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Political Viability, Contestation and Power: Islam and Politics in Indonesia and Malaysia

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Abstract: This article explores the impact of Muslim organizations and Muslim political parties in Indonesia and Malaysia and their relationship to democracy. Questions addressed are as follows: How does the political system (broadly described) facilitate or constrain the goals of various Muslim organizations (both groups in society and political parties)? What roles do these Muslim organizations play in impacting politics and where (or in what areas of) in the political process are they most effective? Under what circumstances have Muslim associations and/or parties been a force for (or antagonistic to) democratization? Given the ethnic and regional diversity in Malaysia and Indonesia, the initial hypotheses for these questions are as follows: under authoritarian and semi-authoritarian rule Muslim organizations actually have greater opportunities to polarize rhetoric as they appeal to citizens based on claims of moral supremacy, fulfillment of social welfare needs, and some level of criticism of a restricted or corrupted political order. At different times the Pan-Malayan Islamic Association (PAS), the leading Muslim party in Malaysia (and a dominant opposition party) has had limited appeal to voters. Under more democratic conditions, Islamic groups or parties may need to moderate their appeals, and/or build coalitions with secular or non-Islamic groups in order to win power and influence in the larger political system. Muslim political parties exist in both Malaysia and Indonesia; their power and influence have varied over time. This project aims to explain why these parties have had more support at some times than others and under what conditions they may moderate their demands and policy choices to accommodate pluralist leanings.

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INTRODUCTION

After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, research and reporting on Islam, and particularly on the relationship between politics and Islam, became increasingly mass market and often polarized. While most attention has been focused on the Middle East and on South Asian countries such as Afghanistan and Pakistan, Southeast Asian nations have been wrestling with unresolved questions about the relationship between religion and politics. Since Malaysia and Indonesia are predominantly Muslim countries, questions about religion and politics are mostly about Islam and politics. In light of the current world focus on Islam, new questions are being asked and more resources are being put into understanding a complex set of problems and unresolved issues.

This article examines how the political systems (broadly described) of these two countries facilitate or constrain the goals and aspirations of various Muslim organizations (both Islamic political parties and Islamic non-governmental organizations (NGO's)). I explain what role the Muslim organizations (defined more fully in the next paragraph) play in impacting politics and under what conditions they achieve their goals. Ultimately, I want to examine under what conditions or circumstances Muslim associations or parties have been a force for democratization in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Indonesia and Malaysia are interesting countries with which to answer these questions. Over the last 10 years there has been a great deal of political, economic, social, and religious turmoil in the region. Looking at Indonesia and Malaysia provides the opportunity to compare the role of Islamic organizations under three different political orders, under strong authoritarianism during Suharto's regime (1966–1998), under soft authoritarianism in Malaysia, and under democratic conditions in Indonesia after 1998. Likewise, Islamic organizations espouse a wide range of goals and ideologies. I am using the term "organization" to refer to both political party groupings, which aim to win elections and to refer to NGOs or civil society groups, which seek to promote a set of social, economic, civic and/or religious goals. Some organizations are working to implement Islamic law, Shari' a, others would like to see the creation of a pan-Islamic caliphate reaching from the Southern Philippines, through Indonesia, up the Malay peninsula and through Southern Thailand, still other organizations are working to further pluralism, human rights, and democracy. Finally, a small number of associations are expressly "liberal," liberal in promoting civil

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rights, tolerance, and equality, and liberal in the economic sense of promoting free-market principles and prescriptions. Sometimes the goals of these organizations overlap and sometimes the aims are antagonistic. While there is no doubt that there is a difference in the aims, structure, and scope of what political parties want to achieve, and what NGO's hope to accomplish (parties want to win seats in elections, and NGO's generally promote or work to achieve a focused platform of issues), there are enough similarities that it is useful to discuss both types of organizations in this article. The groups discussed here all have self-identified as "Islamic." They may work to promote explicitly "Islamic" values, or they may advocate more humanistic goals by using interpretations of Islamic teachings to legitimize these more pluralist goals. This article will look at the range of organizations and try to understand their appeal, role, power, and relationship to the state under different conditions. Is religion, or are religious organizations and groups influencing the state, or is the state able to shape, mold, and influence religious organizations? The answer is different depending on the time period and the place one looks. Sometimes, the answer is yes to both.

THE STATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

In political science there is a great deal of literature about the relationship between state and civil society, and on the role that civil society plays in both promoting democracy and being a critical force for supporting it. One of the more prominent debates is on the degree of autonomy that associations (that is civil society rather than just the masses) have or do not have from the state (Mitchell 1991, 77–96). The term civil society is also used to describe the ability or tone of the debate or opposition that exists in society, that is, do groups use violence or subversion to oppose the regime, or do they play by the rules and engage in "civil" behavior/debate to articulate their interests. I use the term here to describe the role and position of associational groups within society and to asses whether or not they are independent from the state. This helps determine what sort of influence they have in policy-making or the group's ability to get its views asserted. The degree to which groups in society are independent of the state is one indication of how democratic or not a regime is. While this article does not weigh in explicitly on this debate (I am willing to agree that true autonomy may not exist), I have assumed that, in order

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for civil society to have an impact on democratization or on policy-making, it must be at least somewhat free from state domination (Almond 1988, 853–885; Nordlinger 1988, 853–885; Mitchell 1991, 77–96). Long before the articles appeared in the *American Political Science Review* about the state and civil society, political scientists cared about organized groups in society because of the role they might play in making democracy work.

Modernization theory's basic argument was that democracy happened from below when citizens grouped themselves together with other like-minded citizens to assert their interests on the state. Democracy, in other words, was the product of the actions of civil society. Schmitter (1995) and Diamond (1994) theorize the role of groups or associations in society as contributing to or articulating the demands and interests of various sectors of the population. In such a position, civil society is poised to play a significant role in encouraging greater accountability and democratization. In fact, Diamond (1994, 7–11) outlines the ten democratic functions of civil society: (1) setting the limit on state power; (2) supplementing the role of political parties; (3) developing democratic attributes; (4) creating channels for the articulation, aggregation, and representation of interest, and generating opportunities for participation and influence at all levels of governance; (5) mitigating the principal polarities of political conflicts; (6) recruiting and training new political leaders; (7) monitoring elections; (8) disseminating information and aiding citizens; (9) supporting economic reform; (10) strengthening the democratic state. When scholars first envisioned transitions from authoritarian rule, they looked at the processes that Europe and the United States went through over 200 years ago. What many argued was that economic development would lead to the creation of a middle-class. This middle-class would be more likely to form associations and groups to protect and promote their interests. Eventually, these groups would play a larger role in demanding accountability, protection of private economic interests, and responsiveness from the government. These demands would evolve into greater political openness and ultimately democracy. In democratic states, interest articulation comes from a variety of sources in society, but the preferences that are best able to be heard are those coming from well organized, well funded, and well connected groups; civil society rather than just mass mobilization or participation.

