After jihad: A biographical approach to passionate politics in Indonesia

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Photo 1: Religious communal violence in Ambon 1999
(Photo: courtesy of Baghdad)
CHAPTER 1

From Local Brawl to (Global) Jihad: Introduction

Introduction

Indonesia witnessed the mushrooming of communal violence during the early stages of a transition towards electoral democracy after the fall of Soeharto’s authoritarian regime in 1998 (Tadjoeddin 2002; Varshney, Panggabean & Tadjoeddin 2004). Of these, the religious conflicts in Ambon-Maluku and Poso-Central Sulawesi have been the most massive, severe and protracted cases of communal violence in Indonesia. Thousands of people were killed and wounded during the series of deadly violent conflicts between Muslims and Christians in the two areas and thousands more houses, offices and religious buildings were burnt and destroyed. Furthermore, the conflict also attracted thousands of non-local Muslim fighters (jihadists) to join in what they perceived as a ‘religious war’. Thus, it became an arena of jihad for Muslim warriors from different parts of the archipelago, and even—though very few in number—from overseas.

This research will focus on non-local jihadists who participated in the communal violence in two areas in the post-jihad period. By the “post-jihad period” I mean the period after their involvement in the violent conflict in either one or two areas. Applying a biographical approach, I scrutinize how people from different Islamic networks joined the jihad movement, had different experiences and roles during the jihad and eventually took different trajectories in the post-jihad period. In this introductory chapter, I will start by describ-
ing how a local brawl developed into a wider mobilization for jihad.
To explain the mobilization I shall provide the historical context of
Islamic movements in Indonesia and describe its transformation as
well as the national political setting of the democratic transition. In
the next sections I will also introduce the non-local jihad actors who
became the main focus of this research as well as some of the main
arguments of this research.

So, I begin with the question: how did the conflict, which be-

I will commence by narrating the story from Poso, “a sleepy
seashore town in rural Central Sulawesi province” as Van Klinken
(2007: 72) describes it.1) It was Christmas Eve, the 24th of December
1998, the day before the Christian holy day of Christmas, when a
drunken young man, Roy Runtuh Bisalemba, aged 18, assaulted Ah-
mad Ridwan Ramboni, aged 23, with a machete resulting in a light
injury on his right shoulder and hand.2) The detailed narrative of the
incident is unclear, but it was a simple youth brawl nothing out of
the ordinary for Poso—or any other city in the archipelago. What
made it extraordinary was the nexus between the identity of place
and actor as the story developed: the incident took place in the area
of the Darussalam mosque in the ward of Sayo whilst the assailant
was a Christian male from the ward of Lambogia, a Christian area of
Poso. Rumors were quickly sparked within the Muslim community
that a drunken Christian youth had attacked a young Muslim man
inside the mosque! A further false rumor further stirred up emotions

1) This construction of the narratives of the first Poso riot is based on three types
of sources: partisan, journalist or academic. These accounts can be found in Kontras
Aragon (2002), van Klinken (2007), Karnavian et al (2008), and McRae (2008). Of these,
McRae’s (2008) dissertation entitled *The escalation and decline of violent conflict in
Poso, Central Sulawesi, 1998-2007* contains the most complete and detailed narratives,
comparing and contrasting the different accounts of the conflict. I refer in some parts of
this chapter to McRae’s work.

2) A Muslim account of the incidents, rife with rumour and speculations, circulated
among Muslims at the time was accessed at http://tragediposo.blogspot.com/2006/06/
kronologis.html [3 January 2009]. Photographs of the wounded Ridwan and of other fol-
lowing incidents were available at http://www.fica.org/hr/poso/pictures1.html [3 January
2009].
that the Imam of the mosque had been attacked and required hospitalization... Community passions were quickly ignited due to the two religious festivals falling in the same period: it was the Muslim fasting month of Ramadhan and the Christian Christmas season. Religious fervors were further boosted for mass mobilization by the political context; it was the initial stages of local and national political election. The national election was scheduled for June 1999 and the contending parties were employing religious sentiments to marshal political support from Muslim and Christian groups (McRae 2008: 36-49). The rapid escalation of community violence can be better understood once we learn that the nexus between religion and politics at the local level dated back to colonial times and was well developed in the New Order era as discussed by van Klinken (2007: Chapter 5).

In the next three days after the Christmas Eve incident the town of Poso was in turbulence. The very timing of the brawl was also really critical for mass mobilization: Christmas Day that year fell on a Friday, the day Muslims collectively perform the noon Friday prayer. Thus there were mass gatherings on both sides: Muslims for Friday prayers, Christians for Christmas Day. Yet the petty incident would never have developed into a mob brawl without favorable conditions: the already spreading collective anxiety, uncertainty, and tension between the two communities, especially linked with communal and political issues. Thus, the incident took place within the context of rising communal tension between the two communities that led to riots. The three-day riot led to seventeen people being heavily injured, 139 lightly wounded (including 15 security personnel), 158 houses set alight and another 100 destroyed, 14 cars and 20 motorbikes were burnt—though nobody was killed (the report of Bupati Poso on 7 August 2001, as cited by Kontras [2006: 3]). The perpetrators of violence were civilians and its militias who made use of only very simple weapons such as rocks (as missiles), machetes, or, at the most sophisticated, a fire arrows launcher (McRae 2008: 49; Kontras 2006: 3).

In the aftermath there was a lull in Poso for about sixteen months—before the second wave of riots took place in April 2000.
The April violence occurred over a short 5-day period (15-20 April) and remained within the town limits. Instead of the religious zest of the first wave of riots, this one had the stronger political flavor of the electoral campaign. In December 1999 the new Major of Poso had been elected, Abdul Muin Pusadan, a local Muslim academic turned politician, despite strong rumors of ‘money politics’ (Dam-anik 2003: 12-13; McRae 2008: 53-55). The next step of the political battlefield was: who would be his number two, the executive secretary of the mayor’s office. Different political factions played their game and pressured to get the position. Amidst such political tension and public anxiety the new series of violence unfolded, again incited by a local youth brawl on Saturday night, 15 April 2000. The petty fight quickly escalated to the new course of violence that lasted five days and had more devastating results: 37 people were killed, 34 people were injured, and 267 buildings, houses and churches were damaged and burnt (Karnavian et al 2008: 60). In these two series of violence the casualties and victims were mostly Christians.

In contrast to the short period of riots in the first and the second round of violence, the May-June 2000 violence denoted a shift to protracted violence conflict in the Poso district (McRae 2008: 4). It was also a shift from a more or less spontaneous riot to a more premeditated kind of violence, or a pogrom if we follow Brass (1996) and Sidel (2006a, 2006b). Taking place for two weeks, it brought about an almost total collapse of law and order in the area and resulted in the murder of at least 246 people, mostly Muslims, while ten of thousands of people fled the district by land and sea. The centerpiece of this period was the massacre of hundreds of Muslims in the Sintuwulemba village adjacent to the Walisongo Islamic boarding school, 3)

3) One of the strongest candidates was Damsyik Ladjalani, the District Head of the Development Planning Board (Bappeda), a Muslim from the coastal area of Poso. One of the key political forces behind Damsyik’s candidacy was the Islamic party PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, United Development Party). Chaelani Umar, a PPP member in the provincial parliament, threatened provocatively that if Damsyik were not be elected it could lead to a bigger riot. His statement was published by local newspapers: “I predict there will be another riot in Poso. And it might be bigger than what has gone before.” (McRae: 54; Klinken: 82, footnote 9) However, Karnavian et al (2008: 57) describe Ladjalani as a Christian.
From Local Brawl to (Global) Jihad

located in a Poso suburb, which took place over four days from 28 May onward. On the consequences of this dramatic violent episode McRae (2008: 4) writes:

The violence created a group of angry young Muslim men who had seen family members killed or their houses destroyed, and who later recalled that their only thought after this period of the conflict was of how they could take revenge. News of the violence, including gruesome photos of the remains of murder victims, also drew in mujahidin from other parts of the country, who trained and fight with local Muslim men.

It was the beginning of the call for jihad to the Poso violence, what McRae (2008: 152-168) calls the fourth (June-July 2000) and the fifth (November-December 2000) period of the conflict that was characterized by the remarkable involvement of non-local Muslim fighters. It was a shift in the pattern of violence from pogrom to jihad as suggested by Sidel (2006a, 2006b). Yet the call for jihad to the Maluku violence had taken place earlier, in particular following the massacre of hundreds of Muslims in Tobelo, North Maluku, in the last days of 1999.

I will now narrate the story of communal violence in the island of Ambon, the capital of the province of Maluku, also in eastern Indonesia. The incident began on 19 January 1999—during the lull in the Poso violence, less than three weeks after the first outbreak of

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4) There were different accounts of the exact number of Muslims killed in the incidents. The Islamic magazine *Hidayatullah* estimated at least 300 Muslims were murdered (cited by Alkatiri, 2008, published in [http://musliminsuffer.wordpress.com/2008/10/20/memperingati-tragedi-bom-bali-pembantaian-muslimin-di-tobelo-galela-dan-pesantren-walisongo/](http://musliminsuffer.wordpress.com/2008/10/20/memperingati-tragedi-bom-bali-pembantaian-muslimin-di-tobelo-galela-dan-pesantren-walisongo/) retrieved on 28 January 2008). Ngabidun Djaelani, the Sintuwulemba village chief, who testified in the murder trial of Tibo, Dominggus and Marinus, estimated 191 residents of his village were killed. MacRae (2008: 103 footnote 108) suggests that 191 casualties as a reasonable upper limit for the death toll.

5) McRae (2008) distinguishes five periods of conflict as follows: the first (December 1998); the second (15-20 April 2000); the third (May-June 2000); the fourth (June-July 2001) and the fifth (November-December 2001). Aragon (2001) distinguishes four phases of the conflict, similar to McRae except for the fourth: beginning in April and continuing to August 2001, the date he ended his observation. Karnavian et al (2008) divides the conflict into only three episodes, with the third one covering the period May 2000 to December 2001. See Karnavian et al (2008) chapter 4.
Poso riots. Interestingly the two conflicts shared a similar pattern of timing and triggering incident: the Ambon riot also began on a religious holy day (it was Idul Fitri, the holiest day of the Islamic calendar, at the end of the Ramadhan fasting period)\(^6\) and was provoked by a petty fight between local youths. The distinction was the speed with which the Ambon conflict grew and spread to many other parts of the island, continuing for several weeks until mid March.

It commenced in the afternoon of 19 January, when most Muslims in Ambon were celebrating Idul Fitri by visiting families, relatives, and friends. As a place that had achieved prominence as the so-called model of harmonious inter-religious relations during the New Order, it was also common for Ambonese Christians to exchange religious greetings with their Muslim fellows on that special holiday. But it was a very different day: a trifling dispute between two youngsters, a Christian Ambonese and a Muslim Buginese, led to a clash at the Batumerah terminal which was, strangely, followed immediately by massive fights in almost all over Ambon city.\(^7\) Initially, the conflict was marked by strong ethnic elements, Christian Ambonese versus Muslim immigrants—often called BBM (Buginese, Butonese and Makasarese)—but it then developed quickly into a religious conflict between Muslims and Protestants, especially after the destruction of places of worship on both sides.

