DIFFERENT ROUTES TO ISLAMISM:
HISTORY, INSTITUTIONS, AND THE POLITICS OF
ISLAMIC STATE IN EGYPT AND INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines patterns of Islamist political mobilization in Egypt and Indonesia. It focuses on the development of major political organizations formed in both countries whose primary goal is the establishment of Islamic state. By focusing on these organizations, this dissertation seeks to explain an analytical puzzle: why Egyptian and Indonesian Islamist movements develop along divergent patterns of mobilization?

While the traditional focus of the literature is on Islam's cultural tenets and the structure of Muslim society, I argue that the most fundamental factors that have driven the variation in Islamist mobilization were the historical formation of particular types of organizations along with how the outcomes of this period developed over time. Different institutional settings in Egypt and Indonesia prior to the formation of modern political organizations intent on the creation of an Islamic state transformed similar Islamic ideology into different patterns of organizational constructs and programs for mobilization. This formative moment is of paramount importance because it had long-term political consequences. Based on this institutional framework, this dissertation identifies a typology of Islamist historical formation centered on the distinction between the "purist" Islamist movement in Egypt and "pragmatic-reform" oriented Islamist organizations in Indonesia.

This dissertation also examines the relationship between institutional settings and Islamist politics over time. I analyze the history and institutional designs of the state as conditions that both constrained and yet enabled the interests and goals of leaders in

Islamist movements. *Periodization*— defined broadly as the historical sequences of state formation — serves as an analytical framework with which to capture critical moments and actions of the competing groups, especially between Islamist actors and the state elite in response to a particular set of changes, over a defined period of time. By tracing these various paths of Islamist political responses and initiatives through the subsequent changes of state-Islamist relations, this dissertation seeks to offer a more nuanced, historically grounded, but analytically persuasive explanation of the alternative routes toward an Islamic state, in terms of organizational formation, political mobilization and transformation.

Using an historical institutional theoretical framework to interrogate my findings, it is hoped that this dissertation will contribute to a larger debate in political science on Islam and politics, state building, and the historical process of conflict-resolution between the state regimes and Islamist political forces.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce mémoire est consacré d'examiner des modèles de la mobilisation politique islamiste en Égypte et en Indonésie. Elle se concentre sur le développement des organisations politiques importantes formées dans les deux pays dont le but primaire est l'établissement de l'état islamique. En se concentrant sur ces organisations, cette thèse cherche à expliquer une énigme analytique : pourquoi les mouvements islamistes égyptiens et indonésiens se développent-ils selon les modèles divergents de la mobilisation?

Tandis que l'objectif traditionnel de la littérature est sur les principes culturels et la structure de la société musulmane, je soutiens que les facteurs les plus fondamentaux qui ont conduit la variation de la mobilisation islamiste étaient la formation historique des types particuliers d'organisations avec la façon dont les résultats de cette période se sont développés avec le temps. Les différents cadres institutionnels en Égypte et en Indonésie avant la formation des organisations politiques modernes attentifs sur la création d'un état islamique ont transformé l'idéologie islamique semblable en différents modèles des constructions et des programmes d'organisation pour la mobilisation. Ce moment formateur est d'importance primordiale parce qu'il a eu des conséquences politiques à long terme. Basé sur ce cadre institutionnel, ce mémoire identifie une typologie de la formation historique islamiste portée sur la distinction entre le mouvement islamiste « puriste » en Égypte et « reforme- pragmatique » les organisations islamistes orientés en Indonésie.

Ce mémoire examine également le rapport entre les cadres institutionnels et la politique islamiste avec le temps. J'analyse l'histoire et les conceptions institutionnelles de l'état comme conditions que tous les deux ont contraint mais ont permis les intérêts et les buts des chefs dans les mouvements islamistes. Périodisation- définie largement comme ordres historiques de formation d'état - servir comme un outil analytique avec lequel on peut capturer des moments et des actions critiques des groupes de concurrence, particulièrement entre les acteurs islamistes et l'élite d'état en réponse à les changements particulières, sur une période définie. En traçant ces divers chemins des réponses politiques islamistes et des initiatives par les changements suivants des relations d'état Islamiste, ce mémoire cherche à offrir une explication plus diversifiée, historiquement plus au sol, mais analytiquement persuasive des itinéraires alternatifs vers un état islamique, en termes de formation d'organisation, mobilisation politique et transformation.

Utilisant un cadre institutionnel historique pour interroger mes conclusions, on 'espère que ce mémoire contribuera à un plus grand débat en sciences politiques sur l'Islam et la politique, l'établissement d'état, et le processus historique de l'être en conflit- résolution entre les régimes d'état et les forces politiques islamistes.

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INTRODUCTION

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1. Preface

One of the most prominent debates in the literature on political Islam over the last two decades concerns the compatibility between Islam and democracy. This debate has produced a number of different conceptions of Islamism,[1] some of which see it as a political expression of the cultural tenets of Islam (Lewis, 1990; Huntington, 1991), with others understanding it as religious activism or as a social movement (Wiktorowicz, 2003; Munson, 2001), and with still others viewing it as a liberalizing force for democratic change (Wickham, 2003). Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack to the United States, the debate shifted slightly to emphasize on the greater aspects of Islamic militant ideology as a threat to the world political order. However, a key assumption made by much of the literature remained the same: the degree of inclusion and exclusion of Islamist political actors – especially in electoral politics – will determine their level of political moderation, as they learn to engage in the democratic process (Schwedler, 2007; Kalyvas, 2000). These assumptions all underline the fundamental concern with the political dimensions of Islamism. It is consequently surprising that very little attention has been paid to the distinguishing features of the political mobilization of Islamist movements.

Islamism first emerged as one of several potential socio-political models during the process of state formation in the late colonial period. Leaders of the Islamist

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[1] The terms 'political Islam' or 'Islamism' or 'Islamist politics' are used here interchangeably. As I will elaborate further in my theory chapter, Islamism or political Islam refers to designations for the phenomenon of Islamic movement engaging in politics qua Muslim organizations.

movements did not merely seek stricter religious observances or a change in political leadership, but desired a revolutionary transformation of their societies. And though there is no single issue or structure, whether in terms of program or action, that characterizes all Islamist movements, they all nonetheless share one overarching feature as regards the nature and scale of their goals: the establishment of an Islamic state (Mitchell, 1968:12; Ayoub, 2007:4-11; Esposito and Voll, 1996:7-11). Since this programmatic-belief of political Islam constitutes far more than simply a change in political regimes, the relationship between political inclusion and moderation as well as political exclusion and radicalism is more complicated than is typically portrayed. Pathways to moderation must include a wide range of transformations, not just in terms of political behavior, but also ideational and programmatic changes within the Islamist movements.

Egypt and Indonesia have both experienced this complex pattern of Islamist transformation. Moreover the two represent one of the few instances in the Muslim world of political Islamic movements in different countries sharing similar — if not entirely identical — historical formative processes. In both countries, major Islamist political movements were formed in the early 20th century and subsequently joined other political movements, whether nationalist, communist or liberal, to debate the various alternatives for independence from colonial rule (Voll, 1991; Enayat, 1984). Leaders in those movements adopted a shared commitment to a particular belief system based on the idea that Islam is not only a religion, but also a political system that governs the legal, social, economic and political imperatives of the state (Esposito et al. 1997; Kepel, 1989; Berman, 2004). The self-proclaimed goals of the movements delineate their struggles for an Islamic state in terms of three features: the establishment of an Islamic Constitution,

the implementation of Islamic law (*Shari'a*), and the fusion between religion and state through the recognition of the role of the ulama in politics. The movements envisioned the need for fundamental change in Muslim societies, but rejected the premise that this change had to be modeled on colonial-European forms of governance. Instead, they argued that a return to the basic principles of Islam would produce a more lasting and effective form of governance.

Later, during relatively well-defined periods, these two countries witnessed the rise of subordinate reform movements and new types of leadership, which advanced the programmatic goal of an "Islamic state". These leaders advocated distinctive strategies and programs that set the broad parameters for Islamist political development in relation to the state. At the same time however, both the extent and form of those Islamist transformations varied in each country. Indonesia during the last decade of Suharto's New Order regime was characterized by a *comprehensive* transformation of Islamism in which the possibility of a purely Islamic state decreased. This transformation was achieved after almost 40 years of Islamists having distinct political parties and civic associations. Alliances between the state elites and subordinate movements of political Islam led to the ruling regime appropriating the religious agenda of Islamism within the institutional construct of the state. This political change unfolded simultaneously with an increase in the appointments of Muslim elites into the bureaucracy, into parliament, and into high-ranking positions of public office, all of which facilitated the greater inclusion of the leaders of the Islamist movements into the sphere of the state.

In contrast, for most of the second half of the 20th century, Egypt epitomized a *precluded* Islamist transformation marked by tendencies of religious fundamentalism,

which was the major reason for the continued exclusion of Islamist political movements (particularly the Society of Muslim Brothers, MB) from the formal political system. In its inception, the MB advocated a distinctive strategy that aimed for a revolutionary transformation of society rather than for political reforms, with civic associations playing a key role in effecting such a transformation. While MB became increasingly involved in the power struggles that characterized Egyptian politics during the mid 1940s, the political party option was never actually seriously considered by the MB leadership. It is only since 1984 that the MB has participated in parliamentary elections by forging coalitions with secular parties. In the last parliamentary elections in 2005, running as coalition candidates or as independents, MB politicians and activists won 18 percent of the parliamentary seats. However, this historical vanguard of the Islamist movement ultimately failed to bring Islamism into the broader Egyptian political realm.

What the Egyptian and Indonesian Islamist movements illustrate is the complexity that underlies their shared commitment to the establishment of an Islamic state. This can be seen in the variations between them as regards how their programs were developed, where their parameters of operation were drawn, and what organizational strategies they pursued. Understanding these variations will fill an important gap in the literature on the alternative pathways of Islamist transformation.

2. Question

The purpose of this dissertation is to focus on the variety of political mobilization strategies pursued by Islamist groups, with the aim of answering the question 'what factors determined the use of a particular strategy by Egyptian and Indonesian Islamist

groups in pursuing their struggle for an "Islamic state"?' More specifically, why did the Egyptian and Indonesian Islamist political movements have divergent patterns of mobilization?

As this study is concerned with commonalities and differences that emerge from cross-national cases, I specifically examine the development of major Islamist political movements in Egypt and Indonesia from the inception of those movements, both of which occurred in the early 20th century. However, my immediate focus – and moreover my principal explanation for the different patterns of Islamist transformation – is the subsequent moment of historic rupture in each country, that is, their national revolutions (Egypt in 1952-1956 and Indonesia in 1945-1950). I argue that it is at this point that each country's Islamist mobilization took a different direction. My study will situate political Islam at the intersection between social movement theory, revolution theory, and theories of state formation, and will discuss how the transformation of Islamism occurred within the ongoing processes of the institutional construction of each state.

The political origins of Islamist politics had tremendous consequences for the strategies pursued in the struggle for an "Islamic state". For one thing, while the Islamist movements appear to hearken back to Islam's golden age during the life of Muhammad in Madina and practices of the first Muslim communities, leaders of Islamist movements in both countries are in fact influenced by a variety of models and doctrines. The boundaries between the ideals of the Islamic state and the type of government they opposed also produced different conceptions. The problem seems even more difficult when one considers the fact that in the period when each country's Islamist organizations

reached their historic peak, there were significant differences between them in terms of their institutionalization, the strategies that they were pursuing and their programs.

For example, in the years leading to the coup in July 1952, MB was increasingly intensifying its mass mobilization. Its leaders were thus advocating a return to the basic principles of Islam, and were also advancing an extensive program for the purification of society through civil association networks. At the same time, MB deliberately avoided creating a permanent political organization, and even refused to develop formal ties with major parties, including the Wafd, the Hizb al-Wathan, and the Constitutionalist Party of Egypt. Hassan al-Banna, the MB's founder, also frequently attacked the political parties. A non-political strategy was needed, the MB argued, to ensure its distance from the corrupt political system. On those occasions when political confrontations occurred, the advocates of MB were quick to stress that their opponents stood against the purity of Islam; moreover MB initiated an auxiliary mass agitation—sometime violent—in response such confrontations. Political action was usually carried out through ad hoc committees and temporary campaign organizations.

One important feature of this non-political strategy can be seen in the occasional secret deals and bargaining between MB and other political groups. By October 1955, the Nasser regime had consolidated itself in power, allowing Nasser to launch a crackdown on the Brothers that brought the organization's elders and young cadres under control. Islamist political ideas and programs attributed were suppressed, their organization was banned, and their leaders were jailed. But the emergence of radical religious ideas in the mid-1960s, combined with the continued repression from the ruling regimes, inspired the birth of several militant organizations in Egypt over the subsequent decades that have

been variously described as "Islamic fundamentalism" (Rais, 1982:11; Rubin, 1987;134; Piscatori, 1996:7), "Leninist-revolutionary Islam" (Owen, 1990:181), and "fascist-totalitarian religious movements" (Halpern, 1968:151).

Indonesian Islamists utilized differing strategies of mobilization than those used by Egyptian Islamists. The high water mark of Islamist political mobilization was reached after the independence Revolution, during the 1950s. In this period, major Islamist organizations such as Muhammadiyah (est. 1912) and Nahdlatul Ulama (est.1926) maintained a more or less continuous institutional presence in party politics. Moreover, the creation of the Muslim confederation party Masyumi in 1945 provided Islamist leaders with a permanent institutional base within the parliamentary system. Four major political parties based on Islam participated in the first national elections, which took place in 1955, and two of those parties – Masyumi and Partai NU – secured 42 percent of the seats in the new Constituent Assembly. In parliament, the Islamist parties championed a political agenda built around the ideas that Indonesia should adopt an Islamic constitution, and should implement Islamic law for Muslims. Such political aspirations highlighted the different ideological stances regarding the form of Indonesian statehood; a difference that ultimately escalated into open confrontation between the secular-nationalists (PNI) and the communists (PKI).

In the 1970s, a new generation of Muslim activists declared their rejection of Islamic parties: *"Islam Yes, Islamic Party No"*. Their aim was to liberating Islam from what they felt as inappropriate use of Islam for political mobilization. This new Islamist leadership helped to generate extensive institutional reforms by the state that dealt with the Islamic agenda, which greatly broadened Islamism's political goals. Scholars of

Indonesia have sought to capture the nature of the resulting political mobilization of Islam using concepts such as "syncretic Islam in politics" (Remage, 1997:81), "substantialist Islamist politics" (Effendy, 1995:221), "civil Islam" (Hefner, 2001:11), "accommodationist Islam" (Hassan, 1984:78; Ayoub, 2004), and "liberal Islam" (Burton, 1995:5-7).

The details regarding these labels need not concern us here; the important point is that Egyptian and Indonesian Islamists developed strikingly different strategies. Prior to the outbreak of the Nasser's National Revolution in Egypt, why did the leaders of the MB avoid forming a political party as their principal strategy, while Indonesian Islamist organizations, after their Revolution, increasingly gravitated toward the formation of political parties? And why was it that the majority of Egyptian leaders in Islamist movements mobilized around a strong commitment to the creation of an Islamic state, while Indonesian Islamist leaders gradually began to *oppose* an Indonesian Islamic state?

At the most general level, this dissertation responds to these questions by investigating the impact and influence of colonial-state institutions upon the origins of Islamist political formation. By political institutions, I am referring broadly to the "materialized structure of a polity" or "the institutional designs of the state" (Thelen et al, 1991:14), comprising formal and informal rules and procedures, such as those codified in law or deployed by the state and other bureaucratic organizations. This dissertation's basic argument is that variations of political structure in the colonial states of Egypt and Indonesia played a decisive role in shaping patterns of Islamist political formation. Therefore, central to my argument is the notion that institutional approaches and historical narratives serve as two interrelated components in my analytical framework.

The institutional argument claims that the peculiar structure of a polity played an important role in shaping Islamist mobilization strategies.

The difference in political origins is particularly important because it involves choices about structure and strategy under which Islamists entered the political arena. The first two decades of the twentieth century in Egypt and Indonesia — defined as antecedent conditions — constitute the formative period of the nation-state during which political organizations emerged to debate and openly struggle over various alternatives of state formation. I argue in this dissertation that different institutional environments of a polity transform largely *similar* Islamist ideologies into very *different* types of organizations that in turn effect and seek to effect different strategies and programs in their respective political movements. My main concern and argument moves beyond this initial observation to focus on how these Islamist alternatives developed. Thus I show that types of ideology and organization were historically constituted by norms and rules, along with the distinctive acts of earlier Islamist leaders, and combined with responses from the state, which resulted in particular types of Islamist transformation. Elaborating the accumulation of these structural factors through sequences of state formation will help to establish variations in the Islamist transformation trajectories.

In making this argument, I am greatly indebted to the work of Gregory Luebbert and subsequent scholarship which was built upon his *Liberalism, Fascism, or Social Democracy: Social Classes and the Political Origins of Regimes in Interwar Europe* (1991). It posited that political outcomes are alternatives in the sense that they derive from different successes and failures, different patterns of strategies, and rest on different political alliances and configurations of power. Political movements also adopt

fundamentally different responses to a particular crisis. In other words, outcomes "could not consciously be chosen" (Luebbert, 1991:306).

Another facet of my explanation draws upon a state-in-society approach (Migdal, 2001:3-40), by arguing that patterns of institutional development within a particular state are crucial for the transformation of social forces. I develop this argument by examining the political strategies and choices of leaders in Islamist movements throughout the crucial periods of state building. The basic thread that runs through the later chapters of this study is that the transformation of political Islam proceeded in historical sequences of ongoing processes of institutional construction of the state. Islamists' initial failure to hold national leadership during the most critical moment of state formation, such as national revolutions, had an enormous impact on changing the perceptions of, and responses to, the state. Changes in mobilization strategies and programs thus occurred at historical junctures during which leaders of Islamist movements were subjected to an expanded and consolidated process of nationalist state building. This was marked by conflicts, compromises, and alignments between the state (or other political groups) and Islamist elites, as well as by the timing of the formation of a particular regime. Thus historical political arrangements shaped the strategic context evident in later circumstances, and the sequences of events generated self-reinforcing processes that constrained available options at later times, making significant changes possible.

Egypt's political structure has historically tended to be characterized by a post-Ottoman elaborate, institutionalized Islamic system, combined with a relatively strong role for the ulama in state organizations. During the late 19th century the Egyptian monarchy, social divisions and conflicts that resulted from a power struggle within the

newly emerging domain of party politics, all provided Islamist leaders with a sense of institutional vocabulary in which to speak about political alternatives. It is, by and large, through these institutional environments that a set of ideas about the Islamic state were framed, and through which strategies of political mobilization were articulated. The formation of the Society of Muslim Brothers in Egypt in 1928 took place within the context of a movement aimed at defending Islamic authenticity, creating a type of political mobilization that I call "a purist political movement".[2]

Such a highly institutionalized Muslim religious system linked with the state was relatively absent in the Indonesian polity prior to independence. Political bases for the ulama in the late 19th century Dutch Indies were autonomous from the state. Throughout the archipelago, especially in Java and Sumatra, the traditional activism of the ulama in Islamic system operated in the straddled sphere of private and communal system. The first modern Islamist movement, Sarekat Islam (Islamic Society, SI), was formed in 1912. Its mobilization was influenced by the combined factors of a weak institutionalized religious system in the colonial state, as well as by the emerging secular-nationalist and communist movements. Yet, it shared the common opposition platform of liberation from Dutch colonial rule. Although SI favored an Islamic state in its program, the marginal role of the ulama and the absence of a religious system in the state's institutions hindered the movement from developing into a purist political organization, generating a type of a movement that I term "reformist political Islam".

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[2] I will explore the terms I used here, "purist Islamism" (Egypt) and "pragmatic-reform oriented" Islamism (Indonesia), in my theory chapter. For a brief definition, a purist political movement can be broadly defined as an organization that has lack orientation toward winning through compromise and negotiation, while pragmatic-reformist movement is an organization that was inclined to—as opposed to purist—look at political change as a small step, rather than giant leap, securing concessions is more important than maintaining principles.

This institutional argument brings us only partway toward explaining the divergent patterns of Islamist formation. The historical aspect of the argument considers the ways in which state-Islamist relations varied between the two cases throughout the period during and after revolution, a period in which Islamist political movements in both countries escalated to the highest period in their mobilization history. This dissertation therefore seeks to focus upon the mechanisms through which institutions, especially those with a religious agenda, channeled, mediated or blocked Islamist leaders from state politics. What emerges is how the development of Islamism constitutes what Migdal (2001:224-225) has termed "mutual transformation" between the state and Islamist politics *over time*. I argue that the engagement of state and society involves the creation of alliances and coalitions, which benefit each side through the possibility of a new material basis, as well as new ideas and values.

Before proceeding any further, it is important to look briefly at other explanations that try to explain the puzzle of the dynamic of political changes within Islamist movements. As mentioned earlier, two theories deserve particular attention within political scientists' debates over the compatibility between Islam and democracy. These are the power of culture, and theories of social movement associated with a "political opportunity structure". The cultural argument conceives of Islamism as being rooted in the Islamic scriptures and classics, with its growth being shaped by Muslim political experiences. The rise of Islamist political movements are therefore seen as a natural manifestation of integral Islamic injunctions and identities in response to particular social changes. On the other hand, theories of social movements seek to address the point that the presence or absence of structures of political opportunity, especially with regards to

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regime's policy for liberalization, facilitated Islamists in becoming organized into particular types of movement. A party versus a non-party strategy, for example, is selected by Islamist actors as far as political opportunities enable them to do so. These two theories only provide limited insights into the Islamist phenomenon and, as I will elaborate further in my theory chapter, fail to provide an adequate explanation detailing the specifics of Islamist development in terms of its contingencies, fluctuations, and the dynamic of conflict and resolution.

A third explanation centers upon the particularities of the regional political experience. It invokes the role of the Arab-Israeli conflicts and, since the 1980s, the influence of the Iranian Revolution in shaping the unique outcomes of Islamist mobilization. This theory tends to be the most popular because it speaks specifically to the radical characteristics present in almost all Islamist political movements in the Middle East, particularly those in Egypt. Two historical processes of state formation in the region that have unfolded concurrently since the beginning of the 20th century can be linked to the contemporary features of Islamism. The first consists of a series of escalations in the Arab wars against Israel, coupled with the subsequent defeats of the Arabs. The second is that the wars have been marked by popular mobilization around religious symbols and identities depicting the divisions between Israeli-Jews and Arab-Muslims. Moreover each subsequent war increased civic and nationalist sentiments, bringing consequences for the character of civic life, including the nature of civil society organizations. Thus it is the correlation between the wars, the forms of mobilization, and the rising tide of religious action either by the state or by the general populace that provides the explanatory framework as to why, for instance, Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood organized into a more

radical and anti-party movement than other Islamist organizations in Southeast Asia (Felly, 2001; Ibrahim, 1991).

The theory of the regional politics of Islamism may provide a plausible explanation for a single case, such as that of the Egyptian Islamists, but it is inadequate when it comes to a comparative test. That is, it fails to provide a defensible argument for those cases that underwent similar regional challenges, yet produced quite different outcomes. For example a number of Islamist movements in the Middle East, such as Jordan's Islamic Action Front and the Yemeni Congregation for Islamic Reform, moved in moderate directions and even consistently encouraged pluralist political practices, in spite of the fact that issues related to the Israeli-Palestinian were prominently in place (Schwedler, 2006). The main problem with this explanation is that it predicts uniform political outcomes from war, when in fact we observe divergent outcomes. I argue that elements of regional politics can be incorporated into a larger framework of comparative analysis. In this way, we can retain important insights from this explanation while shedding the elements of the theory that prevent us from explaining different outcomes. To do this, I bring together the different variables and explain how mobilization strategies are framed, as well as how the interests of actors are shaped in particular historical circumstances. This dissertation is therefore able to examine the consequences of organizational origins in shaping contemporary outcomes of Islamism.

3. Origins, Strategies, and the Sequences of Islamist Transformation

This study is framed within the tradition of comparative historical analysis. It attempts to examine the existing theories of political Islam within a broader framework of

sequencing and temporality (Mahoney and Rueschemeyer, 2004:12-16). Theoretically, an investigation of historical trajectories of Islamist transformation can provide a basis with which to unravel the varied and changing relationships between Islam and the state and, consequently, be able to determine the changing conceptions of the Islamic state. By testing the arguments through consideration of timing and sequence as derived from Moore (1966:xvii-xx), we can see the importance of focusing upon the origins of movements relative to the established incorporation of religious institutions, on the peak periods of political mobilization that constitute the various choices and strategies, and on the changing social contexts within which settled and unsettled political struggles affected the various Islamist agendas.

In the post-colonial states emerging after World War II such as in Egypt and Indonesia, historical sequences of state formation are reflected in such foundational events as changes in national leadership, elite negotiations to create new institutions, economic crises, elections or the establishment of representative governments, territorial secessions, as well as other critical phenomena, including war (Leiberman, 2001:1117). National Revolution and its outcomes, along with the inauguration of nationalist political regimes, form the most decisive historical sequence that empowered organized political Islam to become a major contender in national politics and, accordingly, to alter its strategies. The subsequent changes in regimes constitute an important sequence of state formation and structuring, which in turn influenced and shaped the patterns of state-Islamist relations. Changes in mobilization strategies did not only occur in the presence of an opportunity structure or with the invention of new cultural perceptions, but was an

outgrowth of complex interactions, negotiations, conflicts and coalitions between the state and the leaders of the Islamist movements.

In this dissertation, I consider the idea of the Islamic state as a site of contest and as a realm for the articulation of a state-society relationship (Moustafa, 2000; Migdal, 1999). The elite of the state and leaders of Islamist movements are political actors who compete over their respective visions of political order and societal transformation. It is important to keep in mind that the modern conception of an Islamic state was invented during the late colonial period, and embodies particular principles of statehood. Similarly, it defines itself as adopting an Islamic constitution, or at least its leaders perceive it as doing so. This category can shift because a state may be Islamic in matters of religio-cultural identity, such as the marking of public holidays during the fasting month of Ramadhan, but not in other matters. For example the recognition of the Quran as a source of legislation is sometimes claimed by both the state and by Islamic groups (Bianchi, 1987:70-71). From this perspective, both categories of the existing state and of the ideals of an Islamic state revolve around various understandings of legitimacy (constitution), authority (forms of government) and jurisdiction (what laws should be implemented). These understandings give rise to a variety of questions: who decides what an Islamic state is? Who decides what parts of Islamic religious law are to be implemented by the state? It is these questions that are central in defining the features of mobilization for the political alternative of an Islamic state, just as they become crucial to the struggle for domination over society between the state elite and leaders of Islamist movements.

Using an institutional framework for studying political Islam, this dissertation makes the general claim that changes in state political institutions dealing with religious

agendas generate transformations in Islamist movements. That is, such changes mark a threshold point for the articulation of new agendas and programs by actors within the evolving state, as well as new mechanisms for the possible inclusion of alienated groups and institutions into the state. While there is a common perception that the transformation of Islamism was facilitated by the political openness of certain regimes during periods of economic liberalization (Anderson, 1991:77-93), the present study posits that changes in the institutional design of the state in a particular period afford the Islamist elite (such as the ulama), as well as politicians and activists in civil society organizations, with new opportunities and resources for increasing their power and realizing their visions of society and state. In this sense, the Islamic state and its institutions are the product of conflicts and negotiations among state elites and the leaders of Islamist movements, with the various participants espousing often-different motivations, and with strategies and resources being unequally distributed between them.

Two important sequences of change related to state-Islamist relations can initially be identified. First, there is the national revolution and the resulting institutional outcomes, and second, there is the refinement or innovation of religious-political ideas by Islamist movements in response to the consolidation of state power, during the period from the mid-1960s through to the mid-1970s. Explaining the dynamics of the political mobilization of Islam requires one to understand the historical sequences of state building in which moments of conflict and of stabilization are paramount. Here too interactions between political elites and the wider public allowed each to advocate their respective strategies and programs in order to promote their political vision. Thus each sequence

propelled periodic transformations in state institutions, as well as in the strategies of Islamist movements.

A brief overview of patterns of Islamist change after the revolution can be described as follows. In Egypt, the rapid decline of Farouk's monarchy and the increasing anti-British sentiments during the late 1940s open the potential for mass mobilization. No organization was actually capable of carrying a revolutionary transformation of the state in this period except the Brotherhood. Thus the coup launched by the middle-ranking "Free Officers" in July 23, 1952 was taken by the MB leadership with surprise, particularly when the Free Officers leadership managed to form an elite-level alliance with MB to launch a *coup* aimed at dominating the revolution. After the coup was successfully carried out, the Free Officers-MB coalition proved temporary, since once the old regime had been overthrown, it was apparent that each group offered different visions on the state organization. It was Nasser's Free Officers' conception of government – based upon 'secular', socialist and Arab nationalism – that was successful in outmaneuvering Islamist leaders to take over the state apparatus and restore order.

Yet, at a more fundamental level, conflicts over constitutional order during revolutionary period remained. In 1970, Anwar Sadat succeeded Nasser and invited MB and ulama into his political circles; an implicit alliance that resulted in the amendment of the Egyptian Constitution in 1971 to designate the Qur'an as the principal source for national legislation. Qutb's formulation of radical-religious ideas of an Islamic state during Nasser's persecutions facilitated the rise of jihadist political organizations. The 1971-77 period became a time of great uncertainty as regards the political development of the Egyptian state *vis-à-vis* the Islamist movements. This troubled relationship was

greatly affected by President Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in 1977, coupled with the Egyptian-Israeli peace agreement that he signed at Camp David in 1979. These seminal events yielded an opening for Islamists to redraw their political conflicts with the state along radical lines, which later became an important factor in Sadat's 1981 assassination.

When Hosni Mubarak assumed the Presidency in 1981, he maintained the existing institutional arrangements dealing with political Islam so as to suppress the ability of Islamist militants to broaden their support base, while at the same time trying to broaden his regime's popular support through links with the ulama. The MB was also allowed to participate—albeit indirectly—in parliamentary elections during the 1980s and 1990s. An attempt to reform the MB along more liberal lines was made by a younger generation of members in the latter part of the 1990s, but their reforms were internally quashed and they left to form their own political party, the Hizb al-Wasat (Centrist Party). But this party was also never granted legal status by the Egyptian state, thereby effectively thwarting efforts by reform-oriented Islamists to broaden their support.

In Indonesia, the unsettled issues of constitutional struggle in the revolutionary period bears much on debate over the principle of state from June through August 1945 whether the new Indonesian state should be national-secular or Islamic. Islamists demanded an Islamically-based constitution, while nationalists preferred the state to remain religiously neutral by not making any religious commitments in the constitution. A compromise was reached with preference for a religiously-spirited national state constitution, or Pancasila, leading to the creation of a specific office designed for the recognition of the role of the ulama in state administration under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Yet, the compromise was not robust enough to decline Indonesian

Islamist leaders' to continue their aspiration for Islamic state. This unresolved debate occupied the leaders of Islamist organization in the post-revolutionary period.

In the first elections in 1955, four parties, the PNI (nationalist), Masyumi (modernist-oriented Muslim), NU (traditional ulama-based party), and PKI (communist), secured a significant number of seats in the Parliament, but none emerged as a clear winner. Sukarno ruled with an increasingly authoritarian style as the Parliament failed to resolve the disagreement over the ultimate ideological basis of the constitution and thus of the state. He abolished the Parliament and formed the Guided Democracy dictatorship based on a nationalist, religious (Islamic) and communist coalition. Suharto's rise to power in 1965 was made possible by an implicit alliance between the military, Muslim elites, and other anti-Sukarno forces. At first, between 1965 and 1966, this alliance defeated its primary political enemy, the PKI. Then as the New Order regime became more consolidated, Islamists were confronted with a choice between integrating Islamism into the state apparatus or remaining as advocates of a distinct Islamic constitution.

Islamists' response to the state consolidation under Suharto's New Order was crucial because it set into motion historical process of Islamist transformations. Muslim politicians opted to maintain their presence in co-opted parties that represented Islam. Subsequent policies since the mid 1970s aimed at integrating Islamic religious interest into the state's institutions have secured the right of the ulama to operate politically in a limited sphere. Just as importantly, liberal-minded Muslim activists working in civil society organizations have helped to integrate Islamism into the national culture since the 1970s, have reduced Muslim hostility to the existing state, and have promoted gradualist strategies for change that have reduced the appeal of the Islamic state. When Suharto's

political power declined at the end of the 1980s, he managed to mobilize a new stratum of Muslim middle class, leading to the formation of an Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals (ICMI) to contend for a political solution for Islam-state conflict.

What is clear from this brief overview is that variations in historical origins and differences in the institutional design of the state produced different transformation trajectories. In Indonesia, the trajectory of comprehensive transformation took place under the influence of three key processes: (1) the formation of Islamist movements that developed along with pragmatic-reformist orientation, (2) the changes in alliance structures between state, religious elites, and subordinate movements, which provided an incentive for the selective incorporation of these Islamist elements into state institutions, and (3) the congruence between the state's ideological consolidation and the relative absence of Islamic religious institutions, which allowed for the institutionalization of the religious agenda in the state without fear of fundamental changes to its constitution. Reform of Islamic ideas launched by liberal-minded activists since the early 1970s was thus crucial to the direction of Islamist change, precisely because they underpinned the doctrinal basis for the changing conception of the Islamic state.

By contrast, in Egypt, strong legacies of purist-Islamist strategies and programs, an elaborate religious institution linked with the state, coupled with the long lasting conflict during national revolution all worked to preclude transformations of the Islamist movement, especially of the Muslim Brotherhood. Over time, particularly as a result of the immense decline of state legitimacy and efficacy, Islamist networks became more extensive and ever more ideologically weighted against the legitimacy of the nationalist-state, while at the same time the state only had limited strategies for incorporating

religious actors. And in contrast to Indonesian Islamist development, the emergence of militant organizations in the 1970s effectively froze the possibilities of reconciliation between the state and the ideals of an Islamic state.

4. Methodology

This project draws upon comparative historical methods and primarily has two competing purposes in terms of its explanatory goals. First of all, it seeks to explain short-term fluctuations in degrees of political change, including the processes involved in the formation of religious politics, as well as moves toward peak levels of its political mobilization, leading to the Islamist transformation. These fluctuations represent moments of conflict and of stabilization between leaders of Islamist organizations, of other political groups, and of the state. Short-term fluctuations in Islamist changes have been of great interest to the student of social movements in the last decades. Of particular interest has been the important role of "political opportunity" in structuring the changes and continuity of such movements. But when we examine the distinctive features of political mobilization during the most extensive period of political activism, it soon becomes clear that the impact of political changes can in fact be fleeting, with the true cause deeply rooted in the origins of the movement. As such, the behavior of leaders in Islamist movements over the short term – that is, over a period of a few years – can be poorly understood. This insight is the reason that the present study does not focus upon short-term political changes, instead choosing to tackle a system-level analysis of evidence over a longer period of time.

Based on the above assessment, my second analytical objective is, therefore, to capture actions and decisions of Islamist actors by using periodization of Islamist political development. This dissertation attempts to understand trends of power struggle among the contesting elite. Historical sociology is generally concerned with these particular themes, yet the resulting explanations often seem to inadequately account for short-term changes that deserve a proper explanation. Arguments that begin with political origins also have a tendency to inadequately link societal-level variables with individual-level behavior. In order to make this link, I assert that macro historical explanations can help to situate sudden, seemingly inconsequential episodes of change within a larger context that allows the patterns of continuity to emerge.

The macro-historical approach to state formation and social movements can be combined into a single set of approaches for considering political mobilization. This dissertation does so by focusing on "master variables" embedded in structural and institutional perspectives. More concretely, this means focusing on both the presence and the absence of religious institutions linked with the state, on party and non-party strategies in the mobilization phase, and on variations in the strength of the role of ulama within the state, all while considering the dynamic of subsequent political events as they are reflected in those institutions. For example, with respect to recent changes in the Indonesian political regimes, my analysis recognizes that transitions to democracy offer opportunities for the emergence of major political transformations in Islamism, especially with regards to Islamist party formation. Yet at the same time, the forms of mobilization in Islamist parties and civil society organizations can to a significant degree be more strongly linked to historical conditions rather than to more recent causes.

It is important to acknowledge at this point that arguments focusing on political origins run the risk of overlooking antecedent causes responsible for both forms of political mobilization and subsequent outcomes (Geddes, 1991; King, Kohane, Verba, 1991:65). Variations in national environments and types of colonial administration arguably set up distinct sets of obstacles and of opportunities for organizational formation of Islamist movements, thereby facilitating particular patterns of Islamist political development. In dealing with this issue, I take heed of recent reminders from scholars using state-centered analytical frameworks to "recover the macro-analytics of state formation" (Katznelson, 2004:279), by making arguments that connect configurations of historical events with mobilization outcomes and recent changes of transformation. Thus my research involves a careful application of the concept of "critical junctures," which are moments of change that contribute substantially to distinct legacies in the process of state formation, as well as consideration of how the initial conflicts in a state's history can steer the trajectory of social-political movements.

I wish to stress that common usage of the term "critical junctures" in political science and sociology in the past decades has generally focused on foundational events of social transformation, fundamental policy shifts or state breakdowns that produced long term political legacies (Lipset and Rokan, 1968; Collins and Collins, 1991:29-31; Mahoney, 2001). However, as modern history is crowded with an assortment of political events, recent scholarship on political science certainly shows that critical junctures have been occurring with increasing frequency (Griffin, 1992:406-8). As a result, the lines that clearly divide critical junctures from less critical moments have been increasingly blurred. In this dissertation, I apply the concept of critical junctures to sequences of state

formation, especially as regards the institutional development of the state in relation to its

social groups. The analytical consequence is that long periods of history are compressed

and replaced by the ever-expanding unit of analysis that focuses on "critical" events.

Such events include regime change, leadership negotiations, shifts in political alignment,

assassination, innovation of religious ideas, elections, or economic crisis. This research

strategy would involve, as Katznelson (1997:98) points out, defining critical junctures not

using our individual research questions, but by "the ways the extraordinary events shape

the contours of normal politics".

Based on these considerations, the narrative of this dissertation focuses on three

sequences of state formation that intersect with moments of choice in the dynamics of

Islamist political movements. These moments include the period of formation of political

movements and organizations in the struggle against colonial rule, the crisis period of

revolution during the struggle for independence, and the period of the innovation of

religious-political ideas in response to the consolidation process of state building. The

shared historical processes of state formation in both Egypt and Indonesia provide

examples for comparing and contrasting the three moments hypothesized in the Islamist

transformation trajectories.

I examine the positions of actors in Islamist movements (such as the ulama,

politicians, and activists of organizations) who were committed to the struggle for the

realization of an Islamic state. These political actors represented Muslim elites who were

politically active within the context of a particular institutional design of the state. Since

the sequence of state formation is central to my argument, the ongoing processes of

institutional development of the state after the independence revolution are highlighted as

shaping the behavior of Islamist leaders. In exploring these causal mechanisms, I employ insights from "historical-institutionalism" in order to explain, for example, why some leaders in a particular Islamist movement during a certain period of time stood so strongly for the programmatic belief in the viability of constitutional transformation toward an Islamic state, while others rejected this option and worked for institutional incorporation of the Islamist agenda within the state. This historical-institutional focus underlines the strategic interaction between Islamist actors and institutions. Thus it helps in understanding the causal dynamics in the development of Islamist mobilization, as well as in uncovering the patterns of conflict and stabilization between Islamist leaders and the state within an historical framework. This research strategy allowed me to locate *settled* and *unsettled* periods of conflict between the state and Islamist movements at a time of mobilization.

Drawing upon recent developments in the comparative historical method, two forms of major comparisons are employed in this dissertation. These are cross-case comparison and macro-analytic narrative (Mahoney, 2003). Cross-case comparison is used to delineate theoretically important aspects of two or more different cases. These comparisons are predominantly informed by "nominal" strategies in causal assessment. I reason that nominal comparison provides a lens through which methodological emphases on historical sequence and timing can be made central. In contrast to most arguments, which stress how the degree to which variables are present affects outcomes, I am inclined to investigate how the temporal position of those variables within sequences also influences outcomes. In this research, the issue is not only "what particular event happens, but also when it happens" (Pierson, 2003:178). For example, I argue that the

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relatively weak religious institutions linked to the state before the revolution, as well as the alliances between the state's elite and subordinate leaders in Islamist movements, are all necessary conditions for the emergence of a comprehensive Islamist transformation, while their absence tends to produce the continued dominance of a movement by those defending the status quo of Islamic cultural purity. This dissertation also informally uses analytic narrative (Mahoney, 2003; Stryker, 1996). This technique is focused on disaggregating explanatory factors and outcomes into smaller event processes with the aim of doing justice to causal complexity. It is especially useful for tracing the configuration of, and interplay between, the various causal factors, and for making causal inferences through comparison of particular event sequences. Organized around the overarching theoretical framework, the treatment of historical cases in analytic narrative is necessarily selective and as such is informed by the key concepts and explanatory arguments.

For its analysis of the programmatic belief of Islamism, this dissertation is primarily concerned with reconstructing the development of ideas or discourses about the conception of an Islamic state. Its main focus is aimed at unearthing patterns and variations of Islamic state alternatives across institutional contexts, social groupings, and temporal periods. In doing so, this study employs a variety of historical and intellectual sources, combining primary evidence and secondary sources from the two countries under study. I draw upon original materials, most importantly political writings from leaders of Islamist movements, including their biographies. I am using these political writings because their statements and visions serve arguably as an ideology, which to borrow from Geertz (1973:134), "explicitly establish political ends and articulate

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strategies for actions". Moreover, political writings provide a window into the long-term ideological orientation of the Islamist movements.

In certain circumstances, these political writings also provide a coherent belief system that dominates the world-views, assumptions and habits of a group's members and activists. My analytical overview of these political writings begins with the emergence of Islamist political movements in Egypt and Indonesia in the early 20th century, a period that witnessed the rise of a variety of political organizations that openly struggled over various alternatives for state formation. It ends in the late 1970s, at which point Islamism had started to splinter due to substantial political transformations. In Egypt, the spread of radical Islamic ideologies fostered the rise of militant organizations committed to violent struggle for an Islamic state, which led to the continued exclusion of political Islam. In Indonesia, the spread of liberal-oriented political ideologies led to conciliation with the state and the incorporation of elements of the Islamist agenda into state institutions, relatively muting demands for an Islamic state alternative.

Studying the transformation of the political movements in relation to state institutions touches upon one of the most difficult tasks in such historical research: the reception accorded to new programmatic beliefs among contemporary leaders and activists. To overcome this difficulty, I draw on qualitative methods, which include the analysis of Islamists' programs, documents, organization archives and literature. I also draw upon interviews that I conducted with Islamist leaders, activists, politicians and religious preachers in Egypt and Indonesia, to assess the changes in their political world-views, strategies and political programs. These interviews took place during my fieldwork in Egypt and Indonesia, when I spent approximately five months in each

country. I seek to compile profiles of major Islamist organizations, associations and parties, as well as detailing their policies and activities. This combined design allows me to map out the views and opinions of Islamists regarding their political imagination.

Before finishing this discussion of methodology, I need to specifically address the issue of comparability between the two case studies. The two cases were selected due to the dependent variable: contrast in the patterns of political mobilization. They also both represent ideal-typical patterns as regards their earliest formation of Islamist political movements and demographic composition. In order to properly consider the similarities and differences between the cases, I employ two strategies of comparison, a combination of a "most similar" and a "most different" systems design (Przeworski and Tueune, 1970:9-34). And while this strategy can never be perfectly realized in any analysis, we are able to discern invaluable points of reference for an in-depth and rigorous contrasting comparison.

First, Egypt and Indonesia can be broadly matched because among countries in the Muslim World, they have the longest history of Islamist political movements. In conjunction with this characteristic, they have experienced long periods of being governed by authoritarian regimes. Second, the Egyptian and Indonesian Islamist movements have had different paths of institutional development – thus comparing them constitutes a "most different systems" design. In both countries, the outcomes of Islam's political mobilization exhibited major contrasts in organizational fronts, institutional characteristics, ideological changes, programs and strategies, as well as other important political attributes. Comparison within this set of cases therefore constitutes a most different systems strategy, since it involves juxtaposing cases that are fundamentally

different in a number of respects. The selection of the Indonesian and the Egyptian cases of political Islam thus enables the larger goal of finding a general explanation for Islamism within a broader comparative test.

5. The Contributions of the Study

This dissertation seeks to make several contributions to the study of comparative politics in developing countries. First, at the most general level, the research highlights the important findings of historical causation in explaining patterns of political mobilization. Many studies on political Islam in Indonesia and in Egypt have employed an historical approach to explain the development of Islamist movements, but rarely do these studies explicitly build an argument to link history, framed as analytically causal factors, with the contemporary outcomes of Islamism.

Second, this project deliberately focuses upon Islamist political mobilization in order to challenge the conventional interpretation of political Islam as being based upon one understanding of an Islamic ideology, timeless and eternal. I do share the assumption that Islamist political movements were built upon a "community of ideas" that were deliberately associated with each other in a process aimed at the creation of an Islamic state. However, I contend that this explanation, taken alone, does not adequately recognize the role of institutions in shaping divergent strategic and programmatic patterns in Islamist movements. The ideological explanation also fails to provide a convincing argument for different forms of political Islamism when the phenomenon is considered comparatively. This latter critique is particularly important precisely because political Islam in Egypt and in Indonesia exhibits divergent patterns of mobilization, even though

the two countries have shared a similar — if not entirely identical — historical-formative trajectory as regards Islamist movements within their respective state building projects.

Third, this dissertation provides insights into the distinctive patterns of political formation for the development of social movements. Prominent studies on Islamist movements are by no means evenly distributed between cultural and structural analyses. Rather, a vast body of literature on Islamism employs a straight-forward cultural analysis. My intention in this study is not to entirely reject the cultural perspective on Islamism by minimizing the role of ideas, but rather to re-contextualize ideological and structural components within an analytical viewpoint that is simultaneously conscious of the role played by rational choice within strategic contexts of political transformation. The institutional variable of this study – religious institutions that are linked with the state, and concomitantly, forms of mobilizing institutions within Islamist movements – underlines the patterns of conflicts and of coalitions in Islamist strategies of mobilization.

Fourth, this dissertation also makes a contribution to the larger topic of theories of state formation. Egypt and Indonesia loom large when considering potential case studies for historical comparison of processes of state formation and the emergence of modern-organized political Islam. However, although both experienced social opposition based on Islam, the political regimes in Egypt and in Indonesia pursued different strategies and took different actions. Within this framework, this dissertation tries to demonstrate that the dynamics conflict and resolution during national revolution shape future politics in profound ways precisely because these two states are endowed different strategy dealing with their internal challengers. Much of the narrative in this dissertation attempts to show

how parts of the state interact with one another, which is crucial for understanding the outcomes of state formation.

Finally, it is expected that this study will contribute to the integration of the study of political Islam in the Middle East and in Southeast Asia to the broader theoretical political science literature. Popular analyses have generally tended to understand political Islam with reference to cultural, religious, or regional concerns, especially the Arab-Israeli conflict. Scholarly treatments of this subject have perceptively analyzed particular national Islamist movements and the regimes they oppose. They have tended to approach the topic of Islamism within the context of discussing the compatibility between Islam and democracy. By contrast, my study attempts to integrate the topic of Islamism into a broader debate and engage the wider literature in political science, particularly themes such as the history of state formation, political mobilization of social forces, and comparative historical analysis.

6. Organization of this Dissertation

The chapters of this dissertation are organized in the following fashion: the next chapter (Chapter 2) presents a framework of analysis for the study of the political mobilization of Islam. As part of this, it reviews the literature on Islam and politics, emphasizing the theme of the cultural and structural theories of Islamism. I then map out my own theoretical framework for the study of political Islam, which is broadly influenced by an historical-institutional perspective. This theoretical framework provides the structure for the subsequent narratives on Islamism in Egypt and Indonesia.

In the following chapters, I probe the empirical narrative of Egyptian Islamists (in Part one) and Indonesian Islamists (in Part two). Each part consists of three chapters, beginning with an examination of the origins of Islamism's organization formation. The next chapter examines moments of crisis during the revolutions and the subsequent institutional outcomes dealing with state-Islamist relations, which is a critical point in the development of Islamist transformation trajectories in both countries. The last chapter in both parts consists of an examination of the most crucial moment of Islamist choice, that is, why, when and how leaders of Islamist movements in the two countries adopted such contrasting responses and strategies to the consolidating process of state power. This chapter elaborates the settled and unsettled issues in state-Islamist conflicts, considering the Islamist leaders involved, as well as the institutional contexts that facilitated the particular types of political transformation. One additional section (in the last chapter) on Indonesian Islamist will examine the forms of political mobilization during the period of the transition to democracy. This study concludes by summarizing the argument, and by considering the argument's implications for comparative research on political Islam and historical process of state transformation.

Chapter Two

THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:
HISTORY, INSTITUTIONS, AND THE POLITICS OF ISLAMISM

"Today, when 'history from below' has become a watchword in both Marxist and non-Marxist circles, and has produced major gains in our understanding of the past, it is nevertheless necessary to recall one of the basic axioms of historical materialism: that secular struggle between classes is ultimately resolved at the political—not at the economic or cultural level of society. In other words, it is the construction and destruction of States which seal the basic shifts in the relation of production, as long as classes subsist."
—Perry Anderson, *Lineages of Absolutist State*, 1971:11.

"Sequence matters because there are irreversibilities… Over time, 'roads not chosen' may become increasingly distant, increasingly unreachable alternatives"
—Paul Pierson, *Politics in Time*, 2004:64.

1. Introduction

The study of alternative paths of Islamism and of Islamist mobilization dynamics affords the opportunity to assess the theoretical approaches most commonly employed to explain the Islamist phenomenon. This chapter will develop an analytical basis for understanding the variations in Islamist mobilization, and will set the parameters for a careful examination of the evolution of Islamist movements in the struggle for an "Islamic state".

This chapter begins, in section 2, by surveying classic scholarly works on political Islam. I will focus primarily on the most important and most influential studies on Islam and politics in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of this literature's explanatory power. In section 3, I will map out my own theoretical framework for the study of Islamism. This section uses an historical-institutional perspective, and aims to understand the development of Islamist politics within

particular contexts of state formation rather than considering it in isolation. The aim is to show that most theories of political Islam have neglected the important differences between Islamist movements in terms of organizational origins, mobilization and political transformation. Awareness of these differences helps us to properly frame the theoretical proposition, and thus to explain the Islamist phenomenon in relation to state formation.

In section 4, an in-depth analysis of institutional contexts of mobilization will be undertaken. Emphasis will be placed on such themes as path dependence, timing and sequence of political development, and the trajectories of Islamist changes. I also highlight some theoretical discussions about how greater emphasis on the patterns of conflict and conciliation between the state and its religio-social constituents could enrich our understanding of various aspects of the movements' trajectories, particularly concerning their fundamental objective of Islamizing the state.

Finally, in section 5, I present an inductive typology of Islamist organizational formation to identify similarities and differences in historical conditions under which Islamism emerged in the modern political arena. The aim here is to provide an analytical device for close inspection of Islamist movements in Egypt and Indonesia.

2. Literature on Islam and Politics

The core phenomenon focused upon in this study can be broadly termed 'political mobilization of Islam'. It encompasses both a range of actors and of political behaviours (Bartolini, 2000:4). The terms 'political Islam' or 'Islamism' or 'Islamist politics' (Beinin and Stork, 1997; Ayoub, 2007) serve here as alternative designations

for the phenomenon of Muslim organizations engaging in politics qua Muslim organizations. 'Political mobilization' encompasses activities that seek to influence state policies or to influence the balance of power, as performed by actors who perceive their actions as an outcome of their identity as Muslims. Their actions are considered 'Islamist' in the sense that they pursue a self-defined religious agenda through engagement with politics (Kalyvas, 2001).

There is a shared analytical understanding within the social sciences that Islamists are groups of people and political communities who adhere to a set of ideological beliefs derived from the doctrine that Islam is not only a religion, but also a political system that governs the legal, economic and social imperatives of the state (Esposito et al. 1997; Eickelman and Piscatori, 1997).[1] Such ideological beliefs have become powerful and important re-imaginings of the state that emerged in the colonial Muslim world during the early 20th century.[2] Leaders of these movements are often but not always associated with the traditional religious elite, the ulama. The trait that is common to all is a commitment to the idea of the Islamic state as having three basic characteristics: 1) The Quran is the fundamental constitution; 2) Government operates

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[1] The term "Islamism" first appeared in eighteenth-century France as a synonym for Islam. It attained its modern connotation in late 1970s French academia, thence to be loaned into English, where it has largely displaced "Islamic fundamentalism." The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language defines Islamism as, *"An Islamic revivalist movement, often characterized by moral conservatism, literalism, and the attempt to implement Islamic values in all spheres of life..."* See, Jones, *Understanding Islamism,* and New York: Blackwell Publications, 2004:31.

[2] I wish to stress here that, unlike Communism, which attached its ideology to Marx or unlike liberalism to renaissance philosophers—Islamism has no founder. What constitute Islamic ideologies refer generally to Islamist thinkers and intellectuals who contributed to elaborate visions of the creation of an Islamic state. Egyptian and Indonesian Islamists might appear to be representing different geographical and cultural entities, that is each has its own different constituents and maintained an array of distinctive cultural characteristics, yet in both cases, Islamist movements were built upon a "community of ideas" that were deliberately associated with each other. Moreover, since the early 19th century, the spread of modern Islamic ideas facilitated the growth of political networks that bridged historical and geographical distances. See, Mohammed Ayoub, *Many Faces of Political Islam,* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2007), 7-20.

based on the concept of consultation (*shura*); and 3) The ruler is bound by the teachings of Islam – thus the application of *shari'a* becomes the central feature of the Islamic state.[3] At its root, the concept of the Islamic state adopted by Islamist political movements represents a profound transformation in the modern *state system*, arising from the desire to fuse religious and secular political authorities. As nearly all leaders in Islamist movements have proclaimed: "[There is] no separation between religion and the state in Islam" (Effendy, 2005:7; See also, Ayoub, 2007:14; Asad, 1985:188).

But while the goal of an Islamist state has been widely espoused by various groups across the Muslim world, the reality is that there have been relatively few successful cases of Islamist movements taking over a state and thus enacting their full socio-political program. Except in Iran since 1979, and more recently in Afghanistan (2003) and Iraq (2004), both of which officially adopted an Islamic Constitution in those years, Islamism has tended to work from within the existing nation-state to slowly introduce elements of its religio-political agenda. In some countries, such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Turkey, and Yemen, Islamist movements have been transformed into political parties. In some other countries, for instance Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Algeria, Islamist organizations have concentrated on religious activism from a position of political opposition to the group in power, although these organizations somehow played the role as *de facto* party organizations. And in a few other cases, militant Islamic organizations have emerged whose goal is a trans-national political transformation and the establishment of an Islamic order, through violent means if necessary.

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[3] I will return to this theme extensively in my empirical chapters. For the study of ideas on the Islamic state in Egypt and Indonesia, see Mitchell, 1969; Malpern, 1958; Effendy, 1995; Samson, 1971.

Such puzzling variations in the outcomes of Islamist political mobilization have been relatively ignored in the theoretical explanations of the phenomenon. Until recently, most scholars of political Islam argued that the desire to establish an Islamic state arose as a 'natural', primordial expression of Islam's cultural tenets. Others claimed that Islamism arose from structural factors in Muslim society, including social and economic dislocation as a result of the process of modernization. In what follows, I review these two arguments at some length to show their strengths and weaknesses in explaining the Islamist phenomenon.

2.1 Culture, Islam and Politics

Although not necessarily related, cultural explanations of Islamism were basically based on an application of Clifford Geertz's theory on the revival of primordial sentiments to the formation of new states. Writing in the early 1960s, Geertz viewed the future of newly independent states as being inextricably linked to the tension between 'integrative revolution' and 'primordial attachments' (Geertz, 1963:105-175). Primordial attachments result from what Geertz calls 'the given' of social existence, which can be assumed to be inherent in blood ties, race, region, religion and custom. These attachments are also seen "to have ineffable and, at times, overpowering coerciveness in and of themselves" (Geertz, 1963:109). Most importantly, Geertz argues that these ties are natural, spontaneous and universal, and that "for virtually every person, in every society, at almost all times, some attachments seem to flow more from a sense of natural – some would say spiritual – affinity than from social interaction" (Geertz, 1963:110). Geertz's work had a powerful influence on the way in

which scholars view the phenomenon of Islamism, particularly in terms of predicating Islamist movements as a natural manifestation of religious affinity among Muslims.

Geertz's idea is reflected in the book *Islam and Politics* by John Esposito (1983), who anchors his explanation of Islamist movements in a unitary understanding of religion. Although Esposito acknowledges the specificity of the social and political contexts in which these movements operate, his underlying premise is that the idea of a "totality called Islam," explained as the basic beliefs of Muslims and the ideas they all share, is the foundation from which political thought emerges. Esposito highlights this totality as 'shared Muslim beliefs' in God's revelation, in Muhammad's prophethood, in Islamic law, and most importantly, in the unity between religion and politics. This latter Islamic imperative (Esposito, 1983:4-7) functions as the basic belief that "motivates Muslims with regard to state and government and guides assessment of whether or not their government is justified in accordance with Islamic injunctions".

The underlying assumption of these propositions is simple: that social and national collectivities whose members adhere to the Islamic religion share a primary identification as Muslims with common beliefs, and belong to a totality called the Muslim World. Lewis (1989; 1991), Huntington (1991; 1997) and Kramer (1995) assert that the primary identification as Muslims who hold common beliefs that guide individual and collective action is attributable to those who profess this particular religious faith. For Lewis (1989: 19), "Islamic religion provides the worldview, the framework of meaning for both individual and organizational life." The primary principle of this worldview is a political commitment to the implementation of Islamic law coupled with a belief in a "then-sacralized ideal of early Islamic community". Most

pre-modern revivalist movements in Muslim history, as most culturalists have argued, are inspired by these two principles of Islamic law and by the ideal Muslim community that existed at the time of Muhammad and the four rightly-guided Caliphs. It is this commitment to both the divine *shari'a* and the model of the early Muslim community that produced modern Islamic political movements, in a variety of organizational forms, which aim to restore the order of Muslim social life.

Cultural arguments to explain Islamism acquired new impetus during the 1990s, within the context of only a few Muslim countries participating in the so-called Third Wave of democratization. Because of their low level of participation, numerous debates arose around the culturally grounded idea that Islam and democracy are incompatible. The main arguments marshaled in favor of this thesis ran along two lines: a) that the essential principles and values underpinning Western liberal-democracy are absent from Islamic theology and culture (Huntington, 1997:31-42); b) that many Islamist thinkers have explicitly rejected liberal democracy (Lewis, 1996:52-63; Wright, 1996:64-75).

But by drawing on the diversity of Islam's political expression, we can quite easily argue that cultural theories of Islamism suffer from the fact that they give axiomatic value to the assumption that political action is the exclusive, automatic, and natural derivative of particular ideas. Put another way, it discounts the possibility of multiple, competing ideas affecting one's actions, in different ways for different people. By putting forth a single, trans-historical version of political Islam, culturalists have essentialized the ideology as a coherent, unitary sociological and political entity. As Zubaida (1997:118) writes: "cultural patterns referring to religious and historical traditions are not fixed, but reproduced in every generation in relation to different

situations and conjunctures". Kalyvas (2001:309-315) also points out that religious doctrine, like all kinds of doctrine, is a contested field of meaning, amenable to a multiplicity of cultural expressions and political arrangements, and lends itself to multiple interpretations and reinventions.

From this perspective, variations in mobilization patterns of Islamist movements are almost to be expected, as a product of their manifold influences. This dissertation argues, therefore, that the effective analysis of contemporary Islamist political movements and their various mobilization strategies must be based upon the proposition that Islamism is not merely the expression of cultural tenets of Islam or historical traditions. Rather, it must be seen as being consciously constituted by both political and religious actors within the specific institutional context of the modern state, a context that is informed by Islam's cultural and historical traditions, but which also has many other important influences.

2.2 Structural Model of 'Muslim Society'

Alternative explanations of political Islam have been put forth by structural framework theories of Islamism which address the basic understanding of the characteristics of Muslim society under which political Islam manifested (Gelner, 1981; Voll, 1986; Piscatori, 1991; Zubaida, 1991). The process of modernization in Muslim society has generally been a favorite focus of these scholars.

In his classic study on Muslim society, Gellner presents a structural model to explain the confronting, but with adaptable nature, of political Islam and the modern state. Gellner sets up a dualistic structure of Islam: the High Islam of city dwellers and

the Low Islam of tribes. High Islam is scripturalist and ascetic, suitable to the urban culture, while the Low Islam is ecstatic meeting the needs of tribal life (Gellner, 1981:42). A Muslim society, in Gellner's view, is a product of the perpetual struggle of these segmentary units of a community mediated by reverence for the *ulama* (saints). As Gellner points out, "…tribesmen come to saints for political leadership, instead of mystical experience" (p. 147). Cities, by contrast, lack cohesion and are politically weak. Economic and social security serve basic interests of urban community. The ulama, although part of city populations, often serve the state and sometimes lead the people, "but they do not form self governing communities" (Gellner, 1981:44). Shared religious symbols and identities seem to bind these conflicting units of Muslim society through the role of *ulama*.

In Gellner's view, states in Muslim society are created by tribal conquest, but they serve as a regulating mechanism for larger society, including their urban rivals. Gellner asserts, however, that these states can never be allowed to become powerful as they "are not able to crush the autonomy of the two conflicting entities" (Gellner, 1981: 53) Cities depend on the state for protection from nomadic assault, and urban *ulama* therefore tend to legitimatize and support governing regimes, but they also seek to protect the cities' populations from the arbitrary whims of state rulers. Both tribes and cities have an interest in the state to be sufficiently strong to withstand tribal domination and to provide urban security, but still too weak to destroy the interests of either. Therefore, while religion is essential for city-tribe relations, the state in modern Muslim society is epiphenomenal, as Gellner puts it: "A weak state, strong culture—that seems to be the formula" (Gellner, 1981:55).

With the spread of urbanization and the consolidation of a centralized nation-state, Gellner (1981:80-84) argues that Low Islam declines and High Islam becomes ascendant. Such development occurs because High Islam captures the urban strata's desire for learning and upward mobility. However, this desire is frustrated by the laxity of the regimes and the failure to modernise their countries. Framed in this model, Islamism is thus viewed as an affirmation of the scriptural-based egalitarian spirit expressing frustration with the blocked road to modernization. Voll (1986) shares the presupposed assumption of this structural model of Islam while he opposes Gellner's deterministic projection. In Voll's (1986: 4-9) view, it is not modernity itself but the way modernization policies unfold that creates particular reactions in Muslim society. Voll (1993:23-30) argues that growing disillusionment with secular nationalism and problems of legitimacy in the existing regimes along with the differential effect of economic development often instigates social reactions that take religious forms. The rapid enforcement of social and economic changes produced a group of people especially in developing countries who could not cope with these changes. These masses reacted to "modernity" by asserting "tradition" (Esposito and Voll, 1989:11).

Here, Islamist politics emerges only as a tool of opposition for the masses against the radical elitist-secular policies that aim to restructure the society. In other words, as a result of the inconclusive policies of the political elite, the intertwined process of secularization and economic liberalization provoked multifaceted crises.[4] Thus, it is the failure of modernization rather than the inevitable tension between the

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[4] See John L. Esposito and John O. Voll, *Islam and Democracy,* New York: Oxford University Press, 1996; Binnaz Toprak, *Islam and Political Development in Turkey,* Leiden: Brill, 1981; Sami Zubaida, *Islam, the People and the State: Essays on Political Ideas and Movements in the Middle East,* London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 1993.

religious and the secular that provides the ground for the emergence of Islamist

organizations. Following Weber's thesis on secularization, this model of explanation

draws attention to the "differential effects and shortcomings of socio-economic and

cultural modernizing policies that create a fertile milieu for the return to religion"

(Keppel, 1989:78; see also, Davis, 1987:37-58). The implicit assumption is that, if

successful, modernizing and secularizing policies would alter the role of religion in the

society and prevent the resurgence of religion.

Studies using this perspective assert that while the political elite successfully

incorporate the ideal of an egalitarian society into their rhetoric, their policies fail to

transform traditional economic and cultural structures. The resulting economic

deprivation, social exclusion, and political under-representation of the masses

reintroduce the idea of religious society as a stable social system and the return to

religion as a panacea for solving existing problems (Ibrahim, 1982:118). It is from this

secularization thesis that structural arguments acquire new insights into the political

economy explanations of Islamist movements (Anderson, 1991; Chibber, 2000; Medani,

2003).

Anderson (1991:17-31), for example, situates the growth of support for Islamist

organizations in North Africa at the juncture of two developments: the state's retreat

from welfare and redistributive policies and political liberalization policies. Her thesis

highlights the opening of the political field during the liberalization period as a strategy

of the elite aimed not at wider political participation but at a broadening of its base of

legitimacy and a widening of the reach of state taxation (Anderson, 1991:24; Chibber,

2001). The unintended consequence of this was that disenfranchised sectors became the

constituents of Islamist organizations. In the context of the state's retreat, Anderson points out that Islamist groups proved better and more efficient providers of social services. The idiom of an Islamic alternative was mobilized in a context that banished discussion of everyday problems and any economic discontent.

The change in the state's redistributive policies and capacities is also crucial for understanding other structural transformations in the economic and political spheres in Egypt, the Sudan and Somalia (Medani, 2003) and the success of radical-Islamist electoral mobilization in Algeria in the 1990s (Gill, 1998; Chibber, 2000). According to Medani, the increased strength of Islamist networks occurs against the dramatic backdrop of a remittance economy following the end of the oil boom in the early 1980s. These countries were all major labor exporters who experienced capital inflows during the oil boom of the 1970s. As remittances declined, the informal markets in foreign currency, trade, labor, and land that expanded during the economic boom came to be dominated by indigenous social networks providing cohesion, shared norms, and an economic infrastructure outside the political system. The rise of the Islamist-authoritarian regime in the Sudan and the emergence of radical-Islamist organizations in urban Cairo were made possible by the ability of Islamist-social networks to operate in establishing a monopoly of power through highly coercive means, which was useful for political mobilization. Similarly with reference to informal institutional arrangements following the fiscal crisis in the Algerian political system, Chibber demonstrated that the "expansion of Muslim constituents to vote for the FIS was largely dependent on whether religious-social groups were successful in containing a better reservoir of

protest networks suited to the interests of particular social classes, especially the petite bourgeoisie" (Chibber, 2000:150).

What is important to note is that the political economy explanation of Islamism touches the intersection of the goals of Islamism and political mobilization, which is capturing the state. However, since the majority of the main variables of this argument focused on the transformation of social classes, it casts aside the cultural and historical issues that shaped the patterns of state-Islamist conflict. The crisis of the state is also perceived by Islamist leaders as evidence of the bankruptcy of secular ideologies, which leaders of Islamist movements have sought to challenge. This study argues that the rise of religious politics must be explained partly in terms of state institutional conditions which circumvented the political arrangements in favor of its constituents in order to prevent Islamist networks from emerging. As I argued in my introduction, Islamism has developed as a counter-ideological alternative of state formation appealing to particular segments of society, fueling the expansion of political actors in Islamist movements to participate in the construction of particular forms of the state (Ayubi, 1990:12-17).

A central problem with the latter thesis is that it failed to apprehend the longevity and the continuity of political movements under the banner of Islam. It assumed that Islamist politics is an exclusively post-colonial phenomenon disconnected from previous religious institutions and authorities in Muslim polities (Bowen, 1992:56-57). The first Muslim Brotherhood organization was established in Egypt in 1928 and spread to Jordan in the late 1940s when secular-national ideologies were on the rise (Voll, 1989; Ismail, 14-17). Moreover, although the political economy account is appealing if we isolate Middle East political Islam to specific cases, such an explanation

leads to over simplification when viewed through broader comparative lenses. As a result, it reveals a serious limitation, namely an omission of many cases of the revival of political Islam in countries where secular-national ideologies continued to play a relatively important role such as in Jordan (Boulby, 2004), Indonesia (Hassan, 2004; Effendy, 2003), Malaysia (Hefner, 2004), and Turkey (Yavuz, 1999).

Such explanations cannot themselves decipher the variations in which Islamist organizing structures are manifested in collective action. Since the focus is on the economic failures of the state, this theory ignores the historical contexts as to why people invoke an Islamic identity rather than class-based identities when the state ideologies have declined. Consequently, they fail to capture the underlying political and institutional processes that set off the continued presence of Islamist politics in the contemporary world.

3. Building an Alternative Framework: Historical Institutional Perspectives on Islamism

Given the limitations of the literature and theoretical arguments examined above, this section aims to construct an alternative theoretical framework to delineate causal mechanisms making sense of the variations of mobilization patterns within Islamist political movements. To begin with, I submit, first, that this dissertation situates Islamism as a historical process in which initial outcomes of organizational formation will have a *longue duree* consequence. It seeks to trace the effects of this formative moment through time (Pierson, 2004:79-86). Conceptualizing Islamism in this manner suggests a refinement of traditional theories of Islamist politics and shifts into identifying important variables, concepts, and arguments that locate how the

development of Islamism in relation with state formation unfold. Central to my theoretical proposition is that long-term structural forces determine long-term political outcomes (Pierson, 2003:177-190).

Second, I conceptualize Islamist political movements understood as a type of religious activism which operates according to the specific logic of religious appeals. Islamist movements in Egypt and Indonesia are thus instances within the large universe of political movements that define their "true" objectives narrowly, using religious criteria and symbols to frame their political action. In this particular framework, Islamism or organized-political Islam is a form of "religious politics" (Kalyvas, 1996:11-14; Posner, 2005:5-9). Indeed, Kalyvas (1996; 1998:291-319) has coined this term to point out the distinctive patterns of political mobilization in the Catholic movements in democratic Europe. Similarly, Subramanian (1997) and Sidel (2007) have dealt with the widespread use of social and political organizations to uphold mass mobilization by relying on the reconstruction of religious symbols and rhetoric. Islamist politics, then, can be disaggregated into patterns of mobilization based on the use and appropriation of Islamic symbols and rituals.

These symbols have become part of the powerful imagination of an Islamic state represented by modern Islamist movements such as the Society of the Muslim Brothers in Egypt, Sarekat Islam (Islamic League) in the Netherland Indies, and Jamaat-e-Islami of Indo-Pakistan. Their emergence were centrally informed by the challenge of the rising political movements that emanated from the struggles against colonial rule — nationalist, socialist, communist, and liberal (Ayoub, 2008:4-10; Effendy, 2003). Islamism, above all, represented a nationalist awakening. However, as it became

politically distinctive, it also represented a specific response in politics and ideology to the process of state building (Ayubi, 1991:11-17; Berman, 2003:258).

Political science has frequently relegated the theme of religious politics to the sideline of the story in the theory of state formation, focusing instead on material factors such as the economy, territory, and military competition (Tilly, 1975; 1990, Downing, 1997; Spruyt, 1994, Ertman, 1997). In the developing world, however, the trajectories of state formation have often been shaped and reshaped by conflicts among nationalist groups mobilized around the sentiment of ideological attachments, whether religion, ethnicity, or other cultural loyalties (Geertz, 1968). In the cases of the late colonial period in the Muslim world, religion was often steeped into organizing imperatives for an alternative state formation. This dissertation, at the general level, aims to offer historical exemplars in which religious forces situate the trajectories of fundamental transformation of the state and state system. And it is for this particular reason that a move to institutional analysis of religious mobilization bears a useful endeavour.

This study thus shares an important assumption with Nettl's (1968) definition of the state as "socio-cultural phenomena." Nettl (1968:565-569) recognized that the character of the state varies widely, depending on how one generalizes its existence and the different ways we perceive its shape and function. Moreover, taking into account the important reminder of Gellner's observation on the "weak state, strong culture" that characterizes the state in Muslim society, Nettl's observation sheds light on the study of state formation by emphasizing that "the significance of a cultural disposition is to allot recognition to the conceptual existence of a state" (Nettl, 1968:566). Based on this observation, this study seeks to explicate the historical change in state formation in

Egypt and Indonesia, in which Islamism or organized-religious politics plays an important role in the construction of institutional forms of the state.

Given the centrality of such a state alternative, leaders in Islamist movements believe that the pursuit of an Islamic state was ultimately an exercise in defining "new religiously-bound political communities" (Langhor, 2001:15; See also, Lawrence, 1998) and incorporating them into the materialized structure of modern polities. Since its initial emergence in the early 20th century, the creation, development and ultimate mobilization of Islamism involved politically stressful processes. Overtime, actors in Islamist politics were engaged in conflicts with other political groups throughout the post-colonial Muslim world. Leaders of Islamist movements were also keenly aware of and sensitive to issues of power competition over the creation of an Islamic state. And the very idea of strategic calculations to achieve political power and leadership of the yet-to-be created Islamic state drew particular attention from other political groups who maintained competing visions of state formation. Sukarno, for example, a leader of a nationalist movement in the Netherland Indies in the 1930s, openly questioned whether an Islamic state of Indonesia "will be suitable for the diverse characteristics of people of the Indies" (Yatim, 1986:18). Nahhas Pasha, one of the leading figures in the Wafd Political Party of Egypt, made a similar comment in 1936 arguing that "it might be necessary to limit the number of branches of the [Muslim] Brothers in Egypt" (Mitchell, 1968:27).

As the Islamist political movements were increasingly constrained by political situations in which they developed, the narrative of an Islamic state itself has gradually undergone substantive transformation beyond its initial formation. As stated earlier,

conventional wisdom views conflict between Islamist politics and secular authorities as a sign of intolerant religious ideologies over the establishment of an Islamic state, not as a structural-bound endeavour. My research shows, however, that in such instances of ideologies, strategies and programs of Islamist movements in Egypt and in Indonesia, actors in these movements are embedded in context-specific webs of institutional environments and expectations. Actors in Islamist movements utilize religious appeals in specific, norm-laden institutional settings.

These settings differ in terms of how fully they are controlled by the state and how saturated they are within an institutional design of the state, as well as the degree to which divergent actors in Islamist organizations are historically integrated into the state system. These differences, in turn, influence patterns of conflicts and the mechanisms in which resolution for a secular struggle between Islam and the state is ultimately resolved at the political—not at the cultural or religious- levels of society. In other words, as religious appeals of an Islamic state could not subsist in the expansion of territorial state organizations, it is the construction and destruction of the institutional design of the state which seals the basic shifts in the relation of religio-political production, as long as the concept of the Islamic state plays a role in coming to terms with institutional ties.

I will explore these institutional contexts of Islamism later in this section. What is important to note here is that such institutional settings change over time. Distinguished from previous efforts to treat Islamist movements from formal variables either as culture or structure, my study thus conveys the idea of critical choices made by political and religious elites and their impact upon the subsequent outcomes of state-

Islamist conflicts, culminating in remarkably different patterns of Islamist transformation and eventually in the changing conception of an Islamic state.

Briefly stated, my general argument is as follows. The various alternatives in the struggle for an Islamic state are shaped by the combined factors of the "genetic moment" of organizational formation and the "contingent" outcome of actions and decisions made by key actors in their engagement with the processes of state formation. In other words, the strategies of prominent leaders in formative moments in the struggle for an Islamic state set into motion the long-term possible preferences envisaged by later actors in response to existing political situations. In certain periods, the actors involved navigate outcomes toward a new equilibrium between Islamism and the state. This means that–to borrow a parlance from counterfactual analytical frameworks– alternative decision options were actually available, which, if chosen, would probably have pushed the paths towards different outcomes.

The rest of this study elaborates and defends this argument on contrasting patterns of Islamist mobilization cases in Egypt and Indonesia. As such, it represents an effort at building a theory of the politics of Islamism. This study does not intend to make a claim for its problematic application for all cases of the Islamist phenomena. Yet, facilitated by the comparative design of the study, the exercise of theory building will be aggregated through identifying an important set of concepts and variables that can later be extended to or tested on other cases—an elaboration that I discuss briefly in my concluding chapter. In its present form, the explanation of this study provides a reasonable interpretation of empirical variations across and within the Egyptian and Indonesian cases. With some modification, this same approach might help explain the

patterns of Islamist political mobilization in other parts of the Muslim world such as the rise of the radical Jama'at-e-Islami in post-partition Pakistan, the rise and fall of Islamist parties in Turkey, or the relatively minor appeals of Islamist party (PAS) in Malaysia.

3.1. Three Processes towards an Islamist Transformation

Scattered attempts to establish an Islamic state is by itself an ultimate goal of few founders of Islamist political movements in the early 20th century. More often the process of creating, shaping and incorporating or declining a religious agenda into state institutions is a byproduct of political and religious elite who seek to achieve certain goals that are not necessarily linked to the idea of an Islamic state. Ultimately, the long process of transition toward an "Islamic state" is frequently a residue of political decisions and actions of the Muslim elite seeking such goals. These goals vary, but can be found in such events as protecting traditional-local schools, rejecting unification of national laws over women and family, challenging land reform initiatives in the defense of a piece of land belonging to the ulama, or even making certain religious decisions for marginalizing their political rivals. As Kalyvas (2005:10) has noted, "conflicts and cooperation were not constructed by traditionally ascribed political cleavages, but through mobilization over [a] variety of tangential political goals sought by actors".

By emphasizing the relationship between structural settings and the development of Islamist mobilization over time, I frame history and institutional designs of the state as enduring constraints for a variety of interests and goals of leaders in Islamist movements. In historical terms, I classify three theoretical dimensions to

reflect a periodization of Islamist development: *organizational formation*, *political mobilization*, and *transformation*. The purpose of this classification, as Posner (2005:7) points out, is "to separate the process of *identity creation*" from the process of alternatives that emerged as a *political solution*. Such a theoretical proposition seeks to capture critical moments and actions made by competing political groups throughout important periods of state development. Although the three dimensions are different, all of them serve as mechanisms to dramatize the changing landscape of institutional settings through which "an explanation of critical actions… requires an adequate understanding of constraints that derived from the past actions" (Levi, 1997:28). As most historical research shows, "the sequence in which events occur is causally important, and events in the distant past can initiate particular chains of causation that have effects in the present (Levi, 1997:29; see also, Pierson, 2004:1-9; Mahoney and Rueschemeyer, 2003:19).