To understand democracy, one certainly needs to look at factors beyond simply civil society. Most definitions of a "liberal"

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democracy[1] include a balance of power among institutions and actors in government, popular suffrage, a free press, and protection of individual rights. Much of the canonical work on democracy also pointed to economic prerequisites for democracy. Seymour Lipset's (1983) work, *Political Man*, argued that national wealth is the most reliable predictor of democracy, and Samuel Huntington (1984) argued in different ways that economic, cultural and social factors are associated with democracy. Democracies in Asia have proven exceptional in these regards. India is the region's second oldest democracy and until recently, it also ranked among the world's poorest countries. Likewise, Indonesia's transition to democracy after 1997 has shown that pluralism can work in a relatively poor and Muslim society. In this article, I am using the word *democracy* to refer to a political system that allows for participation, competition, and a fair degree of liberty. Ideas about democracy have again become critical as we seek better understanding of how religious groups (not just attitudes and values associated with one religion or another) are involved in political processes. In Indonesia and Malaysia religious groups, specifically Islamic organizations, are involved in the political realm in two ways; as civil society organizations, or NGO's, and as political parties directly competing for state power.

In some writing on democracy, there is a bias against religious organizations as positive players within a democratic system. This skepticism is amplified in popular discussions about the relationship between Islam and pluralism. The fear is that if Islamic parties win in elections they will then do away with democratic institutions. There is a new body of literature that finds that in fact democracy is a moderating force for a variety of different extreme religious groups. Elman and Warner (2008), in their introduction to a whole special issue of *Asian Security* devoted to this question, find that in fact, the need to win elections, participate in governing coalitions, and have impact and broader appeal over time has provided powerful incentives to radical religious parties to moderate their positions over time. While this literature is helpful in understanding the relationship between political institutions and religious parties, it does not tell us enough about religious groups outside of institutions of government and how they might impact the political process.

So, how powerful are Islamic groups in Malaysia and Indonesia? Can they be characterized as "civil society"? If so, what then are the implications of Muslim activism and power on the success and sustainability of democracy? I'll turn to a closer examination of Malaysia and Indonesia to try and answer these questions.

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MALAYSIA

Malaysia is often described as a soft (or semi) authoritarian state (Kua 1996). There are regular elections for national and local level officials and these elections are contested by multiple parties. However, the electoral system, the way districts are drawn, limited press freedom, and constraints on organizing people (either by political parties or by NGO's), make the elections less competitive and less free than one would find in a more liberal democratic society. Likewise, state dominance over groups in society, and the continued use of Internal Security Acts to threaten or detain opposition voices makes it hard to see Malaysia as a genuine democracy. NGO's are greatly constrained in what they can do in checking the power of the state. Vidhu Verma (2002) argues that there are social or political organizations that are independent of the state and have some effect on public policy. Meredith Weiss (2005) looks at how state structures impact the types of coalitions, agendas, and behaviors that form among civil society actors, thus implying that civil society in Malaysia is not fully independent of the state. In some cases, there is a tendency for organizations to be co-opted by the state to such an extent that the distinction between society and government no longer is expressed in the dynamics of policy-making (Verma 2002). An array of restrictive laws curtails freedom of expression, association, and assembly. This makes it difficult for NGOs or civil society organizations to try and publicize their activities and gain broader support for particular causes.

> Opposition parties and civil society groups continued to express concern that police were not impartial in granting permits for public assemblies and used unnecessary or excessive force when dispersing demonstrations.
>
> In February, without giving sufficient warning, police fired water cannon laced with chemical irritant to disperse a crowd gathered at the national police headquarters in Kuala Lumpur to present a memorandum on police brutality. (Amnesty International 2005)

Questions about Islam and the nature of political Islam or the relationship between Islam and politics are particularly interesting in Malaysia. President Mahathir in 2001 declared that Malaysia was an Islamic state. The constitution also allows for freedom of religion yet, there is little room for Muslims to believe or worship in unconventional ways.

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How can all three of these elements be simultaneously true? This section of the article will look at the ruling party, United Malay Nasional Organization (UMNO), at the main opposition party, the Islamic party PAS, and at Islamic groups in society to understand the power, goals and relationships of each.

In the 1980's, the ruling party in Malaysia, UMNO, shifted its Malay-centered rhetoric and appeals to a more multi-ethnic approach and began a zealous commitment to "Islamicization" of policies and institutions (Hamayotsu 2002). Part of the reason that Mahathir instigated the vigorous promotion of Islam was to out-do the main attraction of the strongest opposition party, the Islamic party, PAS, and this element will be discussed at greater length shortly. The other reason to promote state-centered Islam was to provide legitimacy to the party and the state in its quest for economic development and modernization. Prime Minister Mahathir announced that Malaysia's overall goal was modernization and development, but that *did not* mean that Malaysia would embark on Westernization. Mahathir portrayed Islam as the key to achieve modernization that was distinct from the West. Mahathir's government spearheaded the creation of a network of Islamic banks, the Malaysian International Islamic University, Islamic Insurance schemes, and the creation of the Hajj Pilgrim Fund (Noor 2003). The regime also supported the creation of the Islamic think-tank Institut Kefahaman Islam Malaysia (IKIM), to promote "progressive" Islamic views, and the government helped restructure and boost the role of many Islamic institutions; the Islamic courts, Shari' a, the building of mosques, religious schools, and the increased request for zakat collection, and there was a huge increase in the number of religious officials and ulama working in the Prime Minister's Office. This coincided with an increase in state and administrative power concentrated in the office of the Prime Minister. The state religious bureaucracy was expanded and it came to regulate and restrain religious-related activities (Hamayotsu 2002, 359).

While Prime Minister Mahathir and UMNO were focused on co-opting and claiming the mantle of Islam, they also cracked down on militant and "deviant" Muslim organizations that posed a threat either to national security, or to the regime's dominant position. Within the Prime Minister's Office is the Islamic Development Department and it has the power to declare Muslim organizations as "deviationist." It has declared 44 such organizations as "deviant" cults and tried to shut these organizations down. The Islamic Development Department is a way of

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mobilizing the state ulama and state power to issue fatwa about the correct interpretation of Islam (Liow 2004, 249).

In both Malaysia and Indonesia, some Muslim organizations have opted for violence in order to express their hatred for the regime and also as a tactic for trying to achieve the stated aim of bringing about an Islamic state. Groups that have used violence or have said that they are preparing to use militant means to assert their interests tend to share certain common features: they feel that the state is illegitimate in its present form and so rather than "playing by the rules" and trying to assert their goals through regular political channels, they resort to violence. Second, militant organizations tend to feel victimized by regimes that they feel are more prone to protect interests of other groups (either other religious groups or other Muslim networks), thus feel that violence is justified in rectifying perceived injustices.