As in Poso, the Ambon conflict took place in several rounds.\(^8\) After a break in the conflict of some months, the next round of con-

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6) *Idul Fitri* is the main Muslim festival in Indonesia and other parts of Southeast Asia, but *Idul Adha* is the main festival in most of the rest of the Muslim world.

7) There are contrasting accounts of this incident. It is described in HRW (1999), Kusuma (2000: 120-5), Suaedy et. al (2000: 89-93), Trijono (2000a: 37-45). The Christian version argues that Yopie, a Christian Ambonese driver, was the victim of extortion by Salim, a Muslim Bugis *preman*. The Muslim version contends that Salim was the victim of pressure by Yopie, a thug from Aboru, Saparua. The HRW Report presents a chronology of the conflict in quite a detailed and balanced way, referring to both Muslim and Christian sources.

8) There are many ways to describe the different stages of the conflict. Ambonese people, according to Trijono (2001a: 36-37), commonly distinguished four stages: the first, from January to early April 1999; the second, from the end of July to October 1999; the third, November to December 1999; the fourth, April 2000 to April 2001. Trijono (*ibid.*) himself prefers to describe it in three stages: the first, 19 January 1999 to April
conflict happened in July. It was set off initially in Saparua Island, when hundreds of Muslims and Christians in the Sirisori village and the surrounding area clashed on 15 July, resulting in dozens of people killed and injured, dozens of buildings burnt and hundreds of people displaced (Kontras & Lerai, 2000: 17). Waves of conflict spread after a huge clash erupted in Poka, a middle-class suburb of Ambon on 24 July. Although in the first round of conflict, Poka had been insulated from the clashes with its population remaining heterogeneous, in the subsequent incident the fighting significantly worsened the prospect of reconciliation among the Ambonese (van Klinken, 2001: 4; Trijono, 2001: 47). In the aftermath of the Poka clash, tensions spread quickly throughout the island of Ambon as the smoke of burnt houses could be easily seen by people at other locations.

The conflict in 1999 reached a climax on 26 December when the Silo church and the An Nur mosque, both located on the same road, were burnt following an incident triggered by a traffic accident close to the Trikora monument. In the incident, a Muslim teenager named Fauzan was crushed by a local transport and died, but his body then disappeared. Muslims accused Christians of concealing his body in a cover-up (Trijono 2001: 44-45; Crisis Center Keusukupan Amboina, 2001: 9). This incident then led to major clashes between the two groups resulting in the burning down of the Silo church and the An Nur mosque. As noted by Kontras and Lerai (2001: 23), the burning of the Silo church provoked Christians throughout Maluku, including North Maluku that was formally declared a new separate province in October 1999. Christian anger intensified because of the histori-

1999; the second, 24 July to 26 December 1999; the third, from 26 April 2000 to April 2001. His rationale is that, from July to December 1999 there was ongoing conflict and therefore there was no need to distinguish different phases for this period. Kontras and Lerai (2000: 1) present three phases: the first, from 19 January to March 1999; the second, from June 1999 to mid-December 1999; the third, from 16 December to January 2000. Van Klinken (2001: 3-5) describes four stages: the first, starting19 January; the second, from 24 July; the third, commencing 26 December; and the fourth, from June 2000 to May 2001.

9) The interesting political process in which North Maluku formally became a new separate province only few days before President Habibie lost his presidency through the Law 46/1999 is discussed in van Klinken (2007: 111-113).
cal significance and strategic location of the old Silo church. It was perceived to be a significant symbol of the presence of the Protestant religion in Maluku. Also Christian anger grew as a result of the overt involvement of particular groups in the military supporting Muslim militias in the attack (Crisis Center Keusukupan Amboina, 2001: 9).

Therefore, in the aftermath of this clash, other conflicts soon broke out after, both in Ambon as well as in surrounding islands. The most ruthless results, however, were felt in the Tobelo sub-district, North Maluku, in the days that followed. The massacre of hundreds of Muslims, including significant numbers of people hiding inside the Al Ikhlas mosque in Togaliwa village, occurred in Tobelo on 28-29 December 1999—again during the fasting month of Ramadhan. Wilson (2008: 114) describes an episode of the violence as follows:

The Pasukan Merah [Christian militia] advanced through Gorua destroying houses and several mosques and attacked Popilo. This village was also quickly overrun, and many Muslim men escaped into the forest. Some joined the large number of women and children hiding inside the village mosque. The Christian militia attacked the building, several men claiming they were forced into this action because the Muslims continued to fire arrows from inside. The attack against the mosque continued throughout the night until resistance from inside had been quelled. Upon entering the mosque, which was now strewn with bodies, the Christians discovered a pit underneath the pulpit where a large group of Muslims were hiding. A militia member dropped a bomb into the recess. Approximately 160 people were killed in Popilo, bringing the deaths in the two villages to around 250. It took several days for those Muslims who had managed to flee from Gorua and Popilo to travel through the mountainous forested area between Tobelo and Galela to reach Soasio. Christian militia also searched the forest to undertake (in the words of one militia member) a ‘cleansing operation’ of Muslims.

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10) The real number of the casualties was disputed. Some Muslim sources estimated the number at between over one thousand—up to 2,800, as appears at http://musliminsuffer.wordpress.com (accessed on 28 January 2008). The North Maluku district government estimated the death toll in northern Halmahera between 26 December to 22 January 2000 at 880 (as cited by van Klinken 2007: 120, footnote 21). ICG (2000: 8) estimates at least 500 Muslims were killed and more than 10,000 survivors expelled.
The news of the massacre quickly spread throughout the country via newspapers and magazines that soon provoked Muslims outside Maluku to be involved directly in the conflict. A video recorded by a medical emergency team of Mer-C who went to the area to take care of the casualties had further enflamed the emotions of Muslims living outside the area. As suggested by Spyer (2002: 33) in her analysis on such VCDs of the conflict, “these VCDs provide little perspective on events and often make no pretension to having a narrative, besides, that is, the insistent, repetitive narrative of victimization resurrected on and out of body parts.” The violent incident was then followed by a period of mobilization of thousands non-local Muslim fighters to the conflict area from various networks of Islamist movements. A big mass gathering was held on 7 January 2000 at the Lapangan Merdeka (Freedom Square), Jakarta, attended by prominent Muslim leaders.11)

The deployment of thousands of non-local Muslim fighters to Ambon, however, only began to happen later in April-May 2000, especially those who joined the Laskar Jihad. Besides Laskar Jihad, who sent the largest number of several thousands of non-local mujahidin to the areas, other Islamist networks (commonly called “Laskar Mujahidin”) had also sent Islamist militias to the same locations, but in much fewer numbers (approximately few hundreds in separate groups at different periods) and with less publicity. I will discuss the different networks of non-local mujahidin in the next sections. The massive mobilization of non-local Muslim fighters to Ambon and Poso shifted the conflict into a prolonged stage and marked it as exceptional because such a colossal mobilization of non-local fighters was without precedent in Indonesia’s modern history. This exceptional phenomenon of the involvement of non-local fighters in the conflict led me to choose it as my research focus as I will elaborate later.

11) Among the national leaders who attended the gathering were Amien Rais, the then Chairman of the MPR (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat, People’s Consultative Assembly) and the leader of the National Mandate Party (PAN, Partai Amanat Nasional), and Hamzah Haz, the leader of the United Development Party (PPP, Partai Persatuan Pembangunan) who would later become Vice President under the government of Megawati Soekarnoputri. For further information on the event and the mobilization processes see Fealy (2001), ICG (2002), Hasan (2002, 2006), Noorhaidi (2005), Shoelhi (2002).
Returning to the question raised in the early passage: how did the conflict that began as a local brawl shift to become an arena of (global) jihad? I argue that the massive mobilization became possible because of the contextual setting of Indonesia’s democratic transition since 1998. It would have been unimaginable to carry out such mobilization in the context of authoritarian rule of the Soeharto New Order regime. Yet the transitional context was only a necessary condition for mobilization, not in itself a sufficient condition. Here I argue that Islamist movements developed considerably in the New Order era, particularly in the 1980s. Their historical roots can be traced back to the early period of Indonesia’s independence. The critical turn taken by Soeharto in his late period to approach Islamic groups led them to move further to the center of the stage. Therefore, when the New Order’s authoritarian regime collapsed in 1998, many Islamist movements were already ‘ready to act’ should the situation require it. Yet the puzzle remains: how could such a massive mobilization occur? I argue that such colossal mobilization became possible not merely due to the capacity of Islamist movements but also due to the support provided by elites, parts of the fragmented state, during the early period of democratic transition.

I will present my arguments in the next three sections: first, on the genealogy and transformation of Islamist movements; second, on the democratic transition and the mobilization processes; and third, on variants of Islamic activism that mobilized non-local Muslim fighters to the conflict areas. I will continue by explaining the research focus and main arguments, a caveat on the use of term *jihad* and names in this dissertation, and finally a brief overview of the dissertation.

**Radical Islamic movements in Indonesia: genealogies and transformations**

I argue that the massive mobilization of thousands non-local Muslim fighters to join the jihad movement in Ambon and Poso during Indonesia’s democratic transition can be understood by tracing
back its genealogy in the wake of Indonesia’s independence and its transformation during the Soeharto New Order era. I share Van Brinussen’s (2002) contention that the historical root of the contemporary radical Islamic movement can be traced back to two main ‘indigenous’ Islamist movements, namely the Masyumi (Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia, Council of Indonesian Muslim Associations) party and the Darul Islam (DI, the Abode of Islam) movement. Although the two were separate political entities they were nevertheless linked in certain ways.

Masyumi was the umbrella of all Muslim organizations created by the Japanese colonial forces that later transformed into the only Islamic political party in the early days of Indonesian Independence in 1945. Furthermore, as argued by Lucius (2003: 3), in the early 1950s Masyumi was not only the most important Islamic political party but also the most important political party of all the parties. In 1952, following an internal dispute regarding the distribution of government positions, the traditionalist Nahdhatul Ulama (NU) left Masyumi and established an independent political party (ibid, p.120). This weakened Masyumi’s superior position as reflected in the 1955 election result where Masyumi was ranked second largest party (with 21.0% of the votes) and NU as third (18.05%) while the Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI) gained the largest portion of 22.5% of the votes and the Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI) came fourth one with 16.5%. Of the four parties, however, Masyumi was the only one who had a stronghold in the outer Islands (Feith 1971; Ufen 2006). This is why Ward (1970: 13) suggests that Masyumi was perhaps the only truly national party during the period as indicated by its vast support from both Java and the outer islands.

