

On the ‘anxiety of incompleteness’: a post-structuralist approach to religious violence in Indonesia

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Abstract: Over the course of the past decade, the study of religious violence has evolved into a thriving industry of sorts. More than a field of academic research, religious violence is now a topic in which powerful US government agencies, major international institutions and all manner of ‘think tanks’ and foundations have developed an interest. This paper suggests an alternative approach, both in terms of the specific context of Indonesia and more broadly. This approach is rooted in a very different political, institutional and intellectual tradition from the dominant strands of the ‘religious violence industry’. In terms of politics, the essential premise is a critical distance not only from the US-led ‘Global War on Terrorism’, but also from those avowedly secular, ecumenical or religiously tolerant and disinterested institutions that claim to be promoting conflict resolution and multi-faith religious coexistence and understanding in Indonesia and elsewhere around the world. In terms of institutional affiliations, the point of departure for the author’s work is a sceptical view of large-scale research projects linked to major funding bodies, government agencies and other centres of state power; and in terms of intellectual foundations, the work here is rooted in the tradition of comparative historical sociology.

Keywords: violence; riots; terrorism; *jihad*; Indonesia; Islam

Premises

Over the course of the past decade, the study of religious violence has evolved into a thriving industry of sorts. More than a field of academic research, religious violence is now a topic in which powerful US government agencies, major international institutions and all manner of ‘think tanks’ and foundations have developed an interest. Understanding religious violence has become not only an intellectual but a political imperative, with analysis geared towards the generation and

modification of policies, funding programmes and other forms of intervention.

Indonesia exemplifies this trend. On the one hand, a vast and growing literature has emerged under the auspices of institutions such as the Asia Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the UNDP and the World Bank to address problems of interreligious tension and conflict in Indonesia. This literature has not only mapped patterns of local conflict and violence across the Indonesian archipelago, but has also promoted the implementation of policies and the allocation of resources to ease tensions and resolve conflicts in localities around the country. The establishment of statistical correlations between patterns of conflict and variations in levels of poverty or 'social capital' is of particular interest to bodies funding programmes to promote economic development and to strengthen 'civil society' and 'governance' in various parts of Indonesia.

On the other hand, a similarly sizeable body of writings has been produced by 'think tanks' and other policy-oriented research outfits based in various South East Asian capitals and in key power centres such as Brussels, Canberra, London and Washington, DC to address problems of Islamist terrorism in Indonesia. These writings have not only identified the groups responsible for terrorist bombings in Indonesia since 2002, but have also documented their links to al-Qaeda and traced their mobilization, recruitment and internal transformation over the years. Through these writings, 'terrorism experts' have helped government policy makers to prosecute – and, more importantly, to justify – the 'War on Terrorism' in Indonesia and elsewhere in the region. The study of religious violence in Indonesia, as elsewhere, has become intimately bound up with the exercise of various forms of power.

This paper suggests an alternative approach to the study of religious violence, both in terms of the specific context of Indonesia and more broadly, an approach elaborated more fully in my book, *Riots, Pogroms, Jihad: Religious Violence in Indonesia* (2006, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY). This approach is rooted in a very different political, institutional and intellectual tradition from the dominant strands of the 'religious violence industry' identified above. In terms of politics, the essential premise is a critical distance not only from the US-led 'War on Terrorism', but also from those avowedly secular, ecumenical or religiously tolerant and disinterested institutions that claim to be promoting conflict resolution and multi-faith religious coexistence and understanding in Indonesia and elsewhere around the world. Much as

critical scholars have shown how the ‘Holocaust industry’ has worked to shape scholarship on European history and Middle Eastern politics to suit certain interests,¹ so should we question the smug liberal notion of a ‘view from nowhere’ in the study of religious violence in Indonesia and beyond.² Against the prevailing tendency to pin the blame for religious violence in Indonesia – and elsewhere – on ‘intolerant’, ‘extremist’ Muslims, if not on ‘fundamentalist’ Islam as a belief system, it is imperative to show how both the structures and the agency of forces associated with Christianity, secularism and ecumenism have been in considerable measure responsible for the broad pattern of religious violence in Indonesia, as well as many specific episodes of violence.

In terms of institutional affiliations, the point of departure for my work is a sceptical view of large-scale research projects linked to major funding bodies, government agencies and other centres of state power. Insofar as my research is part of a broader collective enterprise, it is one staffed by independent scholars with proven commitment to the study of Indonesia (and specific localities therein) and to Indonesian researchers with track records of promoting empowerment, democratization and social transformation in a country that has long suffered from authoritarian rule and state violence against its citizens. The footnotes are thus filled with references to the countless anthropologists, human rights activists and investigative journalists whose work has informed and inspired my work.

In terms of intellectual foundations, my treatment of religious violence in Indonesia is rooted in the tradition of comparative historical sociology. ‘Religion’ is understood neither as a matter of individual belief, nor as a ‘cultural system’, as Clifford Geertz has famously argued,³ but sociologically, as a field structured by its own institutions, authority relations, instilled dispositions (*habitus*) and means of production, accumulation and representation of ‘symbolic’ or

¹ On medieval Europe, for example, see: David Nirenberg (1996), *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ. On modern Europe, see: Albert S. Lindemann (1997), *Esau's Tears: Modern Anti-Semitism and the Rise of the Jews*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. On the contemporary politics of the Middle East, see: Norman G. Finkelstein (2005), *Beyond Chutzpah: On the Misuse of Anti-Semitism and the Abuse of History*, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA. More broadly, see: Norman G. Finkelstein (2000), *The Holocaust Industry: Reflections on the Exploitation of Jewish Suffering*, Verso, London.

² Thomas Nagel (1986), *The View From Nowhere*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

³ See Clifford Geertz (1973), ‘Religion as a cultural system’, in *Interpretation of Cultures*, Basic Books, New York, pp 87–125.

‘spiritual’ capital, as outlined by Pierre Bourdieu.⁴ Conceived not as a disembodied system of belief but in terms of relationships of power – ‘the power to regulate, uphold, require or adjust *correct* practices, and to condemn, exclude, undermine, or replace *incorrect* ones’⁵ – religion, Talal Asad has argued, rests on ‘a peculiar form of property relation – a relation between people with regard to texts and intellectual technologies – that [is] potentially more fluid than other sorts of class relations’.⁶ Thus, much as Peter van der Veer has suggested in his writings on the impact of British rule on Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism in India, the religious field in Indonesia is understood in the light of its specific historical formation dating back to the period of Dutch colonial rule in the archipelago, and in terms of both continuities and shifts in the place of religion in the public sphere and the relations between religious institutions and state power since independence.⁷ The pattern of linkages between religious denominations, school networks, associational activities, political parties described in the Netherlands as ‘pillarization’ (*verzuiling*) was transplanted to Indonesia under colonial rule and, after independence, redubbed as one of diverse competing ‘streams’ or ‘currents’ (*aliran*) in the nation’s political and social life.

While this contextualization of religious identities and institutions is firmly rooted in the tradition of comparative historical sociology, it leaves open questions as to the phenomenology and psychology of religious violence. In contrast to most actor-centred accounts of various forms of violence in Indonesia and other countries around the world, perpetrators of religious violence are here understood neither as

⁴ See, in particular, Pierre Bourdieu (1991), ‘Genesis and structure of the religious field’, *Comparative Social Research*, Vol 13, pp 1–44. On Bourdieu’s treatment of religion, and on the notion of ‘spiritual capital’, see Bradford Verter (2003), ‘Spiritual capital: theorizing religion with Bourdieu against Bourdieu’, *Sociological Theory*, Vol 21, No 2, pp 150–174.

⁵ Talal Asad (1986), *The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam*, Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Occasional Paper Series, Georgetown University, Washington, DC, p 15.

⁶ Gregory Starrett (1998), *Putting Islam to Work: Education, Politics, and Religious Transformation in Egypt*, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, p 13.

⁷ See Peter van der Veer (1994), *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in South Asia*, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA; Peter van der Veer and Hartmut Lehmann, eds (1999), *Nation and Religion: Perspectives on Europe and Asia*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ; and Peter van der Veer (2001), *Imperial Encounters: Religion, Nation, and Empire*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.

rational actors pursuing narrowly self-interested goals,⁸ nor as committed believers in seamlessly coherent belief systems,⁹ nor as sufferers of particular emotional or mental states, whether ‘fear, hatred, or resentment’¹⁰ or running *amok*.¹¹ Instead of understanding religious violence as perpetrated by identifiable individuals or groups with stable religious identities, interests, beliefs and values, my work highlights the puzzle of the often elusive and ever-shifting forms of agency associated with successive forms of religious violence in Indonesia, from ‘mobs’ – and their ‘instigators’ – in the riots of 1995–98, to entire local communities – and the politicians, gangsters and religious activists egging them on – in the pogroms of 1999–2001, to the narrow network of ‘terrorists’ said to be responsible for the bombings of 2002–05.

In this vein, I follow a long tradition in philosophy, psychology and social theory that highlights the inherently incomplete, unstable and interactive nature of what we call ‘identity’, whether religious or otherwise. After all, at the core of any ‘identity’ is always a constitutive sense of lack, of inadequacy, or of a ‘theft’ that can be imputed to an Other who deprives ‘us’ of the full enjoyment of those material, discursive and social practices, which, we imagine, (would) allow ‘us’ to be fully ‘ourselves’.¹² This is what Arjun Appadurai has called the ‘anxiety of incompleteness’.¹³ Thus what is disavowed is the essentially split nature of subjectivity, the inherent fissure and internal antagonism within (each of) ‘us’, the disavowed Egyptian within the Jew of Freud’s *Moses and Monotheism*.¹⁴ Viewed in this light, instances of religious violence are no longer understood to reflect the strength and intensity of religious identities ‘held’ by individuals and groups as

⁸ See, for example, Robert A. Pape (2003), ‘The strategic logic of suicide terrorism’, *American Political Science Review*, Vol 97, No 3, pp 343–361.

⁹ See, for example, Roxanne L. Euben (1999), *Enemy in the Mirror: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Limits of Modern Rationalism*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.

¹⁰ See, for example, Roger D. Petersen (2002), *Understanding Ethnic Violence: Fear, Hatred, and Resentment in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

¹¹ See, for example, Horowitz (2002), *The Deadly Ethnic Riot*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp 102–109.

¹² See, for example, Slavoj Žižek (1993), ‘Enjoy your nation as yourself!’ in Slavoj Žižek, *Tarrying with the Negative: Kant, Hegel, and the Critique of Enjoyment*, Duke University Press, Durham, pp 200–237.

¹³ Arjun Appadurai (2006), *Fear of Small Numbers: An Essay on the Geography of Anger*, Duke University Press, Durham, p 8.

¹⁴ Sigmund Freud (1939), *Moses and Monotheism*, Vintage Books, New York.

they promote their ideas and pursue their interests. Religious violence, instead, erupts amidst heightened states of uncertainty and anxiety as to religious identities and their boundaries, and attendant efforts towards the (re)definition of the self and the (re)articulation of claims of authority. The literary theorist René Girard, for example, moving from Freud's suggestive, but tentative remarks on the 'narcissism of minor differences',¹⁵ famously argued: 'It is not the differences but the loss of them that gives rise to violence'.¹⁶ The sociologist Charles Tilly has drawn a similar conclusion in his survey of collective violence in modern history: 'Violence generally increases and becomes more salient in situations of rising uncertainty across the boundary. It increases because people respond to threats against weighty social arrangements they have built on such boundaries – arrangements such as exploitation of others, property rights, in-group marriage, and power over local government.'¹⁷ As the anthropologist Arjun Appadurai has argued about the link between uncertainty and 'ethnocidal' violence:

'The forms of such uncertainty are various. One kind of uncertainty is a direct reflection of census concerns: how many persons of this or that sort really exist in a given territory? Or, in the context of rapid migration or refugee movement, how many of "them" are there now among "us"? Another kind of uncertainty is about what some of these megaidentities really mean: what are the normative characteristics of what the Constitution defines as a member of an OBC (Other Backward Caste) in India? A further uncertainty is about whether a particular person really is what they claim or appear to be or to have historically been. Finally, these various forms of uncertainty create intolerable anxiety about the relationship of many individuals to state-provided goods – ranging from housing and health to safety and sanitation – since these entitlements are frequently directly tied to who "you" are and thus to who "they" are. Each kind of uncertainty

¹⁵ See Sigmund Freud (2001), 'The taboo of virginity', 'Group psychology and the analysis of the ego' and 'Civilization and its discontents', in Volumes XI, XVIII and XXI of James Strachey, ed, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vintage, London, pp 199, 101 and 114 respectively. See also the thoughtful discussion in Anton Blok (2001), *Honour and Violence*, Polity Press, Cambridge, pp 115–135.

¹⁶ René Girard (1977), *Violence and the Sacred*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD, p 51.

¹⁷ Charles Tilly (2003), *The Politics of Collective Violence*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p 77.

gains increasing force whenever there are large-scale movements of persons, when new rewards or risks attach to large-scale ethnic identities, or when existing networks of social knowledge are eroded by rumour, terror, or social movement. *Where one or more of these forms of social uncertainty come into play, violence can create a macabre form of certainty and can become a brutal technique (or folk discovery-procedure) about "them" and, therefore, about "us".*¹⁸

In such contexts of uncertainty, the redefinition of the self and the reassertion of boundaries and claims of authority are achieved not only through violent opposition to an antagonistic Other, but through recognition in the – imagined – gaze of a broader audience and within a larger symbolic order. Religious violence is thus by definition performative¹⁹ and representational, in both senses of the term.²⁰ For example, Islamist terrorist groups, it has been noted,

‘. . . represent Islam both in the sense that they conjure up a certain picture of it, and inasmuch as they claim to speak for Muslims – thus representing the Islamic community in the political sense. The success or failure of their representative work in this field depends on the extent to which they succeed in gathering around them a community that recognizes itself in the image and feels represented by it. Because this arena is not simply viewed (by being subjected to analysis and comparison, for example), but instead is represented in the light of the press, it constitutes a process of reflection: the amusing feature here – as with every glance in the mirror – is identity formation. If you can see how your own representative is

¹⁸ Appadurai (1998), ‘Dead certainty: ethnic violence in the era of globalization’, *Development and Change*, Vol 29, No 4, pp 908–909 (emphasis added).

¹⁹ See Mark Juergensmeyer (2003), *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA; as well as Natalie Zemon Davis (1971), ‘The rites of violence: religious riot in sixteenth-century France’, *Past and Present*, Vol 59, pp 51–91.

²⁰ ‘Struggles over ethnic or regional identity . . . are a particular case of the different struggles over classifications, struggles over the monopoly of the power to make people see and believe, to get them to know and recognize, to impose the legitimate definition of the divisions of the social world, and, thereby, to make and unmake groups. What is at stake here is the power of imposing a vision of the social world through principles of division which, when they are imposed on a whole group, establish meaning and a consensus about meaning, and in particular about the identity and unity of the group, which creates the reality and the entity of the group.’ Pierre Bourdieu (1991), *Language and Symbolic Power*, Polity Press, Cambridge, p 221.

perceived by third parties (and hence how you are), and are thus able to compare how the representative of the others affects third parties (and hence how others themselves do), you are able to ascertain your own identity. From this it also becomes clear why the third parties (that is, the stage of press publicity) are needed: they stand for 'objectivity' in the sense that they are neutral in the battle for representation in the Islamic field.'²¹

Religious violence, then, must be understood not only in terms of actions taken by individuals or groups, but also in terms of – anticipated – responses by audiences, and thus in terms of broader discursive and social formations in which religion has a prominent – and problematic – role. Religious violence must thus be understood not simply in view of its destructive consequences but also in light of its productive effects.²²

The link between uncertainty and anxiety over 'identity' on the one hand, and violence on the other, is evident in the kinds of political, sociological and discursive contexts associated with riots, pogroms and terrorism around the world, as noted in several important studies. Paul Brass, for example, has situated communal violence in India in the 1990s against the backdrop of 'the rise of intercaste conflict' and the threat of electoral mobilization by coalitions of (Hindu) 'backward' castes with low castes and Muslims.²³ In this context, Brass shows how 'Hindu–Muslim riots are a product of actions designed to consolidate one community or the other or both at the local, regional, and national levels into a cohesive political bloc'.²⁴

Meanwhile, Michel Wieviorka's research on the use of terrorist violence by Basque and Palestinian nationalists and German and Italian left-wing radicals has revealed a similar pattern. 'The

²¹ Werner Schiffauer (2001), 'Production of fundamentalism: on the dynamics of producing the radically different', in Hent de Vries and Samuel Weber, eds, *Religion and Media*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA, p 440.

²² For somewhat similar arguments along these lines with regard to India, see Paul R. Brass (1997), *Theft of an Idol: Text and Context in the Representation of Collective Violence*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ; as well as Paul R. Brass (2003), *The Production of Hindu–Muslim Violence in Contemporary India*, University of Washington Press, Seattle, WA. Note, however, Brass's repeated insistence that the role and responsibility of individuals for acts of violence should not be diminished and dismissed by reference to 'discourse'.

²³ Brass (1997), *supra* note 22, at p 280.

²⁴ Brass (2003), *supra* note 22, at pp 33–34.

organized practice of indiscriminate and irredeemable violence,' he argues, 'is not a faltering movement's last best hope or final act of desperation but rather a substitute for a movement which has either become imaginary or has fallen out of sync with the hopes pinned on it'.²⁵ Thus Wieviorka concludes:

'In its purest – and most extreme – manifestations, terrorism always betrays the disintegration of some collective action. Wherever the social, national, or communal consciousness is strong, and wherever a social or any other kind of movement is capable of being formed, there can be no place for terrorist spinoffs. These appear, and take shape – and become rationales of action rather than mere situational combat strategies – through the disintegration of a collective consciousness, or in the collapse, breakdown, or failure of a social, national, or communist movement.'²⁶

Similarly, the writings of Olivier Roy and Gilles Kepel depict the rise of transnational *jihadi* networks such as al-Qaeda at the turn of the twenty-first century as a response to the co-optation, defeat or disintegration of various Islamist movements in the 1990s and, more broadly, the 'deterritorialization' of Islam and the consequent weakening of this religion's social authority.²⁷ 'Radical militant jihadists,' Roy notes, 'fight at the frontier [of the Muslim world] to protect a centre where they have no place. They fight not to protect a territory but to re-create a community. They are besieged in a fortress they do not inhabit.'²⁸ Overall, these studies suggest that religious violence should be understood as reflecting not the strength and solidity of religious faiths, identities and solidarities, but their perceived fragility and vulnerability in the face of alternative, competing – religious and non-religious – forms of consciousness, association and mobilization.

²⁵ Michel Wieviorka (2004), *The Making of Terrorism*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, p 291 (emphasis in the original).

²⁶ *Ibid*, p 297.

²⁷ See Olivier Roy (2004), *Globalised Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*, Hurst, London; Olivier Roy (1995), *The Failure of Political Islam*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA; and Gilles Kepel (2000), *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.

²⁸ Roy (2004), *supra* note 27, at p 289.

Argument

As signalled above, the central question guiding my work concerns discernible shifts in the pattern of violence observed in Indonesia since the mid-1990s, shifts that have been left entirely unexplained by the 'religious violence industry'. The years 1995–97, for example, witnessed a series of religious *riots* in provincial towns and cities, in which buildings – business establishments, churches, temples, government offices – were attacked, damaged, looted and often burned to the ground by crowds of people, but in which there were few if any attacks on people and only occasional casualties. May 1998, by contrast, saw the unfolding of a 'national' riot in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta as well as several other major cities around the archipelago, in which this pattern of assaults on buildings was accompanied by an unprecedented set of gang rapes and large numbers of deaths. But the remaining months of 1998 passed without a return to – or an escalation of – the earlier pattern of provincial town riots, and instead with the first hints of a new form of violence, one characterized by murderous collective violence, as first seen in a series of anti-witchcraft campaigns in rural Java in 1998–99. Indeed, in 1999–2001, interreligious *pogroms* in Maluku, Maluku Utara and the Central Sulawesi town of Poso claimed hundreds, even a few thousands, of lives and forced tens of thousands from their homes and communities. But by late 2001, these pogroms had apparently run their course and were replaced, as it were, by a new form of violence crystallizing under the sign of *jihad*. First apparent in the guise of armed paramilitary groups dispatched to Maluku and Poso in 2000–2001, this *jihad* soon assumed the form of bombings, beginning with explosions at the residence of the Philippine Ambassador in Jakarta (August 2000) and at Christian churches around the Indonesian archipelago in December 2000, but then shifting to 'Western' targets such as a tourists' nightclub on Bali (October 2002), a McDonald's outlet in Makassar (June 2003), an American hotel in Jakarta (August 2003), the Australian Embassy in Jakarta (September 2004) and tourist resorts in Bali (October 2005).

In short, over the past 10 years, a shift in the forms of religious violence witnessed in Indonesia has been discernible, from riots (1995–97) to pogroms (1998–2001) to *jihad* (2000–2005). The essential puzzle thus lies in the shift from one form of religious violence to another, as seen in the varying locations, perpetrators, targets, processes of mobilization, forms of agency and outcomes associated with each of

these phases of religious violence. The contribution of my work lies not in original research or analysis of any single specific episode of religious violence during 1995–2005, but in the provision of an overarching framework for understanding the broad pattern of variation and change in religious violence during this period as a whole.

This shifting pattern of religious violence in Indonesia over the past decade, I argue, must be understood in terms of broader shifts not only in the ‘structure of political opportunities’ for key religious institutions, but also in the very bases of religious authority and identity over the same years, and in what may be termed the ‘structure of religious anxiety’. Since independence (if not earlier), the place of ‘Islam’ in Indonesian society has in no small measure been determined by the distinctive nexus of class relations in the archipelago, by the peculiar and highly ambiguous position of the political class *vis-à-vis* the business and working classes in the country, and by the intimate but inherently unstable connection between religion, education and admission into this political class. The processes of capitalist development unfolding in Indonesia under the long years of the Suharto regime (1966–98) gave rise to internal transformations and tensions within the country’s social classes, including shifts within the political class occupying state power, and shifts within and between the competing streams or currents defined along religious educational lines. These changes spelled new possibilities for representing ‘Islam’ in Indonesian society and for making claims on its behalf. These possibilities began to expand in the mid-1990s under conditions of decaying authoritarian rule, and appeared to reach their apogee with the fall of Suharto and the elevation of B.J. Habibie in mid-1998, but sharply receded with the turn to competitive elections in mid-1999, the ascension of Abdurrahman Wahid to the presidency in October 1999, and his replacement by Megawati Soekarnoputri in mid-2001.