Both the Indonesian government and Malaysian government have cracked down on certain militant Islamic groups. UMNO's actions against militant organizations have been relatively non-controversial. In June 2000, the Brotherhood of Inner Power, al-Maunah, pulled off an arms heist from an army camp in Perak. The organization was declared a "cult" and military action was taken against it. The group was outlawed and disbanded. The Malaysian wing of Jemaah Islamiyah, Kumpulan Militan Malaysia (KMM), has been outlawed and suspected leaders and members have been arrested and detained under the Internal Security Acts. UMNO has also charged that membership in KMM overlaps with PAS membership, although there seems to be little evidence of this and it may be an attempt to link PAS with terrorist organizations, more on this will be discussed shortly (Liow 2004, 245–246).

In addition to vigorous persecution of more overtly militant Islamic organizations, the state has also gone after Islamic organizations that do not conform to the state's version of Islam. In 1994, the state clamped down on Darul Arqam (DA). DA was one of a number of Muslim revival movements that believed in promoting greater resurgence and observance of Islamic values and practices. Other revival movements include the Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia (Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (ABIM)) modeled on the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt, and Jamaat Tabligh. These groups were based on dakwah or study groups. Membership in the organizations above overlaps and is non-exclusive (Hamid 2003, 361–262). DA, led by Ustaz Ashaari, formed a model Islamic village outside of Kuala Lumpur. There they set up social service organizations, schools, and a base for grassroots organizing that

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would become so successful that they expanded overseas. At first the state tolerated DA, however, in 1994 the government began a series of media attacks criticizing the organization. Later, the organization was banned and Ustaz was detained under the ISA. The government declared DA "deviant" and issued a fatwa against its proponents. The government's strategy of divide and conquer was so successful that other dakwah groups did not come to DA's defense and even supported the fatwa against them. In March and April 2006, 12 DA members were arrested for supposedly taking part in the logistical planning of a series of bombings. The group's possible ties to Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) or militant groups in Mindinao are being investigated (Abuza 2006a). The state's crackdown illustrates the regime's insecurity about successfully presenting itself as a legitimate representation of Islam to grassroots Muslims whose loyalties might be to independent groups like DA (Hamid 2003, 363–367).

Why were ABIM and other organizations left alone? To some extent it is because these groups are less threatening to the government. Although ABIM is a large organization, with upwards of 40,000 members at its height, it has not challenged UMNO's dominance either in the political sense or in a contest of values. It may also be because of the group's ties to UMNO officials. For example, Anwar Ibrahim[2] was closely associated with ABIM before he was recruited into the leadership circle of UMNO.

PAS

The Parti Islam si Malaysia (PAS), or the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party, was formed in the 1950s because of a split within UMNO over the role of religion in politics.[3] PAS's appeal, particularly in the North, and in the wake of the economic crisis and Anwar scandal, has to do with its claim to the idea of an authentic Islam, that it provides a comprehensive system of values that encompasses all spheres of social, cultural, economic, and political activity. Yet ultimately, this appeal seems to be limited to minority of voters. PAS has played an important role in criticizing UMNO and questioning the credibility (on religious and ethical grounds) of leaders like Mahathir. As UMNO stepped up its religious activity in the 1980s, PAS found itself on the defensive and was forced to do something to differentiate itself from the newly Islamicized UMNO. Some voices within PAS became far more radical or fundamentalist, in part as a reaction to UMNO's increasing religiosity. After gaining support, votes, and credibility in the wake of the 1997/1998

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financial crisis and Anwar scandals, the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States again altered PAS' fortunes.

PAS' party platform has varied somewhat in the recent past. In 1999 it muted its long-standing call for an Islamic state based on Shari' a, it did so in order to keep the opposition coalition with secular parties Democratic Action Party (DAP) and Keadilan in tact. More recently, PAS has renewed its call for Islamic law and has suffered from the media's portrayal of PAS as a radical group, and the mainstream press has tried to implicate PAS members as working with more militant groups like al-Maunah or KKM (Noor 2003, 202). There is little evidence that PAS is linked to violent Islamic groups either in Malaysia or outside the country. However, some members of PAS have made inflammatory statements supporting Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda against the United States and in opposition to the idea of a secular state. After the September 11 attacks, and the United States invasion of Afghanistan, PAS called for jihad against the United States and its allies. It paid a huge cost politically for this as it was pushed to the margins of local politics. For UMNO, Islam is linked with modernity, economic development, material progress, and rationality. PAS has consistently been portrayed by UMNO as the antithesis of these values (Noor 2003, 201–215).

In many ways, PAS now has a new opportunity to offer an alternative way of governing in Malaysia. When the economic crisis hit Malaysia in 1997, and when Prime Minister Mahathir fired Anwar Ibrahim and then had him arrested, both the Prime Minister and UMNO seemed vulnerable to opposition forces. PAS and other opposition parties criticized UMNO for its handling of the economy, and for the lack of democratic norms in the country. PAS joined a coalition of opposition parties and did better in the 1999 elections than ever before. It had the chance to rule in Terengganu and Kelantan after winning control of both states in the 1999 election. However, an analysis of what PAS has tried to do there presents us with a mixed impression of its commitment to moderation and to improving upon UMNO's version of democracy. PAS tried to implement *hudud* (Islamic punishment for certain criminal offenses) law in Terengganu, only to have the federal government forbid this. These laws would only apply to Muslims and "party spokesmen went to great lengths to emphasize that non-Muslims had not been unfairly treated under PAS in Kelantan, with freedom of religion guaranteed and non-Muslims even allowed to continue such practices as rearing pigs" (Funston 2000, 9). However, PAS has also advocated a land tax on non-Muslims, again making many people fear what life would be

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like living under PAS leadership. For the most part, non-Muslims in Terengganu and Kelantan have been able to maintain their way of life and their businesses with only minimal intrusions. Alcohol and gambling has been curtailed but if in non-Muslim hands it has been allowed to be bought, sold, and part-taken of.

PAS is again part of an opposition coalition that could be poised to gain considerable control. In August of 2008, PAS endorsed Anwar Ibrahim's Pakatan Rakyat (opposition alliance); joining PAS to a diverse group of parties that would like to take control from UMNO (Chance 2008). To remain in this coalition, one that is ethnically and religiously diverse, one can imagine that PAS will need to moderate its stand on creating an Islamic state in Malaysia.

Like other organizations, PAS members vary considerably on their commitment to democracy or democratic values. In the spring of 2005, PAS elected reformist leaders to top posts, shunning hard-line clerics. Academic-turned-politician Nashruddin Mat Isa was elected the party's deputy president and three other reformists were named vice presidents of the party. This is an historic first for the party, now the three vice presidents are not Islamic scholars but intellectuals or activists. This shift toward more moderate leadership within the party comes about in part because of electoral setbacks in the 2004 election. Nashruddin Mat Isa has been quoted as saying:

> PAS has always contested elections in Malaysia according to the law of the land and the rules of the democratic process. For more than fifty years we have been playing according the rules of the game so why should we support any non-democratic means? We have never, and will never, resort to the use of violence to achieve our goals and we will remain a party that abides by the constitution. (Noor 2007)

The party's support comes mainly from areas in the north and people seem to support the party mostly out of frustration with UMNO and the Barisan Nasional (BN) (the ruling coalition), rather than as a way to express devotion to the idea of an Islamic state (Kulkarni 2005). Realizing this, PAS seems to be taking a more moderate approach right now.