The DI movement, on the other hand, erupted in March 1948 following the unpopular Renville agreement (January 1948) between the national government and the Dutch which ordered the withdrawal of the national armed forces, including the guerilla groups, from West Java to Central Java. The DI was led by a local charismatic

12) Many scholars have written on the DI movements including Boland (1970), Hor-
political leader, Sekarmadji Maridjan (S.M.) Kartosuwirjo, a former Masyumi activist and leader of the Brigade Hizbullah in West Java (Horikoshi 1975: 66). On 7 August 1949 the movement declared the Islamic State of Indonesia (*Negara Islam Indonesia, NII*) a step which was later followed by its affiliates in South Kalimantan (1950), South Sulawesi (1952) under Kahar Muzakkar and Aceh (1953) under Daud Beureueh. By 1953, there was an agreement to establish a united front of the NII which elected Kartosuwirjo as its first leader. The DI movement declined significantly following the capture and execution of its *imam*, Kartosuwirjo, in August 1962 (ICG 2002a: 4, 2005a: 2). Thus besides some of their leaders and activists sharing a similar background, Masyumi and DI also shared the political objective to establish an Islamic state and geographic basis of their supporters, namely Java and the outer Islands. But the two took different pathways for their struggle: Masyumi chose to fight through the parliamentary democratic process while the DI decided to launch violent rebellion in the villages and jungle.

Yet later, after continuous conflict with President Soekarno, some Masyumi leaders changed direction and followed their DI fellows by taking part in the PRRI/Permesta regional rebellion which was, ironically, supported by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (Kahin and Kahin 1995). It led to the disbandment of Masyumi by Soekarno in 1960 and the imprisonment of its leaders in 1962. Soeharto was given political endorsement as the new President in 1966, yet the New Order regime continued to reject the rehabilitation of Masyumi, choosing instead to endorse the establishment of the new party Parmusi (Partai Muslim Indonesia, Indonesian Muslim Party) designated to cater for Masyumi’s constituents (Ward 1970). However, many Masyumi leaders, including its charismatic figure Mohammad Natsir refused to support Parmusi, instead turning their energy to conduct *da’wa* through establishing the Dewan

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The former Masyumi activists who founded the DDII, as Van Bruinessen (2002: 123) suggests, shared the common beliefs characteristic of a group: “a belief in the superiority of Western-style democracy over the neo-patrimonial forms of rule adopted by both Soekarno and Soeharto, an almost paranoid obsession with Christian missionary efforts as a threat to Islam, and an increasingly strong orientation towards the Middle East, notably Saudi Arabia.” Through Natsir, the DDII established close relations with the Islamic World League (Rabitat al-‘Alam al-Islami), of which Natsir became one of its leaders. When the Saudis commenced deploying their wealth to finance the expansion of the Salafi-Wahabism movements following the oil boom in 1980s, the DDII had the privilege to become one of its main channels. With its privileged access to resources, Noorhaidi (2005: 35) contends that the DDII began to occupy a vital position on the map of Islamic organizations in Indonesia by serving as a bridge between Saudi Arabia and Muslim organizations, especially those from such modernist wings, as Muhammadiyah, al-Irsyad and Persis.

Discussing the transmission process of Islamic revivalism from the Middle East to Indonesia, especially through the activists of Tarbiyah, Salafis and Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), Imdadun Rahmat (2005: 79) argues that the DDII and Natsir played a crucial role. Furthermore Rahmat (2008: 90; 2005: 161) contends that the DDII has been the ‘nursing mother’ (ibu susuan, umm ar-radha’ah) of the activists of Tarbiyah, HTI and Salafis, although each have different ideological lineages and thought genealogies. Rahmat (2005: 80-81) presents four proofs to support his argument as follows. First, the DDII was the first Islamic group to seriously and intensively

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13) Explaining the decision to establish the DDII, Natsir (as quoted by Noorhaidi 2005: 32) said, “Previously we carried out da’wa through politics but now we run politics through da’wa.”  

carry out a program to send students to the Middle East with support from *Rabitah Alam ‘Al-Islami* and the Saudi government. The program was later taken over by the Department of Religious Affairs. The DDII even opened a representative office in Riyadh to handle this program in 1970s. The DDII has sent about 500 students to the Middle East and Pakistan up to 2004. These alumni of the Middle Eastern universities became the main actors of the spread of Islamic revivalism to Indonesia, especially those of the Tarbiyah and the Salafi movements. Second, the DDII and Natsir became the initiator and the mediator of the establishment of *Lembaga Ilmu Islam dan Arab* (LIPIA, Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies, formerly LPBA) which was a branch of the Islamic University of Muhammad Ibn Saud in Riyadh. LIPIA has graduated thousands of alumni who became important actors and agents of the Tarbiyah and the Salafi movements. Third, the DDII initiated the foundation of the campus *da’wa* movement through the network of *Lembaga Dakwah Kampus* via the program Latihan Mujahid Dakwah (LMD, Training of *Da’wa* Fighter) in the ITB Salman mosque of Bandung. This movement, he suggests, was the embryonic stage of the establishment of the Tarbiyah and Hizbut Tahrir and also facilitated the development of the Salafi movement. Finally, the DDII played an indirect role in encouraging the translation of works by major Islamic revivalist thinkers from the Middle East, such as Hasan Al-Banna, Yusuf Al-Qardawi, Sayyid Qutb, and Abu A’la Al-Maududi.

One of the main targets of the DDII *da’wa* activities was the university campuses. Through a program named ‘Bina Masjid Kampus’ (University Mosque Development), the DDII sponsored projects for building mosques and Islamic centers in locations around twelve universities throughout Indonesia, some of them in Java.\(^{15}\) It took place in the setting of the New Order’s policy of de-politicization of university campuses through *Normalisasi Kehidupan Kam-

\(^{15}\) The list includes the University of Indonesia in Jakarta, the Gadjahmada University in Yogyakarta, the Diponegoro University in Semarang, and the Andalas University in Padang. A complete list is available in Hakiem and Linrung (1997, as quoted by Noorhaidi 2005: 36) *Menunaikan Panggilan Risalah: Dokumentasi Perjalanan 30 Tahun Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia.* Jakarta: DDII.
pus-Badan Koordinasi Kemahasiswaan (Normalization of Campus Policy-Campus Coordination Board, NKK-BKK). The strict restriction of student activism stimulated, as observed by Noorhaidi (2005: 37), many students to turn toward Islamic activism. This trend increased dramatically in the aftermath of the Iranian Revolution which erupted in 1979 and the subsequent Saudi policy response. According to Noorhaidi (2005: 31), the intensification of the Wahhabi movements throughout the globe can be seen as a response to the Iranian Revolution. The success story of Iranian Revolution, which brought Ayatullah Khomeini to power, has become a model for the successful creation of an Islamic state for Islamist activists across the world. The anxiety that such a revolution might possibly take place in Saudi Arabia haunted their monarchy. Their response was to intensify the campaign to spread Wahhabism throughout the globe which thus meant the expansion of non-revolutionary Islamic activism to tame the influence of the Iranian Revolution. Anti-Shi’a sentiments, as contended by Schwartz (2002: 148-9), were the important ideological elements of Wahhabism in its global expansion.

While the emergence of radical Islamist movements began to occur in early 1980s, it experienced a major boost in the late 1980s with a shift in the elite political game, especially following tension between President Soeharto and segments of the military camp. In order to gain political support from Islamic groups, Soeharto made the significant change of embracing Muslim groups through some symbolic and political gestures including introducing some Muslim-friendly policies and, most strikingly, endorsing the establishment of the Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim se Indonesia (ICMI, the Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals) led by Bachruddin Jusuf (B.J.)

16) For a further discussion on the emergence of radical Islamist movements in 1980s, especially in the university campuses, see Van Bruinessen (2002: 131-4), Noorhaidi (2005: 36-40, also Hasan 2006).

17) The critical episode of this political tension happened when President Soeharto nominated Soedharmono, a titular army general and State Secretary, as Vice President during the General Session of the MPR in 1988. The military camp, led by the former czar of the intelligence service, General Benny Moerdani, proposed to nominate General Try Sutrisno, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, to be the Vice President candidate. See the Editors of Indonesia (1992: 93).
Habibie, the then Minister of Research and Technology (Hefner 1993, 2000; Liddle 1996; van Bruinessen 2002). It is an over-simplification, however, to view the phenomena merely from political elite perspectives. As demonstrated eloquently by Hefner (1993), the foundation of ICMI also reflected the significant change and development of urban middle-class Muslims in Indonesia in the 1970s and 1980s.

The next critical stage in Islamist fundamentalism was the flourishing of a form of Muslim street politics that gradually became more prominent over the course of the 1990s. Such phenomena were, as suggested by van Bruinessen (2002), unlikely without the endorsement and protection of certain faction within the regime. One of the leading actors on the street was KISDI (*Komite Indonesia untuk Solidaritas terhadap Dunia Islam*), the Indonesian Committee for Solidarity with the World of Islam, led by Ahmad Sumargono, a leading DDII activist.18) Though KISDI claimed 1987 as its founding date, its prominence was achieved in 1990, in the caravan revival of Islamist groups—in the same period when ICMI was established. The increasing tension in the final months of Soeharto’s rule and the dynamics of the transition period inflicted a major shift on political Islam. Some groups of Muslim politicians stayed loyal to Soeharto until his last days, including some DDII leaders—those who Hefner (2000: 151) calls “regimist Islam”.19) These groups, as Van Bruinessen argues (2002: 139), feared that *reformasi* might result in a loss of access to the power they had gained just very recently.

The worsening economic crisis mixed with massive popular and student movements demanding Soeharto’s resignation eventually led to Soeharto standing down on 21 May 1998. Habibie,

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18) Ahmad Sumargono was one of the vice-chairmen of Partai Bulan Bintang (PBB), the new version of the Masjumi which was founded on 17 July 1998 and led by Yusril Ihza Mehendra. Sumargono published a book entitled *Saya Seorang Fundamentalis, Refleksi Ideologis* (I am a Fundamentalist: Ideological Reflection) in 1999, by Global Cita Press, Cimanggis Bogor.

19) Dr. Anwar Harjono, a senior Masjumi figure and later DDII Chairman, identified seven Soeharto directed policies indicating this more ‘Islamic’ shift, including new laws on the Religious Court, National Education, National Banking, the disbandment of the SDSB (Sumbangan Dana Sosial Berhadiah)-lotto, permission for female students to wear *jilbab*, and the establishment of ICMI. See Mubarak (2008: 100-2).
Chairman of ICMI, and Indonesian Vice President replaced him as President. The pro-
reformasi movement camp that were previously united in opposition to Soeharto eventually fragmented; the major secular wing perceived Habibie as an extension of Soeharto’s New Order and thus to be rejected. Concerned that Habibie’s presidency would further empower radical Muslims, a broad spectrum of secular and pro-
reformasi Muslim groups created a new front to oppose him. In November 1998 the MPR convened an extraordinary session in response to a massive popular movement asking for ‘total reform,’ including the replacement of Habibie’s government with an ad hoc presidium consisting of reformasi leaders. During this critical period, the national military commander recruited about several thousand civilians, many of them affiliated with radical Muslim groups, as auxiliary security guards or the Pam Swakarsa (O’Rourke 2002, van Dijk 2001). It was during this tense situation that several Islamist paramilitary groups were established including the notorious Front Pembela Islam (FPI) led by Habib Rizieq which was founded on 17 August 1998 (Jahroni 2008: 18; Rosadi 2008: 25).

