Islamisation and Its Opponents in Java

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The protagonists and new totalitarians: Smaller Islamist and Dakwahist movements

We began the preceding chapter concerning the large-scale movements Muhammadiyah and NU — those usually described as ‘moderate’ — by citing the caveat that the label ‘moderate’ is of limited analytical value. In this chapter we will have less terminological difficulty, for we are turning to movements most of whom would be almost universally regarded as immoderate, hard-line, extremist or radical. Here are people and movements that, on the whole, may be regarded as totalitarian in the sense that in their ideal world there would be conformity in both what people do and what they believe.

In pursuing their totalitarian objective of defining both what people do and what they believe, several of the groups discussed in this section are involved (as we have already seen) in attacks on ‘deviant sects’ (what people believe). Here we will see them also attacking what they regard as irreligious conduct (what people do). The overall objective is to shut out voices, lifestyles and ideas other than their own, to close the public space to them and to prevent them winning a wider adherence. These movements include those whose modus operandi is to deploy violence or the threat of violence.

We must, however, observe an important distinction between ideology and action. We will be discussing movements whose ideology is extremist and which engage in extremist, violent action, but also others whose religious aspirations are not significantly different, yet who eschew violence and aim to play constructive roles in society. Some want utopia tomorrow and feel a need to act on its behalf. They may even engage in extremist action,
including suicide bombing, with no practical political goal in sight but to please God. Others are prepared to wait for utopia until it is delivered by God, or to work pragmatically and gradually towards its achievement — the latter being the people whom Masdar Hilmy calls meliorists. That description relates to the political party PKS, which is a complicated, partial exception to the patterns otherwise seen in this chapter. We will consider PKS below.

A preliminary comment on terrorism is needed. Indonesia has a terrorism problem which is rooted in Islamic religious extremism born out of Revivalist epistemology and Islamist and Dakwhist agendas. Indonesia also has a specialist anti-terrorist police force in Densus 88, which has a strong record of penetrating terrorist networks, breaking them up, capturing terrorists and/or killing them. In fact, a common criticism is that Densus 88 kills too many of its targets, preventing use of the intelligence they might provide. Densus 88’s answer is that they face dangerous people who are prepared to kill, indeed to blow themselves up, and police officers often have little choice but to use deadly force in order to stop them and to protect themselves. In this book about the deepening Islamisation of the Javanese, however, terrorism is marginal. The people and movements we will discuss below might, in some cases, segue effortlessly from pengajian to plotting terrorism, but it is only their pengajian that promotes deeper Islamisation.

Terrorist acts of violence have arguably constituted an obstacle, not a path, to deeper Islamisation among Javanese. Sidney Jones has suggested that ‘the more thoughtful jihadis’ themselves accept that the suicide bombings carried out in Indonesia since 2002 have had little or no political impact and ‘implicitly that the pro-Sharia civil society groups have been more effective’. We already noted in the 1970s in Surakarta what seems to have been a dialectical relationship between energetic Islamic reform movements and high levels of Christianisation, so that by the 1980s a quarter of Surakarta’s populace was Christian. Terrorism in the early 21st century probably had a similar effect on some Javanese, discrediting Islamic reform in their eyes and possibly making Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, or kebatinan seem more attractive options. For the pious Javanese Muslim middle class, the JI

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1 A phenomenon observed more widely in Islamic extremism by Olivier Roy; see his works *Failure of political Islam*, pp. 65–6, 157; and *Globalized Islam: The search for a new ummah* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), pp. 246–8.
bombing of Christian targets in 11 cities across Indonesia on Christmas Eve 2000 and in Bali in 2002 were too close for comfort, but it was the 2003 JI bombing of the Marriott hotel in Jakarta, which claimed the lives of 12 Indonesians (including the suicide bomber, plus one European), that was the more direct attack on their social realm. While we cannot doubt that there are pious Muslims among the Javanese middle class who share the religious values and aspirations of Islamists and Dakwahists, terrorist violence directly threatens the social stability, rule of law and security of property that reassure middle classes that their and their children’s futures can be secure and predictable. It is, thus, likely to be a way to lose middle class sympathy. This is not a peculiarly Javanese or Indonesian pattern. Gilles Kepel has noted with regard to terrorism in the Islamic world more generally, that ‘resorting to spectacular terrorism was a high-risk gamble which … was bound to engender … a far greater, far deeper angst among the devout middle class, who feared that such explosions of violence might threaten its vital interests in the long run.’\(^4\) This is not particularly Islamic, either, for in the 1970s and 1980s the aspirations of the Baader-Meinhof group, the Japanese Red Army Faction, the Red Army Brigades in Italy and Action Directe in France all claimed some middle-class sympathy, which was largely lost through their terrorist outrages. What may be more peculiarly Indonesian is the supposed involvement of shady military men with terrorists for their own purposes, which — in the opinion of many observers — declined or came to an end after the Bali bombings, as the terrorists became too dangerous to be played with.\(^5\) Indonesians are prone to believe such plot theories, not least because there have in fact been many plots.

Terrorism is thus an important subject in itself but a marginal one for this book about Islamisation. Readers interested to learn more about it would be well advised to turn to the International Crisis Group publications found in the bibliography of this book and to the other specific works that will be cited below. They should generally avoid the writing of self-labelled ‘experts on terrorism’, whose work has too often been characterised by superficial research and analysis and television sound-bites.\(^6\)

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\(^5\) Among many others, the head of PPP in Surakarta, Hasan Mulachela, believed this to be so; discussion of 25 Aug. 2003, Surakarta.

\(^6\) For a thorough analysis of the weaknesses of some of this literature, focusing on publications by Rohan Gunaratna, Zachary Abuza, Maria Ressa and others, see Natasha Hamilton-Hart, ‘Terrorism in Southeast Asia: Expert analysis, myopia and fantasy’, *The Pacific Review* vol. 18, no. 3 (Sept. 2005), pp. 303–25.
Abu Bakar Ba’asyir has already appeared multiple times in this book. He and his colleague Abdullah Sungkar returned to Surakarta from Malaysia shortly after Soeharto’s 1998 fall from power. Sungkar died in 1999, however, leaving Ba’asyir to carry forward their Revivalist ideas. In 2000 he created MMI (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia, Indonesian Holy Warriors’ Council). In subsequent years Ba’asyir frequently said that he does not approve of violence and prosecutors’ attempts to connect him operationally to terrorism failed until, in mid-2011, he was finally convicted of supporting a terrorist training camp in Aceh. Even before this conviction, he clearly acted in ways that inspired and legitimised violence and he was generally understood to be the spiritual leader of the terrorist group JI.7 Ba’asyir’s speech at the opening congress of MMI was uncompromising and militant:

The sole intention and purpose of God (glorified and exalted is he) in creating men and spirits on this world is to worship him. … But in order to put this worship into practice the essence of this worship, Islamic shari’ā, must be implemented in a complete way. … Without [political] power, much of God’s shari’ā cannot be put into practice. … Thus, in order to implement Islam’s shari’ā in a complete, coordinated and orderly fashion, what is needed is affirmation of its position and what is needed is [political] power. … [What is needed] may, in broad terms, be summarised as dakwah and jihad.

Because mujahidin [holy warriors] are the upholders of religion, they must have the capacity to carry out dakwah and jihad. … The enemies of Islam know that as long as the Islamic ummah, including its fighters, no longer has an understanding of jihad and the spirit of jihad has died, just so long can it easily be dominated, even if in other respects its struggle is spirited. Because of this there grows in the soul of the mujahidin an

7 The best studies are International Crisis Group, Al-Qaeda in Southeast Asia; idem, Indonesia’s terrorist network: How Jemaah Islamiyah works (Jakarta/Brussels: International Crisis Group, 11 Dec. 2002); and idem, Indonesia: Jemaah Islamiyah’s current status (Update briefing no. 63; Jakarta/Brussels: International Crisis Group, 3 May 2007). A brief and more general overview is in Greg Barton, Indonesia’s struggle: Jemaah Islamiyah and the soul of Islam (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2004). Ba’asyir’s defence against the charge of terrorism can be read in Fauzan Al-Anshari, Saya teroris? (Sebuah “pleidoi”) (Jakarta: Penerbit Republika, 2002). Another sympathetic account by a former Ngruki student is in Es Soepriyadi, Ngruki & jaringan terorisme: Melacak jejak Abu Bakar Ba’asyir & jaringannya dari Ngruki sampai bom Bali (Jakarta: Al-Mawardi Prima, 2003). On the 2011 conviction and sentencing to 15 years’ imprisonment, see KmpsO, 16 June 2011; JktP online, 20 June 2011. Ba’asyir’s sentence was reduced on appeal to nine years (JktP online, 26 Oct. 2011) and then restored to 15 years by the Supreme Court (JktP online, 27 Feb. 2012).
understanding and spirit of jihad, right to the borders of love of jihad and of martyrdom in jihad, [a realization] that this is the most important task of Islamic mass organisations in guiding their members, above all their mujabidin. And we are certain that without implementing war in the path of God (jihad fi sabillah), the consolidation of the position of the Islamic faith, above all its [political] power, cannot possibly be achieved.

Fiqh al-qital (knowledge of combat) … is the endeavour to give training in the tactics and strategy of combat and to practice skills in handling weapons. Of the companions of the Prophet, there was not one who could not employ weapons, although their skills were not all the same. Specifically to develop the sciences of jihad and qital, it would be best if Islamic mass organisations had their own camps.