The formation of organized politics is the most basic step in the pursuit of an Islamic state. Such a step grants public sentiments and legitimacy to a particular ideal of "imagined-political community" (Anderson, 1983) challenging other alternatives of statehood. The period of Islamist formation is defined as a moment of the emergence of various organizations to participate in the process of state formation. Both in Egypt and Indonesia such an historical moment coincided with national awakenings in reaction to the decline of Western colonialism (Geertz, 1968; Binder, 1986). Movements envisioned over the creation of an Islamic state are galvanised as a response to the growing questions about the place of Islam in the modern nation-state.

The moment of origins is then conceptualized as a period of ideological formulation upon which a programmatic-belief of the Islamic state is constructed, and the strategic formulations of Islamism place a heavy reliance upon certain forms of organization and strategies. Religious appeals and legitimacy are infused in these organizations as engines of their political action and mobilization (Berman, 2004:279). Hence, one of the basic questions of an Islamic state is who has a claim on governmental power in any given institutions of the state. In this sense, the formation of a state is littered with other political groups that compete over different visions of statehood. This formative moment is the first political act in the struggle for an Islamic state.

Once the idea of an Islamic state is organized politically, it needs institutional boundaries. Political mobilization occurs in this step. It is understood as the period when the religio-political activism of the movement reaches its historic peak and conflict with other political groups escalates. Theories of social movement provide an analytical device to map out the elements of mobilization which inform one another, such as resource mobilization available to movement organizations, political opportunities, and frames of collective action (Tilly, 1978; Tilly et al, 1997:77-86). In the early stages of their development, the distinguishing features of Islamists' entry in the political arena triggered particular feedback mechanisms in this mobilization period. Certain characters of activism in their formative stages are translated in this step, where political actors mobilize their constituents through operating many issues impinging in political process.

The proper institutional boundaries of any given political ideas are also subject to political adjudication. The struggle for this adjudication, and the results, serve as the politics of transforming or incorporating Islamic ideas in the institutional construction of the state. It can be assumed that the organizational origins and the viability of this transformation informed each other. The affirmation of a new political community will almost circumscribe the boundaries of the feasible solution of religious agenda within the state. The final step of action in the struggle for an Islamic state is transformation. This is the moment when the alternative of an Islamic state becomes materialized in the state system, with or without constitutional recognition and power.

These three dimensions of historical Islamism—origins, mobilization, and transformation—are implicitly fulfilled whenever a political movement seeks to pursue an alternative for state formation. Therefore, to translate these three steps into political processes one needs to consider institutional designs of the state. In Egypt and in Indonesia, these processes took place at two levels. First, with regard to the institutional legacies of colonialism, the two post-colonial states have distinctively differed in terms of their formal structures of political power, constitutional system of governance, stability of ruling alignment, uses of state repression, as well as policy making process in relation to transforming their societies.

Second, in terms of the constitutional debate and its results, the founding Fathers of the state settled on a particular blue-print for institutional construction of the state as to how the recognition of the religious agenda would take place, leaving aside several unsettled issues. After the constitutional adoption, conflicts are resolved through recognizing and incorporating some other religious agenda based on that constitutional

blue print. Key to this recognition and incorporation is institutional legacies of a religious system linked with the state prior to the Islamist formation. At this level, patterns of conflicts between Islamism and the state are configured by the extent to which the religious agenda of Islamist political movements overlapped with the existing institutional legacies. As Pierson (2004:71-74) observed, mobilizing political groups compete over "filling up of political space" in the state resources. Success in the struggles over this space depends, "not simply on the resources at one's disposal. Rather, what generally counts is the scale of those resources relative to those of other contenders" (Pierson, 2004:71). It is not only the strength of the groups that counts, but also the scale of those resources relative to the political agenda of the Islamist movements.

Conceptualizing political Islam in its historical dynamic reveals to us that the pursuit of an Islamic state happens at multiple junctures and at multiple areas across the institutional space of the state structure. This dissertation posits that the various patterns of Islamist mobilization in the pursuit of an Islamic state can be characterized as a "path dependence process", as well as "contingent" outcomes of actions and decisions in search of a solution among diverse political actors and interests (Katznelson, 2003:280). Outcomes of this development are alternatives, in the sense that they are unwanted and unforeseen by the founders of Islamist movements. By the term "contingent" I imply that particular efforts to resolve the conflict between Islam and the state often generated something unexpected.

These actors have independent, interdependent, cooperative, and confrontational roles in the ongoing construction of state institutions. Using the Indonesian case as an

example, the transition from the marginal role of the ulama to the institutionalization of their authority in nation-wide offices of the Indonesian Council of Ulama (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, MUI) is beholden to institutions and political actors in the state and the power of religious authorities. These actors behave sometimes in concert, sometimes in competition, but always actively asserting their authority in the process. As Katznelson has noted, "… linkage between the two institutional spheres –*the interaction of institutions*—is overwhelmingly important to account for the production of new outcome[s]" (Katznelson, 2003:284) in Islamist politics.

3.2. Path Dependence and Time-Sequence Dynamics

An approach of this kind has important implications to illuminate the distinct role of historical origins of Islamism. By exploring the variations of national environments of the two polities on the eve of Islamist organizational formation, I delineate the importance of what Lipset and Rokkan (1968:14) have termed as "the structure of political alternatives" in the conception of an Islamic state. Since the structure of choice in the initial formation is treated not only as parametric but also as the heart of both stasis and change, identifying the "formation, reproduction and consequences of various choice structures" (Karl, 1997:12) is essential for explaining mobilization trajectories. As other case studies point out, while alternative outcomes of Islamist development unfold in wide spread *jihadist*-revolutionary fronts in Egypt in the 1970s and the 1990s, they are relatively absent in Indonesia for much of the 1980s and the 1990s; thus, such distinct transformation trajectories underpin the importance of the historical origins. In other words, different patterns of change in Islamism illustrate that

the nature of mobilization in Islamist movements has been profoundly influenced by the variations in the historic conditions under which Islamists entered the political arena.

I interrogate this notion of Islamist development from historical institutional theories in political science; a body of research that highlights the importance of particular institutions of a polity in structuring organizational choices and attitudes among competing political groups. Scholars working in this field have explored how the formation of institutions during crucial periods may set countries on *long-term* outcomes of political development that are not easily reversed (Collier and Collier, 1991; Putnam, 1994; Karl, 1997; Mahoney, 2001; Pierson, 2000; Kuhonta, 2004). Pierson (2000:251-257) argues that central to the causal argument of historical institutionalism are two models of institutional development. These models can be characterized by the concepts of "path dependence" – referring to relatively long periods of institutional stability – and "reproduction" in which dramatic changes take place in a short period of time of institutional crisis called "critical juncture".

The concept of path dependence is subject to many interpretations,[5] but the idea of Levi (1997:28) deserves particular attention to provide a map explaining how the logic of alternative outcomes will unfold within a particular path. According to Levi, path dependence should be understood as:

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[5] An early definition of path dependence was formulated by historians. William Sewell, for example, offered a loose definition of path dependence, as "what has happened at an earlier point will affect the possible outcomes of a sequence of events occurring at a later point in time" Sewell, 1996, pp. 262-63. Later generations defined path dependence with more conceptual rigor in order to underpin the nature of persistence and change in institutional development. It includes that institutions, once created, take "a life of their own" and "may generate social processes not intended, nor foreseen, by their creators" Pierson, 2000, p. 219, and as "kinds of settings that are more or less prone to positive feedback" Ibid, 2000, p. 221. Mahoney adds that a "contingent cause of a path can have a large consequence" Mahoney, 2000, p. 7, and that "outcomes at a critical juncture triggered feedback mechanisms that reinforce the recurrence of a particular pattern into the future" Pierson and Skocpol, 2002, p. 699.

"… once a country or region has started down a track, the costs of reversal are very high. There will be other choice points, but the entrenchments of certain institutional arrangements obstruct an easy reversal of the initial choice".

I argue that the initial conditions of Islamist organizational formation have tended to limit the scope of available options for solution choices in the struggle for an Islamic state. The formative moment of these organizations is of paramount importance, because it provides ideological bases and institutional foundations under which an alternative solution will be taken. "Critical junctures" thus are understood as a "distinctive moment in history in which an important institutional choice is made" (Mahoney, 2000:512). That is to say, the adopted strategies and programs of Islamist movements reproduce in certain ways and are understood as a mode of finding political solutions, even after the initial condition has vanished (Collin and Collin, 1991:31-34). As Pierson pointed out, "junctures are 'critical' because they place institutional arrangements on paths or trajectories, which are then very difficult to alter." (Pierson, 2004:135).[6]

Conceptualizing the development of Islamism in this framework entails the argument that acts of constructing a new mobilization strategy for an Islamic state are inherently acts of refining and reformulating the idea of an Islamic state. It is the contention of this study to explicate the dynamics of Islamist political mobilization in connection with the idea of an Islamic state through the heuristic model of path dependence. By looking at the initial sequence of Islamist formation and locating how

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[6] Several scholars in this tradition invoke a "branching tree" metaphor to capture the notion that institutional trajectories can diverge during critical junctures. See, Lipset and Rokkan, 1967; Verba, 1966; Levi, 1997; Karl, 1997.

conflicts arise, it is possible to explicate the role of political origins in shaping the type of outcomes in religious politics.

As described in the introductory chapter, patterns of Islamist transformation occurred in tandem with state development. Consequently, an exclusive use of a path dependence framework in explaining outcomes undermines the complex stories of change during the period of institutional stability.[7] A common criticism of historical institutional scholarship is that the path-juncture model of political development fails to adequately theorize about the choices that actors make. Indeed, historical institutional works often treat critical juncture periods as unpredictable moments, especially with regards to the highly-efficacious nature of choices in the process of decision making. There is also a strong epistemological assumption in historical institutionalism that once locked into place, institutions reproduce themselves. The theoretical proposition of history as a causal force has brought with it a consequence to expect political development to follow this reinforcing logic (Pierson, 2004:14). Thelen (2003:17), for example, recognized the problem with an analysis to explicate the moment during critical junctures. She noted that, "One of the central problems with critical juncture explanations is that they fail to highlight the mechanisms that keep institutions in place during non-crisis periods."[8]

Other criticisms explicate an imbalance in the treatment between legacies and times of fundamental changes (Capoccia, 2007:1-15). The overemphasis on the

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[7] Thelen, for instance, has argued that explanations that rely on critical junctures often overestimate the indeterminate nature of crisis periods and underestimate the ongoing changes that occur in non-crisis periods. Similarly, Pierson (2000) has given caution to the danger of explanations relying on critical junctures.

[8] According to Pierson, analysts invoking the path dependence perspective need to explain such endogenous incremental change, in part because the cumulative effect of such changes can have much broader repercussions.

centrality of legacies, as Thelen points out, has a tendency to hold "a rather deterministic view of institutional reproduction" (Thelen, 2003:211-12). Path dependence analysis has been depicted as having to "oversimplify and narrow what it means to say that an outcome persists" (Katznelson, 2003:292). Capoccoia (2007) reached a similar conclusion suggesting that research invoking comparative historical analysis must seriously take into account "a historical specification of when and how the goal-oriented actions make history" (Capoccia, 2007:14; also Katznelson, 2003:281).[9] Taking together the above criticism, historical institutionalism not only undervalues the role of critical junctures as a building block of the path dependence explanation, but also fails to illuminate historical narratives with a key dimension of politics, which is the contest over power.[10] Katznelson (2003:284) expresses a harsh critique by arguing that, if the critical juncture is about distinguishing moments of institutional change and that of institutional reproduction, an analyst using path dependence perspective should be able "to identify and delineate in sufficient ways the key actors, events, decisions, and their interconnections with one another as the important elements of critical juncture." And even then Katznelson stated:

> "the very character of critical juncture as relatively open times produced by concatenation of structural processes invite elucidations of the preferences and choices of the actors—grand to ordinary—placed inside such situation when the potentiality of alternatives explodes as previous constraints on belief and action erode" (Katznelson, 2003:272).

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[9] By using periodization of Islamist development, it is possible to follow what Katznelson suggests in resolving such a conceptual weakness. Katznelson argues, it is important to path dependence analysis "to identify and delineate in sufficient ways the key actors, events, decisions, and their interconnections with one another as the important elements of critical juncture" (Katznelson, 2003:284).

[10] For a persuasive critique on the issue of power, see Meadwell, "Institutionalism and Political Rationality," in Andrew Locuer, *New Institutionalism: Theory, History and Analysis,* Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 2004, pp. 80-89.

The framework of analysis adopted here, therefore, pivots upon a theoretical principle that specifies the time-sequence dynamics within the paths, which is vulnerable to historical contingency and unintended consequences. Such a framework echoes Douglas North's (1990) observation that path dependence is "a way to narrow conceptually the choice set and link decision making through time. It is not a story of inevitability in which the past neatly predicts the future." (North, 1990:98f)

My central claim is that historical moments that constitute a continuum of development of Islamism with respect to changes in mobilization strategies anchored upon instances of action and decision of key political actors in key moments steered Islamism toward a new political equilibrium. During that particular moment, I maintain, a return to previous strategies and programs of mobilization were no longer possible, although several options are present. Certain critical situations which are socially and politically troublesome have induced these political actors to be elevated to unprecedented importance during "settled times" and to uphold particular forms of solution over "unsettled times" (Swidler, 1991:278-284) between the existing state and the visions of the Islamic state.

The alternative outcomes of Islamism could then be seen from the vantage point of the unit analysis in question. In specific terms, for instance, some factors shaping the appearance of Islamic-*jihadist* organizations in Egypt throughout the 1970s and 1990s and the gradual conciliation between Islam and the secular state in Indonesia throughout the 1990s were historical alternatives to each other, which were predetermined by the action and decision of key figures in Islamist movements made in an earlier period during institutional fluidity. It is only by looking at the role of the social and political

actors, and attending more closely to the different institutional environments of the

state, that we can begin to unravel the varied patterns of change in Islamism, even when

political order proceeds with stability.

Figure: Path-Sequence Dynamics of Islamist Transformation

Institutional Status of
Islamic State   0   1   2   3
              -----------------[]----------------[]-----------------[]-----------------[]
Sequence of Events   a   b   c   d
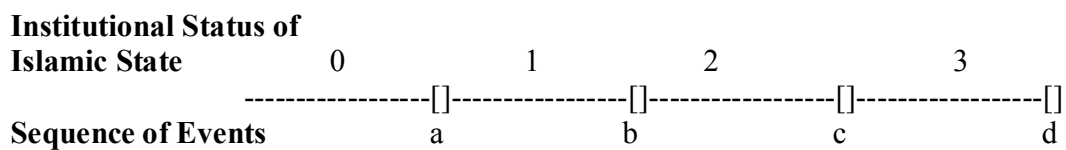
IS-0 : Formative moment of Islamism
         No explicit status of Islamic state

SE-a : Political processes with effects on the Islamist organizations:
        How Islamists enter the political arena

IS-1 : Islamic state ideology is formulated and interests of organizations are shaped

SE-b : Conflicts over alternative forms of state occurred → Political mobilization
        escalates

IS-2 : Struggle for solution: political actors redefine, renegotiate new agenda and
        strategy for Islamic state

SE-c : State responses: suppression, institutional incorporation, or continued exclusion

IS-3 : Transformation of Islamism

How, then, should we understand the Islamists' change even when politics is underway with institutional stability? Why did the Islamist movements transform themselves in the way they did? Answering these questions takes this dissertation beyond the initial interest in the role of historical forces to incorporate the importance of ideas in shaping specific outcomes of Islamist transformation. I argue that Islamists' initial assents and subsequent change in mobilization strategies must be analyzed through an analytical lens that attends to both institutional changes and the conceptual innovation of Islamic ideas within which specific outcomes of Islamism were embedded.

The problem remains that the historical institutional perspective—including its other variants in "new institutionalisms"—has a tendency to relegate the role of ideas to the sidelines of explanation on the political process (Berman, 1998, 14-24, and Hall, 1997). On the one hand, there is a tendency to perceive ideas as epiphenomenal. That is to say, expressions of ideas or ideologies in a political setting cannot be considered as genuine articulations of beliefs or understandings but as a strategic manipulation or position from which to pursue particular goals that are deemed to be more fundamental (Bates et all, 1998). Ideas are simply a consequence of material-institutional arrangements. On the other hand, ideas are frequently regarded as secondary to the more principle explanatory factors such as leadership or power (Kalyvas, 2001:251-55; Schurzman, 1970). In this framework, ideas work and operate merely as devices to untangle the knotty problems of political actors, where their definition, explanation and role are derivative of the actors' interests in which they are embedded.

Such accounts for the role of ideas undermined commonplace readings of historical development, in which ideas often play a prominent role in political change (Sewell, 1985; Smith, 1993; Skocpol, 1985; 1990; Berman, 1996). In response to this challenge, this study attempts to treat ideas as analytically consequential in the effort to account for actions of Islamist leaders thereby triggering particular outcomes of Islamist mobilization. I consider that both ideas and institutions are integral and endogenous elements in Islamist political behavior. By focusing on the very relationships among factors that and the mechanisms in which ideas and moments of political change match, as Lieberman (2002:698) points out, it is plausible to set the underlying conditions that generate outcomes in particular ways. Important to this proposition is, following Sewell's (1985) and Skocpol's (1985) analytical insights, to explicate the moments when a political idea finds persuasive articulation among actors whose institutional position gives them both motive and the opportunity to translate that idea into action. In other words, to explain patterns of change in Islamist mobilization one needs to consider both ideas and institutions as explanatory elements in which the linkage between change during institutional fluidity and purposive actions can be established.

3.3. The Institutional Contexts of Islamism

The concept of Islamic state that forms the foundation of Islamist movements in Egypt and Indonesia was invented in the early 20th century. This idea became a powerful imagination of a state alternative under the respective leadership of Hassan al Banna in Egypt and Muhammad Natsir in Indonesia. In the fifth congress of the Muslim Brothers, al Banna explicitly adopted the name of "Nizam al-Islamiyah" (Islamic

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order). Like wise, in polemics with his nationalist contemporary, Natsir retrospectively

stated his proposal for the creation of "Negara Islam" (Islamic state). Despite these

similarities, the two conceptions of Islamism have significant differences due in part to

the ideological and political environments in which they were born. Both al Banna and

Natsir agreed in principle that the political structure of the Islamic state was to be bound

by three principles: The Constitution of the state is based on Islam; Government

operates on the concept of consultation (*shura*); and the government is bound by the

teachings of Islam and the will of the people, thereby the application of *shari'ah* is a

central feature of the Islamic state.[11]

Nonetheless, specific manners in which these Islamist leaders envisioned their

political agenda varied. Such variations result in different understandings of how the

Islamic state would be accomplished. In this sense, the initial conditions of the types of

organization create long-term consequences for generating specific outcomes of

Islamist transformation. Here the comparison between Egyptian and Indonesian

Islamists involves a detailed look at Islamist-state relations in its institutional

dimension. This is because, as Przeworski (1996: xii) argued, "everywhere...are

determined by common destination, but not by common departure". The politics of

Islamist movements are also fundamentally shaped by the ongoing construction of

institutional structures of the state, and the ways in which resolutions over unsettled

issues between Islam and the state are imposed. I termed this process as "institutional

contexts". Over time, institutional development of the state dealing with religious

affairs provides new incentives, ramifications, and constraints of mobilization strategies

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[11] I will explore the discussion of Islamic state extensively in my empirical chapters. For the study of ideas on the Islamic state, see Mitchell, 1969; Malpern, 1958; Effendy, 1995; Samson, 1971.

adopted by Islamist movements. Drawing upon these differences, it can be conceived that although the "concept of Islamic state" is commonly embraced as universal by all Islamist political movements, my research shows, however, that it was highly contested both before and after National Revolutions.

This study thus examines patterns of the relationship between Islamists and the state in its institutional dimension. The two cases of political Islam developed in a context that is very much defined by the varying political structures of the state. As Islamist movements in both countries could not subsist and failed to achieve power after the Revolutions, participation in the state often led to escalated conflict between the state and the projects of the Islamic state. Moreover, the increasing authoritarian character of the state system was at times politically expedient for Muslim elites in which the struggle for an Islamic state also came to mean securing religious interests in state institutions.

Given the realities of power asymmetry, the question arises, how did actors in religious politics who perceived themselves to be less powerful achieve their goals? And what responses did the state offer to bring about a political solution? By including the power of state into my analysis, this dissertation sets out to understand how Islamist politics—even those that were fairly small and failed to hold national leadership—could interact with parts of state organizations and institutions, and bring about a change in the balance of power in state institutions involving the expansion of the role of religious actors in state politics.

The existing theories of state provide a rich, conceptual understanding of the nature of the state in the developing world and its political processes. But they pay

secondary or little attention to connecting the study of state power with the study of religious politics. In these theories, conceptualizations of the state are varied, such as soft-weak state (Myrdal, 1968), strong-weak duality of the state (Migdal, 1988; Ahmed, 1990; Kohli, 1989), overstating states (Ayubi, 1998), as well as the neo-patrimonial state (Waldner, 2001; Waterbury, 1990). In the two political systems of Egypt and Indonesia, the modern state and the particular sense of national identities are impositions of Western colonial legacies. Both polities represent a relatively weak state in relation to their societies. Describing Egypt under Nasser, Vitalis (1996:112-136) coins the notion that the Egyptian state lacks autonomous institutions endowed with certain capacities to pursue political, socio-economic, and cultural projects. Similarly, Lev (1971:11-19) promotes the idea of a weak state in relation to Sukarno's Indonesia, the weakness depending mainly on the sharpening ideological cleavages in the nation's politics and the poor level of state apparatus. Migdal (1988, 1-14) similarly relies on the idea of state capabilities to highlight that states in the Third World represent a duality. Although they are successful in penetrating their societies, they are incapable of bringing about goal-oriented change because as developing states they internalize the modernist values and norms of colonial legacies.[12] Since the state cannot respond adequately to various claims and demands that emerged from cultural and ideological diversities in a developing context, they promote conflicts with their societies, which are not easily resolved.

Such an approach of state-Islamist conflicts allows this study to specify the available mechanisms through which the state acts as autonomous actors to implement

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[12] In this regard, Migdal (1988:20-22) holds that the experiences and orientations of the elites are less spread out than the diverse sets of beliefs and collections of the larger social units.

their policies. Drawing upon state-Islamist conflicts in Egypt and Indonesia, it reveals that states vary in their ability to adopt strategies dealing with social forces. In the post-coup Egyptian state, subsequent regimes relied on coercive solutions to deal with religious politics and continued to exclude Islamist political organizations from participating in the state political system. Strategies of incorporation are taken in symbolic terms. In the early 1970s, Sadat adopted a position of conciliation between Islam and the state, partly aimed at consolidating his own power. Sadat moved, first, to make constitutional amendments to appropriate the Quran and the Prophetic traditions as principal sources for national legislation and, second, to invite leaders in the Brotherhood into his inner circles (Ibrahim, 1996:56-60). Meanwhile, in the post-colonial state of Indonesia, political regimes pursued strategies for incorporating religious aspirations in the state institutions. Over time, state elites considered political alternatives for making and maintaining ruling coalitions with the religious powers in order to consolidate their power. Periodic coalitions between the state and Indonesian Islamist elites may take symbolic forms, but institutional incorporations of the religious system remain substantial in signifying the shape and function of the state system, which eventually produces distinctive patterns of Islamist transformation.

In order to explain why states vary in their strategies to deal with their domestic challengers, one needs to move beyond state-in-society approaches and undertake a deeper examination of mezzo-level organizational and institutional mechanisms that establish important linkages between state actions and patterns of Islamist mobilization. It is from this point of departure, that this dissertation draws on the concept of "institutional endowments of the state" (Bunce, 1999) conducive to the distinctive

strategies of state actions, either to police their societies or to coerce them. By institutional endowments, I refer broadly to institutional capacities of a polity to institutionalize its society and implement its projects throughout the cultural and ideological differences it claims to govern (Bunce, 1999:112-117).

Modern states, as Bunce (1999:190) has noted, differ in their capacities to permeate their societies and implement their policies in accordance with their ideological projects. Some states are able to exhibit logistical techniques necessary to shape, regulate, and educate their citizens in social relations, but some others engaged within coercive methods in disciplining their societies. Such differences bear much on the legacies of state institutions they possess (Bunce, 1999:142-43). In this perspective, institutional variations of the state structures between Egypt and Indonesia embody the substantive choices and strategies of state regimes as well as leaders in Islamist movements to frame their religious interests in order to resolve conflicting projects between Islam and the state. Bunce points out that "institutions define interests and those interests play a key role in shaping political behaviour... so they shape identities" (Bunce, 1999:144).

The political structure of the Egyptian state was institutionally endowed with an elaborate network of Islamic-religious systems (Moustafa, 2001:201-219; Zeghal, 1999:11-14), from the centrally institutionalized al-Azhar and Diwan al-Ifta (Office of Religious Rulings) to local Islamic courts and schools. Such an institutional density of religious systems, on the one hand, provides state regimes with limited instruments with which to manage any reforms dealing with the religious agenda of Islamism. On the other hand, the institutionalized religious system with the complete role of the ulama

insinuates Islamist organizations into almost all levels of the religious agenda that they seek to reform. The result was a series of multilevel conflicts from the institutional arrangements that had locked Islamist politics in their religious interest articulations and their insistence to define the whole scale transformation of the state system. It was in this sense of institutional overlap that patterns of political mobilization of Islam were self-subversive within Egypt's state institutions.[13]

On the contrary, such an institutional density of religious system was relatively weak in Indonesia (Benda, 1971; Bolland, 1980). Such an open institutional space provides Indonesian political regimes a leeway of strategy to accommodate some elements of Islamic state agenda within the state structure. Over time, the regimes were able to define a gradual incorporation of religious interests of Islamist politics and incorporate them. In most instances, the expansion of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the creation of the Indonesian Council of Ulama in 1975 mirrored the long-term foundation of the declining religious interests in the Islamist politics. Transposed into institutional contexts, it is plausible to recall that institutional endowments of the state do not simply shape preferences of actors through structures of formal and informal rules, but also contribute to a larger discourse that delineates what leaders of the state and actors in Islamist movements may conceive as a feasible solution for an "Islamic state". The trajectories of Islamist transformation take shape as an outgrowth of the interaction between the characters of historical origins in the struggle for an Islamic state, alliances between state elites and the subordinate sectors in Islamist movements, and the state institutional development.

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[13] I adopted this frame explicitly from Valery Bunce, *Subversive Institutions: the Design and the Destruction of Socialism and the State,* London, UK-New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

I draw from Hall's (1992; 1996) institutional framework to enumerate three

levels of mechanisms in both Egyptian and Indonesian state institutions that intersect

with Islamist contentions that are important in shaping patterns of transformation. First,

there are the "macro-institutions that consist of basic features" (Hall, 1992:96) of the

political constitution and deal with the position of religion in the national state system.

The second level includes "basic organizational arrangements of state and society,

including the nature of the political system of the state" (Hall, 1992:97), in particular

the established institutions for legal-religious observances. The third level of institutions

includes "standard operating procedures, regulations, routines of public agencies and

organizations" (Hall, 1992:97). Therefore, it is important to note that this dissertation

does not intend to treat the threshold level of the mobilization processes as something

that happens in the highest levels of constitutional design, but might also be reached in

the mezzo-level of state institutions. Structural theories of Islamism tend to completely

discount this possibility. When it does mention state actions toward Islamist challenges,

it tends to isolate it as a "total conflict between Islam and the state" (Ayubi, 1991:41).

By examining the Islamist development in its full institutional contexts, various actors

in the state and Islamist movements previously ignored are brought to light.

Before any hypotheses are generated to highlight some findings of institutional

foundations of Islamist transformation, it is useful to recall three major trajectories of

Islamist transformation. A *comprehensive transformation* of political Islam (Indonesia

in the 1990s) constitutes the substantial incorporation of religious politics previously

demanded by leaders in Islamist movements into the state institutions and advanced by

the state elites. A *symbolic transformation* (Egypt during Sadat's consolidation and

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Indonesia in the early phase of independence) illustrates a cooptation by the state of leaders in Islamist movements to incorporate elements of the religious agenda, albeit in rhetorical terms, but these refurbished official incorporations are not translated into broader political actions or policies. Finally, a *precluded transformation* of Islamism is marked by continued exclusion of Islamist projects from state institutions, with a consequence that alternatives of an Islamic state remain confined in social forces without access to state power (the Brotherhood under Nasser, Sadat and Mubarak).

5. Purist and Reformist: A Typology of Islamist Formation

In order to evaluate my theoretical framework through a close inspection of actual cases, this section elaborates a clear analytical lens as to how to understand *what kind* organizational formations of Islamism were present in each case, at a given time. Its purpose is to provide a device for tracing cross-national variations of the origins of Islamist movements. This section develops an inductive typology to identify differences and similarities of historical conditions under which Islamism emerged in politics.

Major typology of Islamist movements is almost always structured around the distinction between moderates and radicals (Schwedler, 2001; Kalyvas, 2001; Wickham, 2003); or extremists and accommodationists (Awad, 2001; Abd al-Kotab, 2000; Ayoub, 2007). However, the analytical leverage provided by this distinction is ultimately limited because all political movements, Islamists are no exception, encompass moderate and radical divides. Students of political Islam frequently characterized Islamist political movements in Southeast Asia in general and Indonesia in particular as moderates, while in Egypt or in the Middle East are radicals. This

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assessment is quite misleading. In the aftermath of Indonesian independence and throughout the 1950s and 1960s, almost all organizations based on Islam were radical by their own standards (Feith, 1968; McVey, 1971). Moreover, such a distinction ignores critical aspects of the relationships between religious narratives adopted by leaders in Islamist movements and their strategies and actions. Such a typology also failed to account for how Islamism developed over time.

My findings from patterns of Islamist formation in the early 20th century Egypt and Indonesia reflect that the formation of modern Islamist organizations not only appealed to ideological principles over the creation of an Islamic state and the needs for application of Islamic law, they were also infused with distinctive political strategies and programs and derived from relatively divergent understandings of modernity, especially related to the image of nation-state, party organization, and the West. Building on this finding, I identify a typology of Islamist formation centered upon the distinction between "purist" (Egypt) and "pragmatic-reformist" (Indonesia) Islamist movements.

It bears in mind that this typology is an ideal type when one considers the contrasting patterns of Islamist mobilization. Purist and reformist political movements are thus only two of several possibilities of Islamist formation. However, they are particularly relevant for our case studies.[14] In both Egypt and Indonesia, political organizations based on Islam envision the establishment of an Islamic state, but each of these organizations have pursued different strategies and programs to achieve their goals, with Egyptian Islamists serving as purists, and Indonesian Islamists serving as

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[14] Variations in possible outcomes of this typology can be extended to identify types of Islamist movement in Indo-Pakistan or Turkey in which ethnicity and tribal loyalty become defining features of the formation of organized Islamism.

reformists. In both cases, the belief in moral principles of the Quran and the life of the Prophet to bind the Constitution of the state is central. But when they activate this ideology in certain institutional opportunities and constraints, especially dealing with an attempt to securing religious interests, such contrasting types of mobilization are difficult to dislodge. This dissertation seeks to highlight that institutional environments in both religion and politics in both countries established mediating structures, transforming similar ideological orientations into different patterns of mobilization.

5.1. Purist Islamism: Politics through Purification of Society

Michael Walzer's (1965) study on the Puritan saints and the origins of radical, religious politics in 16th century Europe can be regarded as among the earliest explorations on purist political movements. Walzer (1958:7-11) suggested that, as old social orders broke down and the state structures became weak, sect organizations and radical doctrines emerged. However, even though predictable ideological and organizational responses to the social order arise, they produce distinctive outcomes dependent upon historical situations.

According to Walzer, Calvinism is an ideology in which "a voluntary grouping of equals with a zealous commitment to engage in methodical and systematic struggle" (Walzer, 1958:13) is established in order to destroy the existing social order. Their members are called "saints": they need not be religious, but are any individuals forming voluntary association engaged in the purification of society as the basis for a revolutionary leap toward cataclysmic political order. It makes sense to apply this type of "revolutionary saints" to modern-organized political Islam such as the Brotherhood

because of their ideological and organizational similarities, despite their historical differences. Purist politics I define broadly as a type of political mobilization compelled for political transformation through the purification of society.

In Part 1 of my empirical chapters, I apply these purist political characters in the case of Egyptian Islamists by examining the ways in which their leaders approach politics. Using concepts such as "purity and danger," popularized in social theory by the British anthropologist Mary Douglas (1966), I shall argue that understanding what makes things 'unclean' or 'clean' in a society is the basis for understanding the innermost secrets of the social and moral order. Power is one of the sources of 'uncleanliness'. Aaron Wildavsky (1965:51-74) used this Durkheimian theory of society to account for the Goldwater phenomenon during the Republican Party Convention in the 1964 American elections.[15] Purists, Wildavsky contends, can be distinguished from politicians according to the way they approach political life. Important characteristics for purist politics include its emphasis on an internal criteria for decision-making based on what they believe "deep down inside", their rejection of compromise, their lack of orientation toward winning or attaining power and their inclination toward more principled goals. In practice, purist political organizations also stress style and purity of performance, which are described as integrity, consistency, and adherence to internal norms (Wildavsky, 1965:67).

In the same vein as Walzer, Wildavsky's (1990) study of the varieties of Church-abolitionist organizations in the US Civil War also provides illustrations of the

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[15] Barry Goldwater's popularity as demonstrated in the popular vote was known to be extremely low. However, he still won the nomination as presidential candidate for the Republican Party. The nomination of Goldwater in such a long established American two-party system has raised a puzzle. According to Wildavsky (1965:386-399), the key answer to this puzzle lies in the rise of purist-political factions among Republicans.

variety of political manifestations in American liberal ideologies. In dealing with the question of the abolition of slavery, some liberal civic associations exhibited purist-oriented behaviour in which the enforcement of cultural purity was central for their identity, while others held more pragmatic strategies to engage the solution over slavery through education, information and religious preaching (Wildavsky, 1990:201-216).

To broaden our comparison thusly, it is wrong to narrow purist political movements exclusively associated with a particular religious tradition. Purist politics must be situated within institutional contexts from which they arose. It constitutes social, political, and ideological phenomena that are characterized by maintaining utopian millenarian beliefs combined with concrete political action (Habsbown, 1971:4-5). Walzer's concept of "Puritan saints" thus can be extended into many cases that resonate with purist political characters, not only religious ones. Potential candidates that can be included in this type of movements would be French Jacobins and Leninist-Bolshevik revolutionaries (Goldberg, 1991:6).[16]

5.2. Reform-Oriented Islamism: Pragmatic-Politics with Principles.

In any political movement, the appearance of conflicts between purist strategies and other types of political mobilization reflect an uneasy formulation of how to maintain the integrity of a movement of political principles as well as to gain

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[16] A good example can be found in the history of the European Left. Two decades before World War I witnessed widespread doubts about the Marxist theory of the demise of capitalism. In this uncertain ideological situation, the Social Democratic parties faced the difficult choice of whether to follow the revolutionary road set out by Marx and Engels in *The Communist Manifesto* or to turn to a more "practical" program advocated by revisionist intellectuals such as Eduard Bernstein. Revolutionary socialism can be considered as purist Marxism, whereas revisionists or "reformists" consolidated themselves into pragmatist camps with the expectation "to uphold evolutionary transformation of the bourgeois order to a higher form of socialism." See, Berman, *The Primacy of Politics: Politics and the Making of Twentieth Century Europe,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. See also, Pzreworski and Sprague, 1986:7.

concessions from existing political conditions and constraints. Reformist Islamism thus represents an opposite pole of strategies and organizations attributed to purist political phenomena.

Drawing upon Lipset's (1981) study on working-class politics in Europe and America, the following characteristics of reformist political movements can be advanced. In terms of their attachment to different competing objectives, such as between maintaining principles and securing concessions, purists give priority to maintaining the principles of movement organization and ideology, and reformists tend to place a higher priority on securing concessions. It is a pragmatic-political strategy with principles that underscores the type of reformist Islamism.

Although hard to define, pragmatist politics look at political life quite differently from purists. Wildavsky (1965) points out that pragmatism is an approach to politics that emphasizes the importance of compromise and negotiation (Wildavsky, 1965; Knight and Johnson, 1996:69-91). Posner also notes that pragmatism "is an amorphous label" (Posner, 1990:7), but its principles can be identified. It involves a sense that political leadership is made in small steps rather than big leaps. It is concerned with conciliating opponents and broadening public support, believes that persuasion is more important than principled politics and shows a willingness to adopt any institutional forms in order to achieve substantial goals (Posner, 1990:16). Transposed into an institutional term in Islamism, pragmatist patterns of Islamist mobilization can be regarded as more open-minded about policies in the middle ground between their ideal and the institutional positions and constraints. It differs from the purists by attaching

relatively more value to policies outside the immediate vicinity of the organization's ideals

In Part 2 of my empirical chapters, I situate patterns of political mobilization of Indonesian Islamists using this institutional typology. The importance of colonial institutional settings with regards to moments of national awakenings facilitated the growing conditions that shaped reformist orientations in Islamist movements. The notion of pragmatic-political strategies are relevant to our case on Indonesia because of the relative weakness or absence of the institutionalization of the religious system in the late period of the Netherland Indies which served to reduce the salience of purist-political consciousness. Such institutional environments sharply differentiated Islamist movements in the archipelago from their Egyptian "Brothers". I contend, however, these two typologies of Islamist political mobilization are not mutually exclusive. Purist political movements may demonstrate pragmatic tendencies, and in certain periods reformist strategies may develop into purist tendencies depending on historical situations.

6. Conclusion

As this chapter on theory sought to explain an historical institutional framework, it offered several answers to the puzzling phenomena of the various alternative paths of the struggle for an Islamic state. It is the interaction between historical origins, institutional developments and political opportunities in which Islamist political actors drew their vision for an Islamist state. Such a theoretical proposition affords an opportunity to assess analytical frameworks most commonly employed in explaining

political Islam. Culturalists tend to interpret the emergence of Islamist political movements by focusing on the cultural tenets of Islam. Consequently, they fail to capture fundamental features of significant differences between historical and social profiles among the movements. Similarly, structural models of political Islam which focus on stable structural variables which shape patterns of this organized-politics also ignore the fundamental focal point under which Islamists seek to envision the creation of an Islamist state. The theoretical framework elaborated above reveals more illuminating insights with which to capture the Islamist phenomenon as to why the same ideology adopted by Islamists political movements can produce different strategies and programs in the struggle for an Islamic state.

To conclude, theoretical insights provided by historical institutionalism as an approach to politics lies in its ability to explain variations and irregularities in political outcomes. The institutional contexts of political mobilization in Islamist movements help specify the intersections between ideas, political structures and the preferences of actors that can initially unpack the puzzle of religious politics. In addition, although the visions of an Islamic state have always been appealing in Egypt as well as in Indonesia, the precise modes of expressing these ideas are undergoing continued transformation. Sensitive to historical causation and comparison, this dissertation intends to show that it is the process of construction, transformation, and politicization of religious doctrines that lie at the heart of the struggle for an Islamic state.

PART 1

ISLAMISM IN EGYPT

Chapter One

THE FORMATION OF THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD

"God is our goal, the Prophet our leader, the Qur'an our Constitution, jihad our
path, and dying for God's sake is our ultimate end"
—The Ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood.

1. Introduction

The historical institutional theoretical approach emphasizes the importance of

the particular institutions of a polity in structuring organizational choices and attitudes

among competing political groups. Drawing upon this theoretical perspective helps us

to understand how patterns of Islamist formation in Egypt were shaped by the

prevailing institutional environment. In particular, we are able to see that the

organizational form of the Society of Muslim Brothers (*Jama'at al-Ikhwan al

Muslimun*) constitutes a certain mobilization strategy that was greatly influenced by

three important factors present in Egyptian society at the time of its emergence: the

1924 abolition of the Islamic Caliphate, the strong appeal of Western-liberal thought

that resulted in attacks on the Islamic faith, and the continued British occupation of the

country. The Brotherhood was also greatly affected by the religious institutional

environment, because of the religious dimension to their identity – thus an

understanding of the Egyptian ulama and its links to the state is important to our

analysis. Finally, as a form of nationalist movement, the Brotherhood built its

organizational framework by promoting a national collective interest, one whose

success hinged upon accentuating national social and cultural issues.

In this chapter, I will describe the emergence of the Muslim Brotherhood and its

transition into a purist political movement; an organization—broadly defined—

mobilized its members with a strong sense for the defence of Islamic cultural purity. The chapter seeks to explain how the early pattern of conflicts over alternative visions of state formation for Egypt took shape, and how these affected the group's ideological and organizational choices. The purpose of this chapter is to test our first proposition that understanding the historical environment in which the Egyptian Islamists entered politics makes it possible to more clearly perceive the distinct path trod by this purist Islamist organization in its attempts at articulating and enacting an Islamic state alternative in modern Egypt.

2. Liberalism, Colonialism, and the Emergence of the Brotherhood

The political development of Egypt in the first half of the 20th century is in many respects a story of Egypt's struggle for independence. British domination of Egyptian national life had increased exponentially since their occupation of Egypt began in 1882. By 1906, growing levels of popular discontent with British rule led to a period of internal political and economic crisis that would not end until the coup of 1952. Historians of Egypt note that while the new emerging political parties were seeking to claim for themselves the mantle of 'defender of Egyptian sovereignty', they were simultaneously being wracked by internal divisions that prevented them from effectively handling the social and economic problems of the pre-independence period (Landau, 1954:51-54; Harris, 1964:92-97). Prolonged and seemingly intractable political and social turmoil in Egypt engendered searching national self-analysis, particularly among its political elite, its intellectuals and its ulama, as regards the sources of the country's degradation at the hands of European powers.

From this period of crisis, new social, religious, and political movements emerged in the early 20th century organized along two ideological lines: Islamic reformism and secularism. Both ideological camps felt that modernization of the Egyptian state was a social good, but they differed as to how it could best be achieved. Leaders of both ideological tendencies also felt that the Western constitutional system of governance could be a model of reform that would benefit Egypt, but they differed as regards how they should adopt the system and reconcile it with Islamic tradition. Understanding the roots of this conflict requires an exploration of how unfolding political events affected the long process of state reform in Ottoman Egypt. Therefore, my analysis will focus upon the political processes that formed a context for state reform, the reforms themselves, and the effects of all of these upon social groups in the country.

2.1. Egypt and the Adoption of the Liberal Constitution

The crisis of identity in early 20th century Egypt was the result of numerous factors linked to the process of modernization initiated a century earlier by Muhammad Ali, the Ottoman governor of semi-independent Egypt who came to power in 1803, and later continued by his successor, Khedive Ismail (1863-1879) (Harris, 1964:11-12; Ahmed, 1960:27). These two founders of modern Egypt had initiated far reaching social, economic, political and military reforms to modernize and industrialize the country along Western lines. Key elements of their program were to destroy the previously dominant leadership of the Mamluk dynasty, as well as to curtail the other major power center: the religious elite known as the ulama.

In the early years of Muhammad Ali's reign, the ulama enjoyed significant political influence due in large part to their crucial role in his rise to power. One of the most important channels for the ulama to excersice their influence was the religious establishment of al-Azhar.[1] This religious institution controlled all Islamic structures for education, religious courts, dissemination, and *fatwas* (a ruling on a point of Islamic law given by a recognized authority). Through this elaborated institutions for religioys system, the ulama enjoyed significant autonomy and relative independent of state financial support. No other authority was capable to exercise any form of control over them before Muhammad Ali (Crecelius, 1967:84). But from 1826 onwards, Muhammad Ali "brought the ulama to heel and took steps toward reforming religious institutions, especially al Azhar" (Moustafa, 2001). These reforms resulted in their major sources of wealth and power being brought under state control.

By the end of the 1850s, the state of Egypt controlled a significant chunk of land and property associated with "religiously endowed properties" (*awqaf*). More importantly, in 1857 Muhammad Ali reduced ulama control over educational institutions and law-making (Zaman, 2001; Harris, 1964:41-42). Although the ulama were to some degree able to set "the limits of reform" undertaken by the state, these two developments ultimately paved the way for major religious and political changes in modern Egypt, that is, the gradual decline of religious authorities in public life, and the introduction of Western-style educational institutions and legal codes (Fatah, 1998:7).

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[1] The institution of Al-Azhar is composed of a mosque, the university, the grand sheikh's offices (*mashiakhat al Azhar*), and a host of specialized centers for research, publication, dissemination, and international relations. Its foundation dated back to Fatimid dynasty in 15th century. During Ottoman Empire, al-Azhar was an autonomous institution but receives its funding from the government. The ulama of al-Azhar also consider themselves free to decide how best to use the money, protesting against any interference by the government in its spending, organization, or educational curricula. See, Daniel Crecelius, *Ulama and the State in Egypt*, PhD Dissertation, Princeton University, 1967.

The process of modernization thrown into motion by Muhammad Ali's reforms also prompted a political transformation in the country, and ultimately set the stage for a national awakening. It was this nascent sense of identity that powered the first nationalist revolution against colonialism in 1919, and that led to the formal withdrawal of Britain from Egypt in 1922. Modernization also helped bring about a dramatic rise in the number of Western-educated elites, who went on to play a vital role in Egypt's decision to adopt a liberal-democratic constitution after its independence in 1923.

Important social groups behind the call for the liberal constitution were Egypt's landed elite, British civil administrators, judges, and other new middle-class actors who had graduated from Western-style Egyptian schools (Rutherford, 2008:34; Lombardi, 2001:74). These forces helped to ensure that the Constitution of 1923 followed the spirit of European Enlightenment ideals, and reflected three clear principles of modern statecraft: the state being constrained by laws that define the purpose and scope of state power and through checks and balances on its constituent parts; the society being governed by the principle of "the rule of law"; and the state guaranteeing the rights of its citizens, including the protection of freedom of speech, assembly, participation, and religion (Lombardi, 2001:81-98). Importantly, the British-Ottoman agreement that followed the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after World War I officially kept Egypt a British colony. Thus the Ottoman Khedive (Muhammad Ali dynasty) "was now recognized as a king, and, under British military protection, headed a state based on a model from European constitutional monarchies" (Lombardi, 2001:119). Egypt continued to be governed in this fashion until the Free Officers' coup in 1952.

From its inception, the liberal constitution faced serious challenges. The problem of "rule of law" was an issue in Egypt following the British attempt to force the King to adopt a European code of law (Ziadeh, 1968:11, 14). Moreover the adoption of the new constitution outraged many Egyptians, who perceived the King as a British pawn due to his decision to adopt a code not based on Islamic law. The ulama reacted to the constitution by forcefully re-entering the political scene, defending their authority by insisting that the law of Egypt should be based on a codified body of Islamic jurisprudence, or *fiqh* (Crecelius, 1973:146-154; Marsot, 1968:267-280). But the previous decades' marginalization of the ulama, coupled with the expansion of Western education and ideas, meant that their message was relatively easy to ignore.[2] Indeed, the adoption of a liberal constitution was in effect the final blow to the ulama's previously prominent place in public affairs. As Skovegaard-Petersen pointed out, by the 1920s, the "traditional ulama and their guilds became a weak institution, largely without influence in the political affairs of Egypt" (Skovegaard-Petersen, 1997:101).

It was under these particular political circumstances, of a country being torn between its liberal constitution and one based on Islamic law that, the idea of the Islamization of the modern state through constitutional means began to circulate. And this idea produced an impetus for further elaboration of certain aspects of Islamic constitutional thought (Rutherford, 2000:73). But because the ulama were largely sidelined politically, the struggle for the institutionalization of Islamic law in the modern state came to be led by "modern emerging activists" (Goldberg, 1991: 17), who had been revered for their role in helping to modernize Egypt, but had been largely

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[2] Up until the last quarter of the 19th century, Egypt's political structures were largely Ottoman. Assumptions about the legitimate law based on Islamic jurisprudence and implemented under the jurisdiction of the ulama were not questioned.

uninvolved with the long-established religious institutions. As Abdo notes, in the 1930s, the "struggle for [an] Islamic state was gradually transformed into a genuinely popular cause under the inspiration of [this] new type of Muslim generation." (Abdo, 2001:60).

2.2. Secularism vs. Islamic Reformism

The struggle over Egypt's national identity before independence was largely a battle between Western-educated intellectuals who supported a secular identity for the country and those who encouraged Egyptians to emphasize their Islamic roots (Maghraoui, 2007:2-3). The Islamic reformists were led by Muslim thinkers such as Muhammad Abduh (1848-1905) and, later, Rashid Ridha (1868-1935).[3] These reformers advocated revitalizing Islam by adapting it to modernity. They held that Egyptians could find models of effective governance and a spirit of scientific progress by looking back to Islam's past glories, and argued that these could form the basis for selective borrowing from the West. Indeed, rather than being antithetical to progress, Islam "was a religion of science" (Hourani, 1970:131) that could provide the foundation for Egypt's transformation into a modern nation.

The prominent figures of Egyptian liberal intellectual thought were Western-oriented intellectuals who were either educated in the West or graduated from Western-style learning institutions in Egypt.[4] At the forefront of this political movement was the

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[3] Both thinkers were associated with the long-established religious institution and university, al Azhar, although much of their political thought did not represent this institution. For an extensive discussion of the thought of Abduh, Ridha and their disciples in the Arab world, see Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age,* London and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970, 130-160; 194; 222-225.

[4] The emerging Westernized intellectuals in Egypt were primarily fostered by Muhammad Ali's project of educational reform to send young Egyptians to study in Europe between 1820 and 1880. See, Jamal Muhammed Ahmed, *The Intellectual Origins of Egyptian Nationalism,* London: Oxford University Press, 1960, p. 9-10.

Wafd Party (Delegation Party). When the party was established in 1919, it was originally called *Hizb al Almani*, which means the Secular Party.[5] The liberals wanted to construct Egyptian national identity by emphasizing the country's secular roots, since they held that the country's salvation could only come from a decisive break with its Islamic – and for some, its Arab – past, through the adoption of European social and political values (Hourani, 1970:17).[6] These intellectuals typically supported the nationalist aim of complete independence from Britain, arguing that "only if Egypt were self-governing would it be possible for her to become a 'westernized' nation in the full sense – that is to say, to create a liberal, democratic political system and accept willingly the values of European culture" (Hourani, 1970: 324). To achieve this goal, the intellectuals aimed for a socio-cultural realignment of Egypt with the West, so as to emphasize their shared cultural and intellectual heritage.

The discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun in 1922 increased many Egyptians' sense of their nation's pre-Islamic character (Langhor, 2001:75-80). This sense was reinforced though the efforts of prominent advocates of secularism such as Salama Musa, Ali Abd Raziq, Taha Husayn and Muhammad Heikal. Husayn, for example, urged a redefinition of Egypt that gave primacy to the history and the symbols of Egypt's pre-Islamic, pre-Arab, Pharaonic identities. A proper reading of Egyptian history, as Husayn suggested in 1926, would reveal that "Egyptian civilization actually

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[5] The Wafd Party represents an urban, affluent, educated segment of Egyptian society which benefited from political and economic reforms in Egypt since the reign of Muhammad Ali. The name Wafd was used to refer to delegates named by the British for the negotiation of Egyptian independence after the National Revolution in 1919. See, Byanjar, *Party System in Modern Egypt: Wafd and Its Rivals,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976, pp. 67-69.

[6] Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation: 1930-1945,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 12. See also, Joel Beinin and Joe Stork, eds., *Political Islam: Essays from Middle East Report*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, p. 7.

shares a common Greek ancestry with Europe" (Hourani, 1970:326). He argued that modern Egypt is more properly situated, both culturally and intellectually, in the European "West" rather than in the Arab "East."[7]

The Euro-centric understanding of identity advocated by the liberal thinkers initially triumphed over Islamic reformism, particularly among urban, upper class intellectuals. In general, Egyptian elites tended to see traditional religion as an obstacle to modernization, and thus they argued that it should be reformed so as to decrease the influence of the ulama and religious institutions in the country's social and political life (Smith, 1973:382-284). Ahmad Luthfi al-Sayyid, a liberal who was an architect of Egypt's liberal constitution, once stated: "We have no choice but to discard the ideas and traditions that have led us to backwardness" (Rutherford, 2008:39). But the liberal construction of Egyptian identity failed to win support among the more traditional and less affluent members of society (Abdoo, 2001:14), which ultimately doomed it to failure.

The period after formal independence in 1923 was marked by competition and tension among the major power players in Egypt – the King, Great Britain, and the liberals – such that there was no stable political order. This political turmoil was echoed by significant economic challenges, exacerbated by the country's low level of industrialisation, its poor agricultural production, and very rapid population growth that outstripped economic growth. The inability of the constitutional government to deal

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[7] Quoted from Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, 330. It is important to note that the debate over national identity—whether to identify with East or West—propelled in some ways the cultural-social cleavage that still runs through Egyptian society, with some strata turning towards Islamic tradition, while others embracing a Western-style of modernity. See, Abdo, *No God, But God: Egypt and the Triumph of Islam,* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000, Introduction.

with the array of challenges decreased support for its liberal-secular ideology still more.[8]

This highly fluid environment facilitated the emergence of new elites and of new ideas, many of which had decidedly anti-secular, anti-liberal tendencies. Among the new organizations that resulted were the radical right wing nationalists *Misr al Fata* (Young Egypt), which was organized in 1930 and was modeled on the German and Italian fascists, as well as the Association of Muslim Youth (*Jama'at al-Shubban al Muslimun,*YMMA) in 1927. Indeed, between 1927 and 1935 around 100 organizations that focused on engendering the renaissance of Islam were established (Heyworth-Dune, 1950:106-111)[9], while leftist organizations oriented toward communism and socialism also became numerous. While all these organizations differed in terms of social bases of support and ultimate goals, they shared a common rejection of the liberal constitutional state and a belief in the "need for capable and energetic leadership for Egypt" (Harris, 1964:142).

2.3. The Emergence of the Muslim Brothers

It was at this time of political, economic and social tumult that a fairly small religious association, the Society of the Muslim Brothers, first emerged. Founded in Ismailia in 1928 by a schoolteacher, Hasan al-Banna (1906-1949), the Muslim Brotherhood was initially a social organization conceived of in religious terms as "a

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[8] Raymond William Baker, *Egypt's Uncertain Revolution under Nasser and Sadat,* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978, pp. 6-7.

[9] The word "Islam" has been used explicitly by those organizations as ideology, social-economic program, and group platform. Heyworth-Fubbe has detailed the Islamist-affiliated organizations and characterized them as "societies [intended] to bring the community back to the Shariah and away from Westernism." See, J. Heyworth-Dunne, *Religion and Political Trends in Modern Egypt,* Washington, D.C., 1950, p. 111.

living community … for religious and moral reform to [spread] the message of Islam" (al-Banna, 1945:11).[10] This focus emerged out of al-Banna's diagnosis of Egypt's problems as being rooted in increasing moral laxity and decreasing respect for tradition and religion. Hasan al-Banna noted "Egypt has witnessed widespread enthusiasm for Western secular culture among the upper and middle classes" (Mitchell, 1969: 215), and he argued that continued British occupation and foreign domination of the economy made the independence of Egypt meaningless. In Ismailia, this was symbolized by the conspicuously luxurious homes of the foreigners overlooking the 'miserable' homes of their workers. In 1929, al-Banna observed that Egyptians were practicing a "corrupted" faith, and that they were overwhelmed by "doubt and perplexity and tempted by apostasy (Mortimer, 1981: 252).[11]

The solution proposed by the MB focused upon Islam, and argued for a rapid transition to full independence and "the establishment of a government derived from Islamic constitutions" (al-Banna, 1945:17). The MB wanted to be "a revolutionary-soul making organization" (al-Banna, 1945:87), and offered distinctive economic and social initiatives that addressed the needs of Egyptians. And in increasing their own profile, they also increased the profile of Islam as an ideological alternative.

The religious and social activism of the MB was by all accounts a political manifestation of Islamic reformism introduced earlier, most notably by two prominent thinkers: Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Ridha. Abduh was a fervent nationalist who

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[10] Manfred Halpern, *The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa,* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958, p. 134. See also, Edward Mortimer, *Faith and Power:The Politics of Islam,* New York: Vintage, 1982, p. 252.
[11] Concern with Islamic faith has been mainly driven by the dramatic increase of Christian missionary activities through schooling and social services for Egyptian youth. See, for example, Harris, *Nationalism and Revolution: the Role of Muslim Brotherhood, 1928-1954*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964.

championed an end to colonialism and Western dominance, as well as a more dynamic understanding of the power of Islam to achieve these ends (Adams, 1933:72; also Hourani, 1983:84). Abduh's influence upon both al-Banna and contemporary Islamism derives from his belief in the need to re-open the "gates of *ijtihad*" (intellectual reform), that is, the individual critical assessment of Islamic sacred texts. In so doing, he launched a direct attack on the staid quietism of the learned ulama, who were loath to empower individuals to critically engage with the sacred texts because this would pose a serious threat to their authority. Indeed, there was relatively widespread opposition to what Nadav Safran has called Abduh's "re-interpretive initiative", with its "quest for expanded access to the privileged domain of interpretation" and analysis of Islam (Goldberg, 1991:11).[12] While Abduh's beliefs remained largely academic and thus beyond the reach of most Egyptians, al-Banna would later reiterate and popularize his notion of applying science and reason to the sacred scriptures. But in contrast to Abduh, al-Banna developed sophisticated understandings of the interpretation of these texts, and gave them a political edge by using them to criticize the degraded state of Egypt and the traditional role of the ulama, especially in terms of their reaction to modernity (Vatikiotis, 1981:197).

Al-Banna did not set out to make the MB into a mass political movement. Rather, the organization was originally conceived as a modest religious association that would undertake missionary activities, along with a limited but innovative set of social programs. A key part of these efforts was education aimed at promoting the "reform of hearts and minds", a method that was reminiscent of that used by Sufi sects (Zubaida,

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[12] Nadav Safran, *Egypt in Search of Political Community,* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961, p. 64.

1989:47). This reform sought "the purification of Muslim societies … through the return to the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet as the primary source for the establishment of an Islamic system of governance" (Mitchell, 1968:191). The other major thrust of al-Banna's efforts was social welfare work, which led to the establishment of a social welfare network that provided essential healthcare and other social services for the poor (Husaini, 1956:71-73). The MB also set about establishing an independent economic base for itself, creating enterprises in fields as diverse as weaving, transportation, and construction, and even took the progressive step of offering employees stock options in its companies (Vatikiotis, 1981:367).[13]

While other political and social organizations lost their vigor and cohesiveness during the economic downturn in the 1930s, the MB continued its rapid and disciplined growth. As part of what they promoted as "a model Islamic system" (Owen, 1991:123), the MB formed voluntary organizations that had an Islamic-religious character. These were built upon the principle of Islam's applicability to every sphere of life, and included schools, social clubs, Boy Scout organizations, newspapers, health clinics and mosques. By 1940, the MB had 500 branches with around one million active members, and by the time of the 1952 coup, the MB was the largest social organization in Egypt with an estimated 2000 branches and two million active members. As we will see in the next section, this successful community building through a religious association also caused the Brotherhood's leadership to see political opportunities for the group.

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[13] The extent of the MB's financial holdings, when disclosed in 1948, was surprisingly extensive. It included all social and economic programs ranging from schools to clinics, from mining concerns to publishing and insurance houses, among other profitable holdings. Even today, their economic clout remains impressive. On this point, see Carrie R. Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism, and Political Change in Egypt,* New York: Columbia University Press, 2002, pp. 90-97.

3. Hasan al-Banna and the Muslim Brotherhood

The foundation of the Society of the Muslim Brothers of Egypt is an excellent example of a religious – and later, political – organization coming into being after the national identity had already been constructed. As described above, in early 20th century Egypt, the "nation" was defined on the grounds of its ancient heritage, largely through the efforts of enlightened-secular intellectuals. Hence, the emergence and the systematic growth of an organization aimed at defending the Islamic faith can be interpreted as a direct response to the liberal-secular identity of Egypt's nation. Yet in spite of this, leaders of Islamist movements tend to point out that an interest in defending religion date back much further, to the "early history of Islam" (Binder, 1986:14; Yossef, 1983:68).

Having described the social and cultural environments of Egypt in the early 20th century, it is necessary to describe the MB's ideology in order to illustrate its purist characteristics. I will then outline the pertinent political events that caused the Brotherhood leadership to become increasingly involved in the Egyptian political process. Understanding the linkages between these two developments will help to illuminate why the MB gradually developed into a clearly religious organization in the course of their struggle for an Islamic state.

During the early phase of their development, the MB remained relatively vague regarding the specificities of their political goals. Some observers have even argued that in their early years, the Brotherhood was more like a mystical order than a political movement (Lia, 1998:37; Zubaida, 1998:11), with its organizational development being shaped by the personal character of its founders, particularly Hassan al-Banna and his

closest disciples, rather than by a well-articulated political vision (Voll, 1983:14; Ayoub, 2001:21).[14]

The most obvious program in the early phase of the MB was a missionary one. For example, in 1930, the MB leadership published the Qanun Nizam Asasi (Basic Constitution of Organization), which outlined the organization's five goals: precise interpretation of the Qur'an based on the original meaning while accommodating "the spirit of the age"; unification of Egypt and the Islamic world; strengthening Egyptian society through economic development; liberating all Arab countries from foreign presence; and pursuing world cooperation on freedom, human rights, and Islam.[15] No particularly political objectives were mentioned. Four basic programs were implemented to help to realize these goals: religious mission (*al-da'wa*), education (*al-tarbiya*), indoctrination (*al-tawjih*), and action (*al-amal*). As well, al-Banna frequently addressed other goals of the MB through additional preaching activities, statements and letters mobilizing members around the issue of banning all political parties, ending corruption of government, strengthening the rule of law and expanding the role of government in promoting public morality (Mitchell, 1968:41-44; see also, Rutherford, 2008:156-160).

Hasan al-Banna argued that Egypt suffered from two forms of colonialism, both of which were to be extirpated. The first one was "external" colonialism due to Britain's colonial presence in the country, while the second one was "internal" colonialism or the "domination of Egypt by Egyptian elites" and others who through their acts or

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[14] The role of al-Banna's personality in shaping the characteristics of the Muslim Brotherhood is patently clear. Al Banna memorized the Qur'an, worked as Imam and preacher for the village mosque, edited religious texts, and finally graduated in religion and Arabic studies from Darul Ulum, a relatively modern religious school, in 1927. He was a product of the sufi (mystical) order when he was young.

[15] Qanun al-Nizam al Asasi li Hay'at al Ikhwan al Muslimin, Cairo: Dal al Anshar, 1945.

omissions facilitated – whether knowingly or unknowingly – foreign domination of Egypt (Baker, 1978:8). Much like the Brotherhood's more radical progeny, al-Banna abhorred the very concept of political parties as "an inauthentic borrowing from irrelevant foreign models" (Harris, 1964:48). Wholesale, uncritical borrowing of Western political structures would relegate Egypt, al-Banna argued, "to an enduring plight of servitude to the West and an abiding self-alienation" (Mitchell, 1968: 188) from local alternatives to governance. In al-Banna's view, the liberal-constitutional party system in Egypt was a key instrument of foreign imperialism. This was because political parties replicated the fractured political and institutional structures of the European overlords, thereby blocking the implementation of the unitary system of government mandated by Islamic law.

Al-Banna called for the dismantling of borrowed secular institutions of government. In their place, the MB pushed for "an effort to re-institutionalize religious life for those whose commitment to the tradition and religion is still great, but who at the same time are already effectively touched by the forces of Westernization" (Mortimer, 1981:253). Hasan al-Banna posited the reestablishment of a "pure" Islamic system as the foundation for all social intercourse and as a definitive cure for society's afflictions. Only through the creation of a society based on the total application of Islam could Egypt (and, by extension, the Arab and Islamic worlds) emerge unscathed from its unavoidable encounters with modernity.[16] According to al-Banna, Egypt had to be

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[16] See, for example, William Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East,* Boulder: Westview Press, 1994, pp. 184-187. In this regard, Al Banna called for the reinstallation of Islamic law as the basis of governance, yet like other Muslim reformers, he attempted to reconcile contemporary technological advances with the Islamic precepts expounded centuries before. Therefore, he cautioned his followers that as "the *shari'a* was originally formulated to meet a specific set of historical circumstances," it "was thus a product of informed human reasoning" (p. 42) which, through careful interpretation would permit its adaptation and application to modern exigencies.

purified of the taint of the British and of the secularized political elite who had steered

Egypt into political and economic decline (al-Banna, 1956:31-33).

Later, at the end of 1930s, when the conflicts between the Brotherhood and

other political groups grew, al-Banna made explicit proposals intended as a clear

formulation of what he imagined as an Islamic state. He declared:

> … We want an "Islamic government" that will lead these people to the mosque
> and guide people through the mosque thereafter through guidance of Islam. For
> these reasons, we do not recognize any governmental system which is not
> founded on the basis of Islam or derived from it. We do not recognize these
> political parties, or these traditional forms which the infidels and the enemies of
> Islam have forced us to rule by and practice. We will seek to revive the Islamic
> system of rule with all its manifestation and form an Islamic state on the basis of
> this system (al-Banna, 1956:32).

Al-Banna's strong concern with the role of the state in promoting public

morality caused the MB's program to focus on how Quranic inspiration enters the daily

life of Muslims. Al-Banna perceived a widespread flagging of emotional commitment

to Islam, but expected a solution from the existing state leaders. In his sermon "Nazrat

fi Islah al-Nafs" (Remarks on Self-reform), al-Banna set out how reform over public

morality must start from individual, and then state leader with its striking central image

of electricity. In his view, "…Why did the verses [of the Qur'an] affect our minds in so

weak a fashion? Let me direct your attention to someone who creates electricity and

must feel the electric current. This effect will vary with the force of the current, and if it

is strong enough will put someone who comes into contact with it into the hospital and

if it is stronger yet will put him in the grave [he then discusses similar physical effects

on early converts to Islam] ... if the effect of Qur'an is not the same in us as it was in

our ancestors then we are like an electrician who has put insulation between himself and

the current so that he is not affected by it, and our task is to break down this insulation

so that we can feel the Noble Qur'an so that our hearts will be in communication with it

and we will taste its sweetness".[17] According to al-Banna, the solution was to focus

upon practical activities, with every Muslim playing a role in creating an Islamic society

by participating in the works of an Islamic organization.

4. Formative Stages in the Political Arena (1938-1949)

> "My Brothers, you are not a benevolent society, nor a political party, nor a local
> organization having limited purpose. Rather, you are a new soul in this nation to
> give it life by the path of the Quran; you are a new light which shines to destroy
> the darkness of materialism through knowing God… If you are accused of being
> revolutionaries, say, 'we are voice of right and for peace in which we dearly
> believe and of which we are proud"—Hassan al Banna, 1936.

Scholars have rarely discussed the Muslim Brotherhood without noting its

uniquely purist ideology and strategy. Theorists who privilege the role of al-Banna's

ideas or the framing strategy of the movement tend to highlight al-Banna's reaction to

British colonialism, as well as his deep concern with liberal-secular attacks on the

Islamic faith (Mitchell, 1968; Rais, 1982:24-31).

Historians and political scientists[18] are among the clearest and most emphatic

exponents of there being a strong link – so-called "frame resonance" – between the

glory of the Islamic past and an alternative ideology of state formation (Tilly et al,

2001:11). Halpern (1958) for instance analyzes myths of the Islamic state, which speak

of the lost glory of Islam, of an "Islamic utopia", which are evoked in a context of

revenge against Western-colonial oppressors. "It is the symbiotic nature of the

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[17] Hasan al-Banna "Nazrat fi islah al-Nafs," (Perspectives for Self Reform) in *Tazkirat al Hasan Al Banna,* Cairo: 1956, pp.37-38.

[18] Richard C. Mitchell (1968), and Malfred Halpern (1958) Christina Harris (1964).

relationship between the contemporary plight of Muslim politics and Islamic history",
Halpern argues (1958:134), "that has conspired to turn centuries of hate into action, that
has transformed chaotic rebellion, sometimes supine, other times blindly vengeful, into
organized political movement". The link between modern-state organization and
Islamic worldviews, as Halpern states, "is bolstered by their emphasis on ideological
purity" and by their dichotomous, Islam-versus-the West point of view (Halpern,
1958:138). Thus we see that Egyptians were mobilized by the Brotherhood around the
principle that the Islamic state must triumph over Western-secularism. The creation of a
dedicated Muslim society, which would act as a cleansing, purifying, and motivating
force, was focused upon by the Brotherhood as "a first step to revive the Islamic system
of rule with its manifestation for the application of *shari'a*" (Mitchell, 1968:118).

Involvement in politics was not officially a part of the strategy and program of
the Brotherhood until 1938, when Hasan al Banna unequivocally declared that "we
want an Islamic government" (Mitchell, 1968:111). This declaration marked the
Brotherhood's shift from being a purely socio-religious association to also having a
political component. The shift was the result of, first, after the move of the organization
from Isma'iliya to Cairo in 1933, the MB's deeper engagement with many social
problems of Egyptian society affected by a rapid process of urbanization; and, second,
the MB's reactions to the dramatic increase of the Jewish population in Palestine since
1935 (Rais, 1982:126).

As mentioned above, success in community building in major Egyptian towns,
the absence of ulama in response to moral problems during the liberal period, and the
growing level of anti-British sentiment all provided incentives for the MB leadership to

rise politically. Beginning in December 1936, in response to a rebellion in Palestine against British plans for a Jewish National Homeland, the MB embarked upon its first political venture: collecting funds, organizing rallies and speeches, putting up street barricades, and circulating pamphlets in support of anti-British-Zionist strikes. Then in 1939, in a speech delivered at the fifth Conference of the Brotherhood, al-Banna defined "[the Society] as political organization, but refrained from becoming directly involved in the murky quagmire of party politics" (Abdel-Malek, 1983:161; see also, Harris, 1964:135; Mitchell, 1968:213). This particular conference characterized the Brotherhood and its leadership as, among other things, political in nature.[19]

Major political changes took place in Egypt in 1936, with the death of King Fuad followed by the rise of Ali Mahir, a "strong man" who served as Prime Minister and as Chief of the Royal Cabinet for the young and inexperienced King Farouk. Also in that year, driven by the ongoing escalation of Jewish migration to British-Palestine, new ideas of Pan Arab politics were becoming more prominent.[20] Mahir called upon al-Banna to support a national program for pan-Arab integration, with an expectation that Egypt would take on a leadership role for the British Middle East (Calvert, 1993:110). Al-Banna sought to respond to this call while also promoting the Brotherhood's political goals of establishing an Islamic state. To this end, 1938 saw al-Banna making contact with notables in Jordan and Palestine. He then formed the MB organizational branches in Palestine, and mobilized his recruits by pointing to what he described as

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[19] Christina Harris, *Nationalism and Revolution in Egypt: The Role of the Muslim Brothers,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964).

[20] Pan-Arab political thinking was introduced by Abd Rahman Azzam in response to the increasing power of Britain in the Arab world after the France-British agreement over administration in the Middle East.

"threats from secularism and other religions, and the danger of Jews as agents of Western colonialism" (Harris, 1964:119). Through its paramilitary activities, aid committees, and missionary works, the Brotherhood's members and leaders played an important role in the Palestinian rebellion of 1937-1939.

The involvement in the struggle over Palestine increased the political profile and appeal of the MB and of al-Banna himself, while also giving the organization's leadership greater confidence in the viability of an Islamic state alternative through the purification of Egyptian society. At the same time, that involvement underpinned two important organizational developments within the Brotherhood: the first was the creation of paramilitary organizations, a task that al-Banna gave to the retired military officer Mahmud Labib. With the formation of these organizations, the military faction began to become increasingly dominant within the Brotherhood, a dominance that accelerated as political order began to break down in many Egyptian towns beginning in 1946 (Rutherforth, 2008:241).[21] The second organizational development that flowed from the Brotherhood's involvement in the struggle over Palestine was the crystallization of the idea of *jihad* as an appropriate method for advancing the Islamic state alternative (Huseini, 1959:140). Al-Banna's interpretation of that idea tended toward seeing it as an end in itself, as a cleansing or liberating force capable of driving out traditional ways of thought, and thereby allowing for new, revolutionary modes of behavior to take root. As al-Banna repeatedly stated, "jihad is our pathway to Islamic

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[21] Two competing factions within the Brotherhood developed in this period: the "secret apparatus" (SA) led by Ahmad Sanadi, favoured military confrontation with the government; and a less radical faction, led by Hasan al Hudeibi, called for education and preaching activities the would develop awareness among the public and gradually build a grassroots foundation for an Islamic state. There is no clear date when these two competing factions over strategies of the Muslim Brothers developed. Some sources mentioned the SA was built during the prolonged armed struggle over Palestine in 1939, but they grew during elections in 1941. But the existence of these two factions became widely known later during revolutionary Egypt in 1954. See, for example, Mitchell, 1968: pp. 61-69.

transformation, through which our organization becomes stronger"' (cited in Halpern, 1958: 105).[22]

It is this combination of the purist organizational frame, and hence religious characteristics of its leadership, with transformative projects of the movement that provides a starting point to explain the ambivalent nature of the MB in politics. As we shall see shortly, this ambivalence was reflected in the MB's campaign on public morality against liberalism and secularism in the 1940s. At its sixth Conference in 1941, the Brotherhood's leadership decided to participate in national elections. The decision coincided with the Wafd party taking control of the government with British help, a development that was soon followed by the new Wafd Prime Minister, Musthafa Nahhas, calling elections to fill the Chamber of Deputies. Thus the Brotherhood began fielding candidates, with al-Banna himself choosing Ismailia, the birthplace of the movement, as his constituency.

But in April 1942, a highly significant political development occurred, one that underlines the dynamic relationship between the MB's purist ideological orientation and its political aspirations: Nahhas, who was aware of al-Banna's ascendant popularity, asked him to have the MB halt its plans to run in the elections (Mitchell, 1968:27; Heyworth-Dunne, 1950:40). Al-Banna agreed, with two conditions: (1) freedom for the

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[22] Literally jihad means "holy war". Scholars believe that it was al-Banna's formulation of the jihad ideology within the political context of the Brotherhood's involvement in the declining trend of political order that most likely elevated militancy and the notion of martyrdom to the central virtues of the organization ethos. Historically jihad was not considered to be a duty incumbent on all believers. It usually referred to relations between the Muslim community and other communities rather than within the Muslim community itself. But in al Banna's ideas, jihad has become a critical concept for contemporary Egyptian Muslim activists and may well be the critical concept for them. In al Banna's terms, jihad is an obligatory act for Muslim. Al Banna said, "The important objects of jihad are . . .: an end to the domination of man over man and of man-made laws, the recognition of Allah's sovereignty alone, and the acceptance of the shari'ah as the only law." See, Hasan al Banna, *Min Khatabat Hasan al Banna*, (Cairo: n.p. 1956), 17.

movement to resume his organization activities with full-scale operations and (2)

promise of government action against the sale of alcohol and against prostitution.

Nahhas agreed and very shortly ordered restrictions on the sale of alcohol at certain

times and everyday during Ramadan. Similarly, he took steps to make prostitution

illegal, and immediately closed down many brothels, especially in Cairo (Mitchell,

1968:27). Success in this moral campaign elevated the status of the MB and enabled it

to be a more effective and better-organized religious movement in the political arena. It

also marked what al-Banna called the "period of Islamic victory", which led him –

starting in 1943 – to launch an intensive mobilization in both extra-parliamentary

activism and in attempting to influence electoral campaigns. But the responses of the

government and of the King to this development led to the creation of conditions that

caused the MB to turn increasingly into a purist political movement as opposed to a

mass-based political party.

In the Brotherhood's electoral campaign of 1945, an explicit platform of

developing "programs for Islamic government" (Mitchell, 1968:27) was launched. The

MB attacked on the passive role of the ulama in the struggle over public morality. The

increasingly-mobilized members of the Brotherhood also began an extensive operation

to support al-Banna and his five colleagues who were running for Parliament. As the

Brotherhood's Islamic appeal grew exponentially, the regime's strategies became more

conservative. The Sa'dist Party government of Ahmad Mahir Pasha, who came to

power in 1944 after the collapse of the Wafd, rigged the elections that led to the defeat

of al-Banna and of the other Brothers who were running. This electoral defeat

challenged the belief held by some of the MB's leaders that parliamentary politics was

the best strategy for promoting their whole Islamic agenda. It also helped to define their political appeal as a purely moral movement with tremendous symbolic power capable of pushing for the creation of an Islamic state (Harris, 1964:140-143). At the same time, the visible decline of the monarchy led some leaders of the Brotherhood to begin to question the political prioritization being given to promoting their Islamic state agenda within the existing secular state, rather than directly challenging that state.

The political instability that had plagued the country since the mid-1930s worsened as Egypt experienced frequent collapses of various constitutional governments between 1946 and 1949. This was as a direct result of increasing competition to gain both political and economic control over the country, between the different political parties, the King and the British (Rutherford, 2000:67; Rais, 1981:59). No regime seemed able to survive for longer than two years. Most compromised with the British, parties were becoming politically dependent on the King's authority while simultaneously becoming increasingly alienated from the wider population. This was particularly evident in the poorly conducted negotiations with the British over the administration of the Suez Canal in November 1946 by Ismail Sidqi's government. The agreement in the treaty gave rise to strong "anti-British" and "anti-government" sentiments amongst many Egyptians. As part of this, the MB called for a cultural boycott of everything English. At a public meeting in Cairo, al-Banna himself declared that "the Brothers will sponsor a mass collection of English language books to be consumed 'in the day of fire' throughout Egypt" (Mitchell, 1968:31). Such events ignited growing calls within the Brotherhood leadership to pursue a radical solution for the establishment of an Islamic state.