Could PAS be the key to pushing for greater democratization in Malaysia? Despite its usefulness and power as an opposition force to UMNO and the BN coalition, I think it would be wrong to see PAS by itself as a potential force for democratic change, *not* because Islam is incompatible with democracy, and *not* because PAS itself is

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anti-democratic, but because it would be almost impossible for PAS to rally support to win enough electoral contests on its own based on a moderate and tolerant vision of Islam. UMNO has already co-opted Islam for just this purpose. Mahathir first started emphasizing the importance of Islam in the 1980s and Prime Minister Abdullah has spoken a great deal about “Islam Hadhari” or “civilizational Islam.” In his vision, Islam is a force for tolerance of religious differences, individual piety, and most of all increased scientific progress, and Islamic modernism. For PAS to stake out religious space different from this, they are almost forced to move to more traditional or more rigid conceptions of Islam. This makes it less appealing to the vast majority of Malays and Malaysians, and it moves it away from the values necessary to promote and sustain democracy. As part of an anti-establishment coalition, PAS could be a critical player in liberalizing the political system. As Elman and Warner (2008) explain, religious parties within governing coalitions may moderate their positions over time to maintain access to power and patronage and this seems like a possible scenario for PAS in Malaysia.

Second, it is hard to see PAS alone as a force for democratic change when we compare it to the Islamic forces that helped oust Suharto in Indonesia. In Indonesia, large Muslim organizations such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama are huge grassroots organizations involved in education, healthcare, and community services throughout the country. Leaders of these movements became increasingly critical of Suharto as economic conditions worsened and as protests throughout the country escalated. Since these organizations were not part of the ruling apparatus, and because of the depth of their connections to people throughout society, their criticism of the regime carried a great deal of weight and legitimacy. They did not have anything immediately to gain from Suharto’s departure, but could speak with moral authority about ethical policies and the need to root out corruption that had rotted Suharto’s government through and through. PAS has neither the depth nor the standing to act in this capacity and since it is a political party, its aim is to win more seats within the current system, not necessarily to topple the whole institutional apparatus.

INDONESIA

The relationship between Islam and the state, or Islam and politics, in Indonesia is complex and has been important for over 100 years.

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Reformist and conservative Islamic groups have competed for power and influence in Indonesia since colonialism. These competing faces of Islam, along with more militant Muslim organizations, will continue to vie for power and popular support.

Islamic organizations in Indonesia began forming in the beginning of the 20th-century. Muhammadiya formed in 1912 to assert reformist or "modern" Islamic ideals, and in 1926, Nahdatul Ulama was organized as a conservative counterweight to it. When independence was declared at the end of 1949, there was little preparedness or groundwork for participatory democracy (Hefner 2000). Powerful Islamic and leftist currents were far from democratic. Sukarno's years in office, were in part, marked by conflict and power struggles among the military, leftists, and Islamicists. However, by 1998 some Muslim groups were at the forefront of demands to oust autocratic leader President Suharto.

Suharto's rule, often referred to as the "New Order," is best characterized as authoritarian and developmentalist. He created a political order based on repression, military rule, and economic development. Suharto was able to maintain power in several ways. First, for much of his rule he had the overwhelming support of the military establishment behind him, he also cultivated a powerful group of economic allies who both benefited from his economic policies, and supported his political goals. And, he was able to manipulate and control groups within society in order to minimize opposition to his regime. His relationship to Islamic groups was complex, at times he was antagonistic to Islamic forces, and at times he cultivated certain segments of the community as allies.

In some ways, Muslim groups were treated similarly to other groups in society, they were to be managed and channeled in ways to maximize their quiescence to Suharto's rule, or at least to minimize their opposition. To do this, Suharto created organizations to link society to the regime. For example, Golkar, Suharto's party and the vehicle he used to win elections, existed at every level of society. He also rejuvenated *Pancasila*, as the official state ideology. Pancasila is the basis for a unified state under the adherence of the following five principles: belief in God, humanitarianism, national unity, democracy, and social justice. Islam, of course, was one of the state sanctioned religions (along with Hinduism, Buddhism, Catholicism, and Protestantism), and Islamic leaders varied in their views of Pancasila. Some saw it as an acceptable way of noting the importance of religious life, while others were furious

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that it did not specify the primacy of Islam, or mandate Muslims' adherence to Islamic law.

Like his predecessor, Suharto marginalized political parties. Only three parties were allowed to compete in elections: four Islamic parties were forced to merge in to the Unity Development Party (PPP), non-Islamic parties, like PNI (the Nationalist Party), were fused together as the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI), and most significantly there was the party formed by the armed forces, the Joint Secretariat of Functional Groups (Golkar). Golkar was given primacy in rallying popular support for Suharto. Overall party influence was also minimized by restricting the parties' role in the newly established legislative bodies. About 20% of members were directly appointed by the government.

Suharto began his rule in the late 1960s with restrictions on Islamic activity and there was little overt influence from Islamic groups on politics. Reactions to the repression were split, some sought to revive Islamic parties and increase Islamic appeal in order to capture or influence the state. Other groups promoted a vigorous grassroots program of education and renewal in society; that is, to create a Muslim civil society to balance the state (Hefner 2000, 16). In the late 1970s and into the 1980s, there was an Islamic resurgency, there was a great increase in mosque-building, attendance at Friday prayers increased, and there were greater numbers of people attending religious schools, making the pilgrimage and zakat (donations). Why this sudden transformation? Hefner provides several answers: (1) there was an increase in literacy which made studying and adherence to customs and practices more likely, (2) the official state education curriculum had a religious component to it so more people were exposed to formal religious ideas; (3) participation in organized religion was a relatively safe outlet for expression and it was a sphere of life not totally controlled by the state. In fact, by this time, there was even some space for religious groups to influence public policy (Hefner, 2000, 17).

In the last 12 years of Suharto's rule, he turned to Islam both personally and politically. He began talking about and practicing religion, he allowed and promoted the creation of Islamic banks, gave broader powers to Muslim courts, put an end to the prohibition on wearing the jilbab in schools, allowed Islamic newspapers and TV programs to be published and aired, and there was increased funding for religious schools. Suharto sought to cultivate a loyal Islamic following as a way of perpetuating his power, and as part of an overall strategy of divide and rule where he favored some groups over others. His repoliticization of religion (and ethnicity as well) played upon the country's traditions

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of tolerance and civility (Hefner 2000, 72). Some Islamic groups cooperated and others distanced themselves from the regime and worked at promoting democracy and Muslim values outside of the New Order regime (Hefner, 2000, 18–19); other groups opposed Suharto and were laying the seeds for future militancy or fundamentalist goals of achieving an Islamic state. For these groups, the illegitimacy of the state provided a justification for violence and militancy. Clearly, however, there was little agreement on what "Muslim politics" would mean or look like in Indonesia.