Pesantrens are the fortress of the Islamic ummah. … So that pesantrens truly represent a cauldron for the building-up of a cadre of mujabidin, pesantrens must be distanced from the influences of secular knowledge and thinking. To the contrary, they must bring to life the Qur’an and Hadith and the spirit of war in the path of God.\(^8\)

Books that were read at Ba’asyir’s school at Ngruki indeed included a volume on guerrilla strategy and tactics, as well as works by Osama bin Laden’s mentor Abdullah Azzam.\(^9\)

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\(^9\) Abu Fath Al Pastuni, Gerilya: Strategi, taktik & teknik ([Surakarta:] Afkar, n.d. [c. 2000]). The author’s name may be a pseudonym. I was given a copy of this and other works by the journalist Blontank Poer, who collected them at Ngruki. On Abdullah Azzam, see Kepel, Jihad, pp. 144–7. Other books being studied at Ngruki, according to Blontank Poer, included predictable texts such as an Indonesian translation of Abdullah Azzam’s Join the caravan (Bergabung bersama kafilah; London: Azzam Publications; Jakarta: Penerbit Ahad, 2001) and a collection of his speeches (Abdullah Azzam, Tarbiyah Jihadiyah; transl. Abdurrahman; multiple vols; Solo: Pustaka al-‘Alaq, 1423/2002 –). Other related works from there are Lembaga Study dan Penelitian Islam Pakistan, Membangun kekuatan Islam di tengah perselisihan ummat (intro. Usamah bin Laden; Yogyakarta: Wihdah Press, 1422H/2001M) and Abdullah Azzam, Pelita yang bilang (transl. Abdurrahman; Solo: Pustaka al-‘Alaq, 1422H/2002M). On the Jihadist publishing industry in general, see the International Crisis Group report Indonesia: Jemaah Islamiyah’s publishing industry.
Illustration 37 Ust. Abu Bakar Ba’asyir, Ngruki, 2007
From being an obscure Revivalist cleric, little regarded by his fellow Arabs\(^\text{10}\) and absent from Indonesia for many years, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir was quickly catapulted to the status of an international celebrity, known of and loathed in Washington and Canberra as much as in Jakarta, denounced as a terrorist leader but with no one able to prove in a court of law that this was so until his conviction in June 2011. It is my impression that he much enjoys his celebrity status and probably takes it as a sign that he is succeeding in God’s work. Whenever the Indonesian government tried to hold him responsible for terrorism, his followers denounced this as a Western plot and demonstrated to support him — in one case even attacking the police headquarters in Surakarta.\(^\text{11}\) His mid-2011 conviction will do nothing to diminish — indeed will almost certainly enhance — his reputation among Indonesian extremists.

Ba'asyir travelled to many places in Java, where he attracted large crowds (many of them, no doubt, simply interested to see this celebrity in action) and where the very simplicity of his message was persuasive to many. He has an effective rhetorical style, smiling, laughing, using humour,\(^\text{12}\) but it is all nailed down to his Revivalist conception of the Qur'an and Hadith, and of shari'a (as he understands it) as the absolute determinant of how to live. He is discursive and articulate but has no room for subtleties on basic matters. Such simplicity of message is one of the advantages that Revivalists hold, in contrast to the legalistic complexities of Traditionalism or the intellectuality of Modernism.\(^\text{13}\) When he visited a small mosque south of Kediri in 2006 and 2007, he reportedly attracted an audience in the thousands. The young Muhammadiyah activist who was among his inviters commented that Ba'asyir's message of returning to the shari'a was 'simple,
timely, practical and functional’. Other Muhammadiyah leaders who were interested in Ba’asyir’s ideas invited him to a Muhammadiyah mosque in Kediri, and believed that this was not inconsistent with the December 2006 Muhammadiyah ‘letter of decision’ that denied PKS or similar organisations access to Muhammadiyah facilities, even for ‘activities that call themselves or use symbols of religion or dakwah such as pengajian and guidance of the ummah’. But Ba’asyir also aroused local opposition and on more than one occasion local people or local Islamic leaders objected to, or even prevented, him speaking in their area.

The supposedly ‘simple, timely, practical and functional’ quality of Ba’asyir’s ideas is debatable. The shari’a code proposed by MMI was utopian, poorly drafted, emotive, inflammatory, discriminatory towards minorities and women and obsessed with sexual issues. M.B. Hooker regards it as having ‘no credibility in terms of either the classical [Islamic] jurisprudence or contemporary Indonesian circumstances’. Similarly quixotic was Ba’asyir’s support of using gold dinars and silver dirhams as legal tender, on the grounds that this was necessary for the full implementation of shari’a. His celebrity and consistency in his cause made it difficult for other Muslim leaders to ignore him and encouraged them to downplay frequent allegations of him being linked to violence. Although the national-level MUI

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14 Discussion with Ashari, Ngadiluwih, 28 Nov. 2007; the originals of the translated words that he used were sederhana, aktual, praktis, aktif. Ba’asyir’s speech at Ngadiluwih is also reported in MmK, 7 Nov. 2007.

15 Discussion with Abdul Haris, Triyono and Hari Widasmoro, Kediri, 29 Nov. 2007.

16 For instance, in Banten (JktP online, 1 Nov. 2009, 17 May 2010); the first occasion nearly led to a fight between his followers and opponents; on the second occasion it was the local MUI that objected to him coming. People in Blitar also refused his presence, but his admirer Ashari (discussion in Ngadiluwih, 28 Nov. 2007) said that this was just opposition by ex-PKI and street thugs (preman). Similar opposition occurred in Nganjuk in Nov. 2006, where only about 200 people attended, most of them policemen and military in plain clothes (MmK, 8 Nov. 2006; Suhadi Cholil email, 14 Feb. 2008).


18 Hooker, Indonesian syariah, pp. 277–81 (quote from p. 281).

repeatedly denounced terrorism, when Ba’asyir was arrested by Densus 88 in 2010, MUI demanded a full explanation for the arrest of this ‘well-known and respected figure’.20

Surakarta was a relatively congenial base for Ba’asyir, with a history since the 1970s of Islamic activism by several organisations, a society polarised on Christian-Muslim lines, and a long and ever-permutating list of vigilante groups prepared to threaten or commit mayhem.21 Surakarta was not unique in the last respect. One list of ‘Muslim hard-line groups’ in Yogyakarta claimed that there were 40 of them, many linked to PPP.22 But stronger political leadership in Yogyakarta than in Surakarta (a general topic that will be addressed in the appendix on research methodology and case studies below) meant that there was far less violence in Yogyakarta. This did not mean, however, that Abu Bakar Ba’asyir’s Surakarta base for either jihad or dakwah was stable, for it is in the nature of extremist organisations to be brittle and easily rent by accusations of ideological deviance or hypocrisy. And so it was that MMI and Ba’asyir split in 2008, with the bitterest accusations being hurled in both directions. Thereupon Ba’asyir created his new organisation, Jama’ah Ansharut Tauhid (Congregation of the Helpers of Divine Unity, JAT), which was to give emphasis to dakwah activities but which in 2010 was accused of running a terrorist training camp in Aceh (the discovery of which eventually led to Ba’asyir’s conviction).23 While the subsequent trials continued, in April 2011 a suicide bombing in a police headquarters mosque in Cirebon led to the further discoveries about terrorist links to Ba’asyir’s JAT. Several arrests followed and in May two alleged terrorists were killed by Densus 88 in a shoot-out in Cemani (where Ngruki is found).24

20 JktP online, 9 Aug. 2010.
21 An account of these groups in Surakarta from a rather sympathetic perspective is in Zainuddin Fananie, Atiqa Sabardila and Dwi Purnanto, Radikalisme keagamaan dan perubahan sosial (Surakarta: Muhammadiyah University Press and The Asia Foundation, 2002).
24 JktG, 18 Apr. 2011; KR, 14 May 2001; Kmps, 14 May 2011; TempoI, 15 May 2011. The group that was involved here was reportedly called Tauhid wal Jihad; on this, see also International Crisis Group, Indonesia: The dark side of Jama’ah Ansharut Tauhid (JAT), pp. 3, 10. The group was said also to be involved in the murder of an
While Abu Bakar Ba'asyir undoubtedly has influenced some of his listeners to adopt a more pious way of life, his political involvements and links to extremism have almost certainly limited his impact, and that of his organisations, in actually changing Javanese society. He has made no headway whatsoever towards his Islamist goals. Nevertheless the educational and proselytising work by his followers is significant, if on a much smaller scale than that of NU or Muhammadiyah.

The pesantren at Ngruki — with about 1,600 pupils — has played a role in the deeper Islamisation of surrounding society since the 1970s, as we have seen in previous chapters, but it is also part of a wider and influential network of schools. This has been characterised by the International Crisis Group as a JI school network, consisting of something like 20 pesantrens, most of them in Java, particularly in the area around Surakarta. How this network operates to spread Revivalist ideas in a more Islamised society is illustrated by the story of the villages of Blumbang and Kalisoro, on the slopes of Mount Lawu.