The fall of the New Order regime opened up a new realm which had previously been controlled and dominated by the state: that of the political party. On the eve of the reformasi era about 200 new political parties emerged, though eventually only 48 were allowed to participate in the 1999 general election, some of whom were Islamic political parties (Ufen 2006). Of the 48 parties, at least four claimed to be the successor of Masyumi, namely, Partai Umat Islam, Partai Masyumi Baru, Partai Politik Islam Masyumi and Partai Bulan Bintang (PBB). Of these four only PBB successfully gained sufficient votes above the electoral threshold of two percent, to be entitled to participate in the 2004 election.\(^{20}\) Gaining 2,049,708 votes (1.95%) for 13 parliamentary seats in the 1999 election, PBB increased its votes to 2.7 million (2.62%) in the 2004 election but failed to pass

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\(^{20}\) PBB was fully endorsed by former Masyurmi and DDII senior leaders, including Dr. Anwar Harjono, KH. Rusyad Nurdin, and Mohammad Soleiman. Among its leaders were Yusril IhzaMahendra, Hartono Mardjono, Cholil Ridwan, Abdul Qadir Djaelani and Ahmad Sumargono. The complete list of the first PBB functionaries is available in Tumpal (2005: 62-64).
the increased threshold of 3%.\textsuperscript{21} Its votes declined to 1,864,752 (1.79\%) in the 2009 election. On the other hand, Partai Keadilan (PK, later changed to PKS), which based on the Tarbiyah movement of Ikhwanul Muslimin and classified by Rahmat (2008: 4) as “the continuation of the ideological mission of Masyumi”, has become the ‘miracle’ of Indonesian politics. Founded in August 1998, it trawled only 1,436,565 votes (1.36\%) for seven seats in the 1999 election but jumped dramatically to 8,325,020 votes (7.34\%) for 45 seats in the 2004 election (Rahmat 2008: 1).\textsuperscript{22} In the 2009 election it kept its votes at the same level of 8,206,955 (7.88\%).

While the successors of Masyumi only gained a small portion of votes during the election, where did the majority of ex-Masyumi supporters most likely go? One likely explanation is that ex-Masyumi supporters and young Islamic activists associated with Masyumi joined Golkar since 1970s as argued by Van Bruinessen (2002: 123). Their engagement with Golkar, and especially the involvement of many young Islamic activists of the Muslim Student Association, HMI, seemed likely to have contributed to the increasing role of Islamic factions within Golkar in the 1990s.


\textsuperscript{21} In the 1999 election PBB was saved by its seat numbers which were above 10, even though its vote percentage was slightly less than the electoral threshold of 2\% (Tumpal 2005: 87).

\textsuperscript{22} In certain ways, to a certain extent, PKS had a link with DI as indicated by the key role played by KH. Hilmi Aminuddin, a son of Danu Muhamammad Hasan, a former leader of DI, as the chairman of Majelis Syura PKS (2005-2010). Danu was allegedly recruited by Ali Murtopo to be an agent of BAKIN in 1966-67. Another version revealed that Hilmi was the Minister of Foreign Affairs of DI when he was arrested by Kopkamtib in 1980 and imprisoned without charge until 1983-4. After his release Hilmi, under the supervision of Soeripto, a senior leader of BAKIN, was sent to the Middle East to study Ikhwanul Muslimin. This issue was discussed by Ridwan (2008: 143-6).
I will highlight some critical issues of DI transformation that have contributed to the recent development of radical Islamic movements in the post-Soeharto era.

Soon after the arrest and the execution of Kartosuwirjo in 1962, DI had an acute crisis of leadership particularly following the signed loyalty oath by several DI leaders to the Republic of Indonesia. With many of them receiving financial support and behaving cooperatively with the military, ICG suggest that the “DI became leaderless for a decade” (2005c: 2). During the period, some groups of DI activists worked closely with the military especially in helping fight against the communist party (PKI) in 1965-66 (ibid, 3; van Bruinessen 2002: 128). It is important to notice that since this period some DI leaders developed a close relation with an intelligence officer named Ali Moertopo, a former activist of Hizbullah during the Japanese occupation, who later became the czar of the intelligence agency in the New Order era.

The DI returned to the political stage later in 1970s with the rise of a radical Islamic movement named Komando Jihad (Kom-ji). The group launched several terror actions such as the arson and bombing of churches, night clubs and cinemas in the period prior to the 1977 election. The facts that some of the DI leaders were closely associated to Ali Moertopo led to an interpretation that the actions were orchestrated to discourage Muslims from voting PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, United Development Party), the

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23) The person behind these excellent reports is Sidney Jones, the Director of the South East Asia Project of the ICG from 2002 to 2006, who later became a senior advisor. Her expertise on radical Islamic movements in Indonesia began in 1984 when she worked for Amnesty International defending cases involving some DI activists, including Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba’asyir. She later became the Director of Asia for Human Right Watch (HRW) from 1989-2002. See her profile in http://spinprofiles.org/index.php?title=Sidney_Jones [13 May 2010] and elaborated further in Ridwan (2008).

24) Included among them were Adah Djaelani Tirtapraja, Ateng Djaelani, Ules Sudjai, Djaja Sujadi Wijaya, Danu Muhamad Hassan, Zenaal Abidin, Toha Mahfud and Dodo Mohamad Darda.

25) Some DI activists, including Danu Muhammad Hasan, even believed that Murtopo has saved the DI leadership from the eradication in 1966 when Soeharto considered using the moment for the annihilation of some political enemies, including DI. See ICG (2005: 3).
only remaining Muslim party (van Bruinessen 2002: 128). By mid-1977, the government had arrested 185 people associated with DI and allegedly involved with Komando Jihad. Yet the perception of Komando Jihad as merely “the creation of Ali Murtopo” as argued by previous ICG report (2002c: 5), was later revised by suggesting that some DI members were actively involved in the creation of Komando Jihad, perceiving it as “the first real opportunity since the defeat of the 1960s to mount a guerrilla war against the Indonesian government” (ICG 2005a: 6).

Although some important figures from the DI underground movement were allegedly closely linked with the intelligence officers, there were some newcomers who remained committed and militant to the struggle. Among them were Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba’asyir, both of Yemeni descent, who co-founded the later notorious Islamic boarding school in Ngruki, Solo, in 1973 (see ICG 2002c on the “Ngruki Network). Sungkar and Ba’asyir were former activists of the GPII (Gerakan Pemuda Islam Indonesia), the Masyumi affiliated youth movement, and Sungkar in particular was closely linked with the DDII (van Bruinessen 2002: 129; 2002a: 3; ICG 2002c: 6). In the 1980s they engaged with the increasingly active Islamic student movements, including those engaged in organizing Islamic activities in the Sudirman mosque within the Colombo complex, Yogyakarta. Three of them, Irfan Awwas, Fihiruddin alias Abu Jibril, and Muchliansyah, later became prominent as leading figures of the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI), founded in 2000. Sungkar and Ba’asyir engaged with this group in activating usroh as the method of recruitment for rejuvenating the DI movement. The method combined with pesantren kilat, an intensive short-term Islamic study course, which was later institutionalized by establishing the Lembaga Pendidikan Pengembangan Pesantren Kilat (LP3K, the Institute of Education and Development of Pesantren Kilat) in

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26) Usroh is a Javanese word originating from the Arabic word usra meaning nuclear family. It was a method of da’wa pioneered by Hasan al-Banna, the founder of Ikhwanul Muslimin in Egypt, to build a small group of dedicated members as a building block for eventually establishing Islamic state.
1982 (ICG 2005a: 12-14). Yet by the end of 1983 the government-launched operation to crack down on the retransformed DI network, which included the banning of the newsletter Ar-Risalah, a publication run by a group of radical Islamic students in Yogyakarta and the jailing of its editor-in-chief, Irfan Suryahardi (ICG 2002c: 9).

In early 1985, due to the possibility of being arrested by the security apparatus, Sungkar and Ba’asyir and some other followers decided to leave for Malaysia, in a religiously-inspired emigration or hijrah (ICG 2002c: 11-13). During their term in exile in Malaysia, Sungkar and Ba’asyir remained actively engaged with DI through also participating in arranging the deployment of many activists to join the military academy of Afghanistan Mujahidin in the borderline with Pakistan. Later in 1992 they opened an Islamic boarding school named Lukmanul Hakim in Johor with Mukhlas as its first director. It adopted the system and the curriculum applied in the Pondok Ngruki Solo, founded twenty years earlier. Many of its teachers were alumni of Ngruki, including Mukhlas. In early 1993, following internal dispute regarding DI leadership with Ajengan Masduki, Sungkar founded Jama’ah Islamiyah (JI) and transformed the school to become the nerve center of Mantiqi I. All the most prominent figures of JI—Hambali, Amrozi, Ali Imron, Zulkarnaen, Dulmatin, Imam Samudra, Azhari and Noordin M. Top—spent time there either teaching, lecturing or studying (ICG 2006: 2).

After the fall of Soeharto, Sungkar, Ba’asyir and other JI activists returned to Indonesia. Sungkar died one month after his return in November 1999 while Ba’asyir went back to Pondok Ngruki, Solo. Following the death of Sungkar, Ba’asyir was named as his successor as the leader of JI. Yet some younger and more militant cadres of JI—including Hambali, Imam Samudra and Mukhlas—were very reluctant to accept the leadership transfer considering Ba’asyir to be “too weak, too accommodating, and too easily influenced by others” (ICG 2002a: 3). The fragmentation deteriorated following the establishment of MMI in August 2000 in which Ba’asyir was elected as the ‘commander’ or Amir ul-Mujahidin of the governing council,
Ahlul Halli wal ‘Aqdi.\textsuperscript{27} The radicals criticized the concept of MMI as a deviation from Sungkar’s aims. According to them, it betrayed Sungkar’s \textit{ijtihad politik} that JI should remain covert until the time was ripe to launch overt actions toward an Islamic state. Ba’asyir, on the other hand, argued that the collapse of Soeharto had offered opportunities to advance, thus not taking advantage of the opportunities was not just wrong but also sinful. It was in the context of this internal JI leadership crisis that some radical groups launched a series of terrorist actions, including the Christmas Eve bombing in 2000 and the first Bali Bombing in 2002.\textsuperscript{28}"

**Democratic transition and jihad mobilization**

As explained above, the radical Islamist movements, which dated back to the early post-colonial period, have survived and transformed themselves into the post-Soeharto era. Thus, I argue that they were quite ready to mobilize for collective action when the religious conflict erupted in Ambon and Poso. However, I suggest that their capacity and capability for mobilization only become viable in the aftermath of the collapse of the authoritarian regime which opened up new political space and opportunity structure. In this section I will briefly show how radical Islamist movements have successfully utilized the new political space and opportunity structure offered by the transitional period to mobilize thousands non-local mujahidin to the conflict areas. To discuss the mobilization process, I chose Laskar Jihad as a case study because of its great success in con-

\textsuperscript{27} Irfan Suryahardy Awwas was appointed as the chairman of the executive committee while his elder brother Fikhiruddin alias Abu Jibril was appointed to the department in charge of strengthening mujahidin resources (\textit{Departemen Peningkatan Sumber Daya Mujahid}).