The expectations, uncertainties and anxieties accompanying these shifts help to explain the emergence, subsidence and transformation of successive forms of religious violence. For example, the riots that targeted ethnic-Chinese Indonesians’ property and non-Muslim houses of worship in provincial towns and cities in 1995–97 occurred against the backdrop of increasingly assertive claims on public space and state power under the banner of Islam, as well as rising concerns and frustrations with the constraints imposed on these claims. By contrast, the anti-witchcraft campaigns and interreligious pogroms that claimed the lives of hundreds, indeed thousands, of people in 1998–2001

unfolded precisely as the very basis of claims to representing Muslims shifted with the unravelling of authoritarian rule, the onset of competitive elections, and the loss of state power by forces most insistent on the promotion of Islam. Finally, the shift from large-scale collective violence to paramilitary and terrorist activity, and from domestic to international targets, from 2001 onwards coincided with the (re)entrenchment of ecumenical and Christian forces in the seats of state power in Jakarta. Thus variation observed in the modalities of religious violence – the timing, location, targets, mobilization processes and forms of agency associated with their occurrence – in the past decade or more, it is shown, must be understood in no small measure in terms of the unfulfilled promise – and accompanying problems – of the Islamist project in Indonesian society.

This argument differs markedly from those already developed under the auspices of the ‘religious violence industry’. In contrast to the actor-centred accounts of the ‘terrorism experts’, the stress here is on the powerfully determining effects of historical and sociological context. Shifts within the religious field, and in the position of religion in the broader field of power relations in Indonesia, my research shows, have prefigured corresponding shifts in the modalities of religious violence – its locations, perpetrators, targets and forms, and the mobilizational processes, forms of agency and outcomes with which it has been associated.

In structural terms, each phase of religious violence in Indonesia over the past 10 years has been associated with one or more religious hierarchy and the problems accompanying efforts to assert and maintain religious authority over, and identity among, one or another religious ‘flock’ (*jemaah*). The provincial town riots of 1995–97, for example, accompanied the push by elements within the All-Indonesian Association of Islamic Intellectuals (ICMI) to push new claims to represent – in both senses of the term – Islam in Indonesia, and reflected the tensions, contradictions and limitations of this initiative. The anti-witchcraft campaigns of 1998–99 likewise came into view as the ‘traditionalist’ Islamic association Nahdlatul Ulama faced new threats to its established position in areas of rural East and West Java. Similarly, the interreligious pogroms of 1999–2001 unfolded amidst rising anxiety, instability and uncertainty as to the boundaries of authority commanded by local Protestant church organizations and their Muslim counterparts in the religiously divided provinces of Central Sulawesi and Maluku. Finally, the Islamist paramilitary mobilization

of 2000–2001 and terrorist bombing campaign of 2002–2005 were undertaken precisely as the Islamist networks identified with Al-Irsyad, Persatuan Islam and Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia (DDII) began to lose the positions of influence, access and security within the national political class that they had so painstakingly attained in the preceding decade.

Each one of these religious hierarchies, it is worth noting, faced challenges and threats not only from external religious enemies, but also from the internal tensions, contradictions and limitations of their own religious authority and capacity to maintain religious identity amongst their respective flocks (*jemaah*). Thus the successive phases of violence emanating from within the broad umbrellas of these religious hierarchies worked – structurally, if not instrumentally – not only to effect an extrusion of internal problems on to religious ‘Others’, but also to reassert the structures and boundaries of religious authority *vis-à-vis* those claimed as the followers of their faith. Illuminated in this perspective, the specific modalities of religious violence in Indonesia over the past decade are recast in a new light. The precise timing, location, targets and forms of violence in Indonesia since the early–mid-1990s are understood to reflect the particular nature of both anxieties as to the threats to religious identities, and aspirations as to the reconstitution of religious identities through confrontation with, and effacement of, these threats. Thus the changes in the forms assumed by religious violence over the past 10 years are shown to reflect the emergence of new kinds of threats to religious identities as well as the shifting circumstances within which such identities could be reconstituted and reasserted.

Overall, I offer an explanation of the pattern of religious violence in Indonesia since 1995 that is self-evidently structuralist – and in some ways post-structuralist – in its underpinnings. The upshot is a predictable, and in some measure regrettable, tendency to skirt around complex questions surrounding the lived experience of individual episodes of religious violence, whether by perpetrators, victims, spectators or other interested parties. This limitation of my work reflects not so much a wholehearted commitment to the relentless gridding exercises of comparative politics and other such fields of social science, as a confession of my own diffidence and deficiencies in conducting research. As highlighted by some of the most interesting and insightful scholarship on riots and pogroms produced in recent years, the challenge of credibly reconstructing one or another episode of violence

through eyewitness accounts and other ethnographic materials is, if not insurmountable, then certainly beyond the intellectual and interpersonal skills of this author.²⁹ Yet, as some of this very same scholarship has suggested, the demonstrated extent to which the lived experience – and interpretation – of collective violence by individuals is shaped by relations of inequality and power, points to the potential value of an analysis of the very sociological, political and discursive context in which it unfolds. To be sure, the difficulty of establishing – and investigating – plausibly relevant counterfactual cases limits the kinds of claims that can be made about the causal significance of this context. Yet the tracing of the argument through all the shifting modalities of religious violence – timing, location, perpetrators, targets, mobilization processes, forms of agency and outcomes – across a 10-year period reveals how powerfully and consistently the conditions identified as ‘necessary’ – if not ‘sufficient’ – have exerted a kind of structural determination.

In terms of evidence in support of these arguments, my work draws heavily upon two kinds of sources in its account of the diverse forms of religious violence visited upon Indonesia during the past decade. On the one hand, I extensively cite, quote and otherwise credit dozens of anthropologists who have conducted ethnographic fieldwork in various parts of Indonesia over the course of the last 30 years. As my work shows, without the rich ethnographic literature contributed by anthropologists over the years, our appreciation of Indonesian politics and society would be utterly impoverished, and our understanding of religious violence in the country would be dismal indeed. On the other hand, I extensively cite, quote and otherwise credit dozens of Indonesian investigative journalists, human rights activists and other researchers who have written about the country over the past several decades. This kind of non-academic but often quasi-academic Indonesian-language literature on the country’s politics and society constitutes another rich trove of research and writings that is indispensable for understanding Indonesia and unparalleled in quantity and quality elsewhere in South East Asia (to the best of my knowledge). More than the many months I have spent in Indonesia over the past 10 years and my rather feeble efforts made to conduct interviews and other independent inquiries into one or another episode

²⁹ See, in particular, Shahid Amin (1995), *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura, 1922–1992*, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA; and Brass (1997), *supra* note 22.

of religious violence in the country, the empirical basis of this paper rests on the work of these other scholars and researchers. In short, my work owes much to a broader tradition of independent intellectual production at odds with the commanding heights of the 'religious violence industry'.

Evidence

In support of these arguments, the pages below trace the links between successive shifts in the religious field, the accompanying uncertainties and anxieties, and the forms of religious violence observed in the midst of these shifts. This exercise is performed for three successive phases of religious violence since 1995: religious *riots*, 1995–97; interreligious *pogroms*, 1998–2001; and finally, *jihad*, 2000 to the present, further subdivided into two sub-phases: paramilitary mobilization and domestic church bombings, 2000–2001, and internationalized terrorist bombings, 2002 to the present. For each phase of religious violence observed over the past decade, the political, sociological and discursive contextualization provided at the outset is shown to have profoundly shaped the timing, location, targets, protagonists, forms, mobilizational processes and kinds of agency associated with the violence, as well as the nature and extent of the 'religious' content of such violence.

The ascendance of 'Islam' and attendant anxieties: religious riots, 1995–97

Over the first two decades of the Suharto era, millions of Indonesians previously unincorporated within the orbit of Islamic associations and identities were encouraged to understand themselves as Muslims. As they migrated to towns and cities in record numbers in the 1970s and 80s, moreover, they came to constitute an urban and suburban underclass – *kelas bawah* – available for mobilization not as the Proletariat of the Partai Komunis Indonesia (which had been demolished in the anti-communist pogroms of 1965–66), but as the *Ummat* for those who claimed to represent Islam. Whether they came to the cities from the *pesantren* belt on Java or from rural areas in the so-called Outer Islands where different kinds of religious schools and practices held sway, the vast majority of these new migrants shared a common faith: Islam. As newcomers in the melting pots of Jakarta and other major

Indonesian cities, often without firmly established family networks or community institutions to support them in times of hardship and uncertainty, they constituted a new and growing (sub)urban constituency for those who could preach, teach or invoke an Islam that could incorporate Indonesians from all over the vast, diverse archipelago.³⁰

Indeed, the possibility for mobilization behind the banner of Islam was further enhanced by the dramatic expansion of Islamic education in Indonesia under the New Order. The network of traditional, rural Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) expanded dramatically, as suggested by government records listing 1,871 schools and 140,000 students in 1942, 4,195 schools and 677,000 students in 1978, and 9,388 schools and 1,770,000 students in 1997.³¹ The self-consciously modernist school network associated with Muhammadiyah, which already included 4,600 *madrrasah*, several teachers' academies, religious training schools and college faculties in the 1960s, claimed well over 100 institutions of higher education, including 24 universities, by the mid-1990s. At the same time, the State Islamic Institute (Institut Agama Islam Negara, or IAIN), which was first opened by the Ministry of Religious Affairs in 1960 along the lines of Cairo's Al-Azhar University, had established 14 branches around the country by the 1990s, even as the branches of Universitas Islam had quadrupled in number during the same period. Meanwhile, mainstream state universities throughout Indonesia saw a marked rise in the numbers of students with devout Muslim backgrounds and a dramatic increase in the popularity of campus mosques, prayer and religious discussion groups, as well as Islamic student organizations.³² As one observer noted: 'Mosques are filled with worshipers, particularly young adults; *halaqah* and *pengajian* emerge in almost every university complex and neighborhood; extra religious schooling (*diniyah*) in the afternoon is

³⁰ See, for example, Martin van Bruinessen (1998), *Rakyat Kecil, Islam dan Politik*, Yayasan Bentang Budaya, Yogyakarta.

³¹ See Departemen Agama Republik Indonesia (1997), *Data Potensi Pondok Pesantren Seluruh Indonesia*, Dirjen Pembinaan Kelembagaan Agama Islam, Direktorat Pembinaan Perguruan Agama Islam, Departemen Agama Republik Indonesia, Jakarta, cited in Julia Day Howell (2001), 'Sufism and the Indonesian Islamic Revival', *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol 60, No 3 pp 701–729.

³² 'Islam Sebagai Baju Zirah di Kalangan Muda', *Tempo*, 13 May 1989, pp 74–78; and Nurhayati Djamas (1989), 'Gerakan Kebangkitan Islam Kaum Muda', in Abdul Aziz, ed, *Gerakan Islam Kontemporer di Indonesia*, Pustaka Firdaus, Jakarta, pp 207–287.

crowded with children and teens; the circulation of Islamic books has reached the highest point in Indonesian history; and female students and adults with head-coverings have become a regular phenomenon on campuses and in public places'.³³ In short, by the 1990s, the rising numbers of Indonesians schooled under a distinctly self-consciously Islamic rubric had become a visible feature of urban society in many parts of the Indonesian archipelago.

With the rising number of Muslim professionals, the public sphere of modern, urban middle-class life in Indonesia was now increasingly claimed by those who defined themselves as pious Muslims. Indeed, the markers of Islamic piety were now incorporated into the habitus of mainstream Indonesian bourgeois propriety and prestige. Wealthy Indonesian Muslims began to avail themselves of luxury pilgrimage tour packages to Mecca,³⁴ and to enrol in various institutes, foundations, clubs, intensive courses and workshops in Sufi spirituality and Islamic learning in Jakarta and other major Indonesian cities.³⁵ In women's fashion, Islamic coverings or *busana Muslimah* of various kinds assumed unprecedented popularity and prestige.

Alongside these rising numbers of self-consciously Muslim professionals were the swelling ranks of what might be termed 'professional Muslims', in other words, men – and, to a considerably lesser extent, women – who made distinctly modern careers through the promotion of Islam. IAIN graduates filled the growing numbers of posts as instructors in religion in state schools, *madrasah* and *pesantren*, and joined the expanding ranks of functionaries in the vast Ministry of Religious Affairs. Books, magazines, pamphlets and other publications on Islamic affairs proliferated, as did Muslim radio and television talk shows, promoting the rise of 'pop Islam' in the form of pious music stars and preachers (*dai*).³⁶

Thus, overall, the New Order promoted what the anthropologist Gregory Starrett has called the objectification and functionalization of religion. Indonesian Muslims, in a process observed elsewhere in the

³³ Asna Hasin (1998), 'Philosophical and sociological aspects of Da'wah: a study of Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia', PhD dissertation, Columbia University, New York, pp 318–319.

³⁴ Moeslim Abdurrahman (2000), 'On Hajj tourism: in search of piety and identity in the New Order Indonesia', PhD dissertation, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, IL.

³⁵ Howell, *supra* note 31, at pp 718–722.

³⁶ On the rise of 'pop Islam', see François Raillon (1985), 'L'Ordre Nouveau et l'Islam ou l'imbroglie de la foi et de la politique', *Archipel*, Vol 30, pp 229–261.

Islamic world, increasingly came to understand their religion as ‘a coherent system of practices and beliefs, rather than merely an unexamined and unexaminable way of life’, to think of ‘knowing Islam’ as ‘a defined set of beliefs *such as those set down in textbook presentations*’ and to put Islam ‘consciously to work for various types of social and political projects’.³⁷ In towns and cities around the archipelago, a plethora of professional Muslims emerged, reminiscent of the ‘lumpenintelligentsia’ in the Middle East described by Olivier Roy. With urbanization, mass literacy and increasing access to modern means of communication (television, radio, cassettes, newspapers, magazines, books and pamphlets), moreover, the corpus of religious knowledge and the locus of religious authority grew ever more decentred, with independent study supplementing lessons in the classroom and sermons in the mosque.

‘The new Islamist intellectual borrows from religion the unifying figure that is lacking in the knowledge proposed by the school. Fragmentary modern knowledge, acquired autodidactically, is integrated within a Quranic intellectual framework, developing, on the one hand, the image of a transcendent totality, the *tawhid* (the oneness of God, which extends to His Creation), in which all knowledge comes together, and, on the other hand, a terminology drawn from the Tradition, supported by the citation of verses, but often positioned as the equivalent of concepts issued from modern ideologies. The two bodies of knowledge (modern through brochures and manuals, Quranic by citation) in fact cover a “do-it-yourself” creation, the juxtaposition of segments of knowledge into a whole whose logic cannot be reduced to the sum of its parts.’³⁸

Against this backdrop, and in the context and space of the increasingly self-evident and worrying ‘social gap’ (*kesenjangan sosial*) described above, it is unsurprising that ‘Islam’ also emerged as a rubric for popular protest in Indonesia by the 1980s. Islam, after all, represented a suitable rubric and idiom of protest by outsiders against a regime in which foreign and ethnic-Chinese capital, Catholics and Protestants,

³⁷ Gregory Starrett (1998), *Putting Islam to Work: Education, Politics, and Religious Transformation in Egypt*, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, pp 9–10 (emphasis added).

³⁸ Olivier Roy (1994), *The Failure of Political Islam*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, pp 97–98.

and graduates of secular institutions of higher education were seen to occupy privileged positions. Thus the Islamic party Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP), or United Development Party, mounted strong oppositional campaigns against the regime's political machine Golkar in the 1977 and 1982 elections, before the party was defanged and domesticated by Suharto in the mid-1980s amidst a terrorist bombing campaign and harsh government crackdown on accused Islamist terrorists.

By the 1990s, the Suharto regime itself had moved to capture and claim for itself much of the attractive power associated with the institutions and idiom of Islam. As suggested above, the 1980s had seen an unprecedented ascendance of modernist Muslims into the ranks of the urban middle class and into the circuitries of state power. Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (HMI) student leaders from elite schools such as Yogyakarta's Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM), Bandung's Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB) and Jakarta's Universitas Indonesia (UI) were being recruited in record numbers into the bureaucracy, the business world and Golkar during this period.³⁹ It was to recognize, reinforce and re-channel these trends that the Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Se-Indonesia (ICMI, or Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals) was founded under the leadership of Minister of Research and Technology and close Suharto associate, B.J. Habibie, in the early 1990s. As Minister of Research and Technology since the 70s, Habibie controlled a sprawling empire of state-owned high-tech enterprises, an enormous state-based patronage empire outside military and technocratic control in the name of high-tech economic nationalism. Through his hold over 'strategic industries' and responsibility for infrastructure projects and industrial development schemes, Habibie wielded considerable discretion over government personnel and contracts and built up an enormous clientele of university-educated, modernist Muslim *pribumi* ('indigenous') businessmen, via privileged access to state loans, contracts and regulatory breaks. With Suharto's support, Habibie was elevated to the governing body of Golkar, and various Habibie protégés won key Cabinet positions and other plum civilian and military posts. Meanwhile, a steady process of ICMI-*isasi* moved forward in Golkar, in the awarding of state contracts, on many university campuses and

³⁹ On HMI during this period, see, for example, 'Dulu HMI Lahirkan Kader Intelektual Islam dan Bangsa, Kini. . . ?' *Surabaya Post*, 3 March 1989; 'Dibutuhkan "Gus Dur" di HMI', *Surabaya Post*, 29 November 1992; and 'M. Yahya Zaini, S.H., Ketua Umum PB HMI: HMI Beda dengan ICMI', *Surabaya Post*, 15 January 1995.

beyond. The Center for Information and Development Studies (CIDES), an ICMI-affiliated think tank, soon began to compete with the Catholic CSIS, and its daily newspaper *Republika* tried to rival the Catholic-owned *Kompas*. ICMI support and influence soon extended to Islamic publishers, preachers and pilgrims, into *pesantren*, *madrasah* and IAIN, and to figures within both NU and Muhammadiyah. With Habibie at its helm, ICMI incorporated into the national political class an expanding network of Muslim professionals and professional Muslims who claimed to speak on behalf of all Muslims. The Suharto regime was now one that could claim to be promoting – and representing – Islam in Indonesia.⁴⁰

Yet the processes and possibilities of domesticating Islam were constrained both ‘from above’ and ‘from below’. Indeed, even as the modernist Muslim network moved upward within the political class, the accumulation of wealth and power by the Suharto family imposed a ceiling on any further ICMI-ish ambitions for the foreseeable future. Suharto’s children, after all, had also won seats on the governing board of Golkar and begun to lobby for their own minions and allies in the Parliament, the armed forces and the Cabinet, and their huge conglomerates continued to capture the juiciest state contracts and monopoly concessions. So long as Suharto was President, his children would remain entrenched at the pinnacle of power, and succession struggles could leave state control in the name of their father, rather than in the hands of those who spoke on behalf of Islam. In Indonesian society, moreover, the modernist Muslim segment of the political class found its claim to represent Indonesia – or Islam, for that matter – persistently challenged and hotly contested from below. ‘Islam’, after all, was destined to remain an overly ambitious, indeed presumptuous, banner in a nation boasting the single largest Muslim population and the most popular non-governmental Islamic organizations in the world. The elitist pretensions of middle-class modernist Muslims to represent Islam ran up against the reality of the millions of unschooled and underemployed ordinary Indonesians of the faith. Even in the boom years of the early–mid-1990s, when ICMI was expanding its network, thousands of Muslim youth had left the nation’s *pesantren*, *madrasah*, IAIN and universities for the job market, only to find opportunities for state or private sector employment or upward social mobility highly limited.

⁴⁰ Darul Aqsha, Dick van der Meij, and Johan Hendrik Meuleman (1995), *Islam in Indonesia: A Survey of Events and Developments from 1988 to March 1993*, Indonesia–Netherlands Cooperation in Islamic Studies, Jakarta, pp 263–276.

Compared with the upwardly mobile, middle-class modernist Muslim professionals and political operators who traced their roots back to the *madrasah*, the social and political advancement of those hailing from the *pesantren* belt was decidedly more modest.⁴¹ A few steps behind – or below – their *madrasah*-schooled counterparts on the ladder of educational and social hierarchy, such students flocked in record numbers to the expanded network of IAIN and provincial universities, but at elite university campuses the NU-affiliated Pergerakan Mahasiswa Islam Indonesia (PMII, or Indonesian Islamic Student Movement) was much more modest in its activities and alumni roster than HMI. With high rates of unemployment for university-educated youth persisting through the boom years of the mid-1990s, it is clear that even those *pesantren* youngsters who made it as far as college faced an uphill struggle into the new Muslim middle class.⁴² Beyond the *pesantren* belt, moreover, where state patronage (via ICMI or PPP or otherwise) had made significant inroads by the 1990s, the broad majority of Indonesian Muslims were poor and unlettered, and thus excluded from the kinds of educational experiences and networks that were so crucial for the emergence and ascendancy of the political class that claimed to speak for the *Ummat*.

Thus into the space previously captured by PPP stepped the other ‘opposition’ party allowed to compete in New Order elections, the Partai Demokrasi Indonesia (PDI), enhanced by the late 1980s and early 1990s by the reinvigoration of its Soekarnoist credentials. Created as a forced fusion of secular nationalist and Christian parties in 1973, PDI had, like PPP, competed in New Order elections under highly unfavourable conditions, compromised as it was by government restrictions on its electoral campaigns and intervention in its leadership congresses and internal party deliberations. With Protestants and Catholics seated in the party leadership in numbers far exceeding the Indonesian Christian minority’s small percentage of the national electorate, and with secular nationalists represented by conservative remnants of the old Partai Nasionalis Indonesia (PNI), PDI was hardly an obvious vehicle for populist politics.

Yet by the late 1980s and early 1990s, just as PPP suffered from a wave of desertion by erstwhile prominent supporters and a dramatic

⁴¹ See Andrée Feillard (1995), *Islam et Armée dans l’Indonésie Contemporaine*, L’Harmattan, Paris, especially Chapter 12.