Beginning in early 1947, industrial strikes, student demonstrations, and public

meetings and agitation took place with greater frequency. This soon led to a campaign

of violence by the radical members of the Brotherhood, who assassinated several

leaders of political parties, as well as politicians and municipal authorities perceived as

being opponents of Islam. Although the violence of these killings presents an

incomplete picture of al-Banna's Islamic campaign, they are nonetheless a good

indicator of the level of frustration among some elements in the struggle for an Islamic

state. Moreover, the political crisis and social upheaval during the period of 1947-1949

were certainly perceived as an opportunity by some, and as one observer has noted, the

"leaders of these campaigns were undoubtedly the *Ikhwan* [the Brothers]," (Abdel-

Malik, 1968:27; see also, Vatikiotis, 1965:365).[23]

The campaign of violence and the strong opposition to Britain ensured that the

MB– along with the communists and other radical nationalist organizations – became a

target for the government's wrath. But these were also key factors in the MB's new

position in the Egyptian political arena, as "the only civilian organization that remained

as a strong and effective movement in opposition to the monarchy and in the struggle

for ending British rule" (Rutherford, 2008:97). Within this development, the struggle

for an independent Egypt in the period between 1947 and 1950 has come to be

associated with the struggle for an Islamic state. Indeed, subsequent political

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[23] A catalogue of assassinations attempted by the Brotherhood between 1945 and 1949 was compiled by Anouar Abdel-Malik in his *Egypt: the Military Society,* (New York: Random House, 1968). These include: the attempted assassination of Musthafa Nahhas (December 6, 1945; April 25, 1948; then November 1948); the assassination of Amin Osman (January 4, 1946); the dynamiting of the Metro film theatre (May 6, 1947); the assassination of the Deputy President of the Court of Appeal of Cairo, Ahmed Khandizar (March 22, 1948); the repeated bombing of Jewish businesses and residential quarters (between May and July, 1948); but above all the bombing of Haret el Yahud, the elite Jewish quarter in September 1948; the explosion in Galal Street (November 1948), and the discovery of a jeep loaded with explosives in Cairo (November 5, 1948). See also, Vatikiotis, 1969: 365.

developments such as Egypt's defeat in the 1948 war with Israel made al-Banna and his organization more determined. As Harris notes, "... the notion of independent Egypt before the Free Officers' coup in 1952 was gradually transformed into a popular struggle under the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood" (Harris, 1964:60).

The rise of the Nuqrasi-led Saadist liberal government to power in 1948 prompted new conflicts between the MB and the regime. In the beginning, Nuqrashi saw the Brotherhood as a potential ally for helping to establish order. But Egypt's defeat in Palestine destabilized the relationship between the government and political organizations in the country, by relatively weakening the former and increasing the strength of the latter. This produced a dilemma, since if the government showed strong support for the MB, it would effectively be empowering its strongest opponents. This was particularly true in light of the dramatic increase of the MB's legitimacy due to its campaign against Britain.

As Nuqrashi worked to consolidate his administration, a massive effort at mobilizing for an Islamic state was unleashed by the MB, including occasional acts of terrorism. Escalating riots and general social chaos left Nuqrashi with little option but to take drastic action, which he did by imposing Martial Law in May 1948, and dissolving the Brotherhood in September 1948. This policy was not a formal legislative act, but was rather an announcement by the government aimed at ensuring the rule of law, as well as restoring public order (Rais, 52; See also, Abdel-Malik, 1968:47).

The declaration of Martial Law led to a decline in mass protests, and by January 1949, public order was restored. In response to the Law, opposition political organizations split into two major camps: the Wafd agreed to work with the regime

since they were satisfied with the King's promises to include them in the new government, while the radicals, including the vast majority of the MB and of the communists, rejected the King's promises and demanded new elections. As a consequence of the split, those forces that continued to protest were relatively easily suppressed by the regime. But the radical factions of the MB, including some members who were part of al-Banna's leadership circle, responded to their group being dissolved by calling it an act against Islam. Three weeks after the dissolution, Prime Minister Nuqrashi was assassinated by a veterinary student who was also a member of the Muslim Brothers, Abdul Majid Hasan (Mitchell, 1968; Rais, 1981).

Abdul Hadi, who succeeded Nurashi, continued his predecessor's policy of violently suppressing the MB due to his concern at the challenge that the group represented to the government. But in spite of this, a sharp spike in violence between the MB and the government soon erupted, culminating in the February 1949 assassination of Hassan al-Banna. This assassination was, according to later investigations, "planned, or at least condoned, by the Prime Minister (with probable support from the palace)" (Harris, 1964:185). An attempt at retribution was not long in coming, with three members of the Brotherhood attempting to assassinate Abdul Hadi only a few weeks later. This failed assassination attempt encouraged the Prime Minister to increase security precautions by launching a new wave of arrests of Brotherhood members. Indeed, between 1949 and 1950, around 4000 members of the organization were arrested and brought to court.

The death of al-Banna and the subsequent political process in Egypt after 1949 marked an end to the MB's active participation in the political arena. In 1951, the

decree of dissolution of the Brotherhood was lifted by the court. Both the government and the MB accepted settlements to recognize the organization as a religious and social organization, based on the idea that returning the group to its previous status as an organization focusing on religious missionary activities without any direct involvement in politics would help to resolve the conflict.[24] As I will explore in the next chapter, the early success of the MB in politics and the purist characteristics of the organization had set in motion a particular pattern of conflict-resolution between the MB and orther political groups in resolving over national constitution.

5. Conclusion

Patterns of political mobilization for an Islamic state by modern organized Islamist movements in Egypt gravitated around symbols of Islamic purity. The Society of Muslim Brothers, which had originally been a social and religious organization, represented the first organizational manifestation of Islamic reformism in the struggle for an Islamic state. The Brotherhood's influence later expanded to the political arena as Egypt's political and socioeconomic crises deepened. They began to actively promote a particular model of an Islamic system, and to provide intellectual and strategic guidance for the nascent movement.

Successive political crises during the late 1930s and the 1940s led the MB to take on a political role. At this early stage, they had no formal organization for

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[24] The settlement was reached after long debate centered on the role of the Brotherhood in politics. In their agreement with the government, some restrictions were applied to the operation of Brotherhood activities. These included: no activities associated with military or paramilitary training; all papers and publications of the Brotherhood to be subject to state police inspection; no organization allowed to operate beyond religious and education activities. See Harris, 1968, *Nationalism and Revolution,* p.185.

participating in politics, and their activities revolved around a "general education" approach. And though they aspired to create a mass-based Islamic party system, the breakthrough to a more concrete pursuit of that goal only occurred in the early 1940s. This period was marked by a strategic reorientation of MB activities, in an effort to become a political organization. But a strong and ongoing inclination to struggle for moral purity in an increasingly secular and industrialized Egypt ultimately caused the MB to enter politics without being transformed into a political organization. In other words, religious characteristics of political interest to the MB leadership were shaped by the specific environment of 20th century Egypt, in which prolonged, unsolvable political crises and socioeconomic downturns under liberal-secular governments had occurred. This chapter has argued that such decisive moments are crucial sites of interaction between ideology and socio-political context, with each shaping the other. Although all political groups in Egypt faced the same new socio-political environment in the early 1940s, the effects on each organization were shaped by their respective ideological and organizational structures. Because the MB was one of the most purist and anti-reformist of them all, these tendencies continued to be manifested during the subsequent stages of the MB's rise in the Egyptian political arena.

These developments – the initial construction of the religious association, the goal of establishing an Islamic state, and the translation of the latter idea into political participation without being formally transformed into a political party – provide the background that shaped the patterns of conflict between the MB and the state in later development. Based on this framework, and using a counterfactual analytical framework, one can surmise that if the Brotherhood's leadership been elected in the

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1942 elections, and then served in the Chamber of Deputies, al-Banna's subsequent career as well as his organization's development could have been vastly different. As it was however, al-Banna was succumbed to remain outside the government, while his organization became further involved in politics, which made the MB increasingly problematic for every party leader who took office in the 1940s, and that also caused al-Banna's "Brothers" to gradually turn into a subversive organization.

Chapter Four

**REVOLUTION, STATE PERSECUTIONS,
AND THE *JIHADIST* ORGANIZATIONAL ALTERNATIVES**

"Had it not been much better that those seditious ministers, which were not perhaps 1000, had been all killed before they had preached? It had been, I confess, a great massacre; but the killing of 100,000 [in civil war] is a greater"
—Thomas Hobbes, *Behemoth,* 1668.

"If this Revolution is not allowed to proceed white, then we will make it red"
—Gamal Abdel Nasser, 1954.

1. Introduction

The previous chapter provided a general picture of the historical context of the

organizational formation of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB). It described how the early

success of a purist-religious mobilization faced a variety of challenges and dilemmas

in its moves toward making a direct entry into politics. Multiple opportunities arose

for the MB to build a concrete political organization in a crucial moment of its

development; however, these ended in failure. The moments of opportunity include,

first, al-Banna's decision to withdraw from municipal elections in 1942; and second,

the defeat of the MB candidates in the government-rigged elections of 1946. The

subsequent decline of the monarchy prompted the MB to engage in mass agitation and

armed mobilization rather than incorporating their Islamic state agenda into a party

structure with which to confront the opposing secular authorities.

This chapter presents a narrative of the MB's development after the July 1952

coup by the Free Officers, which initiated a project of political transformation through

a "revolution from above". My narrative will situate the MB within the context of this

change in regime, and will focus on how events surrounding the revolution have had

far reaching institutional consequences for state-Islamist relations, especially from 1954 onwards, beginning with the conflicts between the MB and the Free Officers over state alternatives, through the stabilization of Nasser's political system, and ending with the emergence of Islamist radicalism in the late 1970s.

I contend that the historical process of state formation in Egypt constituted a "critical juncture" whose most crucial aspect involved the expansion of the political opportunity structure, which led to an open struggle between competing groups regarding the constitutional order of the state, particularly between 1952 and 1956. The extent to which – and the manner in which – these conflicts were resolved is responsible for the ensuing patterns of Islamist mobilization. Three significant factors can be identified in terms of triggering the emergence of radical Islamist alternatives in Egypt: institutional exclusion of the Islamic state alternative from the constitutional blueprint after 1953, persecution and suppression of the Islamist opposition, and the state's use of long-established religious institutions in effectively undermining the vision of an Islamic state. Thus the rise of radical organizations should be looked at through an analytical frame that combines the relative power of key institutions (power that flows largely from institutional legacies and the effects of political changes), and the availability of particular resources for mobilization that take shape shortly before the occurrence of a critical juncture.

This chapter's main findings reflect the insight that radicalization of Islamism constitutes a long-term process of political change. Thus rather than following analyses that explain Islamist radicalization as an outcome of political economic factors, this study argues that shifts in Egypt's Islamism from the relative moderation

of the MB toward the emergence of radical organizations took place incrementally. These shifts began during the formative period of the MB-Free Officers conflict in 1954, and were consolidated through the second wave of crisis in 1965. Relying on narratives provided by Muslim activists in this period, I examine the resistance strategies pursued by the Islamist networks during periods of persecution and imprisonment, and the ways in which those strategies contributed to the radicalization of later generations of Islamists. What emerges is that the rise of *jihadist* organizations in the decades that followed was not a sudden explosion – as many have postulated – but was an outgrowth of complex interplays involving a variety of tensions, conflicts and conciliations between various Islamist generations. I am thus highlighting the role played by the "vibrant internal struggles" within the MB's leadership, which were intended in the beginning as a deliberate effort to circumvent the "leadership gap" of the organization (Zollner, 2009). From 1958 to 1966, mainly due to Nasser's persecution and repression, the MB leadership was unable to sustain its organizational activities, thus bringing its vast networks and social services to near collapse. In response, a resistance strategy evolved that set into motion a clear intensification process of purist ideologies as part of opposition strategy against Nasser's state. This process included the formulation of new religious and political ideas in prisons, new techniques for disseminating these ideas, and new mobilization strategies centered on underground activities.

2. Nasser's Regime and its Consequences for Islamist Activism

Egypt's historical process of modern state formation, which gave birth to a new, sovereign state, was greatly impacted by the "colonial departure" or "imperial collapse" (Herb, 1999:34; Owen, 1991:12). But this process did not begin with the July 1952 bloodless coup by middle-ranking military officers, called the Free Officers (*Al-Dhubbat al-Ahrar*). Instead, the configuration of power contestation immediately after the coup must be traced back to unresolved crises in politics and the economy from the time of the Egyptian monarchy, particularly the strong demand for change that followed the 1948 victory over Egypt by Israel (Herb, 1999:111-12). As early as January 1951, it was clear that the demand for change was quickly outpacing the potential for reform from within the system (Gordon, 1992:15-17).

Three revolutionary organizations were operating at this historic junction: the Muslim Brotherhood, the Free Officers Movement, and – in less organized form – the Communists (Harris, 1964)[1]. The first two organizations were widely seen as the most capable of bringing about real political change. Both harbored ill feelings toward the Egyptian regime and Britain, but differed in terms of their ultimate goals. The Muslim Brotherhood was a civilian organization that, at least until the early 1950s, remained the only mass-based opposition whose aim of establishing an Islamic state was well known. The Free Officers was an organization put together by 200 dissident military officers following the 1948 Arab-Israeli war (Gordon, 1992:19). This organization, disgruntled by power competition in the monarchy, especially between parties and the

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[1] The Communists were resurrected shortly after the lifting of the ban on them in 1951. By the time of the coup, it was difficult to estimate the strength of communist organizations in Egypt. See, Harris, *Nationalism and Revolution,* pp. 109-111.

King, vowed to carry out a *coup d'etat* (Batatu, 1983:1). Led by Gamal Abdel Nasser, Mohammad Najib, Anwar Sadat and other middle ranking officers, the Free Officers launched a bloodless coup on July 23rd, 1952 against King Farouk's regime. Within hours, Nasser and his comrades had put an abrupt end to two centuries of monarchic rule in Egypt.

One of the most significant challenges to the Free Officers after the coup came from the well-organized MB (Hennisbuch, 1988:15-16; Shamir, 1978:36-37). The most crucial aspect of the struggle between the two organizations involved differences over what form Egyptian society would take: Nasser's plan was to restructure Egyptian society and politics along socialist and 'secular' lines (Kassem, 2004:21), while the MB emphasized a state based on the implementation of *shari'a* in guiding the people.[2] Because of the importance of this struggle in shaping the MB, it is useful to briefly recount the political opportunity structure for the most politically active organizations prior to the July 1952 coup. Considering the strength of the MB relative to other organizations at the time, what factors led to them missing such a golden opportunity to take power in the face of the collapsing monarchy?

2.1. Political Opportunity and Dilemmas for the Brotherhood

Scholars continue to debate the Brotherhood's role in the 1952 coup (Harris, 1964; Permulter, 1979; see also, Malek, 1978). While earlier accounts pointed to indecisive involvement in the event due to the spontaneity of the Free Officers'

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[2] It must be noted, however, Nasser's ideology was initially not clear. His socialist and secular-leaning political system was adopted later when the conflict between Free Officers and the MB escalated.

initiative (Gordon, 1978; Malik, 1978; Harris, 1966; Mitchell, 1968), more recent studies have uncovered that the coup was in fact the result of a well planned, or at least coordinated, operation between the MB leadership and Nasser's Free Officers (Kassem, 2004; Brownlee, 2007; Ashour, 2009). These latter studies have also emphasized that it was the military factions of the MB that firmly opted for working with Nasser to help launch the coup (Rutherford, 2000:170; Ashour, 2009:88-90).

The fact that the MB did not take a lead role in pushing for revolutionary change in the crucial period of state decline may be surprising. King Farouk's legitimacy following the 1948 Arab-Israeli war was very low, particularly between November 1951 and March 1952 (Brownlee, 2006:42:43). This period was marked by riots and demonstrations in Cairo, Alexandria and Ismailiya. For instance, on January 25 and 26, 1952, as a reaction to deadly clashes between British and Egyptian soldiers, riots against the King and the British broke out in Cairo, eventually leaving a "greater part of the city's business district" in ruins (Gordon 1992: 27; Zaki 1995: 11). Such events offered the MB an opportunity to restore public order and thus to take an even more dominant position in the country, from which it could push that much harder for its vision of an Islamic state.

The opportunity in early 1952 was not only available to the MB. Indeed, a number of organizations, such as the Wafd, Motherland Party, Sa'adist Party, and a few other organizations, could have rushed to harness it. However, none of these organizations had enough resources to institute order and end the crisis (Aly and Wenner, 1982:339). At the same time, the country's unstable and often tumultuous situation meant that "… demand for restoring order was quickly accompanied by the

need for radical change in the political system" (Gordon, 1992:17; Vatikiotis, 1980:165). With the pressure from these twin forces increasing and the traditional opposition failing to advocate effectively on behalf of the public interest, options for non-revolutionary political change steadily dwindled. The anti-monarchy and anti-British riots in January 1952 served as a final blow to the declining constitutional monarchy. They also created an uncontrolled situation in which it seemed as if an active and powerful opposition movement like the MB– which had nation-wide cadres and which commanded paramilitary units – would be able to seize power and bring about revolutionary change in Egypt's political system. Why then did this not occur? To answer this puzzle, it is useful to take a step back and examine the MB's main organizational problem in the early 1950s, one that presented its leadership with a dilemma and that eventually led to a missed political opportunity to take the initiative in this critical moment of state crisis.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the late 1940s was a period of organizational anarchy for the MB. Organizational crackdowns and feuds over leadership after al-Banna's death led to internal rivalry and factionalism.[3] This took place most notably between the Guidance Bureau of the organization and its military units (the Secret Apparatus, or SA), and caused the Guidance Bureau to increasingly lose control over the SA, particularly while it was under the command of Salih al-Ashmawi (Shadi, 1981:21-24; Kamal, 1987). Consequently, when a more ambitious

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[3] Signs of factionalism and rivalry actually dated back to Al-Banna's era in the late 1930s. Although the organization was at the height of its political significance, there were already signs of discontent and internal friction in its ranks. For instance, tensions regarding a disagreement over the absolute power of the Supreme Guide in 1940 and again in 1946. See, Mitchell, *The Society,* pp. 52-55; Salah Shadi, *Safahat min al-Tarih: Hasad al-Umur,* Kwait: Sharikat al-Su'a li al-Nashr, 1981, pp. 32-34.

commander named Abd al-Rahman al-Sanadi took over as commander of the SA, the organization quickly established a high degree of executive autonomy (Mitchell, 1969:58).

After al-Banna's assassination in 1949, the MB became highly secretive. That year saw the leaders of internal factions, namely Salih al-Ashmawi, Abd al-Hakim Abidin, Abd al-Rahman al-Banna, and Shaykh Hasan al-Baquri, seem to put aside their differences in the interests of organizational unity.[4] In 1951, a new leader was selected: Hasan Ismail al-Hudaiby. The July 1952 change in the Egyptian political regime allowed the MB to reappear on the political scene, seemingly renewed. The overwhelming impression was of a united and harmonious organization capable of being a powerful political force.

But this view of the MB, while supported by most scholars focusing on the group, is inaccurate. I wish to argue that the image of organizational strength and unity in 1952 in fact hid the unresolved internal power struggle, which simmered until 1954. Moreover, the internal strife between the new Supreme Guide Hudaybi and the SA was only one aspect of a much larger struggle over influence, strategies, and political convictions within the MB, one that engulfed the leadership and the membership

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[4] For a detailed account of this period, see Abd al-Halim, *al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun,* 1991, pp. 422-24; Shadi, *Safahat min al-Tarikh*, 1980, pp. 79-80. Mitchell noted that Salih al-Ashmawi represented the extremist fraction of the Brotherhood and took leadership of the Brotherhood after al-Banna's death. Hasan al-Baquri was a trained scholar in Islamic theology who graduated from al-Azhar and was a member of the guidance council; he stood for the middle of the road tendency and was al-Ashmawi's major contender. Abd al-Rahman al-Banna was Hasan al-Banna's brother; he represented the conservative wing. Abd al-Hakim Abidin was the secretary general and al-Banna's brother-in-law; see Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, pp. 84–85.

(Rais, 1981:169-173; see also, Mitchell, 1968:118-122).[5] This struggle led to a clash

between those supporting continued Islamization of society as a route to peacefully

transforming the regime over time, and those who favored more revolutionary and

confrontational tactics that included violence.

The clash was underlined after Nasser's invitation to participate in the coup in

late March 1952, with the military factions opting to participate in the revolutionary

plan and the members of the Guidance Bureau opting to not participate (Ashour,

2008:90; Rais, 1980:165). The group's official position was dictated by Hudaybi, who

offered support to the Free Officers on the condition that the revolutionary

transformation under the upcoming regime be compatible with the MB's goals.[6] The

coup on July 23, 1952 was thus supported by some leaders in the MB.

Chief among the MB's concerns was the belief that Egypt needed to return to

stability before it could operate effectively as a democracy. The Free Officers

welcomed the group's support at first, but once Nasser had taken control of the

government and consolidated his regime, he turned on the Islamists with a vengeance.

Asserting his right to rule by referring to Arab nationalist and socialist ideals

(Rutherford, 2000; Dekmejian, 1995; Abed-Kotob, 1996), Nasser tried to undermine

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[5] Although al-Hudaybi repeatedly fended off challenges from within the organization, his
support was fading, particularly following the 1954 incident in which the Brotherhood was accused of
an assassination attempt on Nasser. The continuing internal dissent in the leadup to the incident was
thus a contributing factor in Nasser's decision to purge the whole structure of the Brotherhood,
including the SA-military organizations.

[6] The underlying concern for the Brotherhood leadership in response to Nasser's coup was that
the objective of this plan was considered "not for an Islamic cause". Meanwhile, Nasser's invitation
was well calculated: to stir up internal conflict and use it for his initial plan. From this point on, the
Brotherhood were forced to submit and to cooperate with the new military regime. See, Vatikiotis,
Nasser and his Generation, 1978:67-69.

the Islamists' challenges and subvert the notion of an Islamic state through the co-optation of the long-established institutions of the ulama.

2.2. *The Failure of an Islamic State*

The Free Officers' coup of July 1952 was distinguished by its lack of ideological content.[7] The character of the new military regime was thus shaped almost entirely by the leadership's pragmatic policy choices (Beattie, 1994:71; Gordon, 1992:54), particularly the desire to stay in power. The Free Officers were committed to several broad goals: achieving national independence from Britain, improving the country's military preparedness, reforming the political system to stamp out corruption and opportunism, and achieving a higher level of social justice (Ramadhan, 1968:127-130). These goals were largely compatible with the short-term plans of the MB, which included ending the British occupation, establishing a stable and clean political system, and narrowing the gap between the rich and the poor (Ramadhan, 1968:84). But the political processes aimed at constitutional reform led to a series of events that fed a relentless pattern of power competition between the Free Officers and other revolutionaries, particularly the MB.

The Free Officers' concern was that the impressive popularity of the Islamic opposition in the early months after the coup posed some degree of threat

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[7] This means that, compared to other organizations, the Free Officers had no clear guidance for its platform. A good illustration of this can be found in a statement made by one of the earliest members of the Free Officers, Mustafa Kamel Murad. In the early weeks after the coup, Murad criticized political parties, which cannot be expected to deliver significant change. As Murad put it, "The Wafd was too corrupt, other groups were too weak, and we had lost all faith in the parties and the King. We wanted a change. What kind of change we didn't know, but we wanted a big change." See, Kirk J. Beattie, *Egypt during the Nasser Years: Ideology, Politics, and Civil Society*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1994, p. 54.

to them.[8] Organized political Islam not only represented a powerful opposition that

advocated a clear ideology of the state, but also enjoyed better organization among the

masses, commanded effective armed units (that is, the SA), and had even established

cells in the military and police (Gordon, 1992: 44-45; Mitchell, 1968: 81-82). By early

1953, it had become clear to the Free Officers that unless the MB could be forced to

cooperate with the new military regime, a transition toward an Islamic state was

almost inevitable. It was this view that prompted the Free Officers to court the MB

while simultaneously assessing their threat to the new regime's developing secular

agenda.

Aware of its strength, the MB began to mobilize its supporters to press

the Free Officers for a prominent role in regime decision-making. On August 2,

the MB published a manifesto spelling out what it saw as the reforms that the regime

should pursue. It called for an attack on the corrupt political parties, promulgation of

a national constitution based on the Qur'an, nationalization of the Ahli Bank, outlawing of

interest, closing of the stock exchange, land reform, expansion of free education, and

free public health services (Beattie, 1993:73). One week later, the MB formally

asked for the role of "guardian" of the revolution.[9] It was expected that this role

would empower the Brotherhood to monitor the policies of the Free Officers.

Hudaybi explicitly said that his organization sought to "ensure that they [the Free

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[8] The Muslim Brotherhood's explicit role in politics prior to the coup was well acknowledged. On each of the key goals mentioned above, the Brotherhood had a longer and more impressive record of achievement than the Free Officers. It also had greater popularity, better organization among the masses and cells of supporters in the army and police. See Harris, 1964, p. 198-91; Mitchell, 1968, p. 211-214.

[9] In the agreement made by Nasser and the Brotherhood before the coup, it was said that the Brotherhood had sought this guardianship role. This posture led to some tension with the FO, especially after Nasser denied such an agreement. See Gordon, *Nasser's Blessed Movement,* 1992, p. 53. The Brotherhood again asked to take on a guardianship role when Hudaybi met with Nasser and other leaders in the Free Officers on July 30, 1952, one week after the coup.

Officers] were consistent with Islam … and [constantly asked for an] Islamic constitution to be the stated objectives of the government" (c.f. Rutherford, 2000:183; also Gordon, 1992:53).

As open conflict between the Free Officers and the other revolutionaries drew ever nearer, Nasser began to prepare to launch strikes against opposition forces. First, he took steps to attack the Communists.[10] In early August, Nasser dissolved the Communist organizations.[11] Throughout 1953, the regime worked to destroy two leading left-wing organizations, the Democratic Movement for National Liberation (DMNL) and the Egyptian Communist Party (ECP). Nasser's moves culminated in military trials for the Communists in July 1953 and September 1954. Efforts on the part of the DMNL to unite the Communist movement with other opposition groups in a unity front that would include the Wafd proved elusive. By the end of 1954, the Communists had been removed from Egypt's political scene.

The Free Officers' attempt to moderate the MB's demands for an Islamic constitution was more complex. It is useful, therefore, to describe the sequence of events that led to Nasser's showdown with the MB, as well as how the Free Officers

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[10] The destruction of the Communist movement in Egypt after 1952 is best illustrated by Gordon, 1992. This section relies on his chapter "The Great Deception" in Joel Gordon, *Nasser's Blessed Movement: Egypt's Free Officers and the July Revolution*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1992.

[11] It must be noted, however, that some factions in the Free Officers had contacts with the Communist movement prior to the coup. However, they feared Communist influence on campuses and in factories and the regime took strong measures against Communist affiliated organizations. The crucial point that sparked this first crisis can be seen in the strikes at Kafr al Dawwar, Cairo, around August 1952. Nasser initiated a sweep against organizations and figures associated with the Communists. These strikes, which ended up in bloodshed, mass arrests, and a military trial, underscored the mobilizing capabilities of the Communist organizations. See Gordon, *Nasser's Blessed Movement,* 1992, pp. 27-31; see also, El-Said, *The Rise of Communist Movement,* 1990, pp. 76-77.

overcame the challenge from their "most viable rival within the new regime" (Brownlee, 2007:24).

After taking over the government, the Free Officers expressed their commitment to maintaining a liberal constitution (Beattie, 1992:59).[12] Nasser himself claimed that the coup makers were acting in the name of the 1923 Constitution. At the same time, the Free Officers were intense critics of the Wafd, which they accused of having betrayed the national cause by approving of the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement on the Suez Canal in 1936 (Beattie, 1992:61-62).[13] This conviction caused the Free Officers to take their first steps against the party system in January 1953. All parties were banned indefinitely, their newspapers were closed, and their leaders were arrested and put on trial (Rutherford, 2000:185). Another decisive step taken by the Free Officers, one that was at odds with the liberal constitution, was land reform. This has been described as "the most decisive act" of the Free Officers, since it weakened the traditional landed elite that had supported the monarchy and helped the regime to reach out to the countryside through populist gestures at redistribution (Hudson 1977:239).

Nasser then announced a three-year "transition period", during which the military would rule under martial law. The Free Officers went on to transform their organization into the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), and formalized their own power with a temporary constitution that was promulgated in February of

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[12] It is estimated that of the 90 individuals at the core of the Free Officers in 1952, 60 supported the protection of the liberal constitution. Based on the interview by Beattie, their stated objective at the time of the coup was to purge the political system of corrupt politicians, and to undertake constitutional reform to ensure that the system could not be abused in the future. Beattie, 1992, p. 60.

[13] The Wafd also participated in the British-inspired war cabinet of 1942 that hurt the military, especially Nasser's generation.

1953. The regime briefly tolerated some opposition during March 1954, before a final

crackdown in April. This latter move stripped all opposition political leaders of

political rights, and led to the arrest of critical journalists, the dismissal of

university professors opposed to the regime, and the closing of university

campuses. By August 1954, Nasser had given up on the idea of ruling with the

assistance of civilians. After this point, all key cabinet posts and control of the

national state apparatus were assigned to the military (Gordon, 1992:134-36). All the

committees that Nasser had previously created were also now effectively dissolved.

It is within this environment of a power transition that the Free Officers sought to

resolve the issues surrounding the Islamic state alternative advocated by the MB, and more

fundamentally, the position of the MB *vis-a-vis* the regime. Due to the movement's

popularity and non-party activity, the MB was exempted from the 1953 ban on

political parties. However, Nasser rejected its request for veto power over legislation

(Gordon, 1992:134). In September 1953, the Free Officers entered into a power

sharing arrangement with the MB by offering it several ministerial posts.[14] The regime

also worked to include the MB within its new umbrella organization, the Liberation

Rally. But the MB leadership vigorously rejected this offer because they saw it as an

attempt to dilute their power within a larger, secular group (Rutherford, 2000:171).[15] The

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[14] Some members in the MB Guidance Bureau, including Sayyid Qutb, initially supported Nasser in the RCC. But there was no official statement that the MB joined the RCC. Harris (1964:110-114) noted that after the coup, Nasser offered a member of the MB the opportunity to serve as Minister of Endowments. Nasser also pardoned all MB members imprisoned for attacks on the pre-1952 regime.
[15] The Liberation Rally was designed by Nasser as a mass organization with an Islamic orientation. At least in the beginning, this organization incorporated the Brotherhood's nation-wide branches into the state apparatus. However, the MB leadership perceived that the regime's creation of this mass organization was an attempt to undermine their organization. It is for this reason that Hudaybi vigorously resisted. Interview with Mahdi Aqif, Cairo, December 28, 2007.

MB leadership decided not to participate in the Liberation Rally. Instead, they maintained

their focus on effecting an Islamic constitutional transformation for Egypt. As Hudaybi

stated in October 1953, "we [the Brotherhood] demand that the stipulation of the

Qur'an in the Constitution be put into operation immediately. If the goals of our

Revolution are for [an] Islamic cause, the Brotherhood will support this revolution and

become the backbone of the government." (*Revolution Command Council*, 1955:94).

With the new regime consistently rejecting the call for an Islamic constitution,

the MB began to demonstrate its power through street demonstrations in the closing

months of 1953.[16] By December 1953, the Free Officers were deeply worried about

the MB's consistent opposition. Meanwhile, the MB had also begun to realize that the

regime had no intention of governing according to Islamic principles, and moreover

seemed to be signaling that they would have only marginal power at best. Disillusion

thus grew between the two groups. After a particularly unruly demonstration at Cairo

University in January 1954, the Free Officers took the risky step of dissolving the MB.

The regime justified this by arguing that their Supreme Guide Hudaybi had attempted

to put the regime under his tutelage and spread anti-regime propaganda within the

armed forces (Mitchell, 1968:281; Harris, 1964).

This conflict was furthered by the MB's involvement in the contest over

leadership within the RCC. Thus while Nasser was attempting to effectively control

the military, he also moved to challenge Nagib and his authority. One of the most

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[16] As the power competition between political parties, the MB and Free Officers escalated, Nasser thus chose to reject the Islamists' demands. He realized that the MB was the most credible advocate of this form of constitutionalism. A decision to base the regime on Islam would have effectively strengthened the regime's best organized and most popular competitor for power. From this point, the relationship between Nasser and the MB began to deteriorate, and reached its end in 1954.

crucial issues triggering the conflict was Nagib's address to the Free Officers, in which he called for them to step down from their political and administrative positions and to replace themselves with a civilian government. From the MB's point of view, tensions with Nasser made it necessary to strengthen their organization by seeking out closer ties with Nagib, "whom the Brotherhood regarded as more committed to building an Islamic society than Nasser" (Gordon, 1992:118).[17] As the contest between Nasser and Nagib over the leadership of the RCC grew increasingly heated, the MB also organized rallies in support of Nagib (Brownlee, 2007:64)[18]. But it was the events of October 1954 that lead to the main showdown between the regime and the MB.

It began when Hudaybi wrote a public letter protesting the terms of the Suez evacuation agreement. The regime saw this act as an attempt to undercut its legitimacy and to destabilize it. At stake was the regime's hold on political power. A crisis "then mounted as the regime and the MB were again on a collision course" (Gordon, 1992:191). The decisive rupture between the Free Officers and the MB occurred shortly after the signing of the agreement, when a member of the latter organization attempted to assassinate Nasser in Alexandria.[19] The regime moved swiftly, banning the movement on October 29, 1954, and undertaking mass arrests. After trials in early 1955,

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[17] General Naguib, who was formally declared as President of the Egyptian Republic shortly after the coup, made a bid to convert his formal position into permanent influence over the Command Council of Revolution (CCR). See, Ramadan, *Abdel Nasr wa Azmat Marz,* 1978, pp. 143-47; p. 149.

[18] After becoming President, General Naguib was a leading advocate of the return to parliamentary rule. Nasser then deposed him and placed him under house arrest in 1954.

[19] Whether or not the assassination attempt was undertaken with the Brotherhood's approval or was orchestrated by the Nasser regime as a pretext for a crackdown has been a source of controversy. For a discussion of this point, see, Joel Gordon, *Nasser's Blessed Movement,* New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992, pp.179-181. It is nonetheless telling that "… the assailant [Mahmud 'Abd al-Latif] was a Brother," Gordon, 1992, p. 180.

approximately 7,000 MB members were jailed and Hudaybi was sentenced to hard labor for life. The Free Officers also took over the MB's network of social services. In January 1955, six MB leaders were executed, a huge number of activists fled Egypt, and the Brothers "disappeared from the Egyptian political map literally overnight" (Rubin, 1991:12).

The long struggle for constitutional reform also ended in late 1954, with both the former liberal constitution and an Islamic constitution being ruled out as organizing frameworks for the new Egyptian state. The decision to jettison the Islamic constitutional option was undoubtedly influenced by Nasser's realization that organizing the regime according to Islamic principles would have dramatically strengthened the MB, at a time when this organization was a serious contender for power. At the same time, the MB's unwavering support for an Islamic state organized according to *shari'a* law caused them to consistently reject compromise on this issue, for instance by acceding to some sort of power sharing arrangement.

2.3. Mobilizing the Ulama and Incorporating the Religious-Establishment

It was at this highly contentious moment that Nasser's struggle to define the revolution gradually took shape. In 1955, the Free Officers definitively committed to six objectives that would guide their revolution: the battle against imperialism, the abolition of feudalism, an end to monopolies and the domination of foreign capital, social justice, the strengthening of the military, and the establishment of a sound

democratic system.[20] Enacting these measures entailed a concerted effort, as Kassem points out, to expand state control of Egyptian society and "to restructure economic and social relations along socialist and 'secular' lines" (Kassem, 2004:21). It also entailed a concerted effort to build a populist, national basis of support. Indeed, two features would come to define post-1954 Egypt: an emphasis on a strong, centralized state, and the continuing struggle to cultivate popular support for military rule (Beattie, 1992:61; 64-65).

Nasser's centralization of political control went hand in hand with the effort to construct a new basis of state authority. After its success in centralizing power within the RCC, the Free Officers undertook a number of public speaking tours and used the mass media to communicate directly with the Egyptian people, thereby bypassing traditional political channels (Brownlee, 2007:91; Jankonski, 2002). The dissolution of parties and the subsequent development of a single mass political organization was a central part of Nasser's strategy. By removing the channels through which alternative political interests could be channeled, Nasser was able to control opposition groups.

This success enabled the Free Officers to strengthen their authority by creating a series of organizations, including the Liberation Rally (1953), the National Union (1956), and finally, the Arab Socialist Union (ASU, 1962). While

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[20] See, Gamal Abdel Nasser, *Tahrir al-Misr,* Cairo: Ministry of Information, 1954. It is interesting to note that, just like many authoritarian regimes of the period, Nasser only mentioned in passing a clear conception of governance. The six objectives appear to lean toward socialism, but even this tendency is played down by Nasser's most senior economic adviser, Aziz Sidqi: "I knew Nasser's economic thinking very well. He had two major ideas: develop the country as fast and as well as possible; and, do this in a way that brings social justice. How to do this? Nasser didn't know at all. He had no fixed ideological position—no ideological blueprint in mind". See, Beattie, 1992, p. 157.

the first two parties floundered, either for the lack of an agenda or due to problems

with timing, the ASU proved quite effective (Brownlee, 2007).[21] The underlying

purpose of these organizations was not to facilitate political participation, but was

rather a mechanism for building consent and support for the regime, as well as to

provide a link between the government and the people.

Such populist appeals and mass mobilization strategies were also reflected in

Nasser's approach to dealing with Islamist politics (Waterbury, 1983:314-315).[22]

While he adopted oppressive measures in dealing with the MB, Nasser strengthened

his legitimacy relative to Islamist challengers by building cooperation with – and also

by subordinating – the most important religious institution in the country: the ulama of

al-Azhar. As Moustafa (2001:12) points out, "relying on the authority of al-Azhar

ulama was the most effective means available for strengthening resources and power

in Nasser's political order" *vis-à-vis* Islamism.[23]

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[21] The success of ASU was largely due to the timing of its creation. By 1957, with the MB discredited and repressed, Nasser and his loyalist Free Officers had triumphed on all fronts. The ASU then served as a tool for maintaining social order and managing elite conflict, as well as a mechanism for mass mobilization. In this sense, the ASU's achievement was obvious: its organizational capacity was able to "resolve structural problems providing the president with a political base apart from his challengers" (Gordon, 1980:121), especially the MB and the nation-wide political party, the Wafd. Later in 1972, after Nasser's death, Sadat changed this organization into a political party, the National Democratic Party (NDP). The purpose of the party was to discredit Nasser's followers and – similarly to what Nasser had done – to build support among peasants, the urban middle class, bureaucrats, and business leaders. See, Hennisbuch, *Egytian Politics under Sadat*, Boulder:Westpoint, 1989, pp. 23-26.

[22] Very early on, the Free Officers sought to mobilize popular religious sentiments on behalf of the regime. In the Liberation Rally, the Free Officers worked with local religious leaders, preaching in various mosques at Friday prayers, and otherwise using religious actors to emphasize the compatibility of Islam with Nasser's socialist policies. See, for instance, Anwar Alam, *Religion and State: Egypt, Iran and Saudi Arabia*, Delhi: Gyan Sagar Publications, 1998, pp. 85-87.

[23] It must be noted, however, Nasser's move to appropriate Islam and the ulama in the efforts to stabilize his political order was not an accident. It had been part of the agenda since the Free Officers' early challenge against the demand for an Islamic constitution in 1952. Such an appropriation intensified in the absence of legitimating principles for the Revolution. As we will see, this culminated in 1961, in which Nasser took steps to introduce institutional reforms over al-Azhar. For more on this, see Jakob Skovgaard-Peterson, *Defining Islam for the Egyptian State: Muftis and Fatwas of the Dar al-Ifta,* New York: E.J. Brill Press, 1997, pp. 183-184.

Recalling our earlier proposition about the importance of institutional contexts for Islamist political mobilization, the Egyptian state was richly endowed with an elaborate network of Islamic-religious institutional systems (Moustafa, 2001; Zeghal, 1999). This context provided Nasser with the means to counter-balance the Islamic state alternative through the mobilization of the ulama – and indeed the wider Islamic religious establishment – in the service of the regime and its policies. This mobilization began with land reform. In the 1954 land reform law, Nasser placed "*waqf*" properties – land associated with religious endowments – under the control of a new government ministry. Since the religious institutions of the country, particularly al-Azhar, relied upon income from such land for their operations, the land reform law severely curtailed their autonomy by making them reliant upon the state for financial support. It also allowed the regime to distribute *waqf* resources in such a way as to "reward those who followed [its] lead ... and punish those who did not" (Moustafa, 2001:5).

The second action by Nasser in this vein came in 1957, with the abolishment of the *shari'a* courts. These courts, which had operated as a parallel court system since the 19th century, were made a part of the national judiciary (Cercelius, 1966:16).[24] While the stated objective of this reform was to unify a fragmented judiciary, it had the effect of bringing this alternate religious court system under the direct control of the state.

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[24] Previously, the court and educational systems in Egypt had been divided between the private, Islamic and national systems. Both the reforms of the *sharia* courts and of Al-Azhar were meant to end this separation, and unify both systems under the control of the state. See, Skovgaard-Petersen, *Defining Islam*, 1999, pp. 159-162.

The final action was Nasser's 1961 law that radically re-organized al-

Azhar University by placing it under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Religious

Endowments (Moustafa, 2001; Cerlecius, 1959:417-418). This re-organization

entailed the introduction of modern courses of learning into the university's

curriculum, as well as the establishment of entirely new faculties (including

medicine and engineering) into the university structure. The reforms also

transformed the administration of al-Azhar, and gave the president of Egypt the power

to appoint the Sheikh of al-Azhar. By introducing modern courses and faculties, and

by bringing the university under the control of a state bureaucracy, as Zeghal

noted, Nasser could bring the ulama to heel, without completely annihilating them"

(Zeghal, 1999:374). Admittedly these reforms were met with strong opposition from

conservatives, who resisted the governmental control being imposed on al-Azhar.

Nonetheless, between 1958 and 1964, Nasser undertook a series of actions to enact the

reforms. These included removing the ulama who were opposed to the reforms, and

replacing them with those that were more supportive of the regime and of its

programs (Cercelius, 1966:34-37).[25] Clearly therefore, the reforms were not only an

effort to modernize al-Azhar, but were also a bid "to control the religious sector" by

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[25] Tamir Moustafa (2001:5-6) noted that in implementing the reorganization law, Nasser was forced to appoint a series of temporary directors from the military. These directors of al-Azhar affairs were charged with removing all resistance to government control. From 1959 to 1963, the number of faculty members at al-Azhar dropped from 298 to 215. It can be assumed that the ulama who were removed were the most vocal in their opposition to government control. Between 1963 and 1970, the regime set up committees that were designed to purge al-Azhar of all faculty members who were unwilling to support the reform programs. See also, Daniel Cercelius, Al-Azhar in the Revolution, in *International Journal for Middle Eastern Studies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966, pp. 39-43.

transforming "…al-Azhar from *madrasa* [learning institution] to political vehicle" (Skovgaard-Petersen, 1999:186).[26]

The increasing control over Egyptian Islam's most influential institutions enabled Nasser to contain the mobilization toward an Islamic state. The nature of the reforms also showed that their underlying purpose was not simply to transform the religious sector in accordance with Nasser's state building project (Ismail, 1995; Rais, 1981:171-177), but also to capture the sector's resources, which were being used by the remnants of the MB to oppose the regime.

As was noted earlier, the years between 1954 and 1960 were a crucial period for the Free Officers in their search for the ideological content of the revolution. Within this context, the ideas of the Islamic state as introduced by al-Banna came to represent one pole of Egypt's Islamic aspirations, while the traditional ulama came to represent the other, regime-supported pole. As Crecelius has noted, prior to 1952, these two poles of religious politics competed over who were the "true defenders of Islam …and fought bitter pamphlet and verbal wars over their respective interpretations of Islam" (Crecelius, 1966:34). Indeed, the MB had long held that "[the ulama of] Al-Azhar had not been able to defend Islam or to convey an active and vital faith to the Egyptian masses" (Petersen, 1997:157). Al-Azhar therefore benefited from the MB's dissolution in 1954.

Situated in this institutional environment, Nasser increased his persecution of the MB while enlisting the ulama of al-Azhar in his campaign to adapt Islam to the

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[26] One of the most important consequences of the reform was that the government let the ulama of al-Azhar have ministerial posts dealing with religious affairs, and allowed them to set up institutions for charity and other endowed religious properties. See, Skovgaard-Petersen, *Defining Islam*, 1999, p. 184.

demands of the modern state. In so doing, the ability of Islamist groups to charge

Nasser's regime with working against the interests of an Islamic state was gradually

undermined (Ismail, 1995:45-48).

There are numerous examples of the regime's efforts to ally itself with al-

Azhar's ulama. For example, in a speech on the occasion of the signing of the Suez

evacuation agreement, Nasser championed al-Azhar's ulama as the historical

defenders of Islam against colonialism (Skovgaard-Petersen, 1999:161). He

proclaimed that the nation was again requesting that al-Azhar emphasize that "religion

is love, not terrorism and fanaticism" (Ahmad, 1991:329). The regime also used the

ulama to spread the idea that the MB's leaders were not operating in accordance with

Islamic ethics, and that they were instead using Islam for their own political ends

(Harris, 1964:211). Indeed, a sermon-like newspaper piece by an al-Azhar professor of

tafsir (Quranic exegesis) elucidated Islamic law's judgment on the Brothers: they were

"enemies of God" who resorted to "criminal methods that contradict the essence of the

Islamic message" (*Al Jumhuriya*, October 2, 1954).[27]

This religio-political strategy had one clear result, that is, it increased the

state's control of al-Azhar and of its institutions, which meant that religious

institutions had become a part of the bureaucracy and had thus been incorporated into

the state's institutional structure. Nasser believed that creating a state-controlled

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[27] Nasser's moves to control this influential Islamic institution can be seen in many of the contexts in which the regime used Islam to legitimize a secular political system. While invocations of Islam may or may not have been intended to be simply "lip service", they gradually situated Al-Azhar and ulama as key sources of ideological support for the regime. In 1962 for instance, the regime and the *shaykhs* at Al-Azhar were mainly arguing that Islam and socialism were compatible. But by the late 1960s Islam was being touted as the religion of socialism. An important spokesman for the regime's Socialist Union claimed: "There is no contradiction at all between Islam and socialism, because Islam since its origins has advocated socialism. Accordingly, socialism is one of the principles of Islam". See, Al-Mulhaq Al-Dini, *Al Jumhuriya*, No. 28, July 1, 1966, as cited in Haddad, 1982, p. 212.

monopoly on religion would be useful in defending his regime against Islamist

opponents. It was therefore important that the ulama not be eliminated, but rather that

they be subordinated to the regime. Nasser fostered this institutionalization of the

religious sector by gaining ever-greater control over mosques throughout the

country. Thus both public and private mosques were placed under the direct

supervision of the Ministry of Religious Endowments from 1957 onwards (Alam,

1998:86-87).

Accordingly, between 1957 and 1962, the government built or helped fund

upwards of 1,500 mosques, and virtually doubled the personnel levels in government

mosques (Berger, 1991:18; Bianchi, 1989:190; Alam, 1998:85). In the absence of a

clear alternative to the MB's insistence on an Islamic constitution, the Free Officers

eventually found it most useful to combine a modernist vision of development with a

vague appeal to religious tradition. Cultivating a modernist Islam, while

suppressing the radical Islamic alternatives through the appropriation of the

religious class, was thus an essential element in Nasser's regime-building strategy.

Ultimately, it is reasonable to say that far from being hostile to religion, Islam

became integrated into Nasser's state apparatus and provided it with ideological

support.[28]

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[28] It is interesting to note that Nasser's effort to mobilize Islam was also important in the
international arena. Nasser was concerned with the conservative monarchs of the Gulf region, who were
opposed to his socialist-Republican ideas. This rivalry became more serious in the early 1960s, when
the competition between Saudi Arabia and Egypt for regional leadership intensified. Saudi Arabia was
deeply troubled by Nasser's populist rhetoric, particularly since such rhetoric was spread through the
legitimating institution of Al-Azhar. Nasser, on the other hand, perceived Saudi Arabia as a bastion of
conservative reaction actively working against his interests. Both the Saudis and the Egyptians
subsequently sought to offset the other's influence in the region by setting up competing Islamic
institutions to promote their respective agendas. The culmination of this war of words was the outbreak
of war with Yemen in 1962 (where they each fought each other through the use of proxy armies?). See,

As a result of being integrated into the formal political system, the Islamists' articulation of the institutional structure of an Islamic state began to shift. Indeed, the cumulative effects of conflict with Nasser's regime even caused Islamist leaders to begin searching for ideological alternatives (Ashour, 2008:181-182). By the mid-1960s, following the government's severe persecutions of the MB, Islamists were fragmented into two broad camps: Those who preferred the moderate path through education and missionary works (Abed-Kotob, 1995:313), and those who favored "radical and revolutionary" strategies for Islamic transformation. This latter, radical strand included those who believed in "… overthrowing regimes that failed to fulfill their system of governance in accordance with the *shari'a*" (Scott, 2003). The former represented the official leadership of the MB, the latter were radical organizational fronts that throughout the 1970s developed an understanding that *jihad* (holy war) was the only feasible solution for securing the Islamic state interest.

I will discuss the moderate alternatives later in the next chapter. In what follows, I will explore the historical transition from state persecution of the MB to the development of *jihadist* politics by focusing on the role of ideas, institutions, and rising problems associated with the decline in Nasser's order after the 1967 war.

3. Transitions to Radical Politics

The stabilization of Nasser's political order was finally achieved through the promulgation of a new constitution in 1964. This was the successor to the June 23rd, 1956 constitution, which had guided Egyptians through the initial post-monarchy

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Malcolm Kerr, *The Arab Cold War: Gamal Abd Al-Nasir and His Rivals, 1958-1970,* New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.

period.[29] For the Free Officers, the 1964 Constitution outlined "the legitimating

principles for the Revolution" (Rutherford, 2008:51). And while its content was overly

influenced by the interest of the Free Officers in securing power, it also represented a

new formulation of the 1923 Constitution, one that provided for a greater

concentration of power in the office of the president, and which as a result enabled

Nasser to establish a highly centralized, statist regime that controlled the country's

politics, economy and society.

3.1. Settling Constitutional Order through Persecution

The 1964 Constitution's preamble – a series of statements beginning with the

phrase "We, the people of Egypt" – reminded Egyptians that they had "wrested [their]

rights to a life of freedom". This liberty was based on a "sacred belief in equality,

justice, and dignity." These principles, moreover, were derived from the "ideals

proclaimed by the masses", for which Egyptian martyrs had given their lives in the

struggle for national dignity. The result promised to be a society that "assured...

freedom of thought and worship in an atmosphere where there are no dictates save

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[29] The 1964 Constitution marked the final outcome of the ideological battle that had raged since 1952. In 1956 Egypt held a referendum to approve the "temporary" national constitution, followed by the declaration of the National Charter in 1962 as the ideological basis for the Revolution. The 1964 Constitution can be regarded as the formalization of the Charter. However, the 1964 constitution apparently represented a final effort to institutionalize the broad vision outlined by the regime to resolve the problem "… of legitimating principles [for the Revolution] that had been contested amongst political groups since July, 1952." See, Gordon, 1992, p. 173. On the development of Egypt's constitution, see also Rutherford, *Egypt after Mubarak*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008.

those of conscience and reason."[30] In the context of these rights, Article 3 of the

Constitution also established "Islam as the religion of the state". Importantly however,

there was no stipulation that the state had to implement Islamic law.

The Constitution defined Egypt as a "democratic republic" in which

sovereignty lay with the *umma* or nation, although it bears underlining that this term

was also officially translated as "people" (Gordon, 1992:101). This declaration of

sovereignty also mentioned that "liberty, security, safety, and equality of opportunity"

among the people are guaranteed (Articles 1; 2; 5). In a further elaboration of

legitimating principles reflecting democratic norms, the Constitution established the

equality of all Egyptians before the law, and endowed citizens with the rights of

freedom of opinion and expression (Articles 31 and 44). These principles were

subsequently bolstered with institutional arrangements such as those found in Articles

45 and 47, guaranteeing freedoms of the press, assembly, association, and an

independent judiciary (Article 175). Concurrent with the promulgation of this

document was Law 73/1956 – "On the Exercising of Political Rights" – that codified

the procedures for eligibility for the right to vote, as outlined in Article 61 of the

Constitution.

Regardless of the regime's motivations, the legitimating principles outlined in

this constitutional order were impressive. But those motivations did certainly shine

through particularly brightly in the greater concentration of power in the office of the

president (Articles 71 and 73). Consequently, the new constitutional order also

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[30] The Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt, 1964, Cairo: State Information Service, May 1970. The brief elaboration of the 1964 Constitution above is based on this document.

allowed Nasser to establish a highly centralized political regime that controlled society

both politically and economically (Rutherford, 1999: 197-199).[31]

An important feature of this control was the reinforcement of legal restrictions

on political participation. Throughout the 1960s, the core institutions of the new state

remained the armed forces, the newly expanded *mukhabarat* (state security services),

and a single organization, the ASU, through which all public participation was

channeled.[32] Associations for workers, professionals, and judges were prohibited.

They were replaced with a vast corporatist network of state-controlled unions and

professional associations (Bianchi, 1996; Baer, 1988:18). From 1960 onward –

especially after the enactment of the Emergency Bill in 1958 – the Free Officers

regime governed under an authoritarian system with repressive elements that were a

legacy of its formation. Thus the stabilization of Nasser's political system came to be

characterized not only by the successful promulgation of the new constitution, but also

by the institutionalization of a political structure that persecuted and repressed

opposition forces, particularly the MB.

The wave of persecution of the MB began in late 1954, following the

assassination attempt on Nasser. Shortly after the incident, the MB was rounded up in

what appeared to be a well-planned action. Thousands were sent to prison with or

without trial, and a number of leading figures were sentenced to death by military

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[31] Part of the reason for Nasser to arrive at such an arrangement was that the 1964 constitution was also a pragmatic response to internal and external challenges facing Egypt after the 1952 coup.

[32] From 1957 to 1960, the Free Officers began a gradual incorporation of its members, networks and clients to be transferred into the state. In 1962 Nasser completed this incorporation effort in which the Free Officers' network controlled the bureaucracy, military and other nation-wide political institutions. This network helped them to run the government. See, Springborg, 1987; Waterbury, 1991, pp. 34-36; Hennisbuch, 1988, pp. 17-20.

tribunals, while many others managed to leave Egypt for Jordan, Syria, countries in the Gulf, and most notably, Saudi Arabia (Gomaa, 1997; Rais, 1980:181-83). For the MB members who remained in Egypt, the years between 1955 and 1962 were characterized by "internal struggles for organizational survival" (Zollner, 2009:412; Hafez, 1987) in the form of underground activism, partly because of the state's close surveillance of its activities[33] and partly because of the execution or imprisonment of its leading figures. In using the term "underground activism", I am referring to a set of mobilization strategies relying on hidden resistance, informal networks, and covert leadership operating under the constraints of repressive institutions (Scott, 1993).

During the early stage of Nasser's persecution, the MB's strategy was meant as a deliberate effort to cope with its own lack of leadership. But this strategy also caused the group's leadership to turn inward and to engage in self-assessment, thereby setting into motion a process of intensification of their purist ideology and programs. This led to the growth of a radical political alternative in opposition to the secular state system that eventually culminated in the establishment of vanguard Islamist organizations in the 1970s. That is to say, during this period of persecution, certain properties of purist Islamic ideology introduced by al-Banna were reproduced and disseminated in response to the repressive, centralizing Nasser's secular state.

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[33] The *Mukhabarat* (state security services) was notorious in post-revolutionary Egypt for controlling public activities.

3.2. Leadership Gap and 'Organization 1965'

The leadership gap in the MB was almost exclusively the result of imprisonment, torture, and isolation carried out as part of Nasser's persecution of the group. Given these circumstances, it is not surprising that a clear ideology and set of guidelines for relations with the new state were not available. The problems flowing from this lack of new directives were compounded by the fact that Hudaybi, who was under house arrest from 1955 to 1964, had concentrated his efforts on writing official addresses and *rasail* (statements) between 1952 and 1954 that were concerned with the political developments flowing from years of relative *cooperation* with Nasser's regime (Zollner, 2009). The net result was that there were no long-term strategies, policies, or spiritual advice to provide guidance to the group after 1955 (Kepel, 1985:71).

In the absence of direct guidance, the MB came to increasingly rely upon Islamism's basic ideological tenets. These included the concepts of *nizam al-Islam* (a holistic Islamic system) and *harakat al-Islamiya* (Islamic activism), which had been propagated by the group's founder, Hasan al-Banna. They also included the ideas of one of the most famous ideologues from the 1930s, Abd al-Qadir Awda,[34] who emphasized that it is "a religious duty to actively oppose state control if its leadership is not subscribing to *shari'a*" (Islamic law) (Ramadhan, 1968:116; Kepel, 1985:80). Although Awda's interpretation was not new – in that it was grounded in classical Islamic theories of the state – it gained increased stature among the MB's members in the 1950s.

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[34] Abd al-Qadir Awda was the co-founder of the Brotherhood and one of the most influential ideologues after al-Banna. He was executed by Nasser's regime in 1955.

Beginning in 1958, there were efforts amongst the imprisoned members of the MB to address the leadership vacuum by making Sayyid Qutb a leading figure able to dispense spiritual advice. These efforts were relatively successful, and thus the early 1960s became a turning point within the MB's trajectory, in which signs of revival began to replace disillusionment (Ashour, 2008:171). There are three major indicators of this change: first, during this period, prisoners started to exchange and discuss ideas, especially related to opposition strategies. Second, a communications network was built up, linking prisoners, and notably Qutb, to members and leaders on the outside. Third, Nasser relaxed his tight grip on the Brotherhood and released members with shorter prison sentences (Ashour, 2008:121-126; see also, Ibrahim, 1990:132).

Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966) is perhaps the most important theorist of contemporary radical *jihadist* politics. But his relationship with political Islam, especially the MB, was a complex one. Qutb was a moderately liberal-leaning intellectual during the 1940s. A literary critic by training, he returned to Egypt from a year-long stay in the United States as a committed Islamist activist. His interest in joining the MB grew in the early 1950s, when he regularly contributed to their publications, including *al-Da'wah* (The Call) and *al-Muslimun* (the Muslims). In those publications, he harshly criticized the British occupation of Egypt, even calling for Muslims to form *Kata'ib al-Fida'* (Sacrifice Battalions) to fight against the British. Qutb's insightful works led to his being elevated to the rank of editor of the MB's publications, and beginning in 1951, he was elected as the Head of the Information Department. By the time of the 1952 Coup, Qutb was a member of the Guidance

Bureau.[35] It was during his time in the Bureau that Qutb supported Nasser's transformative ideas in the RCC, and he even once served as a leading adviser to the Free Officers' constitution committee (Ramadhan, 1968:76).

Qutb was among the MB leaders arrested in the first wave of persecution in 1954. He spent only eight months in prison until he was transferred to the Liman al-Turra prison hospital in 1956 due to ill health. It was in this prison hospital that Qutb was able to work on a number of projects. He continued his voluminous Qur'an commentary *Fi Zilal al-Qur'an* (Under the Shade of the Qur'an), revised his renowned book *al-Adalat al-Ijtima'i fi al-Islam* (Social Justice in Islam), and wrote short manuscripts (Shepard, 1989:35-36). Qutb's most important work, *Ma'alim fi al-Tariq* (Milestones), although published after his release, was most probably written during these prison years (Kepel, 1989:50). The prominence of Qutb's various works put him in a position of intellectual leadership within the organization, and made him central to Egypt's Islamist ideological transformation in the crucial years of Nasser's persecutions.

The move toward Islamist ideological transformation in Egypt was facilitated by prisoner networks, which played a crucial role in elaborating and disseminating Qutb's ideas. Qutb was able to communicate and exchange thoughts with other prisoners during his hospitalization in the Liman Tura prison (Kepel, 1989:28). This

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[35] There are many biographies of Sayyid Qutb. This brief biography was extracted from Musallam, *From Secularism to Jihad:* Westport: Praeger, 2005. See also, Charles Tripp, "The Political Vision of Sayyid Qutb, in Ali Rahmena ed., *Pioneer of Islamic Revival*, London: Zed Books, 1994, pp. 154-160; Ahmad Moussalli, *Radical Islamic Fundamentalism: The Ideological and Political Discourse of Sayyid Qutb.* Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1992; Yvonne Haddad, "Sayyid Qutb: Ideologue of Islamic Revival" in *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito, New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983, pp. 67-98, 73; Muhammad Hafiz Diyab, *Sayyid Qutb: Al-Khitab wa al-Idiyulujiyya,* Cairo: Dar al-Thaqafa al-Jadida, 1987, pp, 103-107.

enabled the prisoners to discuss and learn from Qutb's ideas, and upon their return to

their various "home" prisons, they further engaged with the ideas. Hudaybi, who held

the *de jure* leadership of the MB, definitely knew of these activities. Indeed, Qutb

admitted in his memoirs that the Brothers had begun to engage in discussion groups

and to propagate his new approach with approval from the *Murshid* (Ashour,

2008:92). According to Farid Abd al-Khaliq and Abd Azim Ramadan, as well as Qutb

himself, there was a steady diffusion of his ideas.[36] It is quite clear that by 1958,

Qutb's ideas had become the central discourse among the prisoners, which helped

infuse a new spirit within the organization. Moreover, Qutb's ideas were also

discussed outside the prison walls (al-Ghazali, 1989; Ramadhan, 1989:311; Khaliq,

2004), via the efforts of members who regularly visited Qutb in prison and then spread

his ideas amongst those outside prison.[37]

The wider dissemination of Qutb's ideas was greatly aided by the relaxation of

Nasser's persecution measures and the release of MB members with minor prison

sentences in 1957 and 1958 (Ramadhan, 1989; al-Ghazali, 1996:28). These important

political developments were a result of the rise in Nasser's popularity – largely due to

his victory in the 1956 Suez crisis and his appeal as a leader in the Third World –

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[36] Between 1950 and 1960, the younger members at Qanatir prison were particularly inspired by Qutb's ideas. They began to adopt (do you mean 'preach'?) the concept of *takfir* (accusation of unbelief) to other Muslims and government.

[37] Zaynab al-Ghazzali, leader of *al-Sayyidat al-Muslimat* (the Muslim Sisterhood), provided a detailed account of the MB's efforts to circumvent the leadership gap that eventually led to the close association with Qutb's ideas. She mentioned that a number of the Brothers and Sisters visited Qutb and other prisoners and discussed many issues with them. These people included Amina and Hamida Qutb (Qutb's sisters), Hudaybi's wife and his daughters Khalida, Aliyya, and Tahiyya, Amal al-Ashmawi. The discussions are a crucial link in understanding the spread of Qutb's ideas, and how they were adopted by the members of the MB outside prison. See, Zaynab al-Ghazali, *Ayyam min Hayati*, Cairo: Matba'a al-Adabiya, 1987, pp. 57-60.

which meant that the regime no longer considered the lower ranks of the MB to be a threat.

But an unintended consequence of the relaxation of Nasser's policy was the formation of a new group within the MB. The group, which was later to be named in court as "Nizam 1965" (Organization 1965), was largely composed of former prisoners – some of whom had been incarcerated in the aforementioned prison of Qanatir – as well as a large number of Brothers who had escaped the 1954 wave of arrests (Ashour, 2008:92; Kepel, 1989:20-23). The new group was in close contact with Qutb, who acted as their spiritual guide (Qutb, 1965:36). It soon became the most important forum for the new generation in the MB to disseminate and expand Qutb's political ideas about the strategy for Islamist opposition. Organization 1965 also became the launch pad for forms of underground activities that echoed the purist organizational strategy introduced by al-Banna (Dekmajian, 1992; Davis, 1996). Moreover, the group saw itself as the vanguard of Islamist activism called for by Qutb. As Haddad points out, "a member [of this group] needs to pass through several challenging stages of study, preaching, and persecution in order to reach their goal of establishing a just Islamic society" (Haddad, 1993:90; see also, Asour, 2008:92).

Arguably, the organizational development of the MB and the leadership role of Qutb in that development were not a secret to either Hudaybi, who remained the official Supreme Guide, or to other members in the organization (Zollner, 2009). Moreover, it seems that Hudaybi was aware of the ideological foundation of Organization 1965, and made no effort to disband the group or to object to Qutb's theories. The underlying reason for Hudaybi's decision was likely related to the fact

that while the Brotherhood experienced very tight political constraints under Nasser's regime, the activities of Organization 1965 and the expansion of Qutb's ideas became viable means for preventing the MB from entering into a terminal decline. This seems to underscore the preference given to the restoration of the organization by the MB's leadership. It is only in the late 1960s, when Organization 1965 organized an armed insurrection against the regime, that Hudayby began to take steps to denounce it. More accommodating principles regarding the Islamic state alternative were then adopted by Hudaybi's faction (Abed-Kotob, 1996). One of the most important efforts in this de-radicalizing initiative was the publication of a book entitled *Du'at la Qudhat* (Preachers, Not Judges), which went on to underpin the MB's long-term moderation. This marked the historic rupture within Egyptian Islamism that led to the official leadership distancing itself from the radicals.

The response of the regime to Organization 1965 was swift and brutal. The group was brought to court, with members and collaborators accused of planning to overthrow the state system. At the same time, another massive purge of Islamist activists and the MB was launched. This wave of persecution resulted in the execution of six leaders of the MB, including Sayyid Qutb, in mid-1966, as well as the imprisonment and torture of thousands of rank and file members (Rais, 1981:211-13; Beattie, 1997:79).[38]

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[38] According to the Brotherhood's estimates, the number of people detained by the regime in 1965 reached 20,000, of whom around 1,000 were brought before a military tribunal. It must be mentioned that it is unlikely that Organization 1965 (let alone the Brotherhood as a whole) had concrete plans for terrorist activities. There was no evidence that the group had the military capacity to organize a plot, even though both Qutb and the Brotherhood did admit that the group attempted to build an armed organization. Based on this assessment, after its consolidation in the early 1960s, the regime still perceived the Islamists as a serious threat to their power. See, Ashour, 2008:183; Mitchell, 1968:112-113; Kepel, 1989:117.

The fact that the group subscribed to a radical ideology and had a militant method in its struggle for an Islamic state was undeniable. For Organization 1965, the absolute character of state power was the prime target of criticism, while the state system under Nasser represented the epitome of un-Islamic conduct. Thus although Qutb's theories did not explicitly mention about Nasser and his regime, he charged 'secular regime' with the ultimate crime of apostasy. Furthermore, Qutb's total rejection of the existing political system implied that the use of violence in order to bring about an Islamic transformation was legitimate. Qutb's *Ma'alim fi al-Tariq* contained an ideological commitment that said that "…violent struggle for an Islamic state is legitimate" (Omar, 2007:612), and that Nizam 1965 constitutes an organizational model for the *jihadist* struggle in Egypt.

Since Qutb's message was central to the MB's internal struggle during these crucial years, an outline of his religious and political ideas is useful. My analytical goal in the next section is to explicate the role of ideas in underpinning Egypt's Islamist changes.

3.3. From al-Banna to Qutb: a Reproduction of Purist Islamism

Many scholars have tended to emphasize the psychological experience of imprisonment and torture in interpreting Qutb's ideological development. It is not difficult to see how his prolonged torture and incarceration might have convinced him that the state-system – and particularly Nasser's state – was evil (Ramadhan, 1989:119-120; Ashour, 2008:169-170). But it is important to emphasize that Qutb's

ideas on society, politics and governance are firmly grounded in purist Islamic ideology, albeit an extreme form of it, and that they are related to al-Banna's own ideas (Cane, 1995:205; Goldberg, 1991:14-16).[39] The two works that are primarily responsible for the perception of Qutb as a radical Islamist thinker are *Under the Shade* and *Milestones*, which are in essence a concrete elaboration of al-Banna's strategy and program for an Islamic state through the purification of society. But while al-Banna was the product of the 19th century "ancient regime" and the British colonial state, Qutb focused far more on Nasser's nationalist state (Cane, 1995:203; Mousalli, 1994:112; Ismail, 1995:48).[40]

Qutb's understandings of community and agency were profoundly conditioned by the experience of witnessing a powerful, absolutist and secular state "… intrude into society as the colonial regime had never been capable of doing" (Mousalli, 1993:37). Qutb evoked evil as an active and insidious force identified as *taghut*, by which he meant "deception that cannot endure the mere existence of truth . . . for even if truth wished to live in isolation from deception – leaving victory to the decision of God – deception cannot accept this situation" (Qutb, 1974:vol. 3, 1306; See also, Makin, 1999:61).

Building upon these religious themes, Qutb sought to describe human political power by conflating the words: *taghut* and *tughyan*. *Tughyan* has to do with

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[39] For a comparative analysis of Qutb's and al-Banna's political thought, see, Olivier Cane, "From Banna to Qutb to 'Qutbism': The Radicalization of Fundamentalist Thought under Three Regimes," in Shiman Shamir, ed., *Egypt from Monarchy to Republic*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1995, pp. 201-210.

[40] Qutb's ideas were also largely influenced by modern Islamist interpretative literature. This included Pakistani thinker Maududi's concept of *hakimiyat Allah* ("absolute" sovereignty of God). Maududi also mentioned the binary distinction between *jahiliya* (ignorance) and Divinely-ordained political order. Two writers from South Asia, Abul A'la al-Maududi and Abul Hasan al-Nadwi, were among those to reformulate a set of ideas with regards to an Islamic state. See, Haddad, 1994.

overstepping boundaries (including "going beyond disbelief"), whereas *taghut* is associated with "that which is worshipped other than God" (Qutb, 1974: 1307). Here the notion of a modern Pharaoh that emerged during the Islam-liberal debate in the 1920s reappeared as a fundamental theme in Qutb's interpretation of the penetration of Nasser's regime into Egyptian society. Qutb argued that the arbitrary power of the state symbolized by Pharaoh could be conflated with Nasser's absolutist regime. Underlying Qutb's political ideas was a conviction that the ordering of human affairs is the exclusive domain of God, and that "all other forms of human governance, as the source of authority and commands, are therefore equal to *shirk* (polytheism)" (Kepel, 2000:87).

Effectively, Qutb drew upon al-Banna's ideas to envisage a far more intolerant, sophisticated, and exclusivist Islamic state. There are three main themes within Qutb's ideas that were influential in shaping the organizational imperatives of radical Islamist groups in the 1970s. The first is the concept of *jahiliya*, which refers to the immoral, polytheist society of pre-Islamic Arabia, and which Qutb interpreted to also describe a state of being (Mousalli, 1993:76). According to Qutb, any individual, group or society that did not live according to Islam based on the *shari'a* was living in *jahiliya*. This included those citizens of Muslim countries who were not living according to *shari'a*'s tenets. Qutb argued that *jahiliya* was "a destructive and corruptive force intent on eradicating the true Islamic path" (Qutb, *Ma'alim*, 1993:23).

Second, Qutb characterized the world as being polarized into *dar al-harb* (house of war), which was every part of the world that was non-Islamic, and *dar al-Islam* (house of Islam), which was the Islamic world. He argued that the *dar al-harb*

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was to be fought against and destroyed, and then replaced with a Muslim state based on the *shari'a*.

In his notions of *al-jahiliya* and *dar al-harb*, Qutb was highlighting the universalism of Islam, which made it well-equipped to take over all other societies. Echoing al-Banna's vision, Qutb proclaimed Islam to be a complete system, and argued that the main purpose and message of the Qur'an was "political and social, not just spiritual" (Davis, 1985:153). This political and social order would liberate humanity from the yoke of a secular system of state.[41] Kepel (1989:153) noted, Qutb's polarization of the world into two systems made his "ideologies appealing, since they provided guidelines for analyzing the [Nasser's] declining regime."

The third main theme in Qutb's ideas was his interpretation of al-Banna's concept of *jihad* to constitute a "revolt against [unbelieving] rulers" (*Milestones*, 1993:91).[42] Making a point that still resonates today with the radical Islamists, Qutb stated in the mid-1960s:

> "…we are the *umma* of Believers, living within a *jahili* society. Nothing relates us to state or to society and we owe no allegiance to either. As a community of believers we should see ourselves in a state of war with the state and society. The territory we dwell in is *Dar al-Harb*" (*Milestones,* 1991:98)

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[41] Unlike al-Banna, Qutb did not provide details about the true nature of this Islamic state. The powerful appeal of Qutb's ideas lay in the fact that he did not 'openly' or 'explicitly' say that Egypt's secular regime should be overthrown. But, his concept of *al-jahiliya* implied such a militant vision that did not allow for the existence of competing visions.

[42] In Islamic thought, the concept of *jihad* is complex and often misunderstood. Linguistically, *jihad* means 'to strive'. Some classical jurists saw *jihad* as a spiritual struggle to attain moral and religious perfection, as opposed to the 'lesser (military) *jihad*'. However, the majority of classical jurists also understood the obligation of *jihad* in a military sense. Drawing upon this view, many modern Muslim thinkers, especially in response to colonial powers, expected that the Islamic state (*dar al-Islam*) would wage military *jihad* against the external non-Islamic communities (*dar al-harb*) and thus that Islam would spread across the globe. Most of the 'ulama during the 20th century adopted this defensive notion of *jihad*. R. Peters, *Jihad in Classical and Modern Islam,* Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 1996, p. 7.

Dissatisfied with the existing Islamist movement, Qutb asserted that social revolution "… provided the means to eradicate this state of *jahiliyya* and to create the Islamic state mandated by the *shari'a*" (Nettler, 1986:188). Qutb conceptualized the need for revolution in terms of submission to the oneness of God (*tawhid*). He argued that Islam inherently requires the submission to this oneness, which in turn requires the "positive submission to God and negative revolt against submitting to other authorities, be they concrete, metaphysical, or political" (Mousali, 1999:134).[43]

Arguably, the seeds of revolution would only come about at a suitable juncture: "Qutb impressed upon them [Islamists seeking his approval for anti-state violence] the need for long-term educational endeavors to form cadres and militants while waiting for the opportune moment to strike" (Mousali, 1999:151). The importance of *jihad* and the need to eradicate *jahiliyya* societies brought Qutb to consider the necessity of creating "a distinct community of believers" that would take the lead in the destruction of the *jahiliyya*. His worldview thus depicted the world as in a state of perennial conflict between those of the "party of God" and those of the *jahiliyya* societies.

These radical ideas, however, were not translated into organizational imperatives until the structural conditions necessary for their emergence appeared in

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[43] Qutb interpreted *tawhid* (submission to the Oneness) as a total rejection of the substitution of any law for divine law, any rule for divine rule, and any subordination but subordination to God. He specifically refers to "a leader who possessed an absolute power" as violating his subordination to God. According to Qutb, to establish a society based on divine law requires action (*harakah*) of a revolutionary nature to sweep away the *jahili* elements, which have seduced humankind away from accepting submission to the only legitimate authority. See, Ahmed S. Moussali, *Islamic Fundamentalism: The Quest for Modernity, Legitimacy, and the Islamic State,* Gainesville, FL: University Presses of Florida, 1999, p. 134.

the form of Organization 1965. Nasser's death in 1971 and the subsequent political development under his successor, Anwar Sadat, provided a new opportunity for the continued growth of these radical alternatives. In the 1970s, as Eric Davis (1984:153) remarked, "political activism of Islam became increasingly bifurcated and … social and economic disorder pressures the activism into new forms of Islamist movements, which are thoroughly divorced [from the MB]". Egypt's stunning defeat in the Arab-Israeli war in 1967, coupled with its change in regime after the war, propelled new patterns of state-Islamist relations in which Qutb's *jihadism* found fertile ground for upholding revolutionary solutions for an Islamic state.

4. The Rise of Jihadist Organizations:
Networks, Factions and the Islamist-Revolutionary Fronts

Radical-jihadist organizations emerged in Egypt in the mid-1970s. Their formation was closely linked to determinations about the viability of translating Qutb's ideas into organizational practices, especially after the sharp break with Hudaybi's moderation initiatives. The exact date as to when these radical Islamist groups started to organize is unclear. But their networks and factions began to form in the late 1960s and the early 1970s, facilitated by a series of contingent events that occurred after the second wave of Nasser's persecution. Two are particularly important: the stunning defeat of the Arabs in the 1967 war with Israel, and changes in Egypt's political landscape as a result of President Sadat's "Islamic turn", following Nasser's death in 1970.

Jihadist organizations were dramatically different from the MB in terms of group leadership and strategies. This is particularly apparent when we consider their public appearances in the 1980s and their violent operations in the 1990s. However, a closer look at the two major jihadist organizations, Jama'at Islamiya (JI, Islamic Group) and Tanzim al-Jihad (The Jihad Organization), it shows that there are similarities between these organizations and Organization 1965, especially in terms of their programmatic-beliefs regarding Islamic transformation.

As highlighted above, there was a tendency over time toward conflict between the radicals and the moderates in the MB, conflict that was used by Nasser to undermine Islamist collective action. Against this backdrop, Qutb's religious ideas were a catalyst for the consolidation of radicalism, and thus for the later "materialization" of purist Islamism in actual organizational constructs. The role of Qutb's leadership during this crucial period in the MB's history was, at least in part, to overcome the radical-moderate cleavages that eventually led to the devaluation of the moderate strategies. Thus the emergence of jihadist organizations after Qutb was about breaking with failed strategies and creating new ones, and, as a result, changing patterns of political behavior.

The next section explores how jihadist groups mobilized and organized to put in place radical alternatives in their pursuit of an Islamic state. As noted above, important to this development were changes in the political landscape after the death of President Nasser in September 1970 and the ascension of Anwar Sadat to the presidency. It is consequently useful to examine this political change in order to map out the political opportunity structure for key actors in Islamist groups to consolidate

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their networks. The analysis undertaken here explicates the role of Sadat's power consolidation, from which Islam re-emerged as politically relevant such that Islamist activists became a major force to be reckoned with.

4.1. Sadat's "Islamic Turn"

The first three years of Anwar Sadat's presidency represented a crucial period of transition between two different political eras. Two main features characterized this period: First, the political arena was heavily contested by various political forces, with the struggle between the new regime and political forces loyal to Nasser being the most important. This struggle ended on May 15, 1971 with what the regime called "the Corrective Revolution". The second feature of that period was Sadat's lack of legitimacy, which prompted him to seek out new sources of legitimacy and thus to distinguish his regime from that of Nasser.

Sadat's new regime had to deal with many problems inherited from Nasser, most prominently the fallout from Egypt's defeat in the 1967 Six Day War – which prompted popular calls for a renewal of war with the Jewish state – and the expectations that grew out of the Islamic appeals made by Nasser near the end of his reign (Hinnesbuch, 1988:17-19). Sadat's lack of charisma and sense of historical mission as compared to Nasser also posed a problem for the new regime, and were the primary reasons for the "ambiguity, confusion, and inconsistency that characterized the first few years of Sadat's presidency" (Hopwood, 1992:97; also, Vatikiotis, 1985:424). Sadat's problems rapidly mounted, and included issues such as economic decline, strong public pressure in 1971-1972 to re-start the war with Israel, the student protests of

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1972, and the bread riots. It was under the shadow of these pressures that Sadat determined his main policy priorities: reinforcing the regime by relying on Islam and preparing for a military campaign against Israel.

In order to win Islamist support, Sadat took several steps. Among the earliest was his 1971 amendment of Article 2 of the 1964 Constitution, so that it stipulated, "Islam is the religion of the state... the principle of Islamic *shari'a* serves [as] a fundamental source of state legislation" (Rutherford, 2008:109; Lombardi, 2000:181). This step marked the beginning of a trend of reconciliation between Sadat and Egyptian religious forces, one that gave birth to new coalitions between the state and the Islamist elite. Not long after the change to this more Islamic constitution, Sadat initiated a rapprochement with the "dormant" MB, as a part of his wider policy of confronting the Nasserist forces.

Sadat's rapprochement with the MB was important because it marked an effort to expand his "Corrective Revolution" beyond the initial purges of leading leftists from influential positions within the ruling elite, to also take on the strong support for Nasser's socialism at the local level, in particular from those who had benefited from land reform. Effectively, the regime's alliance with the MB was conceived as a way to engender grassroots support for its rule while containing the left. Together with the expansion of al-Azhar and the expanded support for the ulama, this pro-Islamist turn was mediated by King Faisal of Saudi Arabia and by a few members of the ASU's ruling elite.[44] In mid-1971, an agreement was reached between Sadat and the MB in

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[44] Interestingly enough, the agreement between Sadat and the MB was mediated by King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, who for a long time suffered as a result of Nasser's international agenda, and Fouad Allam (the head of State Security and an ASU deputy), and Osman Ahmed Osman (a leading

which the latter agreed to renounce the use of violence and promised not to engage in anti-regime activities. In exchange, beginning in 1971, the regime released thousands of MB prisoners, and most importantly, allowed them to reactivate their organization, restart their publications program, and more generally allowed them to resume their peaceful advocacy of Islam. Between 1972 and 1975, a majority of the Brothers expelled by Nasser's regime had returned to Egypt.[45]

Containing the Nasserist-left was not limited to the rapprochement with the MB, but was also augmented by Sadat's increased efforts to develop and promote his own peculiar religio-political identity. This identity was in opposition to Nasser's secular and Arab-socialist rhetoric, and it figured prominently in Sadat's frequent use of certain political slogans that had specific religious connotations. Thus for instance his public speeches incorporated such slogans as "the Believing President" (*Rais al-Mu'min*) and "the state of science and faith" (*hal al-ilmi wa al-iman*) (Gilsenan, 1990:85; Vatikiotis, 1989; Rais, 1982), along with a variety of other religious symbols (Ismail, 1995:78-82).[46]

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businessman and MB member). See, Nemat Guenena and Saad Eddin Ibrahim, *The Changing Face of Egypt's Islamic Activism,* unpublished manuscript submitted to the U.S. Institute of Peace, September, 1997, pp. 17.

[45] Guenena and Ibrahim (1997) provided compelling evidence regarding Sadat's rapprochement with the MB. Six points of agreements they signed included the release of prisoners in four gradual terms, allowing the MB to be involved in drafting the 1971 Constitution and Sadat's invitation to the MB to participate in elections, although not to act as a political party. See, Nemat Guenena and Saad Eddin Ibrahim, *The Changing Face of Egypt*, 1997, pp. 1-28.

[46] It must be noted, however, that under Sadat, the basic contours of Egypt's political system remained the same with Nasser. The only difference lay in the fact that previous commitments to a secular-socialist vision of development were abandoned. This resulted in the subsequent adoption of a more religious institutional construction of state policies, which greatly benefited the Islamists. For a critical review of this change, see Nazih N.M. Ayubi, "The Political Revival of Islam: The Case of Egypt, in *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies,* vol. 12, No. 4, December 1980, pp. 480-497. See also, Tamir Moustafa, "Conflict and Cooperation"*,* 2000, pp. 7-10.

This strategy was reinforced by an effort to cultivate a greater sense of religiosity among the population and to connect himself to it, as a basis of populist legitimacy (Ibrahim, 1997; Moustafa, 2000; Zeghal, 2001). This Islamization of the country, which started in 1972, meant that the regime "provided millions of dollars for Islamic education, and promoted a depoliticized Islam through state-run television and radio." (Ibrahim, 1997:11) Sadat also provided funding for the construction of thousands of mosques, and offered favors – such as land, construction funds, and television airtime – to popular sheikhs, in return for their support (Moustafa, 2000:14). In this context, the war that began in October 1973 solidified such uses of Islamic rhetoric and the construction of a legitimizing religious regime. Sadat's political strategy, of making pragmatic use of Islam to break away from Nasser's political order, ultimately contributed to the construction and deployment of a legitimizing religious principle that later came to support *delegitimizing* policies and practices which threatened the very foundation of the regime's existence.[47] Sadat thus contributed to the construction of the very political order that would later provide the basis for the challenges to his rule, as well as his own assassination.

4.2. From Study Clubs to Jihadist Fronts: The Jama'at Islamiya

One of the most crucial aspects of Egypt's Islamic turn was the effort to Islamize university students. This effort was aimed at fanning the increasing

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[47] Observers (Ibrahim, 1996b: 29; Hinnebusch, 1988:58-59; Davis 1984:160) have pointed out that the October War was painted as an "Islamic war" due to the use of religious symbolic mobilization strategies. Waged during the month of Ramadan, Sadat sought to compare his war against Israel to the first war in the history of Islam, between the Prophet and Meccan-*jahiliya*. From such slogans it appeared that Sadat's regime had begun a process of relying on rather traditional and religious sources of legitimacy.

religious awareness among the youth, which had emerged in the wake of the Arab

defeat in the 1967 war. Thus while in the early years of Sadat's presidency the

Nasserist-left dominated the Egyptian student movements, by 1972, new "families"

(*usrah*) and "associations" (*jama'a*) were beginning to surface for the first time. These

groups had a religious character, and had their roots in "religious study clubs" on

university campuses (Ashour, 2007:607; Kepel, 1989:127). They soon began to

sponsor Islamic education programs, as well as such miscellaneous activities as

producing publications, putting on summer camps, and organizing journeys to

Mecca.[48]

    Sadat's effort to mobilize Islam on university campuses was beginning to bear

fruit by the time the 1973 war was launched. As Kepel (1989:25) has pointed out,

"university life became more religious… largely with encouragement from the new

[Sadat's] regime." As a result of the state's continuing support, Islamist groups varied

and expanded the scope of their activities to include more political ones. Again

according to Kepel (1989: 137), these religious "families" in Egypt's universities were

the sites where the young Islamist sympathizers and activists that later became the

"Jama'a Islamiya" (Islamic Group, GI) first came together.[49] They were the breeding

ground for the cadres of the future Islamist groups.

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[48] Kepel (1989:191-2) notes that activities such as summer camps were generously sponsored and funded by the state. These camps were not limited to studying *Islamic fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) and Islamic rituals, but also included most types of athletic training, especially martial arts and other self-defense tactics. See, Kepel, *Religious Extremism,* 1991.

[49] My personal conversation with one of the most important actors in the student movement in the 1970s, Abu 'ila al-Madi, revealed that the term 'Jama'a Islamiya' sounds problematic, since it was associated with terrorist activities later in the 1980s and 1990s. Egyptians who grew up in this generation and were active in the Islamist student movements on university campuses labeled their groups "Religious Groups" (Jama'at al-Diniya, RG). Interview with Abu 'ila al-Madi, Cairo, December 9, 2007.

In the mid-1970s, a more systematic and centralized strategy for encouraging

Islamist student groups was initiated by their leaders, most notably 'Abd al-Mun'im,

Abul Futuh, 'Issam al-Aryan, Abul 'ila al-Madi (Cairo, Alexandria and al-Minya),

Nagih Ibrahim and Karam Zuhdi (Asyut University) (Ashour, 1997:606). This

centralization was made possible by national student movements that came together

around their shared support for the 1973 war (Ibrahim, 1997:17). These groups of

Islamist students were distinguished from the MB, and eventually formed a new

organization that called itself "Jama'a Islamiya" or "Religious Groups". But at this

time, each university group remained autonomous in terms of its activities, with no

single ideology or clear political platform being embraced by them all. What was

obvious was their ultimate goal: *al-da'wa* (proselytizing) and *al-'amr bil ma'ruf wal*

nahyi 'an al-munkar (ordering virtue and preventing vice). They were thus "the

nearest approach to a youth movement with a religious character" (Ibrahim, 1997;

1996b: 64),[50] and were acceptable to both the regime and the hegemonic MB because

of their particular twin focuses.

Egypt's university campuses were gradually transformed during the 1970s by

the increasing dominance of Islamist students, to the point that they came to be almost

"governed" by young Muslim activists (Heikal, 1995:133-135; Kassem, 1995:141-

144). These students worked to implement changes in the universities, in the

curriculum taught, as well as by encouraging their fellow students to participate in

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[50] In the first national congress in 1974, the leading representatives from the universities
agreed to form a well-defined structure for the Islamist student groups. Each university had a *shura*
(consultative) council and an *emir* (leader). There was also a national *emir al-umara'*. Since the
students were coming from a variety of political convictions and ideologies, each university leadership
operated in an autonomous manner. Interview with Abu 'ila al-Madi, Cairo, December 10, 2007.

Islamic activities, by halting lectures and classes during prayer times, by segregating the sexes in classrooms, and by prohibiting concerts, art performances and theatrical productions. A prominent Egyptian intellectual, Mohammad Heikal, described this 'sea change' in the environment at universities and more generally in Egyptian culture during the 1970s:

> "Knowing they had the support of higher [governmental] authority, the Islamic students began to behave as if it was they who were running the universities. They decided what subjects were suitable to be taught, forcibly preventing, for instance, lectures to be given on Darwinism … it was clear that the Islamist students were not simply tolerated by the authorities but actively encouraged by them."[51]

By the late 1970s, such religious mobilization began to pay off: Egypt's students were markedly less interested in participating in the activities and demonstrations organized by the leftist student associations. An important phase for political Islam under Sadat was when Islamist groups began confronting leftist activists within the universities in the name of "protecting Islam" (Bayat, 1999; Heikal, 1995:138; Ashour, 2007:607-608). As the leftists withered and Sadat's support for Islamist students continued, the Jama'at gained strong footholds in almost all of Egypt's universities.

Yet its rapid success and lack of a clearly formulated vision for society meant that while JI was able to intensify its activism, it simultaneously became an ill-defined web of activists within a stretched organizational body that lacked clear direction for change. This was reflected after the mid-1970s, when the JI activities rapidly moved forward as regards promoting its political agenda outside university campuses. It began to mobilize its members, as well as the religiously inclined townspeople, against what it called

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[51] See, Mohammad Heikal, *Autumn of Fury: The Assassination of Sadat,* (London: Andrew Deutsch Ltd., 1993, p. 133.

"rampant evil behaviors" (Ansari, 1984). Sporadic violence began to occur on university campuses, as well as in the neighborhoods around them. Between 1977 and 1979, after its leaders' success in winning seats on the Executive Council of the National Students Union,[52] the Jama'at began a public campaign in Cairo University that saw them asserting "… we knew that religion is not only to conduct *da'wa,* but is also the establishment of the Islamic state … to achieve [such a goal], it is an essential precondition that we work to eradicate those practices of *jahiliya*" (c.f. Fandi, 1997:77). Simultaneously, similar activities were undertaken on other university campuses, including Asyut University (Anshari, 1984:137; Fandi, 1997:70).[53]

The relative ease with which the Jama'at activists tapped the use of violence in confronting the leftist organizations and in spreading their religious activism underlined the strong support that they were receiving from the regime. At the same time, the nature and extent of their activities ultimately helped them to guarantee themselves a greater chance of expanding their influence and growth. For instance, in Asyut, one of the organization's strongholds in Egypt's southern province, the Jama'at leaders found themselves with sufficient popular legitimacy to carry out the *da'wa* and to enforce certain Islamic behaviors (Anshari, 1984:134; Ibrahim, 1996:119; Fandi, 1997:70-74). Yet it bears noting that their desire to do so was also a strong indication that they had begun to adopt a more confrontational and militant strategy. That strategy later turned out to be directed not only against leftists and Nasserists, as well as against Christian Copts, but also against the state authority itself.

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[52] Three leaders of the Jama'at who won seats in the National Student Union were Tal'at Qasim, Abu 'ila al-Madhi, and Abdulghani Taha. Interview with al-Madi, Cairo, 10 December, 2007.
[53] In Asyut were Salah Hashim, Usamah Hem, Najih Ibrahim, Ali Shareef, Muhammed Shawqi al-Islambuli and Abu Bala Uthman."

As the confrontations and uncontrolled religious activism pursued by the Jama'at intensified, it became increasingly apparent that clear intellectual guidance was required so as to transform their strength into concrete political achievements. In 1977, a number of the Jama'at leaders, particularly from Cairo, Alexandria and different parts of the Nile Delta, joined the MB, thereby strengthening the politically moderate wing of Egyptian Islamism. Some other leaders, who were mainly from Asyut, were more inclined to join the jihadist groups that had begun to emerge in 1974. These groups were imprisoned-members of Nizam 1965. Then in 1979, a Cairo-Jama'at leader, Karam Zuhdi, as well as various Asyut-leaders, met Muhammad Abd al-Salam Farag, a jihadist leader released from prison in 1978. The meeting resulted in an agreement to unite and to coordinate their efforts to form a united jihadist organization, the Jama'at Islamiya (JI) (Ashour, 2007:608). The alliance between the Islamist-students and a prominent leader of *Nizam 1965* spurred further development of Islamism in which revolutionary jihad came to increasingly define the contours of the mobilization for an Islamic state.

4.3. Building Jihadist Groups

Jihadist leaders had begun to operate and recruit their cadres soon after their release. Between 1972 and 1974, approximately 20 small factions of jihadist groups operated in Cairo and Asyut, but only three of these later became major organizations (Dekmajian, 1990; Ashour, 2007:608). The first of these is the Technical Military

Academy Group (*al-Fanniya al-Askariya*).[54] This group attempted to seize the

Military Academy in Asyut in 1974, in order to launch a coup during Sadat's speech

in the Academy. Their goal was to seize weapons and then assassinate the President.

Although their attempt failed,[55] it was the first jihadist group that publicly declared

Egypt's need for an Islamic revolutionary transformation. This group was led by Salih

Sirriya, a member of *Nizam 1965* who believed that jihad was a tool capable of

changing a political system that was deemed *jahiliya* and 'infidel'.

In a document entitled *Epistle of Faith (Risalat al-Iman)*, Salih Sirrya asserted

that "all of the current Islamic regimes are infidel and *jahiliyya* regimes" (Anshari,

1984:191). Sirriya regarded the use of violence as a legitimate way to change "the

dominant rule", since doing so was justified in Islamic jurisprudence, in order to

anesthetize and excommunicate regimes. The document also stated that, "the House of

Islam [*dar al-Islam*] is the one in which the word of God is the uppermost … and rule

[government] is conducted according to the Quran … the House of *Kuffar* [non-

believers] is one in which the word of non-belief is the highest and is not ruled by the

Quran." Consequently, the only way to change from "infidel" rule is through "jihad".

What this group meant by jihad is "…a way to change governments and to establish

the Islamic state, which is a compulsory duty of every Muslim."

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[54] This organization was known by several names. Sometimes, they referred to themselves as the Islamic Liberation Organization (since its foundation was closely related to Jordan's Hizb al-Tahrir). Some others called them Muhammad's Youth (*Shabab Muhammad*). See SE. Ibrahim, Egypt's Islamic Militants, in *Middle East Report,* No. 103, February, 1982, pp., 5-15.

[55] The leader of the group, Salih Siriyya, was executed after the failed coup, and the other members of the group were imprisoned.

The second group is Jama'at al-Takfir wa al-Hijra (The Society of Repudiation and Emigration, sometimes called Jama'at al-Muslimun). This group's name points toward its radical message of "repudiating those institutions and persons deemed unbelievers", and the need for "withdrawal from *jahiliya* society" (Ibrahim, 1990:96). The ideology of this organization built upon the model of the Prophet Muhammad's Hijra from Mecca to Medina to establish a true Islamic order. The group was established by Shukri Mustafa, shortly after his release from prison in 1970, though the initial members consisted of people he had approached and recruited during his six years in prison. The group's ideology did not differentiate between the state and society, since as Mustafa wrote in his memoir, both society and the state are *jahily* institutions that must be "purified" (Kepel, 1989:198).

It is because of this lack of differentiation that the members of Takfir wa la-Hijra believed that they must maintain their distance from state and society, and indeed should adopt a negative and violent attitude toward them. Mustafa, for instance, adopted *Hijra* (immigration) and isolation as disciplinary techniques and a necessary strategic step towards the ultimate goal, i.e., the Islamic state. Consequently, the group required its members to isolate (*uzla*) themselves from government institutions and to completely ostracize society and its members. They also rejected compulsory military service and employment in government departments and institutions (Ansari, 1984; Kepel, 1989).

As part of a disciplinary method for the organization, Mustafa forbade his members from praying in mosques constructed and sponsored by the state. This was because according to Takfir wa al-Hijra, the basic character of the state's reality was

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jahilyya, and this character would infect all of its activities. As such, the only way to escape such an infidel situation was to join the Jama'at. Between his release in 1971 and his execution in 1977, Mustafa succeeded in recruiting approximately 2,000 members to Jama'at al-Takfir, all in Asyut

The third jihadist group that came out of prison is Tanzim al-Jihad al-Misr (Jihad Organization of Egypt). Muhammad Abdul Salam Farag established this group in Cairo in 1979. Farag's group and factions began to form after Nasser's 1966 wave of imprisonment, and expanded in the mid-1970s through the efforts of masterful recruiters such as Ayman al-Zawahiri, Hani al-Siba'i, Anwar Ukasha, and Muhammad Qutb (Ashour, 2008:111; Zogler, 2007:12-20). Farag was the author of *al- Farida al-Ghaiba* (the Neglected Duty), an elaborate book on the strategy and program of Sayyid Qutb that espoused jihad and violence as legitimate paths toward an Islamic state transformation. This book became the members' intellectual and ideological frame of reference for executing the group's military and political operations. Farag argued that the duty of *jihad* — understood purely as armed struggle — was a duty that had been neglected by the Muslim faithful. He argued that:

> "Despite its crucial importance for the future of our Faith, the *jihad* has been neglected, maybe even ignored, by men of religion of our age. They know however, that *jihad* is the only way to reestablish and re-enhance the power and glory of Islam, which every true believer desires wholeheartedly. There is no doubt the idols upon earth will not be destroyed but by the sword—and thus establish the Islamic state and restore the caliphate. This is the command of God and each and every Muslim should, hence, do his utmost to accomplish this precept, having recourse to force if necessary."[56]

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[56] See, Muhammad Abd al-Salam Farag, "The Neglected Duty" in Johannes J.G. Jansen, *The Neglected Duty: The Creed of Sadat's Assassins and Islamic Resurgence in the Middle East,* (New York: Macmillan, 1986), 172.

Like Qutb, Farag advocated the replacement of the Egyptian regime with a caliphate, that is, a community of believers governed by the precepts of Islam and led by a religious leader (Caliph). To Farag, jihad represented a moral and religious imperative incumbent upon every Muslim (Jansen, 1986:161). He thus specifically called for violence within the context of revolution, arguing that only by armed struggle could an Islamic state ever be realized. He further contended that this view enjoyed solid historical support by respected religious scholars concerned with the creation of an Islamic state.

Farag criticized other Islamist organizations for their timidity and complicity in maintaining the status quo. The Brotherhood incurred his ire for its gradualist approach to the creation of the Islamic state, while al-Takfir wa al-Hijra's idea of divorcing itself from society before waging *jihad* was roundly rejected as flawed, based upon the argument that direct confrontation is the only viable means to forge an Islamic society. Farag and his followers believed that only society's leadership could be considered infidel (*kuffar)* and thus legitimate targets of *jihad*, in contrast to ordinary Muslims, who had simply been led astray by their leaders. For Farag, Christians and Jews were enemies of Islam. Islamist attacks on Coptic targets garnered Farag's endorsement, as he insisted that the forces of imperialism, represented by an obscure but potent conspiracy of Jewish, Christian, and Communist interests, be destroyed locally.

5. The Abortive Jihadist-Revolution, 1981

As was seen earlier, Sadat adopted a conciliatory stance toward Islamist forces so as to help him build political legitimacy. In the later years of Sadat's presidency, jihadist organizations that had begun as numerous small groups and factions became well-structured revolutionary fronts in major Egyptian towns, most prominently in Asyut province, al-Minya, Qena, Suhaj and parts of Greater Cairo (Ibrahim, 1982:6-8; Ashour, 2007:609; Ansari, 1984). Not only did these jihadist organizations provide the more decisive and concrete phase in the creation of an Islamic state, but they also promised to erect a just Islamic political order. Thanks to Egypt's difficult economic conditions, triggered in large part by Sadat's 1977 liberalization policies (*infitah*), a generalized sense of "religious brotherhood" increased among the population, which helped jihadist groups to consolidate their hold. It was within this national context that President Sadat made the 1977 visit to Jerusalem that lead to the signing of the Camp David Peace Treaty in 1979. This sequence of events reshaped the stakes for the jihadist groups, since it provided them with a clear target for total confrontation with the state.

The following section will complement the narrative on the evolution of the radical alternative of Islamism with a more micro-level analysis, to address the mechanisms how revolutionary alternatives of Islamism operate. Relying on documents from jihadists found by the authorities in the massive raids after Sadat's assassination,[57] it is possible to see the eruption of violence in Egypt, particularly

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[57] I am indebted to Dr. Omar Ashour, who pointed out to me documents and works written by leaders of jihadist organizations. An important phase in the development of jihadist organizations involved the production of ideological and political works that reflected their point of departure that

after Sadat's peace initiative with Israel, as a largely deliberate effort to build an Islamic state through revolution. What follows is a narrative of the abortive jihadist-revolution of 1981.

5.1. Reversing Islamic Policies

Observers agree that the assassination of Sadat by members of jihadist organizations on October 6, 1981 was the culmination of a long conflict between Sadat and the jihadist groups that had begun in 1974. Yet it is important to keep in mind that the assassination was also meant to be a prelude to the launch of a coup by the jihadists that would set off the Islamic revolution.

The late 1970s was a period in which criticism of President Sadat and his regime by Islamist groups, including the MB, increased greatly. Sadat thus sought to reverse his earlier policies and to depoliticize Islam. Beginning in 1978, Sadat took steps to ban the Islamist student activism (Alam, 1995:102; Hopwood, 1990), and also used the state-controlled media to discredit the student groups that were members of the union. Sadat even gave a speech in 1979 where he denounced the student groups by name, and argued that "those who wish to practice Islam can go to the mosques, and those who wish to engage in politics may do so through legal institutions" (c.f. Hopwood, 1990:117) Similarly, the regime sought to constrain the MB by shutting

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distinguished them from the Brotherhood. These works were published in different years between the 1980s and the 1990s, but most probably they were written not long before Sadat's assassination was carried out. They included books like *Mithaq al-'Amal al-Islami* [*The Manifesto of Islamic Action*] (1984); *Kalimat al-Haqq* [*A Righteous Word*] (1984); *Al-Ta'ifa al-Mumtani'a 'ann Shariah min Shara'i' al-Islam* [*The Desisting Party from a Law of Islamic Laws*] (1988); *'Ilahun ma'a Allah? I'lan al-Harb 'ala Majlis al-Sha'ab* [*Another God with Allah? Declaration of War on the Parliament*] (1990); and *Hattmiyyat al-Muwajaha* [*The Philosophy of Confrontation*] (1990).

down its publication. It also created a new institution headed by the Sheikh of Al-Azhar to monitor and regulate all Muslim organizations that were not part of the state apparatus.[58]

Tensions between the government and Islamists began to rise still higher in early 1980, triggered by the lack of clear effort on the part of the government to incorporate Islamic law into the country's legislation, something that it had promised it would do (Lombardi, 2001:152).[59] In 1981, to show that it was still in control of the country and would have final control over the parameters of what constituted an "Islamic state", the government cracked down on all opposition figures, though focused most of its energies on the MB and the radical Islamist jihadists. The MB's publications were banned and its leaders imprisoned, and the well-known leaders of Tanzim al-Jihad were also taken into custody. The government's crackdown convinced some leaders of jihadist groups to take extreme measures. After a meeting in September 1981, the jihadist leaders of Tanzim al-Jihad[60] decided to assassinate

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[58] In this period, Sadat's regime also took steps to gain greater control of mosques. It reflected the security services' concern that Islamic militants were using the mosques as a basis for anti-government activities. (Moustafa, 2000:14-17; Zeghal, 2001). This policy was meant to monitor the sermons and personnel in all government mosques. These regional offices were also in charge of selecting *imams* (prayer leaders) and sermon topics, both of which were undertaken by local committees of official ulama and representatives of the Ministry.

[59] Even when the amendment represented a strong provision for the implementation of the *shari'a*, Islamists in the Muslim Brotherhood and the jihadist groups continued to be suspicious of the government's commitment to Islamization. Or, as most observers noted, they at least worried that the government's vision of Islamization would be very different from their own. Then, in the summer of 1981, sectarian tension between Muslims and Copts erupted in serious violence, especially in the southern provinces. For a list of the most serious riots and terrorist attacks and extensive references to contemporary newspaper accounts of the tensions, see Ami Ayalon, "The Arab Republic of Egypt," in *Middle East Culture and Society*, Vol. V, 1981-82, pp. 427-428.

[60] The meeting was held on September 28, 1981. Farag and several leading members of the Jihadists such as Ibrahim, Zuhdi, 'Abbud al-Zummur, and Khalid al-Islambuli (the executor) attended the meeting and arranged the plan for the assassination. See, Omar Ashour, *A World without Jihad,* 2008:131.

Sadat. They accomplished this on October 6, 1981, during a military parade commemorating the 1973 October War.

5.2. A Plan for Uprising

Members of Organization 1965 were serious students of Sayyid Qutb. For instance, Farag based his theory of jihadist revolution on Qutb's view that there is a "need to build a small, militant number of believers that link [them] with broader Muslim society and mobilize the society's support for [an] Islamic state [*dar al-Islam*]" (*Milestone,* 1991:79). But in *al-Farida,* Farag elaborated Qutb's theory, saying that jihad should begin with a careful social, political, and economic analysis of Egyptian society. He argued that such an analysis is necessary for Islamists to "… decide upon and select the most appropriate and most effective method for change" (*al-Farida,* 1991:234), such as the shape and scale of the Islamic revolution, the forms of violence and the tactics to be used, and the level of mobilization. Farag further underlined the "imperativeness of establishing a secret [purified] society (*jama'at*)" responsible for penetrating the security forces, the army, collecting intelligence information, and recruiting sympathetic military personnel and officers into the organization, thus facilitating the achievement of a total Islamic revolution (*al-Farida,* 1991:236).

In the late 1970s, inspired by Farag's vision and emboldened by the increasing number of jihadists, leaders of al-Jihad shifted their focus to the practical and organizational aspects of their plan to seize control of the *jahily* state and to establish an *Islamic* one. Consequently, a middle ranking military officer who had served in the

State Security Intelligence (SSI), Abbud al-Zummur, was recruited and joined al-Jihad in 1978.[61] Al-Zumur quickly took on a major role in planning and strategy, while the military leaders of al-Jihad, such as Esam al-Qamari, concentrated on the military training of members.

The plans were outlined in a document entitled *Pillars of Continuity*, which details six major strategies that the Islamists deemed essential for achieving the Islamic Revolution (al-Zumur, 1987:5-17).[62] An in depth description of these strategies was provided in a document entitled *The Stages of Islamic Movement Development*. The document states that "the plan depended on constructing an organizational structure that is capable, by providing man-power and supplies, of seizing power and completely controlling the vital state institutions and command centers on which the regime relies to rule the country, thereby paralyzing its ability to counter the Islamic move" (*The Stages,* 1987:5). To protect their leaders, the plan aimed at "preventing the regime from taking certain measures or actions to confront

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[61] Abbud al-Zumur was a highly ranked and decorated officer in the Egyptian Army. He had a long professional career, military training, and extensive experience in the Army Intelligence and other branches of the Egyptian armed forces since the October War of 1973. The background and experience that al-Zumur obtained throughout his military career substantially contributed to the development of the Jihad organizational structure and its military strategy before 1981. See, Kepel, *Muslim Extremism,* 1989:

[62] To briefly outline the six strategies, they include: 1) *Coup d'etat Strategy*. This strategy emphasizes the necessity of constructing an organizational structure capable of overthrowing the regime and seizing power; 2) *Mobilization Strategy*. In this strategy, the masses are mobilized to ensure their involvement in the revolution and hence deter foreign intervention in particular; 3) *Winning the Islamic support strategy*. This strategy aims at gaining the support of all of the Islamist factions within the Islamic movement; 4) *Alternative Strategy*. This strategy is designed to avoid and/or cure any future defections or failures that might affect the original plan; 5) *Contingency Strategy*. The strategy aims at taking advantage of any sudden weaknesses or flaws that might arise within the regime before the preparation phase reaches the level of a complete revolution; 6) *The Strategy of Deterrence*. This strategy aims at deterring security forces from kidnapping Islamist women to pressure their active spouses.

Islamists, such as ambushing, assassinating, and arresting their influential officials and figures." Furthermore, according to the plan, the organization should "disable the communications and transportation lines and deter the enemy reserve forces from participating in the battle."

The document also emphasized the urgent task of "preparing Islamist actors to be capable of mobilizing the masses and inciting and goading them into participating in the revolution to demonstrate public support and hence deter foreign intervention… with the necessity of restraining all foreign agents working in the country" (*The Stages,* 1987:8). Although the role of the masses was not made completely clear in the plan, it is obvious that the strategy depended heavily on the tactics and choices of the organization's military leaders, who were at that time enlisted in the army.

The original plan for revolution, as designed by al-Zumur, required a three-year period of preparation before undertaking any action. But a series of unexpected events prompted a strategic change in the jihadists' plan. The first of these took place a few months after the plan had gained an approving Fatwa from Sheikh Mohammad Omar Abdulrahman, when the authorities detected whispers about the planned operation. Sadat's response was to arrest thousands of members of the political opposition in September 1981, especially members of the Brotherhood and leaders of the Jama'at. The latter group included nine leaders of jihadist organizations and members of its Shura Council (Ashour, 2008:167).

Another significant event that affected the plotters was the arrest of group member Nabeel al-Maghribi while attempting to buy weapons from a local arms dealer in Asyut (Ibrahim, 1982:13). Even more dangerous was that the intelligence

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and security forces were becoming more aware of al-Zummur's role in al-Jihad. With the group increasingly exposed and thus endangered, they decided to move more quickly than had been called for by their original, three-year plan. As a result, Farag, after meeting with his fellow jihadist leaders in late September 1981, decided that their first move must be to assassinate President Sadat (Ashour, 2007:606). After the approval of the assassination plan, Khalid al-Islambuli was able to help three members of the jihadist movement to infiltrate his army unit. The assassination was finally carried out on October 6, 1981.

5.3. Assassinating to Seize Power

According to the plan, immediately after assassinating Sadat, the organization was supposed to move strategically on two fronts simultaneously, the first in the south and the second in Cairo. The Cairo portion of the plan called for armed units from the organization to seize and hold the television and radio stations, and to broadcast a statement about the "victory of Islamic revolution" (*Stages,* 1984:12). The move was supposed to be concurrent with another unit's move to prevent or at least deter the police and state security forces from intervening and thus hindering the plan by attacking them in their barracks and at other locations in Cairo and Giza. The same group was then to take control of Cairo International Airport. In the south, the plan was to seize all of the state security buildings and compounds in Asyut and thus to dominate the south entirely, before moving north to Cairo to reinforce their co-revolutionaries (Ibrahim, 1982).

But aside from successfully assassinating Sadat, the group failed to fully

execute any of these moves or to achieve any of these goals. In Asyut, the security

forces were able to put down the insurgency within two days, regaining control of the

region and arresting many of the Islamist leaders. This included the arrest of Khalid al-

Islambuli and two other participants in the assassination. The government then

immediately formed different security committees consisting of members from several

security forces and institutions (Kepel, 1989:211).

While the jihadists were unsuccessful at carrying out their plan, according to

the Minister of the Interior Abu Basha in the 1980s, their readiness for action did take

the government by surprise. Basha also noted that the government was taken aback by

"the size and sophistication of these militant Islamist groups" (Kepel, 1989:222). He

asserted that the security forces realized for the first time that they were facing:

> "A pyramid-like organization with several bases and leadership levels that has
> tremendous resources and capabilities as to members, armaments, and training
> that exceeded all of the state's preliminary estimates. Therefore, a race with
> time became a vital variable to prevent any additional exacerbation, especially
> after finding new and dangerous evidence about the movement size and
> capabilities. The evidence included discovering large stocks of weapons of all
> types… hundreds of machine guns, rifles, handguns, RGB guns, hand
> grenades...and large quantities of ammunition and explosives" (Basha,
> 1990:20).

While a detailed and systematic explanation of the failure of the jihadist uprising is

beyond the scope of this study, it seems clear that the jihadists were pushed into

abortive action due to external factors. Of these, two were particularly important: First,

there was the unexpected selection of Khalid al-Islambuli to participate in October's

military parade. Secondly, Sadat's massive arrest campaign in September 1981 made

the group's leaders increasingly worried that the security forces would discover their plans. They thus reasoned that since the state's attack on them was inevitable, it would be wiser if they moved first.

6. Conclusion

As this chapter demonstrated, patterns of conflict and settlement during the crucial period in the struggle for establishing a new constitution has far reaching institutional consequences for state-Islamist relations. The promulgation of the new constitution was characterized by conflict and polarization of the elite in the struggle for domination, especially between Free Officers and the MB leadership. Prompted by its relative strength in organizational power prior to the 1952 coup, the leaders of the MB consistently urged the new Egypt to adopt the Islamic constitution, which was rejected by Nasser. Overtime, the Free Officers and the MB failed to reach an acceptable power sharing arrangement. Based on this challenge, the state builders in Egypt sowed the seeds of irreconcilable conflict between the state and the Islamist challengers.

The emergence of radical jihadist organizations since the early 1970s in Egypt can thus be conceived as result of three interrelated aspects of the way the Free Officers attempted to stabilize their political order. These results were the exclusion of Islam from the constitutional blueprint after 1956, prolonged persecutions and suppression of the Islamist opposition, and the ability of the state to utilize long-established religious institutions in effectively undermining the vision of an Islamic state. However, the indigenous aspect of Islamist politics was the most decisive factor

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in bringing about organizational shifts, such as a resistance strategy pursued by the imprisoned networks during persecution, and the ways in which that strategy led to the sequential diffusion of radical generations in the Islamist movement.

The resistance strategy—understood as a set of mobilization activities relying on underground activism, informal networks, and covert leadership—was adopted because of severe exclusion, elimination, and persecution. It functioned from the beginning as a deliberate effort to overcome the leadership vacuum of the organization. But in the process, this strategy structured a distinct form of an organizational outcome that provided a catalyst for jihadist politics to consolidate and, as a result, served as precursors for the "materialization" of militant-purified Islamist groups in actual organizational constructs.

As I shall explore in the next chapter, there is a dramatic difference in jihadist organizations that distinguished them from the moderate Brotherhood. This is particularly true in their public appearances in the 1980s and in their violent operations in the 1990s. Political developments in Egypt after Nasser and the subsequent crises after the Camp David Peace Treaty with Israel in 1979 propelled these jihadist alternatives to take action leading to prolonged violent conflicts between Islamist movements and the state. While the 'official' leadership of the Brotherhood gradually moved to integrate their organization with Egypt's political system, during the 1990s, mostly triggered by accumulation of economic, regional and international factors, the radical-jihadists escalated their actions for total confrontation against the state as part of what they believe is the revolutionary path toward an Islamic state.

Chapter Five

**SADAT'S LEGACY AND
THE PRECLUDED TRANSFORMATION OF ISLAMISM**

"They [the MB] assassinated two prime ministers and a finance minister before the [1952] Revolution. Then they pretended to back the late President Gamal Abdel Nasser but attempted to assassinate him in Alexandria. President Sadat did not act against them early in his tenure, having been preoccupied with restoring the occupied territories, and so they killed him. The Muslim Brothers, the Jihad, the Islamic Group, and the rest of them, are all the same."
—President Hosni Mubarak, 1995.

"… the top priority of our objective to participate [in elections] is not to gain the presidency, or any governmental offices. Rather, it is motivated by an effort to advance reform through educating the people [the *umma*]. It is about *da'wa*, a call toward individual transformation."
—Mohammed Mahdi Akif, 2008.[1]

1. Introduction

This chapter examines the historical process of Islamist transformation in Egypt. Different than the radical-jihadist Islamism discussed in the previous chapter, my focus here is on the organizational development of the moderates in the Muslim Brotherhood (MB). After their decisive break from the radical factions in the early 1970s, the Brotherhood set out to pursue a strategy for the integration of Islamism into the existing political system. There were two features of the strategy pursued by the MB in sustaining their activism. First, they continued their presence in Islamist civil society organizations and their role in civic opposition to the ruling regime. Second, the MB participated in Egypt's electoral politics. At least since 1984, in spite of legal restrictions for the MB's political activities, this organization has managed to

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[1] Interview with Mohammed Mahdi Akif, 8 January 2008. At the time when this research was conducted, Muhamad Mehdi Akif was Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood who took the office in March 2004. In its recent leadership change made in January 2010, Muhammad Badi' was selected as the new Supreme Guide.

achieve increasing success in Egyptian parliamentary elections by forging alliances with the existing political parties or running individual candidates.

The decision to participate in elections, albeit indirectly, not only indicated that the leadership of this movement has undergone political moderation, but this also marked a profound change in the program for Islamist collective action. This strategy proved successful and made the movement the most influential parliamentary opposition block to the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP).[2] As a political movement that formerly promoted its strategy to Islamizing the state through a "purification of society," operated with anti-party rhetoric, and now participates in elections demonstrates an Islamist transformation. Scholars equate the MB's decision to enter the elections as a sign of profound transformation of Egypt's Islamist politics to containing "… religious activism in the struggle for democracy" (Wickham, 20003; Abed-Kotob, 1996; Bayat, 2001).

This interpretation must be qualified, however. What the case of Islamist transformation in Egypt illustrates is a pattern that I have identified in the theory chapter as a state of "precluded transformation." The concept suggests a shifting, yet locked-in pattern of relationship between the state and the MB's vision of an Islamic state. In other words, the "purist characteristics" of the organization's origins and the unresolved legacies of conflict between the state and Islamist forces during the 1952

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[2] In 2005, the MB scored an impressive success in the legislative elections. Under limited political openings since 2004, the elections gave the Islamist candidates a success rate of 65 percent for the 150 seats which they had contested. The 2005 elections indicated that the mobilization capacity of other political parties had been drastically reduced in Egypt. Since the early 1990s, these parties had started declining and in 2005 become incapable to compete with the MB at the organizational and political level. These parties include the New Wafd (liberal), Tagammu (Left, Nasserists), Al-Ghad (secular-nationalist), as well as a few newer groupings that have been denied licensing so far Al-Wassat (centrist-liberal oriented young Islamist) and Karama (nationalist). See, Mona El-Ghobashy, "Egypt's Paradoxical Elections", in *Middle East Report,* no. 238, 2006, pp.23-27.

Revolution remains as a feature in the strategic change of the MB. Although profound changes in its strategy and program continued to occur, the organization continued and attempted to fuse two different goals into one political agenda: the struggle for democracy and the pursuit of the enforcement of *shari'a* under authoritarian rule. Examining the historical process of the Islamist transformation in Egypt one may find that the subsequent reforms undertaken by Sadat and continued under Mubarak have caused changes in the structure of the organization along with modifications in its strategy as the opposition in government. Yet, the unresolved issues in the history of state formation drove them from pursuing democratic reform and moving toward "a democratic solution for an Islamic state" (Naguib, 2006:1).

The primary forces that have driven such an ambiguous political transformation were the interaction between the institutional design of the state and the opportunity for considerable strategic changes in the MB's mobilization particularly at institutional junctures. Change in the MB was set in motion by change in the political configurations between the state elite and various mobilized social actors since the 1970s. I will first describe how Sadat transformed the Constitution— in 1971 and in 1980 respectively—in favour of an Islamic state. After his assassination, however, Mubarak took no further political or policy action to translate this symbolic transformation into codes that sanctioned the state to implement Islamic *shari'a*. Meanwhile, the MB's commitment to Islamizing the state, society and culture under a secular institution produced the consequence of subsequent failures of the convergence between Islam and the state. Second, I will explore the trajectories of the MB's transformation beginning with strategies in electoral participation, political

moderation leading to deliberate efforts at integrating its goals within Egypt's

political system. However, the state's policies under Mubarak, which continued to

expand the institutional authority of al-Azhar in state politics, were found to have

reached the limits of transformation in Islamism. From this perspective, the case of

the MB's transformative program illustrated a story of a political movement endowed

with a purist Islamic ideological framework that subverted itself within the state's

stalemate with pre-existing religious institutions.

2. State-Led Institutional Changes of "Islamic State"

The Arab's defeat in the 1967 war against Israel—known commonly in

Arabic as *al-naksa* (the setback)—is widely regarded as the decisive break that

marked the beginning of the periodic decline of the state in Egypt. The standard

narrative of the period after the war indicates that the lofty ideals and high hopes that

Nasser and pan-Arabism inspired began to erode.[3] Not only did the defeat provide an

opportunity for opposition groups to enhance their position in the political arena, but

also domestically the state-led socialist and secular model of development that Egypt

embraced since 1954 faced serous challenge. Egypt's economic situation declined

dramatically since the war and, from the mid 1970s through the 1990s,

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[3] As discussed in the chapter 4, the Corrective Revolution underpinned such a narrative. What makes the defeat became so dramatic was because of Nasser's high ambitions to hold Egypt as a leader for the Arab region as well as the Third World. The Egyptian state and pan-Arabism suffered a number of serious blows, including the breakup of the United Arab Republic, the Yemen civil war, and most importantly, the defeat of the 1967 war itself. As one observer put it, "That occurrence was the most shattering event in Egypt's contemporary history. 'Why were we so utterly defeated?'—the soul searching question echoed all over the country." See, Nazih Ayubi, The Political Revival of Islam, 1980, p. 481. See also, Rif'at Al-Sayid, *Al-Irhab wa al-Taslam: Jama'at Al-Ikhwan al-Mislimin, Limada, wa mata, wa Ila Ayna*, Cairo: Sharka al-Amal al-Taba'a wa al-Nashr, 2004.

unemployment rose steadily while per capita GNP and average real wages fell (World Bank, 2001:611-620).

Exacerbating the problems was the simultaneous growth in population and the absence of state provided social services. While successive Egyptian governments were relatively resistant to liberalization efforts in politics and the economy, the dedicated Islamist opposition seemed capable of advancing their political agenda by harnessing the downward economic trend of the state. It was against this background that the subsequent failure of governments after Nasser attempted to manage institutional changes to secure the political order inherited from the 1952 Revolution. But in the process they established cultural machinery that strengthened Islamist ideological infrastructure in the public realm. All these factors combined ultimately to create Islamist transformative projects, which became more institutionalized under the state ideological infrastructure, but Islamist political actors remained excluded from these state politics.

2.1. The 1980 Islamic Constitution

After Sadat's death, observers on Egypt depicted his policies as "a jumbled confusion" without a clear, long-term vision of policy preferences. As Sagiv's infamous book, *Fundamentalism and Intellectuals in Egypt,* described:

> "In the eyes of masses and many intellectuals, Sadat's policies… were no less than a jumbled confusion: socialism, liberalism, religious faith, economic laissez-faire which benefited a few while the mass sank into a morass of inflation and poverty, oppression of liberals charged with left-wing views, subsequent repression of religious elements after exploiting them against liberals and scorn for the clergy" (Sagiv, 1995:60).

Such policy confusion manifested itself in troubling events that occurred in the latter years of his rule. In 1977, Egypt experienced major political events, each of which had tremendous political consequences for the pattern of state-Islamist relations.

The first was massive social riots in January in response to a significant cut in government subsidies for basic foods as mandated by the IMF and as part of the government's plan for economic liberalization. These food riots were blamed on leftist and communist elements, yet the government instigated a number of repressive measures against opponents across the political spectrum, including the Islamists.[4] The second event was the bloody confrontation in July between the regime and a jihadist group, Jama'at al-Takfir wa al-Hijra. It began when this Islamist radical group kidnapped a former minister for religious endowments, Mohammad Hussein al-Dhahabi, in order to secure the release of those from their organization who were imprisoned and, then, when the government refused to meet their demands they carried out their threat to kill the minister (Ibrahim, 1996; Kepel, 1987:94).[5] The government crackdowns throughout the country left scores dead and wounded. The

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[4] In relation to this event, the Minister of Home Affairs announced on January 20, 1977, that the authorities had "uncovered a plot to burn Cairo. Within one week, the authorities arrested 200 suspects who have a link and direct involvement in the plot. These included top rank leaders of Communist party and Nasserists such as the National Progressive Unionist Party. See, Saad. E. Ibrahim, 1982.

[5] The jihadists' pick of al-Dhahabi as the target for kidnapping was part of long hostility of the jihadist to the ulama establishment since early 1970s, most notably their accusation to the ulama that this religious institution worked for the un-Islamic government. Since the first constitutional amendment in 1971, al-Azhar ulama, the MB and the jihadist groups tried to outdo each other in demonstrating their commitment to Islamic law, and each was forced to make increasingly extreme claims for its favored approach to the Islamic state. No uniform agreement in these religious camps can be regarded as something that constitutes Islamic norms to be applied in the state legislation. Al-Dhahabi was one of the best-known members of the Egyptian ulama who harshly criticized the jihadists as deviants of Islamic teachings. The murderers justified their actions by arguing that "those who ally themselves with an un-Islamic leader are non-Muslims." See, for example, Skovgaard-Petersen, *Defining Islam,* 1997, p. 218; see also, Kepel, *Muslim Extremism,* 1989, pp. 94-98.

third event took place in November when President Sadat made a historic visit to Jerusalem and gave speech in the Knesset. He claimed, and believed, that economic development for Egypt would come with peace with Israel.[6] Problems developed along with harsh criticism toward this particular state policy. Many Egyptians believed that the peace treaty not only betrayed Nasser's pan-Arab nationalism, but also repudiated a Muslim's duty to defend other Muslims against non-Muslim aggression.

In a need of public support, Sadat took stronger steps toward an Islamization of Egypt's constitution. The new ruling party, the National Democratic Party (NDP)—established after the disbanding of the ASU in 1978—became an important organ in the regime's attempt to reach out to Islamists in the Parliament. In 1979 the party submitted the proposal for a new constitution that sought to Islamize Egyptian law in a manner that would satisfy the broad political spectrum, including Islamists, al-Azhar ulama without alienating the liberals, Copts, and foreign aid donors on whom the Egyptian economy depended since 1977 (Kepel, 1989:223-224). Intriguingly, the proposal for constitutional change was not so much different from the terms submitted by the Islamists—particularly the Muslim Brotherhood—in response to Sadat's call for Islamic constitution in the early 1970s. On July 17, 1979, the People's Assembly overwhelmingly voted for the change in the Constitution: No longer would Article 2 read, "… the principles of Islamic Shari'a are *a chief source* of

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[6] Sadat's statements published in interview with Cairo weekly, *October*, 28 December 1977.

legislation," but rather, "… the principles of Islamic Shari'a are *the chief source* of legislation" (Peters, 1987:236; Lombardi, 2002:411-419).[7]

This last constitutional reform sparked another episode of public debate over a clear interpretation of Islamic law. Since the early 1970s, conflicts had emerged between the ulama establishment of al-Azhar and the MB (Moustafa, 1999).[8] Aware of these difficulties, Sadat formed a committee representing a range of Islamists to negotiate with and to develop a code that would be accepted as "Islamic" by a majority of Islamists and that would be tolerable to liberals and secularists in Egypt (Zeghal, 2000; O'Kane, 1982:137-146; Moustafa, 1999). A constitutional provision that makes *shari'a* the principal source of Egyptian law would thus sanction the government to include in its code only laws that conform with the "*shari'a*".[9] Indeed, since 1952, the MB had been explicitly calling for the constitution to be reformed to include precisely this provision (Chapter 4). In 1980, it was clear that the committee failed to convince Muslim leaders to accept a united understanding on the meaning of the *shari'a.* The failure showed a perennial conflict of Islamist interests. For example, there is a consensus on the importance of the constitutional provision to

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[7] The amendment was signed by the People's Assembly who approved this constitutional provision for Islamic law on April 30, 1980. On May 22, 1980, it was ratified by a popular vote and became law. The difference in wording in between the 1971 and the 1980 constitutions reads as follows: *mabadi' al-Shari'a al-Islamiya masdar ra'is li al-tashri'*, which means "a chief source for legislation", while in 1980 Constitution reads: *mabadi' al-Shari'a al-Islamiya masdar al-ra'is li al-tashri'*. The members of the People's Assembly proposed that Article 2 be amended to adopt the wording proposed by some Islamists in 1970: "... the principles of Islamic Shari'a are *the principal source of the state legislation*" [italics added]. See, O'Kane, "Islam in the Constitution of Egypt" in *The Middle East Journal,* 26, (1972), p. 135.

[8] It must be noted, however, that there was no agreement over what constituted Islamic norms to be applied in the state legislation. The ulama generally referred to the legal principles embodied in Islamic jurisprudence or *fiqh*, where as the MB and the jihadists pressured the government to revise the national laws in a way that corresponded with their own, literal interpretation of the Qur'an and *Sunna.* See, Malika Zeghal, Religion and Politics, 2001, pp. 380-383; Also, Skovgaard-Petersen, *Defining Islam,* 1997, p. 222.

[9] The committee was headed by a Sorbonne University graduate, Mohammad Soufi Abu Thalib. See, O'Kane, "Islam in the Constitution of Egypt" in *Middle East Journal,* 26, (1972):137-138.

implement Islamic law, but disagreement amongst the Muslim elite about what constitutes the norms of the Islamic *shari'a* loomed large.

After the constitutional amendments, tensions between the regime, al-Azhar ulama, and the MB continued to unfold over the new constitution. Between 1980 and 1981, aside from al-Azhar's *fatwa* justifying Sadat's trip to Jerusalem in May 1979, Egypt has witnessed escalating tensions between Sadat and Islamist groups in three important areas: the Camp David Treaty, Sadat's pro Western-secular outlook, and the implemented open-door (*infitah*) policies which effected the spread of the Islamists' social services (Ibrahim, 1982:76-102).[10] Further, the state's commitment to "Islamize" the constitution failed to improve Sadat-Islamist relations. In September 1981, Sadat arrested about 600 Egyptians, many of whom were politicians, radical ulama, and intellectuals (Moustafa, 1995:91-97). This symbolic Islamic constitutional transformation culminated in the assassination of President Sadat on October 6, 1981.

2.2. Mubarak and the Containment of Religious Politics

When Mubarak assumed power in 1981, Egypt was constitutionally defined as an "Islamic state". Islam was institutionalized as "the state religion" (article 2), controlled 'officially' by the country's religious institutions. The constitutional provision for the implementation of the *shari'a* does not, indeed, "…come to mean Egypt as a theocratic state" (Lombardi, 2001:150), but was robust enough to conceive

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[10] See, Saad Edin Ibrahim, 1982, pp. 76-102. My personal interview with the former activist of the MB reveals that the *infitah* was problematic not only at the policy level; it was also because Sadat became increasingly unpopular. Sadat and his family attempted to show themselves in a positive light but his Westernized wife and his lavish style of living not only contradicted the Islamic image he was trying to portray but also exposed him to the charge of hypocrisy. Interview with Moustafa Azis Mahmud, Cairo, 2 January 2008.

the state "[is] required and bound to apply national law which conform [with] the

shari'a law" (Lombardi, 2001:151; See also, Peters, 1999). Nonetheless, Sadat's

constitutional legacy created political as well as institutional problems. At least, as an

analyst argued, such constitutional provision for the *shari'a* did not clearly explain

what this requirement entailed.[11] In late 1981, Mubarak reached out to Muslim

leaders with the implied promise that Islamic legal codes would soon be adopted

(Vatikiotis, 1989:439). A few months later, Mubarak released many of the figures

arrested during Sadat's final crackdown. This included several of the leading Muslim

Brothers, who then urged their followers to continue working with the government to

realize the transformation of the 1980 constitution (Moustafa, 1999:6-7; Ashour,

2008:98-99). Furthermore, the government made it a point to be seen moving forward

with the preparation of Islamic legal codes through a committee formed by Sadat for

the formulation of Islamic law.[12]

This attempt to create an Islamic constitution did not last long, however. Over

time, it became clear that the Mubarak regime was not committed to Islamizing

Egypt's law. By the second and third years of his tenure, Islamists began to realize

that the government was trying to freeze the progress of legislation of these particular

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[11] My personal conversation with an al-Azhar professor and MB's politician who served as a Parliament member (1987-2000), Hussein al-Farmawi, revealed that the root of ambiguity is that there was no specific timetable for Islamization in the 1980 amendment; and no serious committee responsible for the constitution to be implemented. The amendment also did not make clear how exactly the regime should identify and interpret the principles and norms of the *shari'a*. These ambiguities eventually produced no clear political solution of how an Islamic state transformation should proceed in an adjudicative manner. Interview with Muhammad Hussein al-Farmawi, Cairo: 19 January, 2008.

[12] At this time, Mubarak continued to work with a committee formed by Sadat to assess the final formulation of new Islamic codes. Soufi Abu Talib, the chairperson of the committee described the President's decision to enter the legislative final game as the realization of the Government's promise to engage in Islamization. But in 1983 he finally gave up and decided not to reappoint this committee associated with Sadat's Islamization projects.

bills. The codes of Islamic law did not emerge from the committee in a timely manner, and there was no indication as to when they would actually be debated.[13]

Throughout 1983, mass demonstrations frequently erupted to protest the delay of the implementation of the *shari'a*. These protests were mostly organized by Islamists from the MB, radical Islamic Groups, to lower ranking ulama.[14] The first election under Mubarak in 1984 took on a distinctly Islamist flavour and sentiment, with MB campaigning for the New Wafd. Slogans like "Islam is the Solution" were chanted and widespread employed to underpin the growing strength of Islamists. In an interview with the newspaper, *Al-Ahyar,* during the midst of the 1984 election campaign, Omar Tilmisani, stated that: "Egypt's problems are soluble, despite all the economic difficulties, provided God's laws are implemented."[15] In fact, the appeal of Islamization was such that every other opposition party except for one, the leftist party Tagamu, felt compelled to call for the immediate application of Islamic state laws (Campagna, 1996:284).

Members of radical organizations also began to agitate for the immediate application of *shari'a*. These developments came to a head in the mid 1980s until the early 1990s, when political alliances demanded the application of Islamic law. All spectrums of Islamism from the MB, to the radicals including the Islamic Group and the Jihad Organization, to the ulama establishment in al-Azhar joined in the call for

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[13] Interview with Muhammad Sayyid Habib, Cairo, 8 December 2007.

[14] Such demonstrations were made possible in part because of the increased independence of the Egyptian courts, which had allowed the New Wafd Party to form again in 1983. See Tamir Moustafa, Conflict and Cooperation, *IJMES,* 1999, pp. 17-18.

[15] Starting form this period, slogans such as "Islam is solution" became widespread in Egypt marking the growing influence of the Brotherhood in the political arena. See an interview with Omar Tilmisani, the Supreme Guide in 1984, in Ayalon, *al-Ahyar,* March 9, 1984, as quoted by Joel Campagna, "From Accommodation to Confrontation: the Muslim Brotherhood and the Mubarak Years," *Journal of International Affairs*: 50, Summer 1996, p. 280.

the application of *shari'a* (Lombardi, 2000:155).[16] In 1985, for example, partly

provoked by the possibility that they would be perceived as lax in their Islamic zeal,

many in the ulama establishment in al-Azhar began to criticize the Mubarak

government as "… failing to conduct some substantive Islamization of the law"

(Moustafa, 1999:14). The desire for Islamization among many Egyptians did not

make the government more accommodating (Abed-Kotob, 1995). Instead, with regard

to the Islamic constitution, the Mubarak regime decided to move towards a policy of

confrontation with Islamists. Issues regarding the legalization of Islamic codes were

finally dropped in the new-elected 1984 Parliament.[17]

Part of the reason that led Mubarak to decline any further Islamization was his

attempt to build political legitimacy for his regime that was different than that of his

predecessors. In the early 1980s, Mubarak witnessed that the dramatic expansion of

Islamist ideological infrastructure developed during the Sadat's years posed a serious

challenge to the existing political order. Mubarak then took steps to contain Islamism

with "mixed-strategies" without changing the fundamental blueprint of the state

structure from the 1952 Revolution. These strategies can be mapped out to follow

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[16] The violent demonstrations occurred in Cairo in late 1984. It was triggered by students at al-Azhar who rioted after a student was run over by a police car. In the mid 1980s, leaders of Islamist groups won majorities in student union elections at all major Egyptian universities and called for Islamic behaviour at universities, including mandatory "Islamic dress" for women and separation of the sexes. In an interview with an al-Azhar graduate, in the public discourse at large, signs of incipient Islamist frustration were also appearing. Not only was mosque attendance increasing, but radical groups were also beginning to appear publicly to lead Friday prayers at mosques around the country. Hussein al-Atta, a former activist of the MB in the 1980s, said that we found that "Not only the public, the newly elected members of the People's Assembly are also eager to see the Islamic *shari'a* to be implemented in the mid 1980s". Atta also said, "… in the whole, the country is perfectly prepared for the application of the Divine Law." Conversation with Hussein al-Atta, Cairo: 17 December, 2007.

[17] With the comfortable majority in 1984 Parliament, the ruling party NDP overwhelmingly voted for postponing the six Islamic codes formulated by the Islamic legal reform committee under Sadat that had been languishing for almost three years. Mubarak used this Parliamentary victory to shelve the current Islamic codes and postpone indefinitely any plans to open debate for Islamic constitution. See, for example, Lombardi, *State Law as Islamic Law*, 2000, pp. 158-160.

what Bianchi termed as "... selective accommodation and selective repressions" (Bianchi, 1989:91). Thus the government exercised harsh repression of the radical jihadist politics, toleration of the MB, and institutional support to expand the religious institutions of al-Azhar in order to have a stronger legal-binding authority.

In this sense, the broader context of the regime's strategy of the containment of religious politics distinguished Mubarak regime's from Sadat's who relied on Islam moving toward a political system that would lead to a more liberalized, plural political direction. In the 1980s, Mubarak attempted to institutionalize partial political reforms started by Sadat's liberal policies (Bianchi, 1989:-110-112; Otaway, 2003:44-45). The regime passed the Electoral Law 144/1983 enabling political parties to compete in the parliamentary elections.[18] Mubarak also released political prisoners and permitted the press to criticize government ministers, although he himself remained off-limits. Non-governmental associations proliferated by the thousands and professional syndicates provided additional political space to demand civil liberties and political rights (Ottaway, 2003:48-51).Yet, on the other hand, Mubarak continued the country's State of Emergency, which enabled it to override the formal legal and judicial structures whenever deemed necessary. With this policy, Mubarak blocked groups or parties deemed threatening, or potentially threatening, from gaining formal legal recognition thereby placing them in a permanent state of siege and insecurity. Theses limited reforms allowed the regime to appeal to popular legitimacy, but, at the same time, still retain control over opposition, particularly the Brotherhood

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[18] Largely as a result of the greater assertiveness of Mubarak's political openings, the number of legally recognized political parties rose to 24 (in the 1995 elections) compared to just 6 parties under Sadat. See, Brownlee, *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization,* 2007, pp. 128-129.

Equally important is Mubarak's strategy to expand systematically the reach of "mass socializing" institutions such as the ulama-establishment of al Azhar and invest heavily in countering the contested interests of an Islamic state (Belaid, 1999:159-160; see also, Zeghal, 2001). Under the 1980 Constitutional provision for *shari'a,* the state cannot be controlled by religious leaders. But, as Mubarak found, it is enough to have an official institution to fulfill this role, namely Al-Azhar University and its institutions, directly related to the presidency (Barraclough, 1998:241). Another authorized religious institution, namely Dar al-Ifta' (House of *Fatwas*) headed by the Grand Mufti of the republic, determines the officially accepted religious norms that are followed by state institutions including the courts.[19] Before the 1980s, the status of al-Azhar within the state structure was clearly one of subordination to the existing political regime (Zeghal, 2001; Moustafa, 2000). However, beginning in the mid 1980s, Mubarak granted increasingly more autonomy to the institution, as a way to pre-empt and contain both the MB and the rest of the Islamist groups. The outcome, as Barraclough (1998:240) argues, was that al-Azhar was structurally, "being dependent upon the state, is also depended upon by the state. The *ulama* [of al-Azhar] became very important for the Mubarak regime due to its lack of popularity and legitimacy. This vulnerability meant that *the state needed to rely on the Islamic scholars to de-legitimize its Muslim opponents*" [emphasis added].

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[19] This state agency plays a major political and judicial role in legitimating and even confirming decisions of the government and the courts in cases that deal with religious affairs in the broadest sense. In other words, not only does the parliament have its own obligations to religious law, but also its legislation and regulations are scrutinized by an appointed religious authority that has the constitutional right for 'judicial review'.

Such a relationship between the state and the established religious institutions has blocked further inroads for further Islamist transformation. Although the consolidation of Mubarak's government witnessed more moderate-pragmatic tendencies within the MB, the Islamists' ideological challenges remained confined in social forces playing the role as an opposition movement to both an authoritarian and secular state. Islamists' demands for a higher threshold of Islamic state transformation generated a condition for the state as well as the Islamists organization that is difficult to resolve. It is a condition that framed for the MB's collective actions both in the Parliament and in civil society organizations (O'Kane, 1982; Berman, 2003).

3. Islamizing State from the Ground Up:
   Da'wa Activism, Social Services, and Electoral Participation

It was against this background of institutional development from Sadat's limited autocracy to Mubarak's controlled political pluralism that the contemporary MB was able to capitalize, and to perpetuate, the wave of religious awareness among the populace that swept across Egypt in the wake of the 1967 defeat. As argued above, the state-Islamist elite alignment after Nasser's death and the changes in the institutional context of Egyptian politics beginning in the 1980s had a decisive impact on the patterns of Islamist mobilization.

I will examine how state toleration, and even encouragement, that the MB enjoyed during the 1970s and the 1980s constituted a slow moving process of the organization's expansion as well as gaining social and political influence. Yet, its goals to enforce the implementation of *shari'a* remained. While the regime's use of restrictions to suppress the alternative of an Islamic state continued, success in social

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and religious activism enabled the MB to chart new areas of activism which was more overtly political in nature. Beginning in the early 1980s, these strategies and social programs helped create the emergence of a parallel Islamic sector that consisted of a broad array of independent mosques, Islamic charities and publishing houses (Naguib, 2006:17-19). Although this Islamic parallel sector had no direct organizational links to the MB, they shared many of the same objectives and helped generate a social and political environment receptive to the growing influence of the Islamist transformative projects among the common people.

3.1. Political Moderation

The historical process of moderation in the MB can be traced back to its internal efforts to overcome the factional struggles between the 'Qutbist-radicals' and Hudaiby's leadership dating from the late 1960s. After the second wave of persecution under Nasser, there was a rivalry to gain control over the strategy for opposition to the secular state between those who embraced Qutb's ideas (Organization 1965) and those who "challenged the uncompromising Qutb's ideas" and "… thus persuade Brothers to opt for a nonviolent alternative," (Zollner, 2007:374) or the 'gradualists' (Abed-Kotob, 1996; Nettler, 1996; see also, Ashour, 2008:149-151).[20] Intense repression under Nasser demolished the Brotherhood organizational infrastructure almost entirely. Concerned with the restoration of the

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[20] As elaborated in the previous chapter, Organization 1965 and the 'gradualists' represent internal factions in the MB history referring to political, religious and violent versus non-violent conflicts over the strategy for an Islamic state. In Egypt's institutional history, Nasser's revolution and prolonged state persecution toward Islamism brought this conflict and factional struggles into being in the late 1960s. Outcomes of this conflict materialized in a sharp break between jihadism (Qutbist-radicals) and gradualism, the one that the contemporary leadership represents. See, Sullivan and Abed-Kotob, 2003, pp.114-136.

organization, Hudaybi sought to win control over the organization at the expense of Qutbist domination. Hudaybi, and the Guidance Bureau behind him, began to systematically counter the radical Qutbist interpretations of the Islamic state. By the early 1970s, the Hudaybi leadership had the chance to win back lost power and control of the organization. The book "*Preachers Not Judges*" has since become an ideological guidance for both religious and political activism in the MB.[21]

Many questions about the internal conflict and factionalism between the Qutbists and the moderates were left unanswered. However, in the early phase of Sadat's consolidation in 1971, Hudaybi's effort to reconnect with fellow Brothers was fruitful in particular he targeted those members who had remained undecided as to whether to break with his authority and follow the Qutbists. (Zollner, 2007:376). Thanks to Sadat's co-optation and his efforts to mobilize Islamist students, which provided an opportunity for the radical-jihadists to recruit some of them, the MB was able to focus on consolidating its members and leadership along moderate lines. By the mid 1970s, this organization had entirely broken away from the jihadists and, overtime, declared that it had no political or organizational ties with them (Abed-Kotob, 1996; see also, Zeghal, 2001).

In 1976, when Sadat introduced the multiparty system and offered a limited space to contest elections, Umar Tilmisani, the Supreme Guide after Hudaybi,

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[21] The book *Du'at la Qudhat* is not a political book, but it does contain a complete political elaboration of Islamist and religious activism in countering the radical interpretation over the strategy of an Islamic state. Arguably, it can be said that the book is not merely a refutation to Qutb's radical ideas, but rather, it has a broader objective in containing radicalism, while suggesting a moderate theological outlook of Islamist activity. In a brief highlight about its content, we can suggest that the book discusses the concept of faith (*iman*) and unbelief (*kufr*), the timelessness of religious meaning, and the question of governance, etc. For a discussion about this book, see Kepel, *Religious Extremism in Egypt,* 1989:134-139.

claimed to have accepted pluralism, but at the same time stated that "secular parties were inferior to the Muslim Brotherhood that pursues the word of *Allah*" (El Ghobasy, 2005:316). The MB then opted to remain active in *da'wa,* religious preaching, education, publication, and social welfare services. But in 1979— triggered by the growing alienation of the educated urban middle class—this organization began to compete in elections for student organizations, university professors' clubs, and professional associations, most of which they won (Wickham, 2003; Abed-Kotob, 1996). Sadat's open toleration to Islamism generated a condition that the religious dimension of the political activities was no longer secret. The regime further formed a cooperative relationship with the leading Islamist business groups, which helped the MB set up institutions for its social welfare and financial activities. Less than a decade after its reconstruction, in the early 1980s, the MB had risen to become a dominant political force in Egyptian politics and civil society organizations without violence.

This internal struggle for moderation only tells us one aspect of the story. More important still is the role of Mubarak's toleration to allow the MB to participate in elections. When Mubarak assumed power in 1981, there was an ample reason to accommodate the growing presence of the MB in politics since the fight against the radical-jihadist groups was a top priority of his policies. As a result, the thaw in the relationship between the state and the MB continued, but there was no question of legalizing its political activities. It only acquiesced to a *de facto* toleration. Arguably, subsequent changes in the institutional context of the 1980s furthered the MB's deepening strategy of moderation.

First is the MB's decision to contest the elections in the mid 1980s. Mubarak's toleration encouraged the MB, for the first time since 1942, to field individual candidates in parliamentary elections by making alliances first with the New Wafd party in 1984, then with the Socialist Labour Party in 1987. The 1984 elections were a decisive point in the MB's mobilization history as an organization whose anti-party platform was well known. In addition, the multiple failure of the MB to become a party, since the 1940s, shadowed its ability to convince many about its commitment to democracy.[22] However, although the rules were rigged in favour of the ruling NDP's domination, the outcomes were a qualified success with the MB's performance on these two elections steadily improving (Lathif, 2004; Altman, 2005).[23] In justifying the Brotherhood's decision to participate in Mubarak's elections, Tilmisani publicly claimed in May 1984 that:

> "When we were released from the 1981 detention, we were in a state of near-recession. We set to look for a lawful means to carry out our activities without troubling security or challenging the laws. Allah saw fit to find us a lawful way in the views of officials. The parliamentary session had just ended and thinking began on the new parliamentary elections. It was the opportunity of a lifetime, had the *Ikhwan* let it slip from their hands they would surely have counted among the ranks of the neglectful" (c.f. El-Ghobasy, 2007:377).

Second, with the regime's toleration and encouragement for the activation of civil society organizations beginning in 1982, the MB expanded its activism to

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[22] Tracing the process of the MB's attempt to forming an Islamist party, it reveals that, at least since 1976, there was a serious discussion in the MB to oversee the possibility to forming the party. Yet, the Guidance Bureau has never reached at a single decision about forming a party until in 1983, when the MB tried to register this organization as a political party to the Party Committee (*Lajnat al-Ahzab*), which marked the moment that the MB moved into a serous consideration about becoming a political organization. However, the regime consistently blocked such a development. Interview with Muhammad Sayyid Habib, Cairo, 10 December 2007. See also, Skovgaard-Petersen, *Defining Islam for Egypt,* 1997, pp. 218-221.

[23] The MB's candidates who contested the 1984 and 1987 parliamentary elections won 8 and 36 seats respectively. These electoral gains continued to increase later in the 2000s elections.

include professional organizations (Wickham, 2002:205-207). This was by no means a new strategy. In fact, starting from the middle of the 1970s, the MB began to engage in voluntary activities in professional and student associations and trade unions (lawyers, doctors, engineers, and so forth). What is distinctive in the current participation is the MB's great success to capturing the leadership of those organizations.[24] By the late 1990s, the Islamists controlled almost all of the professional associations, many of which had previously been monopolized by liberal-secular and nationalist professional organizations. Over time, the MB's interest in controlling professional associations became an effective tool and strategy for advancing its agenda for moderation as well as Islamizing the middle class (Campagna, 1996:283).

The third change, which is related to the second, is that the state's continued retreat from its economic role enabled the MB to capitalize on its social services and charitable networks for the disadvantaged populace (Berman, 2003:260; Campagna, 1996:330-31; Clark, 1995:11-29). In the late 1980s, the MB established an impressive system of social services in major cities and villages in Egypt. Success in resuming its activities in *da'wa*, social services, and publishing, the movement actively contributed to the emergence of a parallel Islamic sector that consisted of a broad

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[24] Up until 2002, there were 22 professional syndicates and organizations with a total of over 3.5 million members. The MB's control of these professional organizations was particularly evident in the most significant and politically active syndicates, including those representing doctors, engineers, pharmacists, scientists and lawyers. It bears in mind, therefore, that controlling these associations has significant implications because these are the most prominent private organizations in the country. Salwa Ismail (2003:45), for instance noted that, "... in a context in which political parties have been virtually ineffective, the syndicates were appropriated as political space by those denied admission through regular channels." In 1987, the MB won control of the Engineers' Syndicate with 200,000 members and $5 million assets. See also, Walsh, Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood and Civil Society, 2001, p. 33.

array of independent mosques, Muslim student clubs, Islamic charities and publishing houses (Clark, 1995:15-17; Wickham, 2002:183-186). Many of these local-based organizations had no direct organizational ties with the MB, but they shared many of the same objectives and helped create a social and political environment receptive to the growing influence of the MB at the grassroots level.

Moreover, its presence in professional associations helped the group enhance its finances in order to provide services to their members and sympathizers, set up projects for low-income housing for professionals, provide cash loans, health insurance, and educational programs to its members (Clark, 1995:15-17). In an interview with *Harvard International Review* in 2001, Mamun Hudaybi, the son of the second Supreme Guide, Hasan Hudaybi, and the Deputy of Supreme Guide in 1997, expressed this grassroots activism as part of the MB's commitment in the struggle for an Islamic state. He said, "… a government that is committed to Islam cannot be established without a popular base that believes in its teachings, the group strove to provide a mechanism for the education of society in Islamic principles and ethics" (Hudaybi, 2001:21). These services are crucial for the general public because government services usually fail to provide quality services and therefore they help the organization to gain a significant degree of popular support.

In the mid 1990s, the conflicting interests between deliberate efforts of political moderation and the organization's ultimate mission for Islamizing the state began to unfold. Integrating its goals in the political system apparently did not decline the group's ultimate mission for the establishment of Islamic state, instead, partly encouraged by its expansion in the social realm and the increasing trend of public

religious sentiment, the Islamists in the Parliament became even more confident in pushing parliament toward the enforcement of the *shari'a* (Bayat, 2001:66; Dawoud, 2001; see also, Wickham, 2002:212).

The subsequent elections in 1995 and then later in 2000 and 2005 demonstrated that the long presence of the MB in religious activism and social welfare service, combined with the declining capacity of the state to provide public services, had a significant positive impact for the steady growth of the Islamists' electoral appeal. In the 1995 and especially in the 2000 elections, independent candidates from the MB ran for parliamentary seats. The independent-Islamists won 8 seats in 1995 Parliament, but in the 2000, the Islamist candidates managed to win 17 seats. This was higher than the total seats won by the secular political parties. An impressive demonstration of the MB's appeal in the electoral politics was witnessed in the 2005 elections. Although the rules were consistently rigged and manipulated, the MB candidates won a total of 88 out of 150 seats, which was a success rate of 65 percent. This is equally impressive when compared to the 11 seats for all opposition groups combined (Makram-Ebeid, 2006; El-Ghobasy, 2007). An important point to mention here is that, in all these elections the MB conducted an ambitious and well-organized campaign, by using its famous slogan: "Islam is the Solution."

The increasing appeal of the "Islamic alternative" in both civil society and the Parliament forced the state to change its toleration policies with selected repression. Beginning in the early 1990s, the state began to realize that the policies that were initially placed to control the MB has become "an incubator for … a social movement [that] translated into the political realm to emerge as the most

formidable, albeit unofficial, opposition group against the Mubarak regime" (Berman, 2003:259). As will be discussed below, Mubarak began to reverse his policies by confronting the emerging 'Parliamentary opposition' operated not only as a democratic force, but also as an organization mandated for the transformation of the state toward the enforcement of Islamic *shari'a* (Dawoud, 2001; see also, Wickham, 2002:212).

3.2. State Responses: Blocking the Road to Transformation

The development of state-Islamist relations in the recent decades in Egypt illustrated that Mubarak's recognition of the MB in civil society organizations as well as full restrictions in political activities produced unexpected results. For the regime, the MB's success at running a great number of social welfare projects proved auspicious for the MB in the short-term. Many of these projects directly intersected with the public services that are theoretically the responsibility of the ubiquitous Egyptian state. By acting as a substitute for the gargantuan social welfare network, the Islamists became a real alternative to the ruling authoritarian system.

The 1992 Cairo earthquake has generally been referenced by observers as a good illustration of the state-Islamist conflicts in the area of social provision. By all accounts, the state's capability to provide humanitarian assistance for the victims of the earthquake was greatly eclipsed by the capacity of Islamist humanitarian relief teams, which were mostly organized by the MB (Berman, 2003; Miller, 2001; Sullivan-Abed-Kotob, 1996). This sense of an Islamist threat expanded as the MB's appeal in elections gradually increased. The ability of Islamist politicians and

grassroots activists to capitalize on religious and social activism for electoral mobilization posed a degree of challenge to Egypt's political order. Not only did the organization increasingly play the role as political opposition to the authoritarian system, particularly its success in elections, it also began to intersect in the areas where the regime would not tolerate, which amounted to a struggle for an Islamic state.

For the MB there were also some unexpected results in the development of the state-Islamist relationship. The state policies became an unpredicted boon for the MB with its increased appeal in the political arena. Scholars of Middle East politics remarked, "[a]s most channels of legal political participation have been progressively restricted or entirely closed, many of those seeking to effect policy and personnel changes have turned to extralegal means" (Baaklini, Denoeux and Springborg 1999:246). The ability to participate in the elections enabled the MB to carry the gains achieved from these non-political activities in to the political scene. The subsequent success in elections, although without transforming it into a party organization, enabled the Islamist politicians in the Parliament to attack the existing system and further their agenda with an increasingly stronger voice. This occurred without having to face the organizational restraints that are normally part of a political party. As Sullivan and Abed-Kotob (1996:57-58) pointed out, "… political participation is crucial to the MB, for it provides a mode of communication that promotes awareness at the societal level, thus aiding in the creation of the Islamic society that is at the core of the MB's long term ambitions".

As the state's combined strategy between toleration and control failed to transform the MB's long term political objectives, the early 1990s marked a turning point with changes in Mubarak policies 'from accommodation to confrontation' (Campagna, 1996). In 1994, the regime cracked down on Islamic businesses, imposed strict controls on the fund raising activities of Islamic charitable organizations, and barred the MB students from contesting student union elections. In the face of the 1995 elections, the government passed legislation that made it difficult for the MB candidates to win the leadership in professional organizations and used widespread fraud to prevent the MB candidates from winning in parliamentary elections (Al Awadi, 2004:170-190; Wickham, 2003:111).

A series of contingent events occurred that increased the regime's perception of an Islamist threat thereby underpinning Mubarak's more repressive measures. The first event was the escalation of the jihadist violence between 1992 and 1997. Beginning in the early 1990s, attacks on selected individuals—especially those public figures accused as "the enemies of Islam"—tourists and non-Muslim populations became more frequent.[25] Al-Jihad and the Jama'at al-Islamiya (JI) are the two groups responsible for most of these violent acts. In 1992, most of the attacks took place in the Sa'id province (at Asyut and al-Minya) where the JI launched an insurgency in order to establish control in the South region. The escalation reached its peak in 1995 and culminated in November 1997 when 68 foreign tourists were killed at the Luxor

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[25] The victims of the jihadists' attack in the late 1980s and the 1990s included the assassination of the Speaker of the People's Assembly, Rifat al Mahgoub (October, 1990); the assassination of the liberal intellectual, Farag Fauda (June, 1992); the attempt on the lives of several figures such as the Interior Minister, General Abu Basha (May, 1987), a journalist, Makram Ahmad (1987), the former Interior Minister, Zaki Badr (1989), the former Information Minister, Shafwat al Sharif (1993), the former Interior Minister, Atef Sedki (November, 1993), and the Nobel Prize Laureate, Nagib Mahfuz (October, 1994).

Temple. Second, in 1995, Mubarak became a target of an assassination attempt by a jihadist group in Addis Ababa, where the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood was implicated. Immediately after the event, the regime arrested 81 of the MB's leading activists and brought them before a military court (Wickham, 2003:215; El-Ghobashi, 2005:373).[26] In the international arena, the tragic violent outcome of Algerian elections in 1991, in which the Islamist political front (FIS) scored significant support in the first round only to watch the regime cancel the elections, gave another strong message to Mubarak that the state of Egypt is "determined not to go Algeria's way".[27]

The cumulative effects of jihadist escalation and the regime's crack down forced the MB into a state of retrenchment. The organization was also forced to abandon control over civil society organizations that it had successfully occupied during the 1980s and early 1990s (Campagna, 1996:213-17). Most importantly, it drove the MB to undertake a series of ideological changes. In 1994, for instance, the leadership published two booklets highlighting its positions on political pluralism and the political rights of women. In these two booklets, the MB made "... a qualified commitment to the principles of democracy and political pluralism" (Wickham, 2003:189) and to the political rights of women.[28] A series of public announcements of

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[26] The Islamist activists arrested for this event were tried before a special military tribunal and charged with plotting to overthrow the government. Fifty-four activists were found guilty and received prison sentences of up to five years with hard labour. In January 1995, a few months before the assassination attempts, in interview with *the New Yorker* Mubarak publicly criticized the MB and blamed the increasing violence on the group. He stated:

> "The whole problem of terrorism throughout the Middle East is a by-product of our own, illegal Muslim Brotherhood—whether its al-Jihad, Hizbullah in Lebanon, of Hamas. They all sprang underneath of the Muslim Brotherhood".

[27] Amr Moussa's (Egypt's Foreign Minister, 1995-2000) statement, cf. Walsh, 2000, p. 34.

[28] In the booklet on *Shura* (consultation) and Political pluralism, the MB maintained that the principle of *Shura* in Islam is an injunction towards the sovereignty of the People or the *Umma*. This is best achieved through a written constitution that guarantees the separation of powers, civil rights and liberties to Muslims and non-Muslims alike, an elected parliament that has oversight and legislative powers, and free and fair elections, all within the limits and principles of the *shari'a*. The booklet also

the Brotherhood's commitment for constitutionalism, democracy and equality of

rights continued to appear. In 1995, in the wake of the arrest of 81 MB leaders, the

organization issued a statement asserting its commitment to Egypt's constitution and

democracy (*The Muslim Brotherhood*, 1996). This was reiterated again in 2000. The

statement highlighted the MB's position on four principle issues: the rights of non-

Muslims, the relationship between religion and politics, the use violence, and human

rights. In that statement, the MB maintained that Christians in the Muslim world are

brothers and partners and are entitled to full citizenship rights and that Islam enjoins

Muslims to work with non-Muslims towards the common good.[29]

However, in spite of these ideological changes and deeper involvement in its

opposition against authoritarianism, the MB failed to convince many segments of

Egypt's society about its democratic commitment. Though the MB repeatedly

affirmed its position on democracy and political pluralism, many of its critics

maintained that this commitment was procedural rather than substantive. Diah

Rishwan, one of the young leading intellectuals in Egypt, points out, "there existed a

fundamental tension between democratic values and the MB's overarching objective

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affirmed the MB's commitment to the principle of multi-party pluralism and in the alternation of power between competing political parties, but within the context of a constitution based on the principles of the *shari'a*. This is sharp different from al-Bana, who regarded multi-party pluralism as a source of *fitna* or factionalism. In the booklet on Women in Muslim Societies, the MB asserted its commitment to the political rights of women both as voters and as candidates for public office. However, the statement denied women the right to the highest executive offices (*The Muslim Brotherhood*, 1994).

[29] However, the booklet left the question of whether non-Muslims had the right to hold the highest executive office unanswered. On religion and politics, for example, the statement maintained that rulers should have no religious authority and that their legitimacy derives from the will of the people who are free to adopt any political system that guarantees their sovereignty. The statement noted that democracy is the political system that most closely approximates the principle of *shura* enjoined by Islam. Finally, on human rights, the statement maintained that Islam has dignified man and humanity the most and that the MB is at the forefront of the human rights movement, especially since Muslims everywhere have been the victims of egregious human rights violations (*The Muslim Brotherhood*, 1997).

of instituting a constitutional order based on the principles and limits of the

shari'a".[30] Critics have argued that while the MB may have embraced the methods

and procedures of democracy, it continued to reject many of its fundamental values.

Observers noted that part of the MB's failure to show its ideological

transformation is in those areas where the principles of the *shari'a* come into direct

conflict with the values of democracy. Issues such as equal citizenship of Muslim and

non-Muslim have become a crucial point that the Brotherhood needs to resolve.

Foremost among these issues is the question of the rights of women and non-

Muslims. Does the ideology of the MB permit women and non-Muslims to hold the

highest executive positions? What are the exact limits of political pluralism, freedom

of expression and freedom of belief under a constitutional system limited by the

principles of the *shari'a* and the question of the implementation of *hudud* or corporeal

punishments enjoined by the *shari'a*? Critics have also questioned the MB's

controversial positions on certain economic issues such as interest rates, codes for

Islamic dress, and the tourism industry.[31]

Finally, critics also pointed to the gap between official statements and

documents released by the MB and unofficial statements made by MB leaders that

contradict their official positions as evidenced in authenticity of the MB's discourse

on democracy. For example in 1995, Mustafa Mashour, who later became the

Supreme Guide of the movement, maintained in a taped interview that in an Islamic

state Coptic citizens would be barred from the top positions in the military in order to

ensure complete loyalty when confronting hostile Christian states, and that a special

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[30] Interview with Diah Rishwan, Cairo, 9 January 2008.
[31] Interview with Diah Rishwan, Cairo, 9 January 2008.

tax (*jizya*) would be levied on Christians in exchange for protection by the state (El-Ghobashi, 2005:386).[32] Contradictions between the formal statements of the MB and the informal opinions and practices of its leaders have been interpreted by many as confirming the duplicity of the movement and its tactical use of democratic language to give an illusion of moderation to what is in essence a conservative and reactionary movement. However, the tensions in the discourse and practices of the movement can be better understood as a reflection of internal dynamics between different generations and factions within the movement rather than as a deliberate policy to deceive.

4. Generational Issues and *the Wasat Party* Phenomenon

A narrative about the blocked transformation of Islamism in Egypt is incomplete without examining the internal dynamics in the MB in relation to the tension and conflict between two generations of Muslim activists; that is between the Old Guard and the new cadre, known as the Wasat (centrist) generation. The latter activists joined the MB during the late 1970s and early 1980s. The members of this generation are quite distinct from the Old Guard which have dominated the power structures of the MB since its emergence in 1928 (Altman, 2006:17; Rishwan, 2004). Equally important, formal and secular politics has been viewed in a pessimistic manner by the Old Guard as a result of the enduring oppression from the state in the 1950s and 1960s. The Old Guard remains deeply suspicious of other groups and

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[32] More recently, Mohammed Mahdi Akef, the current Supreme Guide, lost his temper during a taped interview after the reporter who was interviewing him suggested that creating a pan-Islamic state would constitute a violation of Egypt's sovereignty. Akef replied "to hell with Egypt, and the father of Egypt and the people of Egypt". See, Shoeb, 2006, p. 11.

unforgiving toward such former political rivals, such as the Nasserists, nationalists

and the left due to bitter past confrontations. Therefore formal political participation,

as we shall see later, did not substantially transform the mindset of the Old Guard.[33]

Hence the emergence of the Wasat generation became to some extent one of the most

important catalysts for the new outlook of the MB politics.

As explored in the Chapter 4, this generation came from the Islamist

university students, specifically Islamic Student Groups and developed during Sadat's

"Islamic Turn" politics. In the late 1970s, Umar Tilmisani, the Supreme Guide,

succeeded in recruiting a significant number of student leaders into the MB

strengthening the process of moderation. Beginning in the early 1980s, these leading

activists from the Jama'at, such as Abul illa al-Madi, Isam al-Eryan and Abdel

Monem Abul Futuh, helped steer the movement in a new direction. It was this

younger group of activists which was largely responsible for the electoral successes

of the MB during the 1980s and 1990s.

These younger activists differed greatly in their approach than that of the

founders' generation, particularly from the Secret Apparatus faction (Stacher,

2002:422). The Wasat generation had not been subjected to the rigorous socialization

techniques of the movement and had developed their political consciousness on

university campuses independently from the movement (El-Ghobasy, 2005:386).

Moreover, these activists came to political consciousness in an environment of

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[33] In contrast, the New Guard is made up largely of student leaders from the 1970s. For example, the present leader (*murshid*), Mohammed Akif, who was already a member before al-Banna's assassination in 1949, was sentenced to death after the failed 1954 assassination attempt on Nasser and was imprisoned until 1974. He and others of his generation are generally more zealous, conservative, and committed primarily to long-term spiritual work and to preserving the movement's unity. Interview with Diah Rishwan, Cairo: 2 January 2008.

relative political openness and pluralism. Most important still, they were not shaped by experiences of violence, repression and persecution that had underpinned the outlook of their MB elders. As a result, the Wasat generation activists were averse to the hierarchical and conspiratorial approach of some MB elders (Rishwan, 2004:12). They were more liberal, political-oriented and pragmatic in their outlook and more comfortable working through formal and legal channels and cooperating with other political forces to achieve common goals (*Arab Strategic Report,* 2002:435-436).[34]

Up until 2006, the presence of the young generation of the Old Guard at the forefront of the movement helped bridge the gap between the more conservative and more liberal elements of the movement (Schatter, 2001:424). The two Supreme Guides, Omar al-Tilmisani's (1973-1986) and Hamid Abu al-Nasr (1986-1996), recruited the younger activists under their wing and supported their efforts to shift the movement's activism in a more formal and overtly political direction. However, in spite of the pivotal role they played in bringing back the MB to the center stage, the younger activists were kept away from key decision making positions.[35] Up until recently, they were only allowed to hold positions on the Shura Council (consultation) of the organization, but not on its principal decision making body: The Guidance Bureau (Rishwan, 2004:141).

During the second half of 1990s, tensions between the Old Guard and the Wasat generation began to heighten. The Wasat generation responded to the regime's

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[34] In the 2000s, the young leadership in the MB joined forces with nationalists, liberals and leftist oppositions in organizing events in support of the Palestinian Intifada (2002); holding demonstrations against the American invasion of Iraq (2003). In 2005, the MB joined the Egyptian Popular Committee in Support of Reforms which brought together activists from across the political spectrum. Interview with Muhammad Sayyid Habib, Cairo, 21 December 2007
[35] Interview with Diah Rizhwan, 12 January 2008.

campaign against the MB by trying to move the movement towards greater

transparency and moderation. It was the Wasat generation that oversaw the

production of the booklets on political pluralism and the rights of women and which

initiated a dialogue with other political forces.[36] Moreover, the Wasat generation

began lobbying MB leadership to transform the movement into a formal political

party in order to end the state of legal and ideological ambiguity that has

characterized the movement since its creation in the 1920s.

However, in 1995, both the regime and MB elders aborted these efforts. The

regime persecuted Wasat generation activists who had preached formality and greater

ideological clarity and the MB older generation rejected their propositions. In 1996,

and as a result of these internal and external pressures, a group of leading Wasat

generation activists led by Abu 'Illa al-Madi split from the MB after a stand off with

the leadership and endeavoured to establish a formal, liberal-oriented Islamist

political party: Al-Wasat Party (Centrist Party). Although the Wasat party has been

repeatedly denied legal recognition and remains a narrowly based elite movement

with no real popular support, it is nonetheless significant because it represents the

first serious attempt for Egypt's Islamism to move to a non-violent, liberal, party-

minded movement beyond its purist ambivalence in the struggle for an Islamic state.

The Wasat generation is in many respects representative of the new

perspective of an important segment of Muslim activists of the 1970s. They opted to

remain in the moderate-MB and began to assume a more important role within the

movement. However, whereas the founders of the Wasat party have had the freedom

to articulate a more liberal Islamist discourse, Wasat activists within the MB have had

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[36] Interview with Abu Illa al-Madi, Cairo, 9 December 2007.

to tread more carefully and to mind the delicate balances within the organization. This illustrates a conflict of interest between conservatives and moderates and between the Old Guard and the New Guard (Wickham, 2003:412-423; Baker, 2003:41-43). The phenomenon of the Wasat party indicates that it is conceivable given a more conducive political environment of historic peak of mobilization that the MB itself—much like the Islamist movements in other Muslim countries such as Turkey and Indonesia—will split into two distinct movements: one representing the more moderate and pragmatic outlook of the Wasat generation and another representing the more conservative outlook of the Old Guard-founders' generation.

The founders of the Wasat Party describe their party as a civic party that takes its inspiration from the universal principles of Islam.[37] The founders perceive that the *Shari'a* is not a set of fixed and immutable principles, but rather as a set of general values and principles that must be re-interpreted and adapted to different historical contexts. In their declaration in 1996, the founder stated that:

> The objective of the founders is to make the *shari'a* a living entity that actively interacts with all aspects of life. We thus opt for those interpretations of the *shari'a* that do not paralyze society and stunt its development but rather those that push it forward. The founders believe that their views are inspired by the underlying purposes and intentions of the *shari'a* and recognize that the teachings of the *shari'a* are based on human interpretations that arc subject to mistakes, criticisms and revisions and must thus be revised from place to place and time to time (*Al-Wasat Party Program*, 1997:21).

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[37] It is interesting to note, just like Indonesia, which will be discussed in the next part, Islamists increasingly prefer to use the term 'civic' as a substitute for the term 'secular' due to the latter word has been closely associated with atheism, liberalism and the West. I have an impression during my interview with Isam al-Eryan and Abu Illa al-Madi that, even their political outlook sounded liberal and secular, both carefully managed to use the term 'secular' politically. By using the term 'civic,' it allows them to embrace the notion of a non-religious state while avoiding the negative connotations associated with the term secularism.

In addition to adopting an inclusive and dynamic understanding of the *shari'a*, the Wasat party has unequivocally recognized the principles of equal citizenship and equality among men and women and among Muslims and non-Muslims. The party program explicitly states that the principle of citizenship is the foundation for organizing relations between individuals in a state; and there should be no discrimination on the basis of religion, gender, color, race in all rights and duties including the right to hold the highest executive office. In addition, the Wasat affirms complete equality between men and women in terms of political and legal entitlements and maintains that merit and not gender is the only criteria for occupying the highest public offices.

5. Toward a Democratic Solution for an Islamic State

In this section, I elaborate how legacies of state formation combined with the purist characteristics of the Islamist movement ultimately contributed to outcomes of religious transformation. In the overall strategies undertaken by the MB, one may pose a question: How far did the transformation of Islamism in Egypt unfold? Using some documents and interviews with the contemporary leadership of this organization, we can examine how the MB adapted its purist Islamist programs to the specific conditions of contemporary politics. Participation in electoral politics was not the only framework through which patterns of Islamist transformation was conceived. The document of "Reform Initiatives 2004" also provides another perspective as the MB leadership stated more explicitly their political objectives.

Such an open statement from the MB indicated that the success in containing reform undertaken by the state since the mid 1970s and the gradual increase of electoral involvement since the mid 1980s made the organization more confident among the ruling regime and its constituents (Awadi, 2004:50-56; Wickham, 2003; Rutherford, 2007).[38] As mentioned above, beginning in the mid 1990s, the MB began to articulate its agenda as an opposition group supporting political pluralism and democracy as well as the implementation of *shari'a*. The Wasat generation activists who were more pragmatic and embraced more liberal views than their elders set up this development (Alman, 2006:12-17; Schatter, 2001:227). Arguably, these documents can be regarded as a form of presentation from the contemporary leadership of the MB to push a political convergence between Islamic *shari'a* and the state in constitutional terms.

However, over time the ruling authorities manage to block any form of conciliation. The distribution of these pamphlets was eventually restricted and many of the leaders who wrote them were imprisoned (Rutherford, 2008:208). The student associations and professional syndicates where the MB enjoyed such success were either closed or crippled through legal and extra-legal measures. As the repression intensified, the internal tensions within the MB sharpened and the efforts to define a clear political agenda came to a halt (Rutherford, 2008:232).

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[38] It is important to emphasize, however, that even with such political strength in containing Mubarak's regime, the Brotherhood remained reluctant to state its political objectives. Leaders of the organization claimed that this vagueness was a logical response to the harsh political environment under authoritarian regime. In their view, a clear MB political agenda would be interpreted by the regime as an immediate threat to its power and would lead to a vigorous crackdown. Others argued that the MB's ideological haziness was a product of internal divisions along philosophical, generational, and family lines (Awadi, 2004; Baker, 1990). According to this perspective, the MB refrained from developing detailed plans for political reform in order to avoid the divisive internal debates that would undoubtedly ensue.

This situation began to change in last decade. Facilitated by the release of younger leaders in the MB from prisons and the leadership changes that allowed these young leaders to resume strategic positions in the organization, the MB began to initiate substantive reforms in 2001-2002, dealing with many issues on politics, democracy, and new interpretations of Islamic state (Amtar, 2006:11). In 2004, when the Supreme Guide Mamun al-Hudaybi died, the reforms continued to accelerate internally.[39] Mamun al-Hudaybi had been one of the most eminent members of the Old Guard. His death marked the beginning of a transition toward a new generation of leadership (Rutherford, 2008:89).

It is true that, up until 2005, the younger generation was difficult to take the highest level of the organization leadership. But, under Muhammad Mahdi Akif, two of respected leaders of the young generation—Muhammad Habib and Khayrat al-Shatir—were promoted to the post of deputy for the Supreme Guide. This new pattern of leadership recruitment reflected the internal change in the MB's political behaviour. Muhammad 'Akif, the MB's Supreme Guide (2004- 2010), endorsed the moderate political views articulated by this Islamist younger generation.[40]

It is still difficult to pinpoint to which direction the MB will push these organizational reforms given their contradictory stances on many crucial issues on the role of state in public morality. This brief description on the MB's Reform Initiative deserves particular mention. In 2005, with the government's decision to allow a

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[39] Interview with Isam al-Iryan, Cairo: 23 January 2008.
[40] Since January 2010, there is leadership change in the MB. Although it is beyond the scope of our discussion to look at the ongoing reform undertaken by the MB, it is safe to say that election of Muhammad Badi', the new Supreme Guide who was perceived to represent the conservative faction, reflected an uneasy process of the internal reform undertaken by the MB. Observers noted that the new rising leadership was basically a final blow for reformist factions given Badi's historical record as to be associated with the Qutb's radical group in the 1960s.

relatively free parliamentary election, the MB began to overtly articulate its reform. The campaigning phase of the election also unfolded with far less repression than in previous contests. The MB enjoyed a more open political environment using its own name and to support a group of independent candidates. The relative open campaign environment also enabled the MB to publish a "Reform Initiative", issue a campaign platform (in October 2005), publicize its agenda through pamphlets and newspaper articles and explain its views in numerous interviews to the media.[41]

5.1. Convergence between Islamic Shari'a and the Political System

What is remarkable in the MB's transformative program was that it seeks to create a "… republican system of government that is democratic, constitutional, and parliamentary and that conforms in Islamic principles" *(Mubadirat al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin,* 2004:1). There are four aspects of Islamic constitutionalism that the contemporary leadership of the MB was committed to oversee.

As part of the MB's main concern with the issue of democratization, the first aspect of the MB's commitment was a demand for the constraints on State power. In the MB's view, governments are formed through a contract between rulers and ruled, that is "established by the umma and carried out by the civil institutions of the state" (*Afaq al-Arabiya,* 2004:18). Within this arrangement, the ruler or the government functions as an agent (*wakil*) of the people.[42] To this issue, the MB places particular

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[41] A great number of articles was published by intellectuals and leaders of the MB, especially in a newspaper managed by the MB activists, *Afaq Arabiya.*

[42] In my interview with the leading figures of the organization, the Brotherhood did not provide any details on how this contract is drafted under current conditions. Whether the current Constitution is considered a contract or not is also unclear. If this is an Islamic constitutional contract, to what extent this differs from the current constitution remained unclear. However, there is extensive discussion of the need to constrain and regulate state power.

emphasis on limiting the power of the president. Muhammad Habib conceived that "...the president is a symbol for all Egyptians and not the head of any political party".[43] This means, Habib said, the presidency should be situated as a ceremonial post with no executive power, in order to ensure that the president did not pursue a policy that contradicts his role as a symbol of Egyptian unity.[44]

A particular point needs to be emphasized to explicate the MB's insistence against authoritarianism and the role of state in subordinating religious institutions. Habib maintains, "... we seek to restructure the executive branch in order to limit the state power, including using ulama for its own purpose". Interestingly, the MB stresses its advocacy for the limit of executive power by arguing that state involvement in the operations of religious institutions including al-Azhar University must be stopped. In its view, the president should no longer have the authority to appoint the Sheikh of al-Azhar. Rather, the Sheikh should be elected by senior clerics. Revenue from religious endowments (*awqaf*) should no longer be channelled through the state budget, but should pass directly to al-Azhar. And, the executive should cease its practice of telling imams and preachers what they should say to their followers.[45] In dealing with the military, the MB insists that the military remain uninvolved in politics, and that the Minister of Defence (as well as all other ministers) be civilians. Similarly, it stresses that the police and the internal security forces should be civilian and that they "... not be used by the government to secure its stay in power or suppress the opposition."

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[43] Interview with Muhammad Habib, 8 December 2007.
[44] Interview with Muhhamad Habib, Cairo, 8 December 2007.
[45] Interview with Muhammad Mahdi Akif, Cairo, 10 December 2007.

The role of strong parliament becomes a serious concern of the MB's reform initiative (*Mubadirat*, 2004:15-17). In order to challenge the current practices of executive power, the MB seeks to strengthen the parliament and make it a more effective to balance executive power. It supports increasing the Parliament's budget and staffing, as well as expanding its power to initiate laws, review the state's budget, and investigate the decisions and conduct of ministers. The MB also calls for the expansion of civil society, which it considers a "strategic partner" in its efforts to achieve reform and development. In pursuit of this goal, it advocates repealing laws that interfere with the formation, funding, and operation of civil society groups (*Mubadirat*, 2004:12-17).

The second issue is the legal aspect of the Islamic state. The MB's documents published on the eve of the electoral campaign stressed the centrality of law for political order that they hoped to create. Similar to the nature of statehood in the liberal conception, law applies equally to ruler and ruled, and is the primary means for achieving a more just society (*Mubadirat,* 2004:80). However, the MB also insists that the Parliament must adopt laws that are "within the framework of Islamic *shari'a*" (*Mubadirat,* 2004:81). This framework is to be delineated by elected representatives of the people. According to the MB, these representatives may consult with religious scholars or 'ulama', but the 'ulama' have no authority to issue legislation or to declare legislation invalid. In Mahdi Akif's statement:

> The role of ulama here is consultative... The only institution with the authority to oversee laws is the Supreme Constitutional Court. In our belief, the Constitutional court evaluates laws based upon their conformity with the Constitution, but also must bind their decisions with ulama rulings and advises. Within this spirit, Parliament thus may not adopt legislation that sanctions what is prohibited (*haram*) or prohibits what is permissible (*halal*). I

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give you a specific example, it is impossible for the Parliament to issue laws that allow adultery, or which interfere with prayer or with the performance of the *hajj* [pilgrimage to Mecca]. The elected representatives of the people are free to legislate in all other areas.[46]

In this sense, the Brotherhood's religio-political agenda places particular emphasis on adopting laws that strengthen the protection of civil and political rights because of their assertion that, as Mahdi points out, "this is *shari'a* ... which observes freedom as part of religious injunction".[47]

Public participation is the third aspect the MB seeks to address. In this area of concern, the MB reiterates the broad themes elaborated by Muslim scholars dealing with the compatibility of Islam and democracy. This includes the people as the source of political authority, free elections as the only legitimate method for selecting a leader, leaders are required to consult with the people or their representatives; and citizens can dismiss a ruler that fails to heed their wishes (*Mubadirat*, 2004:16). In Muhammad Habib's view, "*Shura* [consultation] is a fundamental concept in Islam, and, in our view, democracy is the closest conception and the most appropriate institutional mechanism through which a modern Muslim polity to apply *shura.*"[48] Each citizen has a right to vote and to run for office. Beyond these broad principles, the MB also calls for specific reforms that will render elections more free and fair. For example, as Isam al-Iryan points out:

> Security agencies and the Ministry of Justice should be barred from any involvement in national elections. The judiciary should supervise the entire electoral process—from the drawing up of voter lists through balloting, counting the ballots, and declaring the results. And, there should be no

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[46] Interview with Mohammed Mahdi Akif, Cairo, 10 December 2007.
[47] Interview with Mohammed Mahdi Akif, Cairo, 10 December 2007. [Ibid.]
[48] Interview with Muhammad Sayyid Habib, Cairo, 8 December 2007.

restrictions on campaigning. Candidates should be free to hold rallies, distribute leaflets, and hang posters without interference.[49]

By addressing the problem of political participation in the "Reform Initiatives", the MB actually seeks to strengthen the role of political parties in the nation's politics. Akif, for example, explicitly demanded the government to remove the impediments to the formation of parties and to end government interference in their operation. This demand includes support for the MB and for the creation of a Coptic political party.[50] It must be noted, however, the leadership in the MB is divided over whether to create their own political party. Mahdi Akif states that the organization should wait until all the existing laws that interfere with the operation of parties are repealed. But, Isam al-Iryan, one of the leading young generation in the organization, wants the MB to move more quickly to establish a political party with a "civil character" that would be open to membership by all citizens (including Copts). This party, al-Iryan argues, "would mobilize more citizens into the political process, build trust between Muslims and Copts, and strengthen national unity".[51]

Finally, issues such as civil and political rights become one of the most important areas in which the MB seeks to address. In "Reform Initiatives", the MB was committed to oversee the role of the state in guaranteeing the protection of a wide range of individual rights. They supported freedom of speech "within the limits of public order, social decorum, and society's constants" (*Mubadirat*, 2004:14). The freedom to own and use different forms of media is also advocated. Freedom of

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[49] Interview with Irsam al-Iryan, Cairo, 23 January 2008.
[50] Interview with Muhammad Sayyid Habib, Cairo, 10 December 2007.
[51] Interview with Irsam al-Iryan, Cairo, 23 January 2008.

assembly is supported "within the limits of the safety of society and public security" (*Mubadirat*, 2004:15). The MB further advocates cancelling all laws that restrict freedom, including the emergency law and the laws dealing with political parties, the socialist public prosecutor, political rights, the press, and professional syndicates (*Mubadirat*, 2004: 17-19). In this framework, calls for reviewing all the past verdicts issued by military courts and exceptional courts, and ordering new trials before ordinary tribunals were addressed to indicate its bitter experience with the state. It also supports the release of all political prisoners and a firm ban on torture (*Mubadirat*, 2004:17).

5.2. The Role of State in Moral Transformation

The MB's ultimate goal of an Islamic state as elaborated above revealed that the contemporary leadership of this organization has conceptualized Islamic constitutionalism in a manner that meets with the modern-secular conception of statehood. In their critique of authoritarianism, for example, the MB maintained that "Islam advocates the adoption of laws that apply equally to ruler and ruled" (*Mubadirat*, 2004:11), the creation of institutions that regulate and constrain state power, and the protection of many civil and political rights. It also supports broad public participation in governance. However, there are some elements and aspects of the organization's expectation of the role of the state that are decidedly different from the modern-secular conception of a state. Such a difference is most apparent in the frequent references to the transformational character of the MB's political agenda.

The MB leadership believes that, Egypt is weak because Egyptians have abandoned the principles of Islam.[52] This moral and spiritual breakdown can be resolved only by "transforming the individual from within" (Akif, 2004:11). In this sense, individual transformation does not merely entail self-reflection and deeper personal spirituality. The MB believes that an individual's character is shaped by the community in which he lives. In order to transform the individual, the MB points out, the state "must take the lead to transform every dimension of society—cultural, economic, social, judicial, and political" (*Mubadirat*, 2004:10). Muhammad Habib, the Deputy of the Supreme Guide, then suggests that "… a truly Islamic community will emerge only through the purposeful construction from the smallest unit of society: the Muslim individual, home and family, government, and, then, state".[53]

Such Islamic transformative programs echoes al-Banna's political assertion in the 1940s, that the state plays the central role in this process of moral transformation. The state is perceived as the mechanism for ensuring that people "worship, practice good manners, and act honourably" (*Mubadirat,* 2004:19). It protects the morality of individual Muslims by "purging the media of material that runs counter to the rules of Islam and the values that it instils." The state achieves "godliness and religiosity in society" by "… constructing an individual with Islamic principles and values that are deeply rooted in his character" (*Mubadirat,* 2004:22) and by "protecting values, ethics, and manners" (*Mubadirat,* 2004:23).

Recently, the leading intellectuals of the MB developed this conception of the state to underpin the role of the state as an agent of public morality (Baker, 2003:11-

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[52] Interview with Muhammad Sayyid Habib, Cairo, 8 December 2007.
[53] Interview with Muhammad Sayyid Habib, Cairo, 8 December 2007.

12). This is reflected in the MB's call for reviving the Islamic traditional doctrine of *hisba*, which literally means a mutual-duty for Muslims. The idea of *hisba* is a classical principle that dates back to the earliest history of the concept of power in Islam (Qardawi, 2004:9-12). It mandates that each person has a duty to strengthen the religiosity of his fellow Muslims and, thereby, build a stronger and more pious society. But in the MB's conception, the obligation of *hisba* became grafted on to the duties of the state (Cook, 2000:470). The state assumed the obligation to "enjoin good and forbid evil" in each member of the community. This involved not only the obvious task of enforcing a wide range of laws governing personal behaviour. It also included designing the education system, selecting judges, and appointing officials at all levels of society with the goal of enhancing the piety of the community. Based on this assertion, different from the role of state found in modern-secular sense of the statecraft, the MB maintains that, an Islamic state is a state that has more invasive role in order to perform these moral transformation tasks.[54]

Thus, it must be noted that, such a conflicting role of the state between the *hisba* and political constitution within the MB's ideals was intriguing. In essence, the MB make a long and detailed case for creating institutions that are normally associated with constraining and limiting state power. But at the same time, they invoke the concept of *hisba* and its dramatic expansion of the state's power to interfere in the private lives of its citizens.

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[54] Interview with Muhammad Sayyid Habib, Cairo, 2 December 2007. In my inquiry to the Supreme Guide Mahdi Akif's view about the role of the Islamic state, it reveals that the state in the Brotherhood's ideal is "not simply a state that maintains order." Rather, it is "an intellectual creedal state"—a state based upon a creed that it promotes by "creating an atmosphere that translates the teachings of Islam into tangible reality." In Mahdi's view, the state "represents the justice of God on earth" and, through its actions, "deepens the Islamic character of the people and spreads Islam."

These contradictory notions of state authorities deserve a particular explanation. First, as the notion of an Islamic state alternative becomes a popular cause in contemporary Egypt, the MB and the Muslim intellectuals associated with Islamism seek to deceive their audience. But they invoke the rhetoric of democratic institutions and procedures in order to frame their civic opposition against an authoritarian regime. However, deep down inside, they appear to be committed to an autocratic form of rule based upon a powerful state that enjoys divine sanction and few constraints on its power. In other words, the struggle for a democratic Egypt was deeply intertwined with political processes in the strategic insulation for the settlement of an Islamic state.[55] In this sense, there is a certain inconsistency to the claim that the democratic rhetoric of Islamists is merely paying lip service for an underlying autocratic agenda. On the one hand, it implies great sophistication and intelligence among those involved. They present elaborate arguments—complete with extensive Qur'anic citations and references from the Prophetic traditions—that articulate a coherent and plausible case for democracy derived from Islamic sources.

To understand the political commitment of the MB discussed above, it is important to look more closely at how the reform ideas of the Islamic state were advocated by the MB. The performance of the MB's deputies in the Egyptian parliament is a useful means to test the extent to which the Islamist transformation in

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[55] We must note that in dealing with the intertwined characteristics between Islam and democracy, the MB makes no secret of its goal of transforming Egyptian society. This objective is stated in the first paragraph of its Reform Initiative and appears repeatedly in its campaign platform. Similarly, the central role of the state in carrying out this transformation is presented explicitly and repeatedly. The theorists also present their views on *hisba* and the transformational role of the state clearly and explicitly.

Egypt unfolded.[56] The Islamic coalition participated in the 1995 elections with only

two forces: the MB and 'Amal Party (Labour Party).[57] The 2000 election was held as

expected, but for the first time under judicial supervision. The Brotherhood won 17

seats out of the 70 candidates it had run, again under the slogan "Islam is the

solution".

The MB's performance was documented in a book published by the

organization in November 2005.[58] The main commitment of the MB's politics—as

the Supreme Guide points out in the introduction—was to demonstrate that "Islam is

the answer to the problems faced by our nation, and democracy is a mechanism

through which our goals are pursued". This platform is neither an attempt to flirt with

the people's growing religious sentiment, nor is it an unrealistic slogan:

> "The Brotherhood's aim in participating in the People's Assembly or other elected councils is to serve the establishment of the Islamic State from which the country and worshipers will benefit. Why not, as the establishment of an Islamic society is in the interest of Muslims and non-Muslims… So our *manhaj* [direction] is clear, our way is known, our objectives are specific, our finalities are real with no imagination, and our practices in every domain: civic, social, popular, political and parliamentary are appreciated by all […]"

It must be noted, however, the MB deputies in the 2000 Parliament

represented only 4 percent of the total 454 seats. Therefore, they were not in a

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[56] The time frame of the MB's presence dates back of course to its foundation. But only under Tilmisani's leadership did the MB participate seriously, with one candidate in the 1976 elections and two candidates in 1979. The election in 1976 was the first pluralist parliamentary election held by Sadat. As mentioned before, the MB candidates in 1979 organized campaign for "legislating Islamic *sharia*" to realize the Constitutional reform of 1980.

[57] A disjuncture occurred in the 1990 elections in which the Brotherhood and other political parties boycotted the event. In response to the boycott, the regime's repression against the Brotherhood leaders and members was especially harsh. An arrest campaign lasted for several months (January-October 1995), 82 of the Brotherhood's leaders were transferred to military tribunals, which sentenced 54 Brothers for periods between 3 and 5 years. Interview with Muhammad Sayyid Habib, Cairo, 8 December 2007.

[58] The book describes the activities of the 17 MB's deputies in the 2000 assembly.

position to significantly influence the legislation in Parliament or force a debate on a particular issue. However, their performance can still be evaluated when looking at the use of oversight tools including the kind and importance of issues they raised, as well as the quality of their inquiries. Just like other political groups in the parliament, the topics of the inquiries raised by the Brotherhood deputies varied. They included public debt, corruption in the financial sector, mobile phone companies, expired food and wheat products, secret laws, bread prices, contradictions in ministries' decisions, and so forth. From these topics, concern with public morality was obviously the most important topics in the MB's inquiries.

In the five-year period of parliamentary involvement, the MB deputies over time appeared to criticize any act or publication they considered offensive to Islam, good morals, Egyptian tradition, and the Arabic language (. During the 2000-2005 Parliament, the Ministry of Culture responded positively to MB deputies' inquiries by confiscating a novel contested by the MB. Such a concern was then followed up by the government who authorized al-Azhar to give its opinion about whether the content of the material was in accord with Islam precepts.

In another case a deputy from the MB asked the minister of culture to stop "simultaneously publishing a series about Arab and Islamic cultural heritage and the publication of a book critical of the Arabic language" (*Al-Ikhwan*, 2005:67). The reason was not only based on religious concern, but also the MB's belief that publishing such cultural products with public money when people suffered from poverty was not a rational. Meanwhile, the MB overtime protested when any cultural products–such as audio, video, or in print–contained "obvious sexual references" or

nude photos. Along the same lines, the deputies questioned the Information Ministry about the ban of 24 female TV presenters who decided to wear the veil, despite court resolutions giving them the right to appear with the veil on TV screens (*Al-Ikhwan*, 2005:51).

During the term of the 2000 assembly, the performance of the 17 MB deputies was remarkable yet unable to influence legislation in view of the NDP's two-thirds majority in Parliament. The MB's integration into Egypt's political process helped create a debate, but was limited for fear of provoking the regime's security institution or endangering the structural supremacy and control of the regime over the economy, the public media and civil society. However, the partial reforms undertaken by Mubarak are beneficial for the MB and for a move towards democratic openness.

The regime's survival in power does not mean that its stability is not at stake, as the limited openness helped "anti-regime" groups to form, at least gradually, independent movements for opposition to the regime. Such a growing trend of opposition manifested in a type of alliances in civic movements (including Kifaya Movement in 2003), which threatened the NDP's legitimacy. The trend unfolded during the legislative elections in 2005 and caught much of the regime by surprise. It tells the public that the only organized movement able to collect the limited benefit from the state reform was the MB; an opposition force with a strong social base and a message for the enforcement of Islamic *shari'a*.

6. Conclusion

As this chapter demonstrated, the transformation of Islamism in Egypt is characterized with precluded transformation; profound changes that underpinned the

MB's consistent struggle for moderation and operated within the existing political system. However, these changes remained confined under a strong belief in the pursuit of the enforcement of *shari'a* within the state system. This precluded transformation resulted from combined factors of the purist origins of organizational formation, the unresolved legacies of state-Islamist conflict, and short-lived alliance between the state and Islamist elite under Sadat. Hence, the MB's long term objectives still hold the possibility for the convergence between the Islamism and the existing political order.

In this sense, lessons can be learned from the patterns of state-Islamist relations in Egypt. The ability of the state to accommodate its Islamist contenders was so limited that eventually this created unexpected outcomes that led to Islamist moderation. In the growing discrepancies between the state's ability to provide social services and the Brotherhood's long presence in the field, allowed the Islamists to enter the elections, which is similar to paving the road for the Islamists to gain control of legitimate channels to further its own political aims. Similarly, the increasing influence of Islam in the political arena was also unwanted by the Islamists. Occupying a large variety of social and religious institutions led the MB to enter the elections without necessarily being constrained to operate as a political organization. This helped the Islamists in parliament further two different goals under the authoritarian institution: the short-term struggle for democracy as well as long-term objective for a democratic solution for an Islamic state.

PART 2

ISLAMISM IN INDONESIA

Chapter Six

ISLAMIST MOVEMENTS IN THE DUTCH EAST INDIES

> "*...* [It] has been for Indonesia a no less powerful one for cultural
> diversification, for the crystallization of sharply variant, even incompatible,
> notions of what the world is really like and how one ought therefore to set
> about living in it. In Indonesia Islam has taken many forms, not all of them
> Kuranic, and whatever it brought to the sprawling archipelago, it was not
> uniformity"
> —Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed*, 1968.

1. Introduction

In contrast to Egypt's historical experience, the institutional context that

shaped the formation of modern organized political Islam in Indonesia was not greatly

conducive to the emergence of purist politics. Instead, patterns of Islamist

organization-building in the early 20th century Dutch East Indies was more pragmatic

than in Egypt for two main reasons: first, because of the colonial policy of the

incorporation of nationalist organizations; and second, due to the nature of Muslim

society in the East Indies. The first factor is related to the creation of the Dutch

colonial parliament, the Volkrads, which was an institution that allowed limited

elections and thus limited political participation. The Dutch incorporation policy and

its institutionally structured Islamism developed around pragmatic principles, and

designed its ideologies, leadership, and organization networks in such a way as to

engage with mass-party politics.

The second factor arises due to the significant differences in terms of religious

and cultural understandings and practices among Muslims in the East Indies –

especially the Javanese– when modern Islamist organizations were formed.[1] The main difference in this regard was between modernist and traditionalist Muslim organizations. These differences produced almost inevitable conflicts between political Islamists from various backgrounds. Moreover, conflicts with secular nationalist groups during the late colonial period – primarily with the communists – also fostered mutual distrust between the two Islamist factions. As a result, the two factions proved unable to take shared collective action when political opportunities emerged, and indeed ultimately split in a more formal manner from one another.

This chapter examines the formation of Islamist movements in the Dutch East Indies, within the historical, colonial context in which they emerged. The main themes explored in the following sections are the rise of nationalist organizations, ideas regarding the form of an Islamic state and the best way to put one in place, and patterns of cleavages that emerged. An understanding of this formative phase of Islamism helps to underline the crucial role played by the extant historical circumstances in making Indonesia's Islamist movements pragmatic and adaptable. It also allows us to contrast the historical experience of Indonesian Islamists with that of Egyptian Islamists, as an explanatory variable for why similar groups struggling for an Islamic state behave differently. Only by recognizing the different institutional settings of colonialism, the nature of Islam in relation to the state, and patterns of nationalist mobilizations, will we be able to fully understand the pragmatic path of Islamist movements in the Indies.

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[1] The role of the ulama in the Dutch East Indies was also significantly shaped by these diverse socio-cultural and religious practices.

2. The Rise of Nationalist Movements

The territory that would become present-day Indonesia is the result of over two centuries of state consolidation under colonial rule. More specifically, proto-Indonesia – which was known at the time as the Dutch East Indies – grew out of gradual conquest of the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, in a process begun in 1577 by Dutch traders anxious to control the Spice Islands.[2] Administration of the archipelago relied on "networks and contracts between Dutch merchants and local rulers under the auspices of the United East India Company, (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie, VOC)" (Geertz, 1970:32; Vandenbosch, 1944:54-56). This organization served as the principal authority in the East Indies from its inception in 1602. In January of 1800, pressured by the mounting debt of the Netherlands due to the Napoleonic wars, the VOC was dissolved by the Estate General. This led to direct control over Java by the Dutch in the early 19th century, and of the rest of the islands by the middle of the century. The Dutch governors then united the scattered islands, transforming numerous sultanates into districts, regents or provinces. They also began to build a modern bureaucracy that reached deep into native societies in the archipelago, while also increasing economic exploitation of the region (Elson, 2001:16-17; Ricklefs, 1993:56-59; Vandenbosch, 1944:61-63).[3]

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[2] The Malay-Indonesian archipelago comprises up to two hundred and sixteen distinct linguistic groups. However, the eight largest groups (82 percent of the population) are predominant in the major islands of Java, Sumatra, Borneo and Sulawesi, where important Islamic sultanates and kingdoms shared both the experience of conquest and colonization by the Dutch. See, McVey, Ruth, "State vs. Nation," in Damien Kingsbury, ed. *Autonomy and Disintegration in Indonesia.* London: Roudledge-Cruzon, 2003. Batavia—found within modern day Jakarta-named after the Roman designation for Holland-- located in north-western part of Java, was the capital and the central administration during Dutch colonial rule.

[3] An interruption of colonial rule occurred from 1811 to 1816 when the British took over the NEI from the Dutch. Despite the brief administration under the British, colonial administration of the archipelago became increasingly more centralized in which "monetary land tax and more direct control

It was during the late 19th century that the East Indies witnessed the consolidation of state power, enabling the Dutch colonial government to establish a more direct control over the islands. In 1857, the first Constitutional Ordinance (Regeeringsreglement) was enacted to provide the Governor General with unlimited authority for the Netherland East Indies' administration. Subsequent policies were then launched marking a dramatic shift in the East Indies in political centralization, operation of legal systems, and the construction of educational institutions for the natives (Vandenbosch, 1931:337).

Spurred by the Socialist Democratic hegemony in the Netherlands, the East Indies government launched the Ethical Policy in 1901 (Vandensboch, 1943:498). The ideological underpinnings of this policy was, as the Queen of Holland wrote in 1900, "[an] ethical obligation and moral responsibility to the people of East Indies" (Benda, 1970:160). But the immediate purpose of the policy was to set in motion political and economic reform initiatives aimed at reversing damage caused by the *Cultuur Stelsel* and by 'liberal economic initiatives', which had taken place three decades earlier. Two important programs for the natives were introduced: the establishment of education institutions for the natives and a limited widening of political participation (Ricklefs, 1993:116; see, van Neil, 1978:32). In major cities – especially in Java – these new learning institutions included everything from primary schools to medical academies for the native inhabitants. The number of natives attending Dutch schools increased dramatically as a result of these new institutions, and within a decade, the first generation of Western-educated Indonesians were founding modern political

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[under the Dutch] were introduced." See, M.C. Ricklefs, *The History of Modern Indonesia,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993 (4th edition), p. 54.

organizations and aspiring to define and put in place new political realities in the Netherlands Indies (Neil, 1971:81; see also, Nagazumi, 1978).

2.2. Nationalism and the Formation of Islamist Movements

One of the first new civil society organizations in Indonesia was the Javanese ethnic organization Budi Utomo (BU), "the Beautiful Endeavor", which was formed in Java in 1908. Rather than having an explicitly political program, BU functioned primarily as a government pressure group (Ricklefs, 1993:164), and was particularly interested in getting the government to found "more schools and to see that more natives received modern educations" (Kahin, 1960:57). The group's members initially came from the Western-style-educated student population in the major cities. But they quickly expanded to include many members from the lower-levels of Javanese society, especially lower level of the *priyayi*.[4] The BU proved to be quite short-lived as an organization, due to internal tensions in the *priyayi*, as well as because of its uneasy relationship with the Dutch authorities.

The infusion of Islam into modern organizations in the East Indies began two years after the BU, with the formation of Sarekat Dagang Islam (Muslim Trading Association*,* SDI) by a group of urban Muslim traders in Solo, Central Java in 1910. The SDI was not so much a political organization as an economic cooperative formed in response to the economic domination of Chinese enterprises. The SDI soon

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[4] *Priyayi* or bureaucratic elite represents upper social class in the Javanese society. Its social origins dated back to the nobility and aristocratic families of Javanese kingdoms and sultanates. But two centuries of state consolidation under the Dutch brought the modern *priyayi* into being as this class associated with bureaucratic class and lower civil servants working for colonial government offices and institutions. I will return to discuss the patterns of social relation of Javanese society in the next section. For historical origins of modern *priyayi,* see, Robert van Neil, *The Emergence of Modern Bureaucratic Elite in Indonesia,* Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1978.

developed an anti-Dutch rhetoric campaign, and changed its name to Sarekat Islam

(Islamic Union, SI) in 1912. This change reflected the broader interests that were

developing among Muslims in the East Indies, particularly a concern with what was

called at the first SI congress in 1913, "self-governance within the Dutch empire"

(Vandenbosch, 1931:213). It is important to underline that in this period, the creation

of an Islamic state was not explicitly mentioned. But even during its early period of

mobilization, the SI leadership saw their organization as being part of a Pan-Islamist

movement (Elson, 2008:67). Indeed, to some extent the SI's leadership was also

controlled by local ulama, especially at district levels (McVey, 1970; Lanti, 2004).

The rise of the SI has been linked to "a general awakening of the rural

population to its disadvantaged position in colonial Java" (Kartodirdjo 1973: 143;

Siraishi, 1971).[5] This awakening was largely articulated by the SI, who drew upon

their combined political and economic roots in fomenting anti-Chinese riots and

encouraging aspirations of independence for the East Indies.

The SI spread rapidly across Java, and by 1915, had become "the only

organization that spanned the whole of the archipelago" (Kahin, 1958:28). During the

next few years, the SI transformed itself into an explicitly political party, a

transformation that was reflected in its change of name to Partai Sarekat Islam in 1921.

The group continued to radicalize, becoming associated with mass actions (*massa aksi*)

against local power holders (either political or economic) across the East Indies.

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[5] Colonial records has shown a dramatic increase in Javanese-Chinese horizontal inequalities between 1910 and 1916, with greater inequalities in residencies which were to experience higher levels of ethnic violence under the auspices of SI. See, Siddarth Chandra, 'Race, inequality and anti-Chinese violence in the Netherlands Indies' in *Explorations in Economic History* 39 (1): 88-112:2002.

But with increasing politicization came increased ideological conflict among the SI's leaders (von der Mehden 1958:337; McVey, 1970:119). One of the main issues that stimulated the discord was the Dutch government's regulatory response to the radical development of social organizations in the colony. As mentioned above, providing channels for limited participation was an important component of the Ethical Policy. But it was in fact a half-hearted measure that avoided offering real participation to the natives. It was only with the 1903 announcement of the Decentralization Law establishing local councils that the Dutch colonial government began to reverse this situation. The councils were to be filled by representatives of the "colored class in the Indies" through limited elections (Wertheim, 1958:11).[6]

The establishment of local councils soon led to the formation of a national council, Volksraads (Peoples Council), in 1913. Originally, the Volksraads was created to be a lower parliamentary chamber, and was set up expressly to curtail the radical notions of nationalist organizations. The Dutch proposed that it would have only fifteen members: "…five should be European officials, two European private industrialists, three Indonesians, and two foreign orientals" (Pringgodigdo, 1980:16).[7] The members would be appointed by the Crown of the Netherlands based on the Governor General's nominations. But the strong challenges from SI and other native organizations soon forced the Dutch to promulgate the Compromise Law, which

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[6]The concept of color class or caste was introduced by Wertheim (1958) to describe the social and administrative stratification in accordance with the 1854 Ordinance in the NEI. It referred to distinctive "cultural and social division of labor" that included the Dutch (Europeans), Chinese-Indian-Arabs, and the native Indies.

[7]According to citizenship law in the Dutch East Indies, foreign orientals referred to distinctive citizens considered as non-native population coming from the "Orient" or "East", which means the Chinese, Arabs and Indians. See, Suryadinata,

allowed that "some members of the Volksraads should be elected, and some others would be nominated" (Ismawan, 1980:55).

While the Volksraad was beginning its operations in 1917, a debate occurred in SI leadership over whether or not the group should participate in the government council. The radicals, largely influenced by Marxist ideas that began to spread in the mid-1910s, preferred to maintain a revolutionary strategy, through non-participation in the colonial council. Meanwhile, the pragmatists, who were represented by an alliance of orthodox Muslim politicians, decided on a more cooperative strategy, and joined the Volksraad. H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto, the leader of this faction, argued that, "the decision of the SI [to join the Volksraad] was based on our belief that the struggle for change in the Indies" must be conducted by 'reform from within'" (Gie, 1984:14).[8]

Participation in the Volksraad helped to moderate SI's demand for independence, while also increasing the effectiveness of its leadership at building a mass organization across the whole Dutch East Indies (Elson, 2008:81). But a major cost of participation was division amongst the leaders – thus we see that while the pragmatists had joined the Dutch council, the radicals, who apparently represented large portions of the SI, succumbed to communist control. They went on to establish the first communist organization in Asia, Perserikatan Komunis di India (The Communist Association in the Indies – PKI) in 1918. After a brief period of growth and success, PKI was effectively destroyed as a mass organization following its

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[8]Several leaders were influential in SI's decision to participate in the colonial-representative institution: H. Agus Salim (an orthodox Muslim of Sumatran origin), Abdul Muis (an Islamic-religious teacher from Central Java), and other local religious leaders who were part of "Islamic blocks" during the radical-pragmatic conflicts within the SI. See, Bahtiar Effendy, *Islam and the State: The transformation of Islamic political ideas and practices in Indonesia,* PhD. Dissertation of Ohio State University, Columbus, 1995.

abortive 1926 uprising against the Dutch. Meanwhile, SI moderates continued to work within the colonial system, and in 1933 formed Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia (PSII).

The split in SI's leadership had far-reaching consequences. On an ideological level, it kept SI from developing a coherent idea of Islamism (Elson, 2009:5-11). It also caused a decline in the group's political influence, both with the Dutch and amongst its Islamist constituency (von der Mehden 1958; McVey, 1954:30). This latter development meant that their ability to unify the various strands of Indonesian society struggling for an Islamic state decreased enormously, contributing to the inchoate development of many different organizations struggling on their own for an Islamic state (Noer, 1972:112-117). Effectively therefore, the elite conflict within the SI stimulated fragmentation and divergence amongst those who supported Muslim politics.

It is important to underline that, patterns of Islamist formation cannot be explained simply in terms of tensions within 'nationalist groupings'. Instead, it is the character of Indonesian Islam, particularly its religious practices and authority figures in the Indies that have determined the nature of interest articulation in Islamist movements.

As the influence of the SI declined by the mid 1920s, the relationship between Islam and the nationalist movements in the East Indies was complicated by the emergence of a broad ideological split in the Islamist group between the 'traditionalists' or 'old generation' (*kaum tua*) and the 'modernists' or 'reformists', the 'young generation' (*kaum muda*) (Abdullah, 1971; Noer, 1972; Alfian, 1971). As we shall see, the traditionalists represented the syncretic form of Islam that had developed

in Java and elsewhere, mixing Islamic ideals and practices with existing local traditions, including adat (local custom). Meanwhile, the modernists sought to promote the 'purified' Islam that has been growing in popularity since the 18th century, driven by networks of ulama who had studied in the Middle East (Azra, 2004).[9]

In the 1920s, both the traditionalist and modernist currents developed into mass organizations, after the decline of SI. Although these new organizations sought to move away from politics, their leaders were continuously drawn into conflicts with other political organizations. The modernist group, the Muhammadiyah (Faith of Muhammad), launched attacks against traditional Islamic practices and institutions.[10] Between 1919 and 1924, many traditional *kyais* (ulama) became aware of the threat to their core beliefs and institutions from the fast expanding modernist organizations (Noer, 1972). This produced a traditionalist response within a few years: in 1926, Javanese *kyais* (often associated with religious scholars of rural peasantry and owners of traditional schools) founded the Nahdhatul Ulama (NU, the Awakening of Religious Scholars). Initially both Muhammadiyah and NU had relatively benign

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[9] Similar to the rise of the modern Islamic movement in Egypt, the impetus of the Islamic modernist organizations is usually associated with the late 19th-century teachings of Muhammed Abduh of Al-Azhar. In religious thought, the modernists rejected non-Islamic accretions to Islamic practice if not doctrine, the unthinking acceptance of *takdir* (fate) in the body of preexisting Javanese Islamic thought, and urged a return to the basic "purity of Islam" as found in the Qur'an and Hadith. They felt that a renewed Islam was eminently capable of providing a religious and ideological base for rapid social development, a process considered at that time to be within the exclusive domain of the West. The traditional (old-fashioned) adherents rejected the modernist movement and believed that the Western world, being secular, presented *a* grave threat to the integrity of their beliefs. See, Daliar Noer, *Modern Islamic Movements in Indonesia,* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972.

[10]The crux of conflicts between these two religious groups was primarily located in their different interpretations of Islam. The modernist tended to have 'purer commitment' to Islamic belief and the traditionalists tended to integrate Islam in certain ways with the 'pre-existing local culture' that included Hindusim and animism. Yet, the deep sociological and cultural gap between modernism and traditionalism symbolized within urban-rural conflicts, Western and non-Western educated classes, peasant vs. middle-economic classes etc.The modernist attacks expanded not only in religious matters, but became quickly intertwined with the struggle against conservatism, social backwardness, and anti-modernity associated with traditional ulama. See, Noer, *Modern Islamic Movements*, 1972.

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relationships with the Dutch authorities, but things soon deteriorated as agitation for independence increased Dutch hostility toward all indigenous civil society organizations.[11]

Faced with the realization that both currents of Indonesian Islam were there to stay, and in the face of ongoing hostility from the Dutch, as well as competition from the rapidly expanding secular-nationalist and communist organizations, the various mainstream Islamist organizations sought to create a united Islamist political front, the Majelis Islam A'laa Indonesia (MIAI, or Supreme Islamic Council of Indonesia), in 1937 (Syaroni, 1997). But the attempts at unification proved unsuccessful, leading to the formation of about a dozen Islamist organizations, who represented the various modernist, traditionalist, puritan and mystic elements found in East Indies Islam. These included: Persatuan Islam (Islamic Union, Persis), who represented Islamist puritans; Jami'at al-Irsyad (Enlightened Society), formed by the Arab community; Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiya (Islamic Educational Union), which brought together the traditional ulama; and Persatuan Umat Islam (Union of Islamic Umma). These organizations soon became a strong locus of Islamic activism.[12] Indeed as Means has noted, the modernist-traditionalist split in Islam across the Indies engendered a

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[11] Almost all Islamist organizations such as Muhammadiyah and NU operated with cooperative strategy vis-à-vis the colonial government; Muhammadiyah, for example, even receiving a government subsidy, especially with regard to the Dutch plan in promoting a modern education system. See, Vickie Anne Langhor, *Religious Nationalism 101: How the Growth of State Educational System Strengthened Raligious Nationalist Movements in Colonial Era (Egypt, India and Indonesia)*, PhD Dissertation, Columbia University, 2000.

[12] These organizations identified themselves as the main pillars for the establishment of Islamic state. In their constitutions, these organizations explicitly stated that the creation of a society based on the teachings of the Qur'an and the Hadits was the main goal. . For a complete elaboration for Muslim organizations for this period, see Daliar Noer, *Modern Islamic Movements in Indonesia: 1900-1942,* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972.

"dynamic tension... thus creating a strong impulse for reform, change and political opportunism" (Means, 1969: 273; see also, Bush, 2002).[13]

During the same period, ideas of secular nationalism were introduced in the East Indies by former SI activists. The emergence of these nationalists marked an important shift in anti-colonial movements, from "political participation under colonial rule" to "an explicit struggle for an independent Indies" (Ismawan, 1987:88). The outcome was the creation of Partai Nasional Indonesia, or Indonesian National Party (PNI) by Sukarno in 1926.[14] The PNI's rapid expansion, primarily due to Sukarno's rhetorical abilities, has been widely credited with intensifying political divisions in the Indies, particularly between Islam and secular nationalism. These divisions were further deepened by Sukarno's secular nationalist rhetoric, which to some extent drew upon Javanese formulations of the nation, and which sparked reactions from those who were concerned with the position of Islam in Sukarno's nationalist vision. Tensions between Islam and secular nationalism soon spread, setting into motion active mobilization for the creation of "an Islamic state" (Federspiel, 1977:44-45).

As we shall see below, the impetus to define and sustain an Islamic state alternative in the East Indies was inspired by Egypt's Islamic reformism (Laffan,

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[13]The MIAI, perceived as a confederation of Muslim organizations in the Indies was not a political organization. Instead, it served as a voluntary association loosely organized by representatives from mother organizations largely characterized by modernist and traditionalist camps.

[14]The name Indonesia was introduced by Sukarno in PNI and, later, proposed to serve as a new name for an independent East Indies. But amongst the first organizations to use the name Indonesia was a student organization in Holland, not in the Indies, where a concept of independent nation was also debated, Perhimpunan Indonesia (Indonesian [student] Association, PI). Among the founders of this organization were Mohammad Hatta and Syahrir who became Vice President and Prime Minister after independence. The membership of PI was limited within Indonesian students in Europe, but nonetheless provided political training for many leaders in the future Indonesia. Robert Dahm, *Sukarno and Indonesian Independence,* The Hague: Martinus Nitjof, 1969, pp. 21-27.

2001). A Muslim reformer, Ahmad Hasan of Bandung, and his student, Mohammad Natsir, were among the first local Muslim leaders to explicitly formulate the idea of an Islamic state. In time, their organization – Persatuan Islam (Persis) – became an important part of the larger Islamist movement in post-colonial Indonesia, this despite its insignificant size compared to other groups (Federspiel, 1977).

2.3. Idea of an Islamic State and its Social Basis

Ideas of an Islamic state (and indeed, religious nationalism in general) developed within a context of religious communities' fears about the secular core of nationalism (Langohr, 2000; Binder, 1978). The elaboration of these ideas was often heavily contested, and thus their ultimate shape and form, as well as the manner in which they were acted upon, came to reflect the Indonesian cultural landscape that forged them. Of particular importance in this process was the increasing strength of PNI and the radicalization of PKI. This shaping of the idea of an Islamic state in the Indies can therefore be characterized as a collective effort amongst Muslim activists and politicians in response to anti-Islamic attacks (Elson, 2001:80-82), which is in stark contrast to the process that occurred in Egypt.

It is useful to examine the history of ideas of an Islamic state in more detail. According to Kahin (1960:42-47), polemics over Islam and nationalism increased dramatically toward the end of the 1920s. These polemics began with nationalist criticism of what they called the exclusive tendencies of Islamist movements, which were associated with a "specific religious identity" but that exposed "the universalistic dimensions of religious beliefs that supersede the territorial notion of state" (Sukarno,

1927:11). Nationalist leaders used this critique to justify their idea that the Dutch East Indies was "a modern nation-in-becoming and that it should cast away from the establishment of religion as the foundation of the nation" (Ricklefs, 1993:161). As Sukarno himself put it in 1927, "the existence of different languages and religions in the East Indies need be no hindrance to the forming of a nation" (Sukarno, 1932:16). Indeed, he made it clear that his party, PNI, "would be closed to religion, because [otherwise] … not only would important groups which would be able to give necessary support in the construction of the Fatherland be excluded, but at the same time there would be wrangling and discord" (Sukarno, 1932:17). This secular nationalist vision was echoed by a 1928 editorial in a Christian newspaper, which said that "national freedom requires a complete cooperation of the nationalists, setting aside all religions. Only then can the goal of nationalism, national independence, be possibly achieved"[15]

There were some scattered attempts to defend the role of Islam in constructing the Indonesian nation (von De Mehden, 1958:41; Elson, 2008). Islamists mostly denied that religion was an obstacle to nationalism, and emphasized its relevance and legitimacy in the process. It bears noting however that their responses varied, often due to their social and geographical origins. After SI declined, at least three major groups can be identified with regard to the creation of an Islamic state: the traditionalists, the modernists, and the 'puritan' Islamic organizations (Federspiel, 1977:8-11). These religious groups were united in their reactions to the attacks from both nationalist and communist groups. For example, in their response to a secular-nationalist position expressed by Sukarno in 1932, all Islamist organizations shared

[15] *Darmo Kondo* [News Service], 2-7 July, 1928.

the position that "secularism is [perceived by Muslim organizations]… as a threat to

Islamic values, for it signifies conscious separation of moral values from political

behavior" (Samson, 1970:256). Similarly, they asserted that the nature of an Islamic

state for Muslim leaders constitutes "a principle for Islam… that there is no separation

between 'church' and 'state'" (Natsir, 1938:24).

But there were different levels of commitment to the idea of an Islamic state.

The traditionalists within NU gave pro forma support to the establishment of an

Islamic state, but their dependence upon secular authority belied their religious

pronouncements. And the Great Syeikh Hasyim Asy'ari, when asked about

nationalism by a Dutch official who attended the 1935 NU Congress, replied "what we

dream for is independence, what we seek is a national state just like the East Indies

with self-governance for the native" (Wahid, 1986:11; see also, van Bruinessen,

1996:37). Thus we can see that the ideology of an Islamic state did not develop among

the Islamist traditionalists, and that NU was among the most pragmatic of political

actors in the struggle for an Islamic state.[16] Indeed, NU's primary interest can be

characterized as aiming "to protect religious beliefs and practices through involvement

in politics" (Bush, 2002:46; see also, Fealy, 1998).

The foundation of the NU in the early 20th century took place within the

context of the expansion of modern-reformist oriented organizations influenced by the

Wahabi movements, which sought to restore "the pure Islam" in the traditional

Muslim of the East Indies. Regardless of their views on the actual political structure of

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[16]In this sense, the ideology of Islamic state itself was actually never developed in the traditionalist ulama, politicians, or activists. It was rather "a political statement drawn from their important reference of classical intellectual tradition, especially Islamic jurisprudence and law". See, Ali Haedar, *NU dan Islam Indonesia*, Gramedia: Jakarta, 1990:17.

the state, NU's political thinking and behavior were mainly shaped by its historical role "in preserving and maintaining religious practices that have evolved in local contexts over the centuries" (Bush, 2002:55). The NU's leadership was dominated by traditional ulama (*kyai*), with their base of social support primarily consisting of people from a rural peasant background and from middle class trading communities, especially in East and Central Java, and South Kalimantan (Ward, 1974). Its extensive social networks were based out of traditional religious learning centers (*pesantren*) that came into being during the earliest phase of Islamization, in the 14th century (Bush, 2002:56). In many cases, the *pesantren* community follows a patron-client model of the *santri* social system common in the Javanese villages. Most observers have noticed that NU, as an organization, serves as a political weapon of ulama and their *pesantren* institutions.

In this connection, a brief account of the unique characters of Indonesia's ulama is instructive. These characters have, to a large degree, been shaped by the unique process that dot the country's religious history. Islam came to the Malay-Indonesia archipelago in the 8th century, introduced by Arab traders. But it was not until approximately the 13th century that large-scale conversions took place, beginning on the island of Sumatra. By the time that the last Hindu-Buddhist dynasty on Java – the Majapahit Kingdom – converted to Islam in the 16th century, Islam was well on its way to becoming the dominant religion throughout most of the archipelago (Ricklefs, 1991:56). But it is important to underline that the relatively peaceful spread of Islam throughout the archipelago was in many instances achieved by integrating pre-existing

beliefs and customs rather than by wiping these out, which may partially account for the relatively accommodating nature of traditional Islam in Indonesia.

It was also during the 16th century that the structure of the ulama in the Muslim East Indies took shape. The status of the ulama or *kyai* in the devoted Muslim community known as *santri* was based on the superiority of their knowledge of Islamic teachings (Hisyam, 2001; see also, van Bruinessen, 1990). Because the ulama often assumed roles of social leadership in both religious and political life, the ulama-*santri* relationship became the most important non-institutionalized element in colonial Indies society. Indeed, even when the colonial state penetrated deeply into the lower village of the Indies, the patterns of ulama leadership over their *santri* subjects were not destroyed or weakened (Sutherhland, 1979: 25-27). The ulama were not salaried officials, but drew their resources from religious endowments and patron-client relationships based in their *santri* communities (Hisyam, 2001:212-213; see also, Bush, 2002:64).[17] This meant that the social and religious practices of Muslims operated on a communal basis that was beyond colonial control, thereby ensuring that the relationship between ulama institutions and the state was basically weak (Hisyam, 2001:201-208).

The modernists, who were associated with Muhammadiyah and some reformist-oriented organizations, theoretically supported the idea of an Islamic state. But because their urban and educated membership was more sympathetic to secular

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[17] During the Dutch colonial times, there were offices of religious affairs: Office for Native Affairs. This body was derived from the patterns of religious administration under Islamic Kingdom in Java. Looking at the differences between the ulama and the religious officials of the Office for Native Affairs revealed that both possess religious authority, but while the religious officials functioned as bureaucrats and have a legal authority dealing religious observance, the kyai or ulama was autonomous from the state. See, Muhammad Hisyam, *Caught Between Three Fires: The Javanese Penghulu Under the Dutch Colonial Administration: 1882-1942,* Jakarta: INIS Monograph, 2001.

political institutions, they ultimately became a secularizing force within modern

Islamist organizations (Samson, 1971:256-259; See also, Alfian, 1977). Since their

inception, most of modernist Muslim organizations had concentrated on education and

social welfare projects for their communities. But the confrontation with secular forces

and the rising tide of anti-colonial mass politics generated a strong sense of linkage to

the era's political activities. They therefore came to participate more actively in

religious politics, though because of their emphasis on education and social welfare,

their idea of an Islamic state was quite secular and pragmatic.

The puritan Islamic organization adopted the strongest position in support of

an Islamic state. This organization was represented by Persatuan Islam (Islamic Union,

Persis), and was founded in 1923. Persis was responsible for many of the more

sophisticated ideas regarding an Islamic state. Many observers have also noted that,

compared to the modernists and the traditionalists, the Persis leaders were very strong

advocates of an Islamic state alternative during the crucial period of conflict with

nationalist movements (Federspiel, 1977:81). According to Muhammad Natsir, a

prominent Muslim puritan leader, "… establishing an Islamic state in Indonesia is

mandatory for Muslims" (Anshari, 1945:12). This strong position was expressed in the

debates with the nationalists (Federpiel, 1972). In reply to Sukarno's proposal that the

state should take a neutral position on religion, Natsir replied:

> If this is the case, let us from now on be frank and blunt to each other. For our
> aim and purpose are not similar. You seek independence for Indonesia on
> account of a nation, on account of 'Mother Indonesia'. We struggle for
> independence because of Allah …You seek independence from a foreign
> government because of the foreign-ness of its rule. We struggle for
> independence from the government of foreigners, or even from our own people
> because of differences in ideals and the way of life; because of the absence of

Islam in the government! If that is what you suggest, we go separate ways! (Natsir, 1932:31).

Natsir's statement in many ways encapsulates the essence of the debate regarding alternatives of state formation. Muslim activists affiliated with puritan Muslim organization, such as Natsir and Isa Anshari, soon came to take control over the formulation of Islamic state ideology. For this reason, a brief look at Natsir's elaboration of an Islamic state deserves particular attention.

Natsir's conception of an Islamic state was not unique when seen in relation to other pioneers of Islamism in the Muslim world. But it was the most important in the Dutch Indies, and reflected the Islamically-educated intellectual's efforts to find an individual and a collective solution to the exclusion of Islamic identity from the country's political debates on what constituted a nation in the early period of nationalism (Samson, 1971:271). Natsir argued that Islam is a religion embraced by a majority of the people, and accordingly, that "religion is an integral part of social, political and cultural life for the population of the Indies" (Natsir, 1936:21). He also claimed that since the inception of nationalist organizations, "such an organization as SI has been the pioneer of national awakening" (Natsir, 1936:23), and moreover that Islam has established itself as a main source of *legitimacy* for the state.[18]

Natsir's call for the application of Islamic law was not much elaborated until later, in the 1950s, during the parliamentary debate over the state's constitution. His primary concern regarding an Islamic state was that it should constitute "a democratic

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[18]Similar to al-Banna's assertion over the concept of government in Islam, Natsir's eclectic vision on the state in Islamic principles were vague. Such a vision included both an adoption and a rejection of the nationalist project of the European-colonial system. The colonial Dutch East Indies, Natsir argues, "consolidated the nation-state system, yet failed to integrate religion, especially Islam, in the state structure" (Natsir, 1931:12).

republic, [bestowing] sovereignty upon the will of the people, but under the guidance of the Qur'an and the hadith" (Natsir, 1936:11). Natsir maintained that ensuring an "Islamic constitution for the future state was not only a legal requisite for Muslims", but also that it would underline that "Islam was [a] legal, political, economic, and civilization[al] imperative for Muslims". He therefore claimed that the only way for Muslims to maintain their presence and acceptance in the modern state was to "observe the viable application of [an] *Islamic constitution* in the Indies [*Hindia Belanda*]" (Natsir, 1936:24).

An important difference in the ideologies of Natsir and Hassan al-Banna concerns the place of modernity in an Islamic state. For Natsir, Islam's supremacy "as a foundation for a democratic state" means that it is compatible with modernity (c.f. Ward, 1970:258). In defence of this position, Natsir asserted that Islam provides for "a system of democracy and the rule of law in national life, freedom of the judiciary and the sovereignty of law in the courts... Islam has regulations on all problems...even [regulations] on the status of non-Muslims..." (Natsir, 1933:173). Natsir's Islamic state was thus primarily positioned as a political solution to "the question of Islam in [a] modern state" rather than as a proto-caliphate. To this end, it aimed at the implementation of *shari'a* in the Indies as its ultimate goal.

Natsir's theory of an Islamic state was elaborated and ultimately crystallized during the 1940s and 1950s, a period that saw continual conflict with secular-nationalist organizations. This conflict was particularly strong with the communists, whose organizations only emerged publicly in 1948, but whose ideology had been championed by young, radical activists in major cities of the Indies since the late

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1930s (Anderson, 1979; McVey, 1971). By the time that Japan invaded the East Indies in 1942, the archipelago had been transformed into "a colony with three distinct forms of political struggles between Islam, nationalism, and communism" (Benda, 1958:160). The independence of Indonesia in 1945 and its subsequent history have often been portrayed in terms of conflict and resolution between these ideologies, with other social and political cleavages being seen as less significant. For example, Samson has claimed that the principles defining the state, and the national constitution in particular, served as "the locus of political contestation, negotiation, and compromise [for] these ideologies" (Samson, 1970:40).

3. Opposition to an Islamic State

The idea that Islam should have a central place in the state constitution did not go unchallenged. By the time of the dissolution of Volksraads in 1933, two other anti-colonial movements, each driven by different visions of state formation, had come into being: secular-nationalism and communism. And while all of these ideologies were created by elites, they soon managed to cultivate strong roots amongst the general populace. Yet it is important to underline that this support was split along the existing socio-cultural and programmatic lines of cleavage in the society of the Indies (Jay, 1963; see also, Mortimer, 1971). Scholars of Indonesian politics have characterized this phenomenon of cleavages as *aliran*, which means 'streams'. The concept of *aliran* politics was first formulated by Clifford Geertz (1958; 1966) to describe divergent socio-cultural practices in Indonesian (most notably Javanese) society that surfaced during the ideological battles for statehood that followed the country's revolution: the

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syncretic-Javanese *abangan* (often referred to as nominal Muslims), the more devout

Muslim *santri*, and the aristocratic *priyayi* (Geertz, 1958).[19] Each of these streams

linked itself to one of the three formal and informal networks, the secular-nationalist,

Islamist, and communist. Ultimately then, it is the *aliran* that are perhaps most

relevant in understanding patterns of social cleavages embedded in the organizations

that struggled for independence in the early 20th century East Indies.[20]

But this dissertation is claiming that it is also the experiences of colonial

control that have driven the emergence and solidification of modern political

cleavages in Indonesia. The colonial rule of the Dutch, followed later by that of the

Japanese, not only shaped later notions of Indonesian national identity, but also

strongly influenced the development of political divisions along *santri-abangan-*

priyayi lines. One example of this flows from the Dutch colonial governments' fear

that the Muslim community and its rulers might mobilize Islamic unrest against the

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[19] McVey and Anderson (1970), for instance, expanded the concept of *aliran* as Indonesian political parties encircled by a number of social organizations linked to the three formal and informal networks ascribed to secular-nationalists, Islamists, and communist organizations. In post colonial Indies, although the communist stream has diminished after the New Order consolidated, most of the literature on political Islam in Indonesia reflects its analytical roots in this *aliran* framework. See, Ruth McVey and Ben Anderson, *Indonesian Political Thinking: Thirteen Contributions to the Debate,* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970.

[20] It must be noted, however, that an exhausted use of the *aliran* framework in the study of political Islam in Indonesia runs the risk to perceive politics as an extension of local culture. Consequently, it casts away the political dimensions of Islamism within which an engagement with the power struggle in the ideals of state building is paramount. Anderson's (1978) study of the idea of power in Indonesian politics has attempted to engage the theoretical debate over *aliran* politics with regard to the process of state formation. Anderson is essentially correct in asserting that the three ideological streams of the Indonesian alternative of statehood reflects a unique, integral cultural outlook adhered to by a number of people with a similar worldview who are either organized or unorganized (but potentially prone to mobilization) in socio-political groupings toward the creation of a state. Yet, as his focus is only on one facet of the segmented political community as the dominant Javanese-nationalist political culture and its manifestation in Indonesian politics under the New Order, Anderson ignored to provide a systematic effort at mapping out the relationship between the structural persistence of one stream over others. In other words, it fails to count for how this *aliran* politics has been undergoing formation, mobilization and transformation in the Indonesian state. See Benedict Anderson, "The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture", in Anderson, *Language and Power in Indonesia,* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992.

Dutch. In light of this, Dutch colonial discourse articulated a distinction between the 'authentic', traditional essence of Indonesia, and Islamic belief and practice, which were portrayed as foreign imports. This was reinforced by the Dutch policy of implementing its administration through the local bureaucratic elite, the *priyayi*, which was in the main only nominally Muslim (Ricklefs, 1993:131-133).[21] A byproduct of the *priyayi's* two centuries of participation in the state bureaucracy was its increasing Westernization, which put it increasingly at odds with the Muslim elite.

A second mechanism of colonial control that constructed Islam in the East Indies was the implementation of different legal systems. This process, which was originally formulated by a Dutch orientalist named Snouck Hurgronje, saw the Dutch East Indies government label religio-legal practices within the Muslim community as either *adat* (customary law) or Islamic (*shari'a* law, which particularly referred to marital and family law). As part of this policy, the Dutch government made attempts to regulate religious practices among the santri, by encouraging the development of a secular legal system that existed outside the santri system. These oppositional systems that were a key aspect of the colonial legacy – '*santri*' versus '*non-santri*', 'aristocratic' versus 'lower class' – bedeviled the anti-colonial political movements that organized in the early 20th century, and continued to resonate in post-colonial Indonesia precisely because they nurtured and even amplified the differences between

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[21]For historical accounts of the development of santri-priyayi conflict, see also N.A. Baloch, *The Advent of Islam in Indonesia* (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research. 1980; and Peter Riddell. *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World: Transmission and Responses*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. 2001. Nancy Florida makes another important point that part of the colonial project of 'rewriting-Javanese culture involved the construction of this privavi vs. Islam dichotomy in which privavi were portrayed as anti-Islamic. See Nancy Florida, *Writing the Past, Inscribing the Future*, Durham: Duke University Press. 1995, 26-33.

Islamic and non-Islamic systems. The net result was that patterns of conflict between the three broad strands of nationalist organizations were mobilized around the emerging identities that were so impacted by colonial policies.

3.1. Secular-Nationalism

One political camp that opposed the idea of an Islamic state was that of the secular-nationalists. Secular nationalism, which often had an aristocratic (*priyayi*) leadership but was supported by Java's nominally Muslim (*abangan*) community, was the predominant ideology in the Indies' independence movement. Its origins go back to the early period of Indonesian nationalism, at the beginning of the 20th century, and the formation of a small organization with an explicit agenda of an independent Indies, called Indische Partij (Party of the Indies). Because it had a narrow support base that was concentrated among the non-native Eurasians, this party failed to take root, and the colonial government expelled its leaders in 1910. The SI, which was founded one year later, soon eclipsed the successes of the Indische Partij, in a manner that caused them to become the major player in the politics of the Indies (Ingleson, 1979:12).

The profile of Indische Partij induced Sukarno's PNI to attempt to define the nationalist interests and aspirations. According to Sukarno, the primary dream of secular-nationalism was to resolve "the difficulty in establishing a unified Indonesia out of the disparate territories of the former Netherlands East Indies" (McVey, 1970:7). Prior to the PNI's establishment, anti-colonial movements suffered from a chronic problem of disunity. Conflicts between political organizations were seen by Sukarno as "a great weakness" faced by anti-colonial movements. Perhaps influenced by

Marxist ideas that began to spread in this period, Sukarno thus promoted the idea of a 'vanguard party', which was expected to resolve the main problem facing secular-nationalist organizations: how to overcome disunity.

Throughout the 1930s, unity became a mantra for secular-nationalists like Sukarno. In his response to Natsir's view on the position of Islam, Sukarno admitted that the prevalence of Islam across the Dutch territories made it attractive as a "force that could be used to break down local patriotisms and help create national unity" (c.f. Vandenbosch 1952: 182). But, for Sukarno, with more than a million Hindus in Bali and a million Christians spread across the archipelago, the promotion of Islam across the entire Dutch territories also had the potential to become a source of conflict. Sukarno argued in 1936, "… Christianized regions like Minahasa and Ambon were amongst those most nervous of the prospect of a single independent Indonesia" (Sukarno, 1936). The power of the region's identities to divide made PNI's goal of uniting and transforming diverse religious, ethnic, and geographical groups into a single nation-state an often difficult and even tortuous one to achieve. A particular challenge to PNI's vision was the formation of a dozen organizations built around island or ethnic sentiment between 1916 and 1924. Part of the ethos of these organizations was derived from the Javanese-ethnic nationalist organization BU. Moreover the observation of this Javanese identity provoked other ethnic communities to seek representation by their own organizations. These included: Jong Java (Young Java, 1914), Sarekat Sumatra (Sumatra Union, 1911), Pemuda Pasundan (Young Sundanese, 1914), Jong Batak (Young Batak, 1918), Jong Minahasa (Young Minahasa,

1918), Jong Ambon Union (Young Ambon, 1920), and Timorsch Verbond (Timorese Alliance, 1921).[22]

In 1940, Sukarno wrote in the Muhammadiyah magazine Pandji Islam (Islamic Flag) that an independent Indonesia faced a choice between "the union of state and religion, but without [political] unity, or political unity, but the state separate from religion" (quoted in Feillard, 1999: 21). In light of this, Soekarno claimed that the secular nation-state of Indonesia advocated by the PNI was an absolute imperative, to unite diverse ethnicities, as well as different religious and ideological groups in the Indies (Feith and Castles, 1971).[23] More specifically, Sukarno argued that it was politically unfeasible for religion in general (and Islam in particular) to form the foundation of the state.[24]

3.2. Communism

The second political orientation that opposed the idea of an Islamic state was communism. Although its formation as an organization originated from radical activists of SI, the communists made inroads to the Indies through the efforts of a Dutch socialist, Henrik Sneevlit (McVey, 1968). Working as a public servant for the Dutch government in Batavia, Sneevlit began to propagate Marxist ideas among the

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[22] See, Nagazumi, *The Dawn of Indonesian Nationalism,* Ithaca:Cornell University Press, 1980.
[23] During the debate in the Committee for the Preparation of Indonesian Independence (BPUPKI), Soekarno moderated his strong desire for the secular state by promoting *Pancasila* (Five Principles) as neither a secular state nor an Islamic state, but as a religious one.
[24] One of the most radical ideas of PNI was that Soekarno argued explicitly for independence for the East Indies. He promoted the use and growth of the "Indonesian" language. For this reason, the PNI was banned by the Dutch in 1930 and the leaders, including Soekarno were exiled. The party then emerged in several successive incarnations, such as New PNI, Parlindo, and Gerindo over the course of the 1930s and the early 1940s. See, Kahin, *Nationalism*, (1961).

natives. The first socialist organization, the Indies Social Democratic Association

(Indische Sociaal-Democratische Vereeniging – ISDV), was then founded in 1914.

To many, the inspiration for socialist political action was foreign. This was

because there was a relative absence of class conflict along economic lines, as well as

a very low level of industrialization in the East Indies (Mortimer, 1968:4-8). But

Sneevlit's ability to successfully promote Marxist ideas was enhanced by the fact that

those ideas were in harmony with many social, cultural and political views in the

region. Indeed, Soviets—young proletariat cadres—were established for a time in

Surabaya (McVey, 1968:39), and shortly after the 1917 Russian Revolution, Sarekat

Islam (SI) congress even promoted "Islamic communism". As McVey (1968:18) has

pointed out, this attracted followers in Java and Sumatra, and allowed "large portions

of the SI organizational structure to fall into communist control". Ultimately, this

success proved decisive in transforming the combined ISDV-SI into an explicit

communist organization in the Indies, Perserikatan Komunis di India (Communist

Association in the Indies, PKI), in 1918 (McVey, 1968; Mortimer, 1972).

Communist and Islamist organizations frequently clashed in their respective

efforts to attract more followers throughout the Indies, with most of the clashes being

triggered by radical communist followers in the countryside. The clashes tended to

accentuate the social cleavages that existed across social class and ideology, between

abangan (nominal Muslims) and *santri* communities. As the rural violence grew

between 1918 and 1920 (Siraishi, 1972:67-72), the Communists faced a challenge:

either reaffirming their proletarian identity, or abandoning their organizational efforts

among Javanese Muslims. The leadership of the newly renamed Communist Party of

Indonesia (Partai Komunis lndonesia – PKI) opted for rebellion in December 1926, which was the first time that they had entered into open conflict with the ulama. But the Dutch government easily crushed the PKI rebellion, such that the Communists did not again actively participate in the construction of an Indonesian nation-state until the advent of the national revolution in 1948.

After the revolution, the PKI grew dramatically, largely due to its superior organizing skills and nationalist revolutionary rhetoric. But other important leftist organizations were also emerging during this period, including the Indonesian Socialist Party (PSI) and Partai Murba (the Proletarian Party). PSI was influential beyond its size, particularly in the 1940s and early 1950s, and took on a strong role in the government. This was in contrast to the revolutionary communists (that is, PKI), who were a mass party with millions of members, and who were only marginally involved in government until the early 1960s. [25]

In addition to the major organizations examined above, there was also opposition to the idea of an Islamic state from a variety of smaller organizations representing Christians and minority ethnic groups (Ismawan, 1987:67-8; Kahin, 1960). These smaller organizations did play a significant role in the emergence of nationalist movements, particularly the Christians, which was due to the fact that the Christians tended to be among the most educated Indonesians (Harvey, 1978; see also, van Neil, 1977). Prominent parties amongst the Christians included the Indonesian

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[25] *See, Feith,* The Decline, *1972.*

Christian (Protestant) Party, Partai Katholik (the Catholic Party) and Persatuan Dayak (the Dayak Association) in West Borneo.[26]

The conflict over alternatives of state formation discussed above—Islam, secular-nationalism, and communism—will inform our settings of the early patterns of constellation leading to the formation of political Islam in Indonesia. That such patterns endure seems to provide the promise that involvement in mass politics has found stable behavior within Islamist movements. The short period of Japanese occupation during the Pacific war (1942-1945) reflects such a stable behavior marking an important turning point of the political development of Islamism. The subsequent policies of the Japanese administration toward anti-colonial movements, as we shall see later, had long lasting legacies for patterns of pragmatic development within Islamist leaders.

4. Conclusion

Examining the growth of Islamist groups as political movements in contrast to their secular counterparts reveals how Islamists' patterns of organizational building were shaped by the colonial policy of incorporation for nationalist organizations, as well as by the nature of Muslim society in the East Indies. The creation of the 'colonial parliament', the Volkraads, structured the incentives of Islamist leaders in

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[26]It must be noted, the existence of a Dayak party representing the Dayak ethnic communities of Kalimantan is unique, in the sense that no other ethnic parties were present during the consolidation of political cleavage in the colonial Indies. Although region-based youth organizations were formed in the mid 1920s (Ingleson, 1978), their roles in strengthening a new vision of the Dutch East Indies were gradually eclipsed by the consolidated political divisions between Islam, nationalism, and communism. The Dayak Party (founded in 1944) draws our attention back to the regional/ethnic impetuses in Indonesia's original flurry of organizational activity in the early 1900s. The Dayak Party was then the only explicitly regional or ethnic party to attain representation in national politics, especially after the 1955 election.

such a way as to encourage them to enter the political arena and to cooperate politically. This formative moment influenced other Islamist organizations that developed later, encouraging them to be pragmatic and to attune their ideologies, leadership, and organizational networks toward engaging with mass politics. There is thus a link between the formative period of Islamism in the Indies and the subsequent flexibility and strategic innovation shown in the movement's mobilization for an Islamic state.

The early split between modernist and traditionalist Islamist organizations is another factor for understanding why Islamist movements in the Dutch East Indies were unable to form a united political front in the struggle for an Islamic state. Scattered attempts were made by Islamist leaders to unify their movement during the 1930s, through the formation of the MIAI, but the hostility between the two groups remained.

Thus we can see that the formative phase of Islamism in Indonesia influenced the movement in such a way as to make it more pragmatic and adaptable in its later development. The chapter has demonstrated this by examining the different institutional settings during colonial times, the nature of Islam in relation to the state, and patterns of nationalist mobilization. Moreover, we are also able to contrast the experience of Islamists in the Indies with that of Egypt's Islamists during their formative period. Doing so makes it clear why groups with a similar goal – the establishment of an Islamic state – would ultimately look and behave so differently.

Chapter Seven

INDEPENDENCE, POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY
AND THE RISE OF ISLAMIST POLITICAL PARTIES

"We must be prepared to receive, but we must also be ready to share. This is the secret of unity. Unity cannot exist if each group does not share a little" —Sukarno, 1926.

1. Introduction

In chapter six, I outlined the configuration of conflict among anti-colonial organizations in the Dutch East Indies. Patterns of organizational formation of Islamist movements in this period were shaped by the long process of Islamization in the archipelago, as well as by the manner in which Islamic reformism had been challenged by the traditional, organized ulama. Importantly, these ulama were relatively free of control by the colonial state, with their institutions operating in the autonomous-communal sphere. Although Islamist organizations were united in confrontations with their nationalist and communist counterparts, they also suffered from internal divisions, communalism and factional patron-client networks, in addition to the cleavages between their modernist, puritan and traditionalist elements. These differences meant that organized Islamism was unable to build a sustained and united political front.

This chapter seeks to examine the development of Islamism in post-colonial Indonesia. It provides a narrative of the immediate events that led to the formation of Islamist parties, beginning with the elite compromise over the constitutional blueprint for the new Republic, through the formation of revolutionary governments and the escalation of conflict leading to the 1955 Parliamentary elections, and ending with an

authoritarian regime under Sukarno's 'Guided Democracy'. As elaborated in the theory chapter, this period between 1950 and 1958 is defined as a moment when Islamist political mobilization reached its historic peak.

With an eye to our earlier argument regarding the Egyptian case study, it is important to underline that the process of Indonesian state formation initiated a "critical juncture". By considering important events in this brief period, I examine the historical transition behind the decision of Islamist actors – ulama, politicians, and activists in religious organizations – in their pursuit of an Islamic state through parties. The decision to pursue a party strategy had far reaching consequences, since the actions taken by organized Islamism in this crucial period set into motion the patterns of state-Islamist conflict and structured how disagreements over religious politics would be addressed by the state.

A fundamental assertion of this chapter is that the emergence of Islamist political parties in post-colonial Indonesia must be looked at through the analytical prism of the institutional history of state building. By doing so, it is possible to argue that the mechanisms and forms of party formation, mobilization, and organizing were very much shaped by the development of state structure. This is particularly noticeable in how political groups that were present prior to independence competed over the constitutional blueprint for the new state, and how these groups sought to resolve disagreements regarding forms of organizational constructs. Here, the role of the brief period of Japanese occupation – between 1942 and 1945 – with regard to anti-colonial groups is central. The historical institutional framework suggests that the direction of change in the strategies of political groups in response to a critical

juncture is configured by two important factors: the relative power of key institutions (which is a result of institutional legacies and the effects of political changes); and the availability of resources for mobilization that take shape shortly before the critical juncture.

The findings of this chapter can be summarized as follows: In stark contrast with Egypt, what is distinctive about Islamist political mobilization in post-colonial Indonesia is the quick transformation into political parties. As Indonesia's founding fathers failed to adopt a constitution based on Islam, an agreement was reached among the political elite to solve the issue of the place of Islam in the new country in a yet-to-be elected Parliament. These elites then sought to prevent re-colonization by the Dutch by forming the revolutionary government that brought together the whole spectrum of anti-colonial organizations, including Islamist ones. Such an inclusive form of new Republic characterized the basic features of the Indonesian state between 1945 and 1955. Based on this assessment, the theory proposed in this chapter not only aims to explain why Islamist parties came into being in post-independence Indonesia, but also to delineate the process by which religious politics abandoned its 'sacred agenda' and moved forward into a contest for power with other political groups.

The pattern of Islamist party formation in Indonesia followed the same logic that was seen in the emergence of Egypt's jihadist organizations, which is characterized by irreversibilities. This means that the organizational and ideological legacies of pragmatism and reformism by Islamist movements dictated the Muslim elite's behavior during the crucial phase of state construction that centered on compromise and cooperation to make the idealized new state of Indonesia a reality.

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These same organizational and ideological legacies also affected their behavior during the development of ideas and programs for the establishment of an Islamic state. In particular, pragmatism structured the Muslim elite to leave several issues unsettled – especially those related to the constitutional blueprint of the state – during the process of political horse trading that led up to the formation of Indonesia.

The ultimate outcome of this elite settlement was not just the manner in which Muslim leaders began to engage with addressing the Islamic state agenda within the institutional boundaries of the new state, but also how these leaders became more confident about building nation-wide networks to secure their interests both in state-public offices and in the Parliament. This political behavior reflected an over-arching organizational dilemma for Islamism in post-colonial Indonesia: rather than a party strategy and a non-party strategy seeming like two legitimate choices, the party strategy was perceived as the only viable means for advancing Islamists' interests in the institutional construction of the new state. At the same time however, this strategy allowed the Islamists to maintain their societal presence while scouting for opportunities for Islamic state transformation in the future. As I will describe below, this possibility proved very fruitful for Islamist leaders during post-revolutionary Indonesia's inter-elite negotiations regarding the unsettled constitutional issues, which took place between the Nationalists, Islamists, and Communists in the elected parliament.

2. Pancasila and Political Islam:
   ## Emerging State, Elite Compromise and Mass Incorporation

To understand the trajectory of Islamist mobilization in the post-colonial

Dutch East Indies, it is instructive to analyze both the relative strength of organized

Islamism and patterns of political configuration in relation to existing anti-colonial

groups in this period. Historians and political scientists on Southeast Asia have

generally been preoccupied with the assertion that the story of Islamism in Indonesia

is incomplete without highlighting the short but crucial period of Japanese

occupation, from early 1942 to mid 1945. It is commonly argued that this period was

central in the development of almost all anti-colonial organizations in East Asia

(Tuong Vu, 2004; Slater, 2003). And indeed, much of the political development that

took place between 1945 and 1965 was profoundly shaped by the legacies of this

brief period of Japanese rule.

With the advent of the Pacific War, Japan invaded Southeast Asia to challenge

Western hegemony in the region (Paul, 1997:15-40). The Japanese military

occupation and Japan's policies set into motion 'a new awakening' amongst

nationalist groups. In the Dutch East Indies, a number of local elites in the Malay

sultanate had long seen Japan as a potential ally in their struggle against imperialism.[1]

And while the subsequent collapse of Japanese rule had a decisive effect on the

patterns of new state formation, it was the policies of the occupation government

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[1] In the Malay world, nationalist groups had long seen Japan as a potential ally in their struggle against colonial governments. The emergence of Japan as a world power following the Meiji restoration in 1869 had impressed many indigenous leaders on the idea of Greater Asian countries. The Meiji restoration signified that a great nation could move into modernity on their own while retaining an innate 'Asian-ness'. See Barbara W. Andaya, 'From Rum to Tokyo: The search for anti-colonial allies by the rulers of Riau, 1899-1914', in *Indonesia* 24, 1997, pp. 123-156.

toward indigenous organizations that shaped the subsequent patterns of Islamist

mobilization after independence. These policies were the reason that the Islamist

leaders felt confident to harness the political opportunity structure and to openly

compete over visions of the new state in the aftermath of the collapse of the Japanese

empire in mid-August 1945.

2.1. Japan's Policies toward Islamist Group

Not long after their invasion of Java and the establishment of an occupation

government in Batavia in early 1942, the Japanese set up advisory agencies to

mobilize Indonesia's resources and manpower. This interest was mainly driven by the

need to win the Pacific war (Benda, 1958:112-122; 1970; Boland, 1980:23-22). The

Japanese military promoted many Muslim leaders and secular nationalists to head

these agencies. Important to this policy was the effort to co-opt and control Islam.

In the beginning, the Japanese government banned all political activities and

dissolved all anti-colonial organizations including nationalist and communist

movements (Benda, 1958; 1965). One year later, they encouraged the formation of an

umbrella Muslim organization to unite the modernist and traditionalist groups. This

culminated in the founding of Masyumi (Consultative Council of Indonesia Muslims)

in late 1943 (Benda, 1958:112-117) to replace Majelis Islam A'la Indonesia (MIAI).[2]

The goals of Masjumi included "strengthening the unity of all Islamic organizations"

and "… aiding Dai Nippon in the interest of Greater East Asia" (Benda, 1958:151).

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[2] K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari, a great *syeikh* of the NU was appointed as chairman of Masjumi. His son, K.H. Wahid Hasyim who became the Minister of Religious Affairs after the revolution served as the General Secretary. See, Abubakar Aceh, *K.H. Wahid Hasyim: Riwayat Hidup dan Karangan Tersiar,* Surabaya: n. p., 1960.

But for the Muslim leaders, "… this was an open political opportunity to have a single body organization to represent the Muslims' interests in the Indies" (Zuhri, 1970:151; See also Benda, 1958:153). Since the unity of Muslim leaders was the principal reason for the creation of Masyumi, the Japanese ensured that its members came from a variety of backgrounds, including modernist and traditionalist elements, as well as several influential individuals who were not linked to either (Noer, 1960:62; Benda, 1958:150).

The creation of Masyumi reflected the desire of the Japanese to undermine more popular and experienced pre-war Islamist activists (especially those associated with the PSII and the radical Persis). This was illustrated by the promotion of traditional religious leaders to the Masyumi leadership,[3] mostly those associated with Muhammadiyah and NU (Boland, 1980:12-14). The Japanese Islamic policy was bolstered in early1944 by the setting up of regional branch offices in charge of Islamic (religious) affairs staffed by Masyumi members, *Shumubu*.[4] The purpose of these offices was to pave the way for the co-optation of local Muslim leaders, but at the same time to facilitate the penetration of the lowest level of Muslim society (Bush, 2001:107; Benda, 1958). For the first time in history, organizations such as NU and Muhammadiyah were entrusted with the administration of religious affairs at local levels, a role formerly played by local and lower rank of *priyayi* (bureaucrats).

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[3] These two organizations officially joined Masjumi following the formation of the Islamic Party Masjumi in 1945. PSII became a member of the Masjumi confederation in 1951 while the Persis had joined earlier in 1947. See, Deliar Noer, *Partai Islam di Pentas National (1942-1962)*, Jakarta: Grafiti Press, 1990.

[4] The office resembled the Kantoor voor Inlandsesachen (Office for Native Affairs) set up under the Dutch. But under Japanese government, the office was staffed and administered by individuals affiliated to the Masjumi networks, from the top in Jakarta to sub-district levels. See, Deliar Noer, *Administration of Islam in Indonesia,* Ithaca: Modern-Cornell Indonesia Project, 1971.

Japanese efforts to co-opt Islamist leaders were bolstered by other initiatives that used secular nationalist leaders to mobilize support from other networks. In early 1943, leaders of Muslim organizations and of secular nationalist collaborated in founding *Putera*, an organization authorized by the Japanese. Sukarno and Hatta, who had just returned from exile, shared the leadership of *Putera* with two Muslim leaders (Benda, 1958:117). But *Putera* proved relatively unreliable, and thus was replaced in early 1944 by the Java Service Association or *Jawa Hokokai*, a mass mobilizing organization with branches in villages and urban neighborhoods (Zuhri, 1970:153-6). Sukarno and a Masjumi leader, K.H. Mas Mansur, served as advisors to the Japanese chief of *Hokokai*. At local levels, *Hokokai* was staffed by local bureaucrats, thus allowing nationalist leaders limited supervision of local governments for the first time. The combined advisory councils and *Hokokai* branches formed a governmental hierarchy that was based at the centre but connected to the periphery by local offices run by Indonesians. And although it should be noted that the level of integration and differentiation remained relatively low, it was this hierarchy that became the skeleton of the new Indonesian state in late 1945 (McVey, 1996:12).

Having access to government resources encouraged leaders of Masyumi to further collaborate with the Japanese military. The most important move by the Masyumi-Japan collaboration came in late 1943. As the Japanese prepared for an Allied invasion in that year, they established a Central Advisory Council for Dai Nippon and 17 regional councils (Benda, 1958:137). Leaders of secular nationalist

and professional bodies staffed these councils. [5] In the same year, the Japanese authorities formed indigenous militias encompassing both nationalist and Islamist youth. At the time *Putera* was established, the Japanese also created *Pembela Tanah Air, Peta* (Defenders of the Territory), which consisted of a 37,000 paramilitary unit under overall Japanese supervision but with Indonesian officers and soldiers.

Peta was designed as a squad for local defense, with its members deliberately drawn from local elite families and trained locally. Many members of ulama families were recruited into the squad, with a Western-educated Muhammadiyah leader even serving as the senior Indonesian officer (Benda 1958:139; Anderson 1972: 20-4). The Japanese also formed *Heiho*, which was a force of 25,000 that was fully integrated into the Japanese army (Anderson 1972:25). And a paramilitary organization active in large urban centers called *Barisan Pelopor* (Vanguard Corps) was supervised by *Hokokai*. Then in response to requests from Muslim leaders in late 1943, the Japanese authorized training for *Hizbullah* (Army of God), to serve as the armed wing of Masyumi. Many future leaders of the Indonesian Republic and Army would come from *Peta, Heiho, Barisan Pelopor* and *Hizbullah*, as would future leaders of regional rebellions against the Republic (Anderson, 1972:27).

The Japanese policies toward Islam, which were aimed at asserting control over Java during the Pacific war, were instrumental to the political development of organized Islamism. Organizationally, the Japanese created three kinds of organizations where experiences of statecraft and resource mobilization were

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[5] The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Central Advisory Council were Sukarno and Hatta, but prominent leaders of Masjumi were included in this Council to be in charge of day-to-day policies and administration. See, for example, Harry J.Benda, *Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam under Japanese Occupation,* The Hague and Bandung: van Hoeve, Ltd, 1958, p. 161-162.

formative for Muslim leaders. These included: 1) a united political organization for Muslims with a bureaucratic structure involved in managing state religious affairs at local levels; 2) a framework of national government led by nationalist leaders but staffed by traditional bureaucrats; and 3) armed youth militias linked to Islamist organizations. Compromise and cooperation with other nationalist groups was an important element that was emphasized by these organizations and that proved highly significant in terms of later state building. Indeed, after Japan's defeat, this legacy of elite compromise became integral to the organizational form of the Indonesian nationalist movement. Yet while these experiences did help to sustain the collaboration between Islamist and nationalist groups, they also sowed the seeds of later conflict and political tension. This conflict came to the surface when the Japanese surrendered in mid-1945.

2.2. Pancasila: Unsettled Constitutional Blueprint

Patterns of state formation in relation to the development of organized Islamism continued to be shaped by the legacies of the Japanese occupation. The most important of these shaping forces was the commission for the preparation of independence created by Japan in March 1945 (Kahin, 1952:121-127). As Japan staggered towards defeat, the occupation government convened *Badan Penyelidik Usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia* (BPUPKI – Investigatory Commission for the Preparation of Indonesian Independence),[6] bringing together a range of

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[6] In Japanese, this body was known as *Dokuritsu Zyunbi Tyoosakai*. Similar commissions had been formed in Korea, Vietnam, and Taiwan as the defeat of Japan in the Pacific was approaching. The BPUPKI was eventually transformed into Commission for the Preparation of Independence (PPKI) in

indigenous elites to oversee Indonesian independence. This commission was actually far from a representative body of existing organizations. Although it brought together a spectrum of political leaders, nationalists and the Javanese bureaucratic elite dominated it (Ricklefs, 1991:261). The Islamists, on the other hand, were poorly represented.[7] The Japanese seemed careful in appointing only experienced, older and conservative elements to the committee, deliberately excluding extreme leaders of anti-colonial movements that might have instigated an uprising against the authorities (Anderson, 1972: 62-65). For instance, radical communists and puritan Muslims were not invited. Nonetheless, BPUPKI's membership was broad enough to include most prominent Indonesian political activists and religious leaders with genuine nationalist credentials.

After meeting several times between April and July 1945 to draft the constitution of the future Indonesian republic, the Commission was able to reach agreement on the form of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, as well as upon the idea of basing the principle of statehood on Pancasila (Five Principles).[8] It was Sukarno, a nationalist leader, who had first formulated Pancasila as the

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June 1945. See, Tuong Vu, State Formation and the Origins of Developmental States in South Korea and Indonesia, in *Studies in Comparative International Development,* Vol. 41, 4, 2007, pp. 27-56.

[7] Out of 62 members of BPUPKI, only 7 represented Islamist organizations while 4 individuals were' culturally, affiliated to Islam. See, Endang S. Anshari, *The Jakarta Charter of June 1945: The Struggle for Islamic Constituion in Indonesia*, M.A. Thesis of Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, 1979; also, Muhammad Yami, *Naskah Persiapan Undang-undang Dasar 1945*, Volume I, Jakarta: Prapanca, 1959, p. 60.

[8] The standard historical account in Indonesia on the birth of Pancasila is that it was Sukarno's speech on June 1, 1945 to the BPUPKI that marked the day when the complete formulation of five principles were introduced. Muhammad Yamin, a historian who also became a member of BPUPKI, also formulated similar ideas a few days earlier. In less rhetorical terms than Sukarno, Yamin also mentioned five principles that included republicanism, humanitarianism, nationalism, social justice and divinity. But Yamin's speech was not considered a decisive formulation of Pancasila. See, Endang S. Anshari, *The Jakarta Charter of June 1945: a Study of Islamic Constitution in Indonesia*, M.A. Thesis of Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, 1979.

ideological blueprint for the future of Indonesia. Pancasila's five principles included Divinity, Humanitarianism, National Unity, Democracy through Representation, and Social Justice.

The acceptance of Pancasila as the basis for the national Constitution of the new Republic by members of BPUPKI included Islamist leaders within the organization, who had until then been calling for an Islamic state (Anshari, 1980:87-88). But Muslim leaders from both NU and Muhammadiyah were unhappy with the lack of explicit reference to Islam in Pancasila. Nonetheless, pressure from the Japanese during the lead-up to independence helped to persuade these Muslim leaders to put aside their demand for an Islamic state and accept a secular one (Noer 1987: 38-43). The success of the Japanese pressure was helped by the Jakarta Charter (*Piagam Jakarta)* being appended to the first article of the constitution preamble. This stated that the Indonesian state was based upon "belief in God *with obligations for the adherents of Islam to carry out Islamic law."* But when the Constitution was officially promulgated one day after the declaration of independence on 17 August 1945, the last "seven words" that gave the Jakarta Charter its Islamic orientation were dropped. This decision was made to quell the unease from Christian majority provinces, which otherwise would have refused to join in the declaration of independence. Pancasila's first principle, "The Belief in One Supreme God",[9] which

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[9] In the June agreement, the original version "belief in God" was listed last, while in later version it was made the first principle. For a detailed discussion, see Douglas Ramage, *Islam, Democracy and the ideology of tolerance*, New York: Routledge, 1995, p. 14.

intentionally left God undefined, epitomized the final compromise between Islamists, nationalists and religious minorities (Reid, 1974:30; Boland, 1980; Lev, 1972:43).[10]

What is striking about the Muslims' acceptance of Pancasila is how settled it seemed by the time the Constitution was signed by the prominent leaders in BPUPKI on August 18.[11] Historians on Indonesia explain this by referring to the weak position of Islamist leaders *vis-à-vis* their nationalist counterparts during the constitutional debates in the PPKI, both in terms of the number of delegates and the relative vagueness of their conception of an Islamic state (Lev, 1972:23; Ricklefs, 1991:298; Feith and Castle, 1971). Historians have also claimed that although the idea of the implementation of Islamic law was a fundamental goal for an Islamic state, its leaders in the PPKI were unable to delineate clear legal-institutional arrangements for the state to enforce such law (Boland, 1971). Others have mentioned that the Muslims' quick acceptance of Pancasila was due to the fact that the most outspoken champion of an Islamic constitution, Muhammad Natsir (Persis), did not participate in the meetings. In his biography, Natsir says that he was in Bandung when he received an invitation to attend the first meeting of the BPUPKI, but that he declined to come to Jakarta because he was sick (Natsir, 1989:112). Others have countered that the real reason for Natsir's absence was his radical stance toward an Islamic state alternative.

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[10] The removal of these "seven words" of Pancasila was was perceived as an act of betrayal by Muslim leaders; but ironically the nationalists always applauded this decision as a form of sacrifice by Indonesian Muslim leaders to in favor of national unity. For a detailed account on the debate over the acceptance of Muslim factions to Pancasila as a constitutional blueprint, see Bahtiar Effendy, "Islam and the State: The Transformation of Islamic Political Ides and Practices", PhD Dissertation Ohio State University, Columbus, 1995, pp. 76-80.

[11] There were three points that were dropped out of the Constitutional blueprint: onewas related to the "seven words" that were supposedly stipulated in the Preamble of the Constitution, the other two were articles that stated that 1) Islam be the religion of state; and 2) that the President and Vice President be Muslims. See, *Anshari*, 1945:14.

I will argue that the quick decision of Islamist leaders in August 1945 to accept Pancasila must be understood through the lens of the legacy of pragmatism regarding the form of an Islamic state from the colonial period in the East Indies. In other words, the acceptance of a diluted position, of an Islamic state based on Islamic principles, shaped the behavior of Islamist leaders to quickly accept Pancasila as a constitutional blueprint. This assessment underpins what Kahar Muzakir, an Islamist member of PPKI affiliated with Muhammadiyah, pointed out, "… we leave Islamic state to be fought by our future generation" (*Naskah*, 1959:76; see also, Effendy, 1995).

The key variable in the quick acceptance of Pancasila by Muslim leaders was then neither ideological vagueness nor the lack of numerical strength of the Islamists. Instead, the sequence of events that took place between 1945 and 1949, in which constitutional governments of Indonesia were gradually formed, emerges as critical. The first of these events is related to the threat of re-colonization. As Tokyo surrendered, Sukarno and Hatta declared independence on August 17, 1945. They then formed a cabinet composed mainly of Japanese collaborators like themselves (Anderson, 1972:43). Quick and decisive political action had to be taken in order to fill the power vacuum in the former East Indies. This was especially the case because of the threat of invasion by the Allies to disarm the Japanese (Sjahrir, 1980). Soekarno and Hatta declared the first cabinet in late August, and with the PPKI as the core institution, they nominated leaders from various groups to create the Indonesian Central National Committee (Komite Nasional Indonesia Pusat, KNIP), an advisory body set up to create the first cabinet. With broad and active participation from major groups, it represented an inclusive compromise that would help Islamist leaders to downplay

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any dissatisfaction surrounding the constitutional blueprint, and thus to move forward to be included in the new government (Kahin, 1952; Anderson, 1972).

The second key event was Sutan Sjahrir, KNIP's chairman, persuading Hatta and a significant number of KNIP members to approve the group's change from an advisory agency to a parliament, to which the cabinet would be accountable (Anderson, 1972:170-177). Sjahrir's success in doing so was likely due to Sukarno and Hatta realizing that Sjahrir's anti-Japanese credentials were needed to ensure that the Republic would receive international recognition. The result was that Sukarno-Hatta were retained as figureheads while Sjahrir replaced them and formed a new revolutionary cabinet. It was then Sjahrir, with his expertise in constitutional law, who formulated the precise character of the Indonesian government and state institutions, especially in regard to the unsettled issues of the constitution (Budiarjo, 1980:73).

Once Sjahrir took over the KNIP, he called for local committees to be established in preparation for creating governmental offices for the new state. But because there were only a limited number of options available for Sjahrir's government, he called for political parties to be formed, to participate in these committees and to fill seats in the newly established parliament. I will describe the patterns of Islamist party formation in the next section. What is important to note here is that this move generated further collaboration and compromise as new parties were formed and grew.

The political opportunity offered by Sjahrir's call spurred political, social, ethno-regional, and religious elites to form parties so that they could claim seats in

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the committees. Within a few months, several dozen parties were founded or resurrected, including the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) and the PNI (Anderson, 1972; Kahin, 1958; Ambardi, 2008). Islamists launched their united political party in November 1945. The compromise between the factions of Soekarno-Hatta (whose members had been Japanese collaborators) and Sjahris's factions (who had been non-collaborators), as well as the incorporation of major political parties meant that the new state was solid enough to survive in the face of a threat of re-colonization from the Dutch (Ricklefs, 1991:160). Indeed, the Sukarno-Hatta-Sjahrir leadership proved able to fill the power vacuum during the five years that it took for the UN to recognize Indonesian sovereignty (between 1945 and 1949), thereby allowing the Indies to function as a *de facto* sovereign state (Reid, 1974: 65-68; Kahin, 1958).

But while the situation was relatively stable at the national level, conditions were often chaotic within the country. Not long after independence was proclaimed, major cities and towns in Java experienced social anarchy due to local groups affiliated with organizations formed during the Japanese occupation launching massive attacks on the Japanese headquarters and the British/Allied forces (Reid, 1974:134-136, see also, Anderson, 1972). In Aceh, East Sumatra, and Surakarta, radical youth groups dethroned local royal rulers and seized local governments despite the Republic efforts to stop this (Reid, 1974: 65-68, 92-93; Kahin, 1985). Similar upheavals took place in West and Central Java, where local religious leaders led mass attacks on local officials, including those newly appointed by the fledgling republic (Anderson, 1972: 335-342; Kahin, 1985).

It is important to note that in contrast with Egypt during Nasser's revolution, Indonesia had no real army or police force until late 1947 (Said, 1989). And because it lacked coercive power to control the often-chaotic situations that followed independence, Sjahrir's regime made an effort to encourage the masses into its government offices. This was most certainly not because Indonesian leaders believed in mass participation. Rather, the pressing issue was to mobilize popular support to allow the new government to function and thus to remain as strong as possible in the face of the challenge from the Dutch. In addition, Sjahrir believed strongly in diplomacy rather than war. He thus sought to win diplomatic recognition as the uncontested sovereign of Indonesia without undertaking or condoning mass actions.

Because of his lack of coercive power, Sjahrir had to move to settle for political inclusion, mainly due to the fact that mass actions at the local level were spontaneously orchestrated by organizations linked to political elites in Jakarta (Harvey, 1996:70-74). In West Java for example, mass actions were undertaken by organizations affiliated with Masyumi and with *Hizbullah* (van Dick, 1980; Soebardi, 1983). In large cities in East Java, the actions were mainly organized by the Communists.[12] As Ben Anderson (1972:112) has pointed out, "… local militias and

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[12] The challenges from mass actions organized by the radical-revolutionary local leaders were instrumental in forcing the central government to compromise and seek incorporation as part of maintaining order in the face of re-colonization. As most Indonesianists observed there were many challenges to the formation of a new state under Soekarno-Hatta-Sjahrir leadership. Such challenges have ranged from the threat of Dutch re-colonization, federalism, religious upheavals, unsettled constitutions, UN recognition for sovereignty, until civil war. But politically speaking two serious challenges emerged from the radicals originating from the left movements. The first challenge was launched by Tan Malaka, a former PKI leader in the 1926 uprising against the Dutch; and the second from Muso which took form of an armed rebellion in Madiun, East Java, in 1948.

other mass organizations were accepted into local governments, usually as affiliates with national political parties… together with remnants of the colonial bureaucracy".

Because the unsettled issues regarding Pancasila continued to destabilize the new Republic, Sukarno-Hatta authorized Sjahrir to establish a government office called the Ministry of Religious Affairs, in 1946. This unique, state-level office was put in charge of administering Islam (Noer, 1978:3-7; Effendy, 1995:156; Boland, 1980). The creation of the Ministry signaled an important development in the institutional construction of the new Republic, since it allowed an Islamic system to operate at the state level. This immediately changed the strategic frame within which mobilization in pursuit of an Islamic state was occurring. As was elaborated in the theory chapter, the institutional contexts of Islamist mobilization are shaped by the ongoing construction of the state's institutional structures, as well as by the ways in which unsettled issues between Islam and the state are both resolved and imposed. The creation of a state-level department for religious affairs in this crucial phase of state building provided new incentives, imposed new constraints, and had significant new ramifications for the subsequent strategies adopted by Islamist movements.

2.3. The Ministry of Religious Affairs

In the early years of its operation, the Ministry of Religious Affairs had no clear jurisdiction as a state-level department. Part of the reason for this is that such an office had not been part of the conceptualization of a modern nation state by Sjahrir's constitutional government. In addition, the office had been created largely as a concession to Muslim nationalists, in exchange for their acceptance of the Pancasila

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(Anshari 1979:36; Nieuwenhuijze 1958:236 ff.). It was thus part of the 'political settlement' sought by secular-nationalists to accommodate the interests of the Islamists.

It is possible to see the Ministry of Religious Affairs as a continuation of the Japanese-created *Shumubu*, an office that was mainly based on the Kantoor vor Inlandsce Sachen (Office for Native Affairs) established by the Dutch. Indeed, Islamic courts had already existed under the Dutch colonial government, though their area of judicial responsibility had been limited to matters of family law that had been accepted into local custom (*adat*) (Lukito, 1997). For this reason, the Ministry's area of purview was broadened in a gradual manner, to include such things as "the supervision of religious matters" (Boland, 1971:55).[13] It was only during the time of KH Wahid Hasyim, an NU ulama and politician who served as the Minister of Religion from 1948 to 1952, that a blueprint for the Ministry's area of jurisdiction was formulated. The contemporary tasks of this Ministry were largely derived from this formulation.

A close look at the Ministry's blueprint shows that while it was nominally in charge of administering religion, it was in fact largely designed to accommodate ulama interests. The blueprint included supervision of religious education, Muslim marriages, Islamic courts (which deal with divorce and inheritance matters) and the

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[13] In a personal conversation with Mukti Ali, a former Minister of Religion (1971-1977), it revealed that a clear mandate for the Ministry was only established in the late 1950s. Mukti Ali told a story that, Dr. Rasyidi, a Sorbonne graduate who had served as the first Minister in 1945-1947, had difficulties to build a clear vision of what the Ministry should work for. What is clear was "the Minister provided some ceremonial-religious rituals and prayers for the troops who wanted to go to revolutionary war".

hajj.[14] Since it was meant as a political concession, the Ministry – at least until the early 1970s – never had any significant influence on government policy. But the Ministry did dispense much patronage (in the form of jobs, financial rewards and facilities), while also serving as a powerful machine for co-optation (van Bruinessen, 1997). In 1951, separate directorates for other religions were added to the Ministry, thus strengthening its role as a state institution and rendering it more prominent in dealing with inter-religious affairs.[15]

As the Ministry of Religion grew in size and expanded its scope of influence, standardization and transparency were increasingly imposed on Islamic institutions.[16] The imposition of uniformity came through the establishment of local Offices of Religious Affairs (Kantor Urusan Agama, or KUA) in 1947. The traditional semi-hereditary office of the village *naib* (mosque official) was abolished and incorporated into the rational-legal bureaucracy of the Ministry (Geertz 1960:207). These developments deprived families of their control of local religious offices, thereby paving the way for the standardization of religious practices (Hefner, 1987:81-83). Standardization was also imposed on the Islamic courts, which had previously been

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[14] The Ministry attempted to bring private Islamic schools under its control, and under its auspices a large number of state religious schools, of all levels from primary to higher education, were established. The Muslim community's reactions to these efforts, though largely carried out by committed Muslims, were ambivalent; government funding was applauded, but there were doubts about government control of the curriculum. Many traditional Muslim schools (*pesantren*) jealously guarded their independence *vis-a-vis* the Ministry. See, Martin van Bruinessen, 1996.

[15] For an excellent overview of the expansion of the Ministry during the 1950s, see Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java,* Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1960, pp. 200-203; Deliar Noer, *Administration of Islam in Indonesia,* Ithaca: Cornell University Monograph Series, 1978, pp. 8-23.

[16] The Ministry of Religion was the fourth largest nonmilitary department in the Indonesian government following the departments of Education, Police, and Interior. As Daniel Lev has noted, the Ministry grew from nearly 17,000 offices in 1958 to more than 34,000 in 1963 and to 100,000 in 1967. See, Lev, 1972, p.52; see also Biro Pusat Statistik, *Statistik Indonesia 1964-1967,* pp. 28-29. Hefner observed that such a development reached its peak in the early 1970s when a large number of NU-affiliated learning institutions were transformed into state-sponsored Islamic Studies Academies. See, Hefner, 1987, p.544.

characterized by their local diversity. Indeed, Lev observed that before standardization, inheritance problems had been solved in a "crazy quilt fashion" due to the influence of customary *adat* laws and Islamic jurisprudence (Lev, 1972:101). Nonetheless, it should be noted that while the administration of Islamic law was streamlined and standardized with respect to marriage and inheritance laws, the Ministry's area of responsibility was restricted to these two domains. Thus while significant gains were made through the Ministry of Religion, they fell short of the religious political movements' goal of an Islamic state.

The creation of the Ministry of Religious Affairs successfully muted the struggle for an Islamic state, at least until the 1955 elections and the escalation of the controversy over the Jakarta Charter. This was because the political interests of Islamist groups had been largely accommodated in the newly built state-institutional structure. Nonetheless, it bears noting that non-Muslim religious minorities for the most part ignored the Ministry, and participated mostly to ensure that their interests were not threatened by the Muslims (Lev 1972:47, fn. 29).

3. The Rise of Islamist Political Parties (1949-1958)

The post-revolutionary state of Indonesia was built largely upon an ideal rather than upon a set of compromises (Elson, 2001). But the revolutionary backdrop generated many unsettled issues of state formation, thereby spurring political compromise, accommodation, and incorporation. As described above, thanks to elite compromise and mass incorporation during the crucial phase of state formation, Indo-

nesia largely avoided the violence and ideological extremism that Egypt underwent at a similar stage.

A unified Indonesian nation-state emerged in 1949 after the Dutch withdrew their military and gave up their control of the East Indies in the UN. Nonetheless, Muslim elite compromise for the constitutional blueprint of the Republic and their approval for the creation of the Ministry of Religious Affairs was not widely perceived as a permanent solution by most of Islamist leaders. Until the early 1970s, most Muslim leaders believed that "… the decision [of Islamist leaders in the PPKI] was taken in an emergency situation" (Hamka, 1971:19). Others went even further. As Isa Anshary (1964:17) suggested, "it was a magic trick [to single out *the Jakarta Charter*], still wrapped up in a mysterious fog, from those anti-Islamic statists in the Commission so they could decline their commitment against the Muslim stance in one night" (c.f., Samson, 1971:42). This perception created a problem in the political development of state-Islamist relations.[17] As will be made clear below, the legacies of state formation would pose formidable challenges to Indonesian post-colonial state builders when they endeavored to resolve this unsettled constitutional blueprint democratically.

Before delving further into the patterns of Islamist party formation, I will briefly describe the ongoing construction of institutional structures of the state which characterized the new Republic between 1946 and 1952. Works on Indonesian politics have largely claimed that elite compromise and mass incorporation had produced an inclusive and solid political system to survive challenges from the

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[17] Bahtiar Effendy termed such a relation as producing "… hostility between the subsequent governments of Indonesia toward Islam". See, Effendy, *Islam and the State,* 1995, pp. 211-235.

radicals, especially the left. The "Madiun Affairs" in late 1948, in which a Soviet-exiled PKI leader, Muso, returned to Java and overtly proclaimed a Communist government in East Java, was evidence of the radicals' challenge to the compromise patterns among elites (Kahin, 1958; Feith, 1966; Benda and McVey, 1969; Chalmers, 1997).[18] The Constitution promulgated in 1945 gave Indonesia a political system with strong presidential powers. This system was envisioned as being temporary, until representatives for a Constituent Assembly responsible for drafting a permanent constitution could be elected. Because this system was considered as being interim in nature, leaders in political parties behave in such a way that the rules could be changed according to their interests. It took just a few months before the prime minister corralled enough support to transfer many presidential powers to the *de facto* cabinet (Chalmers, 1997:90-92).

In 1948, the 1945 Constitution was replaced by a presidential-parliamentary system aimed at redistributing power and responsibilities between these two state offices. But this arrangement collapsed again in March 1949, against the backdrop of a diplomatic settlement with the Dutch to withdraw from Indonesia on the condition

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[18] Politically speaking, two challenges were seriously confronted by the new Republic, originating from left organizations that brought it to the brink of war. The first challenge came from Tan Malaka; a Communist leader in the 1926 revolt. Malaka was famous for his theory on Marx's social revolution, but had no organizational base in 1945. Malaka's main demand was that Indonesia stop negotiating with the Dutch. He sought elite support to topple the Sjahrir cabinet. In February 1946 Sjahrir was forced to resign. With help from Sukarno and Hatta, Sjahrir was able to resolve the problem by incorporating Malaka's allies in his government. The second challenge came from Muso; another exiled PKI leader who returned from the Soviet Union in August 1948. Musso called for communist members to reject alliance with bourgeois groups. He took command of the PKI and pushed through a radical program of social revolution. In Madiun, an East Java district with significant PKI support, Muso launched a premature military coup against Sukarno-Hatta. He was killed and his forces were decimated in a few weeks. Among the important victims of this coup were local leaders of Masjumi and NU ulama. Like Malaka, Musso failed to disrupt the pattern of elite compromise. These two challenges from Communists also contributed to the decision of Muslim leaders in Jakarta to accept Pancasila (Kahin, 1985:272-303; Reid, 1974:136-147).

that the country would be structured based on a federal system (McVey, 1996:4-5). This change deprived both the president and the national parliament of much authority. Many leaders, from both civilian and military backgrounds, perceived the agreement as being a strategy orchestrated by the Dutch to divide Indonesia along its ethnic, regional and religious lines (Lev, 1972). The leaders in Jakarta were then repudiated in a matter of weeks, with most states forming a new unitary government that forcefully incorporated any holdout states soon afterwards. In this latest constitutional framework, the prime minister and cabinet functioned as the executive body while the president had a largely symbolic role. But with the unsettled issues surrounding Pancasila still being disputed in many regions, Sukarno sought to enlarge the powers of his office so as to enforce the position of Pancasila as the foundation of the new Republic (Effendy, 1995:156-161).

In the Parliament, too, political parties continued to confront each other, which rendered them unable to consolidate as organizations with clear programs and policies. The establishment of the principle of proportional representation (PR) was probably intended to provide new state institutions with popular legitimacy at a time when the Dutch were still refusing to acknowledge Indonesia's sovereignty. But President Sukarno soon found it a useful means to expand the power of his office. Asserting the goal of providing "…direct representation for all significant groups in Indonesian society" (Feith, 1962:132), Sukarno then moved to enlarge the KNIP by including non-party delegates as representatives of the Outer Islands and of minority ethnic communities (Feith, 1962:132). These moves helped him to win personal support while reducing the influence of political parties.

Political Party	KNIP-1946 Number of Seat	KNIP-1947 Number of Seat	Temporary Parliament 1950	Temporary Parliament 1955
PNI	45	45	36	42
Masyumi	35	60	49	44
Partai Sosialis	35	35	-	-
PSII	-	-	17	14
PKI	2	35	13	17
Partai NU	-	-	-	8
Partai Katholik	2	4	9	8
Partai Kristen	4	8	5	5
Other Parties	6	35	64	-
Individuals	71	292	39	94
Total	200	514	232	232

Table 1: Change from KNIP to Temporary Parliament between 1946 and 1955. Source: Riswandha Imawan, *The Evolution of Political Party System in Indonesia, 1900-1987,* PhD Dissertation, Northern Illionis University, p. 108.

It is clear that because of institutional weaknesses, the political strength of most party organizations in post-colonial Indonesia was built around personal, charismatic and patron-client networks that underpinned patterns of party formation. While most politicians kept participating in the cabinets, they grew increasingly antagonistic toward the unsettled ideological blueprint of the new state. It is from this crucial period of party formation that the future fragility and instability of inter-party competition became deeply inculcated into Indonesian politics.

3.1. Building a United-Islamist Party: Masyumi

The formation of political parties was largely governed by two important factors embedded in the crucial moment of the institutional construction of the new state: First, Sukarno's informal speech at the PPKI meeting the day after independence, where he said that "… yet-to-be elected representatives in the Constituent Assembly will begin the work in fashioning the unsettled [issues] of our constitution" (c.f., Feith, 1962:284); and second, Sjahrir's move in late 1945 to transform the KNIP into an advisory body with legislative authority, as well as his call for the formation of parties to be represented in government offices. Guided by these factors, political parties flourished and a new phase of escalation between political groups over an alternative form of statehood surfaced.

Almost immediately, political elites began to declare their party organizations. Leaders in Islamist organizations declared the foundation of Partai Politik Islam Indonesia Masyumi (Masyumi) in November of 1945.[19] Observers have noted that as a party designed for united-political organizing among Islamist groups, Masyumi was almost certainly Indonesia's largest party, at least until 1952 (Kahin, 1958; Ricklefs, 1991; Effendy, 1995:214). A number of factors gave Masyumi a clear political advantage: the name Masyumi itself stemmed from the consultative assembly of Indonesian Muslim leaders fostered during the Japanese occupation. And the party's

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[19] During party declaration, almost all leaders from major Islamist organizations were present. Mahendra noted that the formation of Masyumi was largely initiated by Muslim leaders who have dreamed for a united-Islamic political front to represent aspiring for an Islamic state since the collapse of MIAI in 1940. These leaders included Haji Agus Salim (Syarikat Islam-Penyadar), Abdul Kahar Muzakar, Ki Bagus Hadikusumo (Muhammadiyah), Abdul Wahid Hasyim and Wahab Hasbullah (NU), Mohammad Natsir (Persis) Moehammad Roem and Prawoto Mangkusasmito (Muslim Youth Association). See, Yusril Ihza Mahendra, *Modernisme and FundamentalismePolitik Islam: Studi Perbanding Masyumi dan Jama'at Islami,* Jakarta:Paramadina, 1989, pp. 62-64.

most important elements, the NU and Muhammadiyah, had been able to maintain their political and social networks as they had been the only organizations allowed to remain active. This meant that Masyumi had a much greater presence on the ground than many other political parties that had to build their organizations from scratch (Kahin, 1958:309; Noer, 49-53).[20] Between 1946 and 1948, minor Muslim organizations including Persis, PSII, and North Sumatra-based Jamiat al-Washlyah joined Masyumi, thereby strengthening it (Bush, 2001:113).

As a result of Masyumi being a newly formed, big-tent party that had yet to consolidate itself as a unitary organization, its leadership remained contested. The party's political elite was divided between an Executive Board (Pengurus Besar) and an Advisory Council (Majelis Syura). As to the importance of the NU's role in the early party leadership, there are differing opinions. According to van Bruinessen (1981:62), the NU was not well represented in the leadership of Masyumi, as it was only given one position on the Executive Board (KH Maskyur, representing *Hizbullah*) and three positions on the Advisory Council (Bush, 2001:96). At the same time, because of their role in guiding the party's religious and moral policies, the NU's ulama and politicians dominated the Advisory Council (Bush, 2001). Then in 1950, the party created an additional advisory body within its Executive Board, the Party Leadership Council (Dewan Pimpinan Partai), which was made responsible for

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[20] In terms of membership, Masjumi was unique because it had both institutional and individual members; a characteristic that made Masjumi, in the early years, the only political organization directly rooted in civic association networks (Samson, 1971:14-29). Members of the various component organizations were automatically assumed to be members of Masjumi. In 1950, the party claimed 10 million members. But no one actually knew how many members Masyumi had during the 1950s. The first list of members was not produced until 1960, the year the party was banned by Sukarno. It was revealed that after the 1955 elections, Masjumi had about 6.3 million active members. See, Deliar Noer, *Partai Islam di Pentas National*, Jakarta:Graffiti Press, 1980, pp. 38-41.

determining party guidelines and policies. The NU came to dominate the Party Leadership Council, which in conjunction with its dominance of the Advisory Council allowed it to play a very important role in determining the direction and leadership of Masyumi (Anam, 1987:133-4). Thus NU leaders and ulama felt that they had significant influence within Masyumi, which caused them to urge the NU members at all levels to support the party politically. Support from the NU was responsible for Masyumi's rise as the fastest growing party organization in the pre-1955 election period (Bush, 2002).

Thus Masyumi arose out of a concerted effort by Muslim groups to build a united political arm in order to continue their struggle to settle the Islamic state constitution. Importantly, Masyumi was more than a political organization pursuing policies and programs. It was also an organization with a vision for the establishment of a nation-state organized according to Islamic principles and practices (Mahendra, 1994:12). As K.H. Wahab Hasbullah of NU once said, "… the main goal of our party [Masjumi] was that, we want to defend Indonesian independence. But we also seek an independent state which is based on the *shari'a* and democracy that is accorded with Islamic teachings" (Fealy, 1994:91). The ideological jousting between Masyumi and other parties, particularly over the party's espousal of a religious Indonesian identity based upon the creation of an Islamic state, produced some semblance of a party program. But the effectiveness of this program was increased because the party successfully portrayed itself as the political arm of the Muslim community, and thus that Muslims had an obligation to support it because it sought to integrate Islam with politics (Bush, 2001).

During this revolutionary period, all parties actually shared numerous organizational characteristics (Feith, 1962:123; Skinner, 1959). For example, the nationalist PNI tended to center itself around dominant personalities, while Masyumi was built around pre-structured, autonomous groups in Muslim religious organizations. But because Masyumi constituted a political front that incorporated multiple and diverse Muslim communities, its internal dynamics were exacerbated to a greater extent by the political conditions. Thus the fact that party leaders were forced to maneuver to maintain their positions in the cabinets meant that they had little time to focus upon articulating clear policy positions. As Lyne has pointed out (2000), most parties "drew themselves in the broadest ideological strokes; their programs lacked detail and emphasized anti-Dutch credentials above all" (Lyne, 2000:145).

Within the state bodies, nationalist-secular and Islamist parties were able to find common ground in order to protect their presence and special status. Between 1947 and 1954, Masyumi almost always controlled the Foreign Ministry, the Finance and Economic Ministry, the Information Ministry and the Ministry of Religious Affairs (which the NU's ulama dominated) (Noer, 1981:89-94; Feith, 1962:148). Meanwhile, the lack of public accountability encouraged the parties to use state resources and official appointments as means to expand influence inside the bureaucracy and also to support patronage networks outside. The more tedious and costly task of building up formal party infrastructures and constructing linkages to voters nation-wide assumed a lower priority (Tuong Vu, 2007:43-45).

In spite of the relatively abstract party platforms embraced by the political parties, ideological differences remained. According to Geertz (1958:116-119), the patterns of party competition in the 1950s revealed that all party leaderships and their social bases of support were based upon political frames derived from ethnic, cultural, and religious divisions. Masyumi emphasized religiosity in positioning itself within the political landscape (Liddle, 1970:77), whereas secular parties like the PNI and PKI focused on framing their strategies in ethnic and cultural terms. The PKI was particularly notable for using a strategy that cut across class lines, so as to bolster its challenge against the emerging industrialist class, especially urban politicians, the military and the ulama (Feith, 1962:127). A small number of passionate cadres and activists in almost every party played a role as "a sort of bridge between the top leaders of the party, its ideology and platform, and a large part of its mass following" (Kahin, 1952:305). At the mass level, members, sympathizers, and supporters cared about ideology because it "served to rationalize one party's antagonism toward another" (Feith, 1962:127). For instance, the Masyumi adopted a hostile stance against communism that eventually enabled the party to establish an increased degree of ideological unity, especially between the modernist and traditionalist elements.[21]

But Masyumi's Islamic ideology was not in itself sufficient to overcome the heterogeneity within the party. Indeed, the combination of the new state's institutional environment and organizational factors such as the fact that it consisted

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[21] It must be noted, however, the institutional changes in the early Republic conditioned these ideological conflicts to override strategic behavior. Waving the Islamic platform did not hinder religious parties like Masjumi from building cooperation with smaller parties, even though they had diametrically opposite political ideologies. The reason for this is that, Masjumi could empower its relative position *vis-à-vis* the PNI or the PKI. Since the early period after independence, especially after the KNIP was established, Masyumi enjoyed a close relationship with Sjahrir's PSI.

of many Islamist elements continued to exert pressure on Masjumi's capacity to remain intact. Beginning in 1949, differences in opinion, especially between its Executive and Advisory boards, over how to respond to the challenges of a political situation in perpetual flux after the international recognition of sovereignty put stress on the party's weak organizational ties. In mid 1949, due to differences over the electoral rules set up by the Parliament, Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia (PSII) pulled out of Masyumi, followed by a Sumatra-based traditionalist faction, Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah (Perti) in early 1950. Such breakaways tended to accentuate differences between the remaining party factions rather than diminish them (Bush, 2001; Marijan, 1997; van Bruinessen, 1996).

The early 1950s were a crucial time for Masyumi. Organizational tensions between modernist and traditionalist factions increased (Bush, 2001:147-150). In an effort to repair the party split from 1949, the Masyumi leadership reorganized and gave party control to its Executive Council, demoting its Advisory council to a merely consultative role with no binding-organizational authority on policy making (Anam, 1986; Bush, 2001). This change centralized the party and gave more power to professional politicians (mostly modernists) over ulama authorities (largely made up of NU elements). But this transformation had the effect of stoking already simmering friction between modernist and traditionalist factions.

3.2. The Split between NU and Masyumi

As a form of confederation, Masyumi had suffered from loose organizational ties since its inception. There was relatively little centralized power for decision-

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making, and the constitutive organizations in the party often operated in an autonomous manner, which meant that the interests and preferences of the central board were seldom fulfilled.[22] Indeed, most organizations within Masyumi carried out their activities – such as community welfare projects, *da'wa*, education, and other religious rituals at the grassroots level – separately. The followers of each organization identified with Masyumi as a party that shared a similar ideological goal of an 'Islamic state', but their sense of being affiliated with the party rarely moved beyond an abstract, symbolic level (Leong, 2008:162-164).

The organizational form of Masyumi was particularly shaped by events in national politics that had not yet had a direct local impact.[23] Part of the difficulty was that the two biggest organizations within the party, the NU and Muhammadiyah, took divergent stances on central political questions. So although both agreed that the state should be organized according to Islamic principles, the so-called 'Western-educated politicians' from the modernist camp and the 'conservative-*pesantren*' of the traditionalist camp (Kahin, 1952:157) disagreed about what that meant. Thus while the modernists emphasized social progress, modernity and political development, the

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[22] The fact that Masyumi comprised so many groups was both its strength and weakness. Building upon the infrastructure of its Dutch-era predecessor, the Masyumi already had established ties to religious functionaries in the countryside. On becoming a party, it had successfully elicited pledges of allegiance from most religious leaders—Muslim teachers, mosque officials, and returned Mecca pilgrims—based in villages in Java, Sumatra, and Madura. Even so, the party was an amalgamation of political groups without a deep organizational reach of its own. It is for this reason that its politicians rose from among existing members of the groups. For an extensive study of the complex relations between Muslim groups in Masyumi, see, Lai Yee Leong, Islamic Groups, Strategic Adaptability, and Democratization in Indonesia, unpublished PhD. Dissertation, Yale University, 2008.

[23] Almost all parties experienced the same patterns of organizational formation as the Masyumi. Except for the PKI which had genuinely developed a strategy that combined class conflict with cultural frameworks, both nationalist and Islamist political parties were weak in terms of connecting the central party leadership with their local constituencies. For a detailed account of these phenomena, see, Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution,* 1952.

traditionalist-NU stressed the need to preserve the *pesantren* institutions and the related socio-economic structure (van Bruinessen, 1986; Bush, 2001).

Between 1946 and 1948, the rivalry between the modernist and traditionalist factions affected the power distribution in Masyumi. The 1949 party congress has been seen as a turning point in NU-modernist relations in Masyumi. Natsir, the leader of the puritan-Islamist organization Persis, was elected Chairman of the party at that congress, while Sukiman, a moderate Javanese-Muslim leader, was given the less powerful title of President. Natsir's group also took a majority of the seats on the Executive Board. In addition, at the 1949 congress the decision was made to restructure the leadership councils, in particular to reduce the role of the Advisory Council to only dealing with religious matters. This was ostensibly done to improve the efficiency of decision-making within Masyumi, though the NU *kiais* felt that there was an implicit message that they were not capable of participating in political affairs and that their influence should be restricted to religious matters, a point that they strongly disagreed with. Because they were put into a more marginal position relative to their modernist brothers, the NU ulama proposed turning the party back into a loose federation. Observers noted that this would have undermined the united Islamic platform, and the proposal was eventually rejected by Natsir (Bush, 2002:97-98; also, Noer, 1981). Factional discontent between the two groups subsequently increased, reaching its climax in 1952, when the party leadership replaced the departing NU Minister of Religion with a Muhammadiyah politician. The NU then withdrew from Masyumi and formed its own political organization, Partai NU.

The timing of the NU's exit from Masyumi seemed to be overwhelmingly

triggered by a fear that the domination of the party by modernist politicians would threaten

the NU's religious interests. Natsir's takeover of the party leadership, coupled with his

Islamic-puritan credentials, was seen as an important obstacle to the NU leaders in

articulating their political objectives (Noer, 1980:102). The NU's bold decision was also

influenced by a series of other events: First, the changing political conditions in the

country, as the Wilopo-PNI cabinet announced that the long awaited elections would

take place in September 1955 for the parliament, and December 1955 for the

Constituent Assembly, which would draft a permanent constitution. It was important

for the NU politicians to be able to have an independent say in the formulation of

electoral rules (Anam, 1986:134).

Secondly, the institutional jurisdiction played by the Ministry of Religious

Affairs in the post-1949 Republic was becoming increasingly clear. In 1951, Wahid

Hasyim, a NU *kyai*-politician who served as the Minister of Religion (1948-1952),

formulated a blueprint for the official jurisdiction of the Ministry. This formulation

mostly reflected the NU's concern with protecting the traditional Muslim

community, through such means as supervising religious schools (*madrasah*),

providing Islamic curricula for public and state sponsored education institutions,

administering religious endowments and charities, establishing Islamic courts

throughout the country, building institutions of higher learning for Islamic studies,

and administering religious pilgrimages (Boland, 1971:151-152; Noer, 1978:12-13).

As the main objective of the NU ulama was to secure the religious interests of

Indonesian Muslims, the domination of the modernists in the Masyumi leadership after the 1949 congress was perceived as a threat to their organizational interests.

It took a little while for Masyumi and the NU to reveal the differences in their ideological and political preferences. As the elections approached, both Islamist party organizations sought strategic advantage relative to each other. In distinguishing itself from Masyumi, the NU had a part in shaping the ideological image of its religious contenders. From 1954 onward, there was a clear divergence of vision between these two Islamist movements as to what constituted an Islamic state alternative. The birth of Partai NU as the guardian of traditionalist aspirations redefined Masyumi as a specifically modernist—to some degree puritan—Islamist party (Kahin, 1958). The departure of the PNU also enabled the Masyumi leadership to focus on seeking support base from Muslim modernist and 'puritan' organizations in Outer Islands and, consequently, made it easier to place the issue of an Islamic state, as well as to more greatly emphasize autonomy for the Outer Islands, at the very forefront of its agenda.[24] The internecine competition between these two Islamic parties also made it easier for other parties to misrepresent them on the complex issue of the state and Islamic *shari'a*. The effect was to render Masyumi more radical in appearance even as the traditional ulama in the NU came across as a religiously moderate party. Eager to recover the Religious Affairs Ministry portfolio, NU replaced Masyumi when the latter declined an offer to build a coalition government with the PNI in 1955.

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[24] See, Kahin, *Nationalism,* 1952, pp. 157. After the break-up, Masyumi became the only major party that sought to relate national politics to local electoral appeals. Its message was elitist dealing with ideological, supra-local issues. This was different from the NU who sought to embrace an Islamic platform, insofar as it meant instituting *shari'a* and giving local ulama a privileged role in the highest levels of secular authorities.

4. The 1955 Election and the Making of Two Islamic Political Identities

The elite commitment to hold national elections paved the way for the
escalation of ideological politics in Indonesia. Indonesia had been engaged in local,
limited elections since the late 1910s for the Dutch East Indies council, Volkraads.
But the 1955 election was the first time that Indonesia's post-1949 government had
opened the door to the possibility of having popular legitimacy for its government as
well as its constitution. Accordingly, at the core of this escalation of ideological
politics was the question of the constitutional blueprint of the Republic.

Generally speaking, the 1955 elections reflected the institutionalization of the
cleavages that had been exacerbated and increased due to colonial legacies. Three
dimensions of cleavage emerged in the patterns of political competition in these
elections: ethno-regionalism, religion, and social class. Ethnic-regionalism in the
Indonesian context was defined in terms of cultural, linguistic and territorial
distinctions between the Javanese and the Outer Islands (McVey, 1972; Mortimer,
1977).[25] In terms of the religious cleavage, Indonesia is a largely Muslim society
(about 85 percent), though containing well-educated Protestant and Catholic
minorities (about 3 percent each) whose political influence has been greater than their
numbers would suggest. However, the more important religion-based cleavage has
been within the Muslim community itself. As described in chapter six, the distinction
between devout groups of Muslims (*santri*) and a Java-centered religious tradition

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[25] In the 1960 census, almost half of Indonesia's 80 million people were ethnically Javanese.
Most of them lived in the provinces of East and Central Java and the Special Region of Yogyakarta.
The remainder includes the Sundanese of West Java, about 15 percent of the total population, smaller
groups of Acehnese, Bataks, Minangkabau, and Malays in Sumatra, Madurese in Madura, Balinese in
Bali, Bugis in Sulawesi, and hundreds of still smaller groups spread across the archipelago from the
northwestern tip of Sumatra to the southeastern border with Papua New Guinea.

mixed with Islamic, Hindu, and animistic beliefs *(abangan)* was more important than inter-religious cleavages. Conflict between Muslims and Christians did not become a political issue until the late 1970s, when Christian missionary organizations began to operate with greater numbers and financial resources in Indonesia.

With regards to social class, in the 1950s political conflict was largely based on the hierarchical structure of a Javanese society that had been shaped by the long history of colonial policies (Liddle, 1992:443-447; see also, Wiertheim, 1956:15-27). After the Dutch gained effective control of Java from the early 19th century, the government gradually transformed the kingdoms into modern administrative polities, while retaining much of the earlier conception of an aristocratic (bureaucratic and Western-influenced) elite with paternalistic responsibility for the largely uneducated masses. This framework of a two-class society in Indonesia distinguished the educated, state-employed and the aristocrats from the 'lower' people, who were peasants or who worked as small traders. This class division was challenged, but not vanquished, by the time of the Revolution against the Dutch (Ambardi, 2008:71).[26]

However, with an eye to the central issues surrounding the constitutional blueprint in the aftermath of revolution, I argue that it is the conflict over state constitution alternatives that structured the pattern of competition in the 1955 elections. A brief period of Japanese rule (1942-1945) had rendered this conflict dormant with a temporary political alignment. But events in the late 1940s, from the

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[26] Unlike Latin America or the Philippines, Java (and the rest of Indonesia) has no history of large private landed estates with their socially crippling conflicts between powerful landlords and powerless tenants and farm laborers. In the 19th century, privately held plantations by European business-industrialists did develop, but their corporate managers did not own land or control their workers' lives in the style of the *haciendas*. After independence, most of the plantations were taken over by the state. Outside the plantations, fragmentation rather than concentration of agricultural land has long been the norm.

constitutional convention of the PPKI to the settlement and mass incorporation after independence, reshaped and hardened the cleavages into new forms of elite conflict and social divisions. This conflict specifically revolved around the struggle to draft a permanent constitutional blueprint for Indonesia. While ethno-regional and cross-class cleavages are obviously crucial, the competing alternatives for the foundation of the Indonesian state, particularly between an Islamic and a secular-national orientation, underpinned the most defining feature of competition between political parties. It can be argued, therefore, as some issues in the PPKI conventions were resolved and some others were left unsettled, that the democratic elections of 1955 became an arena in which conflicts over the constitution between Islamists, secular-nationalists, and communists were played out.

In the next section, I focus my narrative on the way the Muslim constituents were mobilized by Islamist elites on the eve of national elections. The purpose is to show how Islamist politicians defined and accentuated social cleavages to generate electoral appeal, and how this strategy then facilitated the increasing level of social solidarity among the Muslim masses. The Islamists' decision to participate in these crucial elections helped consolidate and thus crystallize Muslim political identities on either side of the modernist-traditionalist fault line of electoral Islamism.

4.1. Mobilization

The forms of mobilization pursued by NU and Masyumi were conceived out of attempts by political elites to maintain their control over Muslim groups. Within the context of the 1955 elections, the two parties engaged in – to use Tilly's term – a

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reactive type of mobilization, i.e. religious mobilization as an elite attempt to protect

established claims (Tilly, 1979; see also, Meadwell, 1983). Mobilization developed in

response to political changes surrounding state ideology that encouraged the elites in

both parties to exploit religious symbols. For the modernist Masyumi, mobilization

was used as a means to maximize votes, particularly around the issue of threat from

communists, secular-nationalists and the West. For the NU, mobilization represented

a toolkit for establishing a cultural discourse around the issue of protecting traditional

religious practices.[27] Because of its brief preparatory lead-time compared to

Masyumi, the NU leadership relied principally on mobilizing its organizational

networks through traditional learning institutions (*pesantren*) and local mosques

across the country, though especially in Java (Naim, 1961:61-62). And while

Masyumi put strong emphasis on a federal-like institutional arrangement between

Java and the Outer Islands, the NU did not pay much attention to this particular issue.

However, the two forms of mobilization pursued did share certain patterns: they were

led by religious elites, organized on a hierarchical basis, and included well-developed

social networks among grassroots cadres.

Liddle (1970), Samson (1971) and Feith (1957) have provided compelling

evidence of how political parties with little experience of electoral mobilization have

reached their constituents and have penetrated local politics. Not long after a date for

the elections had been scheduled, political parties started to mobilize their

constituents by using the organizational resources that they already controlled. The

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[27] For an excellent review on the role of religious elites in the 1950s and the 1960s, see
Clifford Geertz, "Kijaji as a Cultural Broker"*, in *Comparative Studies in History and Society,*
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971.

Masyumi and the NU tapped heavily into religio-social associations like the

Muhammadiyah and the NU local offices. These groups provided both parties with

considerable reach into areas where their religious schools and informal associations

exercised considerable influence within their respective communities (Bush, 2002:

161). Nonetheless, there remained a broad segment of voters with whom the parties

had no link, especially in the countryside.

The parties then began to direct their efforts towards increasing party

membership and organizations where these did not exist. The Republic's unstable

institutional structure provided considerable leeway for the political parties to pursue

a variety of strategies in building their grassroots linkages, including: developing

closer ties with authority figures and groups that had not previously been recruited,

and creating a network of collectivist organizations whose religio-social activities

abetted the formation of political identity (Liddle, 1970:71-76). This strategy meant

that Islamist parties were building linkages out from already-established spheres of

influence, often exploiting social ties and community conflicts to maximize their

mobilization capacities. Both Masyumi and NU plugged into the local system of

authority (Jay, 1966:41) by securing the support of local power brokers, usually

traditional figures or local ulama. In the Outer Islands, Masyumi secured the support

of local leaders to build the party branch offices (Liddle, 1970:76). Because almost all

parties controlled government offices, it was easy to offer these local figures financial

inducements or status rewards in exchange for their political support (Feith, 1957:27).

After the local offices were established, both parties introduced another aspect

of local conflicts and cultural fragmentations. That is, where a community

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demonstrated economic or religious fault lines, parties opportunistically exploited latent conflicts and associated themselves with one side or the other. While it was true that already-present social tensions became easily politicized in some communities, in other communities, political parties were active agents in delineating divisions that had not consciously existed previously (Liddle, 1970:78; Samson, 1971:152). For example, Feith (1957:35-36) reported on the political campaign of Masyumi (modernists) and Perti (traditionalists) in West Sumatra, explaining that it was "… the establishment of political parties that primarily changed the relationship of the existing social forces to one another." This meant that political parties entered an environment in which clear differences already existed between two groups separated by their Islamic principles, devotional practices, and cultural outlooks, and emphasized these differences to make them seem more prominent and important to the local people.

An important mobilization strategy for the Islamist parties was the revitalization of the classic doctrines of Islamic society. In many cases, this mobilization platform continued to occupy the minds of Muslim leaders even after the elections. In attacking their nationalist and communist rivals, both Masyumi and the NU shared a common ideology in seeing the PKI as Godless and atheist (Geerzt, 1959:39) and the PNI as an "agent of secularism". The heated debate over the Indonesian constitution had conditioned Islamist parties to overdraw these differences. Such organizations mobilized the populace by drawing attention to Islamic symbols, such as the implementation of *shari'a,* drawing lines to emphasize threats from secularism and other religions, and spreading anti-Western sentiments.

Urban and educated communities were linked together and glorified as the main

thrust of Islamization for the nation (Geertz, 1960). Feith (1957:19) points out, for

example, that Masyumi concentrated on presenting itself as the guardian of the

Islamic faith against the Indonesian secular state. Interpretation of Islamic symbols

was also undertaken, by adapting the story of the Prophet Muhammad for political

purposes. Commenting on this interpretation, Geertz (1960:98) noted, "… these

interpretations ignored so many versions of the life of Muhammad and substituted a

partisan for a large diversity in the world Islamic communities." Different emphases

regarding these religious symbols between Masyumi and NU ultimately played a key

role in creating two national-Islamic political identities.

4.1. Outcomes

The vote totals in the 1955 elections revealed that both the Parliamentary

election and the subsequent election for the Constituent Assembly had defied Islamist

expectations. In the Parliament, secular-nationalists (PNI and others) and Christian

parties won 55 percent of the vote, while Islamist parties (Masyumi, NU, Perti and

PSII combined) gained 45 percent of the vote. Four 'Big' parties with different

agendas for the state constitution emerged in this historic election: The PNI (23

percent), Masyumi (20 percent), the NU (18 percent), and PKI (16 percent).

Political Party	Valid votes	Valid votes (%)	Parliamentary Seats	Parliamentary Seats (%)
PNI	8 434 653	22.3	57	22.2
Masyumi	7 903 886	20.9	57	22.2
NU	6 955 141	18.4	45	17.5
PKI	6 176 914	16.4	39	15.2
PSII	1 091 160	2.9	8	3.1
Parkindo	1 003 325	2.6	8	3.1
Partai Katholik	770 740	2.0	6	2.3
PSI	753 191	2.0	5	1.9
Murba	199 588	0.5	2	0.8
Others	4 496 701	12.0	30	11.7
Total	37 785 299	100.0	257	100.0

Table 2*:* Outcomes of the 1955 Elections for the Parliament and the Constituent Assembly. Source: Leo Suryadinata, *Elections and Politics in Indonesia*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2002, pp. 167-169.

For Islamist leaders, the electoral outcome represented a serious defeat. It reversed

their expectation that the majority principle would produce a state with an Islamic

constitution in Indonesia. Another shocking development, especially for modernist

Masyumi leadership, was the rise of PKI to emerge as one of the biggest parties

(Samson, 1971:99). The Masyumi's failure was largely rooted in its inability to attract

grassroots support from nominal Muslims (especially *abangan*). The election also

confirmed the secular-religious cleavage in the electoral arena. That it divided the

electorate down the middle signaled continuing ideological battles ahead. This result

was repeated with small variations in the elections for the Constituent Assembly.

The 1955 electoral outcomes revealed a clear difference in the party choice of modernist and traditionalist Muslims. The NU's dominance in East Java as well as Central Java and South Kalimantan illustrated the strong role of traditional ulama and its *pesantren* networks. The NU was also satisfied at increasing its number of seats from eight in the DPRS to 45 in the Parliament. In contrast, Masyumi gained a majority in the Outer Islands and West Java, where the Muhammadiyah and other reformist-oriented organizations were most active. Some leaders in Masyumi took these election results as a serious failure, which they interpreted to mean "… greater and more serious efforts for Islamization in society had to be done before Islamic ideology would be politically accepted" (Anshari, 1957, cf. Samson, 1971:59). The election also underlined the failure of both Masyumi and the NU to reach out to all *santri* communities using the same appeals that they had employed within their own narrower constituencies. And despite sharing ideological goals – which would be further demonstrated after the elections – the two major Islamic parties had little incentive to reunify or to coordinate their behavior. Instead, their relative success in the election bolstered the intra-religious cleavage among Muslims, leading to a further solidification of two Islamic political identities after the 1955 elections.

This distinction was also manifest in the Constituent Assembly, as well as in the subsequent cabinets formed between 1956 and 1960. The Constituent Assembly, which had been created to determine a new constitution for Indonesia, became a new arena of political escalation between Indonesia's now-exposed major religio-political cleavages: secular-national state vs. Islamic state. In the Assembly, both Masyumi and the NU were instrumental in consolidating this cleavage through the debates

surrounding the conflicts between Islam and Pancasila. The fact that these two

Islamist parties only controlled 43 percent of seats in the Assembly made it difficult

to decisively push Islam as the ideological foundation of the state. Indeed, even the

re-instatement of the Jakarta Charter as the preamble to the Constitution constituted a

failure (Anshari, 1979; Ma'arif, 1981).

It is important to recall our discussion from chapter six that showed the NU

leadership's failure to develop a clear articulation of an Islamic state. As a result of

this, the role played by NU politicians and ulama during the constitutional debate

in the Assembly was not as central as that played by Masyumi, this in spite of the

fact that the creation of an Islamic state had been an important platform in the NU's

mobilization during the 1950s (Effendy, 1996; Noer, 1981; Ma'arif, 1985:129). Key

to note here is that the Islamists' unwavering co-operation in pursuing this goal

demonstrates their common ideological motivation. Yet this cooperation was

undermined by the fact that the NU adopted a moderate and more pragmatic position

in dealing with the existence of secular authorities. Thus while Masyumi continued to

firmly focus on achieving an Islamic state, after the subsequent deadlock of debates

between 1955 and 1957, NU politicians and ulama in the Assembly were open to

compromise on the state's character and on how the elements of *shari'a* could be

incorporated into a secular state (Ma'arif, 1985:129; Effendy, 1995:221).

Arguably, it was Masyumi politicians and intellectuals who took the lead in

proposing that Islam be adopted as the state ideology. Part of Masyumi's core

position was a belief that "Islam was superior to other ideologies and belief

systems" (Natsir, 1956; cf. Maarif, 1985:159). Kasman Singodimedjo, one of

the young intellectuals in the Masyumi leadership, argued that "since Islam has

a holistic character as revealed from God, Indonesian Muslims cannot decline

the position of Islam as the state constitution" (Maarif, 1985:167). He said that

Islam is rooted in the life of Indonesian Muslims, and that Muslims had played an

important role in the struggle for independence. Because of their support for Islam as

the state ideology, Islamist parties began to attack Pancasila for being "neutral,

ambiguous and secular" (Maarif, 1985:145). For example, Natsir maintained that

because Pancasila as an ideology is neutral, "it could be taken over by other

ideologies, including communism" (Anshari, 1981:76). Furthermore, Pancasila's

ambiguity meant that "it could be interpreted differently by different factions and

groups" (Anshari, 1981:76). As Natsir stated:

> No one would deny that Pancasila has so much mighty ideas. However, the explanations that we have heard from supporters of Pancasila show that they could not define what the core idea of Pancasila is, what the structure is, where it comes from, what the essence of it [is] and what the inter connection [is] between one principle [*sila*] [and] another (Anshary 1981, 75).[28]

An important aspect of the arguments made by Islamist leaders in the Constituent

Assembly was the danger of a threat from communism. According to Isa Anshari,

another Masyumi politician, "the neutral character of Pancasila… could be used by

atheists, agnostics, animists, secularists or other non-Muslims to justify their

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[28] Natsir's main point with this assertion is indeed his criticism to the first principle of Pancasila, belief in One God. This particular principle has become central issue for Islamist-nationalist conflict. Natsir, for example, emphasized that "Pancasila is an empty formulation, it still needs contents". The content of Pancasila, he argued, "depends on the idea of the person who interprets it. Natsir then provided an example that, "if the person who interprets it is the one who considers stone as god, the belief in the one god principle would mean belief in stone as god." See, Endang Saifuddin Anshari, *Piagam Jakarta 22 Juni dan Sejarah Konsensus antara Nasionalis Islami dan Secular Nasionalis tentang Dasar Negara RI,* Bandung: Pustaka, 1981, p. 74.

religions or understanding of their ideology. And our [Muslims'] task is to protect

Pancasila with a clear meaning" (Anshary, 1981:76).[29]

Overall, the main difference between the NU and Masyumi in the

constitutional debate in the Assembly was that the NU took a more open minded

position with regard to the state ideology, emphasizing the organizational issue that

"the state [should] guarantee and provide a legal protection for the Muslims to

observe and practice their religion" (Haidar, 1991:71). Even as both Masyumi and the

NU declined a proposal for incorporating Islamic elements into the state, neither

group budged in their resistance to the other, showing no willingness to form a

common Islamic front. This lack of willingness to work together can be explained by

the fact that each had a different political constituency. For instance, because much of

its support came from the Outer Islands, Masyumi was sympathetic to the clamor for

greater provincial autonomy made by Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Maluku.[30]

Beginning in 1957, the Assembly became sharply divided between secular-

nationalist and Christian parties on one side and Islamist parties on the other. It was

clear that the intense debate over Pancasila had divided the parliament to such an

extent that its very survival was in doubt.[31] According to Adnan Buyung Nasution,

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[29] Natsir was the most elaborative figure in positioning Masyumi's anti-communist stance. He stated that: "We hope that Pancasila will not be filled by those ideologies and ideas that contradict the teachings of the Qur'an, such as Communism or Marxism; the words of God have been part of our life as Indonesians for centuries. We hope that Pancasila will not be used to prevent the implementation of principles and teachings outlined in the Qur'an. Anshary, 1981, p. 66.

[30] In terms of policy orientation, in the 1950s, Masyumi was regarded as a party with a strong capitalist development orientation. Such a policy position threatened PNI and NU which exemplified the Javanese-centralized notion, and PKI threatened Masyumi's export-based economy. Masyumi protected the Outer Islands against intrusive policies from Java-centered policy, whereas NU wanted to ensure its relations with PNI. The features of the electoral base therefore caused the modernist and traditionalist Muslim parties to seek different policy. Herbert Feith, *The Decline,* 1962, pp. 126-134.

[31] It is important to mention here that even though the Assembly could not find agreement on the subject of the Jakarta Charter, it had made progress in other areas, and had all but succeeded in

the discussion over constitutional issues had become "absolutist, antagonistic, so that the parties did not come close to each other but on the contrary were driven further apart" (Nasution, 1991:41).[32]

Because neither political block was able to achieve the two-thirds majority required to settle the controversy, the government soon faced several challenges against the system itself outside the Assembly. First, President Sukarno began to call for the restoration of the provisional 1945 Constitution that guaranteed strong presidential powers. Sukarno blamed the adversarial dynamic of majority rule for the political malaise and held that the presidency would transcend partisanship. He contended that "instead of many parties, one state party that incorporated all social sectors ought to be established" (Imawan, 1989:155). Second, the government was challenged by the Communist Party (PKI), which continued to mobilize its constituents even after the elections. Excluded from the cabinet, PKI capitalized on rising anti-government hostility to attack the ruling coalition, ulama and urban new industrialist class. The PKI organized strikes, causing frequent, widespread social unrest between 1957 and 1960. These activities forced the government into a perpetually reactive position. Moreover, Sukarno gave PKI increased credibility by openly supporting its populist cause (Lev, 1972; Lev and Feith, 1968).

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drafting a set of fundamental human rights. Adnan B. Nasution, *The Struggle for Constitutional Government,* pp. 26-29. It has also been argued that, later in 1958, the suspension of the Assembly and Sukarno's attempt to restore the 1945 Constitution were timed to forestall the increasing chance of any positive results from the Assembly. See, Lev, *The Transition,* 1994, p. 41.

[32] Report on the situation in the Assembly revealed that nationalist and Christian parties viewed the obstinacy of the Islamic parties, but especially the Masyumi, as deliberately destructive to the political process. In its opinion, "the Masyum and its allies were trying everything to deprecate, side-step, and finally overthrow the parliament in which they were a small minority." See, Feith, 1962, pp. 512-153.

A subsequent series of political developments contributed to the declining popular legitimacy of the parliamentary democracy. The armed forces, which increasingly asserted themselves as an important political actor beginning in 1957, started to overtly promote the idea of returning to the 1945 constitution (Nasution, 1991:49). As maneuvering between Sukarno and the party leaders increased, the military leadership also tried to manipulate the situation for their own purposes (Lev, 1972). At the founding of the state, the military had suffered from internal divisions, with anti-Jakarta troops partaking in regional rebellions. In this sense, the military took sides in partisan, regional conflict, at least until the central military leadership, the TNI, crushed the regional rebellions and consolidated the military as an institution. It then moved against rebellious army officers in the Outer Islands who were threatening civil war unless they received more autonomy. By acting in this crisis, the military leadership was also effectively maneuvering against civilian politicians, whom they perceived as part of the problem.

Other important political developments included the struggle in the Assembly over a permanent constitution, the growing dissatisfaction outside Java with tightening government administrative controls and increasing political centralization, and the growth of the PKI in Java. Regional Military commanders in several provinces attempted to shift the balance of power by staging rebellion against the central government, forming a "Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia" (Pemerintahan Revolusi Republic Indonesia, PRRI). There was an

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Islamist element in these regional movements, as several Masyumi leaders in Jakarta were involved and took leadership roles in the rebellion (Harvey, 1984).[33]

The settling of the regional rebellions set the stage for the emergence of new conflict in the political arena: the army versus the PKI. Between 1957 and 1959, President Sukarno and the central army leadership formed a coalition that succeeded in both ending the rebellions and overthrowing the parliamentary system. Sukarno decreed a return to the constitution of 1945, under which the executive – and especially the President – dominated the legislative branch. The victorious generals acquired vast new powers in the economy and regional government and a regularized role in the political process, which was legitimized through the doctrine of the "middle path", called Guided Democracy. Sukarno formulated this political system as "neither fully military-dictatorship nor fully civilian-democracy" (Feith, 1962:211). The Parliament was dissolved in 1959, while Masyumi was banned due to its leaders' involvement in the PPRI during the upheavals of the late 1950s. The dominant factions of NU and PNI decided to seek favor with the power holders rather than contest control through mass mobilization. The PKI on the other hand continued to strengthen its organization and expand its constituency through grassroots mobilizing. The Communists often worked with Sukarno in challenging the army's dominance in the Guided Democracy.

In essence, the 1955 democratic elections failed to fulfill their principal task of laying the groundwork for the drafting of a permanent constitution for the Republic.

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[33] Three prominent leaders of the Masyumi left Jakarta to join army rebels in the PRRI: Muhammad Natisr, Syafrudin Prawiranegara, and Burhanuddin Harahap. Some other leaders came from the PSI (Socialist) who disgruntled by the domination of PKI in Sukarno's Guided Democracy. See, Barbara Harvey, *Pemberontakan Setangah Hati: PRRI dan Permesta*, Jakarta: Graffiti Press, 1984.

Instead of making progress toward democracy and a constitutional settlement among political groups, the elections marked the beginning of the slide into authoritarianism. It can be argued that in the absence of a clear victor able to push through a final solution to the constitutional blueprint issue in parliament, the 1955 election contributed to the gradual demise of Indonesian democracy (Feith, 1962; Lev, 1973; Effendy, 1995).

5. Regional-Secessionist Dimension of the Islamic State

Three regions in post-colonial Indonesia adopted a radical alternative strategy for the establishment of an Islamic state. In 1949, in response to the failure of the Renville Agreement, an armed group of guerrillas in West Java under the leadership of S.M. Kartosuwirjo began to fight for what they called 'the Islamic State of Indonesia' (Negara Islam Indonesia, NII). In early 1952, another group of guerrillas in South Sulawesi under Kahar Muzakar joined the battle for this Islamic state. And Aceh-Sumatera restarted its unhappy relationship with Jakarta, while simultaneously taking steps to support the NII in September 1953. The Acehnese rebellion was under the leadership of Daud Beureu'eh, the most powerful supporter of the revolution against the Dutch (van Dick, 1981; Jackson, 1982; Feith, 1969; Sjamsudin, 1981). One can argue that these rebellions, which came to be known as Darul Islam (DI) and Tentara Islam Indonesia (TII), represented a brief though significant episode of deviation from overall patterns of compromise and parliamentary strategizing by Islamism in this period.[34]

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[34] I called this 'deviation' because although the ideology of Islamic state and its Constitution with the implementation of *shari'a* and the role of *ulama* in politics was the core frame for political

Similar to the PRRI, this radical alternative means for establishing an Islamic state obviously had some overlap with conflicts over the territorial dimensions of state formation. To use Lipset and Rokan's (1967) theory of the emergence of political cleavages, religious (cultural) and territorial cleavages often interact when a new state is formed. The religious cleavages that formed during the era of the emergence of anti-colonial organizations were accompanied by ethnic-territorial cleavages that were consolidated during Dutch colonial rule, but were relatively muted during the Japanese occupation. Armed Islamist rebellions in these three regions were very much shaped by, first, the unsettled conflict over the constitutional blue print, and second, by the manifestation of long disputes about the future form of the Indonesian state.

Aceh constitutes the most compelling case for explaining the cross cutting cleavages between the territorial claim of an ethnic community and the struggle for an Islamic state, yet the other two cases are no less important. I wish to argue that the grievances of these three leaders were regional, but that they expressed them in ideological terms, insisting that an independent Indonesia could only be justified as an Islamic state. This section focuses on Aceh's DII/TII to enrich our understanding of the regional dynamics of an Islamic state alternative: Why did an armed rebellion break out in Aceh, and why did the desire for an Islamic state form the basis for that rebellion?

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mobilization, the DI/TII had a definitive republican-nationalist character. See, Sjamsuddin, 1984, pp. 23-51; Morris, 1984, pp. 7-18; Kell, 1995, pp. 3-11, van Bruinessen, 1980; Bertrand, 2004.

Two important political developments in post-independence Indonesia contributed to the mobilization of DI/TII in Aceh. First, as the area's ulama became more powerful and had more authority over the course of the Indonesian revolution, they began to dominate the administrative structure of Aceh-Indonesia. As a result, Islamic symbols and identity became an increasing source of unity for the Acehnese in their relationship with the central government. Second, the failure of political elites in Jakarta to adopt an Islamic constitution in August 1945 helped to stimulate the formulation of the vision of an Islamic state for the Darul Islam rebellions (van Dijk, 1981; Boland, 1984:20). Moreover, the ulama responded to Jakarta's 1948 decision to create provincial institutions in which Aceh was incorporated into the non-Acehnese-led North Sumatera government by integrating the political interests of Acehnese territory into its religious discourse.

The ascendancy of the ulama in taking over the roles of the traditional elites (nobility) in Aceh can be linked to the decline of the Sultanate of Aceh in the face of an expansion of Dutch colonial conquests in North Sumatra during the 18th and 19th centuries. The breakdown of more traditional patterns of order opened up the possibility of a struggle "to gain control over the politics and economy of Aceh between ulama and nobility (*uleebalang*) within the sultanate of Aceh" (Morris, 1984:37-40; Kell, 1995:17-18).[35] The *uleebalang* were primarily concerned with defending the Acehnese sultanate territories, though also recognized that they were not able to unify the people and lead resistance against the Dutch. They therefore

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[35] Nobility and ulama classes represent social elites in most Indonesian Muslim society. In Aceh, Sultan Iskandar Muda brought this nobility into being during the golden era of the Aceh sultanate in the 16th century. Hadi, *Islam and Politics in Aceh in Seventeenth Century,* Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2003, pp. 14-36.

decided to cooperate, mostly becoming administrators in the colonial government. As a result, the nobility became politically dependent on Dutch authority and consequently alienated from the wider population. By the early 18th century, the "sultanate of Aceh became a weak institution, largely without influence in the internal affairs of territory" (Kell, 1995:19). The struggle against the Dutch thus came to be led by the ulama, who had always been revered in Aceh but had previously been largely uninvolved in the running of society. During the 1880s, as Anthony Reid has observed, "the war was gradually transformed into [a] genuinely popular cause under ulama inspiration" (Reid, 1979:60). But by 1903, a stable *uleebalang* administration under Dutch control was in place, and by 1913, the Dutch could at last be said to have conquered Aceh. The ulama finally gave up the guerrilla struggle in early 1914 (Morris, 1984:71-73).

In the late 1920s, just like in other parts of Muslim Southeast Asia, the religious-reform movement was initiated by the ulama. Its emergence was inspired by "the new forces transforming both the Islamic and Indonesian worlds" (Noer, 1984:42-46). The reformist movement swept through the rural areas of Aceh, providing the Acehnese with a hope for a better future for their society.[36] The reformist enthusiasm culminated in the formation in 1939 of the All Aceh Ulama Association (Pusat Ulama Seluruh Aceh, PUSA). This organization was "the nearest approach to a popular movement of an all-Aceh character" (Reid, 1979:64). The PUSA's Acehnese provenance made it acceptable to the Dutch, for whom the

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[36] Reid (1979) observed that social and economic conditions in the early twentieth century Aceh were conducive to the success of the revival: the collapse of pepper production in the mid-1910s led to high unemployment in the 1930s, and consequently many of the unemployed were drawn to the teachings of the reformist ulama.

activities of anti-colonial nationalist organizations were a greater cause of concern. But as the divisions between the nobility, ulama and their subjects became increasingly bitter in the fading years of Dutch rule in Aceh, "all of the anti-establishment forces gradually associated themselves with the PUSA, shifting them in the process into a more political organization" (Morris, 1984:77).

A short period of Japanese occupation in the former Dutch East Indies was welcomed by the ulama (Sjamsuddin, 1985:31-33). Aceh joined the struggle for Indonesian independence immediately after the end of the Pacific war. In October 1945, the ulama indicated their support for the new republic with the "Declaration of Ulama throughout Aceh", signed by four prominent religious leaders, including Daud Beureuh. This declaration stipulated that the fight for the Republic was a holy war (Sjamsuddin, 1985:39; Morris, 1984:99-111). Their support did not, however, extend to the "new official Republican leadership" in Aceh, which "was virtually to a man the *uleebalang* establishment" (Morris, 1984:107). Indeed, many ulama looked forward to the restoration of Dutch power and of the pre-war status quo. Under these circumstances, as Reid has noted, "the revolutionary impulse came from a coalition of PUSA ulama and young educated in the Islamic traditional learning institutions" (Reid, 1979:90).

The ulama resistance movements soon gained wider support as they confronted the *uleebalang*, giving birth to a sort of social revolution (Reid, 1979; Morris, 1980). By March 1947, the nobility had been decimated, and political, economic, and military power in Aceh had fallen into the hands of the PUSA ulama and forces associated with it. From then on, the only institutional force that defined

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the character of anti-Dutch nationalist movements was the ulama.[37] But Aceh's

choice to integrate itself into the Republic was mainly inspired by the desire to run its

regional affairs without interference from Jakarta (van Dick, 1980:145-46). Acehnese

elites also expected that their region's contribution to the national revolution would

be acknowledged in the new Indonesian state. But the newly formed government in

Jakarta soon demonstrated that it had no intention of either securing the creation of an

autonomous Acehnese region or of preserving the role of existing traditional elites in

governing the territory. With the incorporation of Aceh into the Province of North

Sumatra in 1949, the Acehnese community came to realize that their support of the

new Republic had been betrayed (Sjamsuddin, 1984:57-63).

This incorporation process was furthered by the disruption of traditional

authority structures. As Jakarta attempted to impose its control over the modern state

apparatus in Aceh, it removed the ulama from positions of political and

administrative power and replaced them with new, more-Westernized elites (van

Dijk, 1981:236).[38] The cumulative effect of these pressures on Aceh was, as Morris

pointed out, "a situation where competing elites, ulama and young educated in

Islamic schools, were seeking ways to regain support and legitimacy in their

community. Thus they were in a position to take advantage of the incipient ethnic-

regional consciousness by articulating and ideologizing it" (Morris, 1984:57)

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[37] During the central government's preoccupation with the struggle against the re-imposition
of Dutch authority in Java, from the late-1940s to the mid-1950s, the new emerging elite in Aceh
operated with almost complete autonomy. Its members consolidated their positions within the
Acehnese social structure and controlled all political and economic activities, including "a lucrative
barter trade across the Straits of Malacca with Penang and Singapore." See, Kell, 1995, pp. 45-46.

[38] Karl D. Jackson (1980), in his study on the Darul Islam of West Java, suggested that the
decline of traditional authority had become a source of social discontent that inspired Muslim elite in
West Java to join the rebellion. See, Karl D. Jackson, *Islam, Traditional Authority and the Darul Islam
Rebellion,* Berkley: Stanford University Press, 1980.

This situation gave rise to 'anti-Jakarta' sentiments, particularly in the period of centralization of state institutions and military organizations. With the undermining of the *uleebalang*'s influence, it was only the ulama that were able to maintain their claims of leadership in Aceh territory. The emergence of the Darul Islam revolt in West Java in 1949, followed by other regions in South Kalimatan (1951) and South Sulawesi (1952) added further fuel to the already existing popular discontent with the Indonesian government's disruptive policies in the region amongst the Acehnese.[39] Various political movements and militias were subsequently formed, and although few groups demanded a separate state of Aceh, the dominant trend was to declare the Acehnese rebellion as part of the Darul Islam in West Java, Indonesia. Within this context, the DI/TII of Aceh against the Republic did not seek to secede, but rather to (constitutionally) transform it.

While the idea of an Islamic state might have been poorly articulated, in Aceh, the mobilization for rebellion developed out of attempts by elites to respond to institutional changes that threatened the traditional structure and authority, that is, Acehnese Muslims. It appears that by expressing the idea of an Islamic state within the context of an ethnic-regional identity, the ulama ensured the escalation of political tension with Jakarta into a direct confrontation between "secular-Jakarta state' nationalism and Islamic-Aceh region. It is within these institutional and center-region

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[39] The Acehnese population supported the rebellion that began in 1953. The Ulama, high ranking civil servants and ex-military commanders constituted the core members of the rebellion but tens of thousands of villagers joined. Even if the supply of arms limited their ability to fully participate, they supported the rebellion by monitoring Indonesian troop movements or providing material support. As Sjamsuddin noted, the ulama could mobilize the population in large part because of the respect they enjoyed among the Acehnese and because of their Islamic goals. See, Sjamsuddin, 1985, p. 83; van Dick, 1981, p. 219.

boundaries, that the settlement of the rebellion narrowed the field of possibilities for the future resistance in Aceh. Three factors were important in the resolution of hostilities. First is the diminishing struggle for an Islamic state in other regions, as a result of the capture of the leader Kartosuwirjo (from West Java) in 1960, and the assassination of Kahar Muzakar (from South Sulawesi) in 1961. These incidents created an impression of decreasing momentum in the struggle, which caused the Acehnese leaders to question the ideological and political foundations for the establishment of Islamic state. Second, the compromise with the Republic allowed the Acehnese elite to redefine its objectives in regional terms. And finally, the Acehnese ulama and military commanders gradually abandoned their broader struggle for an Islamic state (van Dijk, 1981:214; Boland, 1984:63).

Late 1958 brought about conflict resolution for the Aceh rebellion, with the Indonesian government reinstating Aceh's provincial status. The resolution allowed the return of many PUSA members to their previous positions, and for Acehnese soldiers to be reassigned to the region. When a cease-fire was reached in early 1959, rebel leaders were split into groups between those who rejected Jakarta's compensation and those who were willing to compromise and accept a settlement on Aceh. However, most rebels abandoned Daud Beureueh's group (the radical faction) and joined Hasan Saleh's group, which negotiated the compromise with the government. In the end, the government agreed to extend wide-ranging autonomy in religion, education, and customary law, and granted the province new status as a "special province" (Sjamsuddin, 1985:81-84).

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6. Conclusion

This chapter has examined the development of organized Islamism in post-colonial Indonesia, particularly the peak period of Islamist political mobilization. It has shown that it is the interaction between pragmatic organizational legacies, events during the revolution and the presence of political opportunity structures after independence that facilitated the particular direction of change in Islamism. The first factor is related to the decisive shift of some political agendas after the subsequent arrangements for the Islamist leaders to be included in the revolutionary governments of the new Republic. The inclusion of the Muslim elite as well as the incorporation of the Muslim masses in these governments marked an important sequence of political development through which Islamist politics dislodged its 'sacred agenda', moving from the struggle for an Islamic state into a contest over power with other partisan groups. The ensuing efforts to keep all anti-colonial organizations united in a situation of revolution also encouraged the Muslim elite to delay their struggle for an Islamic state, but at the same time to maintain their presence in revolutionary governments.

Second, for Islamist leaders in the new Republic, the missed political opportunity in 1945 did not mean a permanent loss of their dream of an Islamic state. That is, while the struggle for an Islamic constitution had failed in the BPUPKI, another phase of struggle began on the day after independence was proclaimed, one that would be pursued through different organizational structures. The sequence of events from 1945 to 1949, combined with the organizational legacies from the war-time Japanese occupation, structured options for the Muslim elite in their search for a

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viable means to sustain their efforts in the struggle for an Islamic constitution. Leaders of Islamist organizations then formed a united-Islamist party to serve as a political tool for Indonesian Muslims, Masyumi. The political strength of this party was based upon its unique federative style that grew out of the consultative assembly of Indonesian Muslim leaders organized during the Japanese occupation. The party's most important elements, the NU and Muhammadiyah, maintained their solidarity for a while in the face of groups that they perceived as a secular and a communist threat. Yet agreement about the desirability of an Islamic state proved insufficient for maintaining the unity of Islamists. After a series of efforts to resolve the internal conflict between the modernist and traditionalist elements had failed, the united-Islamist party broke up.

It is clear that within Muslim communities in Indonesia – both modernist and traditionalist alike – there is an ethos or common urge to establish a state sanctioned by Islamic principles, and for the implementation of *shari'a*. But similarly to the case of the Muslim Brotherhood and the al-Azhar ulama in Egypt, the two *santri* communities represent different poles of religious and ideological convictions, whose interests and preferences about the form of an Islamic state will likely never meet. Indeed, what emerges from the analysis above is that political developments during the revolution caused these two religious groups to develop sharply different strategies and agendas for an Islamic state, which in their turn facilitated the emergence of two very different political identities.

Another point that should be addressed in this conclusion is the fact that the creation of a special office for the administration of religion at the state level has

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played an important role in ensuring that some religious interests have been met within the state structure. Recalling the theory chapter, the pragmatic patterns of Islamist mobilization since the organizational formation of Islamism led the leaders in Islamist movements to approach politics in a more open-minded fashion, and to entertain a willingness to make concessions rather than remaining absolutely committed to their ideal outcome. The willingness of Muslim leaders in post-colonial Indonesia to accept such concessions illustrates their openness to bargaining and to changing their positions.

Chapter Eight

**DISMANTLING THE ISLAMIC STATE:
ISLAMIST TRANSFORMATION UNDER THE NEW ORDER**

 "… various sorts of states . . . give rise to various conceptions of the meaning and method of 'politics' itself, conceptions that influence all groups and classes in national societies"
— Theda Skocpol, *Bringing the State Back In,* 1985.

1. Introduction

This chapter presents a narrative of the historical process of the Islamist transformation in Indonesia. Focusing on the period after the collapse of Guided Democracy, this chapter seeks to explore how the intense period of conflict between Islamist movements and other political groups involved in the process of state formation were resolved in the political arena. The emergence of the so-called New Order military-dominated regime in 1966 marked the beginning of long-lasting efforts for the stabilization of political order in search of a solution to religious politics. This chapter therefore defines the New Order period as a historical outcome in which alternatives for a political solution to the Islamic state were sought by both the state and the actors in Islamist politics.

As previously discussed in the theory chapter, various political outcomes offered alternatives that were unwanted and unforeseen by the founders of Islamist movements. This implies that particular efforts to resolve conflict between Islam and the state often generated something unexpected. In contrast to the Egyptian case where there was a degree of uneasiness over conflict resolutions between Islam and the state, subsequent regimes in Indonesia—both Sukarno's Guided Democracy and Suharto's New Order— were impressively able to maintain the *status quo* of the 'secular' constitution adopted

in 1945, while both regimes took steps for institutional accommodation of Islamists' religious interests. In this sense, what is striking in the development of Islamist politics in the country is the periodic inclusion of a religious agenda within the institutional design of the state. As a result, elements of the "Islamic state" materialized in the state institutions, yet without constitutional recognition and power.

This chapter begins with the political transition of the New Order regime to delineate the historical background of the Islamist transformation. This is quite misleading, indeed. The state's efforts to stabilize order had begun in 1959 when Sukarno declared Martial Law and dissolved the Constituent Assembly in response to the deadlock over the national constitution.[1] Moreover, institutions of Guided Democracy and New Order regimes reflected "a continuity of [a] military dominant political system" (Crouch, 1978:21).[2] However, the implications of this long lasting effort for the stabilization of order did not become apparent until after the violent transition in 1965/66 from Guided Democracy. It marked a historical conjunction of ideological politics in Indonesia characterized by the uneasy alliance between the army, PKI, Islam and Sukarno, to create the New Order and military-dominated regime led by General Suharto.

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[1] Scholars generally pay attention by focusing on the fundamental regime change following the abortive coup on September 30, 1965, which army leaders attributed to the workings of the PKI. Nonetheless, the military that emerged as a political force in the aftermath of the collapse of Sukarno had been instrumental in establishing and supporting the authoritarian character of Sukarno's Guided Democracy. Moreover, the army leadership made important political and economic gains during this period. See, Daniel Lev, *Transition to Guided Democracy: Indonesian Politics, 1957-1959*, Ithaca: Monograph Series of Modern Indonesia Project of Cornell University, 1966.

[2] Drawing a comparison from Egypt's military regime under Nasser, Harold Crouch (1978) provides a good illustration on the nature of military domination in Guided Democracy and the New Order. He said, "… the army had not gained control of the government by means of a Nasserite coup [in Egypt] in which an 'outside' reforming elite overthrew a reactionary and incompetent establishment. The army had already become part of the ruling elite under Guided Democracy. Its rise to a position of dominance did not follow the elimination of the old elite, but rather strengthened one section of it at the expense of other parts" See, Harold Crouch, *Army and Politics in Indonesia,* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978, pp. 22.

Within this regime change, Islamists' responses to the state consolidation under the New Order indicated a sharp departure toward Islamist transformation after the dissolution Masyumi. Three distinct groups emerged distinguished by their political preferences: The Old Guard politicians, young Muslim activists, and young intellectuals associated with Islamic student organizations. What is important to note is that these responses occurred sequentially between 1967 and 1970. As I argued in the introductory chapter, the late 1960s witnessed critical moments for Muslim leaders in Indonesia in which their actions and decisions pushed Indonesian Islamism into new directions. For these three groups, a return to previous strategies and programs of mobilization were no longer possible. Certain critical situations in the early years of the New Order elevated these groups to unprecedented importance where they proposed particular forms of solution over "unsettled issues" between the state and visions of the Islamic state. By the term 'sequence,' I imply courses of action and decision undertaken by Islamist political actors that proceeded in orderly patterns of interaction with the state, namely, the New Order regime. By examining the Islamists' responses as they appeared in this brief period enables us to explore various Islamist alternatives proposed to overcome the long standing conflict between Islam and the secular state. This in turn allows us to explore the predominant alternative that emerged to steer state-Islamist relations in the following decades.

2. **The Stabilization of Political Order:**
    The Rise of the New Order and Islamist Forces

Emerging from the Guided Democracy, the New Order regime owed its political origins to Islamist groups. A great hope, therefore, was placed on Muslim leaders in the

early years of the New Order, that they would play the role as a ruling coalition with the

government. This hope was understandable given their participation in overthrowing

Sukarno and later in crushing the PKI. However, it soon became clear that not only did

Suharto have no intention to share power with Islamist groups, but the New Order

spread the specter of the Islamist threat by labeling Islamist groups as the "extreme-

right" to complement the regime's number one enemy, "extreme left" PKI (Effendy,

1995:98; Samson, 1969).

It is within this transition of the New Order government that new generation of

Islamist leadership emerged and began to reformulate new visions of the Islamic state,

setting into motion a long process of a changing relationship between Islam and the

state. In what follows, I examine the institutional development of the New Order in its

early years and then map out the varieties of responses expressed by Muslim groups

between 1967 and 1970. The purpose is to explicate our proposition that patterns of

Islamist change proceeded in tandem with the ongoing construction of the institutional

design of the state.

2.1. Political Transition to Suharto's New Order

Toward the mid 1960s, the institution of Guided Democracy was shaken by the

increasingly clear tensions between its pillars: Sukarno, the PKI, and the army (Lev,

1966:88-98; Ulfhaussen, 1982:162-225).[3] Similar to Nasser's role in post-revolutionary

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[3] As described in chapter 7, Sukarno's Guided Democracy was basically not a political system. It was an historical outcome of unexpected development characterized by a period of intense struggle and conflict between political ideologies in parliamentary democracy. Arguably, the real institution in this system remains the President, the military and few parties operating under Sukarno's patronage: PNI, NU and PKI. Representation system in Guided Democrcay was based on political parties taken from the 1955 party divisions: Nationalist, Islam, and Communist (Nasionalis, Agama, Komunis, NASAKOM). For extensive discussion on this topic, see Daniel Lev, *Transition to Guided Democracy: Indonesian Politics,*

Egypt, Sukarno emerged as a Third World leader and began to gain immense prestige in the international arena. As a president, he had diverse popular support, and stood in charge of a massive patronage network in the government. This was mainly due to the support from major parties embedded in the elite as a compromise since the revolution.

In 1964, the PKI gained a dramatic rise in memberships claiming up to 2.5 million members (Mortimer, 1971:14). The party was also backed by many political factions, including some left-leaning military commanders and to significant extent Sukarno (Crouch, 1988; Ricklef, 1991). The military, the third group in the Guided Democracy, became more unified and greatly expanded after its success in crushing the regional attempts at secession. Its leaders embraced an explicitly anti-communist stance and sought to mobilize its units to prepare for what they saw as 'an anticipated' Communist coup. Between 1962 and 1964, the army established regional military commanding headquarters ranging from the provincial to sub-district levels (Sundhaussen, 1982:171-178).

During 1964-1965, Indonesian politics became more sharply polarized as Sukarno attempted to balance rising military power by aligning himself closely with the PKI. Under these circumstances, a failed coup launched in September 1965 by left-leaning commanders in the army brought the military under Suharto's command to power (Crouch, 1988; McVey and Anderson, 1981). Immediately after the event, Suharto decisively moved to overthrow Sukarno. In March 1966, following the rejection of the President's plea in the pre-arranged parliament, the Guided Democracy collapsed. Suharto's second action was to take full command with the military launching a massive purge of the PKI. It was under Suharto's leadership that the army

1957-1959, Ithaca: Monograph Series of Modern Indonesia Project of Cornell University, 1966.

coordinated a massive attack in which local Muslim organizations—especially NU youth wings—took part in the killing. About a half million communist members and sympathizers were killed from late 1965 to mid 1966 (Cribb, 1990; 2002:551-560; Ricklef, 1991).[4] The PKI was banned in 1966 while radical peasant unions and student leaders were arrested. From 1966 to 1968, Suharto's New Order regime launched a large scale purge against communists and radical leftists throughout the press and media institutions, professional organizations, and, primarily, the state bureaucracy (Emmerson, 1978:91).

As the New Order regime consolidated its power, the nature of political institutions changed. In November 1966, the New Order government began to set up a systematic plan of political development called as the "modernization of Indonesian society" and held a Defense and Security Seminar, which was attended by officers from the army, navy, air force, and police (Hassan, 1982:2; see also, Samson, 1969). Two themes characterized this New Order transformative project: economic growth and political stability (Hassan, 1980:6-8). There was a strong contention in this project that the New Order regime attempted to depoliticize Indonesian politics. The military leadership then took ideology politics quite seriously. After the army took control of the political order, the New Order excluded the popular-based politicians from its main circle of support and, instead, drew support from non-party intellectuals and technocrats from universities. Central in this circle were urban PSI-leaning intellectuals, Catholics

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[4] For extensive studies on this bloodiest period of Indonesian history, see Robert W. Hefner, *The Political Economy of Mountain Java: An Interpretative History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); Geoffrey Robinson, *The Dark Side of Paradise: Political Violence in Bali* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995); Iwan Gardono, The Destruction of the Indonesian Communist Party: A Comparative Analysis of East Java and Bali, Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1992.

and *Abangan*-Muslim elite (Ward, 1974:34-36).[5]

Second, with the military as the core, the New Order advanced its political institution based on "functional groups" formed during the Guided Democracy.[6] These groups were brought together and transformed to substitute a party organization that played the role as the political arm for the New Order, Golongan Karya (Golkar). Its main task was to secure electoral legitimacy for the New Order by winning elections in a carefully controlled competition with other parties.[7] The first electoral victory of the Golkar in 1971 set the stage for the subsequent steps of restructuring mass politics; a trend that continued until the last elections of the New Order in 1997.

While consolidating his support base, the late 1960s marked an important turning point for Suharto to carry out more systematic measures that together erased all political legacies of the compromises made in earlier periods (Elson, 2001:183-191). The established parties as well as the party system, the very outcomes of the compromise reached since revolution, were the first to be restructured. The New Order held its first elections in 1971, in which only 10 political parties were allowed to

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[5] Kenneth Ward (1974) described that leading military generals close to Suharto (Ali Murtopo, Sudjono Humardani, and L.B. Murdani) convened intelligence personnel and a number of modernizing technocrats that included Catholics, intellectuals from Gadja Madah University in Yogyakarta, and a group of intellectuals from Bandung. They established a Chinese-Catholic run think-tank designed as an architect for the New Order's policies: the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). See, Kenneth Ward, *The 1971 Elections in Indonesia,* Monash Papers on Southeast Asia, 1974, pp. 33-37.

[6] Within NASAKOM institutional arrangement, in the late 1950s, army leaders also formed functional groups in rivalry with Sukarno's and PKI's. To name few of these organizations included: a Youth-Military Cooperation Body, a Labor-Military Cooperation Body, a Press-Military Contact Bureau, and a Peasant-Military Cooperation Body. See Salim Said, The Genesis of Power, PhD Dissertation at Ohio State University, 1987.

[7] It is important to note that Golkar has not really been a political party in the sense of having an electoral platform or ideology on the basis of which electoral support is sought. It has worked more to deny an electoral majority to the other parties. But, it does represent some sort of an operationalization of the very vaguely defined notions of functional group representation embraced by the military. Just like other parties under the New Order, Golkar incorporate a broad cross-section of society: organizations for women, farmers, students, youth, and so forth, Porter, *Managing Politics and Islam,* 2002, pp. 13-15.

contest. Later in 1973, the nine parties out of Golkar[8] that embraced different ideologies

and programs were forced to unite and ultimately to amalgamate into two parties

representing political cleavages that remained: Islam and secular nationalism

(Emmerson, 1978:111).

Another critical step in restructuring ideology politics was the regime's attempt

to develop a doctrine for state ideology[9] in order to resolve conflicts between political

ideologies, especially between Islam and the secular state. This attempt centered upon

"the regime's commitment to protect the purity of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution"

(Hassan, 1982:7). Immediately after the coup, the New Order raised the specter of

communism, Marxism and Leninism. After the communists were eliminated, the New

Order took action against Islamist groups who were also perceived as potential threats

to the legitimacy of Pancasila.

The Regime's perception of the Islamist threat in particular developed in its

experience with the dedicated aspiration of Islamist movements to repeatedly demand

for the reinstatement of the Jakarta Charter. In the first five years of the New Order

regime, such a notion of the struggle for an Islamic state remained. Partly because of

being excluded from the New Order's leadership, and largely because of Muslim's

suspicious attitude toward "modernization", between 1967 and 1970, the perception of

Muslim elite about the regime remained vague and ambiguous. Intense mobilization in

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[8] The nine parties contested the 1971 elections included: NU, Parmusi, PSII and Perti (Islam), PNI, Partai Murba, IPKI (nationalist), Pakindo (Christian) and Partai Katolik.

[9] As described in the previous chapter, to state that Pancasila is ideology is not to equate it with a firm visionary conception on modern ideology such as socialism or liberalism, since it is devoid of any notion of change or a vision for the future. Regardless of how it is described, Pancasila is taken seriously by the state officials—both Sukarno and Suharto—as a means of obtaining legitimacy for their actions and policies. In Suharto's New Order, this seriousness is evidenced in the enormous effort and resources spent by the regime on its policing and disciplining the citizens through indoctrination in schools, universities and special mandatory seminars for civil servants. See, William Liddle, Suharto's Indonesia: Personal Rule and Political Institutions, in *Pacific Affairs* 58, 1 (1985): 3-31.

the previous decades brought "anti-development" or "anti-secular state" sentiments, which ran deep (Ward, 1974; Samson, 1971:118-120). Faced with this Islamist challenge, the New Order government, as an observer noted about Indonesian politics in the early 1970s, tried to "halt ... the political development of moderate Islamists from gaining new—more powerful—dimensions" (Vatikiotis, 1994:55-56).

It is within this historical conjunction of interaction between the consolidation of the new regime and Islamists' consistent struggle for an Islamic state that a new type of Islamist leadership emerged. They sought to fundamentally redefine political Islam in its relation with the state. In the later period, facilitated by the changing alignment between state elites and these subordinate reform movements, Suharto's government translated "… this new interpretation [of Islamic state] formulated by this young generation of Muslim intellectuals" (Effendy, 1995:301) by adopting accommodative policies toward Islam. These policies were carried out in the form of cooptation, elite incorporation, and institutional accommodation. In what follows is a map of the varieties of Islamist responses to the state consolidation under the New Order.

2.2. Structuring Islamists' Responses: Politicians, Vanguards, and Young Muslim Activists

Islamists' responses to the consolidation of the New Order can be broadly mapped out into three distinct groups: politicians of Masyumi and NU, young Muslim activists, and young intellectuals associated with Muslim student organizations. Politicians were the first who were eager to revive their parties as vehicles for participation in the new regime. The NU moved easily to organize as a party entity. Yet, for modernist Muslims, the path was not as easy as they expected. In late 1966, less

than a year after Natsir and other Masyumi leaders were released from prison by Suharto, former Masyumi politicians set up a committee with the principal task to "prepare any possibility for the rehabilitation of Masyumi Party" (Hassan, 1980:79).[10] It soon became clear, however, that the New Order strongly rejected the idea. Two reasons underlined the New Order's decision: Masyumi was once a powerful party who up until the 1960 had a popular grassroots following. Such strength potentially could pose a challenge to the power of the new regime (Samson, 1969; Effendy, 1995:192-195). Second, army leaders objected to Masyumi's political-ideological goals for its efforts in the creation of an Islamic state, especially in constitutional struggles for reinstatement of the Jakarta Charter. However above all, was the fact that some in the military leadership remained resentful of the Masyumi's leadership in their involvement in the PRRI rebellion (Samson, 1969:1005).

By 1968, however, Suharto and young Muslim activists settled on the need to establish a political party for modernist Muslims with two conditions: dropping the name of Masyumi and the restriction of former leaders of Masyumi from party leadership (Hassan, 1980:174-175; Samson, 1972:161-162). The former Masyumi leadership rejected this offer, yet a new party to represent the modernist Muslim was finally formed in late 1968 with no political attachment to the Old Guard of Masyumi: Partai Muslimin Indonesia (Indonesian Muslim Party, Parmusi). Rising to leadership positions in Parmusi were young and educated Muslim activists from Muhammadiyah

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[10] This committee was selected from a loose network organization of Masyumi and other modernist Muslim activists formed after the dissolution of the party, called *Badan Koordinasi Amal Muslimin* (Coordinating Body of Muslim Activities). This organization, except NU that remained organize as a party after the New Order consolidation, draws from 16 Islamist organizations united in Masyumi prior to 1952. See, Boland, *The Struggle of Islam,* 1971, pp. 119; Ward, *The Foundation of the Party Muslimin Indonsia,* Ithaca: Modern Indonesian Project, 1970.

and Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (Muslim Student Association, HMI).[11] These young

Muslim politicians dominated the party directives and, under compulsion from the New

Order, were forced to '*deconfessionalize*' Islamist parties.[12] This was a process that

illustrates a shift among Islamist politicians from their "formal, strictly dogmatic

orientations in the struggle for [the] Islamic state" to the acceptance of a common

platform in national politics (Effendy, 1995:27).

A second response was from the Masyumi Vanguards. Being excluded from the

Parmusi leadership, the Old-Guards of Masyumi were left with no option but to pursue their

struggle for political power outside the party system. They then convened a new

organization focusing on *da'wa* and social services, and adopting the relatively inoffensive

strategy of principled non-cooperation towards the state. Although employing a cultural

version of Islam, the former Masyumi leaders seemed to be merely suspending, rather than

relinquishing, their long terms goal of an Islamic state. In 1967, they established the

Indonesian Council for Islamic Propagation (Dewan Da'wah Islam Indonesia, DDII)

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[11] The creation Parmusi was stressful process for Muslim elite associated with Masyumi. The resistance from former Masyumi leaders such as Natsir, Sukiman and Muhammad Roem was strong enough to oppose the government intervention in the creation of the new party. Since the beginning they proposed that a former Masyumi leader would lead the party. But in 1968, younger leaders from Muhammadiyah, Djarnawi Hadikusomo and Lukman Harun, became party leader and Secretary General respectively. Attempts to establish Masyumi's control by old guards Masyumi continued at its first congress in 1968. This brought the New Order to launch direct intervention in the leadership selection. After nearly a year dispute, an agreement was reached to appoint M.S.Mintaredja, a politician from HMI, as party chairman in 1969. For extensive study on the formation of Parmusi, see Allan Samson, Islam and Politics in Indonesia, PhD. Dissertation at the University of California, Berkeley, 1971, pp. 42-67.

[12] I adopt this term from Arend Lijphart's conception of the nature of changing behavior of Christian political movements in the Netherlands under the basis of consociational democracy. In the 1950s, C.A.O. Van Nieuwenhuije, a Dutch scholar on Indonesian politics, applied this concept to explain the process of interaction between various political groups in reaching an agreement to accept Pancasila as the basis of state serving as a unifying constitution for those groups. See, C.A.O. Van Nieuwenhuije, The Indonesian State and 'Deconfessionalized' Muslim Concept, in *Aspects of Islam in Post-Colonial Indonesia,* The Hague and Bandung: W. van Hoeve Ltd, 1957, pp. 180-243. For the analytical purpose, the term 'deconfessionalization' in this study refers to a phenomenon in which a religious political organization, Islamist parties in this context, reached a certain level of threshold to abandon their religious goals and agree to operate its platform and policies based within a common ground with other partisan groups in national politics.

(Husin, 1997:70). DDII soon became the corner stone for political activism for the "Masyumi vanguards". As declared by its founders, DDII, especially after the failure of the Masyumi rehabilitation, will serve as an institution for "preserving the spirit of Masyumi in [a] non-political party organization" (Husin, 1998:79; Hassan, 1980:34-35).

The creation of DDII then constituted a shift of attention for the former Masyumi leaders from "politicized Islam" to "social and *da'wa* activities" (van Bruinesen, 1996; Collin, 2003:19). It also indicated quite strongly that the pre-1965 coup Muslim politicians began to retreat from formal, parliamentary politics and devoted their engagement to the social and religious sphere. Muhammad Natsir, the most charismatic leader in Masyumi, suggested in the DDII's declaration that Indonesian Muslims should begin turning more attention to dakwah (*da'wa*) than politics in the traditional sense. Natsir claimed in 1967, that the rejection of the Jakarta Charter in 1959 demonstrated that "more than half of the nation's almost 90 percent Muslims rejected the obligation of living by the *shari'a*; obviously there is a need for further Islamization" (Hussein, 1997:73). Central to DDII's goal was to "Islamize Indonesian society from the ground up through *da'wa* activities" (Collin, 2003:114).

Third was the ideological response expressed in 1970 by younger Muslim activists and intellectuals projected as "the revitalization of Islamic faith" (Madjid, 1970:3) and called a Renewal movement (*Gerakan pembaruan*). Determined to offer an alternative strategy for Muslim engagement with broader national goals, the Renewal movement served as the decisive break from the long history of conflicts between Islam and the secular constitution of statehood. These young activists called for "the *secularization* of [the] Islamic party" (Madjid, 1970:8) and as a result, the dismantling

of the Islamic state alternative.

At a most general level, the need for Islamic renewal was greatly informed by the immediate events of the uneasy relations between political Islam and the new regime after the 1965 coup. Most notably were the heated debates between Islam and "modernization" and the dedicated efforts of Masyumi politicians for the establishment of an Islamic state. Such events had a transformative effect on young Muslim activists in the late 1960s. A similar trend of changes had unfolded in Egypt's Islamist movements epitomized in the "Qutbist Organization of 1965". Being part of a generation known as "Generation 66,"[13] and having played a significant role in bringing Sukarno's regime to an end, many of the younger Muslim generation shared political aspirations of the other New Order elements (army, technocrats, secular-leaning intellectuals) in order to realize in their lifetime politically stable and a modernized Indonesia (Hassan, 1980:88; Effendy, 1995:151).

These Muslim activists had expected to benefit from their implicit alliance with the New Order. Yet, they found that Muslims—being included with banned Masyumi and labeled as the "extreme right"—were drawn into a morass of political conflict that was deflecting the Islamic message from promoting its cultural, ethical, and broader political goals. As Utomo Danandjaja, a leader of the Islamic Student Union (PII) who later became a leading proponent of the Renewal movement, stated in 1970, "… And we [the young generation] are fed up with wrestling endlessly with problems that are never solved. We want something new, something fresh, and a short-cut way to break

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[13] Different from Organization 1965 in Egypt's Islamist generation that was labeled by the court, Generation 1966 was well established in Indonesian political lexicon. Its name was taken from cross-class and ideological alliances that took part in bringing Sukarno's Guided democracy came to end. The name Generation 66 was then attributed to indicate a historical break between the two regimes: Sukarno's Old Order and Suharto's New Order.

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the vicious circle which has no beginning and no end" (c.f. Hassan, 1980:90). Seeking to resolve this problem, these emerging intellectuals and activists began to redefine new interests as alternatives for an "Islamic state". In the ensuing decades, they showed that the conflict between Islam and the state that was filled with hostility in post-revolutionary politics could be pushed into new directions.

3. State and the Islamist Organizational Development

It is important to provide a description of certain features of the new generation of Islamist leadership that began to form in the early 1960s. Members of this generation were not so much different from their elders in terms of social-religious back ground, which belonged to *santri* communities, but quite distinct in their socialization. While the Old-NU-Masyumi Guards passed through the stressful and torturous period of political changes, ranging from colonial repression, nationalist awakenings, Japanese occupation, to independence Revolution, this emerging leadership faced simmering ideological debates in which the conflicts of political Islam against communist and secular-nationalist escalated. Central to this socialization, therefore, was the historic failure of the Islamist parties with rebellions and hostilities between Islam and other partisan groups especially the PKI, with the cumulative effects felt in the late 1960s.

Locked in such historical legacies, members of this generation sought to find a solution for the reconciliation between Islam and the state. Discussions and debates over the position of Islam in the New Order appeared between 1966 and 1968 (Hassan, 1980). This event became a precursor for new ideas on Islam and politics and crystallized with young Muslim activists declaring the Renewal movement in 1970. The

ideas they promoted and the strategy they envisioned set into motion a profound change for Islamism in Indonesia.

Because the Renewal ideas served the interest of the state, the New Order government quietly adopted the ideas in its strategy dealing with religious politics by "promoting individual religious piety, suppressing its political expression" (Liddle, 1996; Wertheim, 1972). In this sense, the role of the state was crucial in bringing about Islamist transformation. Yet, changes in Islamism do not necessarily parallel state repression, although it often does. For example, the creation of Parmusi at the expense of the exclusion of Masyumi leaders occurred despite the regime's intervention. However, alternative ideas of an "Islamic state" advocated by the Renewal generation remained an "endogenous" aspiration of Indonesian Islamism.

3.3. 'Secularization Thesis' and Its Religious Contention

The failure of the Islamic state, the totalistic nature of Islamist parties and the dissolution of Masyumi in 1960 produced multiple legacies for Indonesian Muslim activists in the early 1970s. As the New Order regime increasingly consolidated, the ideology of an Islamic state remained confined among Muslim elites who began to define their political interests in their negotiations with the new regime. Central to this contest was another episode of the battle for the reinstatement of the Jakarta Charter in the Constitution. In the MPR session of 1968, while Suharto's New Order advocated the view that Pancasila constituted an "national consensus that reflected [the] intrinsic personality of the Indonesian society" (Samson, 1969:44), Islamist elite both former Masyumi and NU called for reviving the Jakarta Charter which, once again, failed.

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Shaped by this political development, a number of young Muslim activists in student organizations declared their rejection of an Islamic state. The leading figure of this movement was Nurcholish Madjid (1940-2005), the former leader of the Masyumi-affiliated student organization HMI (Hassan, 1980; Effendy, 1995; Ali and Effendy, 1986).[14] However, because Nurcholish represented a generation, the movement constituted a circle of Muslim intellectuals and leaders that began to form in the mid 1960s. In Yogyakata, for example, important individuals associated with the Renewal movement at the time were Djohan Effendi, Syu'bah Asa, Farid Wajdi, and the late Ahmad Wahib. Others in Jakarta include Utomo Dananjaya, Usep Fathuddin, Eki Syahruddin. In the mid 1970s, several numbers of emerging intellectuals who shared Nurcholish's ideas became the back bone of the movement, such figures as Aswab Mahasin, Dawam Rahadjo, and Adi Sasono. Following his return from studies in the Middle East, Abdurrahman Wahid who later in the early 1980s took the NU chairmanship, quickly aligned himself with the movement (Barton, 1995:12). Partly as a consequence, since the early 1980s many of the youth associated with NU and HMI, and a significant number of ulama organizations, shared an intellectual outlook strongly influenced by the Renewal movement (Barton, 1997; Effendy, 1995:266-280).

The Renewal movement found its first expression in a speech delivered by

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[14] Equal to Qutb's position in setting into motion an alternative strategy of *jihadist* opposition in post-revolutionary Egypt, Nurcholish's renewal ideas were considered by many as a turning point of the transformation of Islamist politics. In the post-1965 coup Indonesia, he may be unchallenged Muslim thinker that offered a substantial solution for the reconciliation between Islam and the state. Yet, in contrast to Qutb, Nurcholsih was a Muslim activist. Nurcholish's relationship with political Islam started at very early age when he was a student in the State Institute of Islamic Studies (Institut Agama Islam Negeri, IAIN) Jakarta; a higher learning institution under supervision of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. It was in these student years that Nurcholsih was elected as the president of HMI for two consecutive periods, 1966-1969 and 1969-1971. For complete biography of Nurcholish, see, Ann Kull, *Piety and Politics, Nurcholish Madjid and His Interpretation of Islam in Modern Indonesia*, Sweden: Lund University Studies in History and Religions, 2005.

Nurcholish in Jakarta on January 2, 1970.[15] In this event, crucial to Nurcholish's speech was his declaration of "Islam Yes, Islamic Party No" (Hassan, 1980:188). Anchoring his ideas in many sources of Islamic classics, Nurcholish's ideas comprised a number of diverse themes of political and religious thinking. They reflected a wide range of intellectual concerns of the fundamental Islamic tenets ranging from God, human beings and the manner of their relationships in the light of new social realities, and these were connected with politics (Kull, 2005; Barton, 1995). Here I focus only on his ideas related to religion and politics.

The most important point Nurcholish raised is his deliberate attempt to create an inspiring alternative to the totalistic religious characteristics advanced by ideologues of Islamist parties. These ideologues had justified the idea of an Islamic state by arguing that the doctrine of the transcendent unity of God (*tauhid*) demanded total political, social, and ideological unity. As Natsir, leader of Masyumi in the 1950s, put it, because Islam provides the totality of the political system there can be "no differentiation between worldly and other-worldly," there can be no "contradictions." *Tauhid*, Natsir insisted, demands "a society... free from... exploitation, feudalism and rejection of differentiation among class, race, secular ideologies ... and so forth" (Natsir, 1993:116).

Concerned with the fact that this intolerant vision would downgrade Islam from its spiritual message, Nurcholish tried to discredit it by standing the concept of *tauhid* (and secularism) on its head. *Tauhid*, he asserted, was not about politics, nor at the least

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[15] Interesting to note, that the speech was organized informally as part of a post-*'Id al-Fitr* (Feast of Breaking the Ramadan Fast) celebration. It was organized jointly by four of the most important Muslim youth and student organizations—HMI, GPI (Muslim Youth Movement), PII and Persami (Association of Indonesian Muslim Graduates). Nurcholish's paper entitled "The Necessity of Renewing Islamic Thought and the Problem of the Integration of the *Ummat*". For extensive discussion for this particular speech, see Kamal Hassa, *Muslim Intellectual Responses to "New Order" Modernization in Indonesia,* Kuala Lumpur, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1982.

about political parties (Madjid, 1970; 1972). On the contrary, Nurcholish argued, because "absolute transcendence pertains solely to God," it should "give rise to an attitude of 'de-sacralization' towards that which is other than God, namely the world, its problems and values… To *sacralize* anything other than God is, in reality, *shirk* [polytheism]" (Madid, 1970:18). Invoking a central tenet of Islamic mysticism, he argued that "because God is the Ultimate Absolute ... beyond the ken of human comprehension", it was a human violation to assume that man could transform God's mysteries into worldly ideology.

The solution was, thus to embrace a form of 'secularization' that would strengthen Islamic spirituality by "temporalizing ... values which are ... worldly and ... freeing the *umma* [Muslim community] from the tendency to spiritualize them" (Madjid, 1970:13). Consciously, the term 'secularization' he used would provoke public debate in the Muslim community. Therefore, from the beginning Nurcholish tried to clarify what he meant by secularization:

> "secularization does not mean the application of secularism, because 'secularism' is the name for an ideology, a new closed worldview which functions very much like a new religion...by 'secularization' one does not mean the application of secularism and the transformation of Muslims into secularists. What is intended is the 'temporalizing' of values which are in fact worldly, and the freeing of the *umma* from the tendency to spiritualize them."[16]

To Nurcholish and his contemporaries, one of the most problematic "worldly values and affairs" that has been elevated into spiritual or sacred categories was "Islamic political parties". For this reason, Nurcholish argued that, "Islamic party institutions need to be de-sacralized" (Effendy, 1995:154).

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[16] In his paper, Nurcholish acknowledged that the term "secularization" was adopted from an American Protestant theologian, Harvey Cox. It underpins the idea of the increasing urbanization and rationalization from which the decline of role of religion in public space is apparent.

In the post-revolution Indonesia, the high watershed of mobilization through Islamist parties gave way to Muslims suffering "stagnation in religious thinking" and thereby believing that "Islamic political parties represent divine injunction" (Madjid, 1970:4). Nurcholish contended that "to perceive Islamic parties or an Islamic state as sacred was equivalent to making them beyond worldly objects" (Effendy, 1995:161-162). Part of the reason why Muslims failed to recognize such a distinction, Nurcholish asserted, is because the "solidarity-making nature of the political party" (Hassan, 1980:103). Using religion to justify a certain political grouping of Islam against others "… has fostered the tendency of Muslims' inability to differentiate values which are transcendental from those which are secular and temporal" (Effendy, 1995:163).

From his rejection of Islamic parties, Nurcholish derived his sharp critique of the idea of the Islamic state. A more clear idea to demonstrate the fallacy of the Islamic state was elaborated later after his return from finishing his graduate studies at the University of Chicago in 1984. Nurcholish's understanding of the Islamic state was shaped by his reading about the nature of how such an "ideology for an Islamic state was conceived" (Madjid, 1993:253). Nurcholish argued that the idea of an Islamic state elaborated by Muslim thinkers in the Muslim world during the late colonial period is "a form of apology" (Madjid, 1993:255). This attitude emerges from two different directions: the defense against "Western-modern ideologies such as democracy, socialism or communism" and "… legalism that derives from the understanding of Islam as a structured system based on collection of laws" (Madjid, 1993:252).

Central to the process of the ideological appropriation of Islam as a system of governance is the role played by Western-educated Muslims. This segment of

Muslim society that grew up in modern-colonial institutions saw Islam as "equal or superior to modem ideologies with regard to socio-political issues" (Barton, 1997:115). They argue that Islam is different from Buddhism, Hinduism or Christianity because "Islam is *al-Din*" (Madjid, 1993:225), so it has governing authority over politics, economics and the cultural sphere. Consequently, Muslim leaders believed that "Islam as *al-din* symbolizes a comprehensive religious system and world view" (Madjid, 1993:226). It is for this historical reason that, in response to his critique over the Renewal movement in 1972, Nurcholish maintained that "what we believe was an Islamic state actually [such a state] never existed; … the idea that Islam has a complete conception of governance was merely a historical accident" (Hassan, 1980:107).[17]

By the early 1980s, members of the Renewal generation began to spread and established leading organizations for social and educational transformation (Effendy, 1995:211; Barton, 1995). Many of them organized social and education programs for rural development coordinated with international NGOs and government projects. These programs were mostly attached to the *pesantren* communities (Effendy, 1995). Some politicians from this Renewal generation joined the government's party, Golkar (Hassan, 1990; Porter, 2002).

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[17] Nurcholish argued that the conceptualization of Islamic state was a social-political need, in the sense that it was part of resolving problem to oversee the strategy against colonialism. In the anti-colonial struggle, religion became a form of inspiration and resistance against Western powers and values. Muslims then theorized about the Islamic understanding of the unity of human experience as a reaction against the Western system of religion-state separation. And this trend was commonly introduced and adopted across the Muslim World. But to be sure, Muslim theoreticians did not elaborate the idea of Islamic state until the end of World War I. In this framework, the idea of the Islamic state must be seen as a resurgence and re-appropriation of Islam's classical concept of unity between religious and social institutions to suit the contextual situation of the *ummah*. But this is false, because the state is a worldly factor of life whose dimension is rational and collective, while religion is another aspect of life whose dimension is spiritual and personal. Personal conversation with Nurcholsih Madjid, Montreal: 24 March 2004.

However, two mechanisms facilitated the migration of the Renewal ideas into the broader scheme of social and political development. First is the emergence of an "agency of persuasion" (Malarangeng, 1999:181) which translated those ideas into programs for social transformation in Islamist organizations. Since being elected in the mid 1980s as NU's chairman, Abdurrahman Wahid began to institutionalize this ideological shift of Islamism in NU-*pesantren* communities. Abdurrahman convinced his traditional followers to endorse two decisions: 1) NU would stop all participation in the state-controlled party system in order to focus its energies on promoting social and cultural reform on a grassroots level; and 2) NU would abandon its agenda in the pursuit of an Islamic state and would accept *Pancasila* and the 1945 Constitution as the final bases for state authority.

Second, by design, alternative views offered by the Renewal movement on the *Pancasila* state served the interests of both the New Order and Indonesian Muslims. Beginning in the 1970s, the regime quietly embraced the elements of the 'secularization thesis' for the gradual accommodation of religious interests through its main entrusted institution: the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The institutional accommodation has been facilitated by its two liberal-minded Ministers, Mukti Ali (1971-1977) and Munawir Syadzali (1982-1993).

3.1. 'De-confessionalization' of Islamist Parties

Islamist party organizations were the most prominent target of the New Order's initiatives to restructure and 'secularize' mass politics. The emasculation of Parmusi marked the beginning of what Kamal Hassan (1980:78) saw as the attempt "to

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neutralize Parmusi from Masyumi identity and subordinate modernist activists" under

regime control. In contrast to Parmusi, the New Order's emasculation of the

traditionalist-NU resulted in failure (Ward, 1974). Partly because of its decentralized

organizational structure, as well as its ability to maintain elite unity during Sukarno's

era, NU was the only party that remained autonomous from the government after

Suharto's purges against the PKI and the emasculated PNI and the sidelined modernist

parties. When the New Order scheduled for the MPR session in 1968, NU was the only

political group that readily organized as a party without much intervention form the

government (Kadir, 1988:171).

However, NU could not escape Suharto's containment plan for the pacification

of ideology politics after the New Order's first elections in 1971. In these elections, four

major parties emerged with significant vote share: Golkar (62.8 percent), NU (18.6

percent), PNI (7.9 percent), and Parmusi (5.3 percent).[18] The decisive victory of the

government party, Golkar, as Ward pointed out, "provided the New Order the sanction

of law for all their actions in the legislature" (Ward, 1974:19). Subsequent policies and

bills were then passed by the Legislature that reflected serious efforts undertaken by the

state to dismantle the Islamists' party base.

First is the 1973 bill called "Law on Political Parties and Functional Groups."

This bill is explicitly intended for the New Order's push to simplify the party system

through legislation. The law was basically designed as the principal to formalize

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[18] To draw a comparison with Masyumi's performance in 1955 elections, which gained 20 percent vote share, the modernist Parmusi in the 1971 elections was too poor. Part of the reason was the absent support from Masyumi. In addition, before the election Muhammadiyah had announced its withdrawal from politics, disassociated itself from Parmusi. HMI, the student wing of modernist Muslim also withdrew its support from Parmusi. The 1971 election campaign illustrated that close relationship between Parmusi politicians and the New Order has brought this party to ally itself to Golkar and the army against NU-PNI. See, Kenneth Ward, *The 1971 Elections in Indonesia,* 1974, pp. 71-74.

Suharto's political system called 'Pancasila Democracy'. According to the bill, the nine parties allowed to organize after the 1965 coup was forced to merge into two 'federations'. While the nationalist-Christian parties—PNI, Catholics, Christian-Parkindo, and IPKI—fused into the Indonesian Democratic Party (Partai Democracy Indonesia, PDI), the four Islamist parties—NU, Parmusi and the two minor parties, PSII and PERTI—were fused into a new federation, the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, PPP). The name itself was deliberately designed by the regime to avoid drawing attention to its Islamic character (Harris, 1987). As a matter of fact, although this "party system simplification" was applied to any political group allowed to organize, there are strong reasons to assume that this policy was meant to curtail Islamist parties, or more precisely to include NU in the New Order's political scheme. Idham Cholid, NU executive chairman in the 1970s, had little choice but to accept the NU's integration into the PPP Islamist federation.[19]

Second, after the 1971 elections the New Order used more coercive measures by introducing the concept of 'floating mass'. This concept ensured that PPP, and other parties, could no longer organize politically below the district level (Imawan, 1989:198). It was explicitly aimed at distancing NU's political and religious elite from its mass support base. Implementation of the 'floating mass' can be considered as a central plank of the state's exclusionary strategy, which served to complement the restructuring step of ideology politics. In 1971, the government also began to launch a campaign, 'politics no, development yes' as a way of indicating the future direction of

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[19] NU's decision to integrate into PPP was made without much deliberation, although some ulama and NU politicians suspected that experience in Masyumi prior to 1952 would be repeated. Since the fusion was created, NU only took position as the President of PPP (by Idham Cholid), while Parmusi first Chairman of PPP was, Mintaredja, a Suharto loyalist who led the Parmusi since 1968.

mass politics (Ismawan, 1989:213; Liddle, 1977).

The strategy was not robust enough to change the NU's opposition behavior. Indeed, the 'fusion' policy damaged PDI terribly. Yet, partly due to NU's numerical strength in the party as well as the use of Ka'ba as the party attribute, between 1973 and 1980, PPP's Islamic identity provided the party with a degree of cohesion (Liddle, 1977). The 1977 election fostered PPP and the government's machine Golkar into direct competition as they aggressively competed for the hearts and minds of Indonesians, with each party rallying support based on the two opposing programs of 'Islamic society' and 'development' (Rasyid, 1995:189). A charismatic ulama and NU's Religious Council chairman, KH Bisri Syansuri, declared during the election campaign that "… the struggle of PPP can be characterized as *jihad fi sabilillah* [a holy war] … in order to uphold the religion and law of God, every Muslim who takes part in the 1977 general election, but especially a member of PPP, is obliged to vote PPP" (cf. Rasyid, 1995:182).

During the 1970s, not only did the electoral strength of PPP increase (for instance by gaining 29.3 percent in the 1977 elections), PPP's opposition to the New Order was also reflected in parliament.[20] The PPP showed its strength in its rejection of the draft marriage law proposed by the government in 1973. This draft was an attempt to build a legal unification of marriage law and was seen by many Muslim leaders as a move to secularize marriage institutions. To build consensus, the bill was substantially

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[20] It must be noted, that the New Order's elections were conducted in such a way to ensure that the government party, Golkar, dominated the scene and win the contest. Since 1971 the New Order used intimidation, coercion, propaganda directed against the parties. Security screening of candidates, election regulations, party laws and campaign restrictions were also practiced to marginalize the opposition.

amended.[21] Later, in the MPR general sessions in 1978 and in 1980, NU faction of PPP staged a walk out to protest two decrees.[22] One decree provided equal religious status to the Javanese-religious belief system (*aliran kepercayaan*) with the official religions. The other decree introduced Pancasila as moral indoctrination and education called Guidelines for the Comprehension and Implementation of Pancasila (Penataran, Penghayatan, dan Pengamalan Pancasila, P4). Central to NU's opposition was a perception that the two decrees were part of the state's attempt to turn Pancasila and Javanese belief system into religion (Kadir, 1997:186). Especially for Pancasila, it could displace religious lessons in schools. While the first decree was dropped, the P4 moral course was passed with the condition that it would not serve as a substitute for religious courses. PPP staged a second walkout in 1980, as it refused to participate in the passing of new election laws in parliament viewed as undemocratic.

The challenges of PPP in elections and in parliament made the New Order government to resolve ideological militancy of Islamist party with more coercive measures. In 1980, Suharto began a campaign to socialize Pancasila as the sole ideology for the regime and the nation.[23] The campaign culminated in the August 1982

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[21] The protest was not expressed by PPP alone, but also other Islamist organizations. It was the first clash between Islam and the government since 1965. The 1973 incident was taken by surprise by the government because the escalation of the protest. Muslims, particularly the youth organizations, took their opposition into the streets and managed to occupy the Parliament building for several hours.

[22] The 1978 general session events were not the first blunt opposition of NU against the New Order. In 1973, NU led the Islamist parties to walk out from the parliament in rejecting the draft of marriage bill proposed by the government. The bill was seen as an attempt to "secularize" marriage legal system in which the role of religious institutions would be marginalized. The rejection provoked a huge demonstration in Jakarta involving all segments of Muslim population from ulama, students, and civil society organizations to reject the bill.

[23] Suharto's concern on the *azas tunggal* was expressed in a speech before a military meeting at Pekanbaru, Sumatra in March 1980. Suharto mentioned that in 1966 he and military leadership have built a national 'consensus' with all political forces concerning Pancasila as the state ideology. He maintained that the consensus had not been fully 'successful'. In this speech he referred to the NU-led PPP walkout over the P4 policy in 1978 and the Election Law Amendment Bill in 1980, as two points of tension between the government and PPP. See, Faisal Ismail, Islam, Politics and Ideology in Indonesia: the

proposition that all parties adopt Pancasila as their sole-ideological foundation (*azas tunggal*). Although this draft did not come into the law until 1985, such a policy has had serious effects for confessional-Islamic characteristics of PPP. This party had been designated as the official heirs of Masyumi-NU identity and, to some extent, still maintained its long vision of an Islamic state. But with this regulation, PPP had to formally abandon Islam and rule out direct references to Islam from its charter. Understandably, strong resistance was shown by the Islamist elite in PPP, especially the high ranks of ulama (Ismawan, 1989).

The issue intensified the strains within the PPP, leading eventually to the party's total ideological submission. It began in the 1984 party congress when Jaelani Naro, a Suharto loyalist from Parmusi, rose to the PPP chairmanship. Naro then moved to systematically marginalize NU from the party structure as part of the Congress policy "… to complete the party fusion" (Porter, 2001:171). A few months later, NU decided to withdraw from PPP arguing that regime intervention in the party had proven too detrimental to the NU's political and economic interests. At its 1984 congress in Situbondo, after announcing its return to the NU's founding spirit of 1926 as a purely social-religious organization and formally withdrawing its membership from the PPP federation, the NU took a decision to abandon its Islamic state agenda and passed a resolution accepting Pancasila as the organization's foundation (*azas tunggal*), or sole foundation (Haidar, 1996).

However, the NU retained Islam as its undergirding religious conviction rather than ideology *per se*. NU also confirmed that it accepted the unitary Republic of Indonesia as the final form of the state and, by implication, no longer struggled for

Process of Muslim Acceptance of Pancasila, PhD dissertation at McGill University, Montreal,1995.

specific Islamic causes. The withdrawal of NU freed its members to stay with PPP or join Golkar and PDI (Effendy, 1995:291). The newly elected leader of NU, Abdurrahman Wahid, issued organizational policies reversing the 1977 NU religious ruling that it is "not the duty of NU members to vote for PPP" and "not forbidden to vote for Golkar or PDI" at the elections (Haris, 1994:39). With this development, Naro strengthened his position in the PPP by overseeing modernist Parmusi politicians as the dominant faction in party leadership. In 1987, the PPP removed references to Islam in its party constitution and adopted Pancasila as its ideological foundation.

After the success of the *de-confessionalization* of political parties, the 1985 Law on Mass Organization was extended to all social organizations, not just political parties. This meant that organizations that held Islam in their charter had to be replaced with Pancasila. The issue was so contentious that Muslim leaders and ulama opposed the policy. Angered by Suharto's maneuvers to monopolize ideology politics, protests and riots took place in the mid 1980s. The historic event of these protests was the violent riots in September 1984 in Tanjungpriok, Jakarta, where several hundred civilians clashed with the military leaving more than one hundred dead.[24]

The overall result of the New Order's attempt for *de-confessionalization* of Muslim politics was a qualified success. Some Muslim organizations such as NU accepted Pancasila voluntarily, others succumbed to the regime's pressure, while a few others split over the issue. HMI, for example, the leading Islamic student association split in two with HMI-DIPO accepting the *azas tunggal* ruling and HMI-MPO choosing

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[24] This so-called "Tanjungpriok Tragedy" was seen as an offense against Islam and led to the accusation that it was orchestrated by a Catholic army commander, Gen. Benny Murdani. The protest continued until 1986 with more violent tune, although in very small scale. For example, a bomb exploded in the historic temple Borobudur in 1985 and a small explosive was detonated in a Chinese-business center in 1986.

to secretly keep Islam in its statutes and go underground (Aspinal 2005). For the modernists, this was an especially a bitter pill to swallow, for it set the Pancasila, a creation of man, above the Qur'an and Islam, which was revealed by God (Schwarz 2004:172). The very concept of Islamist goals had become seditious. Many Muslim activists perceived the politics of *azas tunggal* as an attempt to depoliticize, if not to dethrone Islam (Effendy 2003:51). Nonetheless, since the regime took harsh measures against those who refused to accept Pancasila, between 1985 and 1990, all Islamist organizations in one way or another adopted Pancasila as their ideological foundation.[25] Muslim activists who spoke openly against this policy were arrested and given prison terms, and organizations who failed to adopt this policy were forced to dissolve (Ismail, 1995:61-80).

3.2. *Masyumi Network and the Development of Da'wa Activism*

The establishment of the DDII in the late 1960s marked the beginning of new patterns of strategies developed by Masyumi politicians and activists who drew upon the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's model of purification of society. Although the DDII community constituted a minority within the Islamist political mainstream, its ideological link and patronage networks to Masyumi made this organization one of the most important voices of dissent during the New Order.

Being excluded from politics and placed under the New Order's surveillance, beginning in the mid 1970s, DDII personalities intensified their religious and social

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[25] Faisal Ismail (1995) compiled a chronological order of the Islamist organizations' acceptance of Pancasila as their ideological foundations. This included: Muhammadiyah (1987), Persis (1989), Jama'at al-Washiliyyah (1988), Al-Irsyad (1987 and split), Perti (1987), HMI (1987 and split), PII (rejected and dissolved).

programs shaping this organization and developing it into one of the leading institutions

for the cultivation of conservative and fundamentalist understanding of Islam (Liddle,

1992; Effendy, 1995:291-297; Hasan, 2004). The fact that DDII constituted an

organization for social and religious services does not mean that the former Masyumi

politicians totally disengaged from political affairs. Conversely, as the Islamist parties

and organizations were gradually curtailed by the New Order and sometimes fell far

short of carrying out their religious agenda, it was the DDII that took the lead of the

non-parliamentary forces in the call for the implementation of *shari'a*. In the 1970s and

the 1980s, DDII activists took part in occasional outbursts of anti-regime opposition

that reanimated calls for "defending religious interests of Muslim" against what the

Muslim perceived as "anti-Islam propaganda" (Husin, 1998:79).[26]

A number of organizational factors facilitated this trend. The first is related to

the establishment of Arab Saudi sponsored-higher learning institution for Arabic

language and Islamic studies, Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam dan Arab (LIPIA) in

Jakarta in 1978. This institution was linked to the DDII organizationally to coordinate

the Islamization programs as well as provide financial support for the organization. In

1980, another *salafi* international organization, the Al-Irsyad Foundation, a century-old

Yemeni charity, coordinated its programs and activities in Indonesia through DDII

(Collin, 2003).[27] All these developments strengthened the puritan-*salafi* posture of this

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[26] Close ties between the New Order and its non-Islamist technocrat allies frequently produced
state policies which were perceived as an offense against Muslim communities. These policies, for
example, include the 1974 bill for marriage, the 1978 government regulation for religious conversion, and
the 1978 bill of Javanese mysticism to be recognized as a religion. The DDII's opposition against the
New Order was also carried out in non-Islamist issues. Natsir and Anwar Haryono, two leaders of DDII,
joined the Petition 50 (Petisi 50)—a group of political, military elite and political activists who boldly
stood as an opposition organization against Suharto's authoritarianism.

[27] Natsir's world reputation as one of the prominent Islamist politicians during Sukarno's period
enabled DDII to build an access of financial and political resources from the Muslim countries. His

organization. Beginning in the late 1970s, a more systematic training and education for preachers, students and young Muslim activists was launched (Hasan, 2004).

In the late 1970s a new trend of *da'wa* movement emerged in Indonesia modeled on Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (ABIM), an Islamic movement founded in 1971 by Anwar Ibrahim and other activists in Malaysia. ABIM drew inspiration from the Muslim Brotherhood (Ikhwanul Muslimin) of Egypt and the ideas of Mawlana Mawdudi, who founded Jamaat-e-Islami in Pakistan in 1941. Imaduddin Abdurrahim, a former HMI activist who withdrew from the organization due to his disagreement with Nurcholish's Renewal Movement, facilitated the adoption of ABIM methods shortly after he returned from years of teaching in Malaysia.[28] This new trend of *da'wa* activism began in the Salman Mosque at the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB). Under Imaduddin's leadership, Salman Mosque became the model for *da'wa* activism among Indonesian Muslim students throughout the 1980s and the 1990s (Hasan, 2007).[29] Almost similar to the emergence of Jama'at Islamiya student groups in Egypt, many small "families" (*usrah*) and "brothers" (*ikhwan*) sprung up at university campuses echoing trends of religious awareness in response to rapid urbanization among the youth under the DDII leadership (Hasan, 2004; Damanik, 2000).

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position as vice chairperson in the Islamic World League (Rabitat al-Alam Islamy, est. in 1964) also facilitated this organization to establish close ties with other Islamic organizations in the Muslim world. See, Martin van Bruinessen, 2004; also, Nurhaidi Hasan, 2003.

[28] It is interesting to note that ABIM was designed as a student organization. Although it was clearly influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood and other fundamentalist organizations, ABIM constitute its organization as an umbrella for student activism with modern, urban and 'liberal' characteristic. To some extents, especially during the political upheavals in the 1960s, some activists who played the role as midwives of the foundation of ABIM frequently visited Indonesia to learn and discuss many Islamic issues with their 'brothers' from HMI, including Nurcholish Madjid.

[29] Imaduddin wrote a pocket book, entitled *Kuliah Tauhid* (Lectures of the Unity of God). The book was so popular among the Muslim activists, because it simplified Islam as a total way of life. It explicated that *tauhid*, the unity of God, means that sacred and secular, temporal and transcendental are not distinguished in Islam.

Natsir and DDII leaders considered ABIM to be an extension of Masyumi in politicizing Islam. They joined with Imaduddin and his followers to build a movement of Islamic teaching understood as a form of *jihad* or holy struggle waged against "Western" ways of life—capitalism, secularism, liberalism, communism, and materialism (Collin, 2003:113-114). The organization emphasized the superiority of Islam to all other forms of life. The authority of the diverse commentaries on the Qur'an and Sunnah in Islamic tradition was rejected as expressed in the "fundamentalist" slogan "back to the Qur'an and Sunnah." (Hasan, 2002:13). All aspects of life and society should be imbued with Islamic values and modeled on the life of the Prophet and his followers.

In the 1980s, the DDII community became part of the Islamist political mainstream that showed an ambivalent attitude: they intensely distrusted the harbingers of Islamic liberalism (especially associated with the Renewal movement), but legacies from Masyumi led them to believe in the supremacy of Western democracy. Their activities focused increasingly on perceived threats: threats from within (Islamic liberalism) as well as threats from without, including Christian and Jewish threats to the Muslim world. They appeared to believe in a Christian conspiracy (notably Catholics-Chinese descent) to "roll back" Islam in Indonesia, or at least to destroy it as a political force (van Bruinessen, 2002).[30] Interestingly, during Suharto's initiatives for accommodation of Islamist interests in the 1990s, DDII personalities renounced their opposition to the New Order state claiming that there is no longer a significant group of

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[30] In the late 1980s, anti-Semitic books—including various versions of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*—were translated from the Arabic and published. In the 1990s, anti-Semitism and conspiracy theories came to pervade the publications of the DDII and related publishing houses, almost entirely excluded more balanced analyses of world politics.

Muslims who favour an Islamic state—as the term used in the 1950's—yet asserting that a new Islam would be like the Christian Democracy (Liddle, 1995:43-47).

4. The State's Redress of Islamic Interests: Accommodation, Co-optation, and the Consequence to Islamist Activism

This section describes subsequent responses of Suharto's New Order to undertake institutional accommodation of Muslim's religious and political interests. Important initiatives of accommodation were indeed adopted after the *azas tunggal* era. Yet, gradual movement toward capturing Islamist interests in the form of non-party entities was in fact adopted as early as the mid 1970s. Among the most important of these was the infamous establishment of the Indonesian Council of Ulama (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, MUI) in 1975 (Mudzhar, 1993:14; van Bruinessen, 1996:11; Ikhwan, 2005:6). A number of institutions and policies were then created that were visibly designed to appropriate the role of ulama, the Ministry of Religion and their authorities in the institutional design of the state.[31]

In line with this accommodation, one of the most important—albeit problematic—of the New Order's pro-Islamic policies was the creation of the Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals (Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia, ICMI) in late 1990, which was a nation-wide organization formed as part of Suharto's efforts to assume control over the Muslim middle class. A closer look at the

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[31] Before MUI was formed, through the Minister of Religious Affairs, Mukti Ali, the government created Association for Islamic Education Reform (Gabungan Usaha Perbaikan Pendidikan Indonesia, GUPPI), in 1970; Indonesian Dakwah Council (MDI) and the Indonesian Mosque Council (DMI) in 1973. Board of Indonesian Mosques (BKPMI) was also created linked to religious section of Golkar. Later in late 1980s, significant number of social organizations was founded expected generally to be included in subordinate networks of Suharto's management of Islamist political support. See, Porter, *Managing Islam and Politics,* 2002.

timing of the establishment of the ICMI allows one to argue that such incorporation was made possible by a temporal congruence between the increasingly established Pancasila as the common platform for Islamist organizations and the high level of consolidation of state building. It seemed that the massive expansion of Muslim middle class in bureaucracy, civil society organizations and business sectors, left Suharto with no option for his state-building strategy but to accommodate them in his regime structure (Ramage, 1995; Heffner, 1994; Anwar, 1995).

4.1. MUI and State's Accommodation of Religious Interests

The establishment of MUI in 1975 was the final outcome of a tug of war between Muslim leaders and the Suharto government. At least since 1970, Suharto, through the NU-affiliated Minister of Religious Affairs, Muhammad Dahlan, approached Muslim leaders expressing his initiative to form a single, centralized office for the ulama (Mudzhar, 1993). This idea was not new. (van Bruinessen, 1996).[32] Yet, the relationship between the New Order and Muslim groups, especially after the painful emasculation of Parmusi, made the latter consistently reject any proposal for the creation of an ulama organization. However, Muslim protests against the legal unification of the marriage bill in 1973 provided a lesson for the New Order. A more serious engagement to incorporate religious interests of Islamist politics in the

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[32] The precursors of MUI dated back to the early decade of Indonesian revolution. In the 1950s, when the Army was seeking to win the hearts of Muslim in West Java in its struggle against DI/TII, the army command organized meetings with local ulama, demanding their political co-operation. In 1958, too, the provincial Ulama Council was established that comprised ulama and military personnel and with mainly security-oriented purpose. In 1962 a similar body was established at the national level as a means to gain Muslim support for Sukarno's Guided Democracy. The first New Order Ulama Council was formed under similar circumstances, in Aceh in 1965-66. This initiative was part of the anti-communist campaign after the 1965 coup, in which the military commander of Aceh demanded some leading ulama to issue a fatwa allowing the killing of communists.

institutional design of the state was crucial. In May 1975, the Minister of Home Affairs, Amir Mahmud, called the provincial governors to set up councils of ulama in nearly all of Indonesia's twenty-seven provinces (Ikhwan, 2005). These regional councils of ulama, along with leaders of independent organizations including Muhammadiyah, NU, and Persis were then brought in as members of the national MUI (Ikhwan, 2006:4). Following a National Conference of Indonesian Ulama in July 1975, MUI was finally established.

In an opening speech to MUI's first congress, Suharto clarified that the "council was neither permitted to engage in political activities…, but functioned in an advisory capacity" (Porter, 2002:78) to the government and the Muslim community. Suharto's initial plan might have been to make MUI as reminiscent of the traditional office of the *shaykh al-Islam* of Al-Azhar-like office, playing the role to issue *fatwa* to legitimize government policies. Therefore, although MUI was provided with a relatively autonomous position to represent the high office of religious authority, the state remained in firm control of MUI through the Minister of Religious Affairs, the Minister of Internal Affairs, and the Minister of Education and Culture who acted as the advisory council for this institution (Ikhwan, 2005:48).

The New Order's initial plan in the creation of MUI was to mobilize the ulama to participate in political development (Effendy, 1995). Since its inception, MUI was designed to lend legitimacy to government policy initiatives and directives, as an observer noted, "… that the ulama can explain the New Order's policies in a religious idiom acceptable to, and understood by, the wider Muslim *ummah*" (van Bruinessen, 1996:15). In effect, it was meant to deflect potential objections by Muslim groups who

might choose to oppose government policy. MUI therefore remained under considerable pressure to justify government policy and fulfill the requirement to set up a *fatwa* commission (Porter, 2002:79; Ikhwan, 2005).[33]

Nonetheless, the MUI's political character —in the sense that it was part of a political solution between the regime and the agenda of the "Islamic state" of Muslim organizations—enabled this institution to maintain its autonomy, which provided the MUI with legitimacy for its religious rulings. This credibility was maintained through two mechanisms. The first was the MUI's reliance on its well-respected leaders and certain individuals who were perceived as independent from the state's intervention. Although the MUI owes it origins to initiatives by Suharto and continues to receive funding from the government, the MUI retains independence over the selection of its chairman. Elected periodically by its organization members, the elected chairman was usually a well-respected, senior, and knowledgeable member of the ulama who generally belonged to the NU and the Muhammadiyah.[34] MUI high-ranking membership are also appointed or recruited from the 'independent' ulama and it is relatively rare to find a member drawn from the Ministry of Religious Affairs. This leadership structure provides organizational credibility for the MUI among the

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[33] A number of occasion illustrated that MUI's fatwa was produced in order to religiously ascertain as well as justify the government wishes. Yet, many achievements played by MUI can be acknowledged. To name one of them was the MUI-government program in the socialization of the use of IUD in family planning. Many observers noted that without the role played by MUI, it is unlikely that the government could reduce the national birth rate in such a populous country with such a big success in a decade. For extensive review on the role of MUI, see, M. B. Hooker, *Islam: Social Change through Contemporary Fatwa*, Crows Nest, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 2003.
[34] Since 1975 until present, all general chairpersons of MUI reflected the institutional autonomy of Muslim organizations. Chronologically these NU and Muhammadiyah leaders have served as MU's chairpersons: Haji Abdul Karim Malik Amrullah (Hamka, Masyumi leaning ulama-1975-1981); KH Syukri Ghozali (NU affiliated ulama, 1981-1984); KH Hasan Basri (Masyumi member, 1984-1990); KH Ali Yafie (NU, 1990-1999); and KH Sahal Mahfudh (NU, 1999- present).

Indonesian Muslim public.[35]

The second mechanism for the MUI's credibility is that the institution is comprised of diverse religious organizations representing various schools of Islamic jurisprudence. The MUI's religious rulings provided a political space for particular ulama to sometimes defy the MUI's fatwas. For example, the MUI may issue fatwa that publicly appeared only to satisfy the government's wishes. In this situation, the ulama who do not agree with MUI's fatwa usually rush to issue separate religious rulings in order to clarify the MUI's pro-government fatwa. In many cases, the Muslim public generally follows the fatwa from NU, Muhammadiyah or Persis instead of those issued by the MUI. However, although their fatwa may be eclipsed by those of other organizations, the MUI's institutional credibility remained intact. In reality the MUI's fatwas served only as second opinion to those issued by the NU, Muhammadiyah or Persis. In addition, since the religious rulings produced by the MUI were not considered legally binding under state law, it is possible for established Muslim organizations to issue fatwa that appeared contradictory to MUI's fatwa.

What is important to note is that the establishment of the MUI changed the nature of ulama authority in the post-colonial Indonesia. Prior to its creation, the authority of ulama and their institutions operated in a limited communal capacity at the level of religious organizations. The religious rulings produced by the ulama, such as

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[35] A famous story of the uneasiness of maintaining MUI's religious credibility before Muslim public was illustrated by the case when the first MUI chairman, the well-respected Masyumi leaning ulama, Hamka, resigned in 1981 over a *fatwa* that the government deemed unacceptable but which he refused to rescind. The fatwa evolved MUI's decision to consider that attending Christmas celebration was unlawful for Muslim. This fatwa was actually a specific-Indonesian religious problem in that particular period in response to public outcry about the great expansion of Christian missionary since the early 1970s. After this event, MUI's chairpersons usually were more cautious dealing with the government's expectation.

fatwa (religious rulings), *tazkirah* (advice), or *tausiyyah* (opinions), were also associated with individual *'alim* or collectively supported by the partisan ulama, either aligned with Persis, Muhammadiyah, or the NU. This is because each Muslim organization actually adopted different methods of legal reasoning and jurisprudence in producing legal rulings for its community. In the 'traditional' sense of Indonesian religious life, there is significant legal diversity and variation practiced by Muslims which were generally shaped by these established organizations (Mudzhar, 1993:30).

With its establishment, therefore, the MUI became an officially sanctioned religious authority that sought to centralize, and to some extent monopolize, the interpretation of Islamic orthodoxy and in the process diminished the plural and diverse nature of religious law. Realizing its ability to centralize power, the MUI also provided the ulama with new opportunities and recourses to guide the Muslim community and guard it against doctrines perceived as "deviant" (*sempalan*) (van Bruinessen, 1996; see also, Porter, 2002).[36] Later, after the collapse of the New Order in 1998, with increasing levels of societal mobilization, the MUI strengthened its own vision for an Islamic society which largely differed from the 'secular state' and the organizations that ironically helped in its creation.

4.2. The State, ICMI, NU and the Politics of Pancasila

The development of state-Islamist relations in the New Order shifted

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[36] In terms of MUI's fatwa on the deviation of Islamic faith or practice, Muslim organization mainstream such as Muhammadiyah, Persis, DDII and NU tended to support the bans on deviant religious tendencies. But this depended on the religious group being subject to the ban. For instance, regarding Darul Arqam (a sect banned in Malaysia), Ma'ruf Amin (NU's religious council and member of MUI's leadership board) said that the NU disagreed with the MUI that the sect be banned for religious reasons. Yet, he noted that the government banned the sect for security and order reasons but not nationally.

dramatically beginning in the late 1980s. With the gradual movement toward institutional accommodation, the increasingly established norm of the 'Pancasila state' embraced by Muslim organizations, and the massive expansion of the Muslim middle class, Suharto's New Order completed his politics of accommodation by building a new social coalition with Muslim groups who had previously been marginalized. This coalition was established by a new co-opted nation-wide organization known as the Association of All-Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals (ICMI), in December 1990 (Hefner, 1994; Ramage, 1995). Under the leadership of Suharto's protégé and trusted loyalist, the long-serving Minister of Research and Technology, B.J. Habibie, ICMI became a new instrument for the New Order to recruit the elite into the bureaucracy, various ministerial posts, and the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR). This was previously understaken directly by Golkar and other "… limited circles of military and civilian ruling groups in Suharto's corporate networks" (Porter, 2002:167).

Many scholarly interpretations have been offered about the nature of the ICMI, especially its political aspects (Liddle, 1996; Mujani, 1994; Ramage, 1995; Hefner, 1993). It is not the purpose of this study to reject these interpretations, but, rather to complement them with the historical context of why the ICMI emerged in the way it did. What is striking about Islamist development in Indonesia, clearly distinguishing it from Egypt, is the periodic accommodation made by the state to the Islamist religious agenda. The formation of the ICMI in 1990 marked an important threshold point in the Islamist development in which there was convergence of interests between the state elite and large segments of Islamist groups, especially the modernist mainstream.

The initiators of the ICMI were neither Muslim intellectuals nor Habibie, but a

number of Muslim students who planned to organize a national seminar on the role of

Indonesian Muslim intellectuals in political development (Husaini, 1995; Ali-Fauzi,

1994).[37] As soon as the organization was officially formed, the response from the

Muslim elites to the ICMI was overwhelmingly enthusiastic. The ICMI began as a loose

federation of Muslims representing a wide spectrum of moderate, reform-minded,

conservative, and 'radical' Islamist organizations. Yet, elements from modernist

Muslims including Muhammadiyah, HMI, DDII, some ex-Masyumis, and politicians of

PPP, became dominant. For the Muslim middle class in the 1990s, as Liddle (1996:18)

points out, it looked as though the government, after two decades of keeping Islamist

activists and politicians from the corridors of the New Order's power, was finally

willing to admit them. At a more fundamental level, however, in the context of this

highly mobilized middle class pressing for inclusion, Suharto faced the difficult task to

reconsolidate his regime. This was especially ignited by political liberalization launched

in 1986 and by the increasing autonomy of the military institution, which formerly

provided Suharto with political support, but in the mid 1980s began to diminish

(Mackey, 1999).

Based on the assessment above, three main factors are central to facilitating the

state-Islamist convergence in the 1990s. First was the social transformation within

Indonesian Muslim society. Fostered by two decades of the New Order's economic

development, the Muslim middle class of the 1980s and 1990s emerged and became

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[37] ICMI began with an initiative of number of Muslim students form Brawijaya University who travelled to Jakarta in search of financial aid and speakers for the seminar. These students were advised by two prominent Islamist activists associated with the Renewal movement of the 1970s to meet with Minister BJ Habibie. The purpose is to ask for his support for the possibility to form a permanent organization for Muslim intellectuals and to be led by himself. In the beginning, Habibie was reluctant to accept such a request, but agreed eventually after consulting with Suharto about the plan to establish a nation-wide organization for Indonesian Muslim intellectuals. See, Syafi'i Anwar, *Pemikiran dan Aksi Islam Indonesia,* Jakarta: Paramadina, 1995.

more culturally confident. They moved beyond the belief of the 1950s and 1960s that Islam was simply a religion and a cultural tradition belonging to uneducated and backward villagers. Although many of them believed that there could be "no separation between religion and politics", most generally did not support the idea of an Islamic state (Madjid, 1993:7-8; Liddle, 1996).

The expansion of the state education system over two decades also served as an important catalyst for change in Islamist political outlook. In line with the development mentioned above, religious instruction in public school produced a more uniform Islamic population, modern yet more openly pious in daily life and in the workplace (King, 1992; Hefner, 1994). Under the Department of Religious Affairs—long depicted as the institutional bastion of Islamist aspiration—the government not only developed the state religious school system, but also subsidized tens of thousands of private Islamic schools. The higher learning institutes for Islamic studies, IAIN, were also expanded and transformed by Western-oriented curriculum (Hefner, 2000; Azra and Afrianti, 2005). As an observer of Indonesia put it, "it seemed … along the line of the New Order's repression of explicit expression of Muslim's struggle for [an] Islamic state, from the mid 1970s to the late 1980, Indonesia has enjoyed a cultural revival associated with [the] *santri* community" (Ramage, 1995:176). Nurcholish remarked in 1993 that two decades of political stability and economic development produced a "Quite Revolution" for Indonesian Islam (Madjid, 1993:81).[38]

The second factor was the growing religious awareness among the Muslim

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[38] The cultural revival of Muslim also can be attributed to the heavily circumscribed political structure and suppression of Islamic political activities. The New Order's two prong strategy, suppression for political Islam and encouragement of religious aspects of Islam had added to a revival of Islamic consciousness. See, Hefner, Islam, the State, and Civil Society: A Struggle for the Muslim Middle Class in Indonesia, in *Indonesia,* 1994.

middle class and this sent a message to the regime that Islam's position on the political landscape needed to be re-addressed. By the late 1980s, with the acceptance of Pancasila as the common platform for all Islamist organizations and with the widespread adoption of 'Renewal movement' ideas by the Muslim public, the New Order government began to view that Islam no longer posed a threat to the state's secular-nationalist ideology (Liddle, 1996; Ramage, 1995:174). The implication as stated in 1993 by Munawir Syadzali, the Minister of Religious was that "the acceptance of *azas tunggal* [sole ideology] of Pancasila had a profound impact on President Suharto" (*Tempo,* May, 1993).

It is this change in the regime's perception that after 1985 the New Order took steps for institutional accommodationof "… selected aspects of *shari'a* to have firmer legal status under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Religious Affairs" (van Bruinessen, 1996:18). Such accommodation of religious legislation began earlier, however. In 1978, for instance, the DPR passed a bill submitted by Mukti Ali, the Religious Affairs Minister (1971-1977), for the compulsory inclusion of religious subjects in public schools, and these were assigned to teachers who belonged to the religion they taught (Boland, 1971). After 1985, however, the New Order passed several bills re-addressing the religious interests of Muslim. For example, bills were introduced for the integrated supervision of the Ministry of Education for the administration of religious schools (1989) for the Islamic Family Inheritance Law and the Compilation of Islamic Law (1990). Further, in 1993 the Department of National Education lifted the ban of Muslim dress for women that was required for schools and public office and in 1994 legislation passed banning lotteries and other forms of gambling activities (Effendy, 1995:271-283;

Porter, 2002).[39] This unprecedented move of state institutional accommodation indicated that despite the *status quo* of Pancasila and the 1945 constitution, both the state and Islamist actors could still play at the mezzo level of state organization in order to pursue their goals and interests.

The third factor comprised a series of political events that revolved around an internal power struggle within the regime's structure. One was about the regime's initiative to relax its control on public discourse as a consequence of 'limited political openings' (*keterbukaan*) and economic liberalization launched in 1986 (Aspinal, 2005:137); the other was about the deepening crisis over succession of national leadership. In the late 1980s, General Benny Murdani,[40] the Armed Forces Commander whom Suharto trusted, began to raise two sensitive issues in the President's circles: the need "to plan for presidential succession" (Liddle, 1996:629) and the growing public complaints about Suharto's family business activities.

In response Suharto promoted civilian alternatives to military officers, especially in Golkar, to the regime's institutions (Ramage, 1995; Liddle, 1996).[41] The Catholic Murdani was seen by many Muslim leaders as the evil genius behind the "Tanjungpriok

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[39] Particularly in relation to the compilation of Islamic law, which is expected to serve as guidance for judges in Islamic courts, such legislation will bring the *shari'a* as part of legal system in Indonesia equivalent with civil and military courts. However, because of the political environment behind this move, many suspected its perfect implementation, especially related to the fact that Indonesian Muslims usually resolves their legal disputes in civil courts. In this sense, what is important to note is that even if it was only a symbolic gesture to appease disaffected Muslim circles (and it was precisely Masyumi circles), it showed that, despite the New Order's success to transform Islamism, Islam continued rising to an ever more prominent place in state institutions.

[40] Murdani was a strong man in the military, who during 1983-1988 was the commander-in-chief as well as the chief of the major intelligence services. Benny had maintained close contact with the CSIS, a think-tank long associated with anti-Islamic measures during Ali Murtopo's leadership. Criticism of Muslim leaders against Benny Murdani coincided Suharto's need to purge the military of Benny's security network and loyalists.

[41] For example, Suharto and the officers associated with Murdani's network competed over the choice of candidate for the vice-presidency in 1988 (Sudharmono-civilian), in 1993 (Try Sutrisno-military), and in 1998 (Habibie-ICMI). See, Porter, *Managing Islam,* 2002, pp. 92-94.

Tragedy" and many other undercover operations against Islam (Hefner, 1994; van Bruinessen, 1996). Under Murdani, the military established a considerable degree of institutional autonomy from Suharto and now this autonomy was being compromised by the reconfiguration of civilian-Muslim interests. In other words, concerned with the losing control over the army, Suharto in 1990 formed the ICMI and turned to the Muslim middle class and other activists in order to strengthen his regime in retaliation against Murdani's network. (Porter, 2002:132). The post-1992 Indonesian elections witnessed ICMI members rapidly rising to occupy strategic positions in cabinet ministerial posts, state bureaucracy and as Golkar functionaries (Effendy, 1995:291-3). The 1993-1998 Consultative Assembly (MPR) also witnessed the dramatic influx of Islamist figures into this highly important body for the presidential election.[42]

The important implication of the state-Islamist coalition through ICMI was a profound change of the conduct of politics among Islamist political elites. At the most general level, the struggle for the Jakarta Charter was dropped. Although ICMI members can be regarded as representing a variety of Islamist camps, the majority of them shared at least one common goal - they perceived ICMI as having provided them with a useful vehicle for gaining access to those in power. This shared agenda enabled Islamist political elites, in theory at least, to pursue their own agendas and exert influence upon state agencies, officials, and policy-making (Liddle, 1996; Hefner, 1994). Most of them were prepared publicly to support Suharto and to operate within the Pancasila framework in return for Suharto's protection. As one of the leading intellectuals of ICMI who led Muhammadiyah in the 1990s, Amin Rais, wrote "… a

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[42] In the 1993-1998 Consultative assembly, 300 of its 1000 members were indicated to have organizational and political link with ICMI. See, Hefner, *Civil Islam,* 2000, p. 142; Aspinal, 2005.

return to Jakarta Charter was a losing strategy. That is, rather than oppose Pancasila, the only alternative was to enter the government and to influence the state policies in line with the spirit of [Islamic] Jakarta Charter" (c.f. Ramage, 1995:182). They argued that under Suharto's and Habibie's paternalistic protection, ICMI would enjoy the necessary conditions to establish itself as part of the New Order's institutional structure.

Such a commitment to the 'Pancasila state' was also reflected by those Islamist leaders who opposed the Suharto-ICMI coalition. In the 1990s, it was NU under Abdurrahman Wahid that expressed its strong criticism against ICMI. Abdurrahman's opposition was not only framed within Suharto's cooptation toward Islam, but also his concern that such incorporation was sectarian as "… a step backwards toward political segmentation based on agenda for further Islamization of the state" (Porter, 2002:110). To Abdurrahman by inviting ICMI's actors into the state "Suharto provides a political channel for intolerant, and ultimately anti-Pancasilaist, Islamic political views" (Ramage, 1995:162).

Muslim leaders in ICMI generally argued that being part of the New Order would provide Muslim groups with an opportunity to "gradually build an Islamic society" (Ramage, 1995:117). However for Abdurrahman, ICMI's real unspoken agenda was its long term goal to establish an Islamic state. At the very least, he contended, "Islamic society" is a code serving as an alternative system to the current one underwritten by secular-national commitments (Ramage, 1995:118-19). Along with other figures of non-Muslim and nationalist-secular activists, Abdurrahman's opposition to the state-ICMI alliance has placed him as a Muslim leader whose commitment to Pancasila and 'de-confessionalized' political Islam remains

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undiminished (Hefner, 2000:142).[43]

Abdurrahman's criticism of the ICMI was shaped by his perceptions of NU's position within the emerging power-struggles. NU's acceptance of Pancasila combined with Wahid's decision to withdraw his organization from the PPP in 1984, was a momentous move. It effectively brought NU to a new political space and gave this organization enhanced 'freedom of political maneuvering' since it was no longer subject to direct state control and intervention (Kadir, 1997; van Bruinessen, 1996; Hefner, 2000). Since the mid 1980s, NU has been instrumental in the strengthening opposition against the New Order regime. However, with the emergence of ICMI, NU faced competition with modernist Muslims who were formerly marginalized. These two camps of political Islam competed for political predominance. The consequence of *de-confessionalization* efforts by the state as well as Muslim groups forced all Islamist organizations to frame their interests in line with Pancasila. Put differently, by the end of the 1990s the status of Pancasila as a common platform for political conducts by organized Islamism meant that the conflict between Islam and the secular state was resolved. This temporal congruence between Suharto's consolidating interests and the ideological transformation of major Islamist organizations continued unabated even after Suharto's New Order collapsed in 1998.

In August 1997, a monetary crisis engulfed Southeast Asian countries causing a number of national economies in the region to fluctuate. Nowhere did the crisis have a more severe political and economic impact than in Indonesia. The collapse of the rupiah

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[43] In response to the formation of ICMI, in March 1991 Abdurrahman Wahid convened around 50 secular-nationalist and non-Muslim intellectuals, politicians, journalists, NGO activists, and social workers to set up an informal organization called Democracy Forum (*Forum Democracy*). This Forum symbolically played a decisive role of political opposition against state-ICMI coalition.

left most of Indonesia's private companies technically bankrupt. It also drove millions of people into poverty as inflation increased and unemployment spread. By early 1998, the legitimacy of the New Order began to crumble in the wake of massive riots and student demonstrations. After more than 30 years in power, Suharto was forced to resign in May 1998. After the transfer of power to the Vice President, Habibie, there was public pressure to reform the political system In late 1998, legislation on political parties, elections and the composition of legislative bodies were introduced that marked the beginning of new era of democratization.

5. Democratization and the Decline of the Islamic State

As Indonesia adopted a democratic system, Islamic symbols and ideology were once again revived and became instrumental for political mobilization. Many political parties and social organizations were formed and adopted Islam as their ideology. However, in spite of the resurrection of the Islamic state alternative, legacies of conciliation between Islam and the state during the New Order period remained important in shaping the behaviour of Islamist politics. To map out patterns of Islamist mobilization in the post-New Order, I suggest that there are two major currents of Islamist development The first are Islamist organizations who tend to perceive that the conflict between Islamic and the 'secular state' has been resolved. These movements are inclined to work within the democratic system, be more moderate and have entirely abandoned their program for the Islamic state. I label this type of organization as 'secularized Islamism'. The second are those who hold that the reinstatement of the Jakarta Charter and the application of Islamic *shari'a* is part of their organization's

platform. These organizations adopted a relatively radical and, to some extent, militant outlook towadrd pursuing their goals. Some envisioned the re-establishment of the "caliphate system". In general, however, the legacies of conflict, co-optation, and accommodation during the last decades of Suharto's New Order were detrimental to these types of Islamism.

5.1. The Reactivation of Islamist Parties

Soon after assuming the presidency, the Habibie government lifted many of the legal restrictions for political participation and established new laws to regulate the conduct of political parties and democratic elections. On June 1, 1998, Habibie delivered a long presidential address in which he promised to hold fair, honest and democratic elections in 1999. This change helped to activate Indonesian political groups to become political parties in preparation for the elections.

In early 1999, a total of 141 parties were officially registered, but only 48 eventually took part in the June 1999 elections (Suryadinata, 1999; Salim, 1999). Around a dozen of these emerging parties identified themselves as Islamic. Among these they adopted either Islam as their ideological bases or sought to draw their support base from the Muslim masses and organizations (Johnson Tan, 2004:92; Baswedan, 2004:670).[44] After almost a decade of this democratic transition, only five major Islamist parties survived and continue as electoral representatives for Muslim political interests. All of the Islamist parties combined performed poorly and were eclipsed by

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[44] It must be noted, that the revival of Islamic ideology in political parties in the 199 elections were facilitate by change in political bill related to the 1985 Bill on Pancasila as the sole foundation for social and political organizations (*azas tunggal*). The lift of this bill was made during th November 10-13 meeting of the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR).

secular-nationalist parties in the subsequent elections in 1999 and 2004 and

significantly dropped in 2009.[45] Despite such poor results, it is still important to provide

a map of Islamist characteristics in order to delineate our proposition about the ultimate

outcome of Islamist mobilization in the post-stabilization period of state building.

At a general level, the pattern of Islamist party formation was structured around

the existing networks of long-established Muslim organizations, especially NU and

Muhammadiyah they were built up during the New Order period such as DDII or they

relied on grass-roots activists developed earlier on the university campuses. Two

Islamist parties that fit into the first category, that is, 'secularized Islamist parties', are

the Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB, National Awakening Party) and the Partai

Amanat Nasional (PAN, National Mandate Party). The PKB was founded in July 1998

and was strongly identified as an Islamic party because of its infrastructural connection

with NU leadership.[46] Since its creation, Abdurraman Wahid and other party founders

made serious efforts to make the PKB as "a party that is non-sectarian and open to

membership and leadership by non-Islamic elements" (Salim, 1999:16). For this

particular reason, the PKB decidedly embraced Pancasila as its ideological basis, not

Islam. In a few areas in eastern Indonesia, the PKB has Christian leadership. Wahid was

a strong symbol in the party, until his death in January 2010, and helped the PKB to

appear as one of the few Islamist parties that was able to build cooperation across

ideological differences, especially with secular nationalists.

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[45] In 2004 and 2009 elections, there were dramatic changes in electoral rule. First is related to the fact that the president and the vice president are elected directly; Second, the rule also set to elect representatives for the national level DPR and DPD, the provincial Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah (DPRD I) and the district DPRD Daerah II (DPRD II). Observers suggested the year 2004 came to be widely referred to as the "Year of Voting Frequently".

[46] In 1999, there were four other parties affiliated to NU. But the symbol of Abdurrahman Wahid (NU's 1984-1999 chairman) in PKB became sufficient to make this party as 'an official' political organization for NU constituents.

In the same vein, PAN was also an Islamic party whose commitment to Pancasila remained in spite of the New Order's collapse. PAN was founded in August 1998 by cross-ideological activists opposing the Suharto regime, but with a leading important figure with Islamist credentials, Amin Rais. Rais was chairman of Muhammadiyah 1995-1998 which was known for its the vanguard protest during the 1998 *Reformasi* movement that led to the fall of Suharto's New Order. The involvement of liberal-leaning activists who founded the party led to the PAN initially espousing a pluralistic ideology. However, Amin's strong presence in this party has brought the consequence that for Indonesian voters PAN was associated as the political arm of the modernist Muhammadiyah. After the 1999 elections, along with Amin's gradual return to his core constituency, PAN was perceived as a party representing modernist-urban Muslim constituents. In the 1999 presidential race in the Consultative Assembly, under Amin's leadership, PAN and PKB succeeded to construct a coalition with other parties assisting Abdurrahman Wahid's bid to become the President of Indonesia by defeating Habibie (Golkar) and Megawati Sukarno Putri (PDI-P).[47] However, the two parties never obtained electoral success. The PKB won only 13 percent of the vote in 1999 and 11 percent in 2004. Similarly, PAN gained 7 percent of the vote in 1999 and 6 percent in 2004 (Mujani and Liddle, 2009; Johnson Tan, 2005; Ulfen, 2007).

PKB's and PAN's commitment to the secular state of Indonesia was clearly evidenced by their position during the debate on the Jakarta Charter in the 1999 MPR

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[47] In the 1999 elections, PDI-P had won a plurality of 33.76 percent in the election, but Megawati, the party leader, failed to reach out to the Muslim parties to build a coalition to ensure her election through MPR. Megawati seemed to take the position that she could rule without support from other parties. Some elements of Poros-Tengah (center Axis) led by Amin Rais argued against Megawati on the grounds that Islam does not allow a woman to be a leader if there are qualified men. Poros Tengah succeeded in electing Abdurrahman Wahid to the presidency. However, in 2000, Wahid was impeached due to corruption scandals that evolved Wahid's role. As the Vice President, Megawati then took office.

session and the constitution amendment debate in 2002 (Ulfen, 2007). In contrast to other Islamist parties such as PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan), PBB (Partai Bulan Bintang) and PKS (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera), PKB and PAN aligned themselves with secular nationalist parties (Golkar, PDIP, and PD) who opposed reinstatement of the Jakarta Charter in the constitution. The Islamic state-oriented PKS, a new party that we shall examine shortly, took a unique position. It was willing to forego the Jakarta Charter, but proposed to change the Jakarta Charter with what they called the "Madina Charter", a concept taken from a model of governance established by Muhammad in Medina in which Jewish, Christian, and other religions were treated equally. The PKS' proposal also said that the state would impose an obligation on all religious groups, not only Muslims, to practice their own religious obligations. However to most non-Islamist parties, this is *shari'a* by another name.

PPP, PBB and PKS constituted Islamist parties that were formed in the post-New Order and represent our second category. These parties are inclined to perceive that the struggle for Islamic state continues and share an ideological outlook but differ in terms of their respective infrastructural support. PPP was the 1973 forced amalgam Islamist party that accepted Pancasila as its ideology in 1987. After democratization, PPP sought to refashion itself to appear as the Islamic party best able to represent the interests of all Muslims (Suryadinata, 2002:58). It sought to shed its image as the institutionalized Islamic party of the Suharto regime and, therefore, revived Islam as its ideology and re-adopted the Ka'ba as party symbol (Suryadinata 2002:60). Of all the parties whose platform for an Islamic state remained, PPP has the most diffuse support across Muslim groups, with strongholds in the outer islands and among rural and elderly

voters (Anata, Arifin and Suryadinata 2005:12). PBB, by contrast, sought to position itself as the successor to Masyumi and court its community through DDII networks (Salim, 1999). Founded in July 1998, PBB denied that it sought to turn Indonesia into a formal Islamic state but supported the implementation of regulations to reflect Islamic values, including incorporating the Jakarta Charter into the constitution (Suryadinata, 2002:45).

From our discussion on the objectives of the post-New Order's Islamist parties, PPP, PBB and PKS advocated a firm stance on Islamic issues with a tendency to support a conservative Islamization of the country. Yet, parties who still pushed for the reinstatement of the Jakarta Charter and the application of *shari'a* represented a very small minority in the Parliament. The combined electoral gains of PPP, PBB and PKS in 1999 and 2004, for example, accounted for only 12 percent (71 seats of 670 seats) and 8.2 percent respectively. This lack of electoral strength indicated that the Islamic state alternative had clearly diminished with the political process of democratic consolidation. In 1955, the parties who supported the Jakarta Charter—Masyumi and NU—obtained 40 percent of the parliament seats, while in 1999 they declined to just 12 percent. In the 2004 General Elections, PPP and PBB, the two parties left to support the Jakarta Charter, received only 10.8 percent of the vote.

5.2. New Radicals and the PKS Phenomenon

It must be noted, however, the debate and discussion on the return to an Islamic state also took place outside the Parliament. During the constitutional reform period from 1999 to 2002, several Islamist groups organized in civil society mobilized

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thousands of supporters outside the Parliament building in support of the reinstatement of the Jakarta Charter. Different from their 'brothers' who organized political parties, these organizations adopted a radical outlook. Some of them even aspired to the creation of the "Caliphate system" and employed *jihadist* political programs (Jamhari and Jahroni, 2004).

Prominent among these organizations are the Front Pembela Islam (Islamic Defender Front, FPI), Lasykar Jihad (Jihadist Squad), Majelis Mujahidin (Holy Knight Council), Hizbut Tahrir (Party of Freedom, HT), Forum Komunikasi Ahlu Sunah wal Jama'ah (FKAJ), and a jihadist group suspected to have organizational links with al-Qaida Jama'at Islamiya (JI). Nurhaidi (2004) and Mujani (2005) noted that the mobilization capacity of these new radical Islamists, while perhaps still falling far short compared to their peak in Masyumi period in the 1950's, continued to grow and produced one of the most formidable forces in contemporary Indonesian Islam. One may pose a question: Where do these radicals come from?

To answer this question, one must take in account the long term implications of the New Order's religious-political policies as well as the rise of Islamic-based aspirations that developed shortly before the fall of Suharto. It is apparent that the two-pronged strategy in transforming political Islam, the promotion of personal piety and the suppression of its political expression, generated unintended consequences. This policy helped political Islam to become more integrated with the political system, but also facilitated the expansion of religious groups. The increased prominence of DDII and the rise of ICMI in the 1990s enabled these groups to appeal and attract members, especially students from university campuses (Mujani, 2005; van Bruinessen, 2006).

In the 1980s, Indonesia witnessed a broad-based religious activism centered on university campuses. Organizations or small groups for religious studies appeared and *da'wa* activism developed from one university campus to another. Two factors were crucial in shaping this development. First was the severe restriction of student political activity through the New Order's Campus Normalization Act (Normalisasi Kehidupan Kampus, NKK). The act was passed by the office of the Department of Education following massive student demonstrations in 1978 to protest against the reelection of Suharto for a third term. Traditionally, political activities among Indonesian students were common and revolved around the student centre. With the government regulation of student activities, centers for the student activism were subverted into ceremonial and entertaining activities. Many Muslim students in this period began to funnel their activism through campus mosques (Krance, 2001; Damanik, 2000). The second factor was the Iranian Revolution of 1979. This international event led Muslim students to turn to the *da'wa* movement organized around the themes of building dedicated activists with a strong religious identity. By maintaining a decidedly Islamic tone, the *da'wa* organizations hoped to appeal to all segments of the Indonesian society in order to act as their mouthpiece against what they perceived as un-Islamic conduct.

Muslim students studying in the Middle East, particularly al-Azhar (Egypt), Medina University and Umm al-Qura of Mecca (Arab Saudi), began returning home by the late 1980s. Through DDII's initiatives, they provided new leadership to the campus *da'wa* movement. This new ulama served as spiritual guides and produced Indonesian translations of works by leaders of the international Islamist organizations including the

Muslim Brotherhood and other thinkers.[48] As the *da'wa* groups grew stronger, in the early 1990s, they began formally to organize their activities in the University Institute for Islamic Propagation (Lembaga Dakwah Kampus, LDK). This organization expanded and started to enter student politics. Precisely similar to the JI-Brotherhood in Egypt, they used their institutional base to win control of university student senates (Badan Eksekutif Mahasiswa or BEM). In less than a decade, almost all the student governments at major universities were controlled by the Islamist activists.[49]

Among the earliest appearance of *da'wa* activists as a real political force was in their public campaign against what they saw as secular or un-Islamic policies of the New Order government in the 1990s. Partly triggered by the pro-Islamic turn of Suharto's politics, *da'wa* students launched demonstrations protesting policies regarded as un-Islamic. The first and foremost was a campaign against a state-sponsored gambling and lottery on the grounds that "Islam forbids gambling". In late 1993, supported by MUI and other Muslim organizations, the government passed legislation to ban any form of gambling and lottery. In 1994, the *da'wa* student organizations succeeded in seeing the government lift legal restrictions Muslim women dress, such as the Islamic head-covering (*jilbab*) in public schools, universities and other public offices (Effendy, 1995:339-341).

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[48] Islamic publishing house especially linked to the DDII-Media Dakwah, flooded bookstores with books on Islam. Among the published works were books or booklets by Hassan Al-Banna, Abul A'la Maududi, Sayyid Qutb, and other thinkers associated with the revival of Islam including Ali Syariati, Imam Khomeini.

[49] The current leaders of PKS, in addition to the graduates form the Middle East Universities, came from the LDK activists in this period. Zulkieflimansyah (now a PKS spokesman) was elected as the head of the Student Senate at the University of Indonesia in 1994. Kamaruddin (Secretary) won the election in 1995. Selamat Nurdin, another *da'wa* activist from FISIP UI, was elected in 1997. Andi Rahmat (a Member of Parliament) was Head of Student Senate in Economic Department of the University of Gadjahmada in 1999; Rama Pratama (a Member of Parliament) was head of UI student senate in 1998.

However, the Indonesian economic crisis in mid 1997 leading to the emergence of nation-wide student demonstrations against Suharto marked a decisive point for LDK organizations. Such events served as a political instrument for these formerly quietist Muslim activists to become a new Islamist political force. In March 1998, the LDK organizations formed a distinguished student-action organization during the *Reformasi* era called Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia (the United Muslim Student Action, KAMMI). This important phase of organization building brought *da'wa* groups together in a nation-wide Islamist student movement distinguished from the established Muslim student organizations affiliated with HMI, Muhammadiyah or the NU.

The idea for forming a political party was initiated by KAMMI leaders shortly after the resignation of Suharto in mid 1998. During the rush to form political parties,[50] in July 1998, 52 *da'wa* leaders initiated Partai Keadilan (Justice Party, PK). This declaration marked a formal split between the LDK-Tarbiyah movement with its older generation of leadership in DDII (Masyumi) who had established PBB. One of the most important characteristics of the PK was that it was comprised of young members and was led by young leaders (between 30 and 40 years old) who have a high level of education (Damanik, 2002:231). PK was also distinguished from other emerging Islamist parties that participated in the first democratic elections in June 1999 in that it

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[50] The initiative to form a party began in a huge demonstration in al-Azhar mosque in Jakarta calling for ending violence after the resignation of Suharto. There emerge serious question whether the KAMMI activists continue to struggle for political changes in wider scope of political institutions including the parliament or return to student da'wa activism while joint the already declared political parties associated with Islamist aspiration, especially PBB or PAN. KAMMI activists, Almuzammil Yusuf and Mahfudz Siddik, then organized a poll of over 8,000 students and alumni of the LDK/KAMMI network. With support from 70 percent of KAMMI members nationally, they proceeded to invite a range of Muslim intellectuals and public figures to discuss the establishment of a political party. In July 1998, the decision to form Partai Keadilan (PK) was announced by 52 *da'wa* leaders marking the PK and, then, in 2004 PKS to represent interests of the new generation of Islamist activists after the question of Islamism and Pancasila was resolved. Interview with Hidayat Nurwahid, 9 March, 2007.

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was not associated with any established Islamist leadership that developed either during the Indonesian revolution, Guided Democracy or Suharto's New Order.

The establishment of PK in 1998 was a major turning point in the development of the Tarbiyah organizations, but also created divisions among them. While some activists joined KAMMI in forming the new party, others took a more radical position, rejecting democracy as un-Islamic and interpreting *jihad* as requiring Muslims to struggle for the implementation of *Shari'a*. Hizbut Tahrir and other leadership emerged as the radical alternative and appeared public after the fall of Suharto. This organization competed with KAMMI to recruit followers on university campuses.[51]

In the 1999 elections, using the slogan "Islam is Solution", the PK came away with disappointing results. It only collected 1.7 percent of the total vote. This means that the PK failed to pass the minimum electoral threshold of a 2 percent share of the vote. In April 2002, two years before the 2004 elections, the PK leadership then founded a new party named Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, PKS). Learning from the failure in the 1999 elections, PKS revised its platform away from "purely religious appeals" and moved forward to adopt a more general platform painting an image of itself as a party that fights against corruption. The program bore fruit in the 2004 election. The electoral results in this particular election demonstrated the Indonesian public supported the PKS when it won 7.35 percent of national vote; with 45 seats placing the PKS as the sixth largest party in the parliament.

A close look at the PKS' leadership organizational structure, reflects a religious political party that seeks to combine ulama and political authority. Following Masyumi

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[51] My impression during interview with PKS leaders in 2008, most of them expressed a cynical attitude toward their Hizbut Tahrir's brothers.

prior to 1952—and to some extent the Brotherhood—the party executive leadership was

guided by the authority of the Religious Council (Dewan Syari'ah). This council was

comprised of ulama, religious scholars, or selected preachers.[52] The highest authority

for decision making was the Deliberation Council consisting of ulama, the executive

council, and regional representatives. Executive authority rested with the leaders or

activists who were sometime also trained as religious scholars and who passed through

the necessary process of leadership training in the Tarbiyah institutions.

In this sense, central to the mobilization of the PKS was its strong claim to

represent an Islamic political force "concerned with a moral reform".[53] Since its

inception in 1998, the PKS has positioned itself as the party which consistently

campaigned for the urgent need for greater morality. The party reiterates time and again

that the present chaos in Indonesia is caused primarily by a lack of morality among the

nation's leaders:

> "…During the important stages of *Reformasi* movement, every one talked about
> political reform, economic reform, societal reform and so forth. We have so
> many ambitious plans and programs in those talks. But one is missing: why does
> no one talk about moral reform? So, we tried consistently to bear in mind that,
> the top priority of party program that the public needs to know is, that we are
> concerned with the reform of public, especially elite, morality".[54]

In the PKS' view, a large scale of political reform also necessitates the importance of

moral and spiritual transformation of individuals. Echoing the Brotherhood's idea of the

role of the state in public morality, Nurwahid assessed that, in order to transform the

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[52] Members of Shari'a Council are selected from dedicated ulama, religious scholars who
graduated from Islamic studies department from LIPIA (Arab Saudi-sponsored college for Islamic
studies), universities in the Middle East, or at the least, from State Institute of Islamic Studies (IAIN).
Interview with Tifatul Sembiring, April 7, 2007.
[53] Interview with Hidayat Nurwahid, February 18, 2007.
[54] Interview with Tifatul Sembiring, April 7, 2007.

country "PKS first must take the lead to transform every dimension of society—politics, social, economy, judiciary—through the purposeful construction from the smallest unit of society: the Muslim individual, home and family, government, and, then, the whole nation. This is what the Prophet has modeled".[55]

Nonetheless, while the moral appeal was central in its platform, PKS behavior reflects that the party represents the most moderate-pragmatic spectrum of *da'wa* and Tarbiyah movements. In contrast to Hizbut Tahrir and Lasykar Jihad who rejected democracy, PKS positioned itself as a "centrist Islamic party" that occupies the middle point between radical groups that reject democracy and Muslim parties that are totally committed to liberal democracy.[56] The pragmatic image as a moderate Islamist party can be found in the way it was deeply engaged in the nation's political affairs. In the maneuvering that led up to the selection of a new president by the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) in 1999, for instance, PKS joined Amin Rais' Poros Tengah (Middle Axis), an alliance of Islamic parties and Partai Amanat Nasional (PAN), to challenge the election of Megawati Sukarnoputri, the leader of the Democratic Party of Struggle (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan or PDI-P).[57]

In 2000, PKS joined PKB and PAN and opposed a return to the Jakarta Charter. PKS explained this decision in various ways. One said that the party took the position that although government according to *shari'a* is necessary, first people must support the imposition of Islamic law. *Shari'a* imposed by government would be undemocratic.

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[55] Interview with Hidayat Nurwahid, March 11, 2007.
[56] Interview with Hidayat Nurwahid, March 11, 2007.
[57] What is important to note is that PKS rejected Megawati as a president on the ground that Islam does not allow a woman to be a leader in a country if there are qualified men. However, in 2000, when President Wahid was impeached, PKS leaders decided not to oppose the elevation of Megawati to the presidency on the grounds that constitutionally she was the only legitimate President.

PKS chairman Hidayat Nur Wahid said that PKS was committed to Piagam Madinah (the Medina Charter), which in his view refers to concepts found in the Qur'an such as deliberation, equality, rule of law, justice, and Islamic social services. However, when the issue of the Jakarta Charter was raised again in the legislature in 2002, PKS abstained from voting (Nurwahid and Zulkiflimansyah, 2005).

There continues to be tension inside PKS between its commitment to establishing an Islamic government and its commitment to democracy. While the present leadership of the party seems to be firmly committed to democratic reform, there are influential figures in the party who see the democratic process as merely a constitutional path to establishing an Islamic government. To recall our assessment of the structure of the party decision making process, it is unclear to what extent the PKS was able to democratize internally considering the influential position of Guidance Council (Majelis Syura) in directing party decisions. In contrast to PKB and PAN, views on the yet-unresolved conflict between Islamic and 'the secular state' remained strong in PKS leadership.

6. Conclusion

The narrative presented above highlights a framework for the role of institutions, largely developed by the New Order regime, in structuring the historical process of Islamist transformation. In contrast to the development of political Islam in Egypt, what is striking from the Indonesian case is the periodic convergence between of the state institutional development and elements of Muslim political interests.

In this chapter I examined new agendas and definitions articulated by Muslim activists in the early 1970s that led to changing patterns of state-Islamist relations in the following decades. The proposition underlined in our argument is that historical legacies of state formation shaped the subsequent patterns of state-society relations and, in turn, shaped the state's strategy in transforming its constituents. The strength of Islamist forces, both in the modernist-Masyumi and the traditionalist-NU has been part of the New Order's major concern since its early years. However, different from Egypt, political Islam has been present on the level of party organization. The mode of interaction between the New Order and political Islam was therefore marked, first of all, by the state's constant attempt to control party politics and, second, by the move forward to transform Muslim politics into associational life.

Crucial for the New Order's religio-political policies was the redefinition of Muslim interests expressed by young Muslim intellectuals and activists in the early 1970s. This ideational response to consolidating state helped to break the traditional conception of an Islamic state that had been the ideological base for Islamist parties. Such responses paved the way for the rise of a broader goal with a clear solution for the convergence between Islam and the secular authority. In its essence, such responses reflect breaking old forms of political strategy and programs for the "Islamic state", redefining new ones, and, as a result, changing relations between Muslims and other political groups including the state.

Three of the institutional developments were detrimental to the declining trends of the Islamic state. The first was the regime's efforts for *de-confessionalization* of Islamist parties and social organizations. Since its emergence, the New Order state

builders took seriously ideology politics. The government next took steps to restructure mass politics, with the prominent target of establishing control over political parties. After the PKI was disbanded, only Islamist party organizations were left with such a strong commitment to a partisan ideology. It is in the process of restructuring mass politics that the New Order courted Islamist politicians by enacting legal restrictions and to an important degree a violent repression of the organizational existence of Islam. Since 1973, political Islam, in particular PPP, subjected its membership to ideological reorientation in order to conform to the state ideology of Pancasila. Successful in party *de-confesionalization,* the state enacted further policies to dismantle the potential for an Islamic state by bringing all Muslim civil society organizations into another phase of ideological submission.

Second, the establishment of MUI served as an important development through which aspects of religious interests in an Islamic alternative were secured in the institutional structure of the state. The New Order's accommodation of ulama through MUI illustrates an historical-institutional view of the patterns of institutional change such that, institutions, once created, take "a life of their own" (Pierson, 2001:213). Although MUI was created in order to mobilize the ulama in service of the state's political development policies, its political origins provided the ulama in MUI with a platform from which to articulate the need for a greater role of Islam (ulama) in the Indonesian state. The formation of ICMI marked the third institutional change of the New Order and brought the Muslim middle class into state politics. With the collapse of the New Order regime in 1998, the struggle for an Islamic state with an Islamic constitution by Muslim organizations had significantly diminished.

CONCLUSION

1. Introduction

Different origins bring different paths of political development. One of the underlying themes of this dissertation has been to explain the various outcomes of mobilization in Islamist movements. By explicating the divergent historical development of political Islam in Egypt and Indonesia this dissertation has challenged two conventional wisdoms about political Islam: first, arguments which state that political movements' desire to establish an Islamic state arose as a 'natural', primordial expression of Islam's cultural tenets, and second, those which claim that Islamism arose from structural factors, including social and economic dislocation as a result of the process of modernization in Muslim society.

Cultural theorists invariably place emphasis on Islamic cultural tenets to explain problems of conflict between Islamist movements and the secular state. They almost always speak in pejorative terms of the tendency of Islamic doctrines to have a uniformed vision of the fusion between religious and political authorities. The concept of "Islamic state" in the cultural model of explanation allows for little variation; the Islamic state ideas remain recalcitrant and unchanging. An analysis that involves "fundamentalist Islamic" and "religious revivalism" as constants is unable to explain variations in Islamist mobilization patterns and their relations with the state.

The structural explanation flips the cultural perceptions of Islam on its head by granting legitimacy to the modernizing state's policies in the face of gradual failure of the 'secular' state. But the predictive power of the model is limited. It is

assumed that Islamist political movements developed as fragmented reactions to the failure of the modern state in politics and economy that sought to replicate Western modernizing policies in the Muslim societies. The structural argument grounds its analytical premise on the long lasting conflict between the state and Muslim society in the ideological sphere that facilitated the Islamists' efforts to enter national politics. Over time, the political processes in Muslim countries are often symptomatic of ideological cleavages between secular-nationalist elites and the increasingly alienated-Muslim masses. As the secular states have failed to deliver their promises of nations' prosperity, political organizations based on Islam developed as an alternative that appealed to the very core of the Muslim masses.

I have argued that although the structural analytical framework is persuasive in explaining the recent phenomenon on the escalating state-Islamist conflict in many countries in the Muslim world, patterns of the relationship between the state and political Islam as well as the way Islamism was transformed into particular types of organized politics remains unclear and only partially captured by the above framework.

2. History and Institutions as Explanatory Variables

The theme of this dissertation is that it is necessary to interpret the concepts of "political Islam" or "Islamism" and "state" in such a way that they are considered as variables assuming different values and characteristics. As I explicate at the onset of this study, I situate the idea of an Islamic state as a site of contest between the political class of state elites and leaders of Islamist movements. Hence, attention

needs to be focused on the changing nature of both the state and organized politics based on Islam, and the relations between the two, in order to explain different political outcomes through time.

To accentuate the variation of the concepts, it is first necessary to look at the historical formation of modern-organized Islamist movements in their pursuit of an "Islamic state", to examine how a group conceived and represented itself in ideology and in certain organizational constructs. It is then necessary to identify how this group mobilized its resources and power in order to compete and openly struggle with various other groups for alternatives of statehood. Outcomes of this competition produced certain constructions of an institutional settlement. Indeed, due to the emergency nature of resolution in this period, some issues were resolved but some others were left unsettled. It is the long lasting efforts from both the state and actors in Islamist organizations to find a resolution that legitimacy of the state accord the aspired "Islamic system". The combination and interplay of these two variables—history and the long lasting construction of modern state institutions—allow for various outcomes to emerge. It is the core analytical frame that this study has sought to present: to delineate how mechanisms of relations between Islamism and the 'secular' state actually work in historical causation.

Turning to history means that it is important to identify distinctive patterns of how Islamism entered the political arena. As I explored Islamist politics in Egypt and Indonesia, modern political organizations based on Islamic imperatives that emerged in both countries shared similar "Islamic cultural percepts" and ideologies on the Islamic state. But different institutional environments in the two polities transformed

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the largely similar ideology into different patterns of organizational constructs and programs for mobilization. In this sense, formative moment of Islamist politics is of paramount importance because it has long-term political consequences.

For those who are familiar with the topics of political Islam or Southeast Asian politics, the very nature of my proposition might seem too obvious and, therefore, an odd justification for comparison. On what grounds do I compare the radical and somehow violent behavior of Egypt's Islamist movements under repressive regime institutions with the moderate and 'democratic'—even syncretic— version of Indonesia's Islamism under less intense repression deployed by the regime? It is precisely those varying patterns of political outcomes that need to be explained, however. In investigating whether a comparison of Islamist politics in both countries is legitimate, we need to explore the nature of historical origins of Islamism and how these political antecedents developed through time, and to analyze instances of Egypt's radical and violent behavior and Indonesia's Islamist democracy and moderation. If we can find overlaps between the content of Islamic state ideologies and mobilization strategies, on the one hand, and between Indonesian and Egyptian regimes' repertoires in dealing with their Islamist contenders on the other, then my comparison is justified. Therefore, central to my proposition is the assertion that both political regimes and the behavior of Islamist political movements are historical outcomes of conflict and resolution between the various political groups embedded in the process of state formation.

In each of the two broad case studies, I set out to find this overlap. In the first part of my study, I explored how Islamist organization in Egypt first emerged as

religious reform and then developed as a political organization that I characterized as "purist Islamism." Founded by Hassan al-Banna in 1928, the Society of Muslim Brothers (MB) was established as a religious association meant for social and cultural reform of society. Its formation marked a historic awakening of Egyptian Muslims in reaction to secular-liberal attack on the Islamic faith. The weak monarchy, corrupt party system, and continued British influence and control after Egypt's independence increased the MB's popularity in the political arena. The organization then began to introduce ideas about the demand for a society of justice based on good deeds and morals, but institutionalized by the state. Its leadership expressed its strong disapproval against the staid quietism of the ulama of al-Azhar and religious notables due to their failure in revitalizing the Islamic faith. Yet, above all, central to the MB's mobilization strategy was its programmatic-belief on the transformation toward an Islamic state through the purification of society.

Between the late 1930s and the 1940s, the Brotherhood's political influence soared dramatically, when subsequent liberal governments failed to establish genuine political order. Anti-party rhetoric then developed within the Brotherhood in this period, but it tried to get into Parliament. Important to this development was al-Banna's initiatives to send armed groups to fight in Palestine during the 1948 war leading to the creation of a powerful, but radical, armed wing organization within the Brotherhood, Secret Apparatus (SA). The notion of *jihad* infused by al-Banna into the organization increased the purist profile of this Islamist movement. In response to the crisis of governance in the late 1940s, the Brotherhood deepened its mass agitation and violent mobilization which catapulted this organization as the most powerful

opposition to the British and also made it the only viable alternative to rescue Egypt from its political crisis. This early success of the MB coupled with its failure to transform itself into party organization proved ominous when its leadership sought to overcome the dilemmas it faced in the struggle for power with a more powerful organization, the Free Officers.

The Indonesian Islamists faced very different institutional environments when the first organization for an Islamic state was formed. In the second part of this dissertation, I pointed out that the Dutch colonial government sought to incorporate nationalist-organizations into its local parliament, Volkraads. For instance, Sarekat Islam (SI), the first Islamist movement in the Dutch East Indies established in 1912, was encouraged to emerge as a movement mobilizing for an Islamic state with pragmatic and adaptable characters. In stark contrast to Egypt's Islamist formation, SI did not develop into an organization with strong emphasis on "the purification of society", but soon became molded into a party-like organization. Between 1917 and 1933, SI entered the colonial parliament representing nationalist interests. Triggered by leadership conflict in the mid 1920s, SI declined, driving several Muslim leaders and politicians to build dozens of organizations based on Islam. Being split into a number of organizations (mainly structured by the syncretic nature of Indonesian Muslim society, traditionalist-modernist Muslim divisions, and the relatively autonomous structure of ulama linked to the colonial state), hindered organized Islamism from developing into a single, strong united political front for the mobilization of an Islamic state.

Confrontation with nationalist and communist organizations during the Dutch colonial period helped Muslim leaders to seek political unity; such efforts consistently failed however. The creation of the federative organization of MIAI in 1937 marked a brief development of Islamism with a united organizational front. Yet, the success of building unity was not an outcome of internal efforts of Muslim leaders but facilitated by exogenous factors occurring in the early 1940s: namely, the Japanese occupation government's policies toward Islam. The Japanese-sponsored Masyumi and other Islam-based militias served an opportunity for Indonesian Muslims to strengthen their sense of political unity. And when Japan collapsed in mid 1945 and the struggle for an independent Indonesia developed into escalating conflicts between secular-nationalist, leftist, and Islamist fronts, it was Masyumi that enabled Indonesian Muslims to take up political arms in the struggle for an Islamic state in the post-colonial Indonesia.

The differences in the formative period of organized Islamism had lingering and far-reaching consequences for the subsequent developments of Islamist mobilization in the two countries. In contrast to Egypt's Islamist radical development, legacies of pragmatism and conciliation-oriented principles of Islamist movements during the Dutch colonial period coloured the behaviour of Islamist politicians, ulama and social activists in their dedicated struggle for an Islamic state in Indonesia.

3. "National Revolution" as a Critical Juncture

Since history and institutions underpin my explanation in examining the various outcomes of the political development of Islamism, attention must be focused

on how the organizations for the mobilization of Islamic state changed over time. *Periodization* of political development then served as my analytical device to capture critical moments and actions made by competing groups, especially between Islamist actors and the state elite in response to a particular set of changes in a certain period of time. Based on this framework, this dissertation has situated the development of Islamist politics within the ongoing processes of institutional construction of the state rather than framing it in isolation. As I explored throughout my narratives, my aim is to offer a more nuanced, historically grounded, but analytically persuasive explanation of the various paths in the struggle for an Islamic state in terms of organizational formation, political mobilization and transformation. By examining periodization of Islamist development, this study sought to explicate how certain institutions are created overtime and how interests of the state and leaders in Islamist movements are shaped.

This analytical exercise allowed me to locate different points of an historical continuum in Islamist mobilization history to delineate how institutional environment and ideology of Islamic state strategically interacts with one another. The important question is how a certain set of political events and structures and their configuration produced outcomes overtime. Tracing through history, after the formative period of Islamist organizational formation, one of the most important political developments in Egypt and Indonesia is what I defined "National Revolution"; a decisive break from colonial rule and a move to a sovereign state marked by the independence revolution in Sukarno's Indonesia (1945-1950) and by the 'revolution from above' in Nasser's Egypt (1952-1956). In other words, national revolution served as a critical

juncture for all political organizations and groups who competed and conflicted over state formation alternatives.

In the mainstream literature of state formation in political science, the historical process of state formation is usually defined through an analytical premise of the long process of social, economic, military and geographical changes spanning several centuries, especially with reference to the state phenomenon in Western Europe. However, in observing the phenomenon of state formation after World War II, it is clear that most states that emerged in this period were due to a series of rapid events sparked by patterns such as colonial departure, imperial collapse, the breakdown of traditional rulers, or any combination thereof. State formation in Egypt and Indonesia falls into the first two categories. And after their colonial masters collapsed or departed, it was the competing groups, movements and organizations that formed prior to the outbreak of the events which dominated patterns of state formation. In their quest for power, in one way or another, struggles to establish constitutional order for the new state and restructuring a system of governance served as the central arenas in which conflict, bargaining, negotiation, and settlement occurred between the competing groups.

The dynamics of critical juncture during the National Revolution condition future politics in profound ways because some states are better endowed than others in their strategy of dealing with internal challengers simply because of the way these states were born. I have illustrated that the extent to which – and the manner in which – these conflicts were resolved determined the basic contours of the ensuing patterns

of state-society relations—in this case, relations between the state and Islamist politics.

Islamists' struggles for an Islamic state have failed in both countries. But what is striking is that, consequences of this failure led to contrasting outcomes of Islamist mobilization. In the aftermath of the National Revolution, struggle for an Islamic state in Egypt was characterized by the emergence of jihadist organizational alternatives, while in Indonesia the organization that defined the mobilization for an Islamic state was the political party. In explaining this different outcome, I shift my analysis from tackling issues of group conflicts to examining the configuration of unsettled issues of constitutional blueprints, patterns of institutional order that eventually established, and the changing strategy of Islamist movements in terms of opposition to the ruling regime. Crucial aspects that mediate this change include the presence or absence of religious institutions linked to the state, the innovation of religious-political ideas and how these ideas were translated into a certain model of organizational constructs in order to continue the mobilization for an Islamic state. Yet, legacies of organizational properties of Islamism established in the former period remained crucial to the later development.

Drawing from my narrative of state-Islamist relations in Egypt and Indonesia, it is evident that it was the critical juncture during the National Revolution that shaped the subsequent dynamic of state-Islamist engagement to build a solution in dealing with religious politics. Within this dynamic, it also underpinned the alternatives of the settlement process undertaken by both the state and the leaders of Islamist movements. In Egypt, efforts to establish a new constitution after the July

1952 coup were accompanied with severe elite conflict and polarization in the struggle for domination, especially between the Free Officers and Islamist actors. Due to the MB's relatively strong organizational power prior to the 1952 coup, Hasan al-Hudaybi consistently pushed the new Egyptian regime to adopt an Islamic constitution. Overtime, these two actors failed to reach an acceptable power sharing arrangement. In the backdrop of such a critical juncture, what the state builders in Egypt did is to sow the seeds of an irreconcilable conflict between the state and Islamist challengers.

Threatened by the MB's strength prior to the coup, the Free Officers settled the new constitutional order by dealing with the Brotherhood with suppression and persecutions. While the persecution continued, Nasser and the Free Officers' leadership strengthened their legitimacy relative to Islamist contenders by subordinating religious institutions and the ulama of al-Azhar in service to the secular state. The cumulative effects of the politics of state formation under Nasser generated a profound change in Islamist strategy. As soon as the persecutions began following an attempt on Nasser's life in 1954, the MB suffered from a leadership vacuum and was forced to go underground. It was during the internal struggle to overcome the leadership gap that ideas of an Islamic state were redefined and strategies for dealing with the opposition reformulated.

Jihadist politics emerged as a historical alternative for Islamist movement in Egypt due to severe exclusion, elimination, and persecution. But this alternative was also an extreme form of organizational reproduction of purist Islamist ideology and strategy established in the earlier period. As I explored in my Egypt chapters, Sayyid

Qutb's ideas provided a catalyst for the consolidation of jihadist politics and, as a result, served as precursors for the "materialization" of purist Islamism in actual organizational constructs. The role of Qutb in this struggle for organizational survival served to overcome the radical-moderate cleavages in the Brotherhood. Facilitated by Sadat's Islamic turn policies, the rise of jihadist organizations was actually more revealing about the efforts of the new generation of Islamist movements that sought to depart from old and failed forms of strategies, creating new ones, and, as a result, changing patterns of Islamist political behavior.

Historical process of the transformation of the MB under Mubarak also reveals the enduring legacies of state formation as well as organizational properties in defense of Islamic purity. The effort of the 'official' Brotherhood to moderate its ideology and strategy was reflected in the periodic convergence between its Islamist agenda and the political system. The MB projected itself as an organization that agreed to work with national interests and struggle for establishing a democratic system. In particular, under Tilmisani and Mamun al-Hudaybi, this organization declared that it would operate as a political party and guarantee individual and collective rights in the context of Islamic law. Such transformative efforts were reflected in the MB's continued engagement with electoral politics, changes in ideology, giving a more influential role for the new, moderate generation in its leadership. Although Mubarak continued to drop the Brotherhood's proposal to form a political party, from 1984 to 2005 the MB has forged coalitions with secular parties to participate in electoral politics. Working around slogans of "Islam is solution", the

MB has managed its activities to become a major opposition in the Egyptian parliament.

Questions still remained, however, on whether the MB would be a party like all other parties or an Islamic state-seeking religious organization. Up until recently, the Brotherhood failed to provide a clear answer. It never spoke with one voice but instead oscillated between its two poles: the struggle for democracy and the long terms efforts for the enforcement of *shari'a*. As documented earlier, the 2004 Reform initiatives statement remained vague and contradictory. The inability of the Brotherhood leadership to express its credible commitment for civil-democratic governance and thus restrain its own purist politics impulses unfolded in the recent development of the organization. The selection of Muhammad Badi' as the new Supreme Guide in January 2010 was particularly damaging to its moderation efforts. Badi' was known as a rank and file member of Qutb's organizational faction. Shortly after his selection many observers have expressed their apprehension about a possible reversal of the Brotherhood's reform initiatives. Although the Brotherhood reiterated its platforms to moderate and tried to democratize internally, the emergence of Badi' as the top leader becomes a serious blow to the reformist factions in the organization.[1]

In the case of Indonesia, pragmatic-oriented legacies of organizational formation dominated the Islamist political behaviour. First, during the National Revolution, compromise between Islamist leaders and secular-nationalist leaders-as well as the incorporation of a religious system in the state structure were decisive in settling the constitutional blueprint of the new state (albeit temporarily). But the elites

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[1] For a brief review on recent leadership change within the Muslim Brotherhood, see, Husam Tamam, Egypt's New Brotherhood Leadership: Implications and Limits of Change, in *Arab Bulletin Forum,* February 17, 2010.

also reached an agreement to resolve unsettled issues democratically. With elite

compromise, one of the conflicting groups downplayed its political agenda, but

received significant political concessions in matters of ideology, inclusion within

institutional structures in the new state, or other interests to build a coalition in the

new government. Three important compromises addressed to overcome the conflict

between Islamists and secular-nationalists are crucial: (1) the creation of a state-level

department office for religious affairs (2) the abolition of Islam as stipulated in the

constitution, and (3) the acceptance of the neutral position of religion in the new state.

Islamist parties were formed principally as a vehicle for Islamist political groups to

settle the ongoing debate over the nature of a permanent constitution.

The emergence of the New Order marked an important period of the

stabilization of political order as well as of the struggles for settling the constitutional

debate. These struggles took place within historical and institutional contexts

established in the former period. Such contexts defined the allocation and exercise of

political power and shaped the perceptions of both the state and Islamist elite,

especially by constraining political behavior through the operation of rules, norms,

and organizational settings. My story on the historical process of Islamist

transformation reflected the importance of mezzo level institutional designs of the

state. These lower institutional arrangements provided strategic opportunities for

purposive political actors to further their interests, and shape political opportunities

for the resolution of state-Islamist conflict while maintaining the *stats quo* of the 1945

national constitution. After 1966, a return to Islamic constitution was impossible for

both Muslim politicians and the state. But institutional legacies from the revolution

and the structural configuration established during the Guided Democracy provided leeway to both the New Order and Islamist organizations in terms of their strategies.

The new generation of Muslim activists moved first for the "de-sacralization" of Islamist parties. While the New Order government maintained the operation of Islamist political parties to hold *de-cofessionalization* initiatives, in 1975, the New Order government created the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI) aimed at the institutional accommodation of Muslim ulama. Although its position is equal to other non-Muslim clerical institutions –such as the Indonesian Council of Bishop for Catholics, or the United Indonesian Church for Protestants, or the Indonesian Buddhist Council for Buddhists—MUI's political character provided a way for religious views to exert great influence on the emerging institutional structure by securing a place for Islamic interests in public policies. "Historic coalition" of Suharto's New Order with Islamist middle class, politicians, bureaucrats, and Muslim activists through ICMI embodied the most influential device for a political solution in the long conflict and hostilities between Islam and the state. More than being concessional politics, this mezzo level institutional development provided a *modus vivendi* for Islam to become an important component in the modern state system.

Transition to democracy after the collapse of the New Order in 1998 helped a number of Islamist parties to re-emerge. However, the institutional legacies of the political settlement between Islamism and the state have brought serious political consequences for Islamist politics: namely, the demise of the Islamic state alternative.

4. Contribution and Implication for Further Research

Conventional wisdom tends to explain political Islam by reference to features of the Islamic belief system of the unity between religion and the state or to the structural characteristics of Muslim society through which the failure of the modern, secularizing state underpinned Muslim political emergence. My approach has been different, focusing instead on the specific historical origins and institutional environments of the state in which Islamist mobilization developed. I explained how attributes of organizational formation of each case and their institutional settings shaped environment-specific calculations, benefits, and norms of appropriateness (Kalyvas, 2006; Posner, 2003) for both state and Islamist organizations.

Institutional exclusions (in terms of religious interests) and the subsequent persecutions (in terms of participation) seemed appropriate to Egypt's political regimes because of the saturated profile of religious institutions within the state and the purist characters of the Brotherhood and jihadist organizations. Institutional accommodation and subsequent compromise, co-optation and inclusion were a more cost-effective and appropriate approach for Indonesian governments to take in dealing with Islamist politics, on the other hand, because of the relatively open space in the state structure and pragmatic-minded attributes of Islamist movements. By explaining patterns of state-Islamist relations through a focus on particular institutional terrains, this dissertation has contributed to the literature by addressing largely neglected dimensions in most conventional accounts, i.e., history and institutions.

First, since Islamism is considered in this study as a form of religious politics, rather than looking at variables drawn from observing the ideology of the Islamic

state alone, I have preferred to examine variables at the point of application between the state's policies and its Islamist contenders. Actors in Islamist movements can be classified in terms of their institutional preferences, such as ulama, politicians, or activists in social organizations. Therefore, rather than exclusively analyzing ideological contents in political Islam, I have chosen instead to focus on the organizational characteristics of and actual patterns of mobilization adopted in such distinct geographical spaces and political regimes as Egypt and Indonesia. I have done so because I believe that these mechanisms and variables are highly illustrative and informative.

Second, my designation of Egypt's Islamism as "purist" and Indonesia's political Islam as "pragmatic-reformist" in orientation represents an attempt to draw on the literature of comparative political Islam that have heretofore largely classified Islamist political movements between moderate and radical or between peaceful and violent. My mechanism for uniting the two concepts under one lens is comparative historical analysis. Purists and pragmatists are specific types of outcomes that underline the importance of institutional contexts, and as I demonstrated, represent an ideal type when one considers the contrasting patterns of Islamist mobilization. Specific outcomes of organizational constructs—such as jihadist politics, political parties, or revolutionary fronts—constitute alternative paths in the continued struggle for an Islamic state in different points along a continuum of Islamist mobilization. Throughout this study, I have highlighted that institutional environments in both religion and politics in both countries shaped such contrasting outcomes of Islamist mobilization patterns.

Finally, with the growing interest in the study of political Islam in academia, especially after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, my study suggests that insights provided by historical institutionalism as an approach to politics lies in its ability to explain variations and irregularities in political outcomes. This makes it a particularly useful approach in dealing with religious political phenomena, because one of the noticeable features of religious ideologies is their contingency. The very profile of mobilization of religion varies from one Islamist group to another. The institutional contexts and their political consequences suggest that religious politics does not emerge spontaneously from distinct cultural markers or from ideas of Islamic state, since it serves only as a point of departure. Institutions, therefore, are a sensible central point for an analysis to illuminate the processes of organizational formation, its politicization and mobilization.

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