\textsuperscript{28} The two operations were associated with Hambali, a leading figure of the radical wing of JI who allegedly played the role as the hub with Al Qaeda. The first action utilized more than 30 bombs delivered to churches or priests in eleven Indonesian cities across six provinces. The latter, far better planned and more dramatic in its effect, occurred on 22 October 2002 in Bali. It resulted in the death of about two hundred people, mostly Westerners, and several hundreds more severely injured. (ICG 2002b, Imron 2007).
ducting massive mobilization in this period recruiting an estimated approximately 7,000 mujahidin (Noorhaidi 2005: 197). It was also a striking case since Laskar Jihad was originally part of the Salafi/Wahhabi movement which is usually characterized by quietism and apolitical stance. I will begin by giving a short introduction on how democratic transition opened new political space and opportunity structures for collective action and will then describe how Laskar Jihad carried out its mobilization process from the perspective of social movement theory.

Let me start briefly with a conceptual framework of democratic transition. “Democratic transition is an interval between an authoritarian and a democratic regime,” as Ethier (1990: 4) argues. Each transition period, O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986, IV: 6) suggest, based on their extensive comparative study on transition in various countries, is characterized by uncertainty: They write: “Transitions are delimited, on the one hand, by the launching of the process of dissolution of an authoritarian regime and, on the other hand, by the installation of some form of democracy, the return to some form of authoritarian rule, or the emergence of a revolutionary alternative.” Such a transition period is commonly characterized by the drastic decline of government ability to deal with the many problems that arise in the context of a sort of vacuum of authority. The risk of an outbreak of communal conflict, as suggested by Snyder (2000: 310), increases in the early phases of democratization. Based on his comparative work on the rise of ethnic conflict during transition period in many places, Snyder contends, “Nationalist and ethnic conflicts are more likely during the initial stages of democratizations than in transition to full consolidations of democracy.”

After making a comprehensive study of the nationalist conflict during Indonesia’s transition period, Jacques Bertrand (2004: 216) presents an argument that sounds parallel to Snyder’s conclusion: “Ethnic violence is more likely to rise when insecurities are high, and groups fear exclusion or unfavorable terms of inclusion.” In his analysis, Bertrand (2004: 20) proposes the key concept “critical juncture” which refers to a historical moment when the griev-
ances of ethnic groups tend to surface, a political system comes under tensions and, therefore, political institution and the principles of national models are renegotiated. He suggests that ethnic violence erupted in Indonesia at such a critical juncture in the 1990s. “When the regime fell suddenly in May 1998, these fears and insecurities reached high levels, as the basic institutions of the state and fundamental principles of the national model were open for renegotiation,” Bertrand argues (216).

This portrait of the growing communal violence during the early stages of transition was demonstrated nicely in two reports by the UNSFIR written by Tadjoeddin (2002) and by Varshney, Panggabean & Tadjoeddin (2004). They confirm Synder’s hypothesis on the likelihood of eruption of ethnic and communal violence during the initial stages of democratization (see Figure 1.1 below). The burgeoning of communal violence was not typical of a multi-ethnic and multicultural country such as Indonesia. Such phenomena were part of another global trend Mary Kaldor names as “New Wars” (1999).

![Figure 1.1. Death and incidents of non-secessionist collective violence in Indonesia 1990-2003 (Varshney, Panggabean and Tadjoeddin 2004: 23)](image)

This ‘critical juncture’ of Indonesia’s modern history, when “the basic institutions of the state and fundamental principles of the national model were open for renegotiation”, as suggested by Ber-
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Tarrow certainly implicated what Sidney Tarrow (1998: 19-20) calls ‘political opportunity structure’ in explaining the emergence of social movements. According to him, the rise of social movements is frequently prompted by critical changes occurring in a political structure. For Tarrow, this sort of change can provide opportunities that become incentives for social actors to start new stages of what he calls ‘contentious politics’ and promote people to involve in it. Here we come to the issue of mobilization in the social movement theory. Following the suggestion made by McAdam, McCarthy and Zald (1996), the discussion will attempt to combine three key variables in the study of social movements namely, political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and framing processes. In discussing the case of Laskar Jihad I will refer mainly to an excellent work of Noorhaidi (2005) (see also Noorhaidi Hasan [2006]) entitled Laskar Jihad: Islam, Militancy and the Quest for Identity in the Pos-New Order Indonesia.)

Noorhaidi (2005: 97) argues that the Salafis began their engagement with the political discourse of the state in the late Soeharto period by organizing a tabligh akbar (mass preaching session) in Solo, Central Java, in February 1998 and establishing the Ikatan Taklim Salafi (Salafi Religious Teaching Association) in its aftermath. The opportunity to play an active role in the political arena came later following Habibie’s arrival to power in the aftermath of the resign of Soeharto in May 1998. Facing strong pressure from the opposition camps, Habibie tried to mobilize political support from the hard-line Muslim organizations including the Salafis. The Salafi engagement with the political game was enhanced further by the rise of Megawati Soekarnoputri, the leader of the Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan (Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle, PDI-P), known for the political icon of secular-nationalist and non-Muslim groups, to challenge Habibie in the next general election in June 1999. For Habibie’s supporters, their struggle to endorse their candidate was essentially meant to “defend Islam and guarantee a course in the direction of the Islamization of the state” (2005: 100). The Salafis’ mobilization

29) Noorhaidi (2005: 90-129) discusses the mobilization process of Laskar Jihad at depth in Chapter IV ‘Toward Political Activism and Mobilization’.
towards political activism and militancy intensified with the eruption of religious communal conflict in Ambon since January 1999. The prolonged nature of the conflict and the large number of Muslim casualties in such incidents as the so-called Tobelo massacre in late December 1999 forced the Salafis to move further.

What the interesting was how the series of violent incidents were framed by the Salafis. From the point of view of social movement theory, framing is a critical condition for the success of mobilization efforts (Della Porta & Diani 1999: 74). It relates to the process of production, arrangement and dissemination of discourse that may reverberate among those being targeted for mobilization. According to Tarrow (1998: 110), it can be carried out “through accentuating devices that either underscore and embellish the seriousness and injustice of a social condition or redefine as unjust and immoral state affairs.” Snow and Benford (1992: 138), suggest the crucial role of a master frame in the construction of social protest which they compare to the function of linguistic codes in that “they provide a grammar that punctuates, and syntactically connects patterns or happenings in the world.” In the context of collective action, framing plays a crucial role in the making of collective identity among social movement actors. As suggested by Alberto Melucci (1996: 70-4), the successful realization of collective action is greatly influenced by a strong sense of collective action.

In order to mobilize people to join jihad, the Salafis published the *Seruan Jihad ke Maluku* (Call for Jihad to Maluku) which formulated their conflict-driven grievances such as the killing of thousands of Muslims and displacement of hundreds of thousands more from the area (FKAWJ 2000, as quoted by Noorhaidi 2005: 108). They blamed the government for inaction and indifference to the fate of Muslims in Maluku who, from their point of view, were facing genocidal attacks from the enemies of Islam. They argued that the roots of injustice were located in the government’s policy of siding with Christians and overlooking the intervention of the Zionist-Christian international powers through the RMS (*Republik Maluku Selatan*, Republic of the South Mollucas).
In order to attain ‘frame hegemony’, Noorhaidi (2005: 108-111) argues that the Salafis craftily exploited and captured the discourse existing in the Islamist media articulated by radical Muslim leaders and politicians. He identifies three main frames that were utilized by the Salafis to marshal public support for their call to jihad as follows. The first frame was a discourse of separatism condemning the RMS, a mutinous movement that had unfolded in Ambon in 25 April 1950, as the mastermind behind the conflict. The second frame was a discourse on Muslim genocide, depicting the Maluku Christians as launching deliberate operations to expel Muslims from the islands. The third frame was the accusation that Zionist forces were behind the Maluku Christians in an attempt to disrupt Indonesia, the biggest Muslim country in the world. These frames received wider currency following the Tobelo massacre of hundreds of Muslims in late December 1999. It was followed by the mass gathering called Tabligh Akbar Sejuta Umat (literally religious gathering of a million Muslims) held in Jakarta in early 2000 in which a number of leading Muslim leaders and politicians participated.

The Salafis also moved fast by issuing a jihad resolution and declaring the establishment of FKA JW (Forum Komunikasi Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama’ah) in the tabligh akbar held in Yogyakarta only one week after the Jakarta gathering. Soon after the Salafis, through FKA JW, began to launch a massive mobilization to attract support, recruit masses, persuade potential mujahids, and collect money from donors. As described nicely by Noorhaidi (2005: 112), at the grass-root level they opened tents to register the would-be mujahids at public venues, including at street intersections, markets, and mosques. Intensive efforts were also conducted by their leaders to convince civilian and military elites to provide support as well as to hold public gatherings in a number of cities in Indonesia. All the efforts were commanded by FKA JW, a bureaucratic decision-making organization which was structured hierarchically from its headquarters in Yogyakarta down to lower structures in remote villages. All the mobilization endeavors were facilitated by the existence of the Salafi da’wa network which had been developed since 1980s as a re-
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cruitment network. As Melucci (1989: 31) suggests, the recruitment network played an important role in attracting participants since the mobilization process does not start from a vacuum. To understand the participation of individuals in collective action, the recruitment network comprises an important intermediary which in this case was played by the uestazs of the Salafis (Noorhaidi 2005: 123).