One example of how Suharto hoped to control religion can be seen through ICMI's experience. In *Civil Islam*, Hefner has provided a detailed description of the creation of ICMI (the Association of Muslim Intellectuals), an Islamic organization formed in 1990 with Suharto's support to promote moderate Islamic thought and to mobilize Muslim support. Initially, ICMI was a way of creating links between the regime and Muslim activists and ICMI provided a small political space for independent thought and action. However, a split developed both within ICMI and among Muslim groups, and between Muslim bureaucrats (or regimist forces) and reform-minded activists within ICMI. Suharto's response to moderate, quasi-independent activity of reform-minded Islamic leaders was to recruit hard-line (conservative or more fundamentalist) Muslims to his side. (Hefner 2000, 143–165) This divide and conquer strategy has had lasting implications for Islamic politics in Indonesia today.

When the economic crisis hit in July of 1997, long simmering resentment and anger over corruption erupted. Throughout the summer of 1997, Indonesia tried to cope with the falling rupiah on its own. Suharto and his closest allies were unable to decide if they wanted to accept the terms offered by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for assistance in stopping the economy's free fall. Finally, in January 1998, Suharto agreed to a package of economic prescriptions from the IMF. Some of the requirements included curbs on official favoritism for companies controlled by his children and his closet allies, and reductions in subsidies.

In January 1998, Suharto announced that he would seek reelection later that year; it would be his 7th-term as President of Indonesia. He chose B.J. Habibie as his next Vice President. Suharto's actions only served to further weaken investor confidence about reforms in Indonesia's economy, and, public disapproval over how Suharto was handling the economic crisis grew alarmingly. Mass demonstrations increased throughout Indonesia in early 1998. On February 14, they turned

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violent. Rioters in Jakarta, Medan, and other cities burned and looted shops. Churches were vandalized and burnt. Protests continued in major cities during February, although police sometimes tried to break them up, often police and military units stood by while protestors destroyed private property and even attacked other people, mostly ethnic Chinese. On March 10, 1998 Suharto was reelected by the legislature and was given significant new power to confront the economic crisis. His reelection triggered some of the largest and most fiery antigovernment demonstrations in 30 years.

May began with violent riots in Medan and other cities over price increases resulting from reductions in government subsidies for cooking oil and other necessities. Thousands of students continued protesting against the regime. Some very notable and high profile individuals began calling for Suharto to step down. Muslim leader Abdurrahman Wahid called for Suharto's resignation and pled with the nation to put an end to the hostility toward the Chinese community. Wahid's outspokenness against the government gave encouragement to the students to continue their protests. On May 13, 1998, Jakarta police opened fire on thousands of student protestors at Trisakti University. Six were killed and dozens wounded. The next day protests turned horrifically violent. Hundreds of stores, vehicles, offices, and homes were burned and looted. Most of the anger and damage was directed at Indonesia's ethnic Chinese minority because of perceived business ties to Suharto. Hundreds of Chinese women and girls told gruesome stories of being assaulted, raped, and tortured. Graphic tales of the violence have been widely documented.[4] While not the sole cause of the violence, Suharto's alliance with conservative, hard-line Muslims, prior to 1998, and the publication of virulently anti-Chinese, anti-non-Muslim propaganda, helped spur on the violence against the Chinese and it certainly helps explain the slowness of the police and military to respond to the atrocities. On May 21, 1998, after 30 plus years in office, Suharto resigned as President of Indonesia. B.J. Habibie became president and announced that he would stay in office only for a year while the country planned for new elections. The struggle between Islamic groups who had supported Suharto and those who worked for his ouster was not resolved.

Conservative Islamic groups like Komiti Indonesian Solidaritas Dunia Islam (KISDI) (Indonesian Community for Solidarity with the Islamic World) supported Habibie and promoted the idea that "opposition to Habibie equaled opposition to Islam" (Hefner 2000, 207). Moderate

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Islamic leaders such as Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur), Amien Rais, and Nurcholish Madjid (2004)[5] supported democratization and a pluralist system. A small number of conservative Islamic groups were loyal to Suharto until the end, and then threw their support behind Habibie. Despite Habibie's weaknesses as a leader, and his lack of a deep patronage network within the military and government, he was able to oversee significant political changes that set Indonesia on a course to democracy.

The most free and open elections since the 1950s were held in Indonesia on June 7, 1999. Forty-eight parties competed for seats in Parliament. The parties that won the most seats in the legislature were Megawati Sukarnoputri's party: the Indonesian Democratic Party in Struggle (PDI-P), capturing 34% of the popular vote, Golkar, Habibie's party that was still strong because of dense organizational networks established under Suharto, received 20% of the vote, Abdurrahman Wahid's party the National Awakening Party (PKB) and Amien Rais of the National Mandate Party (PAN) also received large number of votes, the later two leaders and parties represented moderate Islamic interests. The President was to be chosen by an electoral-college mechanism in October of 1999. Despite winning the most seats in the legislature, Megawati refused to network and build up a base of support with others in power. With the support of General Prabowo, Suharto's son-in-law, factions within the military, and some conservative Islamic elements, vigorously opposed democratic reforms and the candidacy of either Wahid or Megawati in the 1999 elections, it looked like Habibie might win.

When Habibie withdrew from contention at the last minute, Wahid was chosen by the People's Consultative Assembly to be President (Indonesian General Election Commission 2001; and King 2003). Although only in office for 19 months before being impeached because of his inability to address continuing corruption at the highest levels, economic disorder, and separatist movements, Wahid's presidency was seen as the first democratic transfer of power in Indonesia's history. Although he was a vocal supporter of *reformasi*, political reforms, his administration was quickly beset with problems and he was viewed as unreliable and inconsistent. On July 23, 2001 he was impeached by the congress (Barton 2002). Megawati succeeded him as the third leader in three years to try to govern Indonesia. While none of the first three post-Suharto Presidents lasted long in office or seemed strong enough to pull the economy out of the doll drums, significant political changes did take place and the parliamentary and presidential elections of 2004

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were the most open, competitive and clean elections in Indonesia's modern history.

Former general Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (popularly known as SBY) won the September 2004 elections, carrying more than 60% of the vote. He is seen as personally pious and close to Islamic leaders, but his party, the Democratic Party, is a secular party. After four years in office, it is clear that he is unwilling to firmly confront more conservative elements of Islam in the name of protecting and promoting pluralism. The conflict between moderate Islamic forces and more fundamentalist or conservative forces that blossomed under Suharto, has not been resolved and may in fact be one of the most important political issues for Indonesia today (Freedman 2006).