⁴² See Chris Manning (1998), *Indonesian Labour in Transition: An East Asian Success Story?* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 177–188.

decline in its popular following, PDI gained new appeal as a party with re-varnished Soekarnoist credentials. As noted above and elsewhere in the scholarly literature on Indonesian history and politics, Soekarno had not only played a prominent role in an unparalleled popular struggle for independence, but had presided over the period of most populist politics in the immediate aftermath of independence. Thus, as James Siegel has noted, the violent removal of Soekarno – and the Partai Komunis Indonesia – in the early years of the New Order had left open a space for ‘the people’ (*Rakyat*) to re-emerge in the political imagination,⁴³ with the sign of Soekarno, a spectral figure displaced but never fully disavowed, left as a touchstone – and talisman – of sorts for populist mobilization.⁴⁴ For millions of working-class Indonesians, the figure of Soekarno signified the long suppressed possibility of radical, or at least redistributive, politics after years of harsh restrictions on labour organizing and repression of popular protests. ‘In the kampungs of Surabaya,’ one historian noted with reference to the New Order years, ‘Sukarno was a local hero, “one of us”.’⁴⁵ For small merchants and artisans marginalized by the rise of the *konglomerat* under the New Order, moreover, the name of Soekarno resonated with nostalgia for what were remembered as the ‘halcyon years’ of the 1950s and early 1960s.⁴⁶

Against this backdrop, the emergence of Soekarno’s children on the political scene in the late 1980s and 90s attracted popular energies to the PDI, even as the PPP began its decline. In the 1987 elections, Soekarno’s son Guruh Soekarnoputra and daughter Megawati Soekarnoputri emerged as popular campaign figures for the PDI, helping the party increase its small share of the national vote by 3%, while PPP suffered an almost 12% downturn at the polls. Megawati, whose role as regional party chairman and chief campaign figure in populous Central Java had attracted considerable crowds and media attention in 1987, resurfaced in 1992 as a leading national-level PDI personality. In 1993, with the blessings of key elements in the military leadership, she was elected to the post of PDI Chairperson for 1993–

⁴³ James T. Siegel (1998), *A New Criminal Type in Jakarta: Counter-Revolution Today*, Duke University Press, Durham.

⁴⁴ Karen Brooks (1996), ‘The rustle of ghosts: Bung Karno in the New Order’, *Indonesia*, Vol 60, February, pp 61–100.

⁴⁵ Howard Dick (2002), *Surabaya, City of Work: A Socioeconomic History, 1900–2000*, Ohio University Center for International Studies, Athens, OH, p 471.

⁴⁶ Suzanne April Brenner (1998), *The Domestication of Desire: Women, Wealth, and Modernity in Java*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, p 91.

98. The 1997 elections thus loomed large on the horizon as an unprecedented opportunity for a populist PDI challenge to the New Order regime under the sign of Soekarno.

In short, the three decades of the Suharto era witnessed a dramatic change in class relations in Indonesia. Fuelled by the oil boom, import-substitution and then export-oriented industrialization, economic growth extended the scope and reach of a predominantly Chinese capitalist class within Indonesian society, with urbanization and the deepening commodification of land and labour in suburban industrial zones bringing more and more workers and peasants into the orbit of the *konglomerat*. Thus by the late 1980s and early 90s, Indonesian newspapers were filled with stories of wildcat strikes, land disputes and protests by local residents against the construction of dams, bridges, golf courses, industrial estates and shopping malls blamed for economic marginalization and environmental degradation. Hence government policy makers spoke worryingly of a growing 'social gap' (*kesenjangan sosial*) and of a 'latent communist threat' (*bahaya laten komunis*) represented by emerging labour unions, human rights organizations, environmental groups and student activists.

Against this backdrop, the ambiguity and tension inherent in the position of those claiming to represent Islam within the political class in the Indonesia of the mid-late 1990s stemmed from three fundamental problems. First, as previously noted, the ascendancy of a modernist Muslim network associated with ICMI and Habibie within the political class ran up against the competing interests and built-in advantages of the Suharto family itself, most notably Suharto's favourite daughter, Siti Rukmana Hardiyanti, better known simply as Mbak Tutut. As is well known, over the course of the late 1980s, Suharto's children had begun to emerge as a major force in the business world, with vast, diversified conglomerates enjoying unparalleled access to state loans, contracts, monopoly franchises and regulatory and tax breaks. By the early-mid-1990s, a few of the Suharto children had also won seats on the governing board of Golkar and begun to lobby for their own minions and allies in the Parliament, the armed forces and the Cabinet. Meanwhile, their huge conglomerates continued to capture the juiciest state contracts and monopoly concessions, as the announcement in 1996 of Tommy Suharto's 'national car' project amply attested. So long as Suharto was President, his children would remain entrenched at the pinnacle of New Order power.

Thus the final years of the Suharto era witnessed the intensification

and escalation of tensions between the Suharto family and those ascendant modernist Muslim elements of the political class disappointed if not embittered by the remaining constraints placed on their accumulation of financial, industrial and political capital. With urban middle-class Muslims grumbling about the onerous tariffs slapped on imported automobiles to protect Tommy Suharto's mostly Korean-produced 'national car', Amien Rais, chairman of the country's leading modernist Islamic association Muhammadiyah, and himself a prominent member of ICMI, launched a public broadside against the Suharto family's business interests, using revelations that surfaced in a series of well publicized business scandals as the basis for a set of acerbic speeches, articles and books that led to his forced resignation from the governing board of ICMI.⁴⁷ Meanwhile, jockeying for position within the Suharto regime intensified with the approach of the 1997 elections, the 1998 session of the People's Consultative Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat, or MPR) to 'elect' the president and vice-president, and the approaching moment of *sukses* (succession) from Suharto to a new president and, perhaps, a new kind of regime.

Second, and at the same time, the claims by modernist Muslim members of the political class to represent Islam and to capture the popular energies long suppressed with the demolition of the PKI and the disappearance of the *Rakyat* from official discourse ran up against challenges 'from below'. 'Islam', after all, was an overly ambitious banner in a nation boasting the single largest Muslim population and the most popular non-governmental Islamic organizations in the world. With their long histories, deep roots in society and widely divergent theological, institutional and social underpinnings, NU and Muhammadiyah could hardly be so easily captured – or their leaders co-opted – by an ICMI-based network emanating from the state. In particular, ICMI faced strident and vocal opposition from Abdurrahman Wahid ('Gus Dur'), the chairman of Nahdlatul Ulama, who had withdrawn NU from PPP in the mid-1980s and worked to forge close ties with Catholic businessmen and secular NGOs in Jakarta, as well as American and European foundations promoting liberal multiculturalism in Indonesia. In general, the considerable autonomy of associational

⁴⁷ See, for example, M. Amien Rais (1997), *Demi Kepentingan Bangsa*, Pustaka Pelajar, Yogyakarta; and M. Amien Rais (1997), *Refleksi Amien Rais: Dari Persoalan Semut Sampai Gajah*, Gema Insani Press, Jakarta.

life and the great plurality of views long found in the Indonesian Islamic community made the creation and enforcement of a hegemonic state-based 'Islam' a very difficult project.

Beyond the realm of Islamic educational institutions and associational activities, moreover, workers, villagers and poor urban *kampung* dwellers were showing ample evidence of capacity for popular mobilization under decidedly non-religious banners. With industrialization and urbanization came rising numbers of wildcat strikes, land disputes and incidents of football hooliganism, as well as protests over evictions, environmental problems and the marginalization of street hawkers, market stall vendors and small shop owners by the new department stores, supermarkets and shopping malls appearing on urban landscapes in towns and cities around the country.⁴⁸ A fine local example of these broad trends was the series of mass actions witnessed in 1995 in the East Javanese *pesantren* belt town of Pasuruan, which was known for the Islamic piety of its residents. In 1995 alone, Pasuruan saw the picketing of a cigarette factory accused of land-grabbing, the siege of a village hall after allegations of fraud in the election of the village headman, an attack by knife-wielding peasants on a naval base in a dispute over a mango grove, and the burning of a Korean-owned monosodium glutamate (MSG) factory said to be polluting a local river.⁴⁹ Even in a town as piously Muslim as Pasuruan, the underclass (*kelas bawah*) was re-emerging and mobilizing behind causes other than those located under the rubric of Islam. The potential for broader forms of popular mobilization behind decidedly non-Islamic banners also loomed large on the horizon, as signalled by the April 1994 general strike in the East Sumatran city of Medan and the rising popularity of the PDI's Megawati Soekarnopoetri, until her unceremonious ouster by government forces in July 1996. It was amply clear that the *Rakyat* could be reclaimed and re-channelled by a national political project other than Islam.⁵⁰

Third and finally, the ascendancy of modernist Muslims to the highest echelons of the political class, and of university-educated Muslims within the ranks of the urban middle class in general, threatened to diminish and dissolve the very basis on which Islamic

⁴⁸ Basofi Soedirman *et al* (1997), *Bonek: Berani Karena Bersama*, Hipotesa, Surabaya.

⁴⁹ See 'Amuk Massal Warga Sumberanyar', *Tiras*, 9 February 1995, pp 52–53; 'Berebut Tanah Warisan Jepang', *Tiras*, 2 November 1995, pp 71–72; and 'Aksi Massa Berkedok Lingkungan', *Sinar*, 2 December 1995, p 27.

⁵⁰ Santoso, Lukas Luwarso, Gibran Ajidarma, and Irawan Saptono (1997), *Peristiwa 27 Juli*, Aliansi Jurnalis Independen/Institut Studi Arus Informasi, Jakarta.

networks and solidarities worked to transcend class differences and to underpin claims to legitimate power and wealth. After all, among the growing numbers of devout Muslims in Golkar and the armed forces officer corps were many who sought patrons and allies beyond ICMI, just as many new members of the rising Muslim middle class were attracted to the same Westernized, liberal cosmopolitanism that had long been the preserve of Indonesians educated in secular and Christian schools. In their use of modern educational institutions and associations as a launching pad for the capture of state power and the construction of a patronage network, modernist Muslims were following in the footsteps of the aristocratic, Christian and 'technocratic' networks that had preceded them from the Dutch colonial era through the first two decades of the New Order. In their accumulation of capital and their assumption of a distinctly bourgeois lifestyle, pattern of consumption and sense of propriety, many middle-class Muslims came to share the habitus of a class previously dominated by Chinese businessmen, Christian professionals and the aristocracy. As one analyst noted:

'In their mixing with bureaucrats, Chinese financiers and international partners, they become more cosmopolitan and amorphous (in the sense of eroding the communal sentiments of the past) and argue for more tolerance on the part of the *ummat*. In life-style, they carefully imitate all the middle class symbols, with their conspicuous consumption, urbanism, and of course, patronizing style. But internally, they tend to hold on to and nurture *santri* group solidarity, both to secure their assumed representative status as well as to strengthen their internal control. They have their powerful lobbies which look after student organizations and other *ummat* institutions, which make sure that no sign of radicalization comes to the fore, and which ensure that only acceptable leaders can be elected to their national conventions.'⁵¹

With the rapid and sustained industrialization and urbanization of the New Order years, moreover, came a widening gulf between this class and the workers, peasants and urban *kampung* dwellers who figured so

⁵¹ Aswab Mahasin (1990), 'The Santri middle class: an insider's view', in Richard Tanter and Kenneth Young, eds, *The Politics of Middle Class Indonesia*, Monash University Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Clayton, Victoria, p 142.

prominently in daily newspaper reports of wildcat strikes and land disputes. This gulf was increasingly palpable in urban social space and in the lived experience of everyday life in Indonesian cities. As one author wrote with regard to Surabaya:

‘There was also the nagging fear of the mob. Hence, as in Dutch times, *kampung* people were again coming to be seen as socially alien, unpredictable, uncontrollable. Glossy brochures advertising the new housing estates included reassuring pictures of uniformed security staff, conveying the subliminal message, You will be safe here. Social stratification was facilitated by the motor vehicle and air-conditioning. The role of the automobile in causing twentieth-century urban sprawl is well recognized. Air-conditioning has been taken for granted but it has allowed Surabaya, like other prosperous cities of Southeast Asia, to turn inside out, to become a city in which people turn their back on the external environment. Instead of improving the harsh external environment by the time-honored means of shade, water, verandahs, and gardens, developers have created artificial indoor environments. The middle class can now live in air-conditioned houses, travel in air-conditioned cars to air-conditioned offices, and enjoy recreation in air-conditioned malls. However, this artificial environment is all private space, what money can buy. The *kampung* dweller for the most part has to survive without air-conditioning and in public space. As the surface area of concrete, asphalt, and brick increases, so does the ambient temperature in what has always been notorious as a very hot city, especially at the end of the dry season. It is further degraded by the heat and pollution emitted by the other, air-conditioned society. Thus physical comfort is a social divide almost as sharp as skin color in the colonial period.’⁵²

Thus precisely at the moment when a modernist Muslim network based in ICMI was ascending to the pinnacle of state power, and when devout Muslims were enjoying unprecedented upward mobility in the privileged realms of business, the professions and the universities, the plausibility of Islam as a rubric for the assertion of claims to represent the broad mass of the population began to come into question.

These increasingly apparent, awkward and acutely perceived

⁵² Howard W. Dick (2002), *Surabaya, City of Work: A Socioeconomic History, 1900–2000*, Ohio University Center for International Studies, Athens, OH, pp 412–413.

ambiguities, anxieties and tensions prefigured the onset of religious violence in Indonesia in the mid-1990s. These ambiguities and tensions in the position of 'Islam' in Indonesia in the mid-1990s shaped not only the *timing* of the riots that occurred during these years, but also the location, protagonists, targets, mobilizational processes and forms of agency associated with this violence. This pattern is apparent if one considers the universe of cases of religious riots in 1995–97: Purwakarta and Pekalongan in late 1995, Situbondo and Tasikmalaya in late 1996, and Rengasdengklok, Pekalongan, Banjarmasin and Makassar in 1997.

A first step in this direction is to consider the *timing* of the riots against the broader backdrop of modern Indonesian history. After all, 'disturbances' along the lines of those that unfolded in 1995–97 have been relatively rarer – and considerably more concentrated – in Indonesia than is conventionally assumed, and their temporal distribution across the twentieth century deserves close consideration. Concerted attacks on Chinese-owned shops, businesses and homes, Christian (and other non-Muslim) houses of worship and government buildings in provincial towns and cities in Indonesia occurred in discrete time periods: in 1910–19, in 1963 and in 1980, leaving aside for the moment those incidents of violence that were directly connected with events in Jakarta.

These discrete time periods have much in common with 1995–97, insofar as they all correspond closely with historical moments of especially acute and unsettling urgency, anxiety and ambiguity as to the position of Islam and of those who claimed to represent Islam in Indonesian society. From 1910–19, for example, the series of riots that targeted Chinese business establishments and residences in various towns along the northern coast of Central and East Java came at a moment when, as historians have noted, 'the Chinese' were most clearly seen 'to stand in the way of the rise of a native middle class'.⁵³ It was during this decade that Muslim merchants and professionals began to form associations to promote the advancement of modernist Islam in the archipelago, as seen in the founding of the educational and welfare association Muhammadiyah in 1912, and the formation of Sarekat Islam in the same year. Initially conceived as a Chinese-style mutual-help organization or *kongsi* among Muslim *batik* traders and producers,

⁵³ Takashi Shiraishi (1997), 'Anti-Sinicism in Java's New Order', in Daniel Chirot and Anthony Reid, eds, *Essential Outsiders: Chinese and Jews in the Modern Transformation of Southeast Asia and Central Europe*, University of Washington Press, Seattle, WA, p 190.

the Sarekat Islam rapidly evolved into the first major mass movement in the Indies, its rallies, strikes and other activities attracting the participation and attention of hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of 'natives', especially on Java.⁵⁴ But this was also the same decade that saw a marked surge in the prominence and assertiveness of the immigrant Chinese minority in the archipelago, which occurred in tandem with the rise of the nationalist movement in China at the turn of the century and the Chinese revolution of 1911. In 1900, Chinese merchants had founded the Tiong Hoa Hwee Koan, which began to establish modern Chinese-language schools on Java and elsewhere in the archipelago, and in subsequent years prominent members of the Chinese community began to press the Dutch colonial authorities for new privileges in the Indies, most notably legal status on a par with Europeans and the lifting of restrictions on Chinese travel and residence. Meanwhile, the turn of the century had also seen Chinese merchants making inroads in spheres of the economy – *batik* and *kretek* (clove) cigarettes – previously held exclusively by indigenous Muslim merchants.⁵⁵ Thus the riots in various towns in Central and East Java from 1910–19 unfolded against the backdrop of a broader push for recognition by forces claiming to represent Islam and, it is worth noting, at a time when these forces were most clearly and self-consciously imitating non-Muslims, most notably in their founding of schools and associations modelled on those established by Europeans, Christians and Chinese.

Some 50 years later, a second wave of rioting unfolded in various towns of West Java (and, to a lesser extent, elsewhere on Java) in 1963, at a moment of seemingly very different yet in crucial ways similar circumstances to those obtaining in the tumultuous period from 1910–19. The late 1950s, for example, had witnessed the rise of economic nationalism in Indonesia, as seen in the seizure and expropriation of Dutch businesses in the archipelago in 1957–58 and the declaration of a government ban on 'alien-owned' retail stores in rural areas in 1959–60. The 1959 decree was clearly targeted at Chinese merchants, and although it was unevenly implemented, more than 100,000 Chinese residents left Indonesia in 1960, fearing subsequent restrictions and expropriations. The announcement of this decree, it is worth noting,

⁵⁴ Takashi Shiraishi (1990), *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912–1926*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY.

⁵⁵ The Siauw Giap (1966), 'Group conflict in a plural society', *Revue du Sud-Est Asiatique*, Vol 1 and 2, pp 1–31, 185–217.

was made by a cabinet minister affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama at a gathering of 'national' businessmen closely linked with NU and other Muslim parties, and the decree was most assiduously implemented – and extended to prohibit Chinese residence in rural areas – in West Java, where Muslim parties enjoyed special strength.⁵⁶ Overall, such expressions of 'anti-Chinese feeling', it has been noted, were 'most marked among Indonesian business groups determined to expand at the expense of the Chinese' and the right-wing Muslim parties and army officers who represented them, while the left-wing President Soekarno and the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) worked to protect Chinese residents from such attacks.⁵⁷

By 1963, Indonesia was at a major crossroads in terms of domestic and international policy, with the political constellation in the country marked by rising tension between left- and right-wing forces. On the one hand, the early months of 1963 saw Soekarno engaged in efforts to reach a rapprochement with the USA and in negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a new set of loans and economic stabilization policies. Such developments promised to strengthen the position of the army and of those forces representing Muslim urban middle-class and business interests. On the other hand, the early months of the year also saw increasing moves towards an alliance between the Soekarno regime in Jakarta and the Chinese Communist Party leadership in Beijing, presaging a leftward tilt in favour of the PKI at the expense of the army and right-wing Muslim parties, whose influence had been diminished since the ban imposed on Masyumi in 1960. Meanwhile, the termination of martial law on 1 May 1963 spelled a diminution of the army's powers, thus weakening the hand of the strongest remaining anti-communist force in the country. It was thus, once again, against the backdrop of heightened tensions between social forces identified with 'Islam' on the one hand, and elements deemed to stand in their path, on the other, that riots targeting Chinese businesses, residences and houses of worship unfolded in several towns in West Java (and to a lesser extent elsewhere in Central and East Java) in mid-1963.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ See J.A.C. Mackie, ed (1976), 'Anti-Chinese outbreaks in Indonesia, 1959–68', in *The Chinese in Indonesia: Five Essays*, University Press of Hawaii, Honolulu, pp 77–138.

⁵⁷ Herbert Feith (1963), 'The dynamics of guided democracy', in Ruth McVey, ed, *Indonesia*, HRAF Press, New Haven, CT, p 349.

⁵⁸ On the riots, see Selo Soemardjan, ed (1963), *Gerakan 10 Mei 1963 di Sukabumi*, P.T. Eresco, Bandung. On the national-level political backdrop, see Mackie, *supra* note 56, at pp 82–110.

Some 17 years later, a third wave of similar riots occurred in 1980, in several towns and cities in Central Java and in Makassar. These riots took place in the context of rising hopes and fears as to the strength of 'Islam' in the country, as marked by the above-noted strong showing of PPP in the 1977 general elections and the rising assertiveness of the party in the national parliament (DPR), as well as the considerable interest generated by the Iranian Revolution of 1978–79. Faced with recurring forms of resistance by PPP in the DPR, including several well publicized 'walk-outs' by party members in protest against various pieces of government-imposed legislation, President Suharto had launched a broadside against organized Islam in a speech in Pekanbaru in March 1980. There were certain groups, Suharto charged, which had yet to demonstrate their full commitment to Pancasila, the formal state ideology since independence, which was based on monotheistic – but multi-faith – principles. Here the President was clearly referring to PPP and other Islamic organizations such as HMI, which had refused to accept the five points of Pancasila as their founding principles.⁵⁹ Yet even as the regime's leading security and intelligence officials – most notably the Catholic general Benny Murdani and the Protestant admiral Sudomo – began working to rein in and redirect PPP and other errant Islamic organizations, leading dissident figures in Jakarta launched a protest against this misuse of Pancasila by the President. In May 1980, a group of 50 prominent Indonesians, including many influential retired generals and two former prime ministers, delivered a 'Statement of Concern' (*Pernyataan Keprihatinan*) to Parliament. The members of this 'Petition of Fifty' (*Petisi Limapuluh*) were predominantly devout Muslims and included a handful of prominent Muslim leaders affiliated with Masyumi and PPP.⁶⁰ This unprecedented public protest against the attack by the Suharto regime on Islam thus loomed large in the background of the rioting that unfolded in Makassar in May 1980,⁶¹ and in Solo, Semarang and other towns in

⁵⁹ On this speech, see David Jenkins (1984), *Suharto and His Generals: Indonesian Military Politics 1975–1983*, Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, Ithaca, NY; and C. van Dijk (1980), 'Major developments in Indonesia in the first half of 1980: the General Elections Act and two speeches by Suharto', *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs*, Vol 14, No 2, pp 125–152, especially pp 125–143.

⁶⁰ On the Petisi Limapuluh group, see Jenkins, *supra* note 59, especially pp 162–170.

⁶¹ On the rioting in Makassar (then known as Ujungpandang), see, for example, 'An anti-Chinese rampage', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 2 May 1980, pp 24–25.