Not only utilizing its social network at the grass root and elite level, the Salafis also mobilized its transnational network by requesting fatwa30) from six religious authorities in the Middle East, all of whom were linked to Bin Baz, the former head of the Saudi Arabian Council of Senior Ulama.31) The six muftis issued the fatwas which then in its Indonesian translation was disseminated through various media, including on the deactivated Laskar Jihad website (www.laskarjihad.or.id/risalah/fatwa), the periodical Salafy and various interviews given by Ja’far Umar Thalib. Some of the six muftis deemed the Muslim engagement in the Maluku conflict to be an individual duty (Ar. Fard ‘ayn) for Indonesian Muslims and to be a collective duty (Ar. Fard kiyafa) for Muslims outside Indonesia, as argued by Muqbil ibn Hadi al-Wadi, a mufti in Yemen. He furthermore asked the Salafis “to arise and conduct jihad in the name of God and overthrow Christians who occupy Muslim territory” and suggested that all Muslims “assist the mujahids by contributing property and any valuable thing, because God will bestow guidance on those who helped each other” (Noorhaidi 2005: 118-9, translated by Noorhaidi). Based on these fatwas, Laskar Jihad Commander Ja’far Umar Thalib confidently proclaimed the Maluku conflict to be a holy war against Christian enemies fighting Muslims. There was little doubt

30) A fatwa is a religious decree specifically issued by qualified persons (muftis – Muslim legal scholars) in response to questions requested their opinions. Although not binding, the position of fatwa is important and has become integral part of the legal practice and discourse of Muslims (Noorhaidi 2005: 118). For a further discussion on the dynamics of fatwa in the context of Indonesian Islam, see Hooker (2003) and Kaptein (2004).

31) Among those asked for the fatwa were Abd al-Razzaq ibn Abd al-Muhsin al-Abbad, Muqbil ibn Hadi al-Wadi’i, Rabi’ ibn Hadi al-Madkhali, Salih al-Suhaymi, Ahmad Yahya ibn Muhammad al-Najm, and Wahid al-Jabiri. For further discussion on the fatwa on jihad to Maluku see Noorhaidi (2005: 117-123).
that the successful massive mobilization of non-local *mujahidin* to the conflict areas by Laskar Jihad held a deep debt to the *fatwas*.

The last, but not the least, factor contributing to the great achievement of Laskar Jihad’s mobilization was the support provided by political elites, both civilians and military. As I have shown in my previous work (Azca 2003, 2004, 2005b, 2006), the mobilization of non-local jihad actors took place in the context of increasing tension between President Abdurrahman Wahid and the military. Wiranto and his allies responded to President Wahid’s maneuvers to undermine his political position by supporting the Laskar Jihad as a vehicle to weaken the authority of Wahid’s government. As a consequence, President Wahid’s verbal order to stop Laskar Jihad going to Ambon was ignored by the police and the army (ICGd 2002: 6). Noorhaidi (2005: 128) also mentions that some elites allegedly gave financial support to Laskar Jihad, including Fuad Bawazier, the former Minister of Finance in the last Soeharto’s cabinet, and General Djaja Suparman.

From this account of jihad mobilization, I move now to profiles of various Islamic movements that deployed their troops to jihad’s locations, either to Ambon-Maluku or Poso-Central Sulawesi.

**Islamic activism and non-local jihad actors**

Who were the non-local Islamic activists who joined in the jihad mobilization? Of the more than five thousand non-local Muslim fighters, there were two large groups of non-local jihad actors who

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32) This tension reached its climax when the National Human Rights Commission for East Timor named Gen. Wiranto and some army and police officers as people to be investigated. President Wahid finally suspended Gen. Wiranto as Coordinating Minister on 14 February 2000, and then Gen. Wiranto formally resigned from his position on 16 May (Editors 2001: 145-147; Said 2001: 338-347).

33) The financial scandal surrounding the foundation of Kostrad during Maj. Gen. Djaja Suparman’s era as Commander, which was exposed by his successor Maj. Gen. Agus Wirahadikusumah, was suspected to be the source of funds for the formation and the development of the LJ (Editors 2001: 144).
joined in the jihad, namely Laskar Jihad and Laskar Mujahidin.\(^{34}\) As mentioned earlier, Laskar Jihad was the most well-known and largest Muslim militia group and had recruited thousands of members. While Laskar Jihad is a single group, the so-called Laskar Mujahidin consisted of several militia groups which are linked to different movements, such as Jama’ah Islamiyah (JI), Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI, Indonesia Mujahidin Council), Laskar Jundullah, Mujahidin KOMPAK (Komite Penanggulangan Krisis, Committee for Overcoming Crisis), and some splinter or offshoot groups of Darul Islam (DI). Although coming from different movement backgrounds, they shared some commonalities and networks and at times commonly worked together. This group recruited about several hundreds people, but some of them had previously trained and fought in other war zones, such as Afghanistan and Mindanao (Azca 2003; ICG 2005c; Fealy and Borgu 2005; Noorhaidi 2006). Besides the two large groups, there was also a much smaller number of ‘Other Mujahidin’, a cluster of non-militia groups who were primarily concerned with humanitarian, medical and da’wa issues, such as PKPU (Posko Keadilan Peduli Ummat, Centre for Justice and Care for Society), Mer-C (Medical Emergency Rescue Committee), and other groups and individuals.

To discuss non-local actors who joined jihad movement, I have developed a categorization of Islamism or Islamic activism, informed by the distinction between three types of Islamism proposed by ICG (2005b)\(^{35}\) based on different world views, modus

\(^{34}\) The distinction between the two is just a simple division widely used among local people regarding the non-local jihadists in the communal conflicts in Ambon and Poso. ICG (2002) also applied this distinction.

\(^{35}\) In a report no. 37 entitled Understanding Islamism, ICG Middle East/North Africa (2005b: 1) defines Islamism as “the active assertion and promotions of beliefs, prescriptions, laws or policies that are held to be Islamic in character.” While there are various currents of Islamism, they share a common view in that “they found their activisms in traditions and teachings of Islam as contained in scripture and authoritative commentaries.” The definition of Islamism is a revision of the previous one which generally defined Islamism more narrowly as “Islam in political mode” or political Islam. It criticizes the prior definition as having shortcomings for at least two reasons: “First, it presupposed that Islam per se is not political, whereas insofar as Islam is inherently interested in matters of governance, in fact it is. Secondly, it presupposed that all forms of Islamism are equally
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operandi and characteristic actors, in three main variants, namely, 
pious, jihadi, and political.\textsuperscript{36) By pious what is meant is Islamic activ-
tivism characterized as follows: not aimed at political power; being
mainly concerned with the safeguarding of the Muslim identity and
the Islamic faith and moral order against the forces of non-Muslims;
its characteristic actors being Salafis.\textsuperscript{37) By jihadi what is meant is
Islamic activism focusing on armed struggle (\textit{al-jihad}) based on ji-
hadi ideology (jihadism) with its characteristic actors being jihadi
activists (\textit{al-mujahid}). By political what is meant is Islamic activism which
is characterized as follows: involvement in the political
process, either direct or indirect, and a general acceptance of the na-
tion-state, working within its constitutional framework; articulating
a reformist rather revolutionary vision and referring to democratic
norms; its characteristic actors being paramilitary and party-political
activists. There is a degree of variation among them in the use of vio-
ence; some basically avoiding its use while others occasionally us-
ing it for vigilante action against what they perceive as ‘moral vice’.

Beside their differences in worldview, modus operandi and
characteristic actors, I argue that different types of Islamist activism
also apply different patterns of membership affiliation. Following
the distinction between \textit{exclusive affiliation} and \textit{multiple affiliations}
as suggested by Della Porta and Diani (1999: 119-20), I contend that
both pious and jihadi activism tend to apply \textit{exclusive affiliation},
meaning that its members usually affiliate only to their own group.
Regarding this pattern of affiliation, Della Porta and Diani (1999:
119) describe their typical organizational context as “self-referential
community or sect whose main characteristics are closure in the face

\textsuperscript{36) ICG (2005b) distinguishes three variants of Islamism, namely, missionary, jihadi,
and political. I found two problems with this conceptualization. First, its definition of
the missionary type is biased toward the Tablighi Jama'a movements, although it also
includes the Salafi movement, as reflected particularly in its definition of the characteristic
of its actors, namely missionaries (\textit{du'ah}) and the 
ulama’. Second, its conceptualization
of the political type seems to me as overly narrow, national-centric, and rather simplistic
in its approach to the use of violence.

\textsuperscript{37) By using term Salafi here and its followings I refer mainly to Wahabi activism.
of the outside world, a totalitarian structure, incompatibility with other forms of collective engagement and the view that the adherents are the repositories of truth. Though not necessarily residential communities, the lifestyle of this group is usually markedly.” It is also suggested that membership of this groups tend to lead to “a radical personality transformation.” On the other hand, I contend that political activism tend to apply multiple affiliations, meaning that its members usually affiliate to different kinds of groups. Multiple affiliations, Della Porta and Diani (1999: 120) suggest, play an important role in integrating different areas of movement and creating bridges between organizations.

This distinction between three types of Islamic activism, of course, is not meant to be comprehensive and exhaustive, nor to represent fixed or final categorizations, instead a somewhat loose taxonomy to guide the analysis based on its main characteristics. A reflective note on this categorization will be made in Chapter 7. By using this analytical framework of Islamism, I focus this research on the three variants of Islamic activists who joined jihad movement in Indonesia as follows: Jama’ah Islamiyah (JI) as the representative of jihadi activism; Laskar Jihad as the representative of pious activism; some activists affiliated with different kinds of Islamic groups as the representative of political activism. As will be portrayed later in Chapter 6, political activism is represented by three Islamic activist groups who come from different networks, namely, Front Pembela Islam (FPI, the Islamic Defender Front), Brigade Hizbullah of Partai Bulan Bintang (PBB, the Crescent and Moon Party) and Posko Keadilan Peduli Umat (PKPU, the Justice Post for Caring Islamic Community).

Although they have differences in worldview, modus operandi and characteristic actors, the three kinds of Islamic activism share at least three commonalities, namely, the importance and the virtue of Muslim solidarity, the primacy of Islamic law (syari’a), and the justification and urgency for conducting jihad in order to defend their fellow Muslims which they perceived as being under persecution in eastern Indonesia, particularly in Ambon-Maluku and Poso-Central Sulawesi.
In the next section I will give a short description of some Islamic groups related to the informants associated with this research, namely, Laskar Jihad, Jama’ah Islamiyah, Brigade Hizbullah of PBB, PKPU, PKS, and KOMPAK.

**Laskar Jihad**

Laskar Jihad is the paramilitary division of the FKAWJ, a Salafi group founded in January 2000 in Yogyakarta. It was led by Ja’far Umar Thalib, a man of Yemeni descent born in Malang on 29 December 1961. After graduating from pesantren al-İrşayd in Malang, Thalib continued his study in LIPIA (Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam dan Bahasa Arab – Institute for Islamic Knowledge and Arabic) in Jakarta and later at the Maududi Institute, in Lahore, Pakistan. Thalib joined jihad in Afghanistan during the Soviet Union invasion in 1987-89, before later continuing his study with Muqbil ibn-Hadi al-Wadi’ in Yemen from 1991 to 1993. After returning home in 1993, he established the pesantren Ihyaus Sunnah in Degolan, Yogyakarta, that later became the headquarters of the FKAWJ-Laskar Jihad (Fealy 2001; Jamhari & Jahroni 2004; Noorhaidi 2005).

FKAWJ has a relatively modern structure topped by its Dewan Pimpinan Pusat (DPP, Central Executive Board) led by Ayip Syafruddin, a graduate of the Psychology Faculty at the Muhammadiyah University in Solo. There are five divisions under this board, including Financial Division, Social Division, Health Division, Advocacy Division, Information Division and Special Task Force or the Paramilitary Division. Thalib’s critical and important position of leader of the Special Task Force is indicated by the fact that he is also Chairman of the Advisory Board, the supreme religious board of the FKAWJ. Under the central executive board, there were the provincial (Dewan Pimpinan Wilayah, DPW) and district (Dewan Pimpinan Daerah, DPD) executive board. The FKAWJ also claimed to have overseas representatives, including Malaysia, Singapore, Australia and Yemen (Noorhaidi 2005: 124-5).
• **KOMPAK**

KOMPAK was founded by the DDII on 1 August 1998 as a Muslim charity to assist Muslims affected by natural disaster, conflict and poverty.\(^{38}\) It was led by Tamsil Linrung, a businessman-politician from Makassar who used to be the national treasurer of the National Mandate Party (Partai Amanat Nasional or PAN) before moving to PKS and elected as a member of parliament in the 2004 election. Although officially just a Muslim charity organization, KOMPAK eventually played a critical role in the course of the conflict by establishing its paramilitary wing named Mujahidin KOMPAK. It mobilized Muslims from many groups associated with DDII to join the jihad in Ambon and Poso, include those who affiliated with JI. Some of my informants, who come from different social background and networks, including from Front Pembela Islam (FPI, Islamic Front Defender), Brigade Hizbullah PBB and JI, joined the jihad through KOMPAK. The close link between KOMPAK and JI was evident in the crucial role played by Sobih alias Aris Munandar as the head of the Solo branch of KOMPAK. Aris Munandar was a graduate of Pondok Ngruki in 1989 and then joined the jihad in Afghanistan in 1991 in the same contingent as Ali Imron and Imam Samudra. He was also a functionary of the DDII in Solo (Imron 2007, ICG 2004b). According to ICG (2002a, 2004b) the close link between KOMPAK-DDII and JI dates back to the JI founder Abdullah Sungkar who was also a DDII activist in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

• **Jama’ah Islamiyah**

Jama’ah Islamiyah (JI) was founded by Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba’asyir in 1993 following internal conflict within DI re-
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Regarding its leadership. During the period, Sungkar and Ba’asyir were in exile in Malaysia where they lived until the collapse of New Order in 1998. In the aftermath of the eruption of the Ambon conflict in January 1999, there was internal dispute regarding JI’s participation: one group with a cautious stance, the other being inclined to move fast. Although JI eventually decided to send a team to Ambon, some JI members had become impatient and joined KOMPAK which was also led by a JI activist. According to ICG (2004b: 5) JI had a few troops in Ambon, never more than around twenty at one time. Yet its role was greater than member numbers indicated due to its military skills and weapons as well as its link with Mujahidin KOMPAK and other groups that provided the foot soldiers. When they joined the jihad in Ambon and/or in Poso, some JI activists had already been trained either in Afghanistan or in Mindanao. JI also established a leadership structure in Poso, considering that it could be developed as its basis. However, as described by ICG (2004a: 7-10), there was growing tension between JI and Mujahidin KOMPAK in the later stages. The strong presence of the JI in Poso led to the prolongation of violence until 2007.

• Brigade Hizbullah

Brigade Hizbullah (BH) is a paramilitary group affiliated with Partai Bulan Bintang (PBB), the successor of the legendary Islamic party Masyumi in the aftermath of the fall of Soeharto. **Hizbullah** is an Arabic term meaning army of God. The history of the Brigade Hizbullah dated back to the ‘revolution period’ when Muslims were organized as a militia group under the same name to fight against the Dutch colonials. The new Brigade Hizbullah was founded on 21 August 2001 with two functions, namely, “as the means for struggle and cadre development (pengaderan) as well as the main pillar of PBB” and “as the guardian of party ideology” (Buku Panduan Brigade Hizbullah, no date: 20). Its national commander was Drs. HMA. Salam, As., MBA. It claimed to have 46 thousand members throughout Indonesia, divided in 18 provincial command structures.
Brigade Hizbullah was structured like a military institution, from its national headquarters to the village level. For example, at the national headquarters it is led by the Komandan Pusat (national commander) and Wakil Komandan (vice commander) assisted by the Deputi Umum (deputy for general affairs), Deputi Operasional (deputy for operational affairs), Deputi Administrasi Personalia (deputy for administration and personnel), Deputi Diklat (deputy for education and training), and deputi intelijen (deputy for intelligence) (ibid, 10-12). Secularism and communism were among the main concerns and potential threats perceived by Brigade Hizbullah. One of its main ideologues was Abdul Qadir Djaelani, a leading Islamist activist and former political prisoner of the New Order. He contributed two articles in the Buku Panduan Brigade Hizbullah (no date), entitled ‘Sejarah Perjuangan Politik Umat Islam Indonesia’ (the history of political struggle of the Islamic community in Indonesia) and ‘Ideologi Non Islam versus Ideologi Islam’ (non-Islamic ideology versus Islamic ideology).

During the conflict in Ambon and in Poso, Brigade Hizbullah did not establish a particular group but joined other militia in participating in jihad movements. Due to its historical background and close relationship with the DDII as the extension of Masyumi struggle in the realm of da’wa, some Brigade Hizbullah activists joined jihad through Mujahidin KOMPAK.

• Front Pembela Islam

Front Pembela Islam (the Islamic Defenders Front or FPI) was founded on 17 August 1998 at a commemoration of Indonesia’s Independence Day, just few months after the fall of Soeharto. The event was held in the pesantren Darul al-Um, Ciputat, led by KH.Misbachul Munir, and attended by hundreds of Muslims south of Jakarta and some local leaders and Islamic preachers such KH. Cecep Bustomi, KH. Damanhuri, Habib Idrus Jamalullail, and Habib Muhammad Rizieq Syihab. The establishment of the FPI was aimed at establishing a movement to defend Islam and to uphold the honor of Muslims.
Similar to the FKAWJ, the FPI then established its paramilitary wing named the Laskar Pembela Islam (LPI) led by Muhammad Rizieq Syihab, who was also the chairman of the executive board of the FPI. Syihab is of Hadrami descent born in Jakarta on 24 August 1965 to a family of *sayyids* who claimed to be descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, as indicated by his title as *habib* (pl. *habaib*). Raised in a circle of *sayyids* in Jakarta, he graduated from the LIPIA Jakarta and then continued his education at the Ibn Saud University in Riyadh (Jamhari and Jahrono 2004; Noorhaidi 2005; Jahroni 2008).

FPI attained its later prominence following its involvement in PAM Swakarsa, the civilian security unit sponsored by some segments of the military and government, in response to the growing movements opposed to President B.J. Habibie. Its reputation further developed for its range of attacks or ‘sweeping operations’ on the so-called places of vice such as nightclubs, cafes and pubs. Their vigilante actions were commonly based on their interpretation of *amar ma’ruf nahy munkar*, a Qur’anic phrase meaning performing good deeds and opposing vice. The FPI developed quite quickly and claimed to have established its structure in eighteen provinces throughout Indonesia. Besides its close link with the security forces, especially the police, the loose and open membership of FPI seemed likely to contribute to its rather quick development, including participation by mere jobless youths and even *preman* (Yunanto 2003; Noorhaidi 2005).

Another interesting feature of the FPI is the varied social backgrounds of its members. While some of its elite members were of *sayyid* origin with strong Salafi influence, others were Muslim leaders from Nahdhatul Ulama (NU), traditionalist Muslim background. Misbachul Anam, the secretary general of FPI from 1998 to 2002, for an example, comes from a *pesantren* NU background and is even a leader of a Sufi order *Tijaniyah* (Jahroni 2008: 52). Jahroni also suggests (2008: 58) that the FPI has nothing to do with Masyumi, the DDII or other Islamist transnational movements. “It is a simply an expression of Indonesian Muslim disillusionment with the existing social and political situation.”
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• **PKPU**

The Posko Keadilan Peduli Ummat (the Center for Justice and Care for Society or PKPU) is a humanitarian agency established by the Tarbiyah movement activists on 10 December 1999 to respond to the multi-dimensional crisis that struck Indonesia in 1997. It was managed in quite a professional way so that it was approved as a charity organization by the Indonesian government in September 2000. It also claimed to be a “NGO in special consultative status with the economic social council of the United Nations”. Instead of articulating its Islamic attributes and identities, PKPU calls itself a “national humanitarian institution.” There is no clear track nor association with the Tarbiyah movements if we observe the professional look of the bi-lingual PKPU website. Yet its Islamic character, of course, remains visible as indicated in its product and program. It presents seven kinds of programs, namely: rescue (emergency), rehabilitation, community development, educational program, health program, economic program and *da’wa*. The website also shows a vast network, developed both domestically and internationally. In addition to 14 office branches in many cities throughout Indonesia, including Ambon, Manado, Aceh and Kendari, the PKPU has partners in other countries include the international Islamic charity group [www.zakat.org](http://www.zakat.org).

While the tie between PKPU and Tarbiyah movement and PKS seems to disappear on the website, it is linked very closely on the ground. The narrative of a PKPU volunteer who happened to be a leading PKS activist in Maluku, as I will relate later in this dissertation, provides a striking example.

**Focus of the research**

This research focuses on non-local jihad actors (*mujahidin*) who participated in the religious conflict in Ambon and Poso during the post-jihad period. As mentioned earlier, one of the most unique

39) See the website [www.pkpu.or.id](http://www.pkpu.or.id) (retrieved on 10 August 2010).
features of the communal conflict in Ambon and in Poso was the remarkable role played by non-local actors. Several studies which pay attention to non-local jihad actors, interestingly, mostly dedicated their focus on one of these networks, either on Laskar Jihad or on Laskar Mujahidin. Studies by Noorhaidi Hasan (2002, 2005, 2006), Badrus Sholeh (2003), Sukidi Mulyadi (2003), Mohammad Shoelhi (2002), Kirsten Schulze (2002), and Michael Davis (2002) are examples of those who focus their attention on Laskar Jihad, the biggest network of non-local jihad actors. Studies on Laskar Mujahidin, on the other hand, tend to focus on those who joined transgressive activism or underground movements, especially JI or DI splinter or offshoot groups. This is the case with several ICG reports and those who claimed expertise on terrorism issues such Gunaratna (2002), Abuza (2002, 2007). As far as I know, no research has paid attention to ‘Other Mujahidin’, either those who stayed in the area or who returned. Based on this observation, I have attempted to move further by researching non-local jihad actors who joined jihad through different networks, comparing their role and experiences during jihad and, more importantly, their trajectory in the post-jihad period.

As implicitly articulated in the last statement, the next aspects to become a major focus of this research are two-fold: the ‘jihad experience’ and ‘post-jihad trajectory’. By ‘jihad experience’ I mean the set of experiences that occurred during participation in the jihad movement. By ‘post-jihad trajectory’ I mean pathway(s) taken in the aftermath of jihad participation by the actors. I assume that the two are not disconnected; instead I argue that ‘jihad experience’ influences the ‘post-jihad trajectory’. Based on this consideration, with a major focus on ‘after jihad’, I chose to take a biographical approach to study non-local jihad actors. By taking a biographical approach, I focus on three stages of the non-local jihad actors’ life story: before, during, and after jihad participation. By observing the three stages of life story of non-local jihad actors, I will discuss three research questions as follows: (1) How did non-local jihad actors who come from different Islamic activism networks become jihad activists?; (2) What did jihad’s experience mean to the actors?; (3) How did the
jihad experience influence the life trajectory of the non-local jihad actors in the post-jihad period?

By focusing on the three different stages of life story and by discussing three sets of questions, I will engage with three theoretical issues, namely, first, participation in the movement; second, experience in the movement; third, post-participation of the movement. I will discuss these three issues from the social movement theory approach later in . I will apply a ‘passionate politics’ approach of social movement theory which pays attention to the link between identity, narrative, and emotions.

**Main arguments**

After laying out the focus of the research, I will present my main arguments which structure the dissertation and will be elaborated later in a theoretical chapter (Chapter 2) and three empirical chapters (Chapter 4-6). I will present the arguments in similar line with the research questions presented previously as follows.

My first main argument is that informants in this research become jihad actors after experiencing ‘radical reasoning’. By ‘radical reasoning’ I mean a set of micro-sociological process that involves both cognition and emotion through either ‘moral shocks’ (Jasper 1997, 1998, see also Jasper and Poulsen 1995) or ‘cognitive opening’ (Wiktorowicz 2005) or both which eventually lead to participation in jihad as an ‘act of identity’ (Marranci 2006, 2009b). Radical reasoning often occurs in the context of, and as a response to, identity crisis (Erikson, 1968) experienced by the actor. I suggest that the decision to join jihad involving radical reasoning because it ruptures the ‘normal’ daily life of the actors.

My second main argument is that, jihad participation consists of what I call ‘radical experience’. By ‘radical experience’ I refer to Sartre’s notion of the existence of a ‘pivotal event’ (as cited by Denzin 1989: 64-7) in a human’s life that bring about “a pivotal meaning
structure that organizes the other activities in a person’s life.” Jihad participation as a ‘pivotal event’ eventually, I contend, influences the life trajectory of the actor in the post-jihad period.

It links to my third main argument that, jihad participation as a ‘radical experience’ informs the ‘after jihad’ life of the actor in combination with two main factors, namely biographical traits and social networks. Although jihad participation alone is a very meaningful experience and becomes a ‘pivotal event’ in the formation of movement identity as a jihad activist, the way the experiences are interpreted is, however, significantly influenced by ideological framework which is furthermore maintained and developed through their social networks. I furthermore argue that informants interpret their experience based on ideological framework associated with their particular type of Islamic activism as previously discussed, namely, pious, jihadi, and political Islamism. I also argue that social networks influence the life trajectory of the actor through the dynamics of three kinds of social network, namely, core-network, tactical-network, and extended-network. Core-network is a social network through which the actor joins jihad; tactical-network is a social network of jihadist networks which occur temporarily during the jihad period; and extended-network is an extension of social networks which develop in the aftermath of jihad participation. Of the three networks, I argue that core-network is the most important network which provide ideological framework to the actor and functions as an ‘ideological network’ to the actor.

Caveat: on plot, names, and term

I would like to raise three caveats concerning my focus on plot-driven narratives, the term jihad and the use of names in this dissertation. I will start with the first.

First, the life story narratives presented in this dissertation, particularly in Chapter 4-6, are basically plot-driven narratives. Re-
ferring to Poletta (2006), I argue that plot, the logic of the story, plays a critical role in the making of narrative, as will be discussed in Chapter 2. It is through a plot that events are structured and configured by narrators to be meaningful; otherwise events would be mere occurrences, discontinuous and separate moments rather than episodes in an unfolding story. The use of such concept, although it appears neat and compact, is not without cost: it tends to overlook fragments, a cluster of events or a cluster of interpretations of events, which are characterized by the absence of plot and logical sequence of events. Fragments are merely lightly narrated by the narrators, as an interruption or interlude, between ‘major narratives’ which are commonly based on plot, or a logical sequence of events, which help the narrator to make sense of events and experiences.

During the interviews, I occasionally encountered such fragments, or ‘minor narratives’, in between ‘major narratives’ of jihad told by the narrators. While ‘major narratives’ present meaningful events or experience from the point of view of normative and religious teachings, for instance, ‘minor narratives’ display marginal themes such as trouble, or fear, or fun, or romance, or even sexual affairs, which may be considered as less crucial, or even as a distortion, so they tend to be overlooked, or even concealed, by the narrators in narrating jihad events and experiences. As a consequence of my choice to explore plot-based narratives I have, unfortunately, sacrificed another side of jihad as reflected in its fragments, or its ‘minor narratives’. While admitting that a particular focus on fragments would be interesting and valuable, it is unfortunately beyond the aim and scope of this dissertation project.

Second, on the use of the term jihad. Since term jihad is one of the keywords in this research, I shall give a brief explanation of its general meaning and how it will be used in this research. It is obvious that the term jihad (a verbal noun or gerund of the verb jahada, meaning “to strive, to exert oneself, to struggle”) is one of the most prominent Arabic terms in the Western world due to its vital influence in the Muslim world, particularly with the emerging trend of Islamist movements in many parts of the globe. It is important
to note that *jihad* is a highly contested concept/discourse by which different groups attempt to define and construct their authority and power over “other” groups and people (Azca 2008).

The origin of the concept dates back to the history of the Prophet Muhammad (570–632), as reflected and written in the Qur’an and the notes of his speeches, sayings, and behavior (*hadith* and *sunnah*). The word is generally used to denote an endeavor toward a praiseworthy aim. However, the term has various and ambiguous meanings, as reflected in its different interpretations. Although in the contemporary context the word *jihad* is more widely associated with acts of violence and terror (“holy war”), the “*jihad* of the sword” was originally called “the smaller *jihad,*” in contrast to the peaceful form that is “the greater *jihad,*” signifying the interior *jihad* or personal struggle to rid one’s soul of greed, hatred, and egotism (Peters 1999, Khadduri 1955).

In this research, however, term *jihad* is used basically to refer its particular empirical meaning, namely, participation of Muslim fighters in the communal conflict in Indonesia, either in Ambon or Poso. In some other cases, it also refers to terrorism actions carried out by *jihadi* groups. It is important to note that term *jihadi* has a particular meaning, namely, referring to the ideology of *jihadi* or *jihadism* which justifies the use of violence to achieve its political goals, include the establishment of the Islamic state (Hassan 2009).

Finally, in this research I use both real names and pseudonyms for various reasons. Although at the beginning of all my interviews I promised the informants the right to remain anonymous, at the end of the interview I asked some of them for permission to use their real names. Five of the informants gave me permission to use their real names, namely, Ali Imron, Fauzi, Surahman, Abu Ayyash and Awod Umar. Three of them are *political* activists, the other two are respectively *pious* and *jihadi* activists. It is interesting to note that some *political* activists tend to be more open and relaxed, and perhaps even enjoy the possibility of publicity and coverage. On the other hand, it seems quite common among *pious* activists to seek distance from the media and publicity, especially regarding their ji-
had experience. Fauzi is an exceptional case—as will be discussed further in Chapter 4. A similar tendency is apparent among jihadi activists, with the additional reason of their engagement with the underground movement. Yet Ali Imron is obviously an exceptional case as is manifested in the publication of his autobiography in 2007.

I chose not to ask permission to use the real names of two jihadi activists, whom I refer to by the pseudonyms, Fauzan and Hendro, as I considering that some parts of their life narratives could bring them into trouble and difficulties. I also did not ask for permission to use the real names of all pious core informants—again with the exception of Fauzi—including some not presented in this dissertation, by considering and respecting their puritan life style as reflected in their rejection to have photographs taken. I have also used pseudonyms for some other informants for similar considerations: to protect them from any possibility of difficulties and troubles and in respect for their puritan life style.

**Structure of the dissertation**

This dissertation consists of seven chapters divided into three parts. Part I consists of three chapters, Chapters 1-3. Chapter 1 presents the context, theory, and methodology of the research. Chapter 2 presents a theoretical framework of the research. In this chapter I will examine a particular approach of social movement theory, namely the so-called ‘passionate politics’ approach, that is used as the analytical framework to discuss the topic of the research. It begins with a critical review of the study of communal violence and Islamic movements in Indonesia as well as an overview of some approaches of social movement theory. It ends with an elaboration of the theoretical arguments of this research.

Chapter 3 presents methodological issues and how the fieldwork research on non-local jihad actors in Indonesia was conducted. I will explain two main strategies in conducting this research, name-
ly, “following the flow of actors” and “digging the depth of their experiences”. I followed the flow of actors because the non-local post-jihadists lived in different areas during the fieldwork, most of them returning home whereas few of them stayed on. A few of them even remained in prison for their involvement in terrorist actions. The next major step was to dig for the deep meanings of their jihad experience through life story interviews. A methodological discussion on combining social movement research, life history, and interpretive biography is also presented.

Part II consists of three empirical chapters: Chapters 4-6. It presents the life story narratives of non-local jihad actors divided into three chapters, based on different types of Islamic activism. Chapter 4 deals with the narratives of former Laskar Jihad fighters; presenting four actors: two who returned home, while another two stayed on in the (post) conflict area in Ambon and Poso, respectively. Three of them were ‘ordinary’ Salafis who follow the life style of most of former Laskar Jihad activists by living in a sort of ‘enclave community’. While another one, although remaining committed to Salafism, performs as a maverick Salafi, including by taking part in political affairs in the post-jihad period.

Chapter 5 presents the narratives of non-local jihad actors who come from the JI network. It presents three actors with different life trajectories: two of them are serving in prison but have taking different choices; one chose a cooperative approach with the police and became their partner, another one behaves less cooperatively and seems to remain ‘radical’. Another one has been released from jail, but has no fixed job and seemed to have ambiguous relations with the police and other JI fellows.

Chapter 6 presents the narratives of non-local jihad actors who come from political Islamic activists. They joined through different networks during the jihad (two with KOMPAK, one with PKPU) but took a similar trajectory in the post-jihad period: involving local politics. Their activism careers also resemble each other: they were promoted to get a higher position after their jihad participation. One became Chairman of the PBB in Solo, another one was elected as
Chairman of the FPI in Pekalongan, while the last was appointed Vice Chairman of the PKS in Maluku.

Part III consists of the concluding chapter. It presents the main findings of the research while revisiting its main arguments and drawing theoretical reflections on the topic. It also presents the contribution of the research both empirically and theoretically.***