Since 1998 there has been an explosion of activity from civil society organizations of all types. Muslim organizations are just part of what is happening in Indonesian politics and society since 1998. Muslim organizations range from promoting liberalism (politically, socially, and economically), for example, the Liberal Islam Network (JIL), to militant organizations like Jemaah Islamiyah that support jihad against non-Muslims and are working to create an Islamic state or even a pan-Islamic caliphate.

STATUS OF ISLAMIC GROUPS IN INDONESIA TODAY

Indonesia has a rich tradition of community/Mosque involvement in social services. Religious associations in particular have been very active in running schools, health centers, and orphanages. The largest Islamic organization in Indonesia, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), claims 30 million supporters. It runs schools and community associations throughout the country. As of 2001, Muhammadiyah (the second largest Islamic organization in the country), had 9,527 educational institutions of various types, and 3,775 health and welfare-related centers. Yayasan Indonesia Sejahtera is another community organization that operates a broad range of development programs at the community level. Their central focus is on public health and training and education. NU and Muhammadiyah are powerful, well entrenched, and moderate grassroots operations. NU provides the support base for the National Awakening Party and the National Unity Party. The National Trust Party and the Crescent and Star Party rely on members of Muhammadiyah as its support base. The organizations mentioned here

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are moderate organizations. They promote Islamic values, traditions and practices, and in some cases may advocate Islamic law, however, they are committed to working within the law, and as part of the political system to advance their goals. And, for the most part Muhammadiyah, NU, and Yayasan have said that they support the idea of a pluralist, democratic Indonesia. Individuals and some groups or factions within these organizations were in fact instrumental in helping democracy bloom in 1998 and afterward. Within Muhammadiya and NU there are a variety of other associations that are working on developing democratic values in religious schools, promoting women's rights, or in promoting dialogue and understanding about the role of Islam in life and politics. Examples of such organizations include the Al Maun Institute for Young Intellectuals of Muhammadiya and NU's Center for Pesantren and Democracy Studies.[6] However, these large, powerful, and moderate organizations are not the only voices of Islam in Indonesia. Since the fall of Suharto, more fundamental or militant Islamic groups have become more vocal. Using new democratic freedoms, radical organizations have become adept at fundraising, rallying people, and spreading more conservative and intolerant views of Islam. There are several NGOs that serve as financial and recruiting conduits for militant Islamic organizations.[7]

After the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States, Indonesia condemned terrorism but denied that they had a problem in their own backyard. The October 2002 bombings in Bali, followed in 2003, 2004, and 2005 by the bombing of the Marriott Hotel, and the Australian Embassy in Jakarta, and the bombing of the three restaurants on Bali, forced Megawati and then SBY to acknowledge the presence of militant groups in Indonesia. There are many Islamic organizations that walk a fine line between genuine civil society organizations that play a constructive role in society, and organizations that are more militant in nature (I discuss these militant organizations last as they represent the most extreme end of the range of groups). Two organizations that do not fit neatly into either category but which fall toward the more troubling end of the spectrum are the Tarbiyah movement and the Islamic Defenders' Front.

The Tarbiyah movement began on college campuses in the late 1970s. The Tarbiyah movement's aim was to promote group discussions of Islam and spirituality and it began to train members in the art of power politics and to sponsor members for student body elections. As Tarbiyah activists graduated they spread the network beyond campuses to form religious

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study circles in the companies where they worked and the mosques where they worshiped. The movement then established the Justice Party (later reformed as the Prosperous Justice Party or PKS) as a vehicle to promote Muslim values. Tarbiyah also begun to start elementary and secondary schools and to introduce leadership training programs in to the curriculum (Fuad 2003). This movement straddles the line between mainstream moderate views that support a pluralist vision of the Indonesian state, and more fundamentalist actors working for an Islamic state. While Tarbiyah and PKS mainly promote cleaner government and social welfare goals, the desire to promote Islamic law has not been erased from their party platform. Some fear that PKS wants to smuggle Shari'a in through the back door by posing as a moderate party, but one that has a quiet agenda. There is also no evidence that, should PKS become popular enough to control government and to formalize Shari'a at the national level, it would endanger democratic governance.

Another organization that is becoming more active is the Islamic Defenders' Front (FPI). FPI seeks to promote Islamic values. It perpetrates violence against places serving alcohol, particularly during Ramadan. It was formed in 1998 by Habib Rizaq and is now the largest radical Muslim group in the country. It was able to organize demonstrations of over 10,000 people in Jakarta in October 2001 and has repeatedly organized protests against the United States or her allies for actions in Iraq (Abuza 2003, 24).

There is a wide variety of radical Islamic organizations that want to see greater proselytizing activities and the Islamicization of politics and society. I differentiate these groups from those discussed previously, as the more radical groups are willing to use violence to achieve their aims. They are willing to use violence because they reject the legitimacy of a secular state. During Suharto's New Order, many of those who would become leaders of militant or radical groups saw the regime as being allied with non-Muslim interests (both domestic and foreign). They developed a sense of victimization based on perceived neglect of Islamic ideals and interests (Sidel 2007). Many of these groups see acts of violence, terrorist bombings, and sectarian conflict in Indonesia as preparation for a larger war against the government of Indonesia and other illegitimate governments in the region (Philippines, Malaysia, etc.).

The organization with which to begin to try and understand militant Islam in Indonesia is Darul Islam (DI). Darul Islam began as separate rebellions in West Java, South Sulawesi, and Aceh in the late 1940s and early 1950s and has become a loose, but powerful, web of personal

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contacts that extends throughout Indonesia. DI seeks to create an Islamic state, Negara Islam Indonesia (NII). Although an illegal organization, DI is more or less tolerated. There are some 14 factions of the DI movement, the composition and goals of offshoot organizations vary widely, from JI to non-violent religious groups. The history of DI shows the difficulty in really eradicating the movement. DI has survived and adapted after each period of defeat. From 1977 to 1982 virtually its entire leadership was arrested and yet this just enhanced the credentials of DI members and did not weaken their commitment to the cause. Although there are rifts and power struggles at the top, this seems to have little impact on cooperation and recruitment at lower levels (International Crisis Group 2005; van Dijk 1981).

The extended DI family includes the following organizations: JI, the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia, Laskar Jundulloh, the Banten group, and Angkatan Mujahidin Islam Nusantara (AMIN). This list does not include DI veterans who have established their own organizations and followers but who choose to operate outside of any formal structure or connection to DI. These people may keep in contact with each other, intermarry, and remain connected across generations. JI is a regional component of Al-Qaeda; it has local and regional concerns and works with Al-Qaeda for training and financing. JI officially came into being on January 1, 1993 and was founded by Abdullah Sungkar. Many of the JI leaders are children of DI leaders. The roots of JI can be traced to Indonesia in the 1960s when radical clerics Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, both of Yemeni descent, established an illegal radio station from which they advocated Shari'a. They established an Islamic boarding school in Solo, Al-Mukmin, commonly referred to as Ngruki; it now has about 1,900 students. The school teaches a hard-line and literal interpretation of Islam based on Salafi Wahhabism. According to Zachary Abuza (2003, 141), the school's alumni reads like a list of who's who of Southeast Asian terrorism.

JI is organized into cells, *mantiqi*, there are four cells covering Southeast Asia. Each cell is fairly independent of the others and has specific functions. The Indonesian cell, mantiqi 2, developed two paramilitary components; Laskar Mujahidin and Laskar Jundullah in 1999 and 2000. The Indonesian cell is tied to Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's political organization, the Mujahidin Council of Indonesia (MMI). MMI is a large umbrella association for about 100 small radical and militant groups across the country. Many of the Indonesians who were recruited by and became part of the Malaysian JI returned to Indonesia after the fall of

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Suharto. The Marriott, Bali, and the Australian embassy bombings are also the work of JI in cooperation with the Banten Group (a militia offshoot of JI). Clearly, these militant or radical groups are a threat to democracy and they hinder full consolidation of democracy. But, there is a more complex dynamic underlying the activities of these groups that poses a challenge to democracy. The government's decision to tread lightly, and not outlaw JI (until 2008) or MMI for fear of angering devout Muslims, is connected with a larger timidity about acting forcefully against violence in the name of Islam.[8] SBY has tried to shore up tolerance and pluralism in Indonesia by speaking about the dangers of extremism and violence, and has convened a panel of religious leaders to try and promote more moderate voices of Islam in Friday mosques. However, official government actions have seemed timid in response to MUI fatwas or to MMI's involvement in disaster relief despite United Nation condemnation. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir was released from prison on June 14, 2006 and he was immediately back in full swing reinvigorating MMI and traveling throughout Indonesia giving sermons advocating Shari'a (Abuza 2006b). Over the last five years in Indonesia there has been a creeping Islamicization, although this should not be equated with radicalization. More and more women are covering their heads, and more people are attending prayers on Friday. With decentralization of power to local areas, as many as 50 local districts have implemented aspects of Shari'a (such as parts of West Sumatra and West Java) (Vatikiotis 2006). While Shari'a itself may not threaten democracy, particularly if a variety of groups (women's groups particularly) within society have input as to how it is drafted and implemented, it is the possible erosion of tolerance, civil rights, and protections that imperil a more free society.

Democracy can not be said to be fully consolidated in Indonesia until the government is willing to protect the security of all its citizens.

UNRESOLVED QUESTIONS FOR MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA

If one looks at the history of democratization in Asia, one of the most necessary (but by no means sufficient) ingredients is having a reform-minded leader come to power. From Taiwan to South Korea and Indonesia, there is no question but that the person at the top and the decisions that they make has profound effects on the extent to which political reforms and democratization can go forward. In Indonesia, political reform begin when Suharto resigned, but it is really B.J. Habibie who

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opened the flood-gates to massive change when he allowed for new political parties to form and to compete in the most open and hotly contested elections in that country since the 1950s. Certainly, Habibie hoped that he would be the beneficiary of these changes, but when he was not, he played by the rules and stepped aside. There is a great deal of political science literature on transitions to democracy, which focuses on the contest among elites within power for leadership. Huntington, Przeworski, and others describe the end of authoritarian regimes as coming about when reform-minded leaders out-maneuver or side-line hard-liners in power. This comes about when moderates in power decide to throw their weight behind those seeking greater changes or democratization. What I found in Asia after the economic crisis was basically consistent with this literature. Variables like IMF pressure, popular protests, and pressure from groups in society such as the business community, or from the military, impact the coalitions and degree of power of elites at the very apex of power. Because of these pressures or dynamics, more moderates and perhaps even some hard-liners swing over to support reform minded players and so change is able to happen.

So, is change on the horizon for Malaysia? Abdullah Badawi was not been able to spearhead significant changes, either because he is not personally interested in real reform, or because hard-liners in UMNO have prevented it. Anwar Ibrahim has reentered the political stage as head of the opposition alliance, which now controls 82 seats in the 222-member parliament. The opposition alliance plans to challenge the government with a call for a no confidence vote later in the fall (2008). Anwar claims that he can get 30 Prime Ministers (MPs) to defect from the ruling coalition which could give the opposition power for the first time since Independence. This would be a watershed for Malaysian politics but for now it is far from a sure thing (Chance 2008).

What has happened in Malaysia is that under the semi-authoritarian regime, religion has been shaped, co-opted, and sometimes constrained by the state. Islamic groups, both PAS and civil society organizations, have been left to become more conservative to differentiate themselves from the state. The checks that exist on more fundamentalist visions of Islam are not democratic means of accountability, but the power of non-Muslims and moderate Muslims. 2009 maybe the year when a diverse coalition of interests realizes more significant democratization in Malaysia.

Indonesia has made an amazing transition to democracy. When one looks back at the changes that have occurred in the last seven or eight

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years, one cannot help but be awed at how that country has changed from a rigidly controlled autocracy, to a democratic system in the midst of power devolution to local areas. There are many, many unresolved problems in Indonesia: economic problems, terrorism, sectarian and separatist violence, and corruption, these are huge and difficult problems to be addressed. However, to me, one of the unresolved and most interesting questions is the contest between moderate and conservative Islamic forces. I do not believe that militant Islamic groups have enough support to be considered a major threat to the stability and viability of democracy. However, it is unclear today, in 2008, what vision of Islam and politics will prevail. Will moderate Islamic forces that support democracy, tolerance and pluralism gain the upper hand, or will more conservative Islamists win out and gradually impose a less tolerant, less pluralist and perhaps ultimately less democratic political order on Indonesia? We do not know the answer today and there is plenty of "evidence" to back either scenario. It is also possible that this contest may just become part of "normal" democratic politics in Indonesia and the question itself may remain unanswered for many, many years. Here is what I think we know thus far: under Suharto's authoritarian New Order, Islamic groups were caught up in his strategy of divide and conquer to maintain his rule. This helped contribute to a split between moderate Islamic forces and more conservative or fundamentalist ones. Today, both groups are competing for power and for people's hearts and minds. Groups that reject the existing political institutions and processes do so based on claims that the secular state is illegitimate and that it does not represent the true interests of pious Muslims. While these groups exist only on the fringes of society, they are able to influence the nature of the debate over the role of religion and politics and have tended to get support from more mainstream conservative Islamic groups.

Elections and the democratic processes that have taken root since 1998 have shown several important things: first, Islamic parties that run on a religious platform and that propose implementing Islamic law nationally, do not win a preponderance of votes. Second, Islamic parties in Parliament do not always agree with or align with each other. Moderate Islamic parties are willing to downplay their religious leanings in order to win votes and once in office seem to cooperate and moderate their policies in order to cooperate and build alliances in parliament and within the cabinet (the regular business of politics in a democracy).[9] So, it seems that democracy in Indonesia so far has a moderating influence on many Islamic groups. However, conservative Islamic forces can not be

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discounted, they clearly control the MUI, the council of religious leaders, and have enough influence over the President that he is unwilling to really go out on a limb and criticize or act tough against religious intolerance like the MUI fatwa, the persecution of JIL, or Ahmadiyah. The President's silence and his government's quiescence maybe most telling about Indonesia, a silent majority could pave the way for conservative Islam to dominate politics; it is too early to tell.

Even with the uncertainty over Indonesia's consolidation of democracy, and with Malaysian politics in flux, the Islamic civil society activity we see in those two countries clearly fulfills the role laid out by Schmitter and Diamond for how civil society groups should act in a democracy. There are a variety of interests competing for power and influence and with the exception of a relatively small number of radical militant groups; Islamic organizations seem willing to play by the rules of the game. Under authoritarian and semi-authoritarian conditions, Islamic groups were pushed into an antagonistic relationship with the state. Under more democratic or pluralist conditions that relationship has become more complicated. Some groups are highly critical and oppositional to the regime, and do play a short of watch-dog role, as envisioned by civil society theorists; Other Islamic groups work with the state both to achieve their stated goals and also to get their share of patronage (jobs, money, state contracts, etc.).

In looking at the relationship between Muslim organizations and the political system, this article has found that the type of regime in power impacts both the nature of the group's goals and the method of articulating those goals. Authoritarian regimes, like Suharto's "New Order" and the Malaysian system until quite recently, may force Islamic groups to be more oppositional and more radical in their appeals to people. Under more democratic conditions, there are a larger number of Islamic voices that can be heard, and a choice of the means by which organizations can articulate their preferences. Democratic politics can also have a moderating impact on religious groups if they want to run for office they need to appeal to a broad section of voters in order to win seats and share power. Power can flow from society to the state as well; we have seen Islamic groups act as forces for democratic change in both Indonesia and Malaysia. In conclusion, Indonesia and Malaysia provide us the opportunity to see Islamic organizations in a mostly positive light. They have been contributors to building democracy and thus bolster the literature on the value of civil society organization in promoting and protecting democracy. This does not ensure that democracy will

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be unproblematic in either country, nor can we say that all Islamic groups are assets for democracy. There are still religious groups that are *not* willing to play by the rules and who would like to see democracy over-turned, but they are the minority. The fact that there is a vigorous debate over the relationship between religion and politics may indicate that in fact democratic norms of contestation are being absorbed into the polity, and that in fact Islamic groups are no different from other actors in civil society.

NOTES

1. For discussion about "liberal" and "illiberal" democracy, see Philippe Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl. 1991. "What Democracy is… And Is Not." *Journal of Democracy* Summer:67–73; and Fareed Zakaria. 1997. "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy." *Foreign Affairs* November/December.

2. Anwar rose quickly within UMNO so that he held several prominent positions. In 1998 he was deputy Prime Minister and was Mahathir's heir apparent. Amid great controversy and turmoil, in the fall of 1998, Mahathir had Anwar fired and arrested on trumped up charges of sodomy and corruption.

3. PAS takes its name from this period in the 1950s when members of the Muslim faction in UMNO broke away from the party, and formed an association called *Persatuan Islam Sa-Malaya* (Pan-Malayan Islamic Association) which used the acronym PAS.

4. For more details on the economic crisis and the events leading up to Suharto's resignation, see Amy Freedman. 2000. *Political Participation and Ethnic Minorities: Chinese Overseas in Malaysia, Indonesia, and the United States*. New York, NY: Routledge Press. See also Margot Cohen. 1998. "Turning Point." *Far Eastern Economic Review* July 30. And one can reference the series of articles from the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, reprinted in Faith Keenan, ed. 1998. *The Aftershock: How and Economic Earthquake is Rattling Southeast Asian Politics*. Hong Kong: FEER. See Chapter 2 for articles on Indonesia during the end of 1997 and early 1998 (22–63).

5. Nurcholish Madjid was one of the most influential thinkers, writers, and voices about the compatibility of pluralism and Islam. In an essay published in 2004, he referenced the Koran and wrote: "It is impossible for humanitarian values to conflict with religious values. Religion was not created as an obstacle to humanitarianism. (Q22:78)" Virgina Matheson Hooker and Amin Saikal, eds. (2004). "Indonesian Muslims Enter a New Age" In *Islamic Perspectives at the New Millennium*. Singapore: ISEAS. 76.

6. I was in Jakarta in August, 2005 and met with individuals from these organizations. They are working to promote democratic values, tolerance, and a face of Islam that is moderate, progressive and pluralist. There are many such organizations and activists, these are just three such associations that represent the interesting activity of politicized Islamic groups.

7. For work on moderate Islamic organizations see Robert Hefner. 2000. *Civil Islam Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press; and more historically, C. van Dijk. 1981. *Rebellion under the Banner of Islam: the Darul Islam in Indonesia*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, for more on militant organizations see Abuza, op. cit.

8. Two examples of this occurred in the summer of 2005. A small Islamic sect, Ahmadiyah, was violently attacked in July. People were beaten and their offices and Mosque were vandalized and torched by thugs claiming that Ahmadiyah was an offense to Islam. The police stood by and did nothing. Later in the summer, the highest religious council, the Council of Ulema (MUI), religious leaders appointed by the Ministry of Religion, issued a series of fatwas. Eleven fatwas were issued against religious pluralism and aimed at promoting a more rigid version of Islam. The fatwas reassert the supremacy of the Koran on other religions legally authorized in Indonesia, such as Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism and Buddhism, make various moderate Islamic organizations, such as the Liberal Islamic Network, 'illegal', and ban interfaith prayers unless a Muslim is leading the service, interfaith marriages and women leading prayers when men are in attendance. Fatwas

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are not legal or binding. MUI members are appointed by the government but their edits do not have the power of law and can be ignored or obeyed as people see fit. The government (SBY and the Ministry of Religion) made little or no comment or response to the fatwa. Like its (non) response to the attacks on Ahmadiyah earlier in the summer, the government seems to hope that it can ignore these religious tinder-boxes and to hope they will blow over. The second reason the fatwa are significant is because they have illustrated the divide between moderate and more hard-line voices within Islam. This divide is evident in MUI, and within Muhammadiyah and NU. Which side will come to dominate the debate and place of Islam in Indonesia is incredibly important for democracy. While most ordinary people will take little notice of the fatwa, it may have a more chilling effect as a message to militant Islamic groups: that a more intolerant version of Islam is acceptable and actually promoted by official, mainstream forces, thus legitimizing the views of militant groups.

9. This seems to provide some support for Elman and Warner's argument about democracy taming the radicals.

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