Central Java in late November of the same year.⁶² Thus the riots of 1995–97 discussed in the pages above fit within the broader historical pattern of similar ‘disturbances’ in twentieth-century Indonesia: such riots occurred only during periods of heightened ambiguity, anxiety and anticipation with regard to the position of Islam and those forces claiming to represent it in Indonesian society.

Second, the geographic pattern of rioting in 1995–97 was also distinctly coloured by religious context, as seen in the *location* of riots in provincial towns and cities where the institutions of Islamic learning, association and political activity enjoyed a special claim on the public sphere. All of these towns and cities were known for the pronounced Islamic piety of their inhabitants, be they Sundanese as in Purwakarta, Rengasdengklok and Tasikmalaya, north coastal (*pasisir*) Javanese as in Pekalongan, Madurese as in Situbondo, Bugis–Makassarese in Makassar, or Banjarese in Banjarmasin. All of these towns and cities were well known for their density of *pesantren*, *madrasah*, IAIN, and/or other Islamic educational institutions, as well as Nadhlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah and other Muslim associational networks, typically including Al Irshad and Persatuan Islam (Persis). All of these towns had long histories of political organization and activity under the banner of Islam, ranging from the Sarekat Islam’s rallies between 1910 and 1920 to Nahdlatul Ulama and/or Masyumi in the 1950s and 60s, and PPP presented a major challenge to Golkar in all of these localities from the late 1970s through the 1990s. Most, if not all, of these towns and cities, it is worth adding, were also marked by experiences of armed rebellion under the rubric of Darul Islam in the 1950s and early 60s. This movement for an Islamic state in the early post-independence period was based in areas – West Java, the northern coast (*pasisir*) of Central Java, South Sulawesi, Aceh and South Kalimantan – which constituted the hinterlands of the towns and cities where religious riots unfolded in the mid-1990s.⁶³

⁶² On the riots in Solo, Semarang and other towns in Java, see, for example, ‘Jawa Tengah, Normal Kembali’, *Tempo*, 6 December 1980, pp 12–14; ‘Tidak Ada Lagi Jam Malam’, *Tempo*, 13 December 1980, pp 12–14; ‘Dari Pasar Klewer ke Pasar Ya’ik’, *Tempo*, 13 December 1980, pp 54–56; P. Bambang Siswoyo (1981), *Huru Hara Solo Semarang*, BP Bhakti Pertiwi, Surakarta; and C. van Dijk (1981), ‘Survey of major political developments in Indonesia in the second half of 1980: crime prevention, anti-Chinese riots and the PDI Party Congress’, *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs*, Vol 15, No 1, pp 93–125, especially pp 97–101.

⁶³ See C. van Dijk (1981), *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam: The Darul Islam in Indonesia*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague.

Alongside the historical and sociological depth of Islamic institutions of worship, learning and associational and political activity in these towns and cities, all of the localities that experienced religious rioting in 1995–97 were ones in which the tensions between the position of Islam and non-Muslim sources of power, prestige and wealth had grown especially acute over the course of the New Order era. The sites of rioting in 1995–97, after all, were either major ‘Outer Island’ regional urban centres – Banjarmasin and Makassar – or Javanese provincial towns – Purwakarta, Pekalongan, Rengasdengklok, Situbondo, Tasikmalaya – where small-scale Muslim merchants, moneylenders and small-scale manufacturers faced marginalization in the face of well capitalized Chinese *konglomerat*, whether Jakarta-based or local in origin. Like the *batik* and *kretek* traders and producers in Kudus and other towns in Java in 1910–19, small-time Muslim shopkeepers and entrepreneurs in such towns and cities found themselves dwarfed and dislodged in the 1990s. These were towns and cities that had witnessed the supplanting of public markets by supermarkets, department stores and shopping malls, the eviction of local residents to make way for business establishments and residential subdivisions, and the marginalization of small local firms by larger companies enjoying greater access to capital and closer cooperation from local officials of the state. In all these localities, such encroachments and intrusions upon predominantly pious Muslim communities and their livelihoods were seen as involving and benefiting Chinese businessmen, whether Jakarta-based magnates or so-called *konglomerat lokal*, who through the corruption and collusion of government officials were able to ride roughshod over legitimate local concerns.⁶⁴ In many of these localities, moreover, the increasing awareness of the glass ceiling imposed by Chinese capital was fairly matched by a growing sensitivity to the anomalous prominence of Christian churches and schools in the midst of predominantly devout Muslim populations: hence the common backdrop of controversies over permits for the construction of new churches, claims of surreptitious Christian services in private residences, and accusations of creeping *Kristenisasi* in these towns and cities.

Third, an examination of the *mobilizational processes* by which riots

⁶⁴ For the machinations of a much despised *konglomerat lokal* in Rengasdengklok, for example, see Benny Subianto (1997), ‘Potret Konglomerat Lokal’, in *Huru-Hara Rengasdengklok*, Institut Studi Arus Informasi, Jakarta, pp 92–108.

unfolded in these towns and cities in 1995–97 reveals the common prominence of institutions of Islamic worship and learning in the protagonists, the nodal points of mobilization and the discursive points of reference – and rumour – which marked the onset of these ‘disturbances’. Time and again, these riots began with perceived insults, violations and abuses suffered by locally venerated Islamic figures and institutions. In Purwakarta, for example, crowds gathered to protest the humiliation of a young Muslim schoolgirl by a Chinese store owner who accused her of shoplifting. The news that she had been forced to clean the store toilets while wearing her *jilbab* (headscarf) was deemed particularly offensive just a few short years after government authorities had relented in the face of widespread and well publicized demands and allowed schoolgirls to wear the Muslim headscarf to classes.⁶⁵ Indeed, the *jilbab* had emerged in the 1990s as perhaps the most visible signifier of the extension of claims by Islam on the urban public sphere, with demands for recognition met by the government but pointedly ignored and abnegated in the incident in Purwakarta.⁶⁶

Similar insults to the integrity and public status of Islam were also prominent in all of the other riots that occurred in 1995–97. The shredding of a copy of the Qur’an in Pekalongan, the beating of a *kyai* (traditionalist Islamic scholar) and rumours of his death at the hands of the police in Tasikmalaya, a blasphemy case in Situbondo, and a dispute over a prayer-house drum in Rengasdengklok all exemplify this shared feature of the riots, as did the killing of the IAIN lecturer’s daughter in Makassar. The riots in Pekalongan and Banjarmasin in early–mid-1997 similarly arose in the context of heightened tension between supporters of the Islamic party PPP and Golkar’s backers in the lead-up to the election of that year, as well as in PPP strongholds where Golkar rallies were perceived as unwelcome and insulting intrusions.

Muslim associations and institutions of learning and worship also played prominent roles in the transmission – and interpretation – of these discursive points of reference, as well as in the process of

⁶⁵ For a taste of the publicity surrounding the dropping of the ban on the *jilbab*, see ‘Penerapan Jilbab Tunggu SK Dirjen’, *Surabaya Post*, 18 February 1991; and ‘Aini, Arti, Nurul, dan Widy: Bersyukur Meski Harus Tergusur’, *Surabaya Post*, 24 February 1991.

⁶⁶ For two very different treatments of the significance of the *jilbab* and the veil, see Suzanne Brenner (1996), ‘Reconstructing self and society: Javanese Muslim women and “The Veil”’, *American Ethnologist*, Vol 23, No 4, pp 673–697; and Anne-Emmanuelle Berger (1998), ‘The newly veiled woman: Irigaray, specularly, and the Islamic veil’, *Diacritics*, Vol 28, No 1, pp 93–119.

assembly by which crowds gathered and mobilized. As suggested above, these were localities where ‘professional Muslims’ – religious teachers, members of the local Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) and local leaders of the student associations HMI and PMII branches – were thick on the ground, prominent in local society and available for service as ‘fire-tenders’ and ‘conversion specialists’ who could play crucial roles in stoking the fires of religious tension and providing interpretive frames for the extrapolation of local disputes into larger interreligious issues.⁶⁷ As in the ‘disturbances’ of 1963 and 1980 (and, no doubt, those that occurred from 1910–19), ‘focalization’ and ‘transvaluation’⁶⁸ of the incidents deemed insulting to ‘Islam’ circulated through networks of *pesantren* and IAIN students, via HMI and PMII branches, *tarekat* (Sufi brotherhood) groups and the ranks of the PPP, through conversations, telephone calls and, by the 1990s, photocopied flyers, e-mail messages and the pages of Muslim newspapers and magazines. In virtually every case, the ‘assembling process’⁶⁹ involved mosques, *pesantren*, IAIN and other sites of Islamic worship and schooling as key locations for mobilization in defence of the faith. In several instances, this process was facilitated, accelerated and amplified by Friday midday prayers at local mosques, or by the backdrop of Ramadhan. The role of ‘riot crystals’⁷⁰ moreover, was typically played by *santri* (pupils) from the local *pesantren* or HMI students from the IAIN, who rallied their classmates together to seek justice or retribution, delivered impassioned speeches at local mosques, and otherwise served as the ‘shock troops’ of the riots.

Fourth and finally, the forms, targets and consequences of the rioting reflected the context of acutely perceived ambiguity, awkwardness and anticipation with regard to the position of ‘Islam’ in Indonesian society. The violence of the rioting crowds, after all, was directed not against persons, but against *buildings* and *property*: in all the riots, stores were damaged and burned down, and goods were looted and set alight in the streets, with looting overshadowed by this symbolic

⁶⁷ Brass (1997), *supra* note 22, at p 16.

⁶⁸ On focalization and transvaluation, see Stanley J. Tambiah (1996), *Leveling Crowds: Ethnonationalist Conflicts and Collective Violence in South Asia*, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, p 81.

⁶⁹ See Clark McPhail and David Miller (1973), ‘The assembling process: a theoretical and empirical examination’, *American Sociological Review*, Vol 38, December, pp 721–735.

⁷⁰ See Elias Canetti (1984), *Crowds and Power*, The Noonday Press, New York, pp 73–75.

destruction – rather than consumption – of commodities and economic power. In terms of local public space, the riots culminated – and, typically without effective intervention from the authorities, petered out – with these fires. As the anthropologist James Siegel has suggested, the burning of Chinese property, Christian churches and, in many cases, government buildings and Golkar offices, can thus be seen as a disavowal, an assertion of the moral status of Islam precisely at the historical moment when those who saw themselves as representing Islam and asserted moral claims to power in Indonesian society on this basis found themselves most unsure of the nature of their identities.⁷¹ After all, like Chinese and Christians before them, Muslim Indonesians were now entering the core circuitries of the market and state power with unprecedented success, and doing so in the name of Islam. Unlike the ‘disturbances’ of 1910–19, 1963 and 1980, which had typically begun with religious processions, traffic accidents and other incidents between people who did not know one another, many of the riots of 1995–97 began with disputes between Muslim and Chinese neighbours living cheek by jowl in crowded urban neighbourhoods. Thus even as rioters attacked and burned police stations, government buildings and Golkar offices to voice their demands for public recognition for Islam, they ‘destroyed Chinese wealth [and Christian churches] not to shame Chinese [and Christians], but to show that they were unlike them’.⁷²

As for the aftermath and consequences of these episodes, each riot resulted in a bewildering flood of commentary and analysis, with interpretations variously blaming social inequality, government policy, Chinese/Christian hegemony or elite conspiracy for the ‘disturbances’. But however sociological or conspiratorial the register, all the hand-wringing, breast-beating and finger-pointing ultimately led to unanswered questions surrounding the representation and recognition of Islam and the Muslim majority of the population. Were the interests and aspirations of Muslims inadequately addressed under the current political and economic system? Who could – and should – speak on their behalf? Was their power to be pathologized or celebrated, suppressed or appropriated?

⁷¹ See James T. Siegel (1998), ‘Early thoughts on the violence of May 13 and 14, 1998, in Jakarta’, *Indonesia*, Vol 66, October, pp 75–108.

⁷² James T. Siegel (1986), *Solo in the New Order: Language and Hierarchy in an Indonesian City*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, p 246.

Against this backdrop, it is hardly surprising that the onset of economic crisis and political transition in early 1998 heightened fears – and hopes – of the mobilizational power of ‘Islam’ in Indonesian society. With Habibie, ICMI and the ascendant network of modernist Muslims waiting in the wings and increasingly impatient for the removal of remaining obstacles to their assumption of power, sensitivities as to the position and status of Islam were at an all-time high in Indonesia. Small wonder that a surge of mobilization in early 1998 by urban middle-class Muslim students and professionals, championed by such figures as Muhammadiyah chairman (and prominent ICMI member) Amien Rais and crystallizing under the banner of *Reformasi*, was accompanied by a major riot in Jakarta and several other major cities in mid-May of 1998, much as earlier moments of – real or potential – political transition in Jakarta (1945–46, 1965–66, 1974) – had also been marked by violent crowd actions in the national capital region.⁷³ This transition, culminating in the resignation of Suharto in late May 1998, set in motion a series of tectonic shifts in Indonesian politics and society, which prefigured the next phase of religious violence observed in 1998–2001, anti-witchcraft campaigns and interreligious *pogroms*.

The apogee and evisceration of ‘Islam’, 1998–2001

With the ascension of B.J. Habibie to the presidency in late May 1998 came the long-anticipated elevation of ‘Islam’ to the seat of national state power in Indonesia. Habibie, after all, had long served as the chairman of Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslimin Se-Indonesia (ICMI, the All-Indonesia Association of Islamic Intellectuals) and more generally as the patron and promoter of a broad variety of modernist Muslim activists and organizations seeking patronage and protection from the state. Although many individual Muslims had reservations about Habibie’s own piety, honesty and effectiveness as a leader, his ascension to the presidency represented a major triumph for a wide range of groups organizing under the banner of Islam.⁷⁴ His cabinet

⁷³ On this series of events, see John T. Sidel (1998), ‘*Macet Total*: logics of circulation and accumulation in the demise of Indonesia’s New Order’, *Indonesia*, Vol 66, October, pp 159–194.

⁷⁴ See, for example, the comments of Ahmad Sumargono, a leading light of KISDI, the Indonesian Committee for Solidarity with the Muslim World, and Partai Bulan Bintang, the Crescent and Stars Party, in ‘Ahmad Sumargono: “Kalau Status Quo ini Menguntungkan Islam, Mengapa Tidak?”’ *Tempo*, 23 November 1998, pp 32–35.

included prominent members of ICMI, and other politicians affiliated with a number of modernist Islamic organizations assumed formal and informal positions of power and influence in his administration. Never before had forces favouring the so-called Islamization of Indonesian state and society enjoyed such proximity to power. Small wonder that Amien Rais, chairman of the modernist Islamic association Muhammadiyah and champion of the university campus-based campaign for *Reformasi* and Suharto's resignation, helped to wind down student protests in late May and early June 1998, with pronouncements that the new Habibie administration deserved a six-month trial period.

At the same time, however, the position of Habibie – and of Islam more broadly – remained fragile within the Indonesian state, with the powers of the new president and his allies circumscribed and challenged from both within and without. The retention of the former Suharto adjutant General Wiranto as Minister of Defence and Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief, for example, signalled the limits of Habibie's influence within the powerful military establishment, even as the realities of the Asian economic crisis dictated further subordination of Habibie's famously 'nationalist' pet projects to the austerity and discipline of an IMF re-stabilization programme. Even within Golkar, the long dominant party in Parliament (and in the People's Consultative Assembly tasked with selecting the president and vice-president), Habibie's position soon appeared precarious. Within weeks of Habibie's elevation to the presidency, a bitter fight for the Golkar party leadership surfaced, in which Akbar Tanjung, a Habibie ally and former head of the modernist Islamic student association HMI, only narrowly defeated a former defence minister closely associated with anti-Islamist elements in the military establishment and beyond. The position of Islam within the Indonesian state, it was clear, was far from hegemonic, and the possibilities for promoting substantive Islamization remained highly circumscribed.

It was in this context of evident insecurity and uncertainty within the Indonesian state that President Habibie initiated a process of liberalization and opening to Indonesian society. The summer of 1998 witnessed the loosening of restrictions on press freedoms and the release of scores of political prisoners, even as greater freedom of association encouraged the formation of literally dozens of new political parties. Before the end of the year, moreover, plans for a general election in mid-1999 had already been announced, with many of the restrictions of the long Suharto era lifted to allow for much freer competition. This

move in the direction of democratization was soon accompanied by shifts towards decentralization, with the passage of two important pieces of legislation on regional autonomy in 1999. The new laws devolved considerable administrative and fiscal powers to regencies (*kabupaten*), cities (*kotamadya*) and, to a lesser extent, provinces (*propinsi*), while allowing local assemblies (DPRD) to elect regents (*bupati*), mayors (*walikota*) and governors (*gubernur*), positions hitherto essentially appointed by the Ministry of Home Affairs in Jakarta.

Given the overwhelming majority of 'statistical' Muslims in Indonesia as well as the Islamizing trends in the country noted by countless observers since the 1980s, many figures within the Habibie administration understandably hoped that the political space opened up by these moves would be occupied in large measure by forces rallying behind the banner of Islam. After nearly a decade of claiming to represent not just Islam but millions of Indonesian Muslims, this segment of the national political class projected considerable self-confidence in this regard. What constraints continued to circumscribe and threaten the new regime could be ascribed to powerful enemies within the Indonesian state (eg residual secular and Christian influences in the military) and the international arena (ie Christian and Jewish conspiracies to contain Islam and oppress Muslims throughout the world). Against these essentially external, hostile and parasitic forces stood the Habibie administration as the organic representative of Indonesian society, a society of Muslims. Dissent from within this society – continuing student demonstrations and other protests against the regime – was demonized as the work of communist agitators and their dupes, secretly backed by Christian generals, businessmen and politicians, if not the CIA and Mossad.⁷⁵

Yet with the movement towards political liberalization, democratization and decentralization initiated by Habibie, such claims to represent Islam in Indonesia fell under increasing strain and strife, as the fixity and boundaries of all sorts of identities in the country were undermined and in some cases overwhelmed by a multiplicity of competing interpellations. Within ICMI and its satellite organizations, after all, a broad diversity of modernist Muslims had long coexisted, ranging from non-devout seekers of patronage to pious but highly westernized Muslim liberals to committed Islamists of decidedly puritan hues. More

⁷⁵ See, for example, the various articles published in the October 1998 edition of *Media Dakwah*, a monthly magazine operated by Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia.

importantly perhaps, the authority of ICMI and the various Islamic activists and organizations that sought protection and patronage under Habibie's wings had always rested on its embeddedness within the central state apparatus of a closed authoritarian regime, and on its access to the perks, privileges and prestige of state power. This narrowly modernist Muslim stream within the political class thus rested like a small oil slick upon the vast ocean of Indonesian Islam, with its rich diversity of Muslim institutions of education, association and worship historically independent from state control and its huge population of avowed believers across the sprawling archipelago much poorer, more rural and much more modestly educated than those who, from the pulpits of state power in Jakarta, claimed to speak on their behalf.

Hopes that Habibie and his allies could win the elections of mid-1999 were destined to be dashed, as the administration party Golkar suffered a precipitous decline to 22% of the vote, with a welter of modernist Muslim-led parties such as PPP, PAN, PBB and PK winning only another 21%. By contrast, the decidedly ecumenical Partai Demokrasi Indonesia – Perjuangan (PDIP, or Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle), led by Megawati Soekarnoputri, the daughter of Indonesia's national hero and first president, was placed first with nearly 34% of the vote, while the Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB, or National Awakening Party) led by Abdurrahman Wahid, long-time head of the 'traditionalist' Muslim association Nahdlatul Ulama, came in third after Golkar with 12.7%. With this election result, the possibility of cobbling together a winning coalition of Golkar and allied Islamic parties to (re)elect Habibie in the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) was foreclosed, and the threat of a Megawati presidency loomed large on the horizon. Thus in the October 1999 MPR session, the main Islamic parties – PPP, PBB, PAN and PK – formed a Central Axis (*Poros Tengah*) in support of the liberal traditionalist Wahid as president, forcing the 'secular nationalist' Megawati to settle for the vice-presidency instead. With this outcome, and with Wahid refusing to reward his erstwhile Central Axis supporters with cabinet seats or other concessions, by the end of 1999 Islam had experienced a rapid decline and reversal of fortunes from its apogee in the preceding year. After a transitional administration dominated by modernist Muslims and protective of Islamist groups, Indonesia was now ruled by a president identified with traditionalist Islam, liberalism and accommodation with Christians, and a vice-president whose party included large numbers of non-Muslims (more than one-third of its parliamentary slate) and few prominent

members with any history of Islamic schooling or association. By mid-1999, the notion of Islam as a universalist faith and force in Indonesia, so seemingly ascendant in the years leading up to 1998, had fallen prey to the divisive and particularistic dynamics of competitive elections.

This pattern of dramatic change – and abiding uncertainty – regarding the position of Islam in the Indonesian public sphere prefigured decisive shifts in the pattern of religious violence from mid-1998 through 1999. First, after several years of ‘disturbances’ targeting Chinese business establishments and non-Muslim houses of worship in provincial towns and cities around the archipelago, and in the wake of the May 1998 riot in Jakarta (and several other cities), the by now familiar repertoire of religious riots and church burnings disappeared from the stage of Indonesian public life. Although in the first weeks and early months after the rioting in Jakarta there were numerous reports of harassment and intimidation suffered by Indonesians of Chinese ancestry around the archipelago,⁷⁶ the phenomenon of religious rioting described above soon petered out and vanished from view.

As far as religious violence was concerned, the fading of attacks on ethnic-Chinese property, non-Muslim houses of worship and government buildings by crowds mobilized under the banner of Islam during this period represented an important change worthy of examination. For contrary to suppositions of deep-rooted ‘ethnic hatred’ or ‘economic resentment’, the rising tide of unemployment, inflation and hardship for ordinary Indonesians across the country and the easing of authoritarian restrictions on popular mobilization did not combine to spell a return to riots in 1998–99, much less an escalation in the frequency or violence of such disturbances. Instead, with the assumption of power in Jakarta by forces closely identified with the promotion of Islam, it was the shift in the constellation of religious authority in Indonesian state and society that prefigured the disappearance of religious rioting of a certain kind. If in 1995–97, after all, the *upward* push for the recognition of Islam in Indonesian society had pitted the defenders of the faith in Indonesian society against the stubborn residues of Christian and ‘Chinese’ power in the hierarchies of state and market, with Habibie’s ascension to the presidency in mid-1998 the push for recognition was no longer *upwards* but rather *downwards* and *outwards*. For with the effective capture of state power in Jakarta, the greatest expectations and anxieties as to the position of

⁷⁶ See, for example, ‘Sebagian WNI Etnis Tionghoa di Jatim Masih Galau’, *Suara Pembaruan*, 29 June 1998.