Blumbang has an ancient holy site (pundhen) where the annual bersih desa takes place, funded by contributions gathered from villagers. Until the 1990s, the villagers are said all to have been Muslims of the abangan or kejawen style; neither Muhammadiyah nor NU had a presence. Then more pious forms of Islam began to develop there, which led to tension and divisions within the village. More recently — evidently c. 2000 or so — some young people began to style themselves as Islam kaffah (complete Muslims). According to their leader Edi Suwarnoto — then in his mid-20s and wishing to abandon a rather dissolute, aimless life — they followed pengajian in Surakarta. At some point, LDII also established a presence in the village, but Edi’s Islam kaffah group of course rejected LDII’s teachings, as they also rejected mysticism. Similar developments occurred in the nearby village of Kalisoro. In early 2006, for the observations in the first month of the Javanese year (Suran), Kalisoro’s villagers gathered the usual financial contributions, but about 20 Islam kaffah families refused to contribute to what they now regarded as heathenism. The same was done by Edi’s group in Blumbang. In Kalisoro, the village elders sought to impose a fine on the army officer and in church bombings, including the suicide bombing in Surakarta in September 2011. See further International Crisis Group, Indonesia: From vigilantism to terrorism in Cirebon.

26 International Crisis Group, Indonesia: Jemaah Islamiyah’s current status, pp. 5–9.
pious recalcitrants, which they refused to pay. Their friends in Blumbang thereafter organised support for the Islam kaffah group in Kalisoro, which consisted of calling up some 200 motorbikes from as far away as Surakarta, which rolled into the village ridden by members of Abu Bakar Ba’asyir’s MMI and others of similar views. One can imagine the intimidating effect of this invasion of aspirant mujahidin. Before any actual mayhem could occur, the matter was referred to court in Karanganyar (with an outcome not known to me). This episode evidently helped to solidify a connection between the devout groups in the mountain villages and radical groups from outside. The young village Islam kaffah people now go farther down the slopes to Karangpandan (Karanganyar) for religious guidance at the Isy Karima mosque and pesantren, identified by the International Crisis Group as part of the JI network.27

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27 Discussion with Edi Suwarnoto, Blumbang, Karanganyar, 4 Aug. 2006. On Isy Karima, see International Crisis Group, *Indonesia: Jemaah Islamiyah’s current status*, p. 7. The pesantren is under the guidance of its founder Dr Tunjung S. Soeharso and Ngruki’s Ust. Wahyuddin (Abdullah Sungkar’s son-in-law). DDII played a role in...
Another flamboyantly violent organisation, Laskar Jihad (Holy War Militia), grew from a small pesantren near Yogyakarta founded by Ja'far Umar Thalib. He and his movement are the subjects of an outstanding study by Noorhaidi Hasan, which we follow here. Ja'far Umar Thalib was born in 1961 in Malang into a devout family of Arab (Hadhrami) descent. The young man studied at the Persatuan Islam pesantren at Bangil and then LIPIA, whence he proceeded in 1987 to study in Pakistan at the Mawdudi Institute. During his time abroad, he had experience with the Afghan mujahidin then fighting the Soviet occupation. He returned to Indonesia and, with others, was active in spreading Revivalist versions of Islam, especially among the younger generation. He established his own pesantren Ihyaus Sunnah in 1994 north of Yogyakarta. A dozen or so other such Revivalist schools were set up, linked to Ihyaus Sunnah, in following years. But Ihyaus Sunnah failed to win significant domestic or overseas funding and never spawned a network as large and important as that of Ngruki.

Ja'far Umar Thalib was most influential through his capacity to mobilise people for street demonstrations and, above all, through his Laskar Jihad, which recruited several thousand fighters to do battle against Christians in the sectarian conflict in Maluku. In this military role in Maluku, Laskar Jihad seems to have acted hand-in-hand with elements of the Indonesian military. When Laskar Jihad tried to get involved in the conflict in Aceh, however, local leaders rejected it because they saw it as a tool of the military. Laskar Jihad also had an agenda in Java, but it provoked opposition as well. After a Laskar Jihad attack on ‘places of immorality’ in Ngawi during Ramadan 2001, the group was counter-attacked by PDIP supporters. A PDIP figure was reportedly kidnapped and repeatedly stabbed by the Laskar Jihad side. The police — who raided the Laskar Jihad headquarters and found knives, machetes, bombs, a handgun and ammunition — arrested 80 Laskar members, plus another 38 coming from Surakarta, Yogyakarta and Magelang to join the fight.28

In 2002, after Ja'far had managed to offend other Revivalist leaders and inspire distrust among his own followers by pursuing what was seen as his personal aggrandisement, a fatwa from a major Saudi Arabian religious

organising the 1996 grant of land on which the mosque was erected, according to http://www.isykarima.com/profil/sejarah.html. The Blumbang holy site is more widely known and was referred to repeatedly during my discussion with Drs KRAT Basuki Prawirodipuro and KRT Giarto Nagoro, Surabaya, 25 Nov. 2007.

scholar declared that Laskar Jihad had deviated from its proper religious objectives and should be shut down. Ja’far then disbanded it (just days after the Bali bombs) and most of the students at his pesantren left to study at other Revivalist schools. While undoubtedly Laskar Jihad had inspired several thousand younger activists to a greater militancy and willingness to make sacrifices for its version of the Islamic cause, and had claimed lives in the Maluku conflict, the small size of its pesantren network meant that it was always of marginal significance in the deeper Islamisation of Javanese society.

Other violent groups focused more on local Javanese society in the name of purification. The Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) was created in Jakarta in 1998 and led by the Habib (descendant of the Prophet) Muhammad Rizieq Shihab (b. 1965, Jakarta). Habib Rizieq, as he is known, studied at LIPIA and then took his first degree at King Saud University in Riyadh, followed by a master’s degree in Malaysia. While FPI’s main field of activity has been Jakarta and West Java, it also established branches in towns in Central and East Java. As with Laskar Jihad, so with FPI there have been frequent allegations that it has links with, or is manipulated by, elements in the military. In its early years its main activity was physically attacking ‘places of immorality’ (tempat maksiat) such as cafes, bars, discotheques, billiard halls, gambling joints, and places of prostitution. Probably its most spectacular success was its protest at the second Jakarta Biennale arts show in 2005, where the work of over 300 Indonesian and international artists was displayed. FPI demanded the removal of a particular installation displaying naked humans with their genitalia covered by small circular dots and featuring two television soap-opera stars. The organisers of the Biennale gave in to the implicit threat of violence, whereupon other artists covered up or withdrew their own works in protest. The curator then

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30 A useful account of FPI is in Jamhari and Jajang Jahroni, Gerakan Salafi radikal, Chapter 5. For more details on this and other organisations in Jakarta and West Java, see Chader S. Bamualim’s forthcoming work, tentatively entitled Islamisation and resistance in West Java: A study of religion, politics and social change since c. 1965. Valuable also is Chader S. Bamualim et al., ‘Laporan penelitian: Radikalisme agama dan perubahan sosial di DKI Jakarta’ ([Jakarta:] Tim Peneliti Pusat Bahasa dan Budaya IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah and Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah (Bappeda) Pemerintah DKI Jakarta, 1999/2000).
announced that there would be no more Jakarta Biennales.\textsuperscript{31} From around 2005 or so, FPI began to put more effort into violence against ‘deviant sects’ (\textit{aliran sesat}), several examples of which we have seen above, at least partly because it had been successful in mobilising the police to act against ‘immorality’.\textsuperscript{32}

Coordination between FPI and local police or military was obvious in several cases, and may go far to explain why the government has never declared FPI illegal. That is, the views and objectives of the state and its security apparatus at least sometimes parallel those of FPI. March 2010 saw an Asia-wide gay and lesbian conference convened in Surabaya. The Forum Umat Islam (Islamic \textit{Ummah} Forum) of East Java, an umbrella group comprising FPI, MUI, Al-\textit{Irsyad} and other organisations, surrounded the hotel where it was being held and demanded that the conference be stopped. Some physical conflict occurred. Under the supervision of the South Surabaya police chief, the organisers agreed to cancel their conference and attendees left for their homes.\textsuperscript{33} In June 2010, FPI acted in cooperation with the military in Banyuwangi to stop a meeting intended to disseminate information about new health programmes, claiming that this had been cover for a meeting of former Communists.\textsuperscript{34} In January 2011, the Surabaya FPI acted jointly with the Surabaya police to shut down a discussion by human rights groups in a major hotel on the subject of freedom of belief, to which Ahmadiyya and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups had been invited. Policemen and FPI people arrived together, could not intimidate the activists there, but did sufficiently intimidate the hotel management to shut down the discussion.\textsuperscript{35} In both the Banyuwangi and Surabaya cases, it appears to have been the military or police who took the initial step of informing FPI of the meetings that were to be shut down.

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotenum{32} In August 2010 the Jakarta governor Fauzi Bowo and the police chief Timur Pradopo attended FPI’s anniversary, where Habib Rizieq offered FPI’s assistance in enforcing a Jakarta by-law closing some places of entertainment during Ramadan; \textit{JktP} online, 7 Aug. 2010. Roy, \textit{Failure of political Islam}, pp. 80–1, comments on Islamic, Christian and Jewish puritans’ shared opposition to most forms of entertainment and leisure.
\footnotenum{33} Antara\textit{News.com}, 26 March 2010. It may be noted that there is no law against gay, lesbian, transsexual or transvestite activity in Indonesia.
\footnotenum{34} Jkt\textit{P} online, 28 June 2010, 2 July 2010.
\footnotenum{35} Based on a 13 Jan. 2011 report by Ahmad Zainul Hamdi, director of one of the organisations involved, provided by Masdar Hilmy (email, 28 Feb. 2011).
\end{footnotes}
FPI is somewhat unusual among violent movements in having Traditionalist aspects. It professes loyalty to the Sunni schools of law and in its early days the practices of the Tijaniyya Sufi order were taught as a means to develop members spiritually. Among others, the NU leader Ky. H. Sahal Mahfudh, however, explicitly denied that FPI could be thought of as anything like NU. ‘FPI was set up by Habibs,’ he said, ‘so it is not NU … Those FPI characters are Wahhabi.’ FPI’s political attitudes (particularly opposition to Abdurrahman Wahid) and its social violence meant that it often found itself opposed by NU’s Ansor, which demanded that FPI be shut down, something the government never agreed to do. After the Bali bombings of 2002, however, FPI found it more difficult to get funding and tended to deteriorate into a protection racket (something the police are also good at) until cleaning up its ranks again.

A local Surakarta extremist group that is sometimes confused with FPI is FPIS (Front Pemuda Islam Surakarta, Surakarta Islamic Youth Front). This is based at the exclusive Islamic Community of Gumuk (Jamaah al-Islam Gumuk) in Surakarta, the subject of an important study by Fajar Riza Ul Haq. This community was originally founded in the 1970s, as were Ngruki, MTA and Assalaam. Since the late 1970s it has been led by Ust. Mudzakkir, a native of Surakarta and pharmacist by training, whose ideas agreed with those of his contemporaries Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba’asyir. To Mudzakkir, the Qur’an is the primary source of knowledge, with the Hadith occupying a second rank. Pengajian and militia activity are both seen as ways to build up the cadres of the community. At the Gumuk pesantren, students are instructed in a strictly Revivalist version of Islam, but are also given secular lessons (although the government curriculum is not followed). The community dress in what they regard as an Arabic fashion and women are restricted to domestic roles in the Salafi (Revivalist) style, but other Salafis dislike Gumuk and accuse it of being Shi’ite. Gumuk has established branches elsewhere and gained some thousands of followers. Like Sungkar and Ba’asyir, Mudzakkir regards Pancasila as haram and rejects political parties (including Islamic parties) on the grounds that they foster divisions in society,

38 This was particularly so after the violence at the national monument in Jakarta on 1 June 2008 (e.g. KR, 4 June 2008; detikSurabaya online, 3 June 2008).
but he expects followers to maintain loyalty to him. Street politics is his style, including violent actions against ‘immorality’. Mudzakkir is the main ideologue of FPIS, which was established in 1999 and still has its base in the Gumuk community. It is one of the most violent groups in Surakarta.40

Such groups’ identities and memberships change, overlap, fuse into umbrella organisations for particular actions and then split again over personal or ideological differences, but nevertheless represent a constant presence pushing forward a violent Dakwahist and Islamist agenda. The month of Ramadan has been a particular focus for activity, the month regarded as the most holy of the year, when Muslims should be fasting from sunrise to sunset. Places of entertainment are attacked, patrons are threatened or roughed up, courting couples are hauled off to the police for further admonition, bottles of alcohol are smashed, prostitutes are driven away, and so on. *Laskar* this or *laskar* that, *front* this or *front* that, *koalisi* this or *koalisi* that, with their various open and clandestine links to political parties, the police, the military, businessmen, criminals and religious teachers, are a bewildering cacophony, but the general outlines of the social, political and religious symphony they aspire to is common. They want Javanese (and more widely Indonesian) society to conform to their picture of a more moral and more perfectly Islamic society, which is in almost all cases a Revivalist version. Javanese should live as nearly as possible as the Prophet and his companions lived, in that most perfect of times. Hence their predilection for wearing beards and turbans and for waving swords. Their attitude towards technology tends to be schizophrenic. While they may insist on wearing Arab-style clothes and brushing their teeth with a small wooden stick (*miswak* or *siwak*), as did the Prophet, they also use flush toilets, mobile phones and the Internet and, given a chance, would see no objection to exchanging their sword for an AK-47.

The violence in Surakarta reached a peak during Ramadan in December 2000. A number of cafes refused to close during Ramadan, as demanded by Laskar Jihad and similar gangs. So they attacked these cafes and destroyed several of them, but met stiff resistance from people who protected these ‘places of immorality’. This was the last major street battle between Islamic

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vigilantes and *abangan* resisters in Surakarta. Among the *laskars*’ principle
targets were *Kafe 2000* which was owned by a PDIP follower and *Kafe Skorpio*
which was owned by a policeman. The conflict lasted over several
days, featuring competing convoys of motorbikes around the streets of
Surakarta, mutual threats and reportedly considerable drunkenness on the
*abangan* side. At one stage, the *abangan* carried their counter-attack to
Ngruki, where their enemies when into hiding. NU’s Ansor then decided
to intervene, calling upon the Surakarta government and police to stop the
violence, failing which it would mobilise thousands of its own people to
barricade Surakarta against outsiders. The conflict then calmed down, under
the threat of NU joining the fray against the *laskars*.41

In the wake of this violence, the Surakarta police decided it wise to
take measures to close entertainment venues at least at the start and end of
Ramadan. It can hardly be doubted that this was a painful decision, since
policemen routinely had a personal interest in such places or took a cut
for protecting them. The local context was, however, changing. Surakarta’s
popular new mayor Jokowi (2005–10, then reelected with 90 per cent of the
vote for a further five-year term) brought a refreshing level of competence
and transparency to local government. He opened lines of communication
to the *laskars* and was even able to communicate with the Gumuk com-

41 An account is in Zaki Mubarak, *Geneologi Islam radikal di Indonesia*, p. 196. Other
details are from a long report prepared for my colleague Soedarmono by Muchus
Budi R., who was present at the events and interviewed several of the participants,

42 Discussion with Ir Joko Widodo (Jokowi), Surakarta, 3 Nov. 2006.

43 Discussion with Kombes Pol. Drs Yotje Mende, Surakarta, 4 Nov. 2006. As Kapolwil his responsibilities encompassed Surakarta, Sukohardjo, Boyolali, Karanganyar and Klaten.
Islamic *laskars* still happened from time to time, with some episodes of violence, but often they went to attack a place only to find it already closed, locked and empty. The closures of some places were rather tokenistic, as the extremists turned their attention more to suppressing ‘deviance’, as we have seen above. During Ramadan in 2006, the food court at Surakarta’s main shopping mall reported that the agreement was merely that they would open every day until 5pm, then close for two hours and reopen at 7pm.44

There were still violent incidents. When a *laskar* attack on drinkers led to the death of two of them in 2008, the Surakarta police arrested several perpetrators and Ba’asyir hastened to the police station to offer them his support.45 Generally, however, in Surakarta the police themselves by then were doing most of what the extremists demanded, shutting down illegal gambling joints, publicly destroying bottles of alcohol, arresting prostitutes and shaming courting couples discovered in such places.46 In cities other than Surakarta, ‘sweeping’ against places of ‘immorality’ and threats against restaurants and food stalls by FPI and others still continued, especially during Ramadan.47

**Illustration 39** Ir Joko Widodo (Jokowi), Mayor of Surakarta, 2006

East Java NU criticised violent ‘sweeping’ as inconsistent with the spirit of Ramadan, urging that improper conduct instead be referred to the police. Just as in Surakarta, local government bans and police raids on ‘places of immorality’ came to be regularly reported, particularly during Ramadan.

It must be emphasised that, even though many Javanese dislike the violence of the laskars, the suppression of gambling, drinking, prostitution and the like is supported by many people (Muslims and non-Muslims) on moral grounds, and is welcomed when done by local government and the police. Rarely is there resistance. In 2001, prostitutes and workers who depend on prostitution (parking attendants, etc.) demonstrated against the closure of their business for Ramadan in Kediri, but five years later most of them accepted the inevitable and went home for the fasting month. One is reminded of the comment by the lighterman at Ramsgate in 1581, quoted by Keith Thomas: ‘It was never merry England since we were impressed to come to the church.’

Not all smaller Dakwahist and Islamist groups regard violence as acceptable. In Surakarta, the purification movements MTA and the Assalaam school that began in the 1970s carry on, contributing to the deeper Islamisation of the society. They do so without violence, relying on education and pengajian and, it may reasonably be presumed, are thereby more effective in bringing about social change than are the sword-waving laskars. They are not, of course, entirely free of controversy from time to time. The leader of MTA Ahmad Sukina was denounced in extreme terms by an Arab Habib from Grobogan for overthrowing Traditionalist ideas. ‘We regard no one as enemies, even though we are treated like an enemy by others’, said Ahmad Sukina. MTA continues its opposition to spiritually embedded Javanese beliefs and practices such as slametans, jimats, krisses, Ratu Kidul and the like. At its headquarters MTA has a display of krisses and other jimats, with the warning, ‘Muslim men and women who still have jimats:

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48 JktP online, 2 Sept. 2008.
50 Tempo, 29 Nov. 2001; Mmk, 14 Sept. 2006.
51 Thomas, Religion and the decline of magic, p. 179.
52 MTA-online, 12 July 2007. Habib Yahya evidently even went so far as to claim that MTA is a Zionist front, than which there could hardly be any worse charge.
53 ‘Kita tidak punya musuh walaupun dimusuh’; comment by Ust. Drs Ahmad Sukina, Surakarta, 6 Nov. 2006.
Illustration 40 Ust. Drs Ahmad Sukina of MTA and the collection of surrendered *jimats*, 'a clear source of deviance', Surakarta MTA headquarters, 2008
Repent immediately, for this is an act of *shirk*!, such polytheism being the most heinous form of disbelief in Islam. MTA leaders resist getting involved in politics. ‘You can’t do *dakwah* through politics,’ a Surabaya MTA leader insisted.²⁴ Assalaam also carries on in its educational work.

There are two political parties which are to a greater or lesser degree Dakwahist and Islamist and which have a significant impact among the Javanese: HTI and PKS. Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia²⁵ is a political party connected to the international Hizbut Tahrir — literally the ‘Liberation Party’ — which is based on the ideas of the Palestinian Taqiuddin al-Nabhani (1909–77). The Indonesian branch was founded in 1982 and won followers among university students, but could operate openly only after the fall of Soeharto. Although Hizbut Tahrir is regarded as a terrorist organisation and banned on those grounds in some countries, it has not been associated with terrorism in Indonesia. HTI seeks to create a universal caliphate, a global Islamic state and society. Because it rejects democracy, however, in Indonesia it pursues these goals without taking part in elections. It thus exemplifies the strategy of taking power from below and outside state structures, but unlike MMI it seeks to do so peacefully. Masdar Hilmy describes HTI in the following terms:

HTI is one of the better organised Islamist groups in Indonesia, comprising mainly middle-class Muslims with a strong longing for spiritual assistance. The organisation offers a unique mixture of modernity and elements of Salafism, even though at times it is unclear whether it represents a version of indigenous or Arabised Islam. … HTI tends to choose a moderate, intellectual stance as its means of *dakwah*. Most of its members are attracted to the ideas of HTI not because of coercive indoctrination, but because of the intelligibility of the narratives on Islam provided by its ideologues. HTI mostly deploys international issues affecting Islam and the Muslim world as the basis of its campaign towards the establishment of *Khilafah Islamiyah* [the Islamic caliphate], even though its activists are also very much concerned with domestic social and political issues.²⁶

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²⁴ Mohammad Rokib interview of Ir. Hasan Ikhwani, head of the MTA branch in Sukolilo, Surabaya, 4 Dec. 2008. Hasan Ikhwani added that they could get along well with other religions, but if non-Muslims should provoke and threaten Islam, then they would have to be wiped out entirely (dibumihanguskan).

²⁵ See Hilmy, *Islamism and democracy*, esp. pp. 117–22; unless otherwise indicated the discussion here rests mainly on this source.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 118–9.
HTI’s most spectacular public performance was the holding of an ‘International Caliphate Conference’ in Jakarta in August 2007. This was widely reported in the Indonesian press, with estimates that over 100,000 people attended. The Indonesian government refused entrance to a few of the international attendees, but many Indonesian Muslim leaders put in an appearance.\footnote{Ibid., p. 121.} At local levels, HTI activists often take part in pro-caliphate, anti-government, anti-Israeli and anti-American demonstrations, along with other Islamic organisations.\footnote{For example, \textit{JktP} online, 12 Jan. 2003; \textit{TempoI}, 25 Oct. 2004; \textit{RK}, 4 June 2005, 6 March 2006, 29 July 2006, 5 Jan. 2009; \textit{Surabaya Post}, 4 Jan. 2009.}

While HTI eschews electoral politics, it is aware of the desirability of a larger mass base than the tertiary-educated cadres that it now has. Integrated Islamic Schools (\textit{Sekolah Islam Terpadu}) run by its activists are both a source of income for themselves and a long-term project for building up a following and changing the society. HTI is also appearing in at least some high schools.\footnote{Febi Taufiqurrahman (17 years old, a student leader) said that HTI was present in his senior high school (SMAN 4) in Kediri; Suhadi Cholil and Imam Subawi interview, Kediri, 28 July 2007.} More immediately effective strategies for winning a larger following may also be in hand. We saw above NU’s fears that its followers were being influenced, its branches infiltrated or its mosques taken over by HTI. The senior NU \textit{kyai} Idris Marzuqi was unequivocal about HTI being ‘our enemies’ who would destroy the nation. If necessary, he insisted, NU would respond with its martial arts and mystical sciences of invulnerability (\textit{ilmu kebal, ilmu jadhugan}).\footnote{Discussion with Ky. H.A. Idris Marzuqi, Lirboyo, Kediri, 29 Nov. 2007.} We may be sure that such ‘sciences’ were of little account in the thinking of HTI’s Revivalists. If HTI’s thinking is not subject to Traditionalist superstitions, however, it is subject to its own utopian naivety. Its leading spokesman Ismail Yusanto explained that there were two major problems in Indonesia. The first was a problem of leadership, which would be solved by having a caliph. The second was a problem of ‘the system’, which would be solved by implementing \textit{shari’a}.\footnote{Discussion with Muhammad Ismail Yusanto, Jakarta, 8 June 2007.} Another spokesman even suggested that if the caliphate could be first established in Indonesia, then Indonesia could become the centre of the Islamic world. So there was no reason to fear that Indonesia would disappear in the caliphate,
he said; rather, it would grow by taking into itself other Islamic nations around the world.\textsuperscript{62}

Unlike HTI, PKS has a non-utopian, pragmatic leadership that is working within Indonesia’s democratic political system to create what it regards as a more perfect political, social and religious order. We have often referred to this organisation above, and now need to look at how it carries out its political and \textit{dakwah} aims in Javanese society. As noted above, this party was born out of the \textit{tarbiyah} movement on university campuses (especially secular campuses) modeled on the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. Its religious practices, however, are not entirely Modernist or Revivalist. Although many followers of the \textit{tarbiyah} movement follow daily litanies compiled by Hassan al-Banna,\textsuperscript{63} there are also people in PKS who observe Traditionalist rituals such as \textit{tahlilan} and \textit{yasinan}.\textsuperscript{64} Upon the fall of Soeharto, in July 1998 the activists of this movement decided to create a political party to compete in the expected national parliamentary elections, and they called it Partai Keadilan (Justice Party). With an Islamist platform for implementing \textit{shari’ah} law, it did poorly in the 1999 elections, winning only 1.4 per cent of the national vote, which rendered it unqualified to stand again. So the party was refounded as PKS (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, Prosperous Justice Party) and deemphasised its Islamist aspirations. It still called itself a \textit{dakwah} party, but underlined that it was ‘clean and caring’, emphasising above all its opposition to corruption and concern for the disadvantaged. Its leader Dr Hidayat Nur Wahid\textsuperscript{65} was impressive, its cadres maintained their discipline and exemplified the moral standards the party claimed, and the electorate rewarded them. In the 2004 elections, PKS won over 8.3 million votes nationally, amounting to 7.3 per cent of the national vote. This was an impressive achievement for a new party in a multiparty

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{62} Arif Maftuhin interview with HTI spokesman Tindyo Prasetyo, Yogyakarta, 16 Aug. 2007.
\item \textsuperscript{63} Known as the \textit{al-ma’tsurat}; Arif Maftuhin interview of Cahyadi Takariawan, Yogyakarta, 15 Sept. 2007.
\item \textsuperscript{64} Including one of its founders, Ky. H. Hilmi Aminuddin; \textit{PK Sejahtera-online}, 23 July 2008. This point was also made by Dr M. Hidayat Nur Wahid in our discussion, Jakarta, 7 June 2007, and in a lecture he gave at the Lapangan Tambaksari, Surabaya, on 5 April 2009 (notes provided by Masdar Hilmy).
\item \textsuperscript{65} Hidayat Nur Wahid was born in Klaten in 1960, educated at Gontor, IAIN Yogyakarta and the Islamic University of Madinah (where he gained his doctorate); he taught at both Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta and IAIN Jakarta. Further details at http://www.tokoh-indonesia.com/ensiklopedi/h/hidayat-nur-wahid/index.shtml.
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Illustration 41 PKS election banner in Kediri, 2009.
The Javanese slogan says, 'Come on, build the nation along with PKS' and points out that the candidate is 'original NU'.
democracy in which the largest party (Golkar) took just 21.6 per cent of the vote and the NU-based PKB won only 10.6 per cent. In the simultaneous elections for local parliaments, PKS did similarly strongly.

This more pragmatic approach represented a compromise between those who were prepared to work patiently and realistically to gain political power and those who were more committed to quicker and purer implementation of Islamist goals. In the wake of the 2004 outcome, the pragmatists could claim that their strategy was a success. PKS aimed at winning 20 per cent of the vote in the 2009 elections, when it presented itself as ‘clean, caring and professional’. It also declared itself more pluralist, more nationalist and more open to new phenomena like pop music.66 Its aspirations were,

66 PKS leader Anis Matta quoted in Kmps, 7 Oct. 2008. Similar sentiments were repeated at a PKS national meeting of some 3,500 cadres held in Yogyakarta in 2011, which opened with performances from a ‘Five Mountain Festival’ group, traditional Javanese dance and a hiphop performance; JktP online, 26 Feb. 2011.
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however, unrealistic. The party’s result was little different from 2004, winning 8.2 million or 7.9 per cent of votes, making it fourth in size but far behind PDIP, Golkar and Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono’s Partai Demokrat. Doubts must have grown within PKS about how successful the pragmatists’ strategy really was. In March 2011 internal conflict within PKS became public, with accusations of dishonesty being made against major leaders and signs that idealistic figures may have been deserting the party as early as 2003, with others reportedly being pushed out or sidelined. The public began to suspect that perhaps PKS was not so different from other parties after all.

PKS is a Janus-faced organisation, with different internal and external presentations of itself, as many have observed. While publicly advocating democracy, ‘internally’, Masdar Hilmy notes, ‘PKS activists must adhere to a rather stringent internal code of behaviour that would appear to contradict some basic principles of democracy’. PKS leaders emphasise that they are democrats and have no interest in creating an Islamic state. ‘We are tired of the polemics’ (about an Islamic caliphate), said Hidayat Nur Wahid, by then speaker of the national parliament (MPR), ‘and it is better to concentrate on carrying out the teachings of Islam’. He said to me that PKS wanted no violence, no poverty, no ignorance and no terrorism, and that such views were contrary to those of the Salafis, Wahhabis, HTI, MMI and so on. He denied that it had any Islamist ‘hidden agenda’, as many have claimed. Nor, he said, was there truth in the stories about PKS trying to infiltrate Muhammadiyah.

The aspirations of PKS cadres and the party’s internal representations are not always in line with the leaders’ public positions. The PKS office in Yogyakarta reflected the Janus-faced quality of the party. On the occasion of one of my visits, the front office displayed a banner celebrating PKS’s Korsad (Korps Satuan Tugas Keadilan, Corps of Duty Units for Justice), a sort of scouting outfit roughly comparable to NU’s Ansor. The banner bore quotes from the PKS leaders Tifatul Sembiring and Anis Matta, the latter admonishing Korsad to ‘prepare the physique so as to be fit for the jihad’.

67 PKS and its electoral performance have attracted a great deal of attention from analysts. A good overview is in Hilmy, Islamism and democracy, pp. 123–6 et passim.
68 TempoI, 18 March 2011; JktP online, 29 March 2011.
69 Hilmy, Islamism and democracy, p. 254. See also Anthony Bubalo and Greg Fealy, Joining the caravan? The Middle East, Islamism and Indonesia (Lowy Institute Paper 05; [Sydney:] Lowy Institute, 2005), pp. 72–4.
71 Discussion with Dr M. Hidayat Nur Wahid, Jakarta, 7 June 2007.
caravan’, probably an allusion to Abdullah Azzam’s well-known jihadi work *Join the caravan*.72

PKS declares itself to be a *dakwah* party — one that aims for deeper Islamisation of the society — but in addition to its Dakwahist aims, at grassroots level it is often Islamist. One of its leaders in Kediri, a 25-year-old former student activist, told Suhadi Cholil and Imam Subawi that he was not yet sure whether he supported democracy, for a caliphate was obligatory and better than secular democracy. So, he said, HTI was good.73 A PKS Ustadz told them that whether Indonesia needed a caliphate still needed to be discussed.74 The deputy head of PKS in Kediri town told them that both democracy and a caliphate were merely tools to an end.75 PKS grass-roots international sympathies tend to be like those of other Islamist organisations. Its activists and sympathisers turned out in their hundreds in Kediri in May 2006 to celebrate the victory of Hamas over Fatah in the Palestinian elections the previous January. They carried banners denouncing *inter alia* ‘the wicked greed of American Zionists’.76

Lower-level departure from what is supposed to be PKS policy was exemplified by a vigorous discussion about politics at the Jogokariyan mosque in Yogyakarta during the 2009 election campaign. If PKS has a ‘hidden agenda’, it was not so hidden on this occasion. This was billed as a panel discussion ‘for and against parliamentary *dakwah*’, but in fact it turned out that there was little disagreement on the matter among the four speakers, all billed as *ustadz*. Supposedly in favour of ‘parliamentary *dakwah*’ were two PKS figures who were elected members of local parliaments, Abdullah Sunono and Ahmad Khudlori. Against it were Mush’ab Abdul Ghaffar and the MMI luminary Abu Jibriel Abdurrahman.77 Before an audience that grew to about 300 (mostly young) men, the latter two denounced democracy

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72 I do not of course know whether this is a conscious allusion to Abdullah Azzam’s famous work, but I doubt that many would have failed to be reminded of it.

73 Suhadi Cholil and Imam Subawi interview of Warsono, Kediri, 16 Apr. 2007.

74 Suhadi Cholil and Imam Subawi interview of Imron Muzakki, Kediri, 15 Apr. 2007.

75 Suhadi Cholil and Imam Subawi interview of Ahmad Salis, Kediri, 24 March 2007.

76 *RK*, 1 May 2006.

77 Abu Jibriel (sometimes spelled Jibril) studied at Ngruki, was closely linked to Abu Bakar Ba’asyir, also spent time in prison in the 1980s and fled to Malaysia in 1985, fought in Afghanistan, and helped to found JI and MMI. He was held in Malaysia under the Internal Security Act from 2002 to 2004. In 2005 Indonesian police failed
in uncompromising terms, labeling it an offence against God because it rests on sovereignty of the people, whereas only God is sovereign. Democracy is ‘great shirk’ declared Abu Jibriel. These statements were greeted with cries of *Allahu akbar*. Mush’ab Abdul Ghaffar said that he had once been a cadre of PKS in the belief that it was working to implement shari’a, but discovered that it was not, so he had ‘repented’ — a comment greeted with laughter. The PKS speakers were clearly on the defensive in this environment and adapted themselves to the context, whether out of principle or lack of courage I cannot judge. Abdullah Sunono distributed a prepared paper and spoke well in defence of democracy as something that existed in the early days of Islam. He went on, however, to say that democracy was just a vessel or tool with which to work towards a caliphate. Ahmad Chudori was even blunter. He said that he did not agree with being depicted as a defender of ‘parliamentary dakwah’ for he agreed with Abu Jibriel and Mush’ab Abdul Ghaffar that democracy conflicts with Islam. It was, however, an opportunity to be made use of in the name of dakwah, to make Islam central to social life. If they were successful (in winning power), he said, then political parties would be abolished. The whole ‘debate’ had a rather ritualistic quality, reminding one of the Soviet zealot depicted in Yevtushenko’s ‘Zima junction’: ‘steamed up, banging his bossy fist — / …. There’s iron in his eyes; and as for speeches, / it isn’t words to get the business done, / it’s business only there for the sake of words, / for smooth, obvious speeches.’

The following day Arif Maftuhin and I took the opportunity to ask the deputy head of the PKS fraction in the local Yogyakarta parliament, H. Muh. Wajdi Rahman, about the views expressed at the mosque. We asked particularly about the statements by the PKS speakers that democracy conflicted with Islam and that, if power was achieved, political parties would be abolished. Wajdi Rahman responded that these were just private opinions, not the policy of PKS (despite the speakers being PKS members to lay charges against him after a bomb went off at his house, reportedly because of pressure from PKS and PAN politicians, including the PAN figure Patrialis Akbar, who later became Minister for Justice and Human Rights; *JktP* online, 13 March 2010. See also International Crisis Group, *Al-Qaeda in Southeast Asia*, pp. 2–3, 17, 19, 21.

78 Based on my notes taken at the time and papers distributed at the *Diskusi panel pro-kontra dakwah parlemen*, Masjid Jogokariyan, Yogyakarta, 29 March 2009. It may be noted that the area was dominated by PPP election banners.

of local parliament). PKS members were free to argue their views, he said, but when the central leadership adopted a policy that had to be adhered to by all followers (although clearly that had not applied the previous day at the Jogokariyan mosque). I suggested that this sounded rather like Leninist ‘democratic centralism’, a comparison to which he did not object.80

No issue more provokes the anxiety and anger of these smaller Islamist and Dakwahist movements — and of Muhammadiyah, too, for that matter — than conversions from Islam to Christianity. We have noted above several cases of Muslim anger or suspicion directed at Christian activities. The ‘inculturation’ policy of the Catholic Church seems a particular threat to those Dakwahists seeking to get rid of Javanese customs which they see as heathen remnants of the pre-Islamic age. Javanese churches often seek to preserve inter-religious harmony through joint activities with Muslims, such as breaking the fast together during Ramadan or undertaking social welfare activities together. These, too, are seen as threatening by hard-line Revivalists, who object to anything that makes Christianity seem a normal or welcome part of the society.

Some Christian activity is confrontative, echoing Muslim hard-liners’ style and probably feeding a dialectical relationship between the two sides. Local Chinese are often Christians, so that anti-Christian and anti-Chinese feelings can reinforce each other. One Chinese-led Pentecostal movement was founded by Yusak Tjipto Purnomo (b. 1935 in Jepara). His son Petrus Agung Purnomo heads a movement called the Indonesian Christian Community of the Gospel of the Kingdom (Jemaat Kristen Indonesia Injil Kerajaan), with a ‘Holy Stadium’ in Semarang that can seat many thousands. A daughter runs a branch in Cirebon and proselytises via a local radio station, which was attacked by FPI and others in 2006.81 In Temanggung, a 2010 Pentecostal revival meeting featured faith-healing and speaking in tongues and much display of emotion. By that time there were said to be 40 churches in Temanggung, where there had been none 50 years before.82 In October of that year, a Menadonese Protestant preacher in Temanggung was arrested for distributing leaflets that defamed Islam. When his trial

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82 Hannah Beech, ‘Christianity’s surge in Indonesia’, at http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1982223,00.html.
took place in February 2011, the prosecutors demanded that he be given the maximum sentence of five years, but local Islamic activists who had packed the courtroom rioted. They attacked the judge, the prosecutors and the defendant, set motor bikes and cars on fire, burned two (some reports said three) churches and a Christian school and threw stones at other Christian properties. They had wanted the death sentence.83

Revivalist groups often mobilise in the name of protecting the Muslim ummah from the threat of conversion to Christianity. In 2007 in Yogyakarta, MMI, HTI, PKS, MUI and others objected to a healing ‘festival’ to be led by the Canadian evangelist Peter Younagren. They pressed the police to withdraw permission for it to be held (their threat of violence being implicit), the police gave in ‘in the interest of security considerations’ and the previous permission for the gathering was withdrawn.84 The magazine Sabili regularly depicts Indonesia as a Muslim society under constant threat of Christianisation — something which readers of this book might think to be somewhat exaggerated. It is a touch ironic that the Minister of Religious Affairs, Maftuh Basyuni, opened a Pentecost World Conference in Surabaya in July 2007, proclaiming that the conference itself demonstrated that ‘people of different religious creeds in this country can get along well’.85

Anti-Christian activists have relied on a law which says that a place of worship may not be built without official permission. In a country where many things are determined not by what the law says but by whether someone cares to enforce it, small activist groups have insisted on churches having such official permission and have done what they can to delay or prevent it being given. In Surakarta, extremists’ ’sweeping’ of hotels with the ostensible aim of driving Americans out of town was, at least some of the time, a cover for disrupting religious services in hotels by Christians who lacked permission to build a church. There were also physical assaults on churches that militants declared to be illegal. There were such attacks (the attackers waving swords but not causing serious injuries or death) in

83 The accused was named Antonius Richmond Bawengan. The police withheld information about which Islamic groups were involved. JktP online, 8 Feb. 2011; Tempol, 8 Feb. 2011, 9 Feb. 2011; Solopos online, 8 Feb. 2011; Republika online, 8 Feb. 2011.
85 JktP online, 18 July 2007.
September, October, November and December 2006 and on three Sundays in February 2007. According to the Protestant pastor Bambang Mulyatno, the attack of 14 October 2006 was on a church which in fact had permission to build, but then someone else wanted to buy the land and organised militants in an organisation called LUIS (Laskar Umat Islam Surakarta, Surakarta Islamic ummah militia) to attack. A church that was meeting in Solo Grand Mall escaped such violence by paying protection money to LUIS, pastor Bambang said. In 2005, the police accompanied hundreds of members of MMI and a militia called Laskar Hisbullah to seal a private house suspected of being used as a church in Sukoharjo.

Anti-Christian violence has not been uncommon. A few examples will suffice here. In Yogyakarta, between November 1997 and October 2006, local people attacked and burned or otherwise destructed two churches, the Islamic Ummah Forum (Forum Umat Islam) protested about the construction of four others, stones were thrown at two and one was fire-bombed. During this time a mosque in the Kauman of Yogyakarta was also set alight and a bomb was found there, but I am aware of no evidence that was done by Christians in retaliation — an unlikely act for the underdogs in such a competition in any case. During the first days of December 2010, police defused bombs at two churches in Klaten, Molotov cocktails were thrown at a church in Sukoharjo and a shot was fired at another in Surakarta. A suicide bomber killed himself and a parishioner, and injured several others, at a church in Surakarta in September 2011. On the slopes of Mount Wilis, in a village where inter-religious relationships were amicable, a Catholic church began to be built in 2004 with approval from local people but without having yet obtained official permission for construction. It was destroyed by attackers who, however, were not from the smaller extremist groups but rather from NU's Ansor. The Ansor leadership quickly expressed regret at the incident and further construction was halted until the official permission was obtained. This was indeed quite out of character for Ansor and Banser, which usually turn out to guard churches when they seem under threat from Muslim extremists. For Christmas 2005, Banser ordered 3,500 members to

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88 JktG online, 8 Dec. 2010.
guard churches in Central Java and 13,000 to guard them across East Java, with a detail of at least 3,000 members in the Kediri area. 91

Behind this agitation and violence lies a fear — reminiscent of what we have seen in the 1970s and 1980s — that the Islamisation of the Javanese is in danger of being reversed by Christian proselytisation. This idea is sustained principally by the fact that most conversions are concentrated in towns and cities and are thus particularly obvious. But the statistics that are available suggest that the great wave of conversions took place in the early years after the violence of 1965–6 and that changes since then have been small.

Neither Yogyakarta nor Surakarta has seen increases in the Christian population in recent years comparable to what happened in the 1960s and 1970s, but there has been growth. We saw in Table 11 above that the percentage of Surakarta’s population that was Christian reached 24.5 per cent by 1980 and only advanced further to 25 per cent by 1990. In 2006, that figure was 26 per cent. 92 although that may be an understatement because it is based on the religions recorded in residents’ identity cards and local officials were sometimes reluctant to change those when a Muslim converted to Christianity. In Yogyakarta city the Christian percentage actually fell during the 1990s, from 18.1 per cent in 1980 to 16.6 per cent in 1990. 93

**Table 25** Christian population in Yogyakarta as percentage of total population, 2001–6 94

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Christian population (Catholic + Protestant)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

93 Statistical data gathered on my behalf by Arif Maftuhin from Yogyakarta statistics.
94 Based on data compiled by Arif Maftuhin from the *Yogyakarta dalam angka* series for 2001–6 and received from him on 13 Oct. 2008.
95 In Surakarta, Christians are split roughly equally between Protestants and Catholics, whereas in Yogyakarta Catholics are the larger group, representing around 60 per cent of the total.
In 2000, that figure was just 17 per cent, and that actually represented a drop in absolute numbers, from 71,323 Christians in 1980 to 67,348 in 2000. Thereafter, however, numbers and percentages began to grow again, reaching and surpassing the 1980 percentage, as shown in Table 25. This also represented a growth in absolute numbers of Christians in the city, from 87,749 in 2001 to 108,650 in 2006.

We may note that this growth took place in Yogyakarta during years when the anti-Christian schools campaign was at its height and when there was some anti-Christian violence (although much less than in Surakarta). This may lead us again to speculate that there is a dialectical relationship between Christian conversions and the more extreme forms of Islamic activism, each inspiring the other. But another element in religious changes is marriage. I am not aware of persuasive data on this, but there are indications from some areas and the opinion is held by knowledgeable figures from various sides that interreligious marriage is a major cause of conversions. 96

There are two other groups that Sunni extremists love to hate throughout the Islamic world: Jews and Shi’ites. Both, however, are so small in Indonesia that they offer limited opportunities to be hated. Nevertheless, there has been some violence against them. There is a small Jewish synagogue in an old Dutch-era house in Surabaya, with a tiny congregation mostly of Baghdadi Jewish background. It is almost impossible to be an orthodox Jew in Indonesia, because of both the small size of the community and dietary difficulties. Generally the Surabaya Jews have had no trouble. 97 In 2009, however, a group of Muslim activists organised demonstrations against Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip, burned American and Israeli flags and forced the synagogue to be sealed, before moving on to Kentucky Fried Chicken and McDonalds. 98

Shi’a may have had a presence in Indonesia in the early years of Islamisation centuries ago, but was almost entirely unrepresented in more modern times until after the Ayatollah Khomeini’s revolution in Iran in 1979.

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96 This opinion was expressed by Drs H. Sunardi Sahuri, Yogyakarta, 14 Sept. 2008; and by the Catholic priest Father Haryanto in our discussion in Surabaya, 24 Nov. 2007. Pastor Simon Philantropha also was aware of conversions through marriage (discussion in Surabaya, 24 Nov. 2007). Data gathered by Suhadi Cholil on marriages in Gunung Kidul in 2005–6 showed that some 17–19 per cent of the 546 marriages there involved a change of religion.

97 Discussion with the woman who looks after the synagogue, Surabaya, 24 Oct. 2008. She asked that her name not be given, which I am respecting.

98 JktP online, 14 Jan. 2009.
Since that time, Iran has offered scholarships for Indonesians to study there. Within Indonesia, Shi’a has been represented particularly by Dr Jalaluddin Rakhmat (b. Bandung, 1949) but also by others. In Javanese-speaking areas, its main strength is at Bangil, where there is a Shi’ite pesantren founded in 1973 by the Habib Husein al-Habsyi, Jalaluddin’s teacher. There have been demonstrations against Shi’a from time to time and it has been roundly denounced by Sunnis of Arab descent, inter alia in the magazine al-Kisah.99 The Bangil pesantren experienced some conflict in 2007. After the joint ministerial decree against Ahmadiyya came out in June 2008, a banner was put up in Ampel (an Arab precinct in Surabaya where is found the grave of the wali Sunan Ngampel) saying that now it was the turn of Shi’a to be dealt with, but as head of the local inter-religious forum Ky. H. Imam Ghazli Said had it taken down.100 In early 2011, the pesantren was attacked by about 100 youths on motorbikes who threw stones, injuring two students and a guard,101 but there has not yet been a serious arson attack of the kind that Christian churches have experienced or murderous violence such as the Ahmadis have suffered.

How much impact these smaller Islamist and Dakwahist movements have on the general Javanese public is difficult to assess in detail, but there is no doubt that they are active, attract attention and are constantly pushing Islamist and Dakwahist agendas forward, fighting ‘Christianisation’, ‘immorality’ and ‘deviance’. A research group from UIN Jakarta studied ‘seeds of radical Islam’ in 10 mosques in Surakarta.102 They established that speakers such as Abu Bakar Ba’asyir or people from organisations such as HTI (which they included in their definition of ‘radical’) gave sermons and pengajian lessons at some of the mosques. The extremist organisation Hidayatullah was represented and the selection of study sites included the Gumuk community, the home of FPIS. Among mosque organisers and attendees,

99 See al-Kisah no. 12/4, 17 June 2007. On this magazine, which was established in 2003 and appeals particularly to Indonesian Muslims inclined towards Sufism and accepting the authority of Habibs, see Ismail Fajrie Alatas, ‘Securing their place: The Bā’alawī, prophetic piety and the Islamic resurgence in Indonesia’ (MA thesis, National University of Singapore, 2008), pp. 90–1.
102 Ridwan al-Makassary and Ahmad Gaus AF (eds), Benih-benih Islam radikal di masjid.
there were people affiliated with HTI, MMI, MTA and other such activist movements (as well as the larger Islamic organisations Muhammadiyah and NU). There were some who thought Islam to be inconsistent with democracy, believed that a caliphate should be established, wanted *shari’a* law to be implemented, or were sympathetic to extremist actions. But it was more difficult to establish how widely held such ideas were or how much impact they had on others. Among the interviewees there were also people who were tolerant of religious pluralism and rejected Islamist or extremist ideas. In the main mosque (Masjid Agung) of Surakarta, teachings about *jihad* and implementing *shari’a* evoked ‘very low’ enthusiasm from the congregation. When a HTI speaker gave a fiery Friday sermon there about the need for a caliphate, most of the congregation ‘was nodding off’. At another mosque, an invited speaker gave a sermon that was very radical, the congregation was unhappy about that, and he was never invited again.\(^{103}\) Guinness noted similarly in Yogyakarta in 2000 that sermons in the local *kampong* mosque sometimes ‘actually preached violence’ and ‘used the cry of *jihad*’ but local people did not always agree and, when they came out of the mosque, most simply ‘went about their daily business’.\(^{104}\) While it cannot be doubted that mosques are a major channel for spreading understandings of Islam among the community through their *pengajian* programmes and Friday sermons, it remains unclear how many teach concepts associated with the smaller Islamist and Dakwahist movements under discussion here or what impact they have on their congregations. It needs to be remembered that the number of mosques and prayer halls affiliated with NU and Muhammadiyah is vastly greater than those linked to these smaller movements. That does not, of course, mean that there is a single ‘party line’ taught in NU and Muhammadiyah mosques.

It is important to note who constitute the cadres of these movements, for they represent an important element within Indonesia’s future leadership. Something of a consistent — but not universal — pattern is observable.\(^{105}\) These people tend to be young, aspiring to upward mobility and engaged in tertiary study or already tertiary graduates. Their studies are usually in non-humanities and non-Islamic disciplines — in science, medicine, veterinary

\(^{103}\) Ibid., pp. 153, 155, 200.


\(^{105}\) In the absence of widely based surveys of these groups’ followers, what follows is necessarily rather impressionistic. The impressions are, at least, shared by others, e.g., Hilmy, *Islamism and democracy*, p. 118.
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medicine and engineering. The latter are faculties in high demand, attracting some of the highest-achieving students. So the stereotypical follower of, say, HTI or MMI is smart and well-educated in technical fields, but knows of Islam mainly through campus mosques and the leaders of these movements. They have mostly studied at major state universities: Gadjah Mada, the University of Indonesia, Bandung Institute of Technology and so on. The minority who have formally studied Islamic sciences have typically done so in Saudi Arabia, where Wahhabi interpretations dominate. It is not unusual for the leading figure of a movement to be of Arab ethnic background and thus to bear a certain authority within Islamic societies, especially in the case of a descendant of the Prophet (Habib). The state Islamic tertiary system of STAIN, IAIN and UIN is more rarely represented among these groups. NU’s Hasyim Muzadi observed that Liberalism may be more dominant in the state Islamic system because the students often come from pesantren backgrounds and then study at these Islamic institutions until they ‘are tired of having to be pious’. The Yogyakarta PKS leader Kholil Mahmud commented that IAIN was difficult terrain for the party, which was more successful in gaining support in faculties of science. As IAINs are converted into UINs, however, they add new faculties of the kind that have supported these smaller and more extreme activist groups and indeed it is in those new faculties that the PKS-associated student movement KAMMI finds support.

Noorhaidi Hasan interviewed 125 Laskar Jihad fighters who had been involved in the Christian-Muslim bloodshed in Maluku. They were mostly between 20 and 35 years of age and students, graduates or drop-outs from state universities in Central Java, where most were enrolled in faculties of science and engineering. Some were from well-off families and of santri background, but many were of rural abangan family background and had only learned about Islam when they arrived in a city for their university education. There were, however, also people who had only pre-tertiary education recruited to Laskar Jihad, often from communities on the edge of cities (above all from the environs of Surakarta); again many of those were of abangan background and had been converted to a more committed understanding of Islam through the work of Revivalist pesantrens and other

106 Quoted in JktP online, 30 Nov. 2010.
107 Discussion with Kholil Mahmud, Yogyakarta, 22 March 2008.
108 For example, Moh. Irfan Zamzami interview of Jeje Jaelani, a KAMMI leader at UIN Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, 28 Aug. 2008. KAMMI stands for Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia, Indonesian Muslim Students’ Action Unit.
forms of proselytisation. A study of 80 followers of extremist movements in Jakarta done in 2000 — encompassing Laskar Jihad, FPI, MMI’s Laskar Mujahidin and a student activist organisation called HAMMAS — found a similar pattern. The middle ranks of these organisations consisted mainly of people with tertiary education in various sciences.

The patterns observable in the followers of these movements are not unique to Indonesia. Studies of similar movements in the Middle East — for which the term ‘fundamentalist’ is employed — have shown, as Valerie Hoffman summarises them, that

A consistent pattern emerges, across all these different countries, of fundamentalists drawing heavily from students and university graduates in the physical sciences, usually students of rural or traditionally religious backgrounds. These movements seem to attract the beneficiaries of the expanded university systems in all of these countries, people who have, therefore, likely made recent adjustments to a modern urban intellectual and cultural environment after being raised in a fairly traditional milieu. In fact the background of the fundamentalist movements in all countries has been largely the intelligentsia of middle- or lower-middle-class backgrounds.

There is considerable speculation about why this pattern should emerge so strongly, but little consensus in the way of an answer. We may add our own speculations here. Young people with such psychological, cultural, social and educational profiles as we have seen also in the Indonesian case are among

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110 Chaider S. Bamualim *et al.*, ‘Laporan penelitian: Radikalisme agama dan perubahan sosial di DKI Jakarta’, p. 90. HAMMAS stands for Himpunan Mahasiswa Muslim Antar Kampus, Inter-Campus Muslim Students’ Association. The International Crisis Group has suggested that by late 2011 there was a generational shift under way in the ranks of actual terrorists to people ‘less skilled, less experienced and less educated than the Afghan and Mindanao alumni, most … from poor backgrounds and relying on petty trade’; International Crisis Group, *Indonesia: From vigilantism to terrorism in Cirebon*, p. 1.


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...the brightest of their generation. They face significant personal life transitions as well as challenges in breaking through existing social structures to the better future they desire, and are attracted to fields of study which — unlike the humanities and social sciences — seem to promise straightforward, clear and unequivocal answers (so long as they stay away from theoretical physics, of course). For those attracted to such kinds of studies, a version of religion that also promises straightforward, clear and unequivocal answers may offer at once psychological security, a reassuring social identity and network, perhaps a ladder to advancement and, crucially, the promise of eternal rewards. Small wonder that it attracts.

Thus it is that these smaller Islamist and Dakwahist movements are creating cadres of followers who are likely to play crucial leadership roles in Indonesia's future. They are the ones seeking major change, and it is people who seek change who by definition hold the initiative. They are the cutting edge, the game-changers, the protagonists who push the agenda forward at its edges. They can do so because — as we have seen throughout Chapters 7–12 — they operate in an environment in which Islam permeates Javanese life through educational institutions, through efforts to impose conformity of Islamic belief and through the activities of large-scale Islamic movements, leaving abangan, kebatinan and related ideas and practices on the defensive and older arts and performance styles to be Islamised or wither. In the discussion of the post-1998 period since Chapter 7, we have recorded a profound transition in Javanese society in the decade-and-a-bit since the fall of Soeharto, a transition that built upon foundations laid down in previous decades. We described other and larger movements with contending views of Islam in Chapter 10, but those larger movements seem to be on the defensive in the face of these smaller game-changers.

We may ask who now stands against a more thorough-going Islamisation of Javanese society. Who now are the opponents who figure in the title of this book and who played such a strong role until the 1960s? The answer is — as we shall see in the next chapter — hardly anyone.