's use of the term *jahiliya* that was noteworthy, it was that he argued that even Muslims living under the banner of Islam could be cast within its net. Many argue a distinct departure from how Mawdudi had intended the concept be interpreted. In Milestones Qutb writes:

The question in essence is whether one should choose belief or unbelief, jahiliya or Islam, and whether one should worship the rivals to God or to the Oneness of God. This ought to be made clear. Indeed, people are not Muslim, even if they proclaim to be, so long as they live the life of jahiliya.

By linking his definition of Muslim piety with the concept of *jahiliya*, Qutb opened the way for a hard-line discourse that made it possible to brand everyone one as impious - and thus held the potential to legitimate internal jihad against dominant Muslim societies. Historically, among both the mainstream faction of the Brotherhood and traditional ulema in Egypt and elsewhere, there had been an effort avoid internal conflict or *fitna*, since most traditional scholars and jurists viewed a state of internal rebellion as worse than *jahiliya* itself (Bubalo & Fealy 2005: 19).

Despite Mawdudi's influence on Qutb, many in the subcontinent were troubled by what they saw as a selective and inaccurate re-interpretation of Mawdudi's project by Qutb (Mussallam 2005: 151). Where Mawdudi's project was to be carried out through parliamentary and political processes, Qutb provided a discourse for revolutionary activism. Certainly, Mawdudi's organisation, the *Jamaat-e-Islami*, rejected any form of secular nationalism as an appropriate

model of governance, and also wanted to erode the influence of the pluralistic Sufism that had long held sway over the subcontinent's Muslim population. This project, however, was to be carried out in much the same way as the early Brotherhood leaders had envisaged – through gradual acceptance from the bottom up. Qutb, however, used the basis of Mawdudi's project (the concept of *Jahiliya*) to justify the revival of Islam to be carried out by an Islamic *tali'ah* or vanguard whose job it would be to Islamise society in their image from the top down (Mussallam 2005: 155). For Qutb, the first step in the process was personal purification, to actually rid oneself of the *Jahili* ideas, while contemplating the true nature of Islam. After this process was complete, then the *tali'ah* manifested to overthrow the *jahili* society. While he discussed at length the need for personal purification, it would seem that in his final assessment the external struggle, or Jihad, won out over the need for internal purification. Thus he concluded that it could only be through direct physical force that the political, social and economic obstacles would be removed to establish a true Islamic community (Mamdani 2004: 57).

Due to Qutb's early execution, there is still some debate over some of the finer points of his dialectic. For his ideological heirs, three distinct interpretations emerged from his project. The first and most extreme considered that impiety was endemic all over the world, except among the Islamist vanguard, and pronounced everyone else as *Takfir* or infidels (Kepel 2002: 25). The second interpretation confined the *takfir* label to rulers of the state, who were condemned as *takfirs* for failing to implement mass Islamisation in the Qutbist vision. In this interpretation, all other believers were spared their violent wrath. The third interpretation ameliorated the most controversial passages in Qutb's work by suggesting that his writings on *jahiliyah* should be understood in a metaphoric not literal sense (Kepel 2002: 25). Despite that first two interpretations succeeded in influencing a new generation of violent revivalists, a majority of mainstream Brotherhood

members adopted the third interpretation and eventually recognised Hassan al-Hodeibi as the group's spiritual leader. While al-Hodeibi did not reject completely the work of Qutb, he maintained the core mission of the Brotherhood was to show the Muslim world, through *da'wa*, how to become more Islamic. Thus their mission was to preach and not condemn through internal violence (Kepel 2002: 32).

*Neofundamentalism – the “fourth wave”*

In assessing the capacity of theological revivalism as the *prima facie* agent in the radicalisation process of the Islamist terrorist, the ascendancy the neofundamentalism in the 1960s and 1970s represents a critical juncture and radical departure from the three previous waves of revivalism looked at thus far. Where the first three waves of Islamist revivalism can be traced to specific people, individual ideological projects and particular geographic circumstances, the neofundamentalist turn, contains no such categorical discipline. In this sense it would be more appropriate to define the characteristics of neofundamentalism in terms of its ideological and geographic fragmentation rather than its adherence to any one single ideological project. It is also important to note that while we discuss neofundamentalism as a manifestation of Islamic revivalism, which it is to some extent, many of the symptoms we associate with Islamic neofundamentalism, namely the resentment of secular culture as an anathema of pure faith, are not unique to Islam but symptomatic of the trajectory of religiosity across all faiths as a response to both the problems of post industrial modernity and the failure of the secular nation-state to deliver goods to certain groups of people. In the wake of this failure, we have seen the rise of radicalised religious movements from a plurality of religious traditions including: the spread of messianic Protestantism among Catholics in South America, the increased popularity of ultra-Orthodox Labuvich Judaism among the Jewish community in North America, and among the eastern faiths, the rise of the Sokka Gekkai



Buddhist movement in Japan together with various Hindu sects in India. Certainly the particulars of these different neofundamentalisms differ and not all are violent, but we do see basic similarities in their calls for the rejection of both secular nationalisms and of mainstream religious ideology (Roy 2004: 74-75).

In addressing this phenomenon in the Muslim context, we are presented with an interesting set of conceptual challenges. Most importantly, there is the need to apply the right framework to assess the connection between the various Muslim manifestations of neofundamentalism and their connections to processes of transformation in the radicalization process of those willing to commit acts of extreme violence in its name. In looking for answers to rise of Jihadism and other acts of violent Jihadism over recent years, there has been a barrage of analysis that has portrayed neofundamentalism as both the state ideology of al Qaeda and as a socio-cultural offshoot of Saudi Arabian Wahhabi "Salafism." Certainly the connection between the austere Saudi ulema, Wahhabism and various elements within the neofundamentalist rubric are well known and important to consider. The real innovation in this phenomenon lies in the very nature of neofundamentalism itself – as a deterritorialised and decontextualised form of religiosity that exists free of any geographic centre and is disconnected from any overarching institutional affiliations (Roy 2004). Thus it would be a vast over simplification of the facts to attempt to explain the rise of neofundamentalism in terms of Saudi patronage alone. Above all else, neofundamentalism calls for the creation of the global ummah, that exists beyond the confines of ethnicity, race, language and culture and is thus no longer embedded in a specific territory (Roy 2004: 272). So what then does the ummah in the neofundamentalist conception look like? Even among Muslim neofundamentalists it varies, but for organisations such as Hizbut ut-Tahrir, the caliphate they imagine is not a reenactment of a historical institution and there is no precise location imagined. Rather, the point is that the Caliphate will rule over all Muslims, not over a given territory (Roy 2004: 275). At this stage

it is necessary to more narrowly define how we employ the term Salafi and not get confused with the dual applications of this term in the context of Islamist revivalism. As I discussed in the previous section on Modernism, the term was initially employed by Afghani and represented a call to the return of the true tenets of Islam as a means of castigating the backwardness of the religious establishment rather than simply a call for regressionist cultural practices like the wholesale application of Sharia Law (Roy 2004: 233). In this sense, there is no connection between the Salafism of Saudi Wahhabi Ulema or Taliban and Afghani or even Hasan al-Banna.

Having addressed the ideological tenets of neofundamentalism on an esoteric level, the questions begs as to what practically separates neofundamentalism from the previous forms of revivalism this chapter has dealt with? Thus, what separates an Islamist (modernist or neo-revivalist) from a neofundamentalist? On the surface there are definite similarities. Both cling to a form of religiosity that rejects the idea of different interpretations of the word of the Prophet and maintains that they are the sole arbiters of piety in the Muslim context. To some extent, both envisage a re-Islamisation of Muslim lands based on hard-line ideological precepts through elements like the strict adoption of Sharia law. The similarities between the two factions have been the source of some confusion for those analysing the radicalization processes in different parts of the world. Roy (2004) maintains that the dividing line between neofundamentalism and other forms of revivalism lies in differing positions over the state and politics (247). He argues that neofundamentalists reject political struggle as a means to achieve an Islamic state and believe that an Islamic state should result from the re-Islamisation of the *Ummah* and not be used as a tool of it (Roy 2004: 247). In this sense, neofundamentalists would oppose both moderate and radical Islamists, particularly the modernists, to the extent that they use political processes to achieve their vision of a society ordered strictly on Islamic precepts. In so much

as both Islamists (modernists and neorevivalists) and neofundamentalists agree that the enemy is the west, they propose very different ideas on how to respond. The neofundamentalists' answer is usually *da'wa* and sometimes *Jihad*, but never political action. The Islamists' answer is for the creation of Islamic states. Here Roy's framework highlights the need to differentiate between groups like Hezbollah or Hamas who would be characterised as strictly Islamist in both means and methodology, and groups like the Taliban, Hibut ut'Tarrir and Jemmat e-Islammiy who would more closely meet the definition of prototypical neofundamentalist organisations. Thus for analysts looking to explain processes of radicalisation through the lens of neofundamentalist ideology alone, these categorical distinctions present some complications. In observing Hamas and Hezbollah, we encounter groups that have proved highly adept at radicalising their populations and have shown a willingness to use violence justified in the name of Islam to achieve their own political ends – especially through the deployment of suicide attacks. Despite their penchant for violent activism, neither group is neofundamentalist in nature; both have distinct political agendas attached to secular national liberation struggles. Similarly, the idiom of violence as represented by groups like the Taliban, al Qaeda and Jemmah Islamiyah can certainly be attributed to the neofundamentalist rubric but so too can the project of many other groups that, while 'conservative,' reject violence as a means to an end. In this sense violence is not necessarily implicit to the neofundamentalist worldview and hence one must differentiate between people and groups that simply adopt neofundamentalist agendas, and those that that advocate collective violent Jihad. Put simply, not all Jihadists are neofundamentalists and not all neofundamentalists are Jihadists. Moreover, not all groups that call for the hard line Islamisation of Muslim lands agree that this project can be carried out violently. Further categorisation within the neofundamentalist rubric gets even more difficult for the simple fact that the many self-styled Salafi preachers do not consider

themselves Wahhabis and reject any connection to the ulema of the Saudi nation-state. Similarly, many of the Tablighi groups in South Asia are neofundamentalist in worldview but do not consider themselves to be either Wahhabi or Salafi.

In terms of assessing the historical antecedents that led to the evolution of neofundamentalism as a globalised discourse of religiosity, there are several key strategic dynamics worthy of examination including: the rise of Petro-Islam driven by Saudi oil wealth beginning in the 1960s, the subjugation of the Brotherhood from the mid-1950s onwards, and the geopolitical realities of the Cold War. Despite the importance of these events, there are two necessary caveats in the analysis. First, determining the extent to which processes of radicalisation are driven by macro systemic political issues is difficult. Certainly there are groups of Muslims who live under the yoke of brutal authoritarianism that do not get seduced by violent religiosity. This fact notwithstanding, I maintain that the rampant corruption and the inability of various secular regimes across the region to deliver on promises of economic development and democratisation have on some level created a new and reinvigorated space for the Islamist message. Second, while we focus on events in the Arab world here, we must also consider that one of the real innovations in neofundamentalism has been its ability to attach itself to local grievances in every part of world. Thus, by framing neofundamentalism solely in the Arab context, we miss the complexity of the phenomenon as a decontextualised form of religiosity that does not need a centre to function. Here we see that the two largest and best known neofundamentalist movements, the Tablighis and Wahhabis, had, until the 1960s, a very limited territorial basis (in the Indian Subcontinent and the Arabian Peninsula respectively) but through extensive *da'wa* activity, and a series of other geopolitical dynamics, their message has gained a global audience void of a geographic centrer (Roy 2004: 235).

As I have discussed at some length already, the release and deportation of

large numbers of incarcerated Brotherhood preachers from Egypt and then Syria's prison system, saw neofundamentalism proliferate around the globe in a way that previous revivalists movements had not succeeded in accomplishing. As an incubator of this phenomenon, the connection to Saudi Arabia is important to consider. Starting in the late 1950s, Brotherhood members began arriving in the Kingdom and availed themselves as preachers and civic organisers. Among other things, the original group, including Sayyid Qutb's brother Muahammed, played an instrumental role in the founding of the University of Medina in 1961 and contributed to the creation of a formal Islamic banking system (Kepel 2003: 51). On an intellectual level, the Brothers infused in the Saudi ulema an interest in external *da'wa* activities that had previously not existed, and played a key role in establishing the now banned Muslim World League in 1963, the first organisation established with the goal of using the full (and virtually unlimited) resources of the Saudi State to Wahhabise global Islam. Here, the Wahhabi Ulema capitalised on the Brotherhood's organisational capacity to propagate its brand of austere Islam around the world. This had been achieved through a dual course of building Mosques and madrasas and supporting social welfare organisations. Doing this also set up many generous scholarship programs to bring young men into the Kingdom to train as Wahhabi Imams who would then return to their countries of origin. While the Saudi's deny the charge that they actively tried to "Wahhabise" global Islam, at the very least they have actively propagated Deobandi ideology through Pakistani Madrasas, a fact that demonstrates the reach of Saudi influence (Roy 2004: 236). Ultimately the relationship between the Qutbist Brotherhood and the Wahhabi ulema evolved into a symbiotic relationship where one fundamentally shaped the development of the other; the Brothers in the Kingdom became more interested in conservative cultural practices like the application of harsh interpretations of Sharia Law, while the Saudi Ulema, through Brotherhood preaching, became interested in using their vast oil wealth to expand

*da'wa* activity beyond the traditional confines of the Gulf. Brothers infused Wahhabism with a worldly activism and helped transform its message into a form of radicalised political discourse. This reality was unquestionably heightened by the virtue of the special status the Saudi state occupies as a custodian of the two holiest cities in Islam. This is not to say that the Wahhabi's were not interested in *da'wa* before the arrival of the Brother; for centuries Mecca had been a centre of learning that attracted students from around the world, but the Wahhabi more typically acted through the issuance of *fatwas* rather than *da'wa* activities.

On the surface, the connection between the Saudis and formerly imprisoned Brotherhood ideologues seems an unlikely fit, especially given Qutb's advocacy of revolution and his denunciation of regimes, including those in the Gulf, as apostates to Islam. Members of the political and religious establishment in the Kingdom, however, ameliorated this view on the grounds that the more 'revolutionary' aspects of Qutb's polemic were formed under the torturous conditions of Nasser's prisons (Kepel 2003: 51). Above all else, the acceptance of the Brotherhood members was part of an on-going 'grand bargain' between the Wahhabi Ulema and the al-Saud family. During this period, Saudi Arabia was modernising at a very rapid rate and to maintain the support of the Wahhabi Ulema, the al-Saud family had to grant certain concessions to the clergy. While the political elites maintained some reservations about this arrangement, the influx of hard line preachers helped achieve the larger goals of solidifying the religious credentials of the ruling family in the eyes of the ulema while boosting the Islamic profile of the Saudi nation-state in the region – a perennial concern for the al-Saud family. In addition to pleasing the Wahhabi Ulema, it is quite likely that the longstanding Egyptian-Saudi rivalry also played its part in fueling Saudi support for the Brothers. To this day, the two nations enjoy an uneasy strategic relationship and both vie for cultural, political and ecclesiastic stewardship of the Sunni world. No doubt during the 1960s, Saudi elites took some pleasure in causing Egyptian

angst by allowing Brotherhood preachers to rail against Nasser's socialism from pulpits all over the Kingdom.

The Saudi-Egyptian bacchanal was symbolic of much more than just a parochial feud over domination of the Sunni world. From the 1960s onwards, the unfolding of neofundamentalism was imbued with a distinct geo-strategic context in which regional domination of the Sunni world played a supporting role to the cosmic fight of the day between capitalism and communism. Saudi Arabia was under Washington's sphere of influence while Nasser, a 'socialist', ultimately settled on the Soviet Union, and far from being worried about the long-term prospects of Islamist religiosity, Washington came to view the Wahhabi ulema and the propagation of Deobandi conservatism as a key regional bulwark against the godless heathenism represented by Soviet Union (Kepel 2003). From the late 1960s onwards, both the Saudi rulers and their western protectors saw the utility in corporatising elements of the neofundamentalist space into the broader geo-strategy of Cold War policy planning. I will discuss this phenomenon in the Indonesian context at length in the coming chapters but it is interesting to note that this is a trend that would be replicated across the Muslim world, from Saudi Arabia, to Pakistan, Turkey and through Southeast Asia. It was generally believed that the forces of neofundamentalism could be contained within existing political arrangements and that the actors could be "managed" in way to serve the greater interests of both the state and Cold War geo-politics. In the short term, the strategy worked but ultimately the alliance of convenience between the neofundamentalists and nation-states could not last. To witness the evidence of this failure one need only look at the current security dilemmas faced by both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. Both nations actively nurtured strains of violent neofundamentalism for their own institutional ends and then lost control of the experiment. Now, we have a situation in several countries where the "terrorist" genie has been let out of bottle and the forces once nurtured by the state now

actively challenge its legitimacy- through both direct violence and the propagation of non-violent albeit revolutionary ideas. In Pakistan, the headquarters of the Ahl-I-hadith movement, the military of branch of Lashkar e-Toiba, was built on a plot of land donated to the group personally by General Zia ul-Haq (Roy 243). In addition to supporting the Taliban Ahl-Ihadith has established a large network of Madrasas and helped sustain the Kashmiri Jihad (Roy 2004: 243). The examples presented from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan beg an important and difficult set of questions around how best to respond to radicalised religiosity when it becomes institutionalised and embedded in the fabric of the nation-states themselves. Perhaps many of the missteps in the management of the global war on terror stem from not asking the right questions on this theme.

Without question, the corporatisation of neofundamentalism was most starkly witnessed in the collective response to the Soviet invasion to Afghanistan in 1979. Notwithstanding Roy's keen observation that 'neofundamentalist Jihadists' fight not to protect a specific territory but to re-create a community – the imagined Caliphate' (Roy 2004: 289), the experience of the Afghan Jihad succeeded in both territorialising and contextualising the neofundamentalist struggle in a way that no previous struggle had. Thus, on both a symbolic and practical level, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan succeeded in capturing the imagination of elements within the global Muslim community that created an unlikely set of short-term alliances. Based on demands of power politics driven by a number of realities, these relationships reflected a number of realities including: regional and ethno-religious rivalries, the desire of some regimes to export their neofundamentalist communities to the battle fields of Afghanistan and of course, the desire of neofundamentalist and Wahhabi ideologues to make manifest their ideology in the world. With the continued failure of Islamist revivalism as a mass movement across the Muslim world, the project to defend the majesty of the faith against a superpower was the exact sort of Pan-Islamist confrontational project that the



Qutbist ideologues like al Qaeda number two, Ayman al-Zawahiri, had envisaged. The resistance to Soviet occupation was conducted around two competing sets of relationships; the first was the Suni-Pashtun alliance financed by the Saudis, organised by Pakistan's intelligence service and carried out by the dominant Pashtun tribes in Afghanistan and the tribal Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) region of Pakistan, and eventually armed by the United States (US). The second was the Iranian-Uzbek alliance manifested through Tehran's support for Ahmad Shah Masood's Northern Alliance. In an effort to contain Iranian perceived designs on regional hegemony, the US and its allies largely, though not entirely, backed the Neofundamentalist Sunni volunteers. The response took a variety of forms including: humanitarian assistance, logistical support and the influx of thousands of foreign volunteers into the region. The project to corporatise neofundamentalism to drive the Soviets out of Afghanistan would have deep and long lasting consequences for the region's political order and for the advancement of the Islamist agenda in many parts of the world. Following the withdrawal of the Soviet Union, the Uzbek-Pashto rivalry, ostensibly stroked by competing regional powers, devolved into all out civil war between the Uzbek and Pashton forces (Rougier 2007). Into the ethno-tribal rivalries, the enmeshment of Pashto tribal nationalism with neofundamentalist Islam ultimately yielded the ascendance of the brutal Taliban government, and more generally succeeded in radicalising the tribal politics of the region, particularly in Pakistan's FATA (Rougier 2007). For the foreign Islamist volunteers, the Afghan experience was an exercise in mass empowerment and the Mujahideen's perception that they alone drove the Soviet's out of the Afghanistan helped to set two important plays in motion. First, their perceived victory helped inspire, practically and ideologically, the Islamisation of various ethno-political and national liberation struggles in Southeast Asia and Central and North Africa in 1990s. On an operational level, there is ample evidence to suggest that the veterans of the Afghan Jihad did return to their

countries of origin and served as organisers and fixers in various Islamist causes. Second, the Mujahideen's phantom victory helped solidify the perception among some of neofundamentalist Islamism as a potent postmodern liberation ideology- a project that could be deployed elsewhere (Rougier 2007). Where the previous ideological trajectory of the revivalist movements had been internal in nature, the experience of defeating a superpower certainly provided a greater confidence for those that wanted to stir a broad ideological and civilisational confrontation. Despite the effect of the Afghan experience in radicalising foreign volunteers, we must be nuanced in drawing causal linkages between the success of the anti-Soviet Mujahideen and increased spasms of Jihadist violence that have taken place in the past fifteen years. In this sense it would be problematic to draw the conclusion that the Afghan experience was a *prima facie* driver in the radicalization process. Completely unrelated to the Afghan experience, 1989 saw the ascendency of Omar al-Bashir and hardline Islamist ideologue, Hassan al Turabi, in Sudan. While there is ample anecdotal evidence to suggest that the Afghan Mujahideen did succeed in energising elements of the movement, this rise could also be explained by a host of other factors such as the end of global bipolarity, globalisation and calls for democratisation in a number of nation-states.

By the early 1990s, the 'neofundamentalist space' morphed into three similar but essentially contrasting visions of itself as a self-help ideology. Even among those who took Qutb's view that an elite vanguard should take it upon itself to end the Jahaliyyah state and establish the Caliphate, a clear cleavage emerged between those that wanted to use the experience of the Afghan victory to justify further confrontations to challenge the political legitimacy of "apostate leaders" in Muslim world, and those who just wanted to continue to use the Mujahideen as tool of absolute last resort to help embattled Muslims in different parts of the world. The latter is, of course, most infamously represented by

Osama bin Laden and Ayman Zawahiri, who cast the gaze of their Jihad on the al-Saud family first and then, when that agenda failed, switched to the United States. The former category is represented by a plurality of groups who attempted with varying degrees of success to Islamise a variety of ethno-religious conflicts in Central and Southeast Asia in the 1990s. The trend here seemed to be that where trajectory of activism was limited in scope to just defending Muslims “under siege”, they achieved some success, but where the agenda extended to broad Islamisation of society, they lost support. In Indonesia for example, Laskar Jihad founder, Jafar Umar Thalib gained great public creditability in justifying his Jihad against Christians in Aceh by touting his Mujahideen experience (Stern 2003). The indigenous populations, however, proved to be less interested in the broader neofundamentalist agenda.

Contrasting Bin Laden and Zawahiri's style of violent Jihad against Jahilyi Muslims and non-Muslims alike on the one hand and the type of proto-Islamic “Jihad for hire” seen in places Chechnya and Aceh on the other, the second reaction to the post Afghanistan epoch saw the resurgence of a type of Modernist project that was attempted decades earlier. In Muslim majority secular nation-states like Turkey and Indonesia for example, this form of Islamisation manifested through a variety of mechanisms including rise of Islamic study groups on University campuses, a rise in Muslim identity politics in popular and political culture, and a resurgence of Islam at an electoral level. In addition to these vehicles of expression, this era also witnessed the rise of various forms of alternative ‘self-help’ and personal empowerment movements – akin to the New Age movement in west. Thus during this period, Muslim religiosity took many forms.

The response to this phenomenon on the part of secular nation-states is interesting and worthy of some discussion. In Algeria, Egypt, and Morocco, Islamic participation in the nation-state took a variety forms ranging from electoral

participation from groups like the Brotherhood to violent attacks on tourists by Qutbist factions like Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ). In all cases, these movements were violently put down by secular authorities. In the case of Algeria, the response to the electoral success of an Islamist party was met with a military putsch that saw the onset of a bloody decade-long civil war. In the Algerian and Egyptian contests the argument could be made that a brutal response to the Islamist voice in the political spectrum elicited an even nastier response on the part of those who were excluded. The inability of these states to integrate Muslim expression into secular political discourse has in many cases created more security problems than suppressing the groups has solved.

The third reaction to the post Afghanistan environment was neither political and nor was it immediately confrontational to non-Muslims. Here, we see both a continuation and deviation in the traditional forms of neofundamentalism discussed earlier. Many of the neofundamentalist groups (like Hizbut Tarir) remained decidedly A-political and continued to focus on *da'wa* and encouraged their followers to withdraw from the secular nation-state project (Hussain 2006). Their focus was internal and rather than violently oppose secular government, various neofundamentalist Salafi groups, including Hibut Tarir and Tablighi groups in South Asia, directed their attention inwards and re-focused their energies on Islamising their own communities in their image. In pursuing this policy, the intent was first to attempt to conservatise pluralistic groups like Sufis and other moderate secular minded civil-society groups, and if that did not work, then to intimidate them into silence or submission. This state of affairs has been highlighted by a number of troubling events including: the takeover of the Finsbury Park Mosque in London by Salafi elements in 1995, the execution of Theo Van Gogh, and the harassment of Somali-Dutch politician, Ayaan Hirsi Ali. Thus while more research needs to be done of the precise links between the radicalised rhetoric of the neofundamentalist agenda and its connection in radicalising terrorists themselves,

neofundamentalism has shown itself to have a deleterious effect on inter-communal relations within Muslim communities and in societies where Muslims are the minority within the majority community.

It is also important to consider that during this period, neofundamentalism's ideological centre of gravity shifted from the Middle East to South Asia and Europe. Here, self-styled Salafi preachers, like Shiek al-Masri and Omar Abdel Rachman (the blind sheik), began to demonstrate their appeal to very small but loyal bands of young followers especially among mainly migrant and second-generation migrant communities in Western Europe. Rather than being beholden to the Wahhabi *ulema* in the way that the first generation of ex-Brotherhood neofundamentalist preachers were, however, these 'independent contractors' answered only to their communities and in many cases, as political dissidents themselves, these religious leaders actually harboured severe animosity towards secular leadership structures across the Muslim and particularly Arab worlds (Hoffman 2006). Further entrenching the position of neofundamentalism as a deterritorialised phenomenon, the increased trend of globalisation fuelled by growth of the Internet enabled certain preachers to develop bases of support far outside their places of residence (Hoffman 2006). The devolution of neofundamentalism into hands of DIY preachers was further complicated by the geo-political realities of the 1990s, which irrevocably blurred the line between the rejections of the secular nation-state in a neutral way, as had previously been the case, and rejection of the nation-state because of perceived anti-Islamic policies. This shift in thinking was represented most significantly by the presence of US (*kafir*) forces in Saudi Arabia following the Gulf War in 1991. In this dynamic, neofundamentalist preachers who operated outside the ecclesiastic control of any single institution, proved to present a security problem where these preachers had recruitment bases for Afghan and Iraqi insurgencies and well as others in the Balkans.

### *Identity and Labels*

In delineating and unpacking the evolution of a phenomenon as complex as Islamic revivalism that spans continents and centuries, categorical shorthand descriptive terms like revivalist, modernist, neo-revivalist and neofundamentalist are both useful and problematic. They are useful because such labels do provide a theoretical framework and accurately denote the many real cleavages in thought, means and methodology. There is a danger, however, in clinging too closely to these labels especially when we are looking to assess the role that Islamist ideology plays informing the transformation process of those who adopt an idiom of violence. Not only do Islamist and neofundamentalist movements often reflect different approaches to politics (and to the use of violence), but often adapt and indigenise the ideas of their Islamist counterparts. Traditional categories of radical and conservative do not necessarily hold true. The Muslim Brotherhood's ideas about the transformation of society are quite radical while the means they use to achieve this transformation have been largely mainstream. By contrast, al Qaeda's worldview reflects that conservatism of its Salafi underpinnings yet its activism is more in line with Muslim Brotherhood 'modernist' thinking.

The dividing line between garden variety Islamists and neofundamentalists, while clear on specific issues, does not reflect the reality of groups and individuals who operate in complex and shifting environments. Many Brotherhood members ended up making the jump from social activism to violent rejection of the state, but because they had Qutbist predilections, they fit quite well with the neofundamentalist agenda. Yet other groups have switched tracks from neo-revivalists to neofundamentalists (and then back again) simply because that is

where they perceived the momentum lay (Roy 2004: 251). For example, Mawdudi's Jemaat I-Islammi jumped on the neofundamentalist bandwagon and joined forces with Muttaahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) – a coalition of pro Taliban movements (ibid). Having won elections in the North-West Frontier province in 2002, the MMA has been pushing a neofundamentalist agenda – implementing Sharia, banning television and films – all without consulting the Islamabad. As highlighted earlier, some Islamist groups otherwise opposed to aspects of the neofundamentalist message head in that direction after they are kept from exercising state power.

Conversely, there have many examples where Brotherhood members who have rejected the call for the creation of an Islamic State do not actually make the complete ideological jump to neofundamentalism and prefer instead to focus on ethical issues rather than on the broad implementation of Sharia. Sheikh al-Qaradawi is one such leader who has been labeled a sort of a conservative liberal (Roy 2004: 253). He issued a fatwa condemning the September 11 attacks and has subsequently been removed from the neofundamentalist groups for being too pro western. As Roy (2004) notes:

the blurring of the lines between the Muslim Brother, neofundamentalists and conservatives has political and strategic dimensions ... How does one assess the threats of finding possibilities of finding stabilising elements among conservative Muslims when the reciprocal instrumentalisation of Saudi Arabia and Muslim Brothers to counter Arab Nationalism, Communism and Iranian Islamism in 1980s paved the way for more radical movements (254).

Similarly the use of more general shorthand labels like moderate, conservative and radicals also pose methodological problems for the analyst looking to assess the role of religiosity in the socialisation process of terrorists. To separate the good Muslims from the bad Muslims, we have developed very broad categorical shorthand that is accurate to some extent but also presents some worrying trends. Most troubling is the use of the term 'radical'. A sort of defacto meaning has emerged on what the word means in the context of Islamism. In

sense, the term 'Islamism' has been securitised to the point where it and radicalism can be used interchangeably. The question is, do we treat radicalism as a unique worldview or as a set of methods? Should symbolic radicalism – that is radicalism that is not attached to any plan of implementation, be treated equally to radical rhetoric that is backed by action? How much time should we spend analysing the radicalism of the rhetorical variety? And is there connection between the two? Thus are people who engage in rhetorical radicalism more likely to engage in the real thing? In this context, radical Islam is not a discrete category and often springs from the same matrix as other forms of Islamist expression. Thus it and moderate Islam cannot be clearly and unambiguously separated, so that the social categories of 'Muslim democrats' and 'Muslim radicals,' are not, in some respects, sharply opposed (Wiktorowicz 2004). Thus, presenting Islam in terms of two fundamental categories of a radical faction and a moderate one containing the vast majority of ordinary, 'mainstream' Muslims, though not totally untrue in some respects, suggests an imperviousness of these categories (Sidel 2007).

Equally problematic is the use of the term 'moderate'. Is a moderate simply someone who has definite beliefs (in Islam) and is not a radical? Moreover, in the context of Islamism (or any other faith system for that matter) it is not possible to employ 'moderate' means to achieve very fanatical ends? Thus someone could be radical in vision but at the same time be moderate in methodology. Most worryingly, what happens when societies' goal posts get shifted so far to the right the moderate centre is unrecognisable? Above all else, who decided what the contours and benchmarks of moderation and radicalism are? Should this be within the purview of the nation-state, secular civil society or religious authorities?



### *Conclusion*

At the beginning of this chapter I cited the work of Ernest Gellner and posed two questions, first I asked whether the transition from simple revivalism to violent religiosity was more likely to gain traction within the boundaries of a society whose socio-religious blueprint is unmoving? Thus, do conservative societies produce intolerant people and are these people more susceptible to radicalisation? And second, is there a causal relationship between the pervasiveness of Islam as a complete system of temporal and worldly authority and its manifestation through some groups as a violent liberation ideology bent on redrawing the political map in its image. In this chapter I have engaged with those questions by tracing the development and evolution of Islamic revivalism in a global context. In this context, it has been my intent to demonstrate that by discussing both the evolution and the plurality of voices that exist within the Islamist rubric, we can begin to assess the role that various manifestations of revivalism have played in the socialising process of those willing to commit acts of violence in the name of Islam. My lack of specific discussion on Indonesia here has been deliberate. After all, Islamism (in all its manifestations) touts itself as a globalised liberation ideology and as such, I believed it necessary to explore its inception and development at a global level first.

In regards to the first question I posed, from the point of view of the content explored in this chapter, pinning the transition from simple revivalism to violent religiosity on the nature of Islam itself seems quite difficult. Islam, like every other religion, sells its self as a complete package and despite the project to decontextualise the practice of Islam from the cultures where it has taken root, there seems to be little mass interest in this agenda. Furthermore, revivalism evolved as a mechanism to deal with a series of challenges, first the internal weakness of the Islamic civilisation compared to its peers and then its domination by western colonial powers. At its core, all of these revivalist

theologies, in one way or another, imagine that internal unity is a precondition to either repel or emulate the powers that stifle its rightful influence. To achieve this unity a variety of responses emerged, ranging from straightjacket of Wahhabism to the more pluralist style of Modernism to the confrontational style of the Brotherhood and the elite Islamising vanguard of Qutb. Here it would very problematic to draw the conclusion that a) the ideologies within the Islamist actually talk to one another, and b) that Islam is a gateway ideology where one form of religious expression will ultimately lead to another more sinister form of expression.

In regards to the second question, an answer in the affirmative is more plausible but still quite difficult. Perhaps Islamism has the ability to upset more than challenge strategic orders? Many within the Islamist space certainly envisage theirs as a liberation ideology capable of delivering the goods where the capitalism, secularism and westernism have failed. Moreover, neofundamentalist machinations about the establishing the Caliphate, even if it is a deterritorialised one, comes from scripture and could present the appearance of giving its adherents a righteousness and justification they might not otherwise have had. Even more convincingly, the increasingly aggrieved and confrontational nature of neofundamentalist discourse over the past decade may suggest a worrying trend and perhaps justify the assertion that Islamism is a *prima facie* agent of radicalisation. Smoke does not always mean fire, however, and we must be nuanced in drawing conclusions even from seemingly convincing evidence. As this chapter has demonstrated, Islamic revivalism in all its manifestation has failed as a mass movement for social change. While various movements have been able garner popular support initially, they have largely been unable to maintain it. This is has led to frustration and in case of ideologues like Sayyid Qutb, justified revolutionary tactics to violently and involuntarily Islamise societies that were not coming along voluntarily. From this one can draw the conclusion

that violence and popular support seems to be inversely proportionate. The case of al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) demonstrates this point. In addition to the troop serge ordinary, it was that ordinary Iraqis grew tired of AQI's idiom of violence and intimidation that has seen the number of suicide bombings drop.

In looking at processes of radicalisation, more worrying than the trajectory of Islamism itself is the response of nation-states to this phenomenon. Majority Muslim nation states have swung wildly between either repressing Islamists on the one hand or co-opting them for political purposes on the other. As case studies from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan demonstrate, corporatisating radical elements is certainly not a strategy that yields good outcomes; and while stoking the fires of neofundamentalism may yield short-term geopolitical gains, it more often than not ends up creating security problems for nation-states. Similarly, the Syrian approach of treating Islamism like a cancer that has to be removed does not work. Thus mass executions and torture may solve this problem in the short term but serve ultimately to inspire more violent activism. Islamism represents a diffuse set of ideologies and methodologies, and at the beginning of this chapter, I proposed that it alone is not sufficient to explain the radicalisation of those willing to justify violence. Not only are the ports of call many, the divergent paths of Islamic revivalism, even among those who basically see the world the same way, mean that trying to ascribe culpability of this phenomenon onto any one "ism" is difficult.

### **Chapter 3: Islamism and making of modern Indonesia**

In the preceding chapter, I analysed the origins and evolution of the Islamist revivalist movements and established both the complex variations that exist within the Islamist ideological space as well as the intimate relationship these movements have shared with the unfolding of the nation-state project on a variety of levels. Rather than viewing Islamism as either unified or the violence associated with it as inevitable, I advanced the problem of Islamist violence as one response to the failure of the secular nation-state to deliver a viable project. Similarly, in considering the radicalisation process of those willing to commit acts of violence in the name of Islam in Indonesia, we must also consider the role of Islam in the origins and development of the Indonesian nation-state and the extent to which the four waves of Islamist revivalism have served as both a driver for and bulwark against the project of the Indonesian nationalism. The nation-state, as both an actor and provider of goods, is among the most influential socialising agents that we as humans encounter and thus any social science analysis that seeks to unravel the processes of socialisation that leads individuals and groups towards violence would be lacking if it did not consider the idiom of violence and role that these revivalist movements have played in shaping, or attempting to shape, public discourse over Islam's complex role in Indonesian society.

Since the attacks and on September 11 2001 and then in Bali and Jakarta, there has been much attention paid to a supposedly "worry trend of Islamisation" in Indonesia. Notwithstanding the obvious level of analysis, and taking in to account specific events, even a cursory glance of the region's modern history (from the time of Dutch occupation) would reveal a continuing and similarly "worrying trend of Islamisation." Beginning with Padri Wars in Sumatra in the early nineteenth century, continuing through the Dural Islam movement in the Sukarno years, and then inter-communal violence of the late Suharto era, various forms of violence justified under the banner of Islam are not unique to the politics of the

region. Thus it remains to be seen whether recent acts of religious violence inspired by, and in defense of Islam present *prima facie* evidence of the mass spontaneous mobilisation of radical Islamism in Indonesia. If we employ Ehud Sprinzak's Iceberg Model, which argues that fringe elements acting as the tip of the iceberg can melt away and infect and thus radicalise the rest of the polity, to justify the conclusion that the radical fringe of the Indonesia Muslim spectrum poses the ability to conservatise the sensible middle, then perhaps many of the recent events would take on a new level of urgency (Sprinzak 1995). This hypothesis while attractive, is difficult to justify and despite the presence of various radical groups that advocate a broad project to Islamise the Archipelago, the ability of these forces to coalesce as a mass project has thus far failed. Insomuch as acts of violence associated with the Islamist agenda have proven to be perennial features of the Indonesian system, this phenomenon should not be taken out of context and in many instances, has more to do with a broader pattern of structural violence hardwired into the geo-politics of the archipelago than it does the traction of the globalised agenda of Jihadist neofundamentalist Islam. The evolving idea of the Indonesian nation-state, particularly since the fall of the Suharto regime, has re-invigorated the space for activism surrounding the question of Muslim identity and the boundaries of religious expression. Within this changed environment it cannot be denied that there are groups that harbour deeply conservative agendas unfriendly to western interests and to the interests of the secular nation-state itself. Despite that there people and groups that want to violently shift the goal posts of Indonesian Islam to the right, however, Islamism (in all its forms) has always been one of many competing "isms" looking to capture the socio-political imagination of the archipelago. Thus disembodiment of recent manifestations of Islamism from the evolution of the nation-state itself paints an incomplete picture on the nature and trajectory of Islamism's impact. So once again we must consider the socialising impact the state has had in the

evolution of various types of religious discourse. As Laffan (2003) notes:

It has only been when the state has attempted to intervene in defining or manipulating Islam, or indeed when it has ignored religion on the path to uneven development, that it has sown the seeds of on the disenchanting fringes of Islamic movements (398).

In an effort to contextualise the role of Islamist religiosity in the evolution of the nation-state and flesh out Islamism's diverse impact on the development of modern Indonesia, this chapter will evaluate several key points. First, we will discuss the transmission of Salafist and Modernist revival ideologies from the Middle East to the archipelago, and evaluate the extent to which these ideologies spurred anti-colonial ideas. Next, we will evaluate Islamist ideology in the late colonial and early independence period under Sukarno and evaluate the role of violent secessionist movements like Dural Islam. Finally, we address the radicalising impact of the Suharto years and how the New Order regime simultaneously suppressed and courted Islamist elements for its own ends and set in motion a series of dynamics that has resulted in an escalating pattern of ethno-religious conflict and an upsurge in Jihadist violence. All of these points will be discussed with the view to demonstrate that in the context of Indonesia, we cannot develop a consistent theoretical typology that addresses socialisation of the individual Islamic terrorist without first assessing at a systemic level the checkered role of Islamism in the development of the State.

#### *Part 1: Colonialism, Revivalism and the Arab World*

Southeast Asia has long been connected to the centre of the Muslim world through oceanic trade. Beginning in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Yemeni traders brought Islam to the Indonesian archipelago and converted rulers along the straits of Malacca (Laffan 2003: 398). Despite that there has been an on-going process of selection and modification of various practices, combining them with Islamic and pre-Islamic features (Bubalo & Fealy 2005: 48), it is also

true that the culture and ideas to emanate from the centre of the Muslim world have been consistently powerful in shaping the faith in the Malay-Indonesian world. The synergistic connection between the archipelago and Middle East, however, goes beyond the transfer of ideas. From the mid-nineteenth century, a permanent settlement of several thousand Yemeni Arab traders from the Hadramawt Valley settled throughout the Malay world and established themselves as prominent members of *ulema* (Bubalo & Fealy 2005: 50). The descendents of these settlers, known as Hadramis, would play the role of “cultural broker” between Arab and Southeast Asian worlds and through familial and cultural networks, and expand the cross fertilisation of ideas from the Middle East to Southeast Asia (Elriaz 2004). In addition, with the arrival of Arab migrants into the archipelago, the flow also went the other way and from as early as the sixteenth century, scholars from the Malay-Indonesian world took up residence in Mecca and formed their own communities, known as *Jawa* (Azra 2004).

While my level of analysis in this work is primarily concerned with the hard-line manifestation of Islam (ostensibly through the dissemination of revivalist ideologies), taking an overly securitised view Indonesian Islam in general misses both the complexity and variation that exist within the rubric of Indonesia’s rich and varied religious tradition. Thus before undertaking a cogent analysis on the transmission of revivalist ideology, it is necessary to understand the key categorical division within the archipelago’s Muslim community. During the past century, the discussion of Indonesian Islam has mainly centred around four main categories: *santri*, *abagan*, traditionalist and modernist. *Santri*, meaning religious student, Muslims are those most likely to adhere to ritual and legalist requirements of Islam (Fealey, Hooker & White 2006: 39). Conversely, *Abagan*, meaning “the red or brown ones” refers to Muslims who are generally considered to be less orthodox in their expression of faith and are more likely to lead syncretic religious lives in which Islam is blended with other religious or spiritual

observances including elements of Buddhist and Hindu practices that were prevalent before the arrival of Islam (Fealey, Hooker & White 2006: 39). In the context of this analysis, the terms traditionalist and modernist apply only to *Santri* Muslims. Traditionalists usually seek to preserve the authority of medieval Islamic scholarship and tend to be more tolerant of local customs. Moreover, traditionalists reject *ijtihad* and focus on traditional modes of jurisprudence or *fiqh*. The “local” component of traditionalist Islam in Indonesia includes: the veneration of saints (*wali*) and famous Islamic scholars (*kiai*) as intermediaries between humans and God; belief in the magical or supernatural power of blessed individuals, and engagement with cultural or spiritual rituals designed to ensure communal or individual well being (Fealey, Hooker & White 2006: 39). Modernists, also referred to here as revivalists, as discussed at length in the previous chapter, regard the theology and ritual practice of the traditionalists as impure and a deviation from the original teachings of Islam.

The fractious relationship between traditionalism and modernism remains a central issue in inter-Muslim dynamic in the development of the Indonesian nation-state. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, the Modernist school of thought in the Malay-Indonesian world, as noted above, strongly challenged the domestic traditional order on both cultural and political levels (Elriaz 2004: 20). The earliest and most striking example of this clash between the internationalist reform of the modernist revivalism and traditionalism based in local custom is represented by the so-called Padri movement, which began in 1803 when a group of Pilgrims returned to West Sumatra from Mecca and, inspired by the success of the anti-Sufi Wahhabi efforts in Arabia, tried to assert a scripturalist piety over the prevailing social order (Laffan 2003: 399). Led by Tuanku Imam Bonjol (1772 - 1864), also known as Muhammad Syahab, the Padri movement sought to purify the culture of traditions and beliefs its partisans viewed as un-Islamic, including syncretic folk beliefs, cockfighting, gambling, drinking alcohol, and Minangkabau



matrilineal traditions (Ricklefs 2007). During this period, the Dutch had yet to consolidate their possessions in some parts of the archipelago after reacquiring it from the British. This was especially true of Sumatra, where some areas would not come under Dutch rule until the 20th century (Dobbin 1983). The factions in the Padri melee included Minangkabaus, who adopted a nominal form of Salafism and the Adats, who were Minangkabau traditionalists and wanted to continue to practice Abangan traditionalism. The Minangkabau traditionalist elites requested the assistance of Dutch forces to subdue the Padri faction. The Dutch intervention against the Padris on behalf of the Minangkabau traditionalists set a pattern in which the Dutch began intervening in local conflicts against any nominally inspired Islamic faction that posed a threat to their rule directly or even to their growing patch work of client-rulers (Laffan 2003: 400). Azra (2004) maintains that the Padri movement remains a major landmark event in the history of Islamic renewal and reform in the archipelago; not only because it questioned the degree to which ideologies from the centre of the Muslim world should be adopted in the periphery, but also because it also challenged the established formulation of relations between the 'little tradition' of local Islam that evolved over time in the archipelago and the 'great tradition' of Middle Eastern Islam (147). Despite that the Salafism inspired by the Wahhabi imagination has never taken hold as a mass movement, beginning with the Padris in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, it has been a an omnipresent socio-religious force that has inspired different types of activism at different historical junctures.

The politicisation of the *Santri-Abangan* divide also made its presence felt in the ethno-religious dynamic on Java during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. During that time, the growing traction of Middle East inspired religious practice and attempted Islamisation of the region by those inspired by revivalist ideologies, galvanised increasingly large segments of the population. According to (Ricklefs 2007), from 1850 onwards there was growing and open discord on Java between groups

who defined themselves by their commitment to Islam: the majority, *Abangan*, who were nominal Muslims and *Putihan*, the ones who wear white, or Santri, the more pious students of Islam influenced by the revivalist thinking of the centre of the Muslim world (p.6). The Islamisation of Java in this period cannot be addressed without also discussing the increasing shadow of the Dutch occupation in the region. Thus, while the *Abangan-Santri* discord was real, this chasm occurred within and was made even more complex by the broader socio-cultural framework of Dutch colonial consolidation of the East Indies. In effect, Dutch consolidation of Java masked intra-communal socio-religious discord brought on by first wave revivalism.

Following their victory in the 1825-1830 Java War, the Dutch were able to establish a direct colonial structure over the island. The most important consequence of this was the institution of *cultuurstelel* (literally “cultural system” or more specifically “forced cultivation system”) policy (Kingsbury 2005: 31). Under this system, Javanese peasants were forced to grow commercial crops for the government on between one to two-fifth of their land. To achieve this end, colonial policy strove to co-opt the *priyayi* (the traditional Javanese aristocracy) into the colonial system and transform them into functionaries of the colonial machine (Abuza 2003: 60). Thus, rather than subjugate the *priyayi* directly, colonial administrators incentivised their cooperation through a profit-sharing mechanism where the local elites benefited from *cultuurstelel* policy (Kingsbury 2005: 31). While *cultuurstelel* was abandoned between 1856-1865 in favour of a system based on private capital, its effects were enduring on many levels. To this day, many argue that the disassociation of labour and reward encouraged under the *cultuurstelel* system and the cooptation of elites to enforce it, fundamentally laid the ground work for the insipid levels of corruption and myriad of governance issues that plague modern Indonesia.

Beyond the economic failure of *cultuurstelel* itself, it was the policy of

direct colonial rule over Java that is most relevant in my discussion of the complex role of Islam in evolution of the modern state of Indonesia. In this context, the pattern in Indonesia seems to fit the patterns discussed in the last chapter. That is, when intrusive colonial rule is introduced there is a trend towards the politicisation of religion as a means of liberation. Thus as Dutch colonialism became more entrenched in the mid-19th century, the politics of religion became a focus for both the colonised and coloniser. In this context, Stange (1999) makes the important point that the strongest root of religious tension in the East Indies lay in Dutch efforts to prevent Islam from becoming the focus of nationalist sentiment (130). From a socio-cultural point of view, however, it is equally important to remember that while Islam eventually became a rallying cry around which nationalism was justified, there was nothing inevitable about the clash between Dutch colonial occupation and the arrival of revivalist Islam from the Middle East.

There were two primary reasons for this, both of which reflect the nature of Islamism as discussed in the last chapter. First, even among Santri Muslims, the project to Islamise the region on revivalist precepts was viewed with suspicion. Second and more importantly, in many instances the transmission of first wave revivalist ideology to the region was seen as more of a threat to local cultural practice than to colonial authority as such. In this sense, the Dutch, like the British, did not care about the specific contours of the theology as much as they were more concerned about the political and social challenge to their own authority. Certainly the Dutch were wary of the Ottoman Caliphate's influence over their colonial subjects and went to some lengths to monitor the activity of their subjects in the Arab world. Securing Arab influence, however, only became an issue when the gaze of revivalism itself shifted to include the cause of political liberation. In some cases, local revivalist leaders saw the Dutch as useful agents in implementing their own agenda. For example, the Batavian born Hadrami Sayyid Uthman (1822-1913) was able, through close connection with Dutch colonial

officials, to establish his own press through which he railed against the heretical innovations of local mystical orders (Laffan 2003: 401). Moreover, Uthman also allied himself with the colonial authorities to stem the growing influence of Sharia oriented Sufi Brotherhoods like *Qadiriyya wa Naqshbandiyya*, who were in the crosshairs of both the colonial authorities and *Santri* – considered political agitators by one group and scriptural heretics by the other (Laffan 2003: 401). Thus, as long as the Hadramis like Uthman stayed A-political and kept their critique centred on the transformation of local Islam, it did not pose a *prima facie* problem for the Dutch. Conversely, in the Dutch colonial imagination, all Sufis were by definition fanatics who were, 'inspired by Meccan masters to kill them in their beds' (Laffan 2003: 402). In this context, Sufi inspired Javanese mysticism was seen as more of the threat than first wave revivalist ideology.

From the analysis presented above perhaps the preliminary conclusion can be drawn that the unfolding of Islamism in the Indonesian Archipelago, like its development in the Arab World, has occurred on two axes and has served both as a mechanism for political liberation and of ecclesiastic revival. First, as the case of the *Padris* demonstrates, the adoption of revivalist ideology was at first an internal project designed to cleanse local Islam of its innovation and ostensibly make the faithful more faithful. To some extent, the tension between the axes has never really gone away. If one examines the current trajectory of *Jemmah Islamiyyah*, there is ample evidence to demonstrate that this trend has never really gone away and radical Islamists are to this day still more concerned with imposing their brand of Islam over the people rather than engaging in political processes to Islamise the nation-state by ballot or by force. Moreover, the latter part of the nineteenth century saw the dissemination of revivalist ideology occur in the distinctly political context of European colonialism. As Elriaz notes:

In the face of the threatening clash between tradition and modernity, and the collective early twentieth century mood of weakness in the entire Islamic world, many in the community of the Malay-Indonesian were receptive to

the conceptual heritage that emerged in Egypt (p23).

Thus the second axis of the revivalist project occurred in the East Indies as it had in the Middle East, a response to break the yoke European colonisation. Here, as the Dutch solidified their control over the region, the Modernist ideas that were taking root among the Arab intelligentsia became increasingly attractive as a competing political ideology that could be applied as a unifying force to achieve a form of statehood. Beyond the sole guidance of the Koran (as the Wahhabis imagined), second wave Modernists had specific ideas about how organise a modern nation-state on Muslim precepts. Borrowing Benedict Anderson's analogy of modern Indonesia as an imagined community, then it can be argued that in the Indonesian context the Islamist machination of its project as a liberation ideology effectively sought to replace one type of imagined community with another. Thus the post-colonial manifestation of the modern Indonesian nation-state and the Islamic state envisaged by modernist thinkers are in this sense both constructed fictions stemming from imported ideologies (Anderson1991).

On a structural basis, the transmission of second wave revivalism or Modernist ideology into the Dutch East Indies occurred in much the same way as first wave revivalism - through a mix of pre-existing social networks and an opening created by expanding transportations routes. Beginning in the 1860s, increased shipping frequency between Southeast Asia and the Middle East allowed more people to undertake the Hajj and study in Middle East – both in Mecca and at Egypt's al-Azra University. These buoyed cross-cultural connections led to an increasingly self-confident Muslim community keenly aware of and interested in the awakening inspired by the Mohammed Abduh Pan-Islamist project. These deepening connections, combined with a burgeoning Islamic publishing industry, led to what has been described as the Hadrami awakening across the Malay world where the ideas of Abduh and other Pan-Islamist thinkers

were translated into local languages for people who did not speak Arabic, and then disseminated throughout the region (Elriaz 2004: 44). It is not surprising that this worried British and Dutch colonial administrators who, by the end of the 19th century were becoming increasingly concerned about the organising capacity of Abduh's Pan-Islamism. To stem the seeds of Islamist thought, the British and Dutch began to monitor the activities of Muslim colonial subjects and residents in Mecca and Cairo.

In the Dutch East Indies, the beginning of the 20th century saw the emergence of Islamism not only as bulwark against European occupation as represented by a collection of ideas, but also as organised social movements acting of behalf of a constituency. Two Javanese inspired Hajjis in particular sought to transform the socialising capacity of Islam through the creation of institutions. First, in 1912, K.H. Ahmad Dahlan (1868-1923) founded the *Salafiyyah* inspired *Muhammahiya* organisation in Yogyakarta. Dahlan returned from Mecca in 1888 and was both inspired by the international community of believers he encountered there and the extent to which Islamist ideas were effecting the anti-colonial movement of the Indian sub-continent (Bowen 2003: 160). Despite his interest in Islam as a force of transnational political mobility, he was an Islamic Modernist and as such was primarily concerned about the scriptural plurality of Javanese Islam and like the Padri movement, saw it as his calling to excise Javanese Islam of its syncretism. As Vickers (2005) notes: "*Muhammahiya's* sense of its own modernity marked a departure in Javanese thinking, a rejection of tradition (57). Here, Vickers raises a crucial point that reflects much of my analysis in the previous chapter. That is, the case of *Muhammahiya* highlights the problematic nature of post September 11 scholarship on Islamist movements. In an effort to "explain" acts of violence justified on Islamist precepts, there has been an unfortunate propensity to cast Islamist movements in general as a harbingers of antiquity. As the early case of

*Muhammadiyah* shows, however, the cultural veneer of antiquity cannot be confused with the rejection of modernity. Through the establishment of *Muhammadiyah*, Dahlan, emulating the example of Abduh, sought to spread an authentic Islamic modernity through the word of the Prophet to a population he considered to be living in antiquity. With membership base of 28-39 million, *Muhammadiyah* is the largest modernist organisation in the world and is comprised of an intricate network of youth and women's organisations, teachers, academies and universities (*madrasah*), medical clinics and hospitals, orphanages and other social welfare organisations (Porter 2005: 40). In addition to *Muhammadiyah*, several other modernist organisations during this period included *Sarekat Islam* (Uniting Islam - SI) founded in 1912, and *Persatuan Islam* (Unity of Islam - *Persis*) founded in 1923. The Modernist organisations discussed above, like their mirror image in the Arab world, catered to the ideological needs of educated urban elites and gave priority to education, social welfare programs and *dawah* (Porter 2005: 40). The urban power base of the modernist groups is important to consider in light of the massive urbanisation project of the first three decades of the twentieth century where the complete economic collapse of the Dutch colonial administration drove increasingly large numbers of people into urban areas.

To counter the growing influence of the Modernist based *Muhammadiyah* movement and to protect the economic and socio-religious interests of the rural based *pesantren* (religious boarding schools), another prominent *Hajji*, Hasyim Asyari, founded the Sufi inspired *Nuhdlatul Ullama (NU)* (Revival of the Religious Scholars) (Porter 2005: 40). In the last 70 years, NU has become a diverse and complex organisation with a membership base exceeding 30 million members. Part of its longevity and success may be due in some part to a decentralised structure based on the hereditary influence of individual teachers who run a system of traditional Islamic boarding schools in central Java (Porter 2005: 41). Unlike

*Muhammadiyah*, an organisation designed with the express purpose of advocating a new agenda based on an external set of ideologies, NU represented a formalisation of the collective influence that each individual *pesentren* enjoyed. Here it is important to note that despite NU's political influence, it became a political organisation not because it maintained a real political agenda *per se*, but by virtue that it was in competition with *Muhammadiyah*. Moreover, NU had to be seen to be standing up against the Dutch colonial authorities who were increasing their grip on the control of the religious groups in the archipelago. Both organisations were concerned about the growing reach of the Colonial administration, including, most significantly, the 1925 Guru Ordinance, which restricted the provision of religious education by requiring all classes to be registered with Dutch appointed officials and further regulations mandating that mosques be under the guidance of the *bupati*, the highest grade of native civil servant in the colony (Fealy, Hooker & White 2006: 43).

#### *Part 2: Islam and founding of the nation-state*

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, opposition to what was seen as unacceptable levels of Dutch interference in Muslim life continued unabated and an increasing number of Islamic modernist organisations beat the drum of nationalism. The Japanese invasion and subsequent occupation of the Dutch East Indies from 1942-45 would represent yet another transformative juncture for the Islamist cause in the region. During the occupation, the Japanese attempted to legitimate their role as liberators and partners in the cause of Indonesian nationalism. They justified their legitimacy as liberators on distinctly ethno-cultural grounds and advanced the position that they were liberating their Asian brethren from the clutches of an oppressive foreign (European) colonial structure. Of course this view among locals was short lived as tens of thousands were starved to death and were coerced into forced labour.



The Japanese occupation fundamentally solidified the place of Islam under the big tent of competing ideals for the cause of Indonesian nationalism and went to extraordinary lengths to harness the nascent anger of many constituencies towards their European colonial overlords. Most significantly, the Japanese radicalised and politicised the Islamist voice; Ulema were given military and political training and all Muslim organisations, including *Muhammadiyah* and NU, were merged under the Japanese-created umbrella organization *Masyumi* (Majelis Syura Muslimin Indonesia) (Van Bruinessen 2002, Heffner 2000: 41). In the revolutionary period Masyumi would act as both the advancing the interest of the archipelago's Muslim community, while remaining a centralised organisation under Japanese control. The influence of the Japanese spread beyond their use of Islamist organisation; their three- year rule eschewed a number of governance innovations including local neighborhood organisations, and most significantly, they buoyed nationalist leaders like the young charismatic Sukarno and his PNI party (Hefner 2000: 41). As Vickers (2005) maintains, the combination of nationalism and destruction spurred by Japanese occupation were essential ingredients for the nationalist revolution that followed World War Two (85).

Within days of the Japanese surrender on 8 August 1945, Sukarno and Hatta declared independence and between 1945 and 1949 a full-scale revolution to unseat the Dutch ensued. The Revolution was of course about more than just removing the Dutch from the region; it was also a revolution of ideas surrounding the guiding principles that would underlie the of the new Indonesian nation-state. In this dynamic, deciding on the exact role of Islam in the Indonesia nation-state was a pernicious balancing act. This was not only because the ulema (both traditionalist and modernist) had declared Jihad and played an important role in the struggle for independence and as a consequence had a legitimate voice, but also because there seemed to be an equal number of voices that wanted a version of a secular state. In this context, Sukarno was faced with the unenviable task of

both balancing the demands of the ulema while also selling the idea of cohesive nation-state to a culturally, religiously, linguistically and ethnically diverse collection of islands. Thus it seemed that in setting the ideological goal posts for the state, Sukarno was uncomfortable with using the dominant political imagery of the day – be it capitalism, Islamic modernism or Marxism. Instead Sukarno, like Ataturk, seemed to be more interested in advancing the idea of a secular republic centred somewhat on his personality. The foundation of Sukarno's nationalism was set forth in the doctrine of the Five State Principles, or *Pancasila*, first made public in the middle of 1945 (Vickers 2006: 117). These principles were: (1) Structuring a Free Indonesia in Faithfulness to God Almighty, (2) Consensus or Democracy, (3) Internationalism or humanitarianism, (4) social prosperity and (5) nationalism or national unity (Vickers 2005: 117). While the principles of Pancasila were not enshrined in the interim constitution of 1950, political elites established a broad consensus situated generally around its key precepts. Leading up the first national election to be held in 1955, it was agreed that the interim state would be unitary republic rather than a federal republic, and it was also agreed that political parties would be the vein through which the various demographic cleavages would be expressed (Bertrand 2004: 34).

Muslim groups in general, but particularly those influenced by second and third wave revivalist ideology, believed that Sukarno's nationalism was a shallow basis on which to build a nation and that his Five Principles were a western anachronism (Heffner 2000: 39). In an effort to ameliorate the tensions between those who wanted an Islamic theocratic state and those who advocated western nationalism, Muslim leaders demanded the inclusion of a constitutional caveat would have required all Muslims in Indonesia be subject to Shari law – otherwise known as the Jakarta Charter.

Despite that the Jakarta Charter was abandoned for a lack of support, the questions over the role of Islam in society did not disappear and the most

significant challenge to the state in the early years came from segments of the Muslim community. In January 1948, Muslim militias in West Java broke away from the Republican government after the latter had made what the former perceived to be an unfair agreement with the Dutch (the Renville Agreement) and ordered its militias to withdraw to Central Java (van Bruinessen 2005). Coordinated by the radical Muslim politician, Kartosuwiryo, the breakaway militias continued to fight the Dutch and gradually established their own rudimentary form of government and state apparatus that recognised no law except Shari (van Bruinessen 2005). The Darul Islam movement (DI), or the Islamic State of Indonesia as it came to call itself, remained a serious competitor to the Republican movement throughout the final years of the revolution and became a major problem for it after full independence had been won (van Bruinessen 2005). At its height, DI had of thousands of fighters and controlled significant tracks of mountainous jungle and hinterland across West Java, Aceh and South Sulawesi (Fealy, Hooker & White 2006: 49). The rebellion killed between 15,000 and 40,000 and displaced up to half a million (Fealy, Hooker & White 2006: 49). The Darul Islam movement remained a viable alternative to the secular Republic until the main cog of its leadership base was routed in 1962 (van Bruinessen 2005).

By the mid 1950s, the power of Sukarno's personality and the interim rules established years earlier were not enough to ameliorate the tensions surrounding the issue of the basic foundation of the state and the widely differing views on the parameters of Indonesian nationalism. Haemorrhages emerged on several fronts. While the NU was generally able to integrate its agenda into the framework of the Sukarno regime, the relations between it and its modernist counterpart, together with the relationship between modernist organisations and state, began to fail. In 1952 NU broke away from Masyumi because of a conflict over the distribution of government positions for its members. NU members were for the most part products of the *pesentren* system and lacked the western education to

which many of the modernist Masyumi members had been exposed (van Bruinessen 2005). By the late 1950s, Masyumi became increasingly disaffected with Sukarno's style of leadership and was particularly critical of the regime's cooperation with the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). The antipathy was mutual and regime elites suspected Masyumi of secret collusion with the still simmering the Dural Islam movement. In particular, political elites were weary of Masyumi's power base outside of Java, particularly in Aceh, Sumatra and Sulawesi (Bertrand 2004: 35).

The results of Indonesia's first national election in 1955 were telling of the deep division within Indonesian society, particularly in relation to the role of Islam in the day-to-day affairs of the state. Rather than delivering any one political faction a clear mandate, the results only exacerbated the existing factional tensions (Bertrand 2004: 35). In the ballot, the Islamist parties NU and Masyumi commanded 21 and 18.5 percent of the vote respectively, Sukarno's nationalist PNI commanded 22.5 percent, and the Communist PKI party commanded 16.5 percent (van Bruinessen 2005). Thus the electorate was almost equally divided on the secular and religious based parties. This result effectively answered the question of the Jakarta Charter and issue was resolved in the negative.

In understanding the trajectory of the Islamist agenda in Indonesia today, the political turmoil of the 1950s remains a fundamentally important juncture to consider and highlights a series of dynamics that have changed little over the past 50 years. What evolved in the 1950s within Masyumi was a fundamental disagreement between the Islamist faction over a number of key issues, including: (a) how to convert the message of Islam into a political agenda, (b) the limits of that agenda and (c) the common set of means by which to do this. That these factions agreed on the inclusion of the Jakarta Charter was not enough to unite the divergent interests of the groups. While there were obvious ideological fault

lines between the NU and *Muhammadiyah*, less obvious and in many cases more severe were the growing divisions within the modernist camp itself. Voices within the modernist camp ranged from those calling for full engagement in parliamentary processes, to those calling for a retreat from politics and focus on *dawa* activities, to those who called for the violent rejection of the state altogether. To a large degree, the split among modernists in this period generally reflected the factional split between the second and third wave revivalists discussed in the last chapter, and were driven by many of the same dynamics. Thus, for Islam to shape the politics of Indonesia it would need to act as a cohesive unit. The political dynamics of the 1950s highlight its inability to act as a truly unifying source of political liberation. In addition to intra-communal Muslim disagreements and souring relations between Masyumi and the state, problems were also brewing around the archipelago on an ethnic level. At issue was the increasingly centralised nature of the Indonesian nation-state. In the interim constitutional discussions, the regions had accepted a unitary state in exchange for guarantees of regional autonomy (Bertrand 2004: 35). In this context, Muslims were one of many constituencies that perceived that central government had reneged on its commitment. The crisis came to a head in February of 1958 when a coalition of politicians from Jakarta and regional leaders proclaimed an alternative government, the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia (PRRI) (Bertrand 2004: 36).

Sukarno maintained a two-front attack on the growing number of ethnic rebellions simmering around the archipelago. As a first step he began to dispatch military with greater frequency into the regions. Then, on the political front, he looked to solidify his own control through the implementation of new political regime. Dubbed “Guided Democracy”, his new political regime was announced in 1957 as an alternative to western style democracy. It gave more power to the President and military and ensued that only active or retired military personnel with

unquestioned loyalty to the centre would be appointed as officials at a regional or district level (Porter 2005). The plan also nationalised all industry and in particular removed remaining Dutch interests from the economy (Robison & Hadiz 2005: 44). In 1960, following Masyumi's refusal to cooperate with the new system, the party was banned. Sukarno then dissolved parliament and forced remaining Muslim political parties to integrate into the new secular political order.

To ameliorate his growing dependence on the military to keep the state as a cohesive unit, Sukarno offered support for the PKI. Under his tacit patronage the PKI's support base grew markedly and with the promised land reform and better income distribution, they offered an agenda attractive to many struggling Indonesians (Friend 2003: 101). The final confrontation between the PKI and the military (TNI) ended with the assassination of six generals on 30 September 1965. The military labeled the event as a coup attempt on the part of the PKI, and military units under the control of Suharto responded to the attack. Within days, Suharto (then commander of KOSTRAD the strategic Army Reserve) had seized control of the armed forces and had given himself wide powers to restore order and security. The PKI was banned and its members were jailed, killed or exiled. In the following months, violence extended beyond attacks against PKI operatives and hundreds of thousands of people were killed. While many were Communists, many others were killed in settling local conflicts.

### *Part 3: Islamism in The New Order*

By March 1966, effective Presidential powers had been transferred to Suharto, who acceded to the Presidency the following year. As his first order of business, Suharto aggressively purged the political system of "Old Order" influence, and systematically eliminated any left-wing supporters in the armed forces and placed people loyal to him in positions of authority. He bolstered the role of the military in civilian tasks and to some extent formalised elements of

previous government policy. Suharto maintained a vision of depoliticised Indonesia governed under strong centralised authority and was above all else, paranoid about the threats to the regime from forces within. Along these lines, Robison and Hadiz (2004) succinctly unpack the core elements of the New Order regime and argue that the regime evolved into:

A regulatory apparatus imposing a framework of fiscal and monetary discipline and highly organised political repression aimed at preventing the economic and social disorder that had corroded the previous regime. Within this was established: A system of organising state and society relations characterised primarily by the disorganisation of civil society and the dominance of state-created corporatist institutions.

An extensive and complex system of patronage personified by Suharto that penetrated all layers of society from Jakarta down to the provinces, towns and villages. During its heyday it became a capitalist oligarchy that fused public authority and private interest, epitomised by the rise of such families as the Suhartos.(p.43)

From the analysis presented above, it becomes clear that we need to be nuanced in evaluating the processes by which Islamism was incorporated into the corporatised power structure of New Order political regime. While it is often argued that the Suharto regime was a natural enemy of the Islamist voice, the reality is far more complex. In effect, Suharto had no natural allies or enemies and through its tenure, the New Order regime both empowered and disempowered various groups at different times to fit its own agenda. Rather than suppressing Muslim activism and secularising politics, Suharto instituted a number of reforms that combined severe control of political Islam while allowing expressions of Islamic spirituality (Heffner 2000: 58). Regime elites looked to organize religion as an anchor for public morality, a shield against western liberalism and an anecdote for communism (Heffner 2000: 59). In this context, the New Order not only tolerated depoliticised forms of religion but also encouraged its penetration into all corners of society (Heffner 2000: 59).

For the first five years of its existence, the New Order regime found it convenient to build a temporary alliance with Muslim groups, ostensibly to finish

the task of purging the Indonesian nation-state of its undesirable elements – particularly the PKI elements that survived the initial purges. Between 1965 and 1967, the ethnic Chinese community caught the ire of the regime and was accused of being Communist, while others were resented for their control of commercial interests. Here it is widely believed that Suharto's powerful intelligence chief, Ali Mutopo (often credited as the real architect of the New Order), cultivated a group of DI veterans and allowed them to maintain an arms cache to be used against Communists and other enemies of the regime (van Bruinessen 2005).

Despite the early flirtation, the New Order's policy, beginning in the early 1970s and continuing through the middle of the 1980s, shifted towards one of managing and containing the Muslim forces. While Suharto released the Masyumi leadership structure from prison, he did not allow their core leadership to regroup in the political arena (Hefner 1997: 78). To give voice to Masyumi and the constituency, and to curtail the influence of NU, Suharto established Parmusi to cater to the needs of Masyumi's political constituency. Without the backing of Masyumi's leaders, however, it was unable to recapture its former clout. The old Masyumi elite effectively split up into two distinct groups.

Following its de-registry, many Masyumi leaders, including Mohammad Nastir, decided to devote their energies to dakwah (*da'wa*) rather than engage in traditional political processes. Nastir's retreat from electoral politics into street level activism was broadly symptomatic of a general trend occurring in other Muslim nations - generally reflected in the demographic shift from modernism to neo-revivalism. Embittered by the corrupt and exclusionary politics of both the New and Old Orders, Nastir and many other modernists believed that the Islamisation of Indonesia would need to take place on a grass-roots level (Hefner 1997: 78). The Dakwah Council (Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia – or DDII) was established in 1967 and served the dual function of both Islamising the



population while also serving as a voice of dissent against the regime. As an organisation, DDII presented an unlikely juxtaposition of views: a belief in the superiority of western style democracy over the forms of governance instituted by Sukarno and Suharto, an obsession with Christian missionaries efforts as a threat to Islam, and an increasingly strong orientation towards the Middle East, particularly Saudi Arabia (van Bruinessen 2005). Following the Saudi oil boom and increased activism of its Salafi ulema DDII established a connection with the Saudi funded Islamic World Youth League. Saudi largesse had two major consequences. First, patronage from charities associated with Saudi Arabian Government gave groups like DDII a degree of legitimacy and political cover to carry out their activities. Second, while the transfer of people and ideas between the archipelago and the Middle East was not new the increasingly politicized and violent machinations that lay on the fringes of Fourth Wave revivalism added a complex layer to Indonesia's simmering ethno-religious mix.

While DDII was working to Islamise the population, another group of former Masyumi functionaries rescinded their critique of Suharto and joined the machinery of the regime's Golkar Party. The 1966 Generation, as they were called, formed the basis of the Muslim technocrat awakening in the early 1990s. To present a counter-balance to the NU on the one hand and subversive dakwah organisations, the regime encouraged its young modernist faction to pursue higher education in west – particularly in the USA and Canada.

To ensure the continuation of *Abangan*-Christian domination of the State, the 1970s saw the regime employ increasingly draconian measures to maintain the marginalisation of the Muslim voice in the political system. To achieve this, Suharto resorted to a mix of strategies aimed at weakening Islam's capacity for independent political activity and to garner victory for Golkar at elections (Porter 2005: 46). Among these strategies were state interventions in the parties, electoral manipulations, and a general politic of intimidation and coercion. In 1973,

all Muslim parties (Parmusi, NU, Perti and PSII) were forcefully merged into the United Development Party (PPP). This policy was followed by the implementation of the Floating Mass Strategy, which ensured that political parties like PPP could not organize politically below the district level (Porter 2002: 46). In 1977, when it looked like Golkar would not get 50 percent of the national vote, Suharto dispatched his intelligence chief to create a diversion. Beginning in 1977 and continuing through the early 1980s, there were repeated acts of terrorism including arson and the bombing of Churches, nightclubs and cinemas, all claimed by the shadowy Komando Jihad (Bertrand 2004: 82). These attacks had the convenient effect of dissuading people from voting for the PPP. The Komando Jihad leaders arrested for the attacks were veterans of DI, again proving the connection between New Order's intelligence service and the DI elements (van Bruinessen 2005).

While the regime was not afraid to use Jihadist elements for its own ends, throughout the 1980s, Suharto and his cronies continued to view Islam as the biggest threat to the internal stability of the state. This view was reflected in two key events. First, his appointment of Benny Murdani (a Javanese Christian) as TNI chief; this choice effectively shored up the continued Javanese-*Abangan*-Christian domination of the state. Second, his imposition of Pancasila on all parties and associations was an attempt to formally extend the *Abangan*-Christian ideological domination across the archipelago. The backlash that followed resulted in a series of violent riots – including the famous incident at Tanjung Proik in Jakarta and the bombing of a bank branch owned by one of Suharto's Chinese business partners (van Bruinessen 2005).

By the late 1980s, the ground beneath Suharto's leadership was shifting and his leadership faced several serious problems. First and most significantly, his relationship with the TNI was under question. Benny Murdani, the Army chief and former Suharto protégé, was actively criticising the affairs of the First Family.

The second element was structural; while the regime had used the *Abangn-Christian* power base to limit the power of the nascent Santri voice, Suharto saw that to maintain his own leadership and control the shifting loyalties of the TNI, he had to shift his ethno-religious alignments (Bertrand 2004: 83, Heffner 1997). To this end, he turned towards the institutions of Islam to find new legitimacy - particularly the former Masyumi leadership. The greening of Golkar, as it was labeled at the time, represented a broad set of official and unofficial policies to make the government more inclusive of Muslim interests (Friend 2003: 120). Under the leadership of his closest advisor and anointed successor, B.J. Habibie, Suharto allowed the establishment of an association of Muslim intellectuals (ICMI) and endorsed its demands for affirmative action. In the context of early 1990s Indonesia, this meant proportionate representation of Muslims (usually of a scripturalist ilk) in leadership positions as well as the institutions that represented the interests of the Muslims (Friend 2003: 120). During this period, an Islamic bank and daily newspaper was set up and legislation was enacted that elevated the position of Islamic courts. Thus the trend towards a greater role for Muslims in government through the creation of the ICMI and the simultaneous marginalisation of the Christian Community, signaled to many the beginning of new power dynamic (Bertrand 2004: 90).

Rather than representing something completely new, the Islamisation of the New Order probably represented a formalisation of Suharto's existing policy on depoliticized ethno-religious affiliation. Nevertheless, it did without question increase ethno-religious tensions across the archipelago. Towards the mid to late 1990s, this issue became highlighted in the eastern section of the archipelago where, from the mid 1970s onwards, the regime maintained a transmigration policy that relocated people from densely populated to sparsely populated areas (Heffner 2000). The policy had the effect of moving Muslims from the western part of the archipelago into the Christian majority eastern section. In the context of

the government's rapprochement with various Muslim organisations, this policy provided a window of opportunity for those on both sides of the Muslim-Christian divide with a vested interest in sowing the seeds of ethno-religious confrontation (Elson 2001). In the post New Order era, this dynamic was typified most starkly by the low intensity civil conflicts in Aceh and Sulawesi.

In many respects, the Islamist epoch of the late New Order presented a boon for groups looking to advance a conservative Islamist agenda. In the face of a failing economy and ethno-political issues, the regime successfully co-opted the forces of conservative Islam into its vast web of patronage. In particular, the regime supported the conservative Dakwah activities of the DDII – with the help of Saudi and Middle Eastern funding streams, the group expanded markedly its members base. This style of activism in turn gave rise to a form street Islam that espoused the radicalised politics of resentment seen elsewhere in the Muslim world and embodied by support for global Islamist causes and growing levels of anti-Semitism. The politics of “street Islam” were particularly useful to the regime in managing the influence of leftist and women' groups. This period also yielded the re-emergence of the DI offshoot MMI – the precursor to JI. Conversely, the trend among conservative Muslims towards either classical Salafism or the politicised polemic of Qutbism, was far from uniform and there were equal numbers of self-confessed Islamists eager to find different types of ideological expression.

There can be no doubt that the last decade of the New Order had a conservatising impact on at least the short-term direction of Indonesian Islam. The Suharto regime's willingness to use the “Muslim space” to stir ethno-religious fires for its political ends was disastrous and created an escalating climate of macro societal radicalisation where acts of intimidation, terror and religious violence would become more frequent. As the current problem with JI demonstrates, the arm of militant Islam can be successfully harnessed by the state for its own ends but it is a dangerous game and ultimately the state risks losing control of the

experiment at which point groups like JI start to operate outside the agreed upon boundaries.

### *Conclusion*

In this chapter I have presented a detailed political history on the role of Islam and Islamist movements in the evolution of the Indonesian nation-state from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century until the end of the New Order period. I have engaged several fields and levels of analysis including: the transmission of ideas from the centre of the Muslim world to the archipelago, the impact of Islamic thought on the evolution of the state, and how forces of the state have managed the tides of Islam. As my analysis has demonstrated, questions over the role of Islam in the geo-political framework of the region are vast and complex and go to the heart of the many issues that began long before the attacks on September 11 2001. Thus, beginning to consider more specifically the radicalisation process of those who have committed acts of violence in the name of Islam recently, behooves an appropriate contextualisation of the analysis.

Throughout this chapter, several broad patterns in the analysis have emerged. On the theme of the Islamist agenda, the trends present in Indonesia starting in the colonial times to the fall of the Suharto regime seem to reflect the much of the analysis developed in the last chapter. First, like their counter-parts in Egypt we see a general inability on the part of Indonesian Islamists to craft a coherent governing agenda palatable to the electorate. The traditionalist-modernist divide, the *Abangan-Santri* divide, and more specific fissures within those camps, have been a source of an enduring state of paralysis in the project to craft a common agenda to unseat the dominant western models of secularism. Despite the interest in the various waves of Islamist revivalism (particularly modernism), there seems to be a deep reticence to the some of the austere manifestations of this phenomenon. Second, there has been a consistent pattern on the part of

successive governing structures in the region to corporatise the forces of Islam – most of the time with disastrous consequences. As the Suharto years clearly demonstrate, the practice of politicising and de-politicising the forces of faith in society is a recipe for ongoing inter-communal strife. Above all else, this chapter has demonstrated how the macro political conditions can create those in which acts of religious violence and terrorism get hardwired into conduct of inter-communal relations.

## **Chapter 4: Politics of the "Preman State" – Islamism in Post Suharto Indonesia**

The immediate period following the collapse of the New Order regime in 1998 presented both as a continuation and deviation from the previous 30 years of policy planning. Suharto's inability to manage the economic collapse of Indonesia combined with loss of legitimacy sowed the seeds of his downfall (Robison & Hadiz 2005). Certainly on the face of it, the fall of the Suharto government in Indonesia was looking at a sort of democratic opening. While the *Reformasi* movement succeeded in its demands that Suharto leave power, his legacy lived on and the New Order system of patronage and cronyism reigned supreme in its quest to stall the nation's nascent democratisation agenda. As discussed at length in the last chapter, the central features of the Old and New Orders were their total obsession with managing and dominating the institutions of religious and civil society. Thus, if the New Order regime quintessentially functioned as a protection racket with Suharto as the ultimate Godfather, then his absence created a dynamic in which a number of groups would begin to clamour for the top spot in the new power pyramid. As McLeod (2000) so aptly described it, 'Suharto's departure left the corrupt political and business franchise he developed without a lynchpin, its godfather (McLeod 2000 in Linnday 2001: 283).' Above all else, the shift seen in the transition out of New Order politics was not a latitudinal shift toward a 'new politics' but rather the evolution of a new type of power relationship among a variety of actors who were looking to re-position themselves in the Godfather role. This effectively saw the centralized and orchestrated violence of the New Order evolve towards a trend of decentralised mass spontaneous violence (O'Rourke 2002, Lindsey 2001). In this dynamic, an already fragile set of simmering ethno-religious and inter-communal complexities were manipulated to serve the interests of peoples looking to advance conflicting political agendas.

For Islam and the institution of Islam the post New Order era would give rise to a number of big questions and brought the debate over the position of Islam within Indonesian society back to the big table of national politics. The Jakarta Charter was abandoned because it was unpopular and unsustainable as a governing agenda. In the eyes of Islamists (of all stripes), however, the forced secularisation and de-politicisation of religious life under both the Old and New Orders legitimated, in the context of a changed and democratising political culture, the need for a new discourse on the role of Islam in the day-to-day workings of the nation-state. Of course, this new debate on the role of Islam in the state occurred within the framework of an increasingly conservatised religious culture encouraged in the last decade of the New Order regime. In this context, it may be fair to conclude that during this period increasingly large numbers of Indonesia's Muslims were 'radicalising' – that is, there was a proliferation of a wide set of agendas that could broadly be described as anti-pluralist and austere theologically. While it is possible to argue this case it would be problematic to conclude that Indonesia's 180 million Muslims were radicalising on the same trajectory. As I discussed in the first chapter, the vast rubric of Islamism can lead to fundamentally different sorts of expressions of piety, ranging from the violent rejection of the secular nation-state and the taking of innocent lives, to an interest in Islamisation through the electoral process, to a complete withdrawal from secular society into isolated scripturalism. As I have argued throughout this work, there is no agreement in Indonesia or elsewhere among Islamists on how best to achieve their goal or even what the goal should be.

To understand accurately the escalating cadence of Islamist violence that emerged in the post New Order period, this chapter will problematise the link between conservative theology and violent expressions of religiosity, and further contextualise the rise of the Islamist religiosity against a series of other dynamics. More specifically, this chapter will address: the changing power dynamics in post



Suharto Indonesia and role of the “Islamist space” in that process, the shifting terrain of the Islamist agenda beginning in the 1990s, and the main groups that have emerged over the past 15 years. Finally I will examine the changing modes of piety and activism and begin to delve into the condition that led to the shift from violent Islamist religiosity at an inter-communal level to attacks on foreign targets.

*Part 1: Political Islam and re-ordering of Power in Post New Order Indonesia*

The beginnings of the end of the New Order regime were visible well before the 1998 financial crisis but it was without question the complete collapse of the Indonesian economy, brought on by the crisis that dealt the body blow to Suharto’s leadership. While Suharto had become a master of quietly quashing dissent by effectively pulling the strings of intercommunal politics to his advantage, in the wake of the magnitude of the crisis he was unable to contain or control the rising voices of discord. At the same time, he lost the confidence of the key governing institutions – including the TNI and a large swath of his own cabinet. On 21 May 1998, amid mass protests and civil chaos, B.J. Habibie replaced Suharto as the President of Indonesia.

The final months of the Suharto rule and the transition period following his ousting set the scene for another tectonic shift within the house of political Islam. The continued leadership of the Golkar party and the leadership B.J. Habibie was fraught on a number of fronts from the outset. First, the secular wing of the *Reformasi* movement considered Habibie too close to the New Order regime and wanted to see ‘total reform. Second, despite that Habibie installed a cabinet in which ICMI personalities and the Muslim “green” faction of the TNI were well represented, support for the Habibie government was far universal from within the Muslim political spectrum and a broad array of secular and non-secular Muslims were concerned that Habibie’s presidency would further empower anti-pluralist conservative *Santri* Muslim. As a result, many elites decided instead to

back the charismatic NU leader Abdurrahman Wahid or secular nationalist Megawati Sukaroputri over Habibie (van Bruinessen 2005, Sidel 2006).

Without question, though, the biggest anti-Golkar force came from the ranks of the student population. Muslim student activism, which had grown consistently through the 1980s and 1990s and was represented by a number of organisations including the Neo-Revivalist (third wave) Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia or Indonesian Muslim Student Action Union (KAMMI), was vocal in its opposition to the Habibie government (Bubalo & Fealy 2005: 69). On the other end of the ideological spectrum, leftist student groups demanded the complete overthrow of the New Order and all of Suharto's collaborators (van Bruinessen 2005). Habibie's tenure in the Presidency was marred by several contradictory trends. On the one hand he tried to distance himself from Suharto politics and instituted a number of key reforms including lifting the legislation that discriminated against Chinese, he took power away from the military, decentralized government, and set East Timor on a rocky road to independence (Vickers 2005: 210). On the other hand, Habibie used New Order style tactics to attempt to sway the outcome of the 1999 elections. He used ICMI's patronage networks over groups like DII and KISDI to mobilize the forces of street Islam against competing parties – particularly those from the left. In the same way that Suharto created and used the anti-Communist youth gangs like Pemuda Pancasila (Pancasila Youth) to deal with opponents (Lindsey 2001: 290), Habibie, under the guise of 'public order', turned to a variety of paramilitary Islamic thugs or *Preman* groups (van Bruinessen 2005). The use of these groups would, over the course of the next decade, become a defining feature both in the terms of the evolution of the Islamist agenda and in the broader relationship between modes of formal and informal security.

The 1999 elections would be the first test for Muslim political parties in the post New Order period and for the first time since 1950, there was almost

unlimited freedom on the parameters of political debate. Of the 48 parties contesting the election, 14 defined themselves as Muslim, but among them only the PPP, the Muslim party of the Suharto era, received a significant percentage of the vote, ending in fourth place with around 11 percent (Fealy, Hooker & White 2006: 46). Neither the Crescent Star Party (PBB), which claimed to be the true successor to Masyumi, nor the PK received more than two percent of the vote necessary to stay a registered political entity (Bubalo & Fealy 2005: 69). Megawati's Indonesian Democrat Party, the PDI-P won 35 percent of the vote, while Golkar captured 23 percent of the vote.

The result of the 1999 election posed a set of contradictory results for those interested in the advancement of political Islam. On the one hand, Islam in public and private life was at an unprecedented level of popularity yet political Islam remained weaker than in the 1950s (Fealy, Hooker & White 2006: 46; Lindsey 2001: 284). Sidel (2006) describes well the picture that emerged in the first election after Suharto fell:

In the elections of May 1999, moreover, the fiction of a united Muslim population... dissipated in the fragmentation and factionalism among a welter of Islamic parties and dissolved in the face of a strong electoral showing by non Islamic parties, among Muslim and non-Muslim voters alike. (210)

No doubt one of the main reasons for the fragmentation in the Muslim vote in the 1999 election lay in that the two biggest current Muslim organisations – NU and *Muhammadiyah* - did not vote in cohesive blocks as they had in the 1950s. Throughout the New Order era, NU fragmented and its members cast their ballots co-equally towards PPP, Wahid's party the PKB and to the Golkar (Friend 2003). Regional politics also played its hand here with NU members outside Java typically voted PPP while Javanese members were split sub-regionally among PPP, PKS and Golkar members (Friend 2003). *Muhammadiyah* experienced a similarly type of electoral fragmentation. Whereas in 1950 Masyumi had been natural political choice for *Muhammadiyah* supporters, none of the parties that picked up Masyumi

legacy in the 1999 campaign had broad appeal. Its stated heir, the Crescent and Star Party, distanced urban middle class supporters with its connection to the radical *dakwah* organisation KISDI. Moreover, the strong association between Golkar and the ranks of the urban middle class of *Muhammadiyah* members (following its ban in 1960), effectively delivered the Masyumi constituency to Golkar. The only party with a clear Islamist electoral agenda was the PK (Justice Party) and it failed to gain any sort of mass constituency.

With no clear winner in the 1999 election, Abdurrahman Wahid's ascension to the Presidency was the product of an intricate process of negotiation and compromise. Intense jockeying on the part of Megawati and Habibie and the threat that mass rioting on the part of their supporters could deteriorate into full-blown civil conflict made the choice of Wahid palatable to the political establishment (Robison & Hadiz 2004: 241). In the election campaign, as noted earlier, the paramilitary wings of the PDI-P (*satgas*) and PPP (*GPK – Gerakan Pamuda ka'bah*) acted as the muscle to sell the agenda of the political parties at a street level. While the use of *Preman* to do the bidding of political interest had been a long established practice in the game of Indonesian politics, the mobilisation of these of these forces (on all sides) in the high stakes environment of the 1999 election was particularly pernicious and would foreshadow a nasty turn in inter-communal relations in the coming years. Thus, the willingness of these groups to use violence on behalf of their respective benefactors and the spectre of all out civil conflict beyond the control of the government, necessitated in the mind of political elites the need for a third choice (Robison & Hadiz 2004:241).

Among political elites, the choice of Wahid as President was not meant to eschew a new politics – rather Wahid was meant to be a stabilising agent reflecting enough change to keep people off the streets while essentially preserving the broader structural interests of elite networks within the state (Lane 2007). This is not to say that Wahid was completely ineffectual, but his

reform agenda was stymied by a general unwillingness for real systemic reform at an elite level. His real problem, however, lay in his inability to control the TNI and members of his own cabinet. Wahid's biggest challenge lay squarely in that he was first inheritor of the post New Order system and as such inherited a system that functioned on the basis of official and non-official corruption. Thus he was in the awkward position of having to navigate the interest of vast (and still in tact) state patronage networks of the New Order against the demands of a populations expecting real transformation. In the eyes of many ordinary Indonesians, there was a perception that even despite his personal stature, the growing number of corruption scandals involving people close to him, combined with his inability to prosecute members of the Suharto family, created a general picture of weakness around the man. He was also dogged by the right wing of his own Islamist movement who considered the inclusive and tolerant Sufi Islam he espoused to be heretical. Anti-Wahid sentiments became a rallying cry around which Islamist parties regrouped and brought back to the centre of politics some of the core tensions between traditionalists and modernists discussed in the last chapter. Finally in 2002 amid growing calls for his impeachment, his deputy Megawati Sukarnoputri replaced him.

Between 1999 and 2003, the biggest challenges faced by first Wahid and then Megawati were the escalating incidents of inter-communal violence across the archipelago. During this time Wahid and Megawati were also faced with the unenviable task of managing a de-centralisation project that would devolve autonomy back to the regions while at the same time preventing the Balkanisation of the archipelago. In this context, the struggle on the part of various groups within the regions to retain and change their patronage structure with Jakarta invariably led to an escalation in inter-communal strife (Sidel 2006). Moreover, while structural violence between or directed against particular ethnic and religious groups had been a key feature of the New Order regime, the fragmentation

created in its wake created a dynamic in which religion would come to play a more dominant role in the unfolding of inter-communal problems (Bertrand 2004). Here again, the environment of the 1999 election is fundamental to consider. The deployment of various *Preman* groups and in particular the use of Muslim defence cum vigilante groups on behalf of certain interests in that campaign, set in motion a deteriorating security environment that would get played out on religious lines. Here, the escalation of events from riots and violence directed at ethnic Chinese, to the anti-Witchcraft campaigns, to the inter-communal violence between Muslims and Christians in Sulawesi, Maluku and Aceh, does not reflect either the inevitability of religious conflict and nor does it justify the thesis that there was growing pattern of Islamisation on a mass scale at work, but rather indicates the extent to which religion can be manipulated to serve elite interests.

In evaluating the inter-communal violence in the post New Order period, its connection to a broader pattern of religious violence and ostensibly processes of radicalisation debates over levels of analysis, weigh heavily. On the one hand the intercommunal strife in Sulawesi, Maluku and Aceh were religious conflicts in that they were fought between Muslims and Christians. As such, these conflicts became a rallying cry and prompted calls for the Muslim community to act in defence of its own community. On the other hand, these conflicts were not about religion and had more to do with either questions of autonomy or competition over access to resources. That these confrontations have, for the most part abated, demonstrates the extent to which acts of religious violence themselves are not always tantamount to increased mass patterns of religious radicalisation. Thus, in beginning to evaluate 'tipping-points' in the radicalisation process – that is the particular circumstances that see individuals or group transit into acts of violence - it becomes clear that a highly nuanced understanding of the field of observation is necessary. For analysts, the dynamics present in Indonesia in the late 1990s necessitate the development of a theoretical typology that goes beyond ascribing

blame along solely religious lines.

*Part 2: Shifting Terrain*

The main crux of analysis in this chapter has focused on political shifts following the fall the New Order regime and its impact on the evolution of the “Islamist space.” Now I will delve more deeply into the changing modes of Islamist activism and the groups and patterns that emerged through the 1990s – especially after the 1999 election. The results of the 1999 election unquestionably demonstrate the weariness of the Indonesian electorate towards the agenda of fundamentalist parties. The defeat of Islam at an election, however, certainly did not simultaneously represent the defeat of Islam at a socio-culture level. Thus what developed in Indonesia in the late twentieth century is similar to a pattern that emerged in other nationstates and is best described as the emergence of ‘cultural Islam’ (Hassan 2005). On a sociocultural level, the emergence of this phenomenon exists as a product of, and an answer to the complexities of globalisation. In this dynamic, the failure of the nation-state to deliver on a variety of goods has created the space for the range of groups that encourage the ‘Islamisation of the person’ from the bottom up rather than the Islamisation of society from the top down.

The evolution of this phenomenon among middle class Indonesians in the 1980s and 1990s mirrors that of that UK where second and third generation men and women of South Asian origin began to express themselves through their Muslim identity. In finding a re-born religious identity, the adherent plays out a different form of modernity than the one offered by globalised consumerism. In the Indonesian context, the category of cultural Islam embodies many different styles of practice ranging from pseudo new age Sufism to very austere forms of Salafism. While ‘good Muslim’– ‘bad Muslim’ delineations can be made based on the particulars of the theological interpretation, the common element linking all

manifestations of cultural Islam is the desire to re-create one's identity around the practice of religion. A number of analysts, including Greg Barton, have securitised the “*Santri*-ization” of Indonesian Islam, the transition of *Abangan* syncretic Muslims to the category of *Santri*, advancing the view Indonesian Islam is “radicalising.” While there may be evidence to justify the *Santrification* thesis, it is also true that this process has also enlarged the circle of Muslims who adopt a liberal progressive understanding of Islam (Eliraz 2004: 88). Thus *Santrification* does not necessarily equal radicalisation.

As I discussed in the preceding section, the shifting power structures in post New Order Indonesia and the heightened state of competition therein presented a particular boon for the right-flank of Islamist organisations. The expression of the conservative agenda through the thuggery of street politics and the attachment of these groups to secular and often criminal interests, raised the problem of Islamism on a day-to-day level. Certainly, the presence of nominally conservative or even radical groups is not a new phenomenon, however the realities of the post Suharto era and especially the *Preman*-isation of street Islam, have changed the nature of Islamist activism across the board, especially on the level of recruitment (Lindsey 2001). Where the “radical” movement was at one time almost the sole purview of either the Dural Islam activists or university students, the *Preman*-isation phenomenon opened the Islamist channel to thugs and petty criminals. The austere theological interpretation of conservative Islam combined with their willingness for confrontation, made this sort of recruit particularly useful as foot soldiers in promoting anti-vice campaigns and maintaining ‘public order’ (Lindsey 2001).’ While this pattern is typified most starkly in the development of the Front Pembela Islam – (FPI) (Islamic Defenders Front) - it can also be seen in other organisations including Jemmah Islamiyah.



In the post New Order era, the evolution of the conservative or radical 'Islamist space' occurred on a similar but fundamentally different set of ideological trajectories. In the second chapter of this work, I traced the development of Islamism as a unique religious and socio-cultural phenomenon that developed in four historical waves. In context of evaluating the development of Islamism in post New Order Indonesia, there presents an interesting mix of simultaneously functioning movements that represent all waves of revivalist ideology. Given the doctrinal and methodological differences in these forms of activism, it is helpful to unpack the evolution of Islamism in the post New Order era along the lines of: Brotherhood organisation, Salafist organisation and hybrid Salafist organisations that advance Jihad. While all of these organisation types broadly advance the Islamisation of society and the homogenisation of Indonesian Islam along Arab lines, there are also clear differences in their aims and ideologies. Understanding the complex delineations and differences in modes of activism between these groups is fundamental to understanding how processes of radicalisation work on both individual and group levels.

Of all forms of contemporary Islamism, the influence of the prototypical Muslim Brotherhood has the longest modern history in Indonesia. While initial interest began in the 1950s, it was not until the 1970s and 1980s that Brotherhood ideas and organizational techniques began to gain a real following (Bubalo & Fealy 2005: 66). Several factors accounted for its rise in popularity including the frustration and disillusionment at both the Old and New Orders for their treatment of Islamist organisations and the extent to which Muslim leaders played into their hands (Bubalo & Fealy 2005: 66, ICG 2006(a)). In the context of the New Order regime, the attraction of Brotherhood ideology were the Brotherhood's organisational ideas, notably the emphasis on personal piety, the provision of community service and the formation of close knit groups capable of creating a discrete Islamised space from which the broader community might be made more

devout (Bubalo & Fealy 2005: 66). Beginning in the early 1980s, the main vehicle for Brotherhood activism was the *Gerakan Tarbiyah*, which combined with DDII, made up the largest conservative dakwah organisation operating on university campuses and high schools. Ideologically the group followed the al-Banna strain of Brotherhood thought on the gradual Islamisation from the ground up, and while there have been some acceptance of Qutbist views amongst some Tarbiyah members, these views have generally been interpreted in the most liberal way (Azra 2004). From the mid 1980s onwards, the group spread throughout the archipelago and by the early 1990s, controlled the student councils of Indonesia's largest and most prestigious universities (Bubalo & Fealy 2005: 66, Elriaz 2004).

After playing a prominent role in the protests that led to the downfall of the New Order regime, the *Tarbiyah* entered the political fray and its members founded the PK party. Despite its poor showing in the 1999 election, the re-constituted PKS party managed to garner 7 percent of the national vote in the 2004 campaign. Rather than focusing on an overt Islamist agenda, the main 2004 platform consisted of calls to reform government and stem corruption. It remains to be seen whether the better showing for PKS in 2004 compared to its poor performance in 1999 was the increasing traction of the Islamist agenda on the party's focus on good governance. Despite its popularity, PKS has major problems that limit its broad appeal including its choice in legislative candidates, the persistence of conspiratorial anti-Christian propaganda in its party platform, and charges of financial mismanagement among senior leaders (Bubalo & Fealy 2005: 72).

Another interesting case among Brotherhood inspired organisations is the Indonesian branch of the global Hizb ut-Tahrir organisation. I will unpack the Hizb more thoroughly in the next chapter, but in terms of activism, it presents some key differences from the mainstay of Brotherhood inspired organisations. While the organisation had a reputation for strident radicalism in Europe and is banned in

Pakistan, the Indonesian branch has maintained a record of peaceful activism, to date has not formed a paramilitary wing, and for the most part does not take part in “street politics” (Azra 2006) of the PKS movement. It has kept its message local and rather than advocating the re-establishment of the caliphate, has advocated for the application of Sharia law (Ahnaf 2006).

The development of the Salafi movement has, in many ways, much in common with that of the Brotherhood inspired groups. As I stated earlier, however, there are also a number of key differences both structurally and doctrinally. Like Brotherhood groups, the propagation of Salafi ideology has occurred in direct proportion to the rise in Saudi oil wealth beginning in the 1960s (ICG 2004, ICG2006a). Unlike many of the Brotherhood or mainstream traditionalist organisation, however, the Salafi movement remains small and the number of students in these institutions probably number only in the thousands (Barton 2004). Most Salafi-based groups are situated around education and propagation institutions such as the al-Sofwah Foundation, the Ihsa at-Turots Foundation, and al-Haramain al-Khairiyah (Bubalo & Fealy 2005: 74, ICG 2004). Doctrinally, there are also some key differences between the Salafi movement and Brotherhood inspired groups like *Tarbiyah*. The biggest doctrinal difference comes on the level of emulation of Brotherhood discourse. Where *Tarbiyah* sees Brotherhood thought as a guide for the Indonesian situation, Salafi groups seek to emulate directly the cultural and religious practices of the Gulf region (Elriaz 2004, ICG 2004).

The relationship between Salafism, politics and violence (including terrorism) is complex and it would be problematic to place all Salafi groups in the same category. Most Indonesian Salafi groups focus on religiosity and peaceful missionary and educational activities and specially avoid political activity. This contrasts to Brotherhood thought quite starkly with its pre-Qutb focus on social activism to bring about the gradual Islamisation of society. Because the Salafi

Ulemma is de-centralised and a fatwah can be abided or ignored on a group-by-group basis there is not a consistent Salafi line on violent activism (ICG 2004). Thus while mainstream Salafis tend to ascribe primacy to Sheiks in the Persian Gulf region, there have been several cases where Indonesian Salafi groups have opted out of Saudi and Yemini based rulings. The largest Salafi movement in recent history was the Forum Komunikasi Ahlus Wal Jammah (FKAWJ) and its high profile paramilitary force, the Laskar Jihad, who sent fighters to engage in Jihad against Christians in the Malucas conflict. Similarly many self-described Salafists have aligned themselves with vigilante groups like FPI that act in defence of what they perceive to be moral assaults on Islam (ICG 2004, ICG 2006(a), ICG 2007(a)).

In the wake of the Jihadist attacks across the region and the allegiance of many Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) operatives to Salafi ideology, much attention is paid to the connections between it and Salafi ideology. That many JI operatives, including those awaiting execution for the Bali bombings, have espoused Salafi ideology, has bolstered the perception that Salafi ideology served as the agent provocateur in the radicalisation process of those individuals (Barton 2004). While there is some truth in this analysis, it is probably more accurate to place JI in a third category of activism – Salafi Jihadism. The categorical division between Salafism and Salafi Jihadism reflects the latter's ideological tendencies toward fourth wave inspired revivalism that advances a conservative interpretation of Qutb's thinking on Jahilya and acceptability of violent Jihad. Moreover, the connection between the mainstream of the Indonesian Salafi movement and JI remains tenuous. While JI has maintained cordial relations with a number of radical organisations, this has not precipitated a flow of volunteers into the JI movement and if anything, JI actions have distanced it from mainstream of Indonesian Islamism (ICG 2004). The public statements of many JI figures castigating the mainstream Salafi movement for its refusal to engage in its agenda, present *prima*

*facie* evidence of the fissures between the two communities (Bubalo & Fealy 2004: 76) The other key doctrinal division between JI and other Salafist organisations is the former's connection to the messianic Dural Islam movement. JI arose from ashes of MMI (*Majelis Mujahidiin Indonesia*), a network comprised of DI dissidents who came out of hiding to re-formulate their agenda in the late Suharto era. While JI has adopted the veneer of Salafi rhetoric to communicate its position, its experience and much of its actual practice more closely reflect the rural Javanese heritage of DI, which mixes Islamist ideology with other syncretic elements including the religious veneration of people within its own movement – a trait that would be completely unacceptable to strict Salafists (ICG 2004).

Of the three activist typologies discussed in this section, the Salafi-Jihadist category represents by far the one with the smallest membership base. Applying a very loose standard, one could perhaps lump a number of other groups into the category and thus expand the traction of its appeal, however this is problematic because many of the groups that could be lumped into this category would remain so only on an *ad hoc* basis. As discussed earlier, following the fall of the New Order regime and the political realignments that came with it, there were a number of groups that advocated Jihad on behalf of Muslim communities. As the case of Laskar Jihad demonstrates, however, the willingness of FKAWJ to approve Jihad in the Malucas arose from the specific context of inter-communal strife and was not approved as tactic for ongoing use (ICG 2006(a)). Following the cessation of violence, the group did not adopt JI's agenda and extend its Jihad to either western or local targets. So far, JI is the only organisation that has waged violent Jihad outside the context of inter-communal problems.

While it is impossible to completely separate JI's activism from the broader pattern of violent religiosity that occurred following the fall of the Suharto regime, its agenda has been much slower to take root than other styles of Islamist expression. Despite the persistence of religious violence and various

manifestations of Islamist religiosity, the fears among some analysts that JI represents the tip of the iceberg or the ideological vanguard for Indonesian Islamism, have not come to fruition. Thus, there has not been a large-scale ideological migration from one mode of Islamist expression to the other.

### *Conclusion*

Throughout this chapter, I have detailed the complex role of the Islamist agenda in post New Order Indonesia in an effort to begin to unpack the trajectory of Islamism and how this changed dynamic impacted on the evolution of different modes of Islamist expression. Beginning with political transformation, I discussed the changed power relations in the immediate post New Order period and highlighted the divergent views within the “Islamist space” and the extent to which this presented both a democratic opening for the Islamist agenda at an electoral level while also increasing power competition among ethnic and religious groups. I then discussed the process by which, following the 1999 election, elements within the Islamist rubric got drawn into *Preman*-isation of power relations and began to act as enforcement agents of the Islamist agenda on the streets while simultaneously serving the needs of secular interests. I then engaged in a discussion on varying modes of Islamist expression and highlighted the many points of disagreement between these modes of expression.

Debates over the role of Islam in Indonesian society are complex and trying to deliver a post mortem on Islamism in this context is impossible. From the analysis I presented, however, it seems that several patterns emerge that present important points of analysis in beginning to address processes of radicalisation.

First, it seems that despite the increased interest in cultural Islam and more specifically manifestations of conservative or radical Islam, the project to Islamise the nation-state has failed. The inability of the Islamist space to coalesce at the electoral level demonstrates the fragmented nature of the mandate. While the

electoral success of the PKS party in the 2004 election could present evidence to the contrary, by all accounts the strength of their platform lay not in their religious message but in their promise to clean up the political system. Second, from the analysis presented in this chapter, there emerges a need to separate types of religiously-inspired acts of violence. Despite a pattern that would on the surface indicate a growing pattern of Islamist violence, the reality of the situation is far more complicated and we cannot place the violence associated with the “street Islam” of *Preman* groups on the trajectory as the Jihadist agenda of the JI, yet both are Islamist organisations and advocate the use of Jihad. This demonstrates the need to differentiate between symbolic or rhetorical radicalisation and real thing. In the end, the upsurge in Islamist violence that emerged following the collapse of the New Order regime had more to do with the secular power dynamic than it did simmering religious tensions.

The other major trend to emerge from the analysis presented in this chapter surrounds the complex delineations in the types of Islamist activism that developed in the post Suharto period. In the last section I argued that while the Islamist voice had evolved in the post New Order period, the ideological fissures between the types of groups made it difficult to justify the conclusion that even radical Islam was evolving in the same direction. In regards to the theme of radicalisation I hope what emerges from this chapter is a start to move away from analysis that reduces processes of radicalising to the simple exposure to certain religious ideologies. This type of analysis is both inaccurate since it misses the complexity in expression, and more importantly, it ignores the role of secular forces in stoking the fires of inter-communal discord.

## **Chapter 5: Radicalization - Theory and Process**

The set of conclusions reached in the preceding two chapters on the nature and role of Islamism in the creation of the Indonesian nation-state and in post- Suharto Indonesia, necessitate the need to reconsider the theoretical typologies applied in evaluating the radicalisation process of Indonesian Islamists. Having addressed the varied modes of Islamist activism in post- Suharto Indonesia, it becomes very clear that relying on the generic “Islamist ideology” or Salafism as stand alone concepts to explain what drives the radicalisation process is inadequate. The last chapter highlighted that modes of Islamist activism (even those that most people would deem austere and intolerant), are so full of doctrinal and ideological fault as to de-bunk the notion of a unified Islamist movement being radicalised from the ground up. Most importantly, if the radicalization process could be explained by exposure to Salafi ideology alone, then why have Jihadist attacks against western targets in Indonesia decreased and not increased over the past five years? After all, there are ten of thousands of self-confessed Salafists in Indonesia (ICG 2004).

The growing cadence of Islamist inspired violence in different parts of the world has, over the course of the past 15 years, sparked heightened interest in questions over radicalisation. In this context, analysts from around the world have been quite consistent in asking a series of “how” questions in relation to the nature and trajectory of violent Jihadism. As a result, the trajectory of research on radicalisation forces appears to focus on questions such as: how many terrorists are there?; how do terror cells operate?; how do groups recruit?; how do they get funding?; how are various groups connected?; and of course, how do “we” prevent another attack? Because of these questions, security agencies have a fairly good idea about how the al- Qaeda phenomenon operates and how it finances itself. Much slower to develop, however, has been the crucial set of “why” questions. Even slower, has been a consistent theoretical typology that



addresses specifically the transformation processes that sees Jihadists graduate from mere ideological conservatives to brutal killers. It would seem that for fear of appearing either too “understanding” of the terrorists on the one hand or offending Muslims on the other, analysts and academic have not delved seriously into questions of radicalisation. This pattern also holds for research into the radicalization phenomenon in Indonesia, and, as I will address later in the chapter, there are lots of “how” questions” being asked in relation to the JI movement and far fewer “why” questions.

In starting to ask “why” questions” in relation to the radicalisation process in Indonesia at both an individual and group level, the crux of relevant analysis revolves around socialisation and transformation. That is, what are specific factor(s) that see people and groups graduate from conservatism to becoming willing to commit mass murder? Like all social science endeavours, this field of inquiry weighs heavy with debates over levels of analysis. For the purposes of analysis in this chapter, I take it as a given that Islamist religious ideology plays an important part in macro-socialisation of the individuals and groups of concern. While I am not questioning the role of Islamist ideology at a base level, I am questioning the role of this ideology in the transformation process. There are several issues I am deliberately not dealing with in this chapter including, what attracts people to conservative forms of religion in the first place and the very personal decision-making processes that individuals must go through in the decision to commit an act of terrorism.

To begin to flesh out a new theoretical typology that addresses the socialising factors in the radicalisation process, this chapter endeavours to engage several lines of inquiry. The first half of the chapter will address the subject of radicalisation from a theoretical perspective; first I will evaluate several leading theories on political extremism, particularly those offered by Ehud Sprinzak and Fathali Moghaddam. Then, based on the inherent structural limitations of those

theories, I outline, based on the conclusions from the chapters presented so far, an alternative model of radicalisation centred on the principle of “5 Socialising Drivers.” The second half of the chapter will present group and individual case studies that look more specifically at the radicalisation process at both group and individual levels. Here I will apply the dominant theories of Sprinzak and Moghaddam together with the “5 Socialising Drivers.” All of this will be discussed with a view to gain a clearer and more systematic understanding of the processes of transformation in the radicalisation process of self-confessed Salafi-Jihadists.

*Part 1: Theoretical Typologies of Radicalisation*

As discussed at length in the first chapter, the leading theories on radicalization processes and of ‘radical Islam’, more generally present some serious methodological problems, and have been victim to a raft of populist and amateur fields of scholarly endeavour. On the theme of Islamism, many well-known scholars including the likes of Rohan Gunaratna, essentially treat Islam as a gateway religion where exposure to some forms of activism will invariably lead to other more sinister expressions. In applying this level of analysis, the radicalisation process is not very complicated since it stems from basic exposure to an ideology. As the last two chapters of this work have demonstrated, however, blaming Islamist ideology is insufficient in explaining the violent transformation in the radicalization process.

Similarly insufficient is the course of “blame the victim” literature that has emerged since September 11, 2001. This type of scholarship addresses the subject of radicalization from the point of view of grievance and essentially argues that the perpetrators of the attacks being seen in different parts of the world attack because of the things “we” do (Ganor 2008, Hoffman 2006). Thus if we, the targets, modify our behaviour, there will be fewer attacks. This level of

analysis is lacking since it understands neither the basis of fourth wave post-Qutbist revivalism nor the many local factors that drive most Islamist attacks. Another similarly influential strain of scholarship advances the radicalisation of the “loser” thesis (Pape 2005). This theory argues that Islamism is essentially a bottom-feeding ideology that preys on the weak and vulnerable. This level of analysis is troubling as it ignores that fourth wave revivalism was fundamentally an elite construct, manufactured in Egypt’s universities (Ganor 2008). It may be true that Islamism (in all its manifestations) provides an outlet for the materially, spiritually and existentially disaffected, but that is a very wide net to cast when it comes to identifying who exactly becomes radicalised. Moreover, radical Islamism has demonstrated its ability to capture the imagination of many different sorts of people from very different backgrounds, thus defeating the idea that there is a particular “type” that becomes radicalised.

In moving away from pop analysis of Islamist radicalisation and into more specific theoretical typologies, the field of analysis presents a similar yet slightly different set of challenges. It is under-theorised on a general level and especially as it relates to the dynamics in Indonesia. In terms of specific theoretical typologies that address processes of radicalisation in a systemic way, there are several frameworks that could be applied to the dynamics in post-New Order Indonesia.

Fadhali Moghaddam’s (2006) influential work, *From the Terrorists’ Point of View: What They Experience and Why They Come to Destroy*, offers a comprehensive theoretical typology on Islamist radicalisation. He proposes a “stairway” model. In his conception, the radicalisation process is incremental and the subject passes through various stages of grievance until he or she is ready to commit an act of violence. As a systemic approach, Moghaddam proposes five markers or “floors” in the ideological transformation that sees certain people become willing to commit acts of violence. These are:

### **First Floor: “The system is unfair!”**

The base level of the model addresses general dissatisfaction among the “multitudes.” Here the identity of individuals shifts in such a way that they feel they have no choice in decisions that impact their lives... The perceptions associated with these feelings are shame and anger. Moghaddam relates this condition specifically back to examples such as the US presence in the Gulf and the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories (Moghaddam 2006: 70).

### **Second Floor: “Who’s to blame?”**

Moving beyond mere feelings of grievance and injustice, this level addresses those who can be held specifically responsible for the state of affairs. On this level, the displacement of aggression remains an effective strategy by which to remain in control. Here, Moghaddam highlights the creation of external enemies by certain states as a means to blame-shift. In addition to external enemies, this level sees the employment and maintenance of conspiracy theories to justify the issues on the first floor. To exit from this level, individuals display a willingness to use physical force. (Moghaddam 2006: 80)

### **Third Floor: “The ends justify the means”**

By the time the individual arrives on the third floor, he or she(?) feels that there are no more choices available. Individuals arrive on the third floor with a strong sense of inadequate identity and are likely to seek out social groups and networks of like-minded people. In the context of Islamist groups, these are likely to be all male, high on conformity, obedient, risktaking, and isolated from the moderating influence of mainstream society and will adopt a morality supportive of terrorism (Moghaddam 2006: 96)

### **Fourth Floor: “It’s us against them”**

On the fourth floor the subject experiences another change in their identity in response to the new social / terrorist network they have found. They now see themselves as belonging to a cause and have thus constructed a rigidly divided

world dominated by feelings of 'us versus them.' At this level, Moghaddam identifies the distinct roles that individuals play within a terrorist organisation. Here he offers several prototypical "types" including; (a) Source of Inspiration, (b) Strategist, (c) Networker, (d) Expert, (e) Cell Manager, (f) Local Agitator/Guide, (g) Local Cell Member, (h) Fodder, (i) Fund-raiser. Ascent from the fourth to the top floor is normally predicated on the ability of the subjects to conceal their newly adopted world-view (Moghaddam 2006: 112).

#### **Fifth Floor: "A heroic act will improve the world"**

On the top floor the subject, now part of social network that advocates the use of violence and has a defined role within its structure, begins to see, or is convinced that only direct action against the enemy will bring about any sort of chance of the messianic sense of purpose in carrying out the act (Moghaddam 2006: 126)

Moghaddam's frame of reference for this book comes from his experience working with the UN High Commission for Refugees in the Middle East and South Asia. His focus on grievance issues as the gateway to radicalisation bears particular relevance to the sociocultural circumstances of the Middle East. As discussed later in the chapter, in the context of Indonesia, the issue of grievance seems to be spurious as a gateway to radicalisation and thus limits the general applicability of this theory. As it relates to processes of transformation, the staircase model does present some useful innovations; on the third and fourth floors, its deemphasized discussion on the contours of specific theology and its focus instead on social movement, is useful in relation to the dynamics in Indonesia. Moreover, its emphasis on the withdrawal of individuals into isolated social movements seems to reflect the pattern among Jihadist suicide bombers in Indonesia and elsewhere (Juergensmeyer 2003).

Rather than offering a comprehensive theory of radicalisation, Ehud Sprinzak's "Iceberg model" evaluates the rise of political extremism among the Gush Emunim movement in Israel after the Yom Kippur War in 1973. By

addressing this particular movement, Sprinzak offers a theoretical typology that explains how extremists groups can gain acceptance and subtly shift the political culture in the nation-state.

Gush Emunim has been one of the most controversial and dynamic political movements in Israel's history (Sprinzak 1989). In the aftermath of the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the group succeeded in settling the area of Judea and Samaria (in the occupied territories) against the publicly expressed wishes of the Israeli Cabinet. Despite strained relations with the government, over the next 20 years, the movement succeeded in gaining a large support base among ordinary Israelis on both sides of the Green Line. Through the 1970s, the agenda of Gush and its support base directed the Israeli government's policies on the construction of settlements in the occupied territory. In this context, Gush Emunim reflected bipartisan support within Israel for the idea of a Greater State of Israel. Due to shifts in government policy, however, and as a result of the first Intifada, Gush employed progressively more aggressive tactics to maintain its agenda and its members have been implicated in assaults on both Israeli soldiers and Palestinians. Sprinzak maintains that the real power of the Gush phenomenon is part of a broader socio-religious phenomenon in Israel that represents only the tip of an iceberg of a broader religious subculture that started its meteoric development in the 1950s (Sprinzak 1989).

To attempt to unpack its rise and explain Gush's influence, Sprinzak uses the concept of the 'tip of the iceberg' to describe the extremist movement. He argues the base, like that part of the iceberg that is submerged, is a complete social and cultural system broadening towards the (non-extreme) base (Sprinzak 1989). The extremist group is not detached from this base, and when necessary, can make use of all of its vast resources. One result of this structure is that the extremist group is limited—much more than it at times appears -by the large pyramidal base below the water's surface (Sprinzak 1989). When warm weather

raises the water temperature, the iceberg melts somewhat and then the tip—the extremist group—loses much of its acuity (Sprinzak 1989). That is what happened to Gush Emunim from the beginning of the Likud Government to the Camp David Accords some two years later. During this period it was promised more influence in the corridors of power, and as a result, its extremism was muted. It stressed inside work rather than extra-parliamentary action. This was only temporary, though, and the policies of the Barak and then the late Sharon period, saw relations between it and government deteriorate. Thus by the late 1990s, everything “froze” and the sharpness of the Gush Emunim iceberg became apparent once again, to the point of a terrible isolation and a return to its old tactics (Sprinzak 1989).

While Israel's dynamics with right-wing settlers in the occupied territory and the problem of Islamist radicalisation in Indonesia may seem on the surface to be very different, there are fundamental points of similarity. Both nation-states have groups with agendas based in radicalised religiosity that for generations have refused to be bound by the rule of secular law. Moreover, both nation-states face the public policy challenge of having to appease small but influential theologically conservative communities. Thus Sprinzak's Iceberg Model presents some interesting levels of analysis on cultures of radicalised political ideology. The theory demonstrates how a radical tip and moderate base act in concert to direct policy.

This case also highlights the waxing and waning nature of relations between the state and certain types of extremist organisations. In Indonesia, there is little evidence to suggest that there is any mass support for the extreme Salafi-Jihadist organisations (Umam 2006). The case of Gush, however, highlights the complexity of bringing certain types of organisations to the table of policy debates. Recent examples on the role of Islamist organisations in the public policy sphere include, the anti-pornography legislation of 2007, violence in anti-vice

campaigns, and recent banning of the Shia sect Ahmadiyah. In all of these instances, the state was faced with a difficult decision to either isolate the Islamist movement by ignoring their demands over these issues of help or potentially help erode the secular nature of the state. Just as the Israeli government has to manage its relations with right-wing settlers, the Indonesian government must balance the agenda of various Islamist factions.

*Part 2: Radicalisation re-considered*

The theoretical typologies of radicalisation presented in the last section dealt with the theme of transformation in a very general way. Moghaddam proposes a comprehensive decontextualised look that begins with societal grievance, while Sprinzak takes a very contextualised look at the influence of extremism in the Israeli body politik. The lack of a specific typology that addresses the issues of transformation and the dynamic in an Indonesia context presents the need for the development of a new theoretical typology. The process of applying a theoretical typology to a phenomenon as inherently complex and regionally specific as the radicalisation of terrorists presents many difficult questions. To what extent can a regionally de-contextualised typology work? Is it possible to develop one theory that explains all processes of Islamo-Jihadist radicalisation? In an attempt to engage with these questions and to focus more specifically on the theme of transformation in the radicalization process, I propose a slightly different orientation to the theme than either offered by Moghaddam or Sprinzak. As I have established throughout this and the preceding chapters, ascribing processes of radicalisation or transformation in the radicalisation process on expressions of theology is problematic.

I propose that to develop a regionally appropriate and nuanced understanding of the radicalisation process, consideration of the process of Jihadist radicalisation through the lens of five autonomously functioning



“socialising drivers:” (1) *social network* (2) *leadership*, (3) *ideology*, (4) *time pressure* and (5) *criminality* is needed. By understanding how these drivers function, both autonomously and in relation to one another, a more accurate picture emerges on the transformation process of Jihadists. This typology, rather than attempt to explain the process by way of either societal grievance or versions of bad theology, addresses in a synergistic manner the complex socio-cultural factors that contribute to the transformation process.

*Social network.* The social network driver is probably the best understood of all the drivers I propose. Over the course of the past 15 years, a detailed body of scholarship has addressed the nature and structure of Jihadist cells in different parts of the world. From this body of scholarship, it is understood that the deeply knit bonds and interwoven communal structures around Jihadist cells is one of the defining features of the phenomenon and plays a *prima facie* role in violent transformation (Bloom 2005, Pape, 2005). The focus on a closely knit social structure is co-equally derived from the broadly Salafi origins of the phenomenon with its focus on small study groups together with the post Qutbist Brotherhood desire to build authentic communities. On a practical level, the importance of the social network aspect because, in many cases, cells have to function in secrecy or at least outside the norm of mass society, which requires a degree of isolation (Bloom 2007). These bonds, however, do not necessarily have to be local in nature, and with the expansion of technology and deterritorialised nature of post Qutbist fourth wave revivalism, the Internet could be just as influential in forming social networks as a *madrassa* or *pesentren*.

In the context of the transformation process in Indonesia, the social network driver is particularly crucial. Several JI operatives are not only related to one another but studies also share deep social connections as demonstrated in the infamous Ngruki *Pesentren* in West Java (ICG 2006(a)). The importance of social network is again highlighted in the Dural Islam movement where

connections between its members go back generations. Given the deep personal, business and familial connections between DI members and the JI, the idea of “smashing cells” may be more difficult than security officials assume. Thus, putting someone in jail and breaking a social network are two very different things. In the case of JI, the social network aspect is about more than a group of people that has come together to launch an attack, and instead represents particular communities of young men with deep bonds to one another (ICG 2006(b)). The transformative capacity of these inter-personal connections cannot be downplayed in the radicalisation process.

*Leadership.* Leadership has proven to be another key element in the violent transformation of Salafi-Jihadist groups. In a report for the Australia Strategic Policy Institute, Martin-Jones, Ungerer and Bergin (2007) highlight the transforming capacity of particular leaders of Dutch Islamist groups. In his seminal work, *The Islamist* (2006), the author, Ed Husain, a former Hizb ut’Tahrir activist in the UK, details the cult of personality that formed around the group’s core leadership structure and the ability of local leaders to inculcate young male recruits. Similarly, leaders like Shiek Oman Adbel Rahman (the blind sheikh) and Sheikh Yassin ( Hamas) have engendered tremendous amounts of personal loyalty on the part of followers. Thus in addressing processes of transformation, beyond ideology itself, the presence of strong leader seems to be crucial in dictating the trajectory of escalation leading towards violence.

*Ideology.* The role of ideology has been discussed at some length here already and as I have argued, the potency of Salafist ideology cannot be overlooked at a base level. All suicide attacks justified in defence of or inspired by Islam, have in one way or another, been based in Salafi ideological precepts. The connection between piety and violent transformation, however, is difficult to measure, and the publicly available data on Jihadists in Indonesia indicates that far from being well-studied theologians, operatives such as Imam Samudra and Ali

maintain only a crude grasp of the *Qu'ran* (ICG 2006(a)).

The role of ideology in the process of violent transformation in JI members is further complicated by the evolving nature of the JI organization itself. Chalk and Ungerer (2008) maintain that the group's ostensible manifesto, *Pedoman Umum Perjuangan Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiyya* (PUPJI or General Guide for the Struggle of JI, which was first documented in the 1990s) envisaged the greater Islamisation of the archipelago through a two-step process. The first is to cultivate a puritanical organisation whose members have a strong sense of religious, social, political and, most importantly military identity; the second is to use the group as a platform from which to launch armed jihad (*jihad musallah*) that is directed against 'infidels, polytheists, apostates, atheists and the [morally] corrupt' and aimed at the ultimate creation of a theocratically pure pan-regional Islamic caliphate (Chalk & Ungerer 2008). However, like the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood there has been discord between camps within the JI organization over the transition between steps one and two and the extent to which the tactics of Salafi Jihadism (Fourth Wave Islamist revivalism) are congruous with the traditional Javanese Islamism that underpins the JI agenda. This view is further reflected in the analysis of Chalk and Ungerer (2008) who agree that:

"The lucidity of JI's ideological and operational vision has suffered in recent years... In particular, an increasingly serious disjuncture has emerged between two main factions: a 'pro-bombing' group that advocates 'fast-tracking' the goal of a pan-regional Islamism by engaging in a sustained campaign of suicide bombings across Southeast Asia—even if these are likely to result in civilian Muslim deaths and injuries—and a somewhat more traditionalist bloc (known as the 'bureaucrats') that asserts indiscriminate attacks are not sanctioned by PUPJI and that JI's end-state can only be brought about by Islamising the whole of Indonesia in order to 'positively' tilt the religious balance of the wider region (10)."

Thus, while ideology might play a vital part in the conservatisation of the subject, the process of violent transformation is better explained by other drivers in this typology.

*Time pressure.* The time pressure driver describes the influence of

external events, both local and international, in the transformation process. As the discussion the last chapter highlighted, the timing of attacks are not random and typically follow a predictable pattern of events, coinciding with major shifts in the structures of society. The upsurge in Islamist religiosity at the end of the Suharto period, for example, was driven by a distinctly secular set of circumstances that manifested in an expression of inter-communal violence based on religious lines. The escalating pattern of JI violence in the early 2000s is the by-product of opportunity combined with the regional dynamics that were highlighted in the last chapter more than a response to external events (ICG 2007(a)).

The time pressure presented by world events offers a similar but more complicated set of dynamics. In this context, the actions of the US government are frequently cited as the inspiration for attacks on American targets, intended as a sort of pay back. The impact of the time pressure concept as it related to extra regional events, however, remains unconvincing. Despite the ongoing US occupation of Iraq and the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, together with the Israeli incursion into Lebanon in 2006, there has not been a marked upsurge in Jihadist attacks in either Europe or Southeast Asia. While external events may be peripheral in the transformation process, it is the synergistic effect of local condition mixed with opportunity that makes the time pressure driver act as a potent escalator in the radicalization process.

*Criminality.* The criminality driver is the least theorised of all the socialising drivers have advanced and is potentially the most important in looking to address the violent transformation of groups. Generally, this driver describes the need for people with certain skills sets in terror networking and the escalation toward violence for groups that possess operatives with certain skill sets. Crossing the threshold from being an ideological radical to one prepared to commit a grievous act of violence is not only an existential process it is also a practical one. To plan and carry out an attack, groups need to source weapons and materials not legally

available and recruit people who already possess this type of knowledge. This is easier than teaching the craft of criminal banditry to an ideological conservative with no inherent criminal experience or inclination. As the attempted bombing of the Edinburgh Airport demonstrates, being inspired to commit violent Jihad and having the practical capacity for this are very different things.

### *Part 3: Comparative Group & Individual Case Studies*

In this chapter, I have presented two leading theoretical typologies of radicalization and extremism and then, based on their limitations, I presented a typology that considers five independent drivers in the transformation process – social network, leadership, ideology, time pressure and criminality. To further delve into the radicalisation process and to test the effectiveness of the theories presented, it is necessary to present a series of group and individual case studies.

The group case studies I present in this section evaluate two of the most ideologically extreme manifestations of the Islamist agenda in Indonesia over the past 15 years, Jemmah Islamiyah and Laskar Jihad. I choose these two groups in particular because both have prototypically demonstrated the biggest capacity for violence and group mobilisation. As discussed in the preceding chapter, not all radical manifestations of Islam lead to acts of violence. It follows, therefore, that in the context of the radicalisation process, I address the groups that have shown a propensity for violent religiosity as opposed to other forms of religious activism. Of course this is not to say that JI and Laskar Jihad are the only organisations that have advocated a violent Islamist agenda; other groups, including the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), could possibly fit the purview of a violent Islamist organisation, however the vigilante nature of FPI, its agenda, and connection to secular political agendas and organised crime, make it less relevant for the determining transformation in the radicalisation process.

To this end, I will elaborate on the rise of JI and Laskar Jihad as a case study using five evaluation criteria including: background, aims / ideology, structure, recruitment method, targets. Following my analysis of the network, I will evaluate both case studies through my Five Drivers theory.

*Group Case Studies: The rise of Laskar Jihad and JI*

### **Group Evaluation Criteria: Laskar Jihad**

#### **(A) Background:**

The Laskar Jihad first came to public attention in early 2000. It was formed in response to the inter-communal conflict in the Maluccus and the apparent inability of the government to protect Muslims there (van Bruinessen 2005). The movement that became Laskar Jihad had, until the latter's formation, been an apolitical one influenced by Salafism.

#### **(B) Leadership & Structure:**

The group's leader, Ja'far Umar Thalib, is a ultra-conservative Salafi preacher of Hadrami distraction and was educated at a number of conservative institutions in Indonesia including the Saudi funded *Lembagu Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam dan Arab* (LIPIA) in Jakarta (Umam 2006). In the mid-1980s, he travelled to Saudi Arabia where he received further theological training and then served as a volunteer in the Afghan Mujahideen. Upon his return to Indonesia, he took up proselytizing activities and between 1994 and 1999, the group maintained an apolitical message. Inspired by his own experience in the Mujahideen and angered at the perceived inability of the Indonesians to protect Muslims, he sought a Salafi legal opinion for the operation. As discussed in the last chapter, the Laskar Jihad was part of FWAKJ, a loose network of different Salafist forces. While Laskar spearheaded, other volunteers kept a degree of autonomy.

#### **(C) Aims/ideology:**

Laskar Jihad's ideology contains a number of counter-intuitive signs. On

the one hand, following its strict Salafi credo, the group does not believe that Islam enjoins a specific economic or political system and as such, it rejects the notion of democracy and popular sovereignty as conflicting with Islam (van Bruinessen 2002). Thalib also maintain that because Indonesia is already a majority Muslim state and because Indonesians there are free to practice Islam without fear of persecution, there is no need to Islamise the state directly (Stern 2003). As such, it considers the struggle to improve each member's quality as a Muslim more important than a political agenda. Conversely, its connection to politically active dakwah organisations and its alleged connection to elements within the TNI and intelligence service, demonstrate a degree of political activism (Umam 2006).

**(D) Recruitment method:**

Laskar drew its membership base from a mix of Salafi student activists and Indonesian veterans of the Afghan Mujahideen.

**(E) Targets:**

In 1999, the simmering inter-communal conflict in the Maluccas prompted a shift of Thalib's FWAKJ network into radical activism. After receiving a fatwa from the Salafi Imams in Saudi Arabia sanctioning the venture, the Laskar Jihad opened training camps in West Java and began sending thousands of volunteers to the Maluccas as "relief workers." Between 1999 and 2002, FWAKJ activists allied with Laskar Jihad participated actively in the violent clashes between Muslims and Christians in the Maluccas.

**(F) Current Operational Status:**

The group was disbanded abruptly at a meeting of the FKAWJ legislative board in October 2002. Several factors, both secular and religious, seem to influence Thalib's decision to do this. First, Thalib was becoming

increasingly worried about the politicisation of its member base, and wanted his followers to return to a purely internal practice. Second, due to its size and presence in the Maluccus, it was likely that President Wahid would have, at some stage, acted to forcefully rein in Laksar's activities. Following the attacks of the September 11, at the request of the US government, Thalib was detained and questioned about his connections to Osama bin Laden. Laskar remained opposed to the US intervention in Afghanistan but did not participate in any protests. To date Laskar Jihad has not been re-constituted.

### **Group Evaluation Criteria: JI**

#### **Background:**

As stated at the beginning of this section, JI represents the most pernicious manifestation of Islamist inspired violence in the post-Suharto era. At the height of its activity in the early 2000s, JI had a cell network across Southeast Asia and perpetrated the deadliest terrorist attacks against civilians in the region. The organisation was founded in 1993 by the former Dural Islam leaders, Abu bakar Ba'asyir and Abdullah Sungkar. Both men were connected to Komando Jihad and Ba'asyir was jailed from 1978 to 1982 for his part in a spate of attacks in the 1970s. From the mid 1970s through the late 1990s, Ba'asyir and Sungkar ran the *al-Mukmin pesentren* in Ngruki, Java. The Ngruki network served both as a key conduit in the propagation of Salafist-Jihadist ideas, and in the transport of Indonesian volunteers to Afghanistan to fight in the Mujahideen (Barton 2004). Following the return of the Mujahideen volunteers and as a result of the Islamisation of the late Suharto period, the Ngruki network, from the mid 1990s onwards, adopted an increasingly radical stance resulting finally in an escalating pattern of violence.

#### **Leadership & Structure:**



Like other Salafi-Jihadist organisations, the JI functions through a series of networks under the “spiritual overlordship” of an autonomous spiritual leader. In 1996, Sungkar and other leaders formalised the structure of JI and set it forth in a book called *General Guidelines for the Jemaah Islamiyyah Struggle* (Barton 2004). According to the book, the command structure of JI was to be headed by an *amir* – Abdullah Sungkar (after his death in 1999 Abubakar Ba’asyir assumed the position), who appointed and directed a general council. The council was headed by a central command overseeing four *mantiqi*, or geographical spheres of operation. On an operational level, the organisation was divided into regional sub-groupings (*Mantiqi I*: Malaysia-Singapore, *Mantiqi II*: Western Indonesia, *Mantiqi III*: Mindanao, Sabah and Sulawesi and *Mantiqi IV*: West Papua and Australia) (Barton 2004, ICG 2006(a)). In addition to the original leadership structure, a number of affiliated networks not directly under its control emerged including, most significantly, the Noordin networks, which were responsible for the Jakarta Marriott Hotel bombing in 2003 and Australian Embassy bombing in 2004. Subsequent to the Australian Embassy and Jakarta Marriott attacks, in 2005 ideological fissures within the JI community emerged and its organisational structure fragmented (ICG 2007(a))

**Aims / ideology:**

While JI is nominally Salafist in its worldview, its true ideology is better represented as a mixture of fourth wave post Qutbist revivalism combined with the syncretic ideology of the Dural Islam movement. This discourse combines the anti-western radicalised politics of resentment, with the desire to overthrow the secular Republic of Indonesia in favour of a theocratic state based on the idea of a regional Caliphate that

encompasses parts of Southeast Asia and Australia (Chalk & Ungerer 2008). Elements within the network maintain antipathy towards the mainstream Salafi community for its refusal to engage in Jihad (ICG 2005 (b)). Thus, unlike Laskar Jihad, JI maintains an entirely political agenda to reorganise the basis of the Indonesian nation-state around the precepts of Islam.

**Recruitment method:**

Like Laskar Jihad, the recruitment patterns of JI generally follow a social network model centred on institutions of learning together with personal and family connections. This is highlighted most starkly by the disproportionate number of JI operatives that have emerged from two particular sources, the Laqmanul School in Malaysia (closed in 2002) and al-Mukmin in Ngruki, Java (ICG 2007 (a)). The Laqmanul School in particular became a nerve centre for the Noordin Network, and most leading JI operatives maintained an affiliation with this school. That JI's recruitment has so far not extended beyond the family and personal networks of existing members or the institutions mentioned above, demonstrates the unpopularity of the Salafi-Jihadist agenda among mainstream Islamists.

**Targets:**

Ji's escalation towards violence began in 2000 with a series of attacks on churches, culminating in the Christmas Eve bombings in Jakarta and five other Indonesian cities that left 19 dead (Fealey, Hooker and White 2006: 49). Following this, JI began targeting westerners, launching massive bomb attacks on nightclubs in Bali on 12 October 2002, the Jakarta Marriott Hotel in August 2003, the Australian Embassy in Jakarta in September 2004, and then Bali again on Oct 1 2005 (ICG 2006(a), Fealey, Hooker and White 2006: 49). Like Laskar Jihad, the group's transformation

from rhetorical or symbolic radicalism to actual violence occurred within the dual context of the inter-communal strife of the late 1990s and the individual experience of Afghan Mujahideen volunteers.

**Current Operational Status:**

While key JI figures such as Noordin Top still remain at large, the success of a number of police raids over the past two years have stymied the operational capacity of the JI network. As a result, the ICG maintains that JI is going through an ideological metamorphosis that is pushing it in two directions. On the one hand, groups inspired by previous JI attacks will continue to bomb western targets. At the time, however, the ICG maintains that mainstream elements within of the network are moving away from attacks on western targets and towards the greater Islamisation of the nation-states through a number of means including, public vice and morality campaigns, and demanding that regional judges enforce shari'a law (ICG 2007 (b)). While JI probably poses less risk to western interests in the archipelago, the threat that their operation could spawn intra-Muslim discord is quite acute.

Despite the doctrinal and organisational differences in JI and Laskar Jihad, the case studies presented above reveal some broad patterns in relation to the radicalisation process, confirming to some extent the efficacy of the Five Drivers Model as a relevant model through which to view and analyse processes of transformation. First, in addressing the pattern of transformation towards violent activism, the time pressure driver seems to be particularly important. The trend of both organisations towards violent activism was born from the changed (secular) geo-political condition on the ground in Indonesia in the late 1990s. Moreover, both organisations also benefited from the Islamist turn of the late Suharto period. Supporting the relevance of time pressure in the violent transformation of both groups was the experience of senior members in the Afghan Mujahideen. Aside

from religious motivation, the Afghanistan experience provided the skills necessary to engage an insurgent like struggle elsewhere and further highlights the relevance of the criminality drivers in the transformation process. The time pressure driver also impacted the trajectory on an ideological level. JI's long-term focus on the continuation of the DI agenda means that even if weakened it will likely continue its struggle through attacks on western targets or threatening judges who do not impose shari'a law. Conversely, Laskar Jihad's focus on purely the Salafist goal of personal piety, meant that their violent activism did not extend beyond the purview of aiding Muslims in the context of inter communal strife.

In addition to the primacy of time pressure, on an operational level the network driver has shown itself to be a crucial area of analysis in assessing patterns of violent transformation. JI, in particular, evolved from being a terror organisation comprised of cells and networks, into complex social movements comprised of inter-woven personal and familial contacts born from decades of contact (ICG 2006(b)). The case of Bali bombing mastermind, Aly Ghufron Nurhasyim – or Mukhlas, clearly demonstrates the depth of social inter-connection in the JI network. He matriculated from the al-Mukmin *pesantren* in Ngruki 1982, and in the 1980s he volunteered in Afghanistan. Upon his return to Indonesia, Mukhlas took up a leadership role in the JI network, married Ba'asyir's sister, and was eventually selected by Sungar to serve as the rector of Laqmanul School (ICG 2005(a)). The case of Mukhlas reflects the extent to which patterns of violent transformation can be understood in relation to the depth of enmeshment in the social structure of the organisation. Thus in its initial phase of violent activism in the early 2000s, JI did not use nameless, faceless operatives to execute its operations, but rather trusted members of its inner circle.

The role of leadership in the violent transformation of Islamist inspired terrorism presents some important but contradictory signs. In the case of Laskar

Jihad, it was the personality of Jafar Umar Thalib that drove the groups' escalation towards violent activism and that saw the group disband completely. In the context of JI, however, the role of leadership in violent transformation appears to be more complicated. Certainly Ba'asyir and Sungar provided ideological inspiration and created the ideological framework for the movement. Connecting the power of their personalities to the planning and execution of specific attacks remains difficult, however, especially as Ba'asyir denies his involvement in the JI organisation. In the mid 2000s, JI devolved from a centralised organisation to one that functioned through a series of cells and larger social networks (Abuza 2003). In this context, some nuance is necessary in unpacking the role of leadership and in the case JI, it is more likely that individual cell and network leaders like Noordin Muhamad Top played a more important role in the violent transformation of individual cell members than 'big players' like Ba'asyir.

Similar to the role of leadership, determining the precise role of ideology as the transformational driver in the radicalisation process of Islamist terrorists is difficult to assess. On the surface this may seem counter-intuitive especially because this discussion centres on people and groups that justify their actions in defence of Islam. As I have discussed at length throughout the preceding chapters, however, the connection between piety and violent transformation remains convenient and illusive. If simple exposure to certain ideology was the sole agent of radicalisation, then it reasons that the thousands of students that passed through the *Ngruki* and *pesentren* would all be equally disposed to violent transformation. That this did not happen and that JI remained small and isolated, refutes the primacy of the ideological driver in the process of violent transformation. Similarly, in the context of Laskar Jihad, that its operations did not extend beyond the purview of the inter-communal problems of the early 2002 problematises the notion of a broader Salafist threat to the nation-state. This is not to say that the propagation of austere theologies like Salafism do not pose the

potential to have a corrosive effect on the cause of religious pluralism because they do, but its connection to processes of violent transformation remain problematic. In the case of JI, the thinking of Ba'asyir and Sungar were ideological products of the Dural Islam movement as much as they were products of fourth wave revivalism and have vacillated between the two. Moreover, the ICG in its 2007 report on the current state of JI argues that groups turn against strikes that inflict mass casualties. This view fundamentally problematises the primacy of Salafi-Jihadist ideology in its current project to Islamise the state and highlights the multiplicity that inform JI ideological position. Based on all of this I conclude that while not relevant, the impact of the ideological driver is predicated on other conditions.

#### *Conclusion*

This chapter has engaged the theme of radicalisation from both theoretical and practical perspectives. I began by discussing some of the problems associated with the dominant levels of analysis in the field, and then I examined two of the leading theoretical typologies that explain radicalisation and extremism. I then offered an alternative view of violent transformation and applied the theory to two of the most violent Jihadist groups that arose in post New Order Indonesia. My intent in approaching the subject in this way was to problematise dominant thinking in the field of radicalisation and to transcend simple lines of logic that ascribe responsibility for the violent transformation to a single phenomenon.

On a theoretical level, I have attempted to disconnect issues of grievance and versions of flawed theology from being the primary engines of radicalisation. Here, the comparative case studies of JI and Laskar Jihad demonstrate that the complex trajectories involved in violent transformation need to be analysed beyond the 'Muslim rage' thesis. While individual terrorists have provided prolific justification for their actions based in Muslim theology, there is nothing uniquely transformative about the ideological discourse of 'Muslim rage' and it remains a

tenuous methodology through which to explain violent transformation, especially in Indonesia. While there are lots of Muslims in Indonesia that espouse a discourse of radicalised resentment attached to the perception of global Muslim victimisation, this view has not translated into a greater attraction to the discourse of JI. Thus it is important not to confuse radicalised politics of resentment common across the Muslim world with other indicators of violent transformation. Similarly, expressions of certain types of theology, while problematic, are also inconclusive in explaining violent transformation.

In proposing the Five Drivers Model of radicalisation and applying it to JI and Laskar Jihad, my intent has not been to suggest that this model explains every facet of the radicalisation process. Nor has it been my intent to suggest that there is one driver above others responsible for processes of violent transformation. In the unique context of the two Indonesian Jihadist groups addressed, I maintain that the relevance of this model is contingent upon looking at the drivers presented as inter-dependent agents of socialisation. Thus, the relevance of time pressure or ideology cannot be understood without also addressing the role of leadership or social networks. While incomplete, this typology highlights the complexity of the radicalisation process and demonstrates the need to evaluate the tipping-point in processes of violent transformation as a multi-faceted process that cannot be reduced to a single level of analysis.

## **Conclusion**

Throughout the preceding five chapters I have presented a view of Islamism and its role in the socialisation of Jihadists in a way that transcends the theoretical reductionism that permeates the dominant discourse in the fields of terrorism and security studies research. In presenting a contextualised view of radicalisation that takes into account the role and evolution of the nation-state as a *prima facie* socialising actor I have demonstrated that neither religious ideology nor societal grievances alone are adequate to explain the process by which Islamists become inspired to commit acts of violence. As such, this thesis has demonstrated the complexity of the radicalisation process and has shown the extent to which the dynamics associated with radicalisation processes need to be analysed through the lens of a number of socialising drivers.

Finding grand narratives on the theme of radicalisation in Indonesia is difficult and the extent to which any one theoretical typology can completely explain processes of individual and group transformation remains a hotly contested subject. This thesis has presented a social science analysis of the radicalisation process and as such has dealt with a series of specific socio-political questions relating to the evolution of the nation-state and role of Islamist agenda within that framework. The conclusions of this thesis raise more questions than they provide answers and the quest to develop a consistent theoretical typology that explains violent transformation in the radicalisation process of Jihadists in Indonesia will no doubt be one that will need to be unpacked in more depth at the doctoral level. While more research on this theme needs to be engaged the trajectory of analysis offered in this thesis does begin to offer some insight into the dynamics that sees particular Islamist groups commit acts of violence. Despite the time, financial and methodological constraints of this project it demonstrates several key points which are useful in the greater



scholarly endeavour to understand processes of violent transformation of the Indonesian Islamists. These points include the following:

1. The current field of terrorism and security studies has grossly over-estimated the role of theology in processes of violent transformation among Islamo- Jihadist groups in Indonesia;
2. In looking to explain processes of radicalisation casting global conspiracies that link groups in the region into the web of “global terror” is highly problematic.
3. Securitising Islam in the Indonesian context does not yield answers that explain processes of violent transformation.

From both a theoretical and ideological perspective my overarching task in this thesis has been to problematise the connection between Islamism (in all its manifestations) and the vexed issue of violent transformation. The second chapter of this thesis examined the theme of Islamism from both a theoretical and historical perspective and I discussed the plurality of voices that exist within the Islamist space. Further, I challenged the assumption that the current field of scholarship can securitise all manifestations of Islamism to fit the needs of post September 11 thinking on the relationship between religiosity and expressions of violence. The second chapter highlighted the complex relationship that exists between the Islamist agenda and the forces of secular nationalism and the extent to which the project to violently Islamise the nation-state arose as a direct result of the subjugation of second wave Islamists thinkers at the hands of secular nationalist leaders. The broad delineations that evolved within the rubric of the Islamist space both in the Middle East and in Indonesia, and the divergent views contained within and among those movements, present severe challenges in looking to explain processes of violent transformation through expressions of theology alone. What seems clear however, from the conclusions in the second

chapter is that violent Islamism seemed to arise in direct proportion to both its failure to succeed on a populist level and by its subjugation on the part of secular leaders. In this context, the right wing fringe of the Islamist space withdrew from the marketplace of mainstream politics and into either isolation or violent opposition to the state. Despite the persistence of individuals and groups that maintained a vision to Islamise the state there is an absence of agreement among the parties on how best to achieve this. Thus, in contemporary Indonesia we see a plurality of Islamist voices spanning all four waves of Islamist thought without a broad consensus on how or what the specific parameters of an Islamised Indonesia would look like. Moreover, the citizens of Indonesia, like in a majority of other Muslim dominant states, are and remain cool to the idea of broad Islamisation. This does not mean that there is an interest for various Islamist causes on the civil society level but there seems to be little or no interest in the project to Islamise the nation-state or the violent activism of groups like JI and in fact, the violent activism has only succeeded in isolating the Islamist voice from mainstream public opinion.

In the third chapter I specifically addressed the complex role of Islam in the creation of the Indonesian nation-state and challenged the view that the rise of violent Muslim religiosity occurred specifically within the context of the post September 11 era. In the third I discussed at length the extent to which debates over doctrinal interpretations of Islam and the way those ideas were or were not implemented into the project of the nationstate has been a perennial issue in the geo-politics of the region. In the post September 11 era there has been an unfortunate consensus amongst terrorism and security scholars on the transmission of ideas from the Middle East to the archipelago and in this chapter I highlighted the complex and historical relationship between the centre and periphery of the Muslim worlds and the extent to which whilst ideas from the Middle East have been deeply influential in the unfolding of Islamism in the region,

the ideas adopted from the Middle East have been indigenised and run through the unique socio-religious filter of the region. Since the attacks in Bali and Jakarta and the nominal allegiance like JI to Salafi ideology there has been considerable attention paid to the trend of Salafi activism in the region. In the third chapter I discuss this issue at length and related my analysis of the findings of the second chapter, which challenges the assumption that Salafism alone can and should be viewed as a terrorist ideology.

Most significantly the third chapter began to introduce the idea that the specific dynamics that lie at the core of the radicalisation of groups need to be analysed through the evolution of the nation-state itself and to this end, the third chapter discussed at length the role of Islam and the Islamist agenda in the creation of the Indonesian nation-state following the Second World War. Moreover, I discussed Islam as one of many competing ideologies that would serve as the guide for the new nation and the process by which Islam was rejected by the mainstream of Indonesia to be the sole guiding parameter of its nationalism. In addressing the complex role of Islam in the Indonesian nation-state following its independence in 1947, I discussed at length the process by which the forces of Islam were both co-opted and subjugated by secular nationalist leaders for political ends. The Dural Islam movement was in particular a serious and violent challenge to the sovereignty of the Indonesian nation-state and Sukarno's ability to put the movement down showed both his antipathy towards the Islamist agenda and the extent to which mainstream Indonesia was not interested in this agenda either. I then highlighted the process by which Suharto rose to power and his use of the Islamist space to achieve that end. In unpacking the politics of the New Order, Suharto's management of the Islamist space proved to be fundamental to the development of the discourse that saw groups like JI emerge. Whilst Suharto didn't have natural enemies or allies he found the Islamist voice to be an effective means by which to control groups that were not loyal to

his agenda. In particular, the use of ex-Dural Islam members by Indonesia's intelligence service against PKI members was a prime example of this and his simultaneous de-politicisation of religion combined with his use of various Islamists groups in constructing a corporatised state with institutionalised violence did without question create the dynamics that saw a variety of potentially violent factions emerge.

The late Suharto period saw a consolidation of his use of the Islamist agenda to justify his rule and keep other forces within the nation-state in check, notably the military. The third chapter highlighted in detail the process by which Suharto began to integrate the forces of conservative Islam into the corporatised structure of his regime and the process by which he began to privilege individual leaders within those movements. The fall of the Suharto regime in 1998 and the prospects of democratisation that created occurred within the framework of an Indonesian political culture that had been both corporatised and Islamised in the late years of the New Order. This dynamic saw a number of groups that were privileged under Suharto begin to compete for resources and prestige in the new political experiment resulting in increasing amounts of inter-communal and religious violence.

The fourth chapter addressed in detail the process by which Islamism became a voice of expression for a variety of groups looking to recalibrate their positions in the post Suharto period. I demonstrated the extent to which the rise of these movements while justified by and in defence of Islam, had more to do with distinctly secular questions of access to state power and resources. The change in political dynamic in post New Order Indonesia also saw a "back to the future" on the role of Islam and the changing parameters of Indonesian nationalism. The same voices that in the 1950s were arguing for the Islamisation of the Indonesian state were, in the post New Order period, arguing for a return to that agenda. Despite the expansion of a variety of different types of Islamist organisations in

the late New Order period, including those funded by sources in the Persian Gulf and the growing traction of “Camp Islam”, there was an inability of Islam to coalesce as a mass movement for political change. During the immediate post New Order period in addition to the evolvement of conservative manifestations of the Islamist agenda, a number of other types of Islamist movements emerged concluding with those that would be more closely associated with Sufism and/or New Age Spiritualism and thus, demonstrating once again that ascribing processes of violent transformation in the radicalisation process on its own is highly problematic.

Certainly, of the different types of Islamism that emerged during this time it is clear that there was a particular attraction to the theologically austere and/or radical manifestations of this agenda. The third chapter demonstrated the extent to which nuance is necessary in analysing this phenomenon, as the attraction to austere types of theology as stated before had more to do with a set of secular processes and in particular the unequal unfolding of the globalisation process and the inability of secular leaders to deliver an effective governance agenda. Moreover, it is clear that just because increasingly large numbers of people were attracted to austere manifestations of Islamism this did not equate to increased levels of violent transformation problematising the connection between equating manifestations of piety and specific acts of violence. Just because someone adopts Salafi discourse and attends anti-American rallies in the centre of Jakarta does not mean they are being radicalised and/or more likely to commit acts of violence. The fourth chapter demonstrated the extent to which it is necessary to separate acts of processes of rhetorical radicalisation from the real thing. Just because someone adopts the discourse of bin Laden doesn't mean they will emulate his actions.

The fifth chapter addressed the theme of radicalisation from both a theoretical and practical perspective and analysed several leading theoretical

typologies of the radicalization process and then based on the limitations of those processes, I suggested a new means by which to observe the radicalisation phenomenon. I suggested that rather than looking at radicalisation through the lens of either versions of flawed theology or social grievances, that radicalisation instead should be viewed through the lens of five independent socializing drivers. Continuing on the basis of the third and fourth chapter where I establish the role of secular forces in the unfolding of violent religiosity I suggest that radicalisation needs to be understood through a combination of social network, leadership, ideology, time pressure and criminality. To test this theory I looked at two leading Salafi-Jihadist organisations and while limited, this case study did demonstrate the extent to which violent transformation has to be observed through a combination of socialising processes.

As I stated at the beginning of these concluding remarks, the conclusions of this study represent a beginning and not an end. More work needs to be done and more research needs be engaged in to test the efficacy of the five drivers approach which will be the basis of my PhD research. Ideally, this will include a substantive fieldwork component through which I can construct detailed and individual case studies. This thesis has, in a limited capacity, demonstrated the complex trajectories involved in processes of violent transformation amongst Islamists in Indonesia and to the extent possible has attempted to engage a new theoretical typology to help understand the evolution of this phenomenon. Moreover, this thesis has, to the extent possible, delinked questions of theology and social grievances as the primary drivers in processes of violent transformation and instead raises the question of the role of the nation-state as both an agent provocateur and subjugator of violent Islamist religiosity. Questions over the role of Islam in the context of a democratising Indonesia are complex and demand complex levels of analysis among academic and public policy leaders. Responding to the unique challenge posed by groups who are willing to inflict

mass casualties justified for and in defence of Islam presents a unique and difficult challenge. By returning to New Order style tactics of managing the forces of religion for political ends as a means of responding to this challenge, is a dangerous game which history has shown does not work. Ultimately, in Indonesia like elsewhere, violent Islamism whilst problematic and unlikely to disappear from the socio-political landscape in the near future is getting less popular not more popular. JI's increasingly violent tactics in the early 2000s isolated it both from its own far right wing faction and more importantly from mainstream Indonesian Islam. Thus, while conservative austere and radical manifestations of Islam will continue to be popular for some time the extent to which these ideologies represent a gateway to violent manifestations of Islamist religiosity remains highly questionable. Scholars working in the field need to be nuanced and engage appropriate levels of analysis in addressing this complex phenomenon.

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