Islam in Indonesia no longer centred on a fixed hierarchy located within a centralized state and now were redirected and diffused within the broader, murkier realm of Indonesian society.

Meanwhile, a third and broader shift in the nature and direction of religious violence became evident in the months following Habibie's ascension to the presidency, namely the emergence of seemingly 'horizontal' conflict of a popular and highly murderous nature. As could be expected, the effects of the first change of president in three decades in Jakarta were soon to trickle down to the cities, towns and villages of the archipelago in terms of access to state power and patronage. With the removal of the certainty and the centralization of state power in the Suharto era, and their replacement by a transitional form of government moving towards competitive elections and the de-concentration and decentralization of state power, moreover, the fixity of the very hierarchy connecting locality to Centre was undermined, as were the boundaries of the jurisdictions governed by those asserting authority within this hierarchy.

Under the New Order, the circuitries of power connecting villages to towns to provincial cities to Jakarta were centrally wired in the national capital and coursed through the military, the civil service, Golkar, various pseudo-parliamentary bodies, and schools and universities. Competition for power and patronage within the political class was thus confined and channelled – vertically, as it were – within the state's coercive and ideological apparatuses, as rival networks defined by educational and religious affiliations and identities fought for coveted appointed positions (eg military commands, governorships, seats in various pseudo-parliamentary bodies) and associated perks (eg construction contracts and criminal franchises). Against this backdrop, the demise of the New Order and the promise of competitive elections on the horizon carried significant implications. Instead of individuated competition channelled vertically and confined laterally within the state, various streams or currents (*aliran*) within the political class now found themselves competing – collectively and horizontally, as it were – not (only) in and for the state, but (also) in and for society. Thus the boundaries of identities and interests in Indonesian society, long determined by a fixed, hierarchical source of recognition firmly anchored in the state and centred in Jakarta, were left in flux.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ On this point, see Henk Schulte Nordholt (2003), 'Renegotiating boundaries: access, agency and identity in post-Soeharto Indonesia', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, Vol 159, No 4, pp 550–589.

The implications of this loosening and shifting of boundaries were evident in a variety of violent new conflicts. In some cases, these were boundaries of property and territory, as seen in countless seizures of land and fights over control of mines, forests and coastal shorelines. In numerous other cases, the boundaries concerned were those of local criminal rackets, with rival gangs in Jakarta and other cities initiating *antar-kampung* (inter-neighbourhood) skirmishes to determine the extent of their claims over over 'turf' under conditions of indeterminate or fluctuating franchise. More broadly, with the de-concentration of power in Jakarta and the move towards decentralization in the provinces, the very boundaries of administrative units came into question, with local politicians vying for the subdivision (*pemekaran*) of countless villages, regencies and provinces in the months and years after Suharto's fall from the presidency.

In many cases, contestation was framed in terms of the boundaries of collective identities – whether cast in terms of community, clan, ethnicity or religious faith – whose fixity was no longer assured. Thus the months after Suharto's fall saw the proliferation of cases of *main hakim sendiri*, mob lynchings of suspected thieves by members of village and neighbourhood communities, especially on Java.⁷⁸ Meanwhile, November 1998 saw a violent skirmish on the island of Sumba between hundreds of members of rival clans – one affiliated with the local *bupati*, the other with the head of the local assembly – armed with spears and knives, which left a reported 100 casualties in its wake.⁷⁹ Coordinated attacks on Madurese immigrant communities, already witnessed in early 1997 in parts of West Kalimantan, subsequently recurred in the province and spread to areas of Central Kalimantan, with armed groups claiming to represent the proudly 'indigenous' Dayak – and later Malay – ethnic groups effecting the 'cleansing' of tens of thousands of 'outsiders' from these localities.⁸⁰

Against this backdrop, it is hardly surprising that much of the 'horizontal' violence that began to unfold in 1998–99 assumed the form

⁷⁸ Kees van Dijk (2002), 'The good, the bad and the ugly: explaining the unexplainable: amuk massa in Indonesia', and Freek Colombijn, 'Maling, maling! The lynching of petty criminals', in Freek Colombijn and J. Thomas Lindblad, eds, *Roots of Violence in Indonesia: Contemporary Violence in Historical Perspective*, KITLV Press, Leiden, pp 277–297, 299–329.

⁷⁹ Jacqueline A.C. Vel (2001), 'Tribal battle in a remote island: crisis and violence in Sumba (eastern Indonesia)', *Indonesia*, Vol 72, October, pp 141–158.

⁸⁰ International Crisis Group (2001), *Communal Violence in Indonesia: Lessons From Kalimantan*, International Crisis Group, 27 June, Jakarta/Brussels.

of specifically interreligious pogroms. Religious faith had long served in Indonesia as the primary marker of public identities insisted upon – and enforced by – the state, and as a key determinant of point of entry into the political class. Not only was the ascension to the presidency of a politician closely identified with Islam thus experienced beyond Jakarta in terms of religiously coded local repercussions for the distribution of state offices and patronage, but the turn towards open politics and competitive elections laid open the question of the very basis of claims to religious authority and state power. If under a centralized, closed authoritarian regime, claims of representation were imposed and enforced from above, now under conditions of political openness and competition, the boundaries of religious authority had to be affirmed from without and from below. Thus the first few years after Suharto's fall saw, for example, groups identified with rival Protestant sects clashing in violent skirmishes in the tiny island of Nias off the north-western coast of Sumatra⁸¹ and the burning and destruction of dozens of homes identified with members of a 'Medi' cult by their Muslim neighbours in a village in the West Javanese town of Tasikmalaya.⁸² Beyond such highly localized conflicts, moreover, larger-scale episodes of violence also unfolded under the sign of Islam and religious faith, as seen first in the case of an anti-witchcraft campaign on Java, and then in Muslim-Christian pogroms in the provinces of Maluku and Maluku Utara, and in the Central Sulawesi regency of Poso.

The anti-witchcraft campaigns on Java in 1998–99 and the interreligious pogroms in Poso and Maluku in 1999–2001 all represented a decisive shift in the pattern of religious violence in Indonesia from the preceding phase of riots in 1995–97. This shift was evident in the very *forms* that violence assumed, with murderous attacks on individuals (in Java) and entire neighbourhoods and villages (in Poso and Maluku) replacing, as it were, the earlier exclusive focus on the burning of buildings and property. These attacks claimed hundreds, indeed, a few thousands, of lives, and led to the forced displacement of thousands of people from their homes, neighbourhoods and villages. This shift was also quite evident in the new *locations*,

⁸¹ Edward Peake (2000), 'Tradition, Christianity, and the state in understandings of sickness and healing in South Nias, Indonesia', PhD thesis, University of London.

⁸² These events are described in a brief unpublished account obtained by the author: Tim Advokasi PC PMII Tasikmalaya (2000), 'Rusuh di Kampung Hanja', July, Tasikmalaya.

protagonists and *mobilizational processes* in and through which the violence unfolded in parts of rural Java in 1998–99 and in Poso and Maluku in 1999–2001. The very ways in which this violence was *religious* were also markedly different from the riots of the previous years.

As suggested by the virtual disappearance of the kind of religious riots seen in 1995–97, the emergence, spread, transformation and fading of religious pogroms in 1998–2001 reflected a national conjuncture that shaped the nature and direction of violence at that time. Most obviously, this conjuncture was one in which the forces associated with the promotion of ‘Islam’ in Indonesian public life were first launched into the seats of state power in Jakarta, soon embattled from without and within, and eventually eclipsed and ousted from power. The effects of this precipitous ‘rise and fall of Islam’ in 1998–2001 on the national political stage rapidly trickled down through the distribution of power and patronage in provinces, regencies, towns and villages around the Indonesian archipelago. The local effects were especially destabilizing in localities where the networks (*jaringan*) connecting local networks of politicians, civil servants (retired and active), military and police officers, businessmen and gangsters to Jakarta were defined and divided along religious lines, and where local boundaries of authority – and balances of power – were redrawn through *pemekaran*, the formation of new districts, regencies and provinces (most obviously in the creation of the new province of Maluku Utara).

Such palpable tremors of political realignments rippling across the archipelago at this conjuncture, moreover, were accompanied by deeper, perhaps somewhat less discernible, tectonic shifts in the very structures of religious identity, authority and power in Indonesia. As the anthropologist James Siegel has argued, the loosening of the centralized authoritarian state’s surveillance and control during the political liberalization initiated by Habibie in the latter half of 1998 called into question not only the established hierarchies of power and patronage in Indonesia, but also the very source and structure of recognition and identity for Indonesians around the archipelago. This state of uncertainty was profoundly destabilizing for locally entrenched religious institutions – whether traditionalist Islamic associations such as Nahdlatul Ulama and Al-Khaira’at or Protestant churches such as Gereja Kristen Sulawesi Tengah and Gereja Protestan Maluku – which in one way or another had secured local niches beneath and within the New Order state and

thus kept at bay persistent questions about the boundaries of their authority and identity.

This state of uncertainty was also profoundly destabilizing for many people, as perhaps best exemplified by a villager in the East Javanese regency of Banyuwangi (the epicentre of anti-witchcraft activity in 1998) described by Siegel, who found himself wondering – and asking others – whether he might, in fact, be a practitioner of black magic, or *dukun santet*. ‘This man could not tell from his own interrogation of himself whether he was a sorcerer. He asks how he is seen by others, and he thinks that they may know something about him that he does not know himself.’⁸³ This villager’s self-doubts provide something of an extreme ‘limit case’ of the implications of the breakdown of recognition and sociality for the onset of violence. ‘The feeling of being possessed – if not the posing of the question “Am I a witch?”’ – Siegel argues, was a precondition for the outbreak of the anti-witchcraft campaign on Java in 1998–99:

‘It indicates that, at a certain moment, there was not merely uncertainty about identity, which means that one doubts who one is, as though one had a range of known possible identities. To be a witch, at least in Java, is to be invested with a power heterogeneous to all social identity. Thus there is also the possibility that one could be someone completely different from anything or anyone one knows. The impossibility of relying on social opinion opens up infinite possibilities within the person. But these possibilities are not the ones imagination presents.

Accused of witchcraft, I can find no reflection of myself. I therefore ask, “Am I a witch?,” but I do so futilely. To ask this question is to say that I cannot put myself in the place that others once placed me. I can no longer see myself as they saw me at an earlier time in my everyday identity. Earlier I would be able to say, “I am not a witch,” because I would not be able to find in myself the confirmation that the accusations of my neighbors were true. But under conditions that prevailed during the witch hunt, self-image disappeared as multiple possibilities of identity thrust themselves forward. “Witch,” under that condition, is a name for the incapacity to figure oneself.

The difference between witch and murderer of witch collapses

⁸³ James T. Siegel (2001), ‘Suharto, witches’, *Indonesia*, Vol 71, April, p 36.

when both are thought to be inhabited by death and feel it urgent to kill to save themselves. They are governed by the feeling that death is already present in them and in those near to them. The capacity to die replaces social identity. To rid themselves of it they must kill. They have the attributes of the witch. They hope that murder will restore normality.’⁸⁴

As Siegel suggests, this radical uncertainty – and the ensuing violence – recalled another conjuncture in modern Indonesian history, the period of anti-communist pogroms in 1965–66, not just in rural East Java but elsewhere in the archipelago as well. Those years, after all, had witnessed sudden, rapid regime change, the breakdown of established structures of power and patronage, recognition and identity, and a climate of widespread fear, and not just among those Indonesians affiliated with the Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI) – fear of being killed by the communists, as well as fear of being accused of – and killed for – being a communist oneself.⁸⁵ As the state-led anti-communist pogroms proceeded, with hundreds of thousands killed and an equal or greater number imprisoned for their affiliation with the PKI, many of those Indonesians sought refuge in religion, if not spiritually, then in terms of protective identity. For in the face of the fatal association of atheism – or lack of official religion (*agama*) – with communism and the pressing imperative of identification – in all senses of the word – millions of Indonesians sought to obtain national identity cards (*Kartu Tanda Pengenal*, or *KTP*), which required a declaration of religious faith from among the five supposedly monotheistic faiths – Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism and Buddhism – officially acknowledged by the state. Thus in the years stretching from the massacres and mass jailings of 1965–66 to the Suharto regime’s first experiment with elections in 1971, millions of Indonesians ‘converted’ to an official *agama* so as to avoid the stigma of ‘not yet having a religion’ (*belum beragama*) and thus suspicion of communist identity.⁸⁶ This process linking citizenship to religion continued for years, as seen

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, p 37.

⁸⁵ Pipit Rochijat (1985), ‘Am I PKI or non-PKI?’ *Indonesia*, Vol 40, October, pp 37–52.

⁸⁶ For accounts of different faiths in different areas of Indonesia, see, for example, R.A.F. Paul Webb (1986), ‘The sickle and the cross: Christians and communists in Bali, Flores, Sumba, and Timor, 1965–67’, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol 17, No 1, pp 94–112; and Avery Willis Jr (1977), *Indonesian Revival: Why Two Million Came To Christ*, William Carey Library, South Pasadena.

in the 'wave of conversion' sweeping the remote south-eastern Maluku island of Aru in the mid-1970s in advance of the 1977 elections, as recounted by the anthropologist Patricia Spyer.⁸⁷ More than the 'regional rebellions' of the 1950s in Maluku and Sulawesi, the fall of Suharto in mid-1998 thus recalled the violence of 1965–66 and the subsequent consolidation of new – official, 'statistical' – religious identities and religious authority structures that it had issued forth.

Such recollections were thus doubly troubling, as omens of the uncertainty and violence accompanying regime change, and as reminders of underlying doubts about religious identities, boundaries and hierarchies that owed so much to the violence of this earlier era. As Spyer has argued, these religious identities, boundaries and hierarchies had long rested on the logic of seriality, on 'numbers, statistics, and the range of enumerative practices with which they are associated'.⁸⁸ In this context, the competitive elections and decentralization already looming on the horizon in mid–late 1998 and replacing centralized authoritarian rule in mid–late 1999 heightened worries about the numbers of the faithful – numbers of converts, numbers of voters – who could be claimed for each 'flock' (*jemaah*).

It is thus against the temporal backdrop of this distinctive national conjuncture of 1998–2001 that the geographical distribution – and spread – of the pogroms in specific *locations* around the Indonesian archipelago during this period must be situated. Indeed, following the logic of seriality stressed by Spyer, it is striking how all the major episodes of communal violence during this period unfolded in localities where the statistical distribution of religious faith was least concentrated, all of which were found in the cluster of eight provinces with between 30% and 85% Muslim populations – and electorates. According to the 2000 census, Maluku was only 49% Muslim after the creation of Maluku Utara (85% Muslim); Poso was only 56% Muslim,

⁸⁷ See Patricia Spyer (1996), 'Serial conversion/conversion to seriality: religion, state and number in Aru, eastern Indonesia', in Peter van der Veer, ed, *Conversion to Modernities: The Globalization of Christianity*, Routledge, London, pp 171–198, especially p 171.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, p 191. On the logics of seriality, see also Ian Hacking (1990), *The Taming of Chance*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; and Benedict Anderson (1998), 'Nationalism, identity, and the world-in-motion: on the logics of seriality', in Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins, eds, *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling beyond the Nation*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, MN, pp 117–133.

in 78% Muslim Central Sulawesi.⁸⁹ Thus the decidedly ecumenical Partai Demokrasi Indonesia (PDI) had long established roots in all of these localities, and the possibility of a destabilizing shift – of votes, DPR and DPRD seats, and eventually *BUPATI*ships and governorships – from Golkar to the PDIP (the post-1998 reincarnation of the party) loomed large on the horizon. Meanwhile, the statistically solid Muslim regency of Banyuwangi stood out as the site of the tightest electoral margin – 45.5% to 43.9% – in East Java between the most popular Islamic parties, PKB (41.9%) and PPP (3.5%) on the one hand, and the major ecumenical parties, PDIP (32.7%) and Golkar (11.1%) on the other.⁹⁰ All the sites of large-scale religious violence in 1998–2001 were localities, in other words, in which high levels of religiously coded electoral uncertainty prevailed.

In such settings, increasing apprehensions about the numerical – and electoral – strength of statistical religious ‘others’ thus combined with abiding anxieties about the weakness and fragmentation internal to religious ‘communities’ themselves. The tensions observed by anthropologists along the upland fringes of Nahdlatul Ulama’s strongholds in East Java in the late 1990s, for example, owed as much to the challenges ‘from below’ represented by rival local sources of spiritual authority – healers, Javanist groups, shrine-based cults – as they did to conspiracies ‘from above’ by modernist Muslims entrenched in the state in Jakarta. Likewise the established positions of GKST and Al-Khaira’at in Poso were increasingly threatened over the years, not only by competition across the official religious divide, but by rising ethnic, associational and denominational diversity and fragmentation within their respective realms of pastoral care, as described in ethnographic studies published *prior to* the violence of 1999–2001. Similarly, the ecclesiastical authority of their counterparts in Maluku and Maluku Utara ran up against the enduring influence of *adat* (customary law) and aristocratic lineage, the proselytizing efforts of outside missionaries (evangelical Protestant, Catholic and Muslim) and the destabilizing effects of immigration.

⁸⁹ Ananta, Arifin, and Suryadinata (2004), *Indonesian Electoral Behaviour – A Statistical Perspective*, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, pp 24, 53. Central Kalimantan and West Kalimantan, the sites of violent ‘ethnic cleansing’ of immigrant Madurese communities in 1997, 1999 and 2001, were 74% and 58% Muslim respectively. The other provinces within this band of provinces were Jakarta (DKI), East Kalimantan and North Sumatra, all of which merit further treatment as counterfactual cases of non-occurrence of communal violence during this period.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp 345–346.

Meanwhile, by the turn of the twenty-first century, the attractive powers of modern secular education, the national state and the market had drawn increasing numbers of Christians and Muslims into their orbit, encouraging discernible trends towards cultural, linguistic, organizational and social homogenization across the religious divide. These trends were perhaps most visible in everyday life in Maluku's provincial capital city of Ambon, where Protestant and Muslim neighbourhoods and houses of worship were often found in close proximity (as reports of the violence of early 1999 make clear) and where more and more Ambonese and migrants of different faiths mingled in the streets, the schools, the shops and the offices of government with every passing year.⁹¹ Thus in contrast to the 1955 elections, when the vast majority of voters in Poso and Maluku had backed 'sectarian' political parties clearly identified with one or another religious faith – Masjumi for Muslims, Parkindo for Protestants – by the time of the elections of 1999, the avowedly ecumenical orientation of the two most popular parties – PDIP and Golkar – signalled the possibility of overriding, if not erasing, religious differences in the political realm.⁹²

In such settings, moreover, the local ecclesiastical establishments had come to assume quasi-statal and parastatal forms, with religious identities intimately bound up with associational, educational, economic and political hierarchies.⁹³ This pattern was perhaps less clearly or completely articulated in the East and West Javanese rural stronghold of Nahdlatul Ulama, which was well known for its rather decentralized, familial and personalistic organizational structures, its relative distance from the modern state school system and other secular state institutions, and its disavowal of pretensions to represent all Muslims under the banner of 'Islam'. In more peripheral, less developed 'Outer Island' localities such as Poso, Maluku and Maluku Utara, by contrast, this pattern was much more fully articulated, in part thanks to the

⁹¹ See, for example, Juliet Patricia Lee (1999), 'Out of order: the politics of modernity in Indonesia', PhD dissertation, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, pp 207–259.

⁹² For evidence in support of these arguments, see Sidel (2006), *Riots, Pogroms, Jihad: Religious Violence in Indonesia*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, pp 159–161, 170–176, which draws upon diverse ethnographic accounts published *prior to* the onset of pogroms in these localities.

⁹³ For background, see Lorraine Aragon (2000), *Fields of the Lord: Animism, Christian Minorities, and State Development in Indonesia*, University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu; Albert Schrauwers (2000), *Colonial 'Reformation' in the Highlands of Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, 1892–1995*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto; and Gerry van Klinken (2007), *Small-Town Wars: Post-Authoritarian Communal Violence in Indonesia* (forthcoming), Routledge, London.

relatively more modernized, rationalized and capitalized structures of local Protestant churches, in part because of the greater importance of the offices and resources of the state. As one anthropologist noted with regard to the remote south-east Maluku district island town of Tual:

‘Civil servants are the backbone of urban society. By the end of the 1980s nearly all the rupiah flowing into the district came from civil service salaries. Almost no rupiah came in outside the government budget. Agriculture is just subsistence. There is practically no export – just a little copra and marine products. The big fishing trawlers that frequent Tual harbor are Taiwanese and pay their money to Jakarta. The whole of society depends on the state – even if only as a labourer at a school building site.’⁹⁴

In such localities, moreover, religious institutions and identities had from their inception been ‘political’ in the sense of close identification with religiously segmented networks connected to the state. As another anthropologist noted with regard to Protestant–Muslim conflict in Poso, ‘this fight is not about religious doctrines or practices, but about the political economy of being Protestant (or Catholic) and Muslim’.⁹⁵ Likewise in Ambon and in other parts of Maluku, as the political scientist Gerry van Klinken concluded,

‘joining the Protestant or the Muslim community means being part of a network that not only worships God in a certain way but does practical things for its members – provide access to friends in powerful places, for example, or protection when things get tough. These networks extend up the social ladder to influential circles in Jakarta. And they extend downward to street level, where gangs of young men provide the protective muscle that an inefficient police force cannot provide.’⁹⁶

⁹⁴ P.M. Laksono (2002), ‘We are all one: how custom overcame religious rivalry in Southeast Maluku’, *Inside Indonesia*, April–June. This argument was articulated earlier and elaborated in greater detail in Paschalis Maria Laksono (1990), ‘Wuut Ainmehe Nifun, Manut Ainmehe Tilor (Eggs from one fish and one bird): a study of the maintenance of social boundaries in the Kei Islands’, PhD dissertation, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, pp 39, 75–84.

⁹⁵ L.V. Aragon (2001), ‘Communal violence in Poso, Central Sulawesi: where people eat fish and fish eat people’, *Indonesia*, Vol 72, p 47.

⁹⁶ Gerry van Klinken (1999), ‘What caused the Ambon violence?’ *Inside Indonesia*, Vol 60, October–December.

These distinctive features of the *timing* and *location* of the anti-witchcraft campaigns and interreligious pogroms of 1998–2001 help to explain the *protagonists*, the *targets* and the very *processes of mobilization* through which the violence unfolded. In contrast to the unarmed urban crowds that emerged and dispersed virtually overnight in response to incidents involving institutions of religious learning and worship in the provincial town riots of 1995–97, these pogroms were marked by distinctly different forms of agency and, it is worth noting, religiosity. Thus in the killings of accused *dukun santet* in the villages of rural East and West Java in 1998–99, for example, crudely armed groups of local youths launched coordinated attacks, but, as James Siegel has noted, even after several months of such killings, the victims remained *local* individuals, and the perpetrators continued to act not in the name of Islam, or Nahdlatul Ulama, or even ‘the village’, but instead as purely *local* murderous mobs (*massa*):

‘In a village, some took action against a witch. Each group that did so acted separately and one by one. . . . The witch hunts were the actions of clusters of unselfconscious young men who not only did not, but in my opinion could not, act “in the name of”. They lacked the ability to see themselves in assumed identities such as “Christian” or “Muslim” at the moment of the attacks.’⁹⁷

By contrast, in Poso, Ambon and various parts of Maluku and Maluku Utara, the perpetrators of violence had the discursive means of identifying themselves and their victims – collectively – along clear official, religious lines. Yet what is so striking in the characters and events at the outset of the pogroms in these localities is the prominence of seemingly ‘secular’ disputes between ‘secular’ groups in ‘secular’ settings – turf wars between urban youth gangs around bus terminals, competition between politicians over state offices, the inauguration of a new district or province – and the apparent absence of churches, mosques and religious schools from the original violence. Defined and divided along religious lines and connected to the religiously segmented local networks of politicians, civil servants, retired and active military and police officers, and businessmen, neighbourhood and village youth gangs – rather than students from religious schools – quickly emerged as the foot soldiers in the interreligious policing and warfare that these

⁹⁷ Siegel, *supra* note 83, at p 52.

networks increasingly organized and equipped along paramilitary lines in the towns and villages of Poso, Maluku and Maluku Utara.

Early on in these pogroms, churches and mosques came to function as command and communications posts and as networks for the accumulation and dissemination of (dis)information, weapons and explosives, as suggested by the range of accusations against clerics affiliated with Al-Khaira'at, GKST, GMIH and GPM during this period. This devaluation of the specifically spiritual content of religion was also evident in the early reversion to red and white headbands and other items of clothing to distinguish the opposing sides, and the tendency to use these 'colour war' terms of reference – and other equally profane lingo – instead of a more religiously coded idiom. The very need for such markers in Poso and Maluku further highlighted the anxieties about religious identity discussed above, as did the reported prominence of recent converts, refugees and other 'outsiders' in the violence, perhaps best exemplified by the leading role of the Flores-born Catholic gangster in the massacre of Muslim villagers in Poso in late May 2000.⁹⁸

In all of these settings, the unfolding of religious violence produced similar local effects and followed similar patterns of internal transformation. In Banyuwangi, southern Malang, and other areas of rural Java, for example, the local killings of suspected local *dukun santet* in 1998–99 were in due course appropriated by the leaders of Nahdlatul Ulama as a campaign against the organization, and gradually brought to a halt with the reassertion of NU's authority. Suspected *dukun santet* were administered special oaths called *sumpah pocong* by local *kyai* (religious scholars), and neighbourhood watch groups (*ronda*) were strengthened with the deployment of NU youth (*Ansor*) and martial

⁹⁸ On the alleged prominence of recent Christian converts from among the upland Ondae and the forest-based Tobelo in the anti-Muslim pogroms in Poso and North Maluku respectively, see Aditjondro (2001), 'Kerusuhan Poso dan Morowali', p 4, and Christopher R. Duncan (2001), 'Savage imagery: (mis)representations of the Forest Tobelo of Indonesia', *Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, Vol 2, No 1, pp 45–62. Duncan casts doubt on reports blaming the Forest Tobelo's supposed primitive savagery for the pogroms of December 1999–January 2000 in North Halmahera. In his earlier work, however, he noted: 'As their attitudes towards Christianity have changed since conversion, their attitudes about Islam have solidified. Instead of seeing Islam in terms of pork taboos and funny prayer positions, they now view it as the wrong choice made by misguided people who have not been informed about Jesus Christ.' Christopher R. Duncan (1998), 'Ethnic identity, Christian conversion and resettlement among the Forest Tobelo of northeastern Halmahera, Indonesia', PhD dissertation, Yale University, New Haven, CT, p 170.

arts (*Banser*) militia to various towns and villages. In Poso, Ambon and other parts of Maluku and Maluku Utara, moreover, the pogroms of 1999–2001 effected the spatial segregation and simplification of Christian–Muslim communities seen in other sites of interreligious violence elsewhere around the world, producing an ‘interlocking binary spatial grid and inside/outside polarities’, with the ‘proliferation of interfaces, the barricading, and the influx of refugee populations’ reorganizing towns and villages into a highly militarized and religiously coded topography.⁹⁹ In these settings, such processes were accompanied – and expedited – by the reconstitution of the two opposing religious communities into militarized hierarchies organized and equipped for inter-faith warfare. In a pattern reminiscent of shifts observed in other sites of sectarian violence elsewhere in the world, the years 1999–2001 in Poso, Maluku and Maluku Utara thus saw a shift from more spontaneous rampages by crudely armed crowds to more carefully coordinated large-scale attacks by heavily armed paramilitary groups, and then a reversion to sporadic bombings, drive-by shootings, and quick raids and arson attacks across the well established and tightly guarded religious divide.¹⁰⁰

Thus by the end of 2001, the large-scale collective violence between Protestants and Muslims of the preceding few years had run its course and subsided into small-scale disturbances in the formal and informal settlements that had crystallized in these religiously divided localities. In large measure, the fading of pogroms followed from the internal transformation of the violence itself, with the successes of ‘cleansing’ working to (re)establish religious boundaries and hierarchies, and thus greatly reducing the uncertainties and anxieties so evident in 1998–99. In no small measure, moreover, the disappearance of pogroms from Poso, Maluku and Maluku Utara by late 2001 reflected the imposition of local constraints on interreligious violence from without and above, as seen in the deployment of thousands of police and army troops to these localities, the signing of formal peace accords, and the religiously coded gerrymandering of new districts and provinces.

By late 2001, after all, the weak and vulnerable administration of President Abdurrahman Wahid had been ousted and replaced by one

⁹⁹ Allen Feldman (1991), *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, pp 17–45, at p 35.

¹⁰⁰ On this pattern, see, for example, Arianto Sangaji (2003), ‘Pasukan Terlatih dan Perubahan Pola Kekerasan di Poso?’ *Kompas*, 17 October.

headed by Megawati Soekarnoputri, whose leadership of the decidedly ecumenical PDIP combined with her strong position in the national parliament and in the military establishment to guarantee stronger protection for non-Muslims throughout Indonesia. This national constellation combined with shifts in the international arena in the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 attacks on New York and Washington, DC to spell the forced eviction of Laskar Jihad from Poso, Maluku and Maluku Utara and its effective elimination in due course. But as the formation of this paramilitary group had already foreshadowed in early 2000, the gradual disappearance of Christian–Muslim pogroms in the provinces and the effective dislodging of ‘Islam’ from state power in Jakarta also prefigured the emergence of new forms of religious violence in Indonesia, under the distinctive sign of *jihad*.

The defeat and disempowerment of ‘Islam’: *jihad*, 2000 to the present

In contrast to the riots and pogroms observed in Indonesia in the preceding decade, the turn of the twenty-first century witnessed a discernible shift to a new form of religious violence in the country, one identified with the sign of *jihad*. This *jihad*, in the narrow sense of the term, assumed the form of armed paramilitary assaults on Christian neighbourhoods and villages in Maluku and Poso in 2000–2001, and terrorist bombings elsewhere in the country from 2000 through 2005. These new forms of religious violence in Indonesia differed markedly from preceding patterns in at least three ways. First of all, this violence lacked the seemingly more spontaneous, sporadic and popular character of the riots of 1995–97 and the pogroms of 1998–2000, with attacks by crudely armed crowds on buildings, neighbourhoods and villages, replaced, as it were, by completely premeditated, carefully planned and coordinated activities by small groups of heavily armed, trained, full-time *jihadi* fighters and conspirators. Not only the identity of the perpetrators, but also the very nature of the agency associated with the violence, had clearly changed.

Second, the pattern shifted from local forces and foci of violence to ones of national and international scale. In the riots of 1995–97 and the pogroms of 1998–2000, the violence was directed by townspeople against other townspeople, villagers against other villagers, sometimes even neighbours against neighbours. In the paramilitary activities of armed

groups operating in Maluku and Poso, by contrast, recruits from Java and other parts of the Indonesian archipelago were mobilized for a broader, arguably more national, struggle across the religious divide. In the explosions that punctuated the years from 2000 through 2005, moreover, the targets shifted from the local Christian churches bombed on Christmas Eve 2000 to sites of foreign and distinctly 'Western' influence and intrusiveness: nightclubs catering to foreign (mostly Australian) tourists on Bali in late 2002, the American-owned Marriott Hotel in Jakarta (a reputed US Embassy haunt) in mid-2003, and the Australian Embassy in Jakarta in mid-2004. These bombings were also carried out by full-time *jihadi* activists who counted Malaysians and other foreign nationals among their numbers, and whose international orbit included Muslim rebel-controlled zones of the southern Philippines, safe havens in Malaysia and Thailand, and *jihadi* training camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Third and finally, the pattern shifted to one in which the purveyors of religious violence appeared to be exclusively Muslim in faith and Islamist in intention, and in which Protestants, Catholics and other non-Muslims seemed to figure solely as targets and victims. In the religious pogroms of 1998–2000, some of the most egregious instances of large-scale collective violence were perpetrated by Christians against Muslims, and the death tolls in Maluku and Poso claimed large numbers of victims of both faiths. But the activities of heavily armed and trained extra-local paramilitary groups in Maluku and Poso in 2000–2001, and the detonation of bombs in various locations around the country in 2000–2005, were undertaken solely by Muslims acting under an Islamist banner.

To be sure, considerable financial and logistical assistance was provided by Christian businessmen, military officers (retired and active) and politicians in Jakarta and elsewhere in Indonesia to armed Christian groups in Maluku and Poso, and Protestant and Catholic churches in Western Europe and North America also offered various forms of support. But these Christian forces, like the avowedly neutral agencies of the Indonesian state, were careful to distance themselves from acts of violence against Muslims and to define their involvement in terms of helping to defend vulnerable minority communities under threat. Against the rallying cry for *jihad* among Muslims in Indonesia and beyond, no corresponding call for a new set of Crusades was openly voiced by Christian leaders in the archipelago or elsewhere, no supra-local paramilitary groups were recruited and dispatched to Maluku or

Poso, and no bombing campaign against mosques around the country or Muslim embassies in Jakarta came to pass.

In short, the turn of the twenty-first century witnessed a notable narrowing of religious violence in Indonesia. This narrowing was evident in the decline – rather than escalation – of inter-faith violence in religiously divided localities around the archipelago, and in the diminishing scale and frequency of violent crowd actions in such settings. Religious violence, it became clear, was increasingly the preserve of small numbers of full-time specialists in isolated pockets, rather than entire communities of faith across the country. Neither the various local contests for local office, nor the creation of new regencies, cities and provinces after 1999, nor the parliamentary and presidential elections of 2004 gave rise to new waves of large-scale collective violence across the religious divide. Aside from sporadic bombings, drive-by shootings and night-time attacks peaking as the 2004 national elections approached, even Maluku and Poso remained free of the wholesale pogroms of the turn of the century.

Instead, the religious violence that unfolded in the first five years of the new millennium in Indonesia assumed two forms associated with the pursuit of *jihad*, in the narrowest and most murderous sense of the term. First of all, as noted above, the period beginning in early 2000 witnessed the formation and deployment of armed paramilitary groups in areas of Maluku and, by mid-2001, in the troubled Central Sulawesi regency of Poso. In Maluku Utara, for example, small groups of non-local Muslim fighters began to arrive in late January 2000, a few weeks after the massacre of Muslim villagers in Tobelo and the other atrocities by armed Christian groups in Maluku in December 1999 and early January 2000. As of April 2000, moreover, as many as 2,000 armed Muslim fighters affiliated with the group Laskar Jihad appeared in Ambon, following weeks of paramilitary training in Bogor, West Java.¹⁰¹ They rapidly asserted leadership over local armed Muslim forces and initiated a new wave of attacks on Christian areas. By June and July of that year, groups of such fighters, armed with automatic weapons and sophisticated communications equipment, had launched coordinated assaults on isolated or otherwise vulnerable Protestant villages in Maluku Utara, on Ambon Island, and, by late 2000, the

¹⁰¹ For a sympathetic account of Laskar Jihad's role in Maluku, see Mohammad Shoelhi (2002), *Laskar Jihad: Kambing Hitam Konflik Maluku*, Puzam, Jakarta.

neighbouring island of Seram.¹⁰² These attacks, which left hundreds of casualties, appeared to enjoy the active support of elements in the armed forces. Yet by the end of 2000, efforts to restrain and repel Laskar Jihad by less sympathetic elements in the armed forces were well under way, led first by a Joint Battalion (*Yon Gab*) under the command of a Balinese Hindu general, and later by Special Forces (*Kopassus*) troops. These efforts, which included well publicized incidents of torture and summary executions of Laskar Jihad members, contributed to a marked decline in Muslim violence against Protestant neighbourhoods and villages in Maluku.¹⁰³

Meanwhile, a somewhat similar pattern was observed in Central Sulawesi, where small numbers of armed Muslim fighters – known as Laskar Jundullah – were first sent by Islamic groups in the South Sulawesi capital of Makassar and in Jakarta in the months following the massacre of more than 100 Muslim villagers in Poso in June 2000. By July 2001, moreover, hundreds of armed Muslim fighters affiliated with Laskar Jihad also began to arrive in the wake of renewed large-scale attacks by armed Christian forces on Muslim villagers in Poso. At first, these self-styled *mujahidin* set up guard posts in critical areas along the borders between Muslim and Christian neighbourhoods and villages, while initiating moves to train and reorganize local armed Muslim forces. In late November 2001, Laskar Jihad forces initiated large-scale assaults on Christian neighbourhoods and villages in Poso, leading to widespread anticipation of an attack on the Protestant town of Tentena and a rising national and international outcry. By early December, a major infusion of army troops had brought this campaign to a halt and facilitated the imposition of a peace accord by the end of the year.¹⁰⁴

By the end of 2001, Laskar Jihad had been largely defanged and driven out of the two main sites of interreligious violence in the country and threatened with irrelevance or extinction. In May 2002, the head of Laskar Jihad, Ja'far Umar Thalib, was arrested in connection with the murder of a Laskar Jihad member who had been

¹⁰² International Crisis Group (2000), *Indonesia: Overcoming Murder and Chaos in Maluku*, December, International Crisis Group, Jakarta/Brussels, pp 8–14.

¹⁰³ International Crisis Group (2002), *Indonesia: The Search for Peace in Maluku*, February, International Crisis Group, Jakarta/Brussels, pp 13–14.

¹⁰⁴ Human Rights Watch (2002), *Breakdown: Four Years of Communal Violence in Central Sulawesi*, December, Human Rights Watch, New York; International Crisis Group (2004), *Indonesia Backgrounder: Jihad in Central Sulawesi*, February, International Crisis Group, Jakarta/Brussels.

stoned to death for committing adultery. In October of the same year, the group was formally disbanded.¹⁰⁵

This pattern of paramilitary mobilization and forced demobilization in 2000–2002 was accompanied, and extended, by a second form of violence, namely a bombing campaign that claimed hundreds of lives in Jakarta and elsewhere in the archipelago from 2000 through 2005.¹⁰⁶ Already in late April 1999, just a few short weeks before the parliamentary elections of that year, a bomb exploded late one night in an office inside the complex of the Istiqlal Mosque in Jakarta, a site identified with the accommodation between Islam and secular nationalist forces in Indonesia (Istiqlal means Independence in Arabic), and known to be designed by a Protestant architect. The mosque, said to be the largest in South East Asia, was viewed by some knowledgeable Islamists as a sacrilegious symbol of Islam's subordination to secular state power and, at the same time, seen by a broader audience of Muslims as one of the premier national sites of Indonesian Islam. The Istiqlal Mosque was thus both a legitimate object of *jihadi* violence and a target whose partial destruction and desecration could be blamed on non-Muslims and thereby used to heighten interreligious tensions and Islamic solidarities on the eve of Indonesia's first free and competitive elections since 1955.¹⁰⁷

By the end of 2000, moreover, this early bombing experiment had resumed and escalated, with a series of deadly explosions at almost 40 different churches around the Indonesian archipelago on Christmas Eve of that year. The bombs, which left 19 dead and more than 100 wounded, exploded in churches around the archipelago, from cities in Sumatra to Jakarta, Bandung, and other towns on Java, to Mataram on Lombok.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ For a fine early overview of the rise and fall of Laskar Jihad, see Michael Davis (2002), 'Laskar Jihad and the political position of conservative Islam in Indonesia', *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol 24, No 1, pp 12–32. For the subsequent definitive account of Laskar Jihad, see Noorhaidi Hasan (2005), 'Laskar Jihad: Islam, militancy and the quest for identity in post-New Order Indonesia', PhD thesis, Utrecht University.

¹⁰⁶ For a useful chronology of bomb attacks in Indonesia, see 'Teror Bom di Indonesia (Beberapa di Luar Negeri) dari Waktu ke Waktu', *Tempo Interaktif*, 17 April 2004; and '193 Ledakan Bom Selama Tahun 1999–2003', *Suara Merdeka*, 10 September 2004.

¹⁰⁷ See the articles published under the rubric 'Siapa Sebenarnya Pembom Istiqlal?' *Tempo*, 3 May 1999, pp 22–29.

¹⁰⁸ See the series of articles published in the investigative report 'Cerita dari Mosaik Bom Natal', *Tempo*, 25 February 2001, pp 60–80.

A series of subsequent bombs and bomb threats targeted a handful of individual churches around the country over the course of 2001.

But the targets of these explosions shifted in 2002 from Indonesian Christian churches to sites of foreign – and largely ‘Western’ – influence and intrusions of a seemingly more secular nature. In October 2002, car bombs exploded at two nightclubs catering to foreign – mostly Australian – tourists in a resort area on Bali, an island known for the Hindu faith and strong PDI-P allegiances of its inhabitants. The bombs, which were accompanied by several other small explosions, killed nearly 200 people, mostly young Australian tourists.¹⁰⁹ These explosions were followed by the – apparently suicide – car bombing of the American-owned Marriott Hotel in Jakarta, reportedly a favourite US Embassy staff haunt, which left 10 dead and 150-plus wounded in August of 2003. A year later, in September 2004, a second apparent suicide car bomb attack on the Australian Embassy in Jakarta left at least nine casualties and manifold injuries and damage in its wake. This pattern of single annual detonations persisted into 2005, with October of that year witnessing a second attack in Bali, with bombs in three restaurants killing more than 30 people.¹¹⁰ These explosions – along with less well publicized bomb attacks on Philippine targets (the Ambassador’s residence in Jakarta in August 2000, the consulate in Manado in October 2002) – represented a discernible change in the form, frequency and focus of religious violence in Indonesia, from the more localized and mobilizational pattern of preceding years in the country.

The turn of the twenty-first century also witnessed a corresponding transformation in the protagonists – ie the perpetrators – of religious violence in Indonesia. In the riots of 1995–97, after all, the key catalytic role had been played by ‘local boys’ enrolled in Islamic schools and affiliated with Islamic students’ associations in the very towns and cities where the disturbances unfolded. Likewise in the pogroms of 1998–2000, murderous attacks on neighbourhoods and villages across the religious divide in Maluku and Poso had been undertaken by local youths armed and mobilized by local networks of politicians, civil

¹⁰⁹ See Hermawan Sulistyono, ed (2002), *Bom Bali: Buku Putih tidak resmi Investigasi Teror Bom Bali*, Pensil 324, Jakarta; and ‘Setahun Bom Bali’, *Tempo*, 19 October 2003, pp 28–83.

¹¹⁰ See ‘Dari Martapura Untuk Bali’, *Tempo*, 9 October 2005, pp 26–27; and the series of related articles under the rubric ‘Bali Kembali Dilanda Teror’, *Tempo*, 16 October 2005, pp 26–42.

servants, active and retired military and police officers, businessmen, gangsters and clerics. In the paramilitary activities in Maluku and Poso of 2000–2001 and the bombing campaign of 2000–2005, by contrast, broader supra-local networks with national and transnational affiliations were mobilized for religious violence.

This shift was already apparent in the paramilitary mobilization associated with Laskar Jihad that began to unfold in early 2000. Indeed, the formation of Laskar Jihad was announced in a massive rally in the Central Javanese city of Solo in April of that year, with a certain Ja'far Umar Thalib as its supreme leader. In early 1998, Thalib had established an organization known as Forum Komunikasi Ahlusunnah wal-Jama'ah (FKAWJ, or Communications Forum of the Sunna and the Community of the Prophet), which was based outside Yogyakarta, Solo's rival as a centre of aristocratic lineage and culture in Central Java. The FKAWJ included a recently founded *pesantren* and surrounding 'intentional community' and incorporated into its orbit Muslim students from the cluster of universities in Yogyakarta, Solo and other towns and cities of the province. By the time of the formation, paramilitary training and deployment of Laskar Jihad troops in early 2000, FKAWJ's broader 'flock' was to exceed 40,000 in number, with its affiliated Internet sites and publications reaching many more potential sympathizers.¹¹¹

Meanwhile, the various bombings of 2000–2005 were attributed to another Central Java-based Islamic school network, namely the Pesantren Al-Mukmin in Ngruki, Sukoharjo, on the outskirts of the city of Solo. Among those arrested, detained, and in due course convicted for the bombings were a number of alumni of the Ngruki *pesantren* and of other *pesantren* and *halaqah* (discussion groups) founded by Ngruki graduates around the country, as well as former students of a *pesantren* operated in Malaysia by the Ngruki school's founders while in forced exile from the mid-1980s through the late 1990s.¹¹² Indeed, in August 2000, K.H. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, the surviving founder of the Ngruki *pesantren*, was elected to head the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia

¹¹¹ Noorhaidi Hasan (2002), 'Faith and politics: the rise of the Laskar Jihad in the era of transition in Indonesia', *Indonesia*, Vol 73, April, pp 145–169.

¹¹² See, for example, 'Al-Qaidah "made in Madiun"?' *Tempo*, 3 February 2002, pp 20–22; Eriyanto dan Agus Sudibyo (2003), 'Amrozi, Terorisme, dan Desa Tengkulun', *Pantau*, January, pp 12–20; and Es. Soepriyadi (2003), *Ngruki dan Jaringan Terorisme: Melacak Jejak Abu Bakar Ba'asyir dan Jaringan nya dari Ngruki sampai Bom Bali*, Al-Mawardi Prima, Jakarta.

(Assembly of Indonesian Jihadists) at the founding congress of the organization in Yogyakarta.¹¹³ In subsequent years, Ba'asyir was accused of serving as the spiritual – if not operational – leader of what American, Australian, Indonesian, Malaysian, Philippine and Singaporean intelligence agencies identified as Jemaah Islamiyah,¹¹⁴ a clandestine network of Ngruki graduates and other Islamist activists held responsible for undertaking the various bombings of 2000–2005.¹¹⁵

In contrast to the religious identities, affiliations and institutional trappings associated with the protagonists of the riots of 1995–97 and the pogroms of 1998–2000, the evident centrality of FKAWJ and Pesantren Ngruki to the activities of Laskar Jihad and Jemaah Islamiyah respectively, marked the purveyors of *jihad* in two ways. First of all, at their core, the two hubs of jihadist recruitment and indoctrination were located in the heartland of Central Java, a region long described by anthropologists and other observers as home to Islamic practices and solidarities inflected with Javanism, mysticism, syncretism and pre-Islamic Hindu–Buddhist inflections.¹¹⁶ The province had been a stronghold of the PKI in the 1950s and early 1960s, and it had served as a major source of votes for the ecumenical ‘secular nationalist’ PDI-P in the 1999 elections. Based on the outskirts of Yogyakarta and Solo respectively, the FKAWJ and Pesantren Ngruki had also emerged in the shadow of the rival centres of Javanese aristocratic court culture – and of the prominent secular universities – which loomed so large in

¹¹³ For materials from the founding congress of MMI, see Irfan Suryahardi Awwas, ed (2001), *Risalah Kongres Mujahidin I dan Penegakan Syari'ah Islam*, Wihdah Press, Yogyakarta.

¹¹⁴ See, for example, Ministry of Home Affairs (2003), *White Paper: The Jemaah Islamiyah Arrests and the Threat of Terrorism*, Ministry of Home Affairs, Singapore.

¹¹⁵ For sympathetic treatments of Ba'asyir's personal history and his persecution at the hands of the Indonesian authorities (and their American and Australian sponsors), see Fauzan Al-Anshari (2002), *Saya Teroris? (Sebuah "Pledoi")*, Penerbit Republika, Jakarta; Irfan Suryahardi Awwas (2003), *Dakwah dan Jihad Abu Bakar Ba'asyir*, Wihdah Press, Yogyakarta; and Irfan Suryahardi Awwas (2004), *Pengadilan Teroris: Klarifikasi Fakta dan Dusta yang Terungkap di Persidangan*, Wihdah Press, Yogyakarta.

¹¹⁶ See, for example, Stephen C. Headley (2004), *Durga's Mosque: Cosmology, Conversion and Community in Central Javanese Islam*, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore; and Mark R. Woodward (1989), *Islam in Java: Normative Piety and Mysticism in the Sultanate of Yogyakarta*, University of Arizona Press, Tempe, AZ.

both cities.¹¹⁷ Like those who established the Islamic modernist association Muhammadiyah in Yogyakarta and Sarekat Islam in Solo in 1910–19, the founders and followers of FKAWJ and the Ngruki *pesantren* in more recent years launched their proselytizing efforts in the least puritanical, least pious Muslim area of Indonesia, and in the face of widespread indifference, scepticism and hostility from their supposed co-religionists.¹¹⁸ Indeed, the vast majority of Laskar Jihad recruits interviewed for one study came from remote Central Javanese villages and families whose understandings and practices of Islam were fully at odds with those espoused by the group.¹¹⁹

Second and more specifically, both the FKAWJ and Pesantren Ngruki traced their origins and affiliations to the educational and associational umbrellas of Al-Irsyad and Persatuan Islam (Persis), organizations closely identified with Indonesia's Hadhrami Arab immigrant minority and with the strictest interpretations and applications of Islam in the archipelago. Ja'far Umar Thalib, the head of FKAWJ and Laskar Jihad, for example, was himself the son of a Hadhrami immigrant and Al-Irsyad activist, attended the Persatuan Islam school in Bangil, East Java, and then the Saudi Arabian-sponsored Institute for Islamic and Arabic Studies in Jakarta, where he was a leader of the student organization affiliated with Al-Irsyad. Similarly, K.H. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, along with his fellow co-founder of the Pesantren Ngruki, Abdullah Sungkar, was the son of a Hadhrami immigrant and graduated from Universitas Al-Irsyad. The curriculum of the Ngruki *pesantren* was likewise said to draw heavily on the system of learning established in Persatuan Islam's leading schools.¹²⁰ Despite evident differences in

¹¹⁷ On Solo, for example, see Suzanne April Brenner (1998), *The Domestication of Desire: Women, Wealth, and Modernity in Java*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ; John Pemberton (1994), *On the Subject of "Java"*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY; James T. Siegel (1986), *Solo in the New Order: Language and Hierarchy in an Indonesian City*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.

¹¹⁸ On the 1912 founding of Muhammadiyah in Yogyakarta and Sarekat Islam in Solo respectively, see Mitsuo Nakamura (1975), 'The crescent arises over the banyan tree: a study of Reformist Muslim movement in a Central Javanese town', PhD dissertation, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY; and Takashi Shiraishi (1990), *An Age in Motion: Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912–1926*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY.

¹¹⁹ Noorhaidi Hasan, *supra* note 105, at pp 161–193.

¹²⁰ See Farha Abdul Kadir Assegaff (1995), 'Peran Perempuan Islam (Penelitian di Pondok Pesantren Al Mukmin), Sukoharjo, Jawa Tengah', Tesis S-2, Program Studi Sosiologi, Jurusan Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial, Program Pasca Sarjana, Universitas Gadjah Mada, pp 60–70; and Zuly Qodir (2003), *Ada Apa Dengan Pondok Pesantren Ngruki*, Pondok Edukasi, Bantul.

tactics (paramilitary activities *v* clandestine bombings) and in ideological goals (Islamization of Indonesian society *v* establishment of Islamic law, state and caliphate), the two networks clearly shared a common ancestry in Al-Irsyad and Persatuan Islam.¹²¹

These two organizations were founded in the early twentieth century by Muslims of Hadhrami Arab descent and others influenced by the teachings of modernist Islamic scholars in the Middle East. From their inception, Al-Irsyad and Persis schools placed great emphasis on the study of Arabic and, far more than the more Westernized *madrrasah* of Muhammadiyah, prepared their students for higher education in centres of Islamic learning far from the Indonesian archipelago. In their religious teachings and practices, Al-Irsyad and Persis were more openly and stridently antagonistic towards the influence of Christianity in the archipelago, and towards the accretions of local customs, the worship of saints and shrines, and the mysticism of Sufis and Javanists alike.¹²² As one author noted with regard to Persatuan Islam, its reputation ‘lay less with its organizational accomplishments in education, buildings or organization, than it did with the creation of an esprit de corps, a distinctive character, an outlook and an ideology that saw Islam as the very center of life with all matters directly dependent on that conviction’.¹²³

While the founders and first students of Al-Irsyad and, to a lesser extent, Persis, were predominantly drawn from among the immigrant Hadhrami Arab community in the Indies, by the 1930s, the vast majority of students were, by assimilation or ancestry, Indonesians. Yet the fact that these schools fed into an overseas education network promoted a ‘sense of separateness’ and an ‘outward orientation, back to the Middle East’, encouraging students to understand ‘that their center was not “here” in the Indies, but rather “there” in the heartland of the Arab world’.¹²⁴ Thus Al-Irsyad and Persis activists were understandably ambivalent towards Indonesian nationalism, supporting the struggle

¹²¹ For an excellent broad overview, see Martin van Bruinessen (2002), ‘Genealogies of Islamic radicalism in post-Suharto Indonesia’, *South East Asia Research*, Vol 10, No 2, pp 117–154.

¹²² On Persis and Al-Irsyad, see Howard M. Federspiel (2001), *Islam and Ideology in the Emerging Indonesian State: The Persatuan Islam (PERSIS), 1923 to 1957*, Brill, Leiden; Natalie Mobini-Kesheh (1999), *The Hadrami Awakening: Community and Identity in the Netherlands East Indies, 1900–1942*, Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, Ithaca, NY, especially pp 71–90.

¹²³ Federspiel, *supra* note 122, at pp 88–89.

¹²⁴ Mobini-Kesheh, *supra* note 122, at p 83.

against Dutch colonial rule on the one hand, while opposing the construction of a secular nation-state in its stead on the other. Although they contributed their energies to the *Revolusi* that led to Indonesian independence in 1945–49, many members of these groups were understandably dissatisfied with the place of Islam in the new nation-state and its constitutional democracy and showed sympathy for the Darul Islam rebellion in areas such as West Java, South Sulawesi, South Kalimantan and Aceh in the 1950s and early 1960s. A leading figure in Persis, Mohammad Natsir, headed the modernist Islamic party Masjumi and briefly served as Prime Minister in the early 1950s. But Masjumi's involvement in the CIA-backed regional rebellions of 1957–59 led to the forced dissolution of the party in 1960 and the punishment or political neutralization of many of its members.

While Al-Irsyad and Persis thus entered the 1960s on the very fringes of Indonesian politics, their enduring transnational linkages combined with the sociological and political trends described in the pages above to allow their networks of schools – and their aspirations for Islam in Indonesia – to survive, grow and prosper in subsequent decades. Banned for its role in supporting the 'regional rebellions', by the 1960s Masjumi could no longer provide an umbrella of state patronage and protection as it had in the early years after independence, and despite their contributions to the anti-communist campaigns of 1965–66, activists from these circles found themselves utterly marginalized and at times actively persecuted by the seemingly Christian-dominated New Order state. In this context, Al-Irsyad and Persis activists devoted themselves to the crucial tasks of religious schooling and proselytization. Their efforts were nurtured by Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia (DDII, or Indonesian Islamic Preaching Council), an umbrella group founded by Mohammad Natsir and other former Masjumi leaders in 1967, which drew on donations from Saudi Arabian and other foreign sponsors, as well as those made by sympathetic Indonesian professionals, businessmen and government officials. As industrialization and urbanization in the 1970s and 80s brought millions of Muslim migrants to Jakarta and other major Indonesian cities, Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia established hundreds of *pesantren* and *madrasah* and constructed thousands of mosques in an attempt to capture the hearts and minds of this growing new constituency. It was in this context that Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, a former activist in the Masjumi-linked Gerakan Pemuda Islam Indonesia (Indonesian Islamic Youth Movement) in the early–mid-1960s, and the host of a talk show on a DDII-sponsored

Solo radio station eventually banned by the government, helped to found the Pesantren Al-Mukmin in Ngruki, Sukoharjo, in the early 1970s.

DDII was also especially successful in its *dakwah* activities in the campus mosques of state universities in major Indonesian cities, including such prominent institutions as Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB), Institut Pertanian Bogor (IPB), Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) in Yogyakarta, Universitas Airlangga (Unair) in Surabaya, and Universitas Indonesia (UI) in Jakarta.¹²⁵ Thanks to its access to scholarships offered by Saudi-sponsored and other international Islamic organizations, Dewan Dakwah was also able to facilitate study in the Middle East, with Laskar Jihad founder Ja'far Umar Thalib just one among the many winners of DDII scholarships for Islamic schooling in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

By the 1990s, moreover, with the demise of Benny Murdani and the rise of Habibie and ICMI, well connected Dewan Dakwah activists enjoyed new freedom to preach and to publish, as well as unprecedented access to state patronage and support. Through their inclusion in Habibie's vast patronage empire, such activists extended their influence among government-funded students pursuing postgraduate technological and scientific degrees in Europe and North America, and among the ranks of university lecturers, journalists, publishers and other 'professional Muslims' in Indonesia. Thus by the turn of the twenty-first century, Dewan Dakwah had established a nationwide network of affiliated schools, mosques, organizations and activists around the archipelago. For many years, the urban middle-class constituency of Persis and Al-Irsyad, the high levels of educational achievement with which their schools were identified, and the relative wealth of the small Hadhrami immigrant merchant elite had given these associations influence far beyond their small numbers, as amply evident in Natsir's leadership of Masjumi in the 1950s. These advantages were all the more evident in the heyday of ICMI and Habibie in the 1990s, as seen in the prominence of Al-Irsyad luminary Fuad Bawazier and of various DDII-affiliated figures during this period. But after years of sponsoring new mosques and schools, this network had also extended its influence somewhat further down the social scale, especially among

¹²⁵ Asna Husin (1998), 'Philosophical and sociological aspects of Da'wah: a study of Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia', PhD dissertation, Columbia University, New York, pp 147–176; 'Bermula dari Masjid Salman', *Tempo*, 13 May 1989, pp 79–81; Abdul Aziz, Imam Tholkhah, and Soetarman, eds (1989), *Gerakan Islam Kontemporer di Indonesia*, Pustaka Firdaus, Jakarta.

more modest recent migrants to the growing cities and towns of the country.¹²⁶

This network was clearly crucial for the promotion of *jihad* in the first years of the new century. DDII's monthly magazine, *Media Dakwah*, and similar publications such as *Sabili* and *Suara Hidayatullah*, drew attention to atrocities against Muslims in Maluku and Poso, attacked the government in Jakarta for its complacency and complicity in the violence, and advertised – if not openly advocated – violent mobilization against Christians in these sites of interreligious violence.¹²⁷ Moreover, DDII activists and affiliates in various Muslim parties worked to raise money to support Muslim communities – and Muslim fighters – in Maluku and Poso, and in some cases helped to organize the smuggling of weapons and the insertion of trained jihadists into these areas.¹²⁸

In short, the very forms of identity and intentionality identified with the promotion of *jihad* in 2000–2005 differed markedly from those associated with the preceding periods of religious riots (1995–97) and pogroms (1998–2001). The paramilitary mobilization in Maluku and Poso on the one hand, and the bombing campaign around the country on the other, represented carefully planned and coordinated initiatives by small groups of full-time fighters and conspirators engaged in round-the-clock *jihad*. Thus at first glance, the identification of the perpetrators – the 'whodunnit' of investigative and prosecutorial work – would appear to suffice as an explanation for the violence of 2000–2005. Indeed, in contrast to the local affiliations of the rioters and pogromists of earlier years, the troops of Laskar Jihad and the bombers of Jemaah Islamiyah were distinguished by their association with Islamic organizations – Al-Irsyad, Persatuan Islam and Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia (DDII) – known for their strict puritanism, strident anti-Christian, anti-secular and anti-Semitic rhetoric, and strong transnational connections to 'Salafi' and 'Wahhabi' currents in Saudi Arabia and

¹²⁶ See, for example, Martin van Bruinessen (1998), *Rakyat Kecil, Islam dan Politik*, Bentang, Yogyakarta, pp 47–107.

¹²⁷ On *Media Dakwah*, see R. William Liddle (1996), 'Media Dakwah scripturalism: one form of Islamic political thought and action in New Order Indonesia', in Mark R. Woodward, ed, *Toward a New Paradigm: Recent Developments in Indonesian Islamic Thought*, Arizona State University Program for Southeast Asian Studies, Tempe, AZ, pp 323–355; and Robert W. Hefner (1997), 'Print Islam: mass media and ideological rivalries among Indonesian Muslims', *Indonesia*, Vol 64, October, pp 77–103.

¹²⁸ International Crisis Group (2004), *Indonesia Backgrounder: Jihad in Central Sulawesi*, February, International Crisis Group, Jakarta/Brussels.

Pakistan as well as the 'global *jihād*' of Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and beyond.

Yet the fingering of these jihadists leaves essentially unanswered basic questions as to the timing and trajectory of their *jihād*. For the Persatuan Islam journal *Pembela Islam (Defender of Islam)* was already bewailing the weaknesses of Muslims in the face of a dynamic Christianity in the 1930s, and Dewan Dakwah activists were railing against *Kristenisasi* and the closet secularism of liberal, Western-educated/influenced Muslim intellectuals throughout the 1990s. Yet at no point during these years did any of the thousands of students and graduates of Al-Irsyad and Persis schools in Indonesia take up arms or explosive materials, and indeed only a very small fraction within the broader family of such Islamic activists did so in the peak years of *jihād* in 2000–2005.¹²⁹ This leaves the crucial questions unanswered: why no paramilitary mobilization or bombing campaign *before* 2000? Why these particular forms of so-called *jihād*? Why the rapid rise and fall of Laskar Jihad? Why the shift from Indonesian targets to foreign 'Western' ones in the bombings of 2000–2005? Finally, why not more religious violence in Indonesia, but instead, by 2005, its apparent reduction to a single, annual explosion?

The answers to these questions lie in no small measure in the discursive, political and sociological context of the conjuncture of 2000–2005, and in the shifting position of Islam within this context. As already spelled out with reference to the riots of 1995–97 and the pogroms of 1998–2000, this paper has argued that the modalities of religious violence in Indonesia – its timing, location, forms, targets, protagonists and processes of mobilization – have been decisively shaped by the broad constellation of religious authority in the country and by the possibility of articulating claims to represent – in both senses of the term – Islam – in the world's most populous majority-Muslim nation-state. This argument extends to the forms of so-called *jihād* observed in Indonesia in 2000–2005.

Indeed, the conjuncture that served as the backdrop to paramilitary mobilization in Maluku and Poso and bombings around the archipelago was one distinguished by a new configuration of religious authority and power in the country. In contrast to the preceding decade of steady

¹²⁹ International Crisis Group (2004), *Indonesia Backgrounder: Why Salafism and Terrorism Mostly Don't Mix*, September, International Crisis Group, Southeast Asia/Brussels.

ascendancy and rising assertiveness by forces associated with the promotion of Islam in the Indonesian state and the public sphere, the turn of the century saw the eclipse and evisceration of the Islamist project in the country, in a rather sudden and dramatic reversal of fortunes. As suggested in the preceding two sections, this trend was already visible on the horizon from the inauguration of the Habibie administration in mid-1998, as it battled against forces within and beyond the state to contest its efforts to represent 'Islam' and to reposition the faith in public life in Indonesia.

With the elections of June 1999, moreover, the fiction of a united Muslim population universally represented by Habibie and allied forces dissipated with fragmentation and factionalism among a welter of Islamic parties, and dissolved in the face of strong electoral showings by non-Islamist parties among Muslim and non-Muslim voters alike. Indeed, a clear plurality of the vote (34%) was won by Megawati Soekarnoputri's Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia – Perjuangan, or PDI-P), a party known for its Soekarnoist lineages, 'secular-nationalist', ecumenical and 'syncretist' orientation, and sizeable non-Muslim constituencies and membership. More than one-third of the members of parliament elected on the PDI-P ticket were non-Muslims (mostly Protestants), and virtually none of its Muslim MPs claimed a background of Islamic education or associational activity.¹³⁰ By contrast, parties with Islamist agendas and affiliations – Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (United Development Party), Partai Bulan Bintang (Crescent Star Party), Partai Keadilan (Justice Party) – achieved less than 20% of the vote, with the Partai Amanat Nasional (National Mandate Party) of Muhammadiyah Chairman Amien Rais winning 8% under an avowedly ecumenical banner and with token non-Muslims in its ranks. The universalistic claims made under the sign of Islam were fully revealed as partisan, particularistic and rather poorly received even among the broad mass of the Muslim population.

Frank admission of defeat in the aftermath of the June 1999 elections had been avoided only thanks to the peculiarities of Indonesia's inherited, early post-authoritarian system for indirect election of the president by the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) in

¹³⁰ Of the 153 members of the PDI-P elected to the DPR in 1999, only 96 (63%) were registered as Muslims, with at least 36 Protestants (23%), 12 Catholics and 7 Hindus among the remaining MPs. See 'Wajah Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Republik Indonesia Pemilihan Umum 1999', *Kompas*, Jakarta (2000), pp 3–155.

October of the same year. A group of Muslim parties known as the 'Central Axis' (*Poros Tengah*) cobbled together a coalition in the MPR to defeat the candidacy of PDI-P Chairwoman Megawati Soekarnoputri and to elect long-time Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) Chairman and National Awakening Party (PKB) leader Abdurrahman Wahid as president instead. But Wahid was quick to turn on his erstwhile supporters, removing from his Cabinet or otherwise marginalizing ministers associated with the various Muslim parties and centralizing power in the hands of close associates drawn from 'traditionalist' NU circles (including family members) and from the ranks of the secularized, liberal Muslim and Christian groups with which he had long allied himself and NU. As a figure long associated with the promotion of religious tolerance, moreover, Wahid was especially concerned about the protection of Indonesia's minority faiths and extremely opposed to other Muslim leaders' efforts to rally public support for *jihad* in Maluku and Poso. Thus the same Central Axis parties' leaders who had publicly rejoiced at the election of a prominent Muslim figure to the presidency soon spoke in terms of Wahid's betrayal of their trust and support, and began conspiring to promote the early demise of his presidency. In mid-2000 and again in mid-2001, these Muslim parties and other anti-Wahid forces used the occasion of the Annual Session of the People's Consultative Assembly first to censure the President and then to compel his early removal from office.¹³¹

Thus the context for the onset of *jihad* in early–mid-2000 was one of disappointment, if not despair, with regard to the precipitous decline and ongoing reversal of the gains for Islam in the 1990s. The country's new president and most prominent Muslim leader, after all, was no longer a champion of Islamization, but instead a representative of Indonesian Islam known to be comfortable and cooperative with Western liberal, Christian, Javanist, secular, and even Jewish elements in Indonesian society and beyond.¹³² Beyond the narrow realm of formal politics, moreover, the processes of democratization and decentralization unfolding since 1999 gave rise to manifold alternative interpellations – by spokesmen for *adat* (customary law), for

¹³¹ For a broad overview of the first year of the Wahid administration, see Kees Van Dijk (2001), *A Country in Despair: Indonesia Between 1997 and 2000*, KITLV Press, Leiden, pp 431–534.

¹³² See, for example, comments on Wahid by the Chairman of Persatuan Islam at the time: 'KH Shiddiq Amien, Ketua Umum Persis: Kemusyrikan Dibiarkan, Syariat Malah Ditolak', *Suara Hidayatullah*, October 2000.

aristocratic claims to traditional authority, for various ethnic identities and loyalties, for 'indigenous peoples' and for a variety of local and national causes – which cross-cut and competed with the articulation of claims in the name of Islam.¹³³ Against this backdrop, the atrocities committed by armed Christian groups against Muslim communities in various parts of Maluku and North Maluku in the last week of December 1999 and the first week of 2000 signalled the apparent obliviousness and apathy of the Wahid administration, the mainstream media and the broad mass of the Muslim population in the face of threats and indignities to Islam. It was thus not only to assist vulnerable co-religionists in areas of inter-faith conflict, but also to reassert and reawaken seemingly lapsed religious sensibilities and solidarities, that the call for *jihad* was issued in the early months of 2000. This call was met first with paramilitary mobilization in Maluku and then, on the first anniversary of the Christian attacks on Muslims in Ambon, Tobelo and elsewhere of late 1999, with the Christmas Eve 2000 bombings of churches around the archipelago. While this initial phase of *jihad* expanded to Poso in July 2001, conditions in Indonesia and beyond spelled its termination and transformation in subsequent months.

Indeed, mid-2001 witnessed not only a massacre of Laskar Jihad troops in Ambon by the security forces, but further defeats for Islam in Jakarta. The Central Axis parties had failed to prevent the election of the PDI-P's Megawati Soekarnoputri to the vice-presidency in 1999, and this position combined with the strength of her party's contingent in parliament and her close connections to elements in the military establishment to make her the eventual replacement for Wahid in July 2001. While the Central Axis had worked assiduously against a Megawati presidency in 1999, raising doubts as to her Muslim faith and about the suitability of a woman president in the light of Islamic doctrine, by mid-2001 the leaders of these parties were climbing on board the bandwagon that would bring her to the Palace. Hamzah Haz, the Chairman of PPP, agreed to serve as Megawati's vice-president, PBB leader Yusril Izha Mahendra stayed on as Minister of Justice in her administration, and representatives of PAN and PK accepted token seats in the new cabinet.¹³⁴

¹³³ For a recent overview of some of these trends, see Julia Day Howell (2005), 'Muslims the New Age and marginal religions in Indonesia: changing meanings of religious pluralism', *Social Compass*, Vol 52, No 4, pp 473–493.

¹³⁴ On the broader pattern of co-optation and accommodation of political parties in post-Suharto Indonesia, see Dan Slater (2004), 'Indonesia's accountability trap: party cartels and presidential power after democratic transition', *Indonesia*, Vol 78, October, pp 61–92.

This acquiescence in the elevation of Megawati to the presidency came at a considerable price. First of all, it served as a public acknowledgment of the real limits to Islamist advancement through parliamentary party politics. By 2001, after all, the various Islamic parties had essentially given up on their avowed efforts to insert key phrases about Islamic law into the Constitution. Within each Islamic party, this pattern of co-optation and cooperation with the Megawati administration gave rise to considerable grumbling – and threats of rebellion – from less well connected and accommodating elements.¹³⁵

In addition, the co-optation of the various Muslim parties by 2001 allowed Megawati to pursue the kind of ecumenical ‘secular nationalist’ agenda with which the PDI-P had long been identified, while offering scant protection to the Islamic activists who had mobilized with these parties’ encouragement – and with accompanying military protection – in the preceding years of the Habibie and Wahid administrations. Thus the months following Megawati’s ascension to the presidency witnessed the continuation and escalation of the crackdown on Laskar Jihad by the security forces, leading to its forced demobilization and virtual disappearance from Maluku and Poso by early 2002 in the wake of the peace accords imposed on these two areas, the arrest of Ja’far Umar Thalib in early May and the disbanding of the group in October of the same year.

But the networks of Muslim politicians, bureaucrats, businessmen, clerics and retired and active police and military officers who had mobilized to support their co-religionists in Maluku and Poso faced a broader campaign of government harassment and intimidation as well. Most prominent in this regard was the well publicized arrest and imprisonment in Manila in March 2002 of three Indonesian Muslim activists on clearly trumped-up charges of smuggling explosives, a move allegedly made by the Philippine authorities at the urging of the new head of the National Intelligence Agency, a close associate of the new president. Among the three activists was the national treasurer of both Amien Rais’s party PAN and of Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia (DDII) as well as a leading figure in the DDII-sponsored group KOMPAK, which was active in its support of *jihad* in Maluku and Poso. Also arrested was the deputy head of the South Sulawesi branch

¹³⁵ For a broad overview of the full spectrum of Islamic political parties in Indonesia since 2001, see Anies Rasyid Baswedan (2004), ‘Political Islam in Indonesia: present and future trajectory’, *Asian Survey*, Vol 44, No 5 pp 669–690.

of PAN, a KOMPAK activist, Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia member, leader of a South Sulawesi group calling for the implementation of Islamic law, and alleged founder of a group of armed Muslim fighters (Laskar Jundullah) active in Poso.¹³⁶ Following arrests made in Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore in early 2002, moreover, accusations of involvement in terrorist activities led to the onset of police investigations and legal proceedings against the Ngruki *pesantren* co-founder and Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia leader K.H. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir later the same year.¹³⁷

It was thus against the backdrop of decisive domestic and international developments that a bombing campaign against foreign – 'Western' – targets began to unfold in 2002. As noted above, within Indonesia, the inauguration and entrenchment of the Megawati administration in mid-2001 spelled the decline and defeat, if not effective disappearance, of the Islamist project in national parliamentary politics, even as accompanying social trends worked to undermine efforts to strengthen religious solidarities among Muslims. Even as the new government in Jakarta appeared to prioritize the promotion of Chinese business and the protection of Protestant communities – and PDIP politicians – in Maluku and Poso through 'peace accords', a crack-down on Laskar Jihad and other Muslim paramilitary forces, and religiously coded gerrymandering in these areas, the complicity of Muslim politicians and the complacency of the Muslim population at large were amply apparent. Meanwhile, the onset of the 'Global War on Terror' in the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 attacks on New York and Washington, DC, soon encouraged the pursuit of Muslim fighters involved in the *jihad* in Maluku and Poso and the persecution and prosecution of a broader range of Islamic activists supporting their struggle. As early as November 2001, for example, US Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, a leading hawk in the Bush Administration and a former ambassador to Jakarta, warned that 'going after Al Qaeda in Indonesia is not something that should wait until after Al Qaeda has been uprooted from Afghanistan'.¹³⁸ Accusations of al-Qaeda training

¹³⁶ For background, see *ManilaGate: Kontroversi Penangkapan Tamsil Linrung* (2003), Merah Putih, Jakarta.

¹³⁷ 'Al-Qaidah "made in Madiun"?' *Tempo*, 3 February 2002, pp 20–22; 'Tim Jibril, Al-Qaidah Dari Solo?' *Tempo*, 24 February 2002, pp 20–22; 'Setelah Intel Melayu Bersatu', *Tempo*, 24 February 2002, pp 24–26.

¹³⁸ 'Of missiles and terrorism', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 8 November 2001, pp 22–23. See also 'Wawancara Paul Wolfowitz: "Aksi Teror di Indonesia Disusupi Al-Qaidah"', *Tempo Interaktif*, 19 November 2001.

camps in Poso, connections to *mujahidin* in Ambon, and linkages with Abu Bakar Ba'asyir and Jemaah Islamiyah were soon issued by high-ranking foreign government officials, reported in the Indonesian media, and acted upon by the military, police, intelligence and judiciary arms of the Megawati administration. In tandem with widely publicized arrests and accusations by authorities in neighbouring Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore eager to demonstrate their commitment to the 'War on Terror', American pressures helped to expedite and escalate a crackdown on the networks of *jihadi* fighters and conspirators that had emerged and expanded in Indonesia in the preceding years.

In short, the shift of the form and focus of *jihad* from paramilitary mobilization in areas of interreligious conflict to bombing of foreign – and 'Western' – targets in 2002 reflected the new constellation of power relations and religious authority in Indonesia that had begun to crystallize at the time. This new constellation was one in which the space for the promotion of 'Islam' in the national parliamentary arena had dramatically shrunk, and in which the channels of quiet collaboration between *jihadi* activists and sympathetic elements in the state and the political class were rapidly being closed down. This new constellation, moreover, was one in which the banner of Islam no longer seemed to carry the potential to mobilize and unify significant numbers of Indonesian Muslims, either as crowds or as voters, or as supporters of *jihad*.

Against this political, sociological and discursive backdrop, the internationalization of the bombing campaign represented the extrusion of the internal contradictions and limitations of the Islamist project in Indonesia, with externalization forestalling if not foreclosing a belated acknowledgment and acceptance of defeat. This attempt to restore the visibility and viability of Islam at the moment of its virtual evisceration or absorption coincided with an international conjuncture – the rise to global prominence of al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden and the retaliatory 'War on Terrorism' – which accorded foreign, especially 'Western' targets special priority and prestige. Yet the specific timing, locations, protagonists and forms of *jihad* reflected the peculiarities of Indonesian conditions in particular.

The significance of the Indonesian political, sociological and discursive context is especially apparent against the backdrop of preceding episodes of *jihad* in recent Indonesian history, first in the paramilitary mobilization associated with the Darul Islam movement of the 1950s and early 1960s, and then in the bombing campaigns of

the mid-1980s. The proclamation of the Negara Islam Indonesia (Islamic State of Indonesia) in mid-1949, after all, represented a break with the conciliatory stance of Republican leaders during the *Revolusi* by a group of Muslim independence fighters. This rebellion unfolded against the backdrop of the favouritism shown towards graduates of secular schools in the staffing of the newly independent Indonesian state (including the army), the forced demobilization of the 'irregular' guerrilla groups that had contributed so much to the energies of the *Revolusi*, the rejection of special provisions for Islam and Islamic law in the Constitution in favour of the multi-faith (but monotheistic) Pancasila, and the growing divisions among Muslims that accompanied constitutional democracy, which all contributed to a rising sense of disappointment and disenchantment among those who had mobilized against the Dutch under the banner of Islam. Thus the early 1950s saw the emergence of the Darul Islam (Abode of Islam) movement, with armed guerrilla groups from the *Revolusi* mobilized against the embryonic Indonesian state as late as the early 1960s in provinces such as West Java, South Sulawesi, South Kalimantan, Aceh and some northern coastal towns of Central Java.¹³⁹

This early episode of *jihād* in reaction to the decline and defeat of a previously ascendant Islam in Indonesia recurred in the form of a bombing campaign in the 1980s, during the peak years of Christian – and in particular, Catholic – influence in the Suharto era. As noted in Section Three above, the early–mid-1980s witnessed a set of humiliating defeats for forces identified with the promotion of Islam in Indonesia. After the strong performance of the Islamic party PPP in the 1977 and 1982 parliamentary elections, the Suharto regime embarked on a campaign to defang the threat of a populist Islam. This campaign included the imposition of more subservient pro-government figures within the PPP leadership, the promotion of the liberal accommodationist Abdurrahman Wahid as the new chairman of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the encouragement of Wahid's withdrawal of NU support for PPP, and the passage of legislation insisting that all organizations should accept Pancasila – rather than, say, Islam – as their founding and guiding principles. As this campaign proceeded in the early–mid-1980s, it provoked – in one or the other sense of the word – violent reactions in the name of Islam: most notably, a series of bombings took place around

¹³⁹ See C. van Dijk (1981), *Rebellion Under the Banner of Islam: The Darul Islam in Indonesia*,; Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague.

the Indonesian archipelago in 1984–85. These bombs targeted diverse sites of non-Muslim power and influence: a Chinese-owned bank and a Chinese-owned shopping mall in Jakarta in October 1984; a Catholic church and a Protestant seminary elsewhere on Java on Christmas Eve in December of the same year; the world-famous ruins of the pre-Islamic kingdom of Majapahit in Borobodur, Central Java, in January 1985; and a tourist bus bound for Bali in March of the same year.¹⁴⁰

Viewed against the backdrop of the Darul Islam rebellion(s) of the 1950s and early 1960s and the bombings of the early–mid-1980s, the *jihad* observed in Indonesia in the early years of the twenty-first century thus appears less as the product of – essentially exogenous – Wahhabi or Salafi influence, Afghanistan experience or al-Qaeda outreach than as the most recent variation on a well established recurring theme in Indonesian history. The activists recruited for *jihad* in Maluku and Poso in 2000–2001 and for bombings around the country in 2000–2005, after all, seem to have been drawn from the very same networks involved in the Darul Islam movement of the 1950s and the bombing campaign of the mid-1980s. These networks, it should be stressed, do not appear to have been involved in any form of religious violence in Indonesia in the intervening decades, which were free of armed insurgencies and terrorist bombing campaigns. Their engagement in full-time, full-blown *jihad* of one kind or another came only under certain specific circumstances – in the wake of rising popular mobilization and increasingly assertive claims on the public sphere and the state articulated in the idiom of Islam, and during a period of decline, defeat, disappointment and disentanglement from state power for those forces most closely associated with the promotion of the faith. Thus the *jihad* of recent years in Indonesia should be understood not as evidence of an ascendant, insurgent Islam, but as a symptom of the weakness of those who have tried to mobilize in its name, with both sore losers and ungracious winners involved in its perpetration.

Conclusions

The analysis presented in the pages above carries a set of implications for the study of religious violence in the Indonesian archipelago and beyond, implications of special relevance in the contemporary context of the ‘Global War on Terror’ and the flourishing ‘religious violence’

¹⁴⁰ See Tapol (1987), *Indonesia: Muslims On Trial*, London, especially pp 71–87.

industry. As noted above, neither the statistical analysis of violent incidents across the Indonesian archipelago nor the ‘whodunnit’ narrative of terrorist activity has addressed – much less answered – crucial questions regarding the timing, location, targets, forms and protagonists associated with religious violence in Indonesia. An alternative analytical approach is required for the study of religious violence in Indonesia in particular and in other settings as well.

In recent years, the body of scholarship associated with ‘social movements theory’ has begun to encroach upon the study of religious violence in the Islamic world and to incorporate the likes of al-Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah within its analytical grid.¹⁴¹ Religious violence, it is argued, is a form of collective action, one that, like protests, peasant rebellions and political campaigns, can be understood in terms of available opportunities, resources and ideologies for mobilization.¹⁴² Viewed through this lens, the timing of religious violence can be seen to reflect shifts in ‘political opportunity structure’ for believers and representatives of a given religion, the perpetrators of violence can be identified through the ‘mobilizing structures’ and ‘social networks’ of religious worship and education, and the forms and targets (the ‘repertoires’) of violence can be linked to the ‘collective action frames’ associated with the faith. In the case of Indonesia, it is easy to see how these terms could be applied to describe the contexts and contours of successive phases and forms of religious violence since 1995, and to imagine how this paper could be re-stylized along these lines.

Yet, as the preceding pages have suggested, the putative advantages of descriptive clarity – or conformity – afforded by such use of ‘social movements’ language are not accompanied by commensurate assistance in the task of explanation. ‘Social movements theory’, after all, remains an essentially actor-centred approach, in which the agents of mobilization provide the starting point for analysis. Yet the perpetrators

¹⁴¹ See, in particular, Carrie Rosefsky Wickham (2002), *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism, and Political Change in Egypt*, Columbia University Press, New York; Quintan Wiktorowicz, ed (2004), *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, IN; Quintan Wiktorowicz (2004), ‘Framing jihad: intramovement framing contests and al-Qaeda’s struggle for sacred authority’, *International Review of Social History*, Vol 49, Supplement, pp 159–177; and David Leheny (2005), ‘Terrorism, social movements, and international security: how Al Qaeda affects Southeast Asia’, *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, Vol 6, No 1, pp 87–109.

¹⁴² On the broadening of social movements theory to encompass the wider realm of ‘contentious politics’, see Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly (2001), *Dynamics of Contention*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

– crowds, criminal gangs, conspirators – have been the least accessible and identifiable elements of religious violence in Indonesia, and not only the agents, but the very forms of agency associated with this violence have shifted from the ‘spontaneous’ riots of 1995–97 to the more coordinated pogroms of 1998–2001 to the full-time *jihad* of subsequent years. There is neither a stable set of actors, nor a discernible ‘movement’, nor a consistent form of mobilization around which to organize a narrative account, much less an explanatory analysis, of the pattern of religious violence in Indonesia during this period. Indeed, throughout the past decade in Indonesia, the fundamental question of identity – of who is a Muslim and who speaks on behalf of Islam – has remained open and essentially unanswered.

Indeed, this broader question as to the inherently problematic nature of religious identity in Indonesia has served as the point of departure for the analysis of religious violence in the country. Successive phases and forms of religious violence in Indonesia since 1995, it has been argued, have reflected shifts not just in the structures of ‘political opportunity’ for Muslims in the country, but also shifts in the discursive, political and sociological structures of religious identity – and in *the structures of anxiety about religious identity itself*. Both the possibilities for representing Islam as a coherent body of beliefs and a unified body of believers, and the potential for the dissolution of the boundaries of the faith, it has been shown, shaped the timing, location, targets, forms, protagonists and kinds of agency associated with first riots, then pogroms, and then *jihad*. Thus the riots of 1995–97 unfolded when and where established hubs of Islamic piety and learning ran up against the circuitries of Chinese capital, Christianity and the secular state, and assumed the form of a public disavowal – through the burning of goods and buildings – of desire for incorporation into this profane realm. These riots unfolded against the backdrop of rising claims on an authoritarian state and a limited public sphere for ‘Islam’, but also amidst increasing ambiguity as to the nature of these claims, and in the context of increasing popular mobilization behind alternative, non-Islamic banners.

Similarly, the pogroms of 1998–2001 took place when and where local hierarchies and boundaries of religious authority – whether Muslim or Protestant – appeared to be under greatest strain and threat of dissolution, and assumed the form of murderous collective attacks on religious ‘others’ and the violent reassertion of the local borders and power structures of religious faith. These pogroms took place against

the backdrop of the rise and fall of an administration in Jakarta identified with the promotion of Islam, in the midst of a shift from centralized authoritarian rule to competitive elections and regional autonomy, and in the shadow of electoral realignments and socio-political trends that cross-cut established religious divides. Finally, in 2000 the call for *jihad* emerged when and where the protection and promotion of Islam appeared to have been most grossly neglected and violated, and assumed the form of spectacular displays of terror against non-Muslims in sites of Christian population and 'Western' power. This *jihad* emerged in the wake of the dramatic defeat of Islam in the elections of 1999, against the backdrop of presidential administrations increasingly susceptible to secular, syncretist and Christian influence, and amidst the broader dissolution of Islam as a unifying force in the parliamentary arena and in the public sphere in general.

Throughout these successive phases of religious violence in Indonesia since 1995, the targets and forms of violence observed reflected the extrusion or externalization of tensions and contradictions internal to the structures of religious identity and authority associated with 'Islam'. In the riots of 1995–97, the attacks on Chinese-owned businesses and property, Christian churches and government buildings occurred at the peak of pious Indonesian Muslims' success in joining the ranks of the university-educated urban middle class and entering the core circuitries of the capitalist market and the secular state, with the much-discussed 'social gap' (*kesenjangan sosial*) among Muslims at its very widest. Similarly, in the pogroms of 1998–2001, the attacks on 'sorcerers' in Java and across the Muslim–Christian divide in Maluku and Poso unfolded as the fixity and force of Islamic and Protestant boundaries and hierarchies faced unprecedented threats of diversification, dissent and defection *from within* these 'religious communities'. Finally, in the *jihad* of 2000–2005, the paramilitary assaults on Christian villages and the bombings first of Christian churches and then of foreign 'secular' targets were undertaken just as the promotion of Islamic law appeared to have faded from the parliamentary arena and the public sphere, and to have become the exclusive preserve of a narrow, secretive, sect-like group. Nothing illustrates this point more clearly than reports that members of Jemaah Islamiyah swore an oath of loyalty (*bai'at*) to K.H. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, a personalistic practice identified with the mystical Sufi brotherhoods (*tarekat*) so abhorred by those advocates of a more puritanical, and more universalistic, understanding of Islam.

Yet to understand these tensions and contradictions as essentially internal to religion – and to Islam in particular – in a disembodied, theological sense is to ignore and obscure their embeddedness within a broader constellation of this-worldly power relations. As noted above, the peculiar position of religious institutions in Indonesian society has always been accompanied by attendant ambiguities, uncertainties, anxieties and expectations, given the contradictions and changes within and between the diverse educational and associational currents (*aliran*) in Indonesian public life. These ambiguities, uncertainties, anxieties and expectations, it has been shown, have prefigured the violence accompanying a period of dramatic social and political change in Indonesia. Religious violence in Indonesia has thus been revealed to be ‘about’ religion in some sense, not in the conventional sense of religious belief or interreligious intolerance, but in the broader sense of religious authority, identity and boundaries.

Finally, this paper has revealed how supposedly ‘secular’, ‘ecumenical’ or religiously neutral and disinterested forces – the capitalist market, the coercive and educational apparatuses of the modern state, competitive electoral democracy and decentralization – have been imposed and experienced in a religiously coded fashion in Indonesia. As of this writing, the success of these forces in defanging, demobilizing and domesticating the threat of ‘Islam’ in Indonesia is apparent in the broad pattern of interreligious peace, in the predominance of politicians and parties with decidedly non-Islamist agendas in a largely consolidated multi-party democracy, and even in the strikingly secular appeal of the supposedly ‘fundamentalist’ Prosperous Justice Party (PKS, or Partai Keadilan Sejahtera) as a foe of corruption and a promoter of ‘reform’. Yet, as suggested above, even what can be billed as a triumph for multi-faith tolerance or secularism in Indonesia has been accompanied by forms of scapegoating and sacrifice reminiscent of the very religious fanaticism so easily, and so smugly, demonized by the ‘religious violence industry